

Predictor of Stressors Causing Health Issues Among Indian Police Staff

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Abstract

Police personnel is a vulnerable group and have a strenuous routine. Although they are exposed to wider range of stressors generally, while during pandemic scenario the exposure to such routine results in family issues, mental health issues and the list is unending. The objective of the study was to investigate the predictors of Stressors and perspectives of health issues among Police staff. The study consists of police personnel from Indian police force with sample size of 210. Data was analyzed by exploratory factor analysis. The findings of the study extracted total of five factors of stress. The total variance explained was 76.991 per cent. First factor extracted was Work Pressure (27.532 %) followed by Aggression (19.618 %) Public Opinion (11.664 %), Health Issues (9.243 %), Family Ignorance (8.935 %). These findings highlight the importance of stress reduction and workplace health initiatives for police officers.

Index Terms- Anxiety, Burnout, Police Staff, Stress.

1. Introduction

Stress refers to the “insight of incongruity between environmental burden (stressors) and person’s ability to fulfill these demands” (Malach-Pines & Keinan, 2007). There are several reasons due to which stress arises as stated by (Malach-Pines & Keinan, 2007, McCarthy et al., 2007 and Water & Ussery, 2007). There are stress symptoms determined by various literature such as blood pressure, depression, mood swings, craving, strain, nervousness and the list is unending (Agolla & Ongori, 2009; Ongori, 2007; Agolla, 2009).

Police personnel in our country have a strenuous routine. Blum (2000) and Violanti (1996) also investigated the consequences of stress such as depression, aggression and suicidal attitude. Thus, major reason to conduct this study is to determine various factors of stress amongst police employees. The work of police is of critical importance to a nation’s progress. They work 24X7 to protect life and property of general public and maintenance of law and order. They undertake endless number of jobs such as crime detection and investigation, chasing and interrogation of criminals, traffic control, VIP security, disaster management, security of strategic points (like bridges, historical/religious/ government buildings etc.), intelligence and CID, riot control, administrative work, electoral duties to name a few.

2. Review of Literature

Collins and Gibbs (2003) carried out research investigate the various symptoms of stress among police personnel and found that female police personnel have high scoring on GHQ as compared to male police personnel. The major symptom of stress found in this study was heavy work pressure and culture of organization. Malach-Pines et al. (2007) conducted his study to investigate the highly stressful period among police employee in Israil were found prone towards high level of stress. Further, less salary packages, workload pressure, less

available equipment were the major reasons of stress at the most priority among these police officers rather than the factors associated with terrorism. Despite of high stress at work, the officers expressed highly satisfaction from it. Ranta and Sud (2008) highlighted that emotional exhaustion arises due to workload as well as personal conflict at workplace. While depersonalization, was noticed among police employees due to receiving of less acknowledgment at workplace. Bano (2011) presented various symptoms that cause stress among them such as less participation in family due to workload, negative public opinions towards police jobs, and also the less salary packages in this sector. Ogungbamila (2013) inferred that health workers were found with higher levels burnout as compared to police personnel or teachers. Queirosa et al. (2013) indicated aggressivity about 13 per cent to 22 per cent as compared to burnout. Joseph and Nagarajamurthy (2014) stated that less salary, negative reputation among public and political pressure were the significant reasons of stress among these employees. Husain (2014) indicated that police staff members carried depression at highest peak level along with anxiety and stress. Nelson and Smith (2016) shown that less positive work factors along with negative work characteristics have sown the relationship with depression symptoms. Further, perceived level of stress indicated as a mediator between WC and MH factors. On the other side, job satisfaction showed the mediation between positive work characteristics and depression. Stogner, et al. (2020) suggested that uncertainty play the major source of stress. The author recommended that by altering policing strategies in future pandemics, officers should experience less uncertainty and less stress. Although, it is not possible to remove stress from one’s life completely, but by providing training on positive coping skills may help officers to deal with the stress which they face without the side effects of increased burnout, poor mental health, and unhealthy behaviors such as alcoholism. Wu, Y. et al.

(2021) inferred that perceived effectiveness of agency protection of officers against the COVID-19 risk, sufficient amount of sleep, and increased family time significantly reduced stress.

3. Objectives of Study

1. To determine significant Predictors of stressors and health issues amongst Police Staff.
2. To determine the percentage of personnel facing health issues while working in this sector.

4. Methods

Sample size consists of 210 police employees (100 constables, 60 inspectors and 50 other officers). Convenience sampling techniques was applied for data collection. Self-developed questionnaire was used for extracting the factors of stress among police personnel by reviewing various literatures such as, 'Occupational Stress Questionnaire' by McCreary & Thompson, (2006); Mental Health Inventory by Jagdish and Srivastava, (1983); Ratna and Sud (2008) and Joseph & Nagarajamurthy (2014). Findings were analyzed by using statistical techniques. The frequency distribution was employed to investigate

the percentage of police personnel who think that this job has impacted on their health status. Further, exploratory factor analysis was applied to extract various factors of stress among police personnel. The responses were measured on 7-point likert scale.

5. Data Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis was employed to extract possible factors of stress. The value of Cronbach alpha found to be sufficient (.748), therefore data was reliable enough. The sample adequacy was determined by KMO (0.801) which came to be sufficiently high. The Bartlett's Sphericity Test came to be statistically significant (p=.000).

As indicated in Table 1, the Varimax Rotation Method was used, and five factors were extracted in this analysis. The total 76.991 variance was explained by overall five factors in order of 27.532, 19.618, 11.664, 9.243, and 8.935 per cent respectively. Factor loadings were taken greater than 0.50. Eigen values for all five factors came to be 6.914, 4.995, 2.929, 2.302 and 2.107 respectively. The communalities were greater than 0.500.

6. Results

Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis

Statement (Labels)	Factors					Communality
	1	2	3	4	5	
1		.885				.787
2		.814				.679
3		.946				.896
4		.864				.747
5		.916				.853
6		.966				.937
7					.849	.726
8					.873	.769
9					.820	.704
10			.802			.643
11			.850			.728
12			.872			.764
13				.677		.573
14			.879			.780
15				.954		.914
16	.891					.795
17	.871					.761
18	.905					.823
19	.866					.762
20				.956		.918
21	.788					.631
22	.881					.795
23	.874					.767
24	.904					.820
25	.871					.772
Eigen value	6.914	4.995	2.929	2.302	2.107	
% (Variance)	27.532	19.618	11.664	9.243	8.935	Total 76.991%

Discussions and Implications

The findings indicate that work pressure scored the highest per cent of variance followed by strain. while family ignorance showed the least per cent of variance. First factor Work Pressure explains 27.532 per cent of total variance carrying 9 statements,

followed by second factor "Aggression" explaining 19.618 per cent of the variance, followed by "Public Opinion" explaining 11.664 per cent of the variance, followed by "Health issues" explaining 9.243 per cent of the variance with three statements, followed by "Family Ignorance" explaining 8.935 per cent of variance.

It is inferred from the findings that jobs of police sector are overburdened by working lifestyles, because of which the police person is also not able to give proper timing to their families as well as their health?

also get influenced by such pressurized and hectic job. This may lead to burnout stage of police. The Table 2 includes the names of factors depending upon the nature of statements included in the factor.

Factor	Name of Factors (% of Variance)	Label	Statement with Factor Loadings
Factor 1	Work Pressure (27.532%)	W16	Frequent transfers make the job tough
		W17	
		W18	There is excessive pressure from higher authorities
		W19	This job involves greater political pressure
		W21	There is excessive supervision pressure
		W22	The working hours are long & irregular
		W23	There are poor working conditions in this sector
		W24	I feel this job demands excessive involvement
		W25	My salary is lower than minimum required for such jobs
Factor 2	Aggression (19.618%)	S1	Crime scene leave me stress ridden for long
		S2	Job Stress leads to negativity in day-to-day life
		S3	I feel I get more irritable at home due to work pressure
		S4	I feel myself more aggressive than before
		S5	I feel dealing with horrible crimes increase my anxiety level
		S6	High exposure to accidents creates severe exhaustion
Factor 3	Public Opinion (11.664%)	P10	There is negative public image in the society
		P11	I feel unable to participate in social activities due to work schedule
		P12	Society often under-rates my job
		P14	Society does not give me the respect that I deserve
Factor 4	Health issues (9.243%)	H13	I feel long hour duty is cause of physical aches
		H15	I feel this job creates sleeping disorder
		H20	Experiencing life threatening situations make me feel frightened & emotionally shocked for long time
Factor 5	Family Ignorance (8.935%)	F7	My job lessens my participation in home activities
		F8	My job creates displeasure with family

personnel which could be serious as well as harmful to their routine life. The results also indicate that.

majority of police personnel experienced health issues while working in this sector.

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	179	85.2	85.2
No	31	14.8	100.0

Table 3 inferred that majority of employees (85%) states that they experienced health issues while working in police sector during COVID-19, whereas only 14 per cent of employees indicated that they do not experienced health issues while working in police sector.

7. Conclusion

The present study extracted the total five factors which are the reasons of stress amongst police force. The total variance explained by these five factors was 76.991 per cent. The first factor extracted by exploratory factor analysis was work pressure (27.532 %) followed by strain (19.618 %) public opinion (11.664 %), health issues (9.243 %) and family ignorance (8.935 %).

Direction for Future Research

It is recommended to the authorities as well as to government to make some efforts in relation to entertainment programs participation, counseling seminars or some campaigns especially for these employees' time to time so that employees could be able to relief their stress level by such participations. Also, researcher can conduct the future research on Burnout situations with their coping strategies.

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