



REASONS OF STRESS ON POLICE PERSONNEL IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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Abstract

A police department is both a professional and military organization, and these two aspects oppose each other. As a professional, he is considered to be an expert in his field and is expected to use his expertise for the good of his public. He has much discretion in how he serves the people who call upon him. However, the dangers and complexities of the work require a military structure of the organization and a military leaning in the training. Although some are actually educated, all police Personnel are well trained. Policies, regulations, and procedures cover every facet of police work. Everything is expected to be done by the book with substantial repercussions, including civil and criminal liability, for varying from the expectations of operating procedures. Often the facts of a situation require a course of action that does not follow procedures. If the police personnel follows procedures exactly, he knows he won't fully help the public, and the public will think police personnel is shirking his responsibility. If the personnel follows his own judgment, they are taking a risk. The community and department expect Personnel to use judgment, but when they do, there is a danger they will be disciplined; another unnatural no-win situation engendering chronic stress.

Key Words: Stress, Police, Personnel.

Introduction

Stress plays a part in the lives of everyone. Some stress is not only inevitable, it can be good. For example, the physical stress of “working out” improves your cardiovascular system, and feeling pressure that causes you to study harder for an exam can improve your score. Police stress, however, refers to the negative pressures related to police work. Police Personnel are not super humans. According to Gail Goolkasian and others, research shows that they are affected by their daily exposure to human indecency and pain; that dealing with a suspicious and sometimes hostile public takes its toll on them; and that the shift changes, the long periods of boredom, and the ever-present danger that are part of police work do cause serious job stress. Police stress arises from several features of police work. Alterations in body rhythms from monthly shift rotation, for example, reduce productivity. The change from a day to a swing, or graveyard, shift not only requires biological adjustment but also complicates Personnel’ personal lives. Role conflicts between the job—serving the public, enforcing the law, and upholding ethical standards—and personal responsibilities as spouse, parent, and friend act as stressors.

Review of Literature

Margaret Francis (2007) in her empirical study has made comments on “Stress Personality Relationship” Stress had been a noted problem among students for it evokes negative thoughts and feeling in a person. There has been a study of how personality influences stress which led to the finding that significant differences exist between low and high categories of stress. Low extraversion, high anxiety, etc., leads to higher stress. Thus study proves that personality factors have an impact on stress. 16 PF Personality Test and perceived stress scales were used as a guidance and support to publish their research. Niharika Gaur (2008) has inferred his observations after he had made a study on “Stress, Social support, Job Attitudes and Job Outcome across gender” among 240 information systems professional. He emphasizes a significant difference between male and female professionals on stress and on social support. His finding led to conclude that Men have higher job satisfaction, and commitment than Female professionals, but Female professionals have higher turn over intention.

Objectives of The Study

1. To identify the factors causing stress among the police personnel in the study area.
2. To measure the prevailing job stress among the police personnel
3. To find the suggestions on stress management of police personnel.

Methodology

The study is conducted using both analytical and descriptive type of methodology. The study primarily depends on primary and secondary data. This study is based on both analytical and descriptive methodology and it depends upon primary data as well as secondary data. The Survey is conducted among the Police in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra Pradesh hosts a number of Police stations making the study realistic and meaningful. The city consists of top, medium and operational level as well. The primary data is collected through a well structured questionnaire more appropriate and suitable to collect responses from police personnel in Andhra Pradesh. The researcher collected the secondary data from Journals, Magazines, Publications, Reports, Books, Dailies, Periodicals, Articles, Research Papers, Websites, Company Publications, Manuals and Booklets

Discussions: Results, Findings And Suggestions

Source Adopted To Recruitment Of The Respondents

The source of recruitment of the police personnel are widely classified into two categories as mentioned in the table below. The following frequency distribution clearly revealed the major source from which the police personnel are recruited.

Table 1.1 Source of Recruitment

Source of Recruitment	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Through written exam , physical exam and interview	404	79.2	79.2
Through written exam and physical exam	106	20.8	100.0
Total	510	100.0	

Table 1.1 shows that 79.2 percent of the respondents applying for Grade II PC, Grade I PC, and Head constable cadre are recruited through written exam, physical exam and interview whereas, 20.8% of the respondents applying for Sub Inspector of Police, Inspector of Police and Deputy Superintendent of Police are recruited through written exam and physical exam

Category of Posting At The Time of Service In Police Department

The employees of the police department are greatly influenced by the branches posted to them. In certain cases, it is obviously felt that the branch they work matters much more than the pay. It is felt that employees consider the branch they serve as a prominent factor determining their output. They are grouped under three heads – Local police, traffic police and armed reserved police. The frequency distribution relating to their responses is shown in the table below:

Table 1.2: Category Of Posting

Branch	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
TSP	60	11.8	11.8
Armed reserve	145	28.4	40.2
Local Police	305	59.8	100.0
Total	510	100.0	

From the above table 1.2 it is found that 59.8 percent of the police personnel are posted as local police, 28.4% are posted as armed reserve police, and 11.8% have been posted as TSP. It is concluded that majority of the police personnel are posted in Local police station.

Opinion About Stress In Job

The problem of stress is inevitable and unavoidable in police department. A majority of police employees face severe stress related ailments and a lot of psychological problems. Therefore the following table explains the police personnel views regarding the stress faced in job.

Table 1.3: Stress In Job

Attributes	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	263	51.6	51.6
No	247	48.4	100.0
Total	510	100.0	

Table 1.3 shows that, 51.6 percent of the respondents expressed that they face very much stress in job and 48.4 percent felt that their job is not much stressful.

Reason For Stress

The following table explains the reasons for more stress in the job of the police personnel.

Table 1.4: Reason For Stress

Stress	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Adherence strict time schedule	28	10.6	10.6
Dealing heterogeneous people and their attitude	43	16.3	26.9
Treatment of higher officials	36	13.7	40.6
Managing the co-workers	23	8.7	49.3
Heavy work load	65	24.8	74.1
Risky nature of the job	68	25.9	100.0
Total	263	100.0	

From the above table, it is found out that 25.9 percent of the respondents expressed to have more stress due to risky nature of job, 24.8% felt that the reason for stress was due to heavy work load and 13.7% stated that stress was due to treatment of higher officials. It is further found that 16.3% of the respondents felt that dealing heterogeneous people was the reason for stress, 10.6% analyzed that their stress was due to adherence of strict time schedule and 8.7% expressed that it was due to managing the coworkers. Therefore maximum of the personnel express that their stress was due to the risky nature of job.

Methods Followed To Reduce Stress

Police employees are exposed to all kinds of stressors that can affect them on all realms of life. An effort should be made by the department of police in our country to develop a friendly climate with appropriate physical working condition. The productivity of the workforce is the most decisive factor as far as the success of police department is concerned. The productivity in turn is dependent on the psychosocial wellbeing of the employees. The following table explains the methods adopted by the department of police to reduce stress among the police personnel.

Table 1.5: Methods Followed To Reduce Stress

Methods	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sports/Exercise/Walking/Swimming	42	17.0	17.0
Meditation/Yoga/Counseling	41	16.5	33.5
Smoking	32	12.9	46.4
Alcohol	2	0.8	47.2
Positive thinking	14	5.7	52.9
Prayer	40	16.2	69.1

Watching TV /Hearing songs / Reading Books	39	15.8	84.9
Gardening	14	5.7	90.6
Chatting with friend	19	7.7	98.3
No methods	4	1.7	100.0
Total	247	100.0	

The above table explains the various stress coping strategies adopted by the police department in managing the stress of the employees. It is found that 17% of the method developed is sports, exercise, walking and swimming, 15.8% by watching TV, hearing songs and reading books, 16.5% use meditation techniques and 16.2% go from prayers. It is further analyzed that 5.7% of them adopt positive thinking and gardening as a stress managing strategy and the rest of the police personnel also adopt smoking, alcohol, chatting with friends as one of the stress coping strategies. But, it is finally concluded that most of the personnel practice sports, exercise, walking and swimming to reduce their stress.

Findings

The police employees in work influences them to adopt entertainment as stress managing strategy as they face unsafe environment, workplace anxiety, strainful family life, Non-cooperation, free hand (Non-Interference), nepotism and favoritism from colleagues results to health setback, restlessness in work.

More work pressure from the higher officials creates restless in work, unsafe environment, workplace anxiety, strainful family life of the police personnel. The monthly income received is not sufficient for the risk taken in life. Therefore in order to cope up stress the employees adopt optimistic approach.

Frequent deviation from work, authoritarian attitude of superiors, work pressure/time constraint in work place creates restless, unsafe environment, professional jealousy resulting to health setback of the employees that enable them to take adequate rest to reduce stress in them.

Deviation of work among the employees, non-cooperation from colleagues and higher superiors creates unsafe environment in job and ill health resulting them to adopt Decentralization methods as a stress technique.

Suggestions

The working conditions of law enforcement officers are not likely to change given the realities of the current economy. But there are things that officers can do to control it. For example, officers can control how they choose to react to stressful incidents and must acknowledge that fatigue plays a direct role on personal stress levels. Officers will react as they have been trained when they are properly rested and alert.

It is the responsibility of elected officials and senior law enforcement officers to bring reasonable balance through policies that are supported by research. Till recent studies have proved that police culture supports the mentality that working more is better for your career, despite the fact that chronic fatigue causes serious performance and health issues.

Stress cannot be taken out of police work but it can be recognized and by providing help to the police personnel and their family, stress caused by the organization itself can be reduced.

The stress in police work can be recognized by helping the officers in three areas. First, they can provide help to individual officers. Second, family life can be helped. Third, the stress caused by the police organization itself can be reduced.

Stress managing techniques programs conducted on individuals police personnel often help reduce departmental stress. Care should be taken from the top levels by having a psychologist in the department. The police



department needs to have policies for transferring the police personnel temporarily for reducing stress in job. The police personnel should be taught about the symptoms and effects of job stress. Proactive training helps ward off stress when officers encounter it.

Family life which is the one of the major responsible of every police personnel can be helped in several ways. Poor communication causes stress.

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