Correlation of Job Stress and Quality of Life Among Police Personnel in Tripura

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ABSTRACT *Background: Policing is a psychologically stressful work environment filled with danger, high demands, and equivocalness in work, encounters human misery and death exposure.*

Aim: This research is attempted to assess perceived stress and quality of life among police personnel (Constables and Officers). The study is also intended to ascertain the correlation between stress and quality of life among the study subjects.

Method: Using Systemic Random Sampling data were collected from different police stations of West Tripura. District The sample was consisted of police personnel of different rank of Tripura Police. In this study two groups of police personnel like Constables (N=83) and Officers (N=33) were randomly selected. Inclusion criteria: Policeman in service ≥3 years, age ≥21 years, with minimum primary school educated. Exclusion criteria: who is unable to comprehend study questionnaire, on leave, exclusively doing clerical job, who are found inebriated. Self-reported questionnaire evaluated.

Tools: Police specific Stress Questionnaire, measures of chronic job stressors, WHO QOL-BREF.

Results: 1/4th of constables have significantly stressed and 2/3rd of officers are significantly stressed. Positive linear relationship exists between age and stress in both the groups. Tenure of work has positive linear relationship only in officers. Officers are more stressed than constables. Bellow secondary constables are more stressed & Graduate officers are more stressed. No relationship exists between education and stress level. Mean score of neglected family life, job boredom, and quantitative work overload score is more in officers group and noxious physical environment, communication quality and praise is more in constables. In quality of life, the mean score of all the domains is higher in constables than officers.

Conclusion:

INTRODUCTION

Stress is the mental, physical and emotional reactions one experiences as a result of demands of one's life. The most commonly accepted definition of stress according to Richard S Lazarus is that stress is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize[1].

The job of police is psychologically stressful which is filled with danger, high demands, and equivocalness in work. It may encounter human misery and death exposure. The sources of psychological stress in police personnel is the Police work itself. Officers often experience conflict, for example, attempting to apprehend a criminal yet ensuring that none of his or her rights are abridged. Shift work is disruptive to the personal lives of most police officers which brings stress. The police profession contains many elements of danger that affect officers in both obvious and subtle ways. The inability to resolve completely people's problems confronts the police officer daily which invites sense of uselessness. Police personnel are constantly exposed to the inequities and brutalities of life. Such experiences must take its emotional toll on even the well-adjusted individuals. At most any time a quick response

to a particular condition is required, and such a response is jolting to the officer's physical and mental state. The seriousness of the issues and consequences of police work is both physically and mentally demanding. The sources of stress may be the criminal justice system practices and characteristics like officers are alarmed by the habitual relapse rate of criminals who seem to enjoyfreedom rather than jailed. Many court decisions are viewed by officers as unfairly increasing the difficulty of police work. Officers may find the adversary system difficult to adjust to, particularly when their testimony is challenged. Delays, continuances, and inconvenient scheduling make courtroom appearances a frustrating experience[2].

The effects of work-related stress on law enforcement officers' family members have been recognized for many years. In 1975, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office established an eight-week program for spouses of recruits; in 1978, Arthur and Elaine Neiderhoffer published 'The Police Family: from Station House to Ranch House', which examined many of the difficulties faced by spouses (primarily wives) and children of police officers. In recent years, the law enforcement family has received increasing attention. Congress held hearings in 1991 on stress-related problems among officers' families, and the 1994 Violent Crime Con-

trol and Law Enforcement Act included legislation requiring additional support for officers' families[2].

Quality of life is defined as individuals' perceptions of their position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live and in relation to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns[3]. So quality of life assessment means subjective evaluation of cultural, social and environmental context. It focuses upon respondents' "perceived" quality of life and is not expected to provide a means of measuring in any detailed fashion symptoms, diseases or conditions, but rather the effects of disease and health interventions on quality of life. As such, quality of life cannot be equated simply with the terms "health status", "life style", "life satisfaction", "mental state" or "well-being".

Juniper B et al (2010) worked on a new approach to evaluating the well-being of police at Cranfield University with a aim to construct an instrument that measures the work-related well-being of officers and staff within a police force. The nine dimensions extended beyond conventional stress measures and may offer a practical alternative way of assessing the overall well-being status of an entire force using a systematic item selection framework[4].

A study on intimate Partner Violence within Law Enforcement Families by Anderson AS & Lo CC (2010) shows how exposure to stressful events on the job affects law enforcement employees' physical aggression toward domestic partners, evaluating the role of negative emotions and authoritarian spill over in mediating the impact of such task-related stress. Significant positive effects on physical aggression toward an intimate partner were found for variables measuring authoritarian spillover and negative emotions[5].

Due to the nature of the job they perform, police officers are under severe stress; therefore, to make a study on this respective profession would certainly reveal valuable results for other professions. That is why we aimed to investigate the QOL and related risk factors among the police officers in this study.

Aims & Objectives:
The main aims of the study are as follows:

1. To understand the socioeconomic profile of the police personnel of Tripura.
2. To assess the perceived stress of various police personnel (as per ranks) in Tripura.
3. To ascertain the quality of life of various police personnel in Tripura.
4. To study the correlation between stress and quality of life among the two groups of police personnel viz.-
   - Constables
   - Police Officers.

Hypotheses:
1. There would be significant difference between two groups of police personnel (constables and officers) with respect to their perceived stress.
2. There would be significant difference between two groups of police personnel (constables and officers) with respect to their quality of life.
3. There would be significant correlation between job stress and quality of life among police personnel.

Materials and Methods
Sample
The sample has been selected purposively from the police personnel of different ranks of Tripura Police working in West district of Tripura, India who fulfils the inclusion criteria. The selection of samples is based on stratification. Here stratification has been done based on positions or ranks of the subjects in to two strata: Constables& Head Constables as one group and assistant Sub-inspectors, sub-inspectors, Inspectors, as another group.

Measures:
Socio Demographic Schedule: This is a semi structured interview schedule prepared by Bhattacharjee, A, and Ghosh, S (2014). It is focused on collecting detailed information about personnel characteristics like age, education, rank, tenure of service, marital status, type of family (rural/urban) etc.

Police Specific Stress Questionnaire (Savery, Souter & Weaver, 1993)[6]: This questionnaire was developed after reviewing the literature of PragyaMathur Kumar (1999) which had identical occupational stressors for police. There are 13 items in the questionnaire. The score ranges from 0 to 52. The subjects are categorized according to the stress level as: Insignificant stress(0-13), Average stress (14-25), Significant stress (26-41) and Extreme Stress (42-52). This questionnaire measures different domains of police job and this are- neglected family life, job boredom, quantitative work overload, noxious physical environment, communication quality and praise.

The World Health Organization Quality of Life Brief Version (WHO QOL-BREF)[7]: It is prepared by WHO for assessment of quality of life. It is a set of 26 questions. It produces scores for four domains related to quality of life: physical (7 items), psychological wellbeing (6 items), social relationships (3 items) and environment (8 items). The items are rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5. Here high score indicates high level of quality of life and the vice versa.

Procedure
Ethical Permission was taken from the institutional ethical committee of Tripura Medical College following Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) guideline.Throughout the entire procedure; systematic random sampling technique for sample selection has been applied. The complete questionnaire consisting of brief introduction addressed to the participant, personal data sheet & measures of all variables in the study has been used for the purpose of data collection. The questionnaire has been prepared from the scales mentioned in the chapter tools used in assessment. The questionnaire is also prepared in Bengali language. The validity of the translated version was done by translating it by 2 persons and then back translation in to English. A pilot study was done on 10 policemen who were not included in the study sample. Instruction has been given in detail for each particular measure. The subjects have been instructed to "Read instructions carefully & answer accordingly. Please do not have any item unanswered". The policemen were given the questionnaire depending upon their choice of language (English/Bengali). In the next meeting they return the filled up questionnaire.

Inclusion criteria: 1) Policeman in service ≥3 years at the time of the study. 2) Police personal >18 years of age. 3) Police personnel of either sex irrespective of marital status. 4) Police personnel with qualification of at least primary

school.

Exclusion criteria: 1) Police personnel who are unable to comprehend the study questionnaire. 2) Subjects who are on leave at the time of the study. 3) Police personnel exclusively involved in clerical job. 4) Subjects who are found inebriated at the time of interview. 5) Police personnel with any history of major physical and mental illness.

After data collection all the data sheets were scored following respective manuals. For statistical analysis, Mean and SD were computed. Finally comparison between groups was done with 't' test after testing for equality of variants and ANCOVA for adjusted comparisons. Statistical analyses was done with SPSS version 22, MedCalc software.

RESULTS
Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics

Variables	Group A(Constable)		Group B (Officer)	
	N=83	%	N=33	%
Age (Years):	41.711 ±6.947	71.55	50.03 ±6.27	28.45
<36	15	18.07	1	3.03
36-45	48	57.83	4	12.12
>45	20	24.09	28	84.85
Marital Status:				
Unmarried	4	4.82	2	6.06
Married	74	89.16	31	93.94
Separated	5	6.02	0	0
Rank:				
Nayak	9	10.84	*ASI : 15	45.45
Constable	71	85.54	SI : 17	51.51
Head Constable	3	3.61	I : 1	3.03
Education Level:				
Bellow Secondary	8	9.64	0	0
Secondary	55	66.27	10	30.30
Higher Secondary	15	18.07	8	24.24
Graduate	5	6.03	14	42.42
Post graduate	0	0	1	3.03
Tenure of work: (Years)				
<10	5	6.02	1	3.03
10-20	30	36.15	4	12.12
>20	48	57.83	28	84.85

*ASI= Assistant sub Inspector, SI= Sub Inspector, I= Inspector

From table 1 it is evident that the mean age ±SD of the subjects in Group A (Constables) was 41.711 ±6.947 years where as for Group B it was 50.03±6.27. All most all the constables were married (89.16%), 4.82% were unmarried, 6.02% were divorced or separated. In case of officer group 93.94% responders were married and 6.06% responders were unmarried. So far as rank of the police personnel was concerned the results showed that in Group A, 9 (10.84%) respondents were Nayak, 71(85.54%) respondents were constables and 3(3.61%) respondents were Head Constables. In case of Group B, 15(45.45%) respondents were Assistant Sub Inspector, 17(51.51%) respondents were Sub Inspectors and 1 (3.03%) respondents was Inspector. Analysis of educational status of the respondents revealed that in Group A 9.64 % respondents were educated up to bellow secondary level, 66.27% responders were educated up to secondary level, 18.07% were educated up to higher secondary level and 6.03% respondents were graduate. In officer group 30.30% were educated up to secondary level, 24.24% were studied up to higher secondary level followed by 42.42% graduate and 3.03% was post graduate. In group A, 6.02% have period of work <10 years, 36.15% have working period 10-20 years and 57.83% have tenure of work >20 years. In Group B, 3.03% respondents have work experience of <10 years, 12.12% respondents were worked for 10-20 years and 84.85% have work experience of >20 years (Table 1).

Table 2: Distribution of subjects according to degree of stress

Stress Level	Group A N=83		Group B N=33	
	N	%	N	%
Insignificant Stress (0-13)	34	40.97	0	0
Average Stress (14-25)	27	32.53	4	12.12
Significant Stress (26-41)	19	22.9	23	69.67
Extreme Stress (42-52)	3	3.62	6	18.18

The distribution of the respondents according to level of stress is given in table 2. The results showed that 40.97% respondents of Group A had insignificant stress but interestingly in Group B all the police personnel had either average stress or more than average stress. In case of constable group (Group A) 32.53% had significant stress level where as in case of officer group it was 69.67%. 3.62% respondents of Group A had extreme stress while 18.18% of group B had extreme level of stress.

Figure 1: Graphical presentation of distribution of subjects according to degree of stress in Group A and Group B
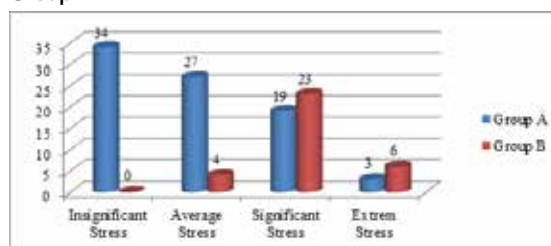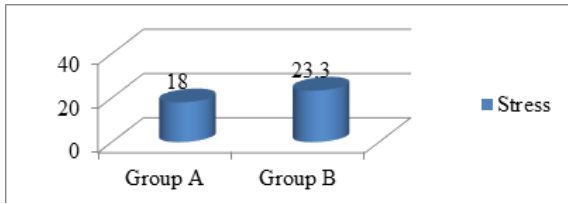

From table 3 it is evident that the mean stress score of the constable group of police personnel was 11.8 (group A) and for officer (group B) it was 23.3. This indicates that officer group is more stressed than constable group. The 't' value is significant at 0.05 level of significant and hence the first hypothesis 'there would be significant difference between two groups of police personnel (constables and officers) with respect to their perceived stress' has been rejected.

Table 3: Comparison of stress score between Group A (Constable) and Group B (Officer)

Variables	Stress Score				
	Mean	SD	t-value	df	P-value
Group A	18.0	11.3	-2.38	63	0.021*
Group B	23.3	10.5			

*P= <0.05

Figure 2: Graphical presentation of level of stress in Group A (Constable) & Group B(Officer)


So far as quality of life of police personnel is concerned

the findings revealed that the overall quality of life of constables of Tripura Police is higher than the officers of Tripura Police. The mean scores of physical health (domain1) in group A respondents was 63.4±15 where as in Group B it was 60.9±12.1. The P value is .359 which is insignificant at o.o5 level of significant. The mean scores of psychological health (domain2) in group A responders is 56.6±13.5 vs. 50.1±16.4 in Group B (p=0.05). The mean scores of social relationship (domain3) in group A responders is 71.3±19.2 vs. 65.3±19.1 in Group B (p>0.05). The mean scores of environmental health (domain4) in group A responders is 41.8±11.8 vs. 40.2±12.6 in Group B (p>0.05).

Table 4: Comparison of Quality of Life Domain Scores in Group A (Constables) and Group B (Officers)

	QoL-D1			QoL-D2			QoL-D3			QoL-D4		
	Mean	SD	P-value	Mean	SD	P-value	Mean	SD	P-value	Mean	SD	P-value
Group A (N=83)	63.4	15.0		56.6	13.5		71.3	19.2		41.8	11.8	
Group B (N=33)	60.9	12.1	0.359	50.1	16.4	0.050	65.3	19.1	0.132	40.2	12.6	0.511

P value= Not significant

Figure 4: Graphical presentation of Quality of Life Domain Scores in Group A (Constables) and Group B (Officers) Police personnel
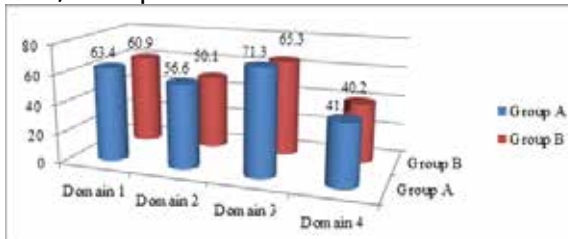
Discussion:

The mean age of officers is more than constables. Approximately half of the constables are belong to 36-45 years age groups. More than two third population in officer group belong to >45 years age group. The gender distribution is not done as very less number of female policemen is working in West district during the time of the study. Whatever number of female policemen is present either they do not fulfill the inclusion criteria or they are missed due to random sampling. Nearly all policemen in both the groups are married. Nearly two third populations in Group A is constable & almost half of populations in officer group are Assistant Sub-Inspector and Sub-Inspector each. More than half of the population is constable group has crossed 20 years in police job. The corresponding figure in officer group is more than 80%. Nearly one quarter of constables has significantly stressed and in officer group two third of them are significantly stressed. Officers are more stressed than constables.

In quality of life assessment, the mean score of all the domains i.e. physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environmental status in constable group is higher than officers.

In constable group, percentile changes in stress index score, quality of life is diminished by 31%. In connection to this study, following conclusions can be made on the basis of relationship between quality of life and stress index score:

- 41% negative relationship exists between stress index score and physical health.
- 8% negative relationship exists between stress index score and psychological health.
- 38% negative relationship exists between stress index score and social relationship.
- 9% negative relationship exists between stress index score and environmental health.

Similarly in officer group, percentile changes in stress index score, quality of life is increased by 24%. In connection to this study, following conclusions can be made on the basis of relationship between quality of life and stress index score:

- 22% positive relationship exists between stress index score and physical health.
- 31% positive relationship exists between stress index score and psychological health.
- 44% positive relationship exists between stress index score and social relationship.
- 4% positive relationship exists between stress index score and environmental health.

CONCLUSION

The perceived stress is more in officers although within the same group the difference is not much significant.In constable group percentile changes in stress index score quality of life is diminished by 31%, in officer group percentile changes in stress index score quality of life is increased by 24%..

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