



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

A STUDY OF STRESS AMONG POLICE OFFICERS

KEY WORDS: Stress, Police personnel, physiological and psychological problems

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ABSTRACT

The project aims to studying the stress and assessing various health problems among police personnel. Police services have always been one of the most challenging and stressful services in India and with changing times it is becoming even more so. They have to take care of angry mobs, counter-insurgency operations, traffic control, VIP security, political rallies, religious festival crowd control, and various other law and order duties without losing their composure and sensitivity. They have to face probably risky things that may lead to physical or mental trauma or maybe death within the line of duty. Their work stress may be additional aggravated owing to their temperament traits or wrong brick ways. A majority of Indian and international studies have found high stress levels in police, which is disturbing as psychiatric morbidity in police can have many direct and indirect negative consequences for society. Therefore, except for good condition, they need to be mentally suitable do full justice to their duties. Due to high stress the police are suffering from physiological and psychological problems. Many of them are become diabetic due to stress. Hence the research is aims to measure the stress, physiological and psychological health problems.

INTRODUCTION:

Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) was credited with the Metropolitan Police Act in 1829, a statute that in essence created the police as they are known today. He stated: *"The police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."* That has not changed in the past 189 years.

In relation with police service during everyday work, whether on duty or off duty, the police officer is exposed to a higher number of life-threatening work that precipitate sudden activation of the fight-or-flight mechanism within the physiology of the human body. Unlike the other profession, the police officer often does not have the option of flight, which normally provides both escape and relief from the stress. As a result of this, increased numbers of cases of marital problems and family relationships, suicides, chemical addictions, and personality disorders are prevalent among police officers.

Apart from this additional factors that exacerbate the detriment effects of police stress upon the officer include poor diet and eating habits stemming from frequent motor patrol assignments, disrupted sleep patterns resulting from around-the-clock shift work, the strict discipline inherent in a paramilitary work environment, and frequent displays of disrespect offered by offender and citizen alike.

Symptoms of mental state problems caused by stress among police embrace nightmares and disturbed sleep patterns, restlessness, avoidance of activities previously enjoyed by the person, withdrawal from social interaction, uncharacteristic outbursts of anger, increase in blood pressure and pulse rate not due to underlying medical conditions, excessive work absences due to nonspecific illnesses, weepiness and melancholy, and an unusual preoccupation with death and dying.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

University at Buffalo researchers have found through a decade of studies of cops. That the pressures of enforcement among police officers in danger for top vital sign, insomnia, exaggerated levels of harmful stress hormones, heart issues, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide. UB researchers currently are ending one in every of the primary large-scale investigations on however the strain of police investigation affects Associate in Nursing officer's physical

and mental state, funded by a \$1.75 million grant from the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

The National Institute of Justice side \$750,000 to the study to measure police officer fatigue and the impact of shift work on health and performance. John M. Violanti, Ph.D., analysis prof in UB's Department of Social and medicine within the college of Public Health and Health Professions, is principal investigator of the study, called the Buffalo Cardio-Metabolic Occupational Police Stress (BCOPS) study. More than four hundred cops have participated within the study up to now, with the researchers aiming for five hundred. The clinical examination involves questionnaires on mood and psychological factors like depression and PTSD, in addition to measures of bone density and body composition, ultrasounds of brachial and carotid arteries, salivary cortisol samples and blood samples. The officers additionally wear atiny low device to live the number and quality of sleep throughout a typical police shift cycle.

Results from Violanti's pilot studies have shown, among other findings, that officers over age 40 had a higher 10-year risk of a coronary event compared to average national standards; 72 percent of feminine officers and forty three % of male officers, had higher-than-recommended steroid alcohol levels; and cops as a gaggle had higher-than-average pulse rates and heartbeat vital sign.

"Policing could be a psychologically nerve-wracking work setting crammed with danger, high demands, ambiguity in work encounters, human misery and exposure to death," said Violanti, a 23-year veteran of the New York State Police. "We anticipate that knowledge from this analysis can cause police-department-centered interventions to cut back the chance of unwellness during this nerve-wracking occupation."

The investigation's about two of most up-to-date studies report on the result of shift work on stress and suicide risk in cops, and on male/female differences in stress and possible signs of cardiovascular disease. Results of the shift work pilot study, involving 115 randomly selected officers, showed that suicidal thoughts were higher in women working the day shift, and in men working the afternoon/night shifts.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

Meaning of stress:

Stress is Associate inevitable and ineluctable part of life because of increasing complexities and fight in living standards. The speed at that amendment is going down within

the world these days is actually overwhelming and breathe taking. In the quick ever-changing world of these days, no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. Everyone experiences stress.

The idea of stress was initial introduced within the life sciences by Selye Hans in 1936. It was derived from the Latin word 'stringere'; it meant the expertise of physical hardship, starvation, torture and pain. Selye Hans, 1936 outlined stress as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand placed upon it". Further, stress was outlined as "any external event or drive that threatens to upset the scheme equilibrium" (Selye Hans, 1956). Another definition given by Stephen Robbins (1999) stress has been stated as "a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he / she wishes and that the result is gave the impression to be each unsure and vital." Stress affects not only our physical health but our mental well being too. To with success manage stress in everyday lives, individual can learn to relax and enjoy life. The best thanks to manage stress is to forestall it. This may not be always possible. So, successive best things area unit to scale back stress and create life easier.

DEFINITIONS OF STRESS:

According to Selye (1956) stress is "any external event or internal drive which threatens to upset the organismic equilibrium".

Wolf and Goodell (1968) defined stress as a dynamic state within an organism in response to a demand for adaptation.

Cofer and Appley (1964) defined stress as a state of an organism where he perceives that his wellbeing is endangered and that he must direct all his energies to its protection.

Lazarus (1966) referred stress a state of imbalance with in an organism that is elicited by an actual/perceived disparity between environmental demands and the organism's capacity to cope with these demands; and is manifested through variety of physiological, emotional and behavioral responses.

McGrath (1970) defined stress as a perceived imbalance between demand and response capacity under conditions where failure to meet demand has important consequences.

Cox (1978) has described three classes of definitions. Stress can be variously thought of as a response, i.e. the stress response to an extreme stimulus; as a stimulus i.e. as the stressor itself as an intervening variable.

METHODOLOGY:

Statement of the Problem:

To study the level of Stress among police officers.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To know the stress among Male and female police officers.
2. To understand the level of stress among police officers.

Hypothesis:

1. There would be a significant difference between male and female police officers stress.
2. Police officers have more stress than non-police officers.

Sample:

Data for the present study was collected by self-report questionnaires. Those who participated in the survey were Police officers age from 22 to 30 years. Thirty five of the respondents are male and 35 are female, and 70 sample (male-35, female-35) were non-police officers who are

working in other department where there is no night duty. (N =140).

TOOLS USED:

Stress scale

The present stress scale standardized by Dr. Tejinder Kaur, Dr. Prema Puri Nee Kumar and Professor Manju Mehta. For assessing the level of stress amongst the university and college female teachers, scale was developed consisting of items keeping in mind the characteristics and dimensions of stress, mentioned by Pestonjee(1992) and Selye(1936). The items were constructed both in Hindi and English. These 200 items were given five experts in the field of psychology having considerable experience and were asked to judge the relevance of each item in relation to stress. According the items were sorted out by the experts. Out of 200 items, 64 items were retained

Limitation of research study:

- Samples were collected within Belagavi and Bailhongal.
- Present study limited to only Police officers. For comparison purpose only selected the other officers

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table NO 01 : Shows the mean, sd and t-values of male and female Police officers.

	Male	Female
Mean	72.65	73.91
SD	23,41	10.43
't'- value	1.72@	

The mean and SD of male is 72.65 and 23.41 is lesser than the female i.e. 73.91 and 10.43 respectively. The calculated 't'-value 1.72 is not significant. Therefore the formulated hypothesis that there would be significant difference in stress between male and female is rejected. The scores clearly indicate both are feeling more stress. And female show little bit more stress than male. Female have to manage the family and duty that creates more stress among women. If she has kids then the level of stress natural increases more.

Table NO 2: Shows the mean, sd and t-values of police and non-police officers.

	Police officers	Non-police officers
Mean	79.09	25.8
SD	23.75	8.79
't'- value	15.86**	

The mean and SD of police officers 79.09 and 23.79 is higher than the non-police officers 25.8 and 8.79 respectively. The calculated 't'- value 15.86 is higher than table 't'- value and significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the formula Zld care.etc"

Publishing research papers and conducting some more studies about stress of police officers may not change the conditions of police departments overnight, but it is one way of getting the message out that the negative effects of stress must be treated and acknowledged.

Police officers need to learn how to relax, how to think differently about things they experience as a police. Where the Psychologist work is more responsible to protect the mental as well as physical health of police officers.

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