



## BURNOUT AND WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AMONG POLICE PERSONNEL

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### ABSTRACT

Police personnel face many stressors and it may lead to burnout and it can influence their families. This paper seeks to find out the relationship between burnout and work family conflict among police personnel. A total of 450 police personnel including 379 men and 71 women were contacted and administered the questionnaires. Non probability convenience sampling technique was used. Results indicate that there is a significant relationship between burnout and work-family conflict.

**KEYWORDS :** burnout, work- family conflict, police personnel

### INTRODUCTION

Work plays a significant role in human functioning and has a significant impact on individual overall well-being. Among other profession, police personnel face more stress in day to day life. The law enforcement officer, the strains and tensions experienced at job are unique, and sometimes inevitable. In the line of duty, police personnel face more than public safety concerns: They also face stress, which not only negatively impact their physical and mental health, according to several line of research affects their work competence.

One of the major consequences of occupational stress is burnout. Burnout is a condition of emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP), and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (PA) that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity Maslach (1982). The term "burnout" was first used to describe a syndrome of exhaustion observed among mental health professionals (Freudenberger, 1974). Maslach (1982) provided a comprehensive definition of the term, incorporating the physical as well as the mental exhaustion observed in professionals whose work requires continuous contact with other people. Storm & Rothman, 2003 explained that the nature of police personnel job is regarded to be highly demanding and can even be described as harmful.

Stressors at work may affect their family life. If the individual is facing more than one role may have work family conflict (Duxbury and Higgins, 1992). A majority of Indian, and international, research have found high work stress levels among police personnel and it is affecting their mental health, leading to many direct and indirect negative consequences for society (Rao GP et.al (2008) and Collins PA et al (2003). As a result, despite of physical fitness, they have to be mentally healthy to do full fairness to their duties. Gershon (2000) suggests that working under constantly stressful circumstances leads to the dissatisfaction and exhaustion of police personnel.

Dhaliwal (2003) explains that largely the policemen in India remained overburdened with work and have to reside away from their families and children for long periods which frequently cause family problems and disputes. Inability to handle domestic tension and job related stress may translate into rude behaviour on duty. Studies indicate that positive relationship between work involvement and work family conflict (Hammer et al.,1997;Darry and Mc Carthy, 2007). It suggests that persons with high level of mental involvement in their work role may be more preoccupied with their work and, therefore, can give over an extreme amount of energy to their role at the expense of their family role, resulting in work family conflict. Stressors linked with work role are more likely to increase view of work family conflict than family work conflict. Similarly, stressors related with family role are more likely to impact feelings of family work conflict than work family conflict (Mesmer-

Magnus and Viswesvaran, 2005). Higgins CA et al (1992) studies finds that work-family conflict have a significant negative influence on an persons quality of work life and quality of family life. Hence, this study was undertaken to understand the relationship between burnout and work family conflict among police personnel.

### METHOD

The aim of the present study is to find out the relationship between police burnout and work family conflict. Single group design with a cross section assessment of the study variables employed.

### Sample

Non-probability convenience sampling technique was employed. Sample for the current study (constable and head constable) were drawn from the police stations located in Bellary district, Karnataka. Permission for the data collection was obtained from Superintendent of police and Inspectors from corresponding police stations. A total of 450 police personnel were contacted at their work place and various measures were administered following informed consent. The study population includes the police personnel of two ranks i.e; constable and head constable in service. Men (379) women (71) with minimum 3 years of experience were included in the study.

### TOOLS

#### Socio-demographic data sheet

The socio-demographic data sheet was used to record the relevant information of the participants. The subject's socio-demographic details such as age, gender, religion, education, years of work experience, rank, marital status, and presence of any mental and physical illness were noted in the pro-forma developed specifically for this purpose by the investigator.

#### Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach et al, 1981)

It consists of 22 items. It addresses 3 general scales which are Emotional Exhaustion (EE-9 items), Depersonalization (DP-5 items) and Personal Accomplishment (PA-8 items) MBI is a self-report measure. Each item is rated on the scale from (Never) to (Everyday). The level of burnout can be established by considering the level of relationship among these 3 sub dimensions. Total burnout score on MBI is calculated as add up score on EE and DP sub scales and subtract PA sub scale score. Higher score indicate high burnout. Lower score indicate low burnout

#### Work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (Netemeyer et al. 1996)

Work-to-family conflict (WFC) and family-to-work conflict (FWC) were assessed by two scales developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996). WFC consists 5 items, FWC consists of 5 items. Each item is rated on the scale from (strongly disagree) to (strongly agree). Higher the score indicate higher conflict. They defined WFC as "a form of inter

role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by the job interfere with performing family-related responsibilities.”They defined FWC as “a form of inter role conflict in which the general demands of, time devoted to, and strain created by the family interfere with performing work-related responsibilities.”

Statistics

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) – version 16 was used to carry out the analysis. Descriptive statistics was carried out on the socio-demographic data. Correlation was used to analyze the relationship between police burnout and work family conflict.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The hypothesis tested in this research is as follows:

H1. There is a significant relationship between police burnout and work family conflict.

H01 There is no significant relationship between police burnout and work family conflict.

Table-1: Socio- demographic characteristics of the study population

Item	Category	Frequency	%
Sex	Male	379	84.2
	Female	71	15.8
Rank	Constables	260	57.8
	Head constables	190	42.2
Marital Status	Single	69	15.3
	Married	381	84.7
Religion	Hindu	347	77.1
	Muslim	76	16.9
	Christian	26	5.8
	Other	1	0.2
Family	Nuclear	240	53.3
	Joint	204	45.3
	Extended	6	1.3

A total of 379 male (84%) and 71 female (16%) were included in the study, it includes 260 constables and 190 head constables. The socio-demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table-2: The relationship between burnout and work -family conflict (WFC) and family-work conflict (FWC).

Variable	Work Family Conflict		Family Work Conflict	
	‘r’	‘p’	‘r’	‘p’
Emotional exhaustion	0.457	0.001	0.397	0.001
Depersonalization	0.235	0.001	0.259	0.001
Personal Accomplishment	0.217	0.001	0.081	0.084
Burnout	0.298	0.001	0.346	0.001

As seen in table 2, the emotional exhaustion subscale is significant and positively correlated with work family conflict and family work

conflict. It indicates that higher the emotional exhaustion in the police personnel increases the WFC and FWC. Depersonalization subscale is statistically significant and positively correlated with WFC and FWC. It explains that who have negative, hostile, or excessively detached response to the job will increase the WFC and FWC. The personal accomplishment subscale is negatively correlated with WFC. It refers that more directly expectations at work, including an individual's expectations of continued effectiveness at work is associated with WFC. The personal accomplishment and FWC is not significantly correlated. Total burnout positively correlated with WFC and FWC. It suggests that higher burnout increases WFC and FWC vice versa. It is found that police burnout is related significantly to work family conflict and family work conflict. Therefore the alternative hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

This study found that burnout in the police personnel leads to work family conflict and family work conflict. They are emotionally exhausted and depersonalized. Police personnel work tension was affecting their family life. Their family disputes also have a role in work conflict. Balancing work and family demands is very important. Therefore intervention programs should involve enhancing ones coping style to deal effectively with burnout, work-family conflict and its consequences.

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