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INTRODUCTION

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

NEED/IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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APPENDIX/ANNEXURE

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A STUDY ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG GRADE I POLICE CONSTABLES

M.SHUNMUGA SUNDARAM
ASST. PROFESSOR
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
KALASALINGAM UNIVERSITY
KRISHNAN KOVIL

DR. M. JAYA KUMARAN
PROFESSOR & HEAD
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
KALASALINGAM UNIVERSITY
KRISHNAN KOVIL

ABSTRACT

This research required determining the amount of stress that police constables face and what are the most stressful events and also it determining the relationship between demographic factors and stressful events. This study was conducted on 200 police constables (grade I) working in 52 police stations within Tuticorin district. Police constables felt that Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to increased responsibility and Stress due to lack of admin policy do vary with demographic factors like age, gender, religion, service of the years, marital status, income and the place of residence. The results and their interpretation relate only Grade I police constables. This present study also suggested that perception about the work and practice must be changed. Police department must offer counseling for the police constables and giving chance to them for future scope. This study suggests well defined training and developed departmental policies reduce the stress level. Responsibility of the police constables must consider based on their capacity, Police departments, with their tense organizational structures, and offer both opportunities and challenges for stress prevention programs. In Tamil Nadu this kind of research has not been conducted particularly in police department which is measured the most demanding and stressful police district in Tamil Nadu, India.

KEYWORDS

Counseling, Occupational stress, opportunities, Organizational structure, police constables.

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress among police is often viewed as an unlucky, but expected part of police work. Police are like a real heroes, but most of people are unaware the amount of stress that police face every day. Police work involves protection of life, safeguarding property through vital patrol techniques, enforcement of laws and ordinances in the place for which the Police station is responsible. Police who are out in the street, every day during their duty are struggle police. They are the first's line of protection between the criminals and the society. During their duty, unexpectedly they may encounter situations involving major crisis without any warning. There are several factors like 24 hours availability, administration problem were involved and make police as a most stressful job. This study basically deals with Tamil Nadu police department and the Tamil Nadu has a Police population ratio of 1: 632. Police Constable is the lowest police grade in India. This study explores the major causes of stress and amount of stress faced by police constables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Spielberger, Vagg & Wasala (2003), stress is recognised as a complex process that consist of three major mechanisms: sources of stress that are encountered in the work environment, the perception and appraisal of a particular stressor by an employee, and the emotional reactions that are a response to perceiving a stressor as threatening. Spielberger's State-Trait (ST) model of occupational stress focuses on the perceived severity and frequency of occurrence of two major categories of stressors, i.e. job pressures and lack of support

Gulle et al. (1998) conducted a study that explored inherent and organisational stress in the South African Police Service. It included 91 Police members ranging in ages from 21 to 53 years with the sample consisting of 85 males and 6 females. This study indicated that in comparison to American stressors, which were all inherent in the nature of the job, South African police stressors were among the more organisationally-oriented. Violanti & Aron (1994) found the South African sample displaying a greater degree of stress than the USA sample. The way in which the SAPS operates creates stress in addition to the inherent pressure already existing as a result of the nature of police work. The study also found that excessive paperwork, insufficient person power, fellow officers not doing their job, inadequate or poor quality equipment and inadequate salaries were cited among the stressors which occurred most frequently within the police.

Basson (2005) reported that police units involved with family violence, child abuse and sexual offences had 254 vacancies (20% of total number of jobs). The average number of criminal cases managed by each detective vary from 32 (Northern Cape) to 52 (Eastern Cape), with a national average of 43, whereas the ideal is that each detective should not investigate more than 18 cases. Therefore police member.s (detectives in particular) experience high job demands (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2006).

Martocchio and O'Leary (1989) conducted a meta-analysis of studies investigating the relationship between gender and occupational stress and concluded that there were no differences in experienced stress between males and females. International studies showed that police officers report varying amounts of work stressors on the basis of rank (Brown & Campbell, 1990; Brown, Cooper & Kirkcaldy, 1996; Kaufmann & Beehr, 1989), race and ethnicity (Violanti & Aron, 1995), and gender (Wexler & Logan, 1983). Cooper & Bramwell (1992) indicated that potential sources of stress varied between different sub-cultures and status groups within the same organisation. Terry & Calan (1997) showed that those higher in the organisational hierarchy experience higher levels of perceived stress. The nature of police work is acknowledged as highly stressful and particularly hazardous (Selye 1978; Alexander, 1999; Anshel, 2000; Paton & Violanti, 1999). According to Mostert and Joubert (2005), the negative effects of job stress on employees and their work are such that it is necessary to explore the processes involved when job stress is studied.

McCafferty (1992) attributes suicide of police members to stressors at work. Factors that may contribute to distress include authoritarian structure, lack of participation in decision-making, poor inter-personal relationships with supervisors, lack of administrative support, unfair discipline, unfair promotion and the nature of police work. The irregularity of working hours, poor working conditions and the experience of constant fear and trauma contribute to making police members more susceptible to suicide (Maynard, Maynard, McCubbin & Shao, 1980; Rothmann and Strijdom, 2002). Working in shifts, low salaries and the dangers involved in police work seem to be related to stress and suicidal tendencies (Kruger, 1996; Lott, 1995). According to Rothmann and van Rensburg (2002) suicidal behaviour may be considered a domain of psychological disturbance and is associated with potentially severe mental and/or physical health outcomes. Suicidal behaviour varies in severity from ideation through intent and attempt to actual completion.

The productiveness, motivation and health of a police service are regarded as important factors contributing to a country's stability, economic growth and development (Rothmann & Van Rensburg, 2002). Healthy police officers that are engaged in their work are therefore imperative to furthering these goals.

However, police work has been identified as an exceptionally stressful occupation (Alexander, 1999; Anshel, 2000; Paton & Violanti, 1999). Physical assault, the violent death or suicide of an officer who is a close friend, a response to the death of a child, overt violence, work overload, time pressure and inadequate resources are among the frequently occurring stressors that confront police officers (Carlier & Gersons, 1992; Kirkcaldy, Cooper & Ruffalo, 1995).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Four or five stressed-out policemen commit suicide every year. Stress-related ailments have killed more serving policemen in the past three years. Several inspectors and constables have died of heart attacks while on duty. Constables are feeling that they work under great pressure and their job is demanding and uncertain, also, public expectations from the police are high. During festivals timings, constables often work for more than 36 hours at a stretch. This may take a heavy charge on their health. Stress can cause hypertension, joint pains, high blood pressure, diabetes as well as paralytic strokes and heart attacks. They also experience lack of concentration, resulting in their making errors while passing orders or taking important decisions. Besides the routine work, constables often face stressful situations because of harassment from superiors.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of this study:

- The study the socio-demographic factors of the respondents;
- Identify the most stressful job activities of police constables;
- To study the relationship between demographic factors and level of stress among the grade I police constables;

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design chosen is descriptive as the study reveals the existing facts. Descriptive research is the study which describes the characteristics of a particular individual, or a group. This study is about selected variable of stress. This study is based on the police constables in Tuticorin district. The research concentrated on eight sub divisions comprising 52 police stations and the researcher collected 200 samples from grade I police constables. The researcher used convenience sampling for the study. The researcher prepared structured questionnaires for data collection for this study. The questionnaires included questions on demographic profile and causes of stress. Primary data were collected through the questionnaire directly from the respondents and the secondary data were collected from government records, books, journals and the Internet. The researcher used descriptive analysis, factor analysis and ANOVA for data analysis.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

DEMOGRAPHICAL FINDINGS

AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their age. 65 constables forming 32.5% of the total constables were in ages 20-29 years, 121 constables forming 60.5% of the total constables were in ages 30-39 years.

GENDER OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their gender. 103 constables forming 51.5 % of the total constables were Male gender and the rest of 97 constables forming 48.5 % of the total constables were female gender.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their educational qualification. 32 constables forming 16% of the total constables were having school level education, 148 constables forming 74% of the total constables were having under graduate level education.

RELIGION OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their religion. 136 constables forming 68 % of the total constables were following Hinduism religion, 48 constables forming 24.7% of the total constables were following Islam religion.

COMMUNITY OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their community. 100 constables forming 50 % of the total constables were belonging to other castes and 47 constables forming 23.5% of the total constables were belonging to Scheduled castes.

PLACE OF THE RESIDENCE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their Place of the residence. 148 constables forming 74% of the total constables were belonging to rural areas.

MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their marital status. 126 constables forming 63% of the total constables were married, 63 constables forming 31.5% of the total constables were unmarried.

YEARS OF SERVICE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of police constables based on their Years of service. 57 constables forming 28.5% of the total constables were having a service of 6 years to 10 years, 96 constables forming 48% of the total constables were having a service of 11 years to 15 years,.

NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the Number of dependents of the respondents. 119 constables forming 59.5% of the total constables were having two dependent members in their family, 57 constables forming 28.5% of the total constables were having three dependent members in their family.

SALARY RECEIVED BY THE RESPONDENTS

The table below shows the classification of the respondents based on salary received. The above table shows that out of the total 600 police constables of the study, 95 Police constables forming 47.5% were Grade I and had a salary slab of Rs.8000-10000, 97 Police constables forming 48.5% were Grade I and had a salary slab of Rs.10000 -15000,

MEAN OPINION ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF STRESS

The table below shows the mean opinion about the amount of stress they face with regard to some 44 stressful activities in due course of their jobs. As the stress levels were measured from a low stress value of 0 and a high stress value of 9 the mean value lies between 0-9.

The first ranked stressful job activity is *handling large crowd/ mass demonstration* with a mean stress value of 5.9350, the second ranked stressful job activity is *Seeing criminals go free (for example because of lack of evidence, court leniency)* with a mean stress value of 5.8950, and third ranked stressful job activity is *having great deal with media* with a mean stress value of 5.8800.

The last ranked stressful job activity is *Assignment of disagreeable duties* with a mean stress value of 4.1550, the second last ranked stressful job activity is *Frequent interruptions* with a mean stress value of 4.3250, and third last ranked stressful job activity is *Assignment of new or unfamiliar duties* with a mean stress value of 4.6550.

FACTOR ANALYSIS OF OPINION ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF STRESS WITH REGARD TO VARIOUS STRESSFUL ACTIVITIES

The opinion about the 44 job related activities were subjected to factor analysis to ascertain the important job related factors that create stress. As a first step Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were conducted and the results are shown in the table below.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy. | 0.884 |
| | Approx. Chi-Square | 3901.508 |
| | df. | 946 |
| | Sig. | 0.000 |

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) is .884. This means the sample size is adequate. Bartlett test of Sphericity is a statistical test for the presence of correlations among the variables and it clearly shows that the test static chi-square is significant as it is less than 0.05.

VARIABLES LOADED ON FACTOR 1

| Variables | Loading |
|--|---------|
| 1. Lack of participation in policy-making decisions | 0.671 |
| 2. Racial conflict | 0.601 |
| 3. Personal insult from customer/consumer/colleague | 0.533 |
| 4. Seeing criminals go free | 0.519 |
| 5. Shift work | 0.495 |
| 6. Noisy work area | 0.485 |
| 7. Delivering a death message or bad news to someone | 0.361 |

Seven variables are loaded on factor one. Factor is named as '*stress due to lack of admin policy*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 2

| Variables | Loadings |
|---|----------|
| 1. Assignment of disagreeable duties | 0.715 |
| 2. Working overtime | 0.686 |
| 3. Frequent interruptions | 0.584 |
| 4. Frequent changes from boring to demanding activities | 0.538 |
| 5. Lack of opportunity for advancement | 0.462 |
| 6. Too much supervision Stressful Job-Related Events | 0.334 |

Six variables are loaded on factor two. Factor is named as '*stress due to doing disagreeable duties*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 3

| Variables | Loadings |
|---|----------|
| 1. Assignment of increased responsibility | 0.712 |
| 2. Dealing with crisis situations | 0.531 |
| 3. Inadequate or poor quality equipment | 0.502 |
| 4. Making critical on-the-spot decisions | 0.491 |
| 5. Lack of recognition for good work | 0.465 |
| 6. Insufficient personnel to handle an assignment | 0.440 |

Six variables are loaded on factor three. Factor is named as '*stress due to increased responsibility*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 4

| Variables | Loadings |
|---|----------|
| 1. Performing tasks not in job description | 0.679 |
| 2. Having to deal with the media | 0.640 |
| 3. Having to go to court | 0.619 |
| 4. Insufficient personal time | 0.507 |
| 5. Attending to incidences of domestic violence | 0.323 |

Five variables are loaded on factor four. Factor is named as '*stress due to performing tasks not in job description*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 5

| Variables | Loadings |
|--|----------|
| 1. A forced arrest or being physically attacked | 0.714 |
| 2. A fellow officer killed in the line of duty | 0.517 |
| 3. Experiencing negative attitudes toward the organization | 0.510 |
| 4. Having to handle a large crowd/mass demonstration | 0.509 |

Four variables are loaded on factor five. Factor is named as '*stress due to being physically attacked*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 6

| Variables | Loadings |
|--|----------|
| 1. Excessive paperwork | 0.639 |
| 2. Meeting deadlines | 0.631 |
| 3. Staff shortages | 0.480 |
| 4. Reorganization and transformation within the organization | 0.457 |
| 5. Conflicts with other departments | 0.331 |

Five variables are loaded on factor six. Factor is named as '*stress due to excessive paper work*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 7

| Variables | Loadings |
|---|----------|
| 1. Competition for advancement | 0.742 |
| 2. Assignment of new or unfamiliar duties | 0.642 |
| 3. Inadequate salary | 0.412 |

Three variables are loaded on factor seven. Factor is named as '*stress due to competition for advancement*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 8

| Variables | Loadings |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Fellow workers not doing their job | 0.688 |
| Poor or inadequate supervision | 0.422 |

Two variables are loaded on factor eight. Factor is named as '*stress due to fellow workers not doing their work*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 9

| Variables | Loadings |
|--|----------|
| Periods of inactivity | 0.757 |
| Difficulty getting along with supervisor | 0.737 |

Two variables are loaded on factor nine. Factor is named as '*stress due to periods of inactivity*'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 10

| Variables | Loadings |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Covering work for another employee | 0.724 |
| Poorly motivated co-workers | 0.383 |

Two variables are loaded on factor ten. Factor is named as 'covering work for another employee'.

VARIABLE LOADED ON FACTOR 11

| Variables | Loadings |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Killing someone in the line of duty | 0.648 |
| Inadequate support by supervisor | -0.398 |

Two variables are loaded on factor eleven. Factor is named as 'stress due to killing some one in the line of duty'.

FINDINGS**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF POLICE CONSTABLES**

1. Out of 200 constables 65 constables forming 32.5% of the total constables were in ages 20-29 years, 121 constables forming 60.5% of the total constables were in ages 30-39 years, and 14 constables forming 7% of the total constables were in ages 40-49 years.
2. 103 constables forming 51.5 % of the total constables were Male gender and the rest of 97 constables forming 48.5 % of the total constables were female gender.
3. 32 constables forming 16% of the total constables were having school level education, 148 constables forming 74% of the total constables were having under graduate level education, 18 constables forming 9% of the total constables were having post graduate level education, and the rest of 2 constables forming 1% of the total constables were having professional education.
4. 136 constables forming 68 % of the total constables were following Hinduism religion, 48 constables forming 24.7% of the total constables were following Islam religion, and 16 constables forming 8% of the total constables were following Christianity religion.
5. 100 constables forming 50 % of the total constables were belonging to other castes, 39 constables forming 19.5% of the total constables were belonging to backward castes, 14 constables forming 7% of the total constables were belonging to most backward castes, and 47 constables forming 23.5% of the total constables were belonging to Scheduled castes.
6. 148 constables forming 74% of the total constables were belonging to rural areas, and 52 constables forming 26% of the total constables were belonging to urban areas.
7. 126 constables forming 63% of the total constables were married, 63 constables forming 31.5% of the total constables were unmarried, 9 constables forming 4.5% of the total constables were divorced, and 2 constables forming 1% of the total constables were separated.
8. 37 constables forming 18.5% of the total constables were having a service less than 5 years, 57 constables forming 28.5% of the total constables were having a service of 6 years to 10 years, 96 constables forming 48% of the total constables were having a service of 11 years to 15 years, 10 constables forming 5% of the total constables were having a service of 16 years to 20 years.
9. 21 constables forming 10.5% of the total constables were having one dependent member in their family, 119 constables forming 59.5% of the total constables were having two dependent members in their family, 57 constables forming 28.5% of the total constables were having three dependent members in their family, 2 constables forming 1% of the total constables were having four dependent members in their family, 1 constables forming .5% of the total constables were having six dependent members in their family.
10. The above table shows that out of the total 600 police constables of the study, 95 Police constables forming 47.5% were Grade I and had a salary slab of Rs.8000-10000, 97 Police constables forming 48.5% were Grade I and had a salary slab of Rs.10000 -15000, and the rest of the 8 Police constables forming 25% were Grade I and had a salary slab of above Rs.15000.

JOB RELATED STRESSFUL ACTIVITIES OF POLICE CONSTABLES

1. The first ranked stressful job activity is *handling large crowd/ mass demonstration* with a mean stress value of 5.9350, the second ranked stressful job activity is *Seeing criminals go free (for example because of lack of evidence, court leniency)* with a mean stress value of 5.8950, and third ranked stressful job activity is *having great deal with media* with a mean stress value of 5.8800.
2. The last ranked stressful job activity is *Assignment of disagreeable duties* with a mean stress value of 4.1550, the second last ranked stressful job activity is *Frequent interruptions* with a mean stress value of 4.3250, and third last ranked stressful job activity is *Assignment of new or unfamiliar duties* with a mean stress value of 4.6550.

RESULTS OF ANOVA

The 11 stress factors extracted were as follows

- Stress due to lack of admin policy
- Stress due to doing disagreeable duties
- Stress due to increased responsibility
- Stress due to performing tasks not in job description
- Stress due to being physically attacked
- Stress due to excessive paper work
- Stress due to competition for advancement
- Stress due to fellow workers not doing their work
- Stress due to periods of inactivity
- Covering work for another employee
- Stress due to killing someone in the line of duty

1. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to lack of admin policy, Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to increased responsibility" do vary with the age of the respondents at 5%.
2. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to periods of inactivity, Stress due to excessive paper work, Stress due to being physically attacked, Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to lack of admin policy" do vary with the gender of the respondents at 5%.
3. All factors extracted from Stressful Job Related Events do not vary with the educational qualification of the respondents at 5%.
4. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to doing disagreeable duties" do vary with the religion of the respondents at 5%.
5. The various factors extracted from Stressful Job Related Events do not vary with the community of the respondents at 5%.
6. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to periods of inactivity" do vary with the place of residence of the respondents at 5%.
7. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to increased responsibility" do vary with the marital status of the respondents at 5%.
8. It is concluded that the factors "Stress due to killing someone in the line of duty, Stress due to periods of inactivity, Stress due to fellow workers not doing their work, Stress due to competition for advancement, Stress due to being physically attacked, Stress due to increased responsibility and Stress due to doing disagreeable duties" do vary with the service of the respondents at 5%.
9. It is concluded that the factors "Covering work for another employee, Stress due to periods of inactivity, Stress due to being physically attacked, Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to lack of admin policy" do vary with the Income of the respondents at 5%.

DISCUSSIONS

This study set out to examine following hypothesis. The first was various factor extracted from Stressful Job Related Events do not vary with the demographic factors of the respondents. Findings from this study shows that grade 1 constable's stressful job related events like Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to increased responsibility and Stress due to lack of admin policy do vary with demographic factors like age, gender, religion, service of the years, marital status, income and the place of residence. This present study also suggested that perception about the work and practice must be changed by providing good work climate and developed departmental policy that will reduce the stress level. And police department must offer counseling for the police constables and giving chance to them for future scope. The researcher suggested that during the recruitment personality dimensions also examined. Decreasing working hours, role overload and work load, flexi working time will lead to maintain their personal time. Responsibility of the police constables must considered based on their capacity, because Tamil Nadu has a Police population ratio of 1: 632, Police departments, with their tense organizational structures, offer both opportunities and challenges for stress prevention programs. Although it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs, we believe that these programs may be effective if started early during police training and delivered regularly throughout a police's career to keep the rate of stress among police as low as possible.

CONCLUSION

The study explained Stress due to doing disagreeable duties, Stress due to increased responsibility and Stress due to lack of admin policy are the primary causes of stress among police constables. Further, it empirically investigated that age, gender, religion, service of the years, marital status, income and the place of residence in the same field has significant association with stress level among police constables. The study suggests to regularly organizing the training programs, counseling and medical checkups for stress management of police constables.

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