



AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING OF POLICE EMPLOYEES OF NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

Stress is an inevitable part of police personnel. The purpose of this research is to identify causes of stress and also empirically investigate the socio-demographic factors affecting stress level among police personnel. Findings revealed that political pressure, lack of time for family, negative public image and low salary were the primary causes of stress among police personnel. It also emerged that stress is significantly more pronounced among those police personnel who are younger, more educated, posted in rural areas and have less work experience. The findings supplement existing body of knowledge and contribute to the understanding of causes of stress and role of socio-demographic factors in affecting stress level among police personnel.

Keywords: Police, Causes of Stress, Nagapattinam Districts Etc.

Introduction

Stress is a complex phenomenon. An individual's experience of stress depends upon numerous aspects related to personality, environment, sociocultural situation, and several contextual factors. Occupational stress is a matter of concern in the current scenario. Occupational stress results in disruption of the psychological as well as physiological homeostasis of the individual, leading to deviant functioning in the working environment.

Police personnel play a pivotal role in maintaining the disciplinary and legislative homeostasis of the society. Stress among police personnel is being acknowledged as an international phenomenon of serious concern. In addition to the nature of job, there are numerous other issues like long and unpredictable working hours, constant pressure to perform, accountability, work overload and noxious physical environment. In India, research work related to stress in police began about a decade back. Media, many a time highlights about the impact of occupational stress on physical as well as mental health, which also attracts the attention of researchers to study this domain in detail. In India, socio psychological studies and surveys on "police stress" have been largely focused on experiences of job stress, job satisfaction, and impact of geographic & cultural variation on occupational stress among police personnel. Policing is one of the most stressful occupations. The work of police is to protect life and property. It undertakes investigation of crimes. Its role involves many challenges such as encounter with dreaded elements while handling crimes. These roles expose police officers to different work situations which require different physical and mental ability (Anshel, 2000; Rollinson, 2005; Morash et al., 2006) to deal with situations firmly and effectively. A number of studies were carried out in different parts of the world for understanding nature of stress among Police Personnel. The reasons for stress are negative working environment plenty; long working hours, lack of time for family, irregular eating habits, need to take tough decisions, sleepless nights, poor living conditions, torture by seniors, disturbed personal life and the dwindling public confidence in the police force (Water and Ussery, 2007; Malach- Pines and Kienan, 2007, McCarthy et. al, 2007). In addition to above, stress may occur due to organizational factors like management style, poor communication, lack of support, inadequate resources and work overload (Kop et. al, 1999). Stress among policemen would manifest in the form of fatigue, depression, inability to concentrate, irritability and impulsive behaviour. These danger signals are quite common among the policemen. Policemen are often viewed as rude and highhanded. However, outsiders may not appreciate the extreme conditions under which they lead their lives. Stress also has a negative effect on the health of the policemen. It makes them more susceptible to physical ailments. Both physical and mental illness renders the employee unfit for work. It impacts job satisfaction and reduces job performance.

Review of relate studies

Occupational stress has become one of the major influences on the health, daily living and psychological well-being of workers. Work is an essential part of our lives and there are people who find real satisfaction in their work, however, there are individuals who are susceptible to workplace stress such as, police and other law enforcement agents. In Nigeria, certain workplace has no respect for mental health and even when they try to assist, the cost of employees in the workplace is high which affects low income earners (Gross, 2005). Police work is known to be fraught with a wide range of dangerous situations. These include high-speed automatic chases, highly emotional and menacing domestic situations, the stress dealing with people who are irrational due to alcohol, drugs or mental instability, and the unpredictable armed confrontations with criminals. The participation of police in these high-risk activities is taken for granted and regarded as being part of their job. The police are assumed to be carefully selected for their resilience to coping with dangers and it is assumed that they have



received adequate training to ensure that skills protect them from these occupational hazards or stress (Buhrmaster, 2006; Mangwani, 2012). Most traditional societies considered the job of policing to be exclusively reserved for men. This sex-type prejudice had influenced the perception of most people in our society, even up to the 21st century. This is reflective of most people's belief that police force services are not meant for women, while men are not expected to be in woman profession, like nursing profession. These different professions manifest different types and levels of occupational stressors. In addition to the occupational stressors in these stereotyped professions, the individuals' perception of their occupation is a good determinant of their job attitude and psychological well-being (Lindsay, 2001; Akinnawo, 2010). It is believed that there are some stringent rules and administrative policies in male-dominated jobs which may be difficult for women to cope with, and thereby constituting major sources of occupational stress (Ransom, 1998; Lindsay, 2001; Akinnawo, 2010). Job stress is produced from lack of regards for physiological, psychological and social comforts from the equipments use in working, relationships, and other considerations that can be found in the working environment. Comfort is achieved when a person neither feels nor shows any sign of fatigue or stress (Lemu, 2007). However, Harper (2000) therefore observed that stress is not an illness in itself, but rather a maladaptive response to pressure. Thus, the word stress may be used as an umbrella term covering all of an employee's physical and emotional problems. However, Buhrmaster (2006) and Mangwani (2012) found that, some policemen experience helplessness, feeling of inadequacy, anger, shock and guilt, while others go through periods of disbelief, depression and self-blame, and all these trigger frustration in police job, which eventually have significant effects on their psychological well-being. Mangwani (2012) further observed that members of South African police force had been diagnosed with depression experienced multiple problems at work and could no longer handle the pressure in the work environment. She was able to identify the multiple problems at workplace that had been associated with depression such as, criminal charges, a pending or just completed disciplinary hearings or departmental trials against the police. Thus, the police officers diagnosed of these multiple problems suffered from post-traumatic stress, depression, tension, frustration, sadness and loneliness prior to committing suicide.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to examine the effects of occupational stress on psychological well-being of police in nagapattinam districts.

1. Investigate the effect of work-stress on psychological wellbeing of police employees.
2. Examine the effect of frustration on psychological well-being of police employees.
3. Ascertain the effect of depression on psychological well-being of police employees.
4. Suggest ways of improving psychological well-being and reducing stress among police employees in their stations or workplaces.

Research Design

"A research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the researcher purpose with economy in procedure"

This study is a descriptive research design in which I have explained the effect of work stress on job satisfaction and psychological well-being among police personnel of Nagapattinam Districts.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The term analysis refers to the computation of certain measures along with searching for patterns of relationship that exist among data groups. The data after collection has to be processed and analyzed in accordance with the outline laid down in research plan or research design. This is essential for a scientific study and for ensuring that we have all relevant data for making comparisons and analysis.

Correlations					
		Police Operational Stress	Police Organizational Stress	Personal Related Factors	Strategies Used By Police Officers
Police Operational Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-.030	.144	.055
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.837	.319	.706
	N	50	50	50	50
Police Organizational Stress	Pearson Correlation	-.030	1	.213	.197
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.837		.138	.170
	N	50	50	50	50
Personal Related Factors	Pearson Correlation	.144	.213	1	-.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.319	.138		.816



	N	50	50	50	50
Strategies Used By Police Officers	Pearson Correlation	.055	.197	-.034	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.706	.170	.816	
	N	50	50	50	50

H1: correlation analysis between any police operational stress about any and police organizational stress and strategies used by police officers.

The objective of testing this hypothesis is to know whether police operational stress about any and police organizational stress and strategies used by police officers to have a statically significant linear relationship with the correlation analysis was conducted to check the vicariate relations between knowledge about any police operational stress about any and police organizational stress and strategies used by police officers. With $r = -.030^{**}$, $p = < 0.01$. **. This Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) tests and thus the correlation method for the given data analysed, interpreted & represented spss.

Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test ^{a,b}		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.494
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	15.823
	Df	15
	Sig.	.394
a. Only cases for which GENDER = MALE are used in the analysis phase.		
b. Based on correlations		

Kaiser Meyer Olkin (Kmo) And Bartlett's Test (Measures the Strength of Relationship among the Variables)

The KMO measures the sampling adequacy (which determines if the responses given with the sample are adequate or not) which should be close than 0.5 for a satisfactory factor analysis to proceed. Kaiser (1974) recommend 0.5 (value for KMO) as minimum (barely accepted), values between 0.7-0.8 acceptable, and values above 0.9 are super. Looking at the table below, the KMO measure is 0.494, which is close of 0.5 and therefore can be barely accepted (Table 3).

Bartlett's test is another indication of the strength of the relationship among variables. This tests the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix.. You want to reject this null hypothesis. From the same table, we can see that the Bartlett's Test Of Sphericity is significant (0.394). That is, significance is less than 0.05. In fact, it is actually 0.394, i.e. the significance level is small enough to reject the null hypothesis. This means that correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Total Variance Explained										
	Component	Initial Eigenvalues ^a			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
		Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Raw	1	3.218	33.757	33.757	3.218	33.757	33.757	2.443	25.625	25.625
	2	1.916	20.094	53.851	1.916	20.094	53.851	1.864	19.555	45.180
	3	1.843	19.329	73.180	1.843	19.329	73.180	2.669	28.001	73.180
	4	1.308	13.718	86.898						
	5	.720	7.554	94.452						
	6	.529	5.548	100.000						
Rescaled	1	3.218	33.757	33.757	1.783	29.715	29.715	1.629	27.152	27.152
	2	1.916	20.094	53.851	1.079	17.985	47.701	1.290	21.502	48.654
	3	1.843	19.329	73.180	1.219	20.312	68.013	1.162	19.359	68.013



	4	1.308	13.718	86.898					
	5	.720	7.554	94.452					
	6	.529	5.548	100.000					
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									
a. When analyzing a covariance matrix, the initial eigenvalues are the same across the raw and rescaled solution.									
b. Only cases for which GENDER = MALE are used in the analysis phase.									

Total Variance Explained

Eigenvalue actually reflects the number of extracted factors whose sum should be equal to number of items which are subjected to factor analysis. The next item shows all the factors extractable from the analysis along with their eigenvalues. The Eigenvalue table has been divided into three sub-sections, i.e. Initial Eigen Values, Extracted Sums of Squared Loadings and Rotation of Sums of Squared Loadings. For analysis and interpretation purpose we are only concerned with Extracted Sums of Squared Loadings. Here one should note that Notice that the first factor accounts for 33.757% of the variance, the second 20.094% and the third 19.329%. All the remaining factors are not significant.

Implications of the Findings

The implications of the findings inherent in the study evidently indicate the factors associated with occupational stress such as work stress, frustration and depression that have significant effect on psychological well-being of police officers in Nagapattinam. Another implication of the findings is that those associated factors with occupational stress exerted significantly influence on the organizational commitment of the. This implies that the gap between police and attainment of their constitutional objectives could be bridged by bringing about improvement in the occupational stress and psychological well-being of police. When stressful situations of these kinds are experienced by the police they become difficult to control. As such social workers, counselling psychologists, personnel psychologists and other health professionals should mount intervention strategies that could be relied upon for the improvement of the Nigeria police self-efficacy, active problem solving coping and their social networks. The implications also present platform upon which the organizational commitment of the police personnel could be understand and managed.

This recommendation goes to government and police organization in that, they should endeavour to find means of managing psychological attributes such as police self-efficacy, work-motivation, emotional labour, psychological well-being, work-stress and social networks of their employees. This is based on the fact that management of these attributes will go a long way in enhancing their organizational commitment. This could be done by establishing behavioural clinics in all the police stations throughout the country. This is necessary in order to diagnose and treat the behavioural problems among the police personnel.

Conclusion

This study has been able to look at the effects of occupational stress and its associated factors such as work-stress, frustration and depression on psychosocial well-being of police officers .The study also established that stress generally has been one of the bottlenecks for effective excursion of daily activities among po The result of this study proves that workplace support is considered as avenues to increase job satisfaction among the police officers. Therefore, it is recommended to reduce the stressful conditions and to improve job satisfaction among the officers more attention should be given on the roles and the support that they receive.

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