



WORKPLACE STRESS AMONG BUS DRIVERS

Community Medicine

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ABSTRACT

Objective - 1) To know the prevalence of workplace stress among the bus drivers.

Methodology-

Study type: Cross-sectional study.

Study area: Four bus depots of the M.S.R.T.C. division.

Study period: October 2016-February 2017.

Study Subjects: all bus drivers of all four bus depots in the division. There were 500 Bus drivers on roll.

Sample size: 400 participants as 100 bus drivers could not be interviewed because of night shifts. Written informed consent was taken and a semi structured questionnaire was used to obtain information about socio-demographic aspects. Workplace stress scale developed by American institute of stress was used for assessing stress in study subject's.

Results - Majority 249 (62.25%) of bus drivers were having stress. According to stress levels 99 (24.75%) were having low stress, 82 (20.5%) were having moderate stress, 45 (11.25%) were having severe stress and 23 (5.75%) were having potentially dangerous stress.

Conclusion- Workplace Stress levels were high among bus drivers adequate measures should be taken to reduce their stress

KEYWORDS

Workplace stress, Bus Drivers.

INTRODUCTION-

Bus drivers are required to balance the competing demands of safety, customer - focused service and company operating regulations. Any impairment in this balance can have undesirable consequences like workplace stress.

Acknowledging that the bus is one of the most popular mode of public transport and taking in account the volume of passengers it carries clearly there is a need to actively address the work place stress of bus drivers.

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MATERIAL AND METHODS - Ethical clearance from Institutional Ethics Committee of college & necessary permission to carry out the study was obtained from Divisional Controller, M.S.R.T.C. and his co-operation was sought. He was explained regarding the nature of study and requirement of place for interviewing of study participants. All depot managers co-operated for carrying out the study and all the necessary arrangements interviewing the study subjects were made. List of all bus drivers was obtained from depot managers of respective bus depots. A time schedule was prepared for the study participants, so that they could participate in the study conveniently without disturbing their duty pattern.

The pilot study was carried out on 100 study participants with predesigned proforma to check the feasibility and to test the proforma, necessary changes in proforma were made after pilot study.

The interview technique was used as a tool for data collection. Data collection was done during morning and afternoon hours, time which was convenient for the drivers. Data was collected from on an average 5 - 6 study participant per day. The interview of each subject used to last for an average of 35 to 45 minutes. Data was collected on all days of a week.

Interview was carried out in room provided by depot managers of respective depots, having necessary space to carry out the study. Confidentiality of the study subjects was assured and maintained throughout the study. Before personal interview objective of the study was explained to participants and written informed consent was taken. History taking included socio-demographic details & Workplace stress was assessed using scale developed by American institute of stress was used which contains 8 questions on which response was recorded on 5 point scale for assessing stress in study subjects after translating into vernacular language i.e. Marathi.

RESULTS -

Socio demographic factors

Age Groups (in years)	No.	%
25-29	12	3
30-34	16	4
35-39	32	8
40-44	55	13.75
45-49	72	18
50-54	144	36
55-59	69	17.25
Religion		
Hindu	230	57.5
Muslim	73	18.25
Buddhist	93	23.25
Christian	3	0.75
Sikh	1	0.25
Marital status		
Married	391	97.75
Unmarried	7	1.75
Separated	2	0.50
Education		
Primary	9	2.25
Middle	61	15.25
High School Certificate	229	57.25
Intermediate or Post high school diploma	86	21.5
Graduate & post graduate	15	3.75
Socioeconomic status		
Upper middle (II)	152	38
Lower middle (III)	231	57.75
Upper lower (IV)	17	4.25
Total	400	100

Table 2: Distribution of Bus Drivers according to Workplace Stress *

Level of Stress	Stress Score	No.	%
No Stress	<15	151	37.75
Low Stress	16-20	99	24.75
Moderate Stress	21-25	82	20.5
Severe Stress	26-30	45	11.25
Potentially Dangerous Stress	31-40	23	5.75
Total		400	100

* The Workplace Stress Scale - developed by The Marlin Company, North Haven, CT, and the American Institute of Stress, Yonkers, NY¹.

DISCUSSION -

Extensive search was done to identify a valid tool for assessment of workplace stress which will be available in public domain but none of the scales had proven validity which was shown in results by **Shea T, Cieri HD (2012)**¹ who did a snapshot review workplace stress evaluation tools in which she concluded that no scale has been validated to an acceptable level for use as a workplace stress evaluation tool and recommended that a validation study be undertaken to validate an existing scale or develop a new scale using standard psychometric techniques.

Hence in the present study Workplace stress was measured using the workplace stress scale developed by the Marlin Company and the American Institute of Stress (The Marlin Company, North Haven, CT, and the American Institute of Stress, Yonkers, NY after translating into vernacular language i.e. Marathi. It is a swift test to assess the job stress levels of the individuals. This scale assesses the work-stress based on one's thinking about their current job. Workplace stress scale is comprised of 8 statements describing how one feels in the job. The 8 items are rated on a 5-point rating scale. The five responses in this scale are 'never,' 'rarely,' 'sometime,' 'often,' and 'very often. This scale is easily available in public domain.

In the present study workplace stress was present in 62.25% of study subjects, According to levels of stress (24.75%) were having low stress, 20.5% were having moderate stress, 11.25% were having severe stress and 5.75% were having potentially dangerous stress. This is in accordance with **Albnght CL et al (1992)**² where 29.3% bus drivers were having low strain, 25.6% were having active strain and 24.8% were having high strain, **Bigert C et al (2003)**³ where Job strain was slightly more common among drivers (bus drivers 10%; taxi drivers 6%; truck drivers 7%) than among other men (4%).

Limitations of study-1) Healthy Worker Effect⁵ - which is the mortality advantage of workers in employment relative to the general population (which also comprises diseased, non-working individuals with a higher risk of mortality). Healthy worker effect could be minimised by taking comparison group. Such comparison group was not taken in this study.

2) Number of tools were available for assessing workplace stress but none was validated. They were using their workplace stress scales and recommended to validate the scale. Scale used in our study also requires validation

CONCLUSION -

Prevalence of Workplace stress was 62.25% (249 subjects), according to stress levels 99 (24.75%) were having low stress, 82 (20.5%) were having moderate stress, 45 (11.25%) were having severe stress and 23 (5.75%) were having potentially dangerous stress.

Recommendations – 1) Stress reducing activities like yoga and Meditations should be introduced at workplace.

Conflict of Interest- None

Funding- None.

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