



JOB STRESS AMONG WOMEN CIVIL POLICE OFFICERS IN THRISSUR DISTRICT IN KERALA

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Abstract

Stress at work place is a crucial matter in the present world. Some stress is inevitable, it can be good. Stress of civil police officer refers to the negative pressures related to police job. The present study attempts to identify personal factors which lead to job stress among women civil police officers in Thrissur district in the State of Kerala and coping measures adopted to control stress with a view to minimise the negative consequences of stress. The study reveals that the personal factors such as carrying out work along with family responsibilities, lower resistance to illness, change in appetite, forgetfulness and angry, worries about health, difficulties in family life, hypertension & BP and tiredness are the factors lead to personal stress.

Keywords: *Personal Factors, Job Stress, Women Civil Police Officers.*

1. Introduction

Stress and anxiety have become pervading features of people's life in modern world. Despite of tremendous advancements in science and technology and remarkable growth of economy and sources of luxury, majority of people all over the world seem to be experiencing moderate to high degree of psychological stress in various spheres of their lives. Personal Stress may be caused by the nature of work, changes in life or personal problems. Work of a Civil Police Officer has been regarded as a stressful occupation. Police stress arises from several features of police work. Role conflicts between the job like serving the public, enforcing the law, and upholding ethical standards and personal responsibilities as spouse, parents, and friends act as stressors. The Present study is an attempt to identify the personal factors which leads to stress among women civil police officers.

2. Statement of the Problem

Women are the integral part of the society and their contribution for the development of the society is equal to their counterpart, men. In modern time women engage in all walk of life and in many sectors they out perform their fellow men. Men generally concentrate in their occupation. Family affairs are entrusted to their spouse, but as far as women are concerned, both family and occupation are equally important for them and they are expected to perform in both. Balancing the work & family roles has become a key personal and family issue. There are many factors in working women's lives that leads to stresses. They deal with home and family issues as well as job stress on a daily basis.

Stress plays a part in the lives of everyone. Some stress is inevitable, it can be good. Stress of civil police officer however, refers to the negative pressures related to police job. Police officers are not super humans. They are affected by their daily exposure to human indecency and pain, that dealing with a suspicious and sometimes hostile public.

Women civil police officers face lots of stress. They are more likely to face disapproval from fellow officers, family and friends. Superior officers, peers and the public question the ability of Women Police officers to handle the emotional and physical rigors of the job, even though women can do so. Stress contributes not only to the physical disorders, but also to emotional problems. Police work inhibits non-police friendships, interferes with schedules in family, social events and generates a negative public image. In this situation, it is highly relevant to conduct a study to find out personal factors that affecting job stress and its consequences. The present paper is an attempt in this direction.

3. Significance of the Study

Stress is inevitable part of modern life. But sometimes it will lead to inefficiency, anxiety, burnout, depression etc. In order to control stress, first it is necessary to identify its sources. Then it can be reduced by adopting various coping strategies. It will definitely lead to increase in the efficiency of police. If the efficiency of police officers get increased, it will lead to normal and peaceful life of the society, which is the ultimate aim of every government. It is expected that the outcome of the present study will be useful to minimise the stress level of women civil officers in the State of Kerala.



4. Literature Review

The prominent studies conducted so far in relation to the present work are briefly reviewed below.

- Ellison and Genz (1983) in their study “Stress and the Police Officer” identified women’s unique stressors as lack of acceptance by the male subculture and the related denial of needed information, alliances, protection, and sponsorship from supervisors and colleagues.
- Wexler and Logan (1983) in the study “Sources of stress among women police officers” identified the woman-specific stressors of sexist, negative attitudes of male officers, group blame, responses by male officers, and lack of role models
- Goolkasian et al.(1985) identified women’s special stressors as disapproval from fellow officers in the academy and in first jobs, coworkers’ demands that the women prove themselves, and lack of informal tutoring and mentoring.
- Rajeswari, T.R. (1992) in her study on “Employee Stress: A Study with Reference to Bank Employees” found significant negative relationship between age and stress and also between experience and stress. This study also found negative correlation between number of members in the family and stress. The level of stress did not differ between different levels of workers namely officers, and clerks.
- Nezhad et al.,(2010) in their study “Occupational stress and family difficulties of working women” examined the occupational stress and family difficulties among working female. Family and work difficulty is inter-related. Stress and work family difficulty can make negative influence on individual mentality and health. The results of the study found that there was a positive relationship exists between occupational stress and family difficulties. Work home interface was best predictor of family difficulties for working women. Mothers with high level of stress experiences difficulty in family. It was concluded that educational tools must be developed to reduce stress among working women.
- Baumi Omalayo⁴⁷ (2012) in his study “Effect of gender and status on job stress among police officers in Ekti state of Nigeria” points out that female police officers experience high significant stress level than the male police officers. The responsibilities of the female population as a result of cultural values and societal expectations have negative effect on their physical well-being and coping mechanisms on the job. They usually have very little time – their pent-up tension that they have been keeping or harboring from their workplace. Furthermore, the result of this study revealed that senior police officers do not experience more stress on the job than the junior police officers.
- Tayde Sandeep shrirang⁴⁹ (2012) in the study “A comparative study of job satisfaction life satisfaction and occupational stress among Maharashtra police” identified that there is significant and positive correlation between job satisfaction and life satisfaction among police constable of each branch were obtained which revealed that police constables of each branch who were found with highly satisfied regarding their job also found with highly satisfied in their life and vice versa. Except in executive branch correlation coefficient between job satisfaction and occupational stress in each branch were found to be significant and negative which revealed that in traffic, crime and special branch, police constable who were found highly satisfied with their job also possess less stress related to their occupation.
- Mrs.Savitha.G(2016) in her study “Stress management - A study among women police officials” suggested that majority of the respondents are not able to balance home and their career. They face problems like no time to spend with family members, not possible to attend functions and increased conflict with family members. Respondents also encounter problem like lack of opportunity to handle critical jobs while they work in police department.

5. Objectives of the Paper

The main objectives of the present study are as follows.

- To identify personal factors which leads to job stress among women civil police officers.
- To assess various coping strategies adopted by women civil police officers to control stress and
- To analyse the consequences of job stress.

6. Hypotheses

- H: Personal factors do not create any stress among women police officers.

- H: Consequences of mental stress of Women Civil police Officers are not moderate.
- H₀: Consequences of physical stress of Women Civil police Officers are not moderate.

7. Research Methodology and Data base

7.1. Sources of data

Both primary and secondary data are used for the purpose of the study. Primary data were collected by administrating a pretested structured schedule. Secondary data were collected from books, periodicals, project reports, research journals, articles, Kerala police department and various websites.

7.2. Sampling method

Simple random sampling method was adopted for selecting the Women civil police officers from the district of Trissur. Number of police stations having women civil police officers under city is seventeen and it is twenty seven in rural section. Total strength of civil police officers in the district is 1399, among them 180 are WCPO. List of rural WCPO was available from collectorate, Thrissur. And the list of city WCPO was available from police academy, Ramavarmapuram, Thrissur. The sample size of the study is sixty, which is 33.3% of the total strength of WCPO. The respondents were selected from the list using lottery method.

7.3. Variables Used for the Analysis

The analysis is based on the following variables.

1. Frustration in carrying out work along with family responsibilities
2. Resistance to illness
3. Change in food habits to cope with job
4. Forgetful and angry
5. Worry about health
6. Facing difficulties in family life
7. Conflict & differences in opinions among family members
8. Facing the problems of hypertension and high BP
9. Feel tiredness .

7.4. Tools of Analysis

The analysis of the data has been done with the help of computer applying Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 20). The data collected have been classified, tabulated, coded and edited. The statistical tools used for analyzing data include Z test, ANOVA, 2 test.

8. Limitations of the Study

- Data regarding stress are collected by using likert scale. Limitations of scaling techniques are applicable to this data.
- There exists the element of bias in answering the questionnaire, errors are likely to occur.

9. Analysis of Data

10. The results of the analysis based on primary data are discussed in the following pages.

10.1. Personal Factors influencing Stress

Following Personal factors which lead to job stress among women civil police officers are tested:

Table 1 Regression coefficient

Path	Estimate	CR	P	Variance explained
Frustration in carrying out work along with family responsibilities Job Stress	0.452	7.501	<0.001	20.5
Resistance to illness Job Stress	0.673	12.565	<0.001	45.3
Change in food habits to cope with job Job Stress	0.666	12.370	<0.001	44.4
Forgetful and angry Job Stress	0.761	15.373	<0.001	57.9

Worry about health Job Stress	0.737	14.531	<0.001	54.3
Facing difficulties in family life Job Stress	0.463	7.715	<0.001	21.5
Conflict & differences in opinions among family members Job Stress	0.351	5.643	<0.001	12.3
Facing the problem of hypertension and high BP Job Stress	0.741	14.667	<0.001	54.9
Feel tired Job Stress	0.884	21.457	<0.001	78.2

Table 2: Model fit Indices for CFA personal factors of stress

	χ^2	DF	P	Normed χ^2	GFI	AGFI	NFI	TLI	CFI	RMR	RMSEA
personal factors	28.246	18	.058	1.569	.975	.937	.974	.980	.990	.048	.049

All the attributes loaded significantly on the latent constructs. The value of the fit indices indicates a reasonable fit of the measurement model with data. In short the measurement model confirms to the factor structure of the constructs.

Table 3: Means, Standard deviation and z value for Personal stress

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	Z	p value
Personal factors of stress	60	24.68	7.35	61.70	29.78	-5.60	<0.001

The mean percentage score of level of personal stress of Women Civil police Officers is 61.70% which indicate that the level of personal stress of the respondents is Stressful. The CV indicates that this score is less stable as the value is more than 20%. To test whether the sample information that is observed exists in the population or to verify that the personal stress of Women Civil police Officers is stressful or not, hypothesis is formulated.

H_0 : The level of personal stress of Women Civil police Officers is not stressful

To test the above hypothesis one sample Z test is used and the result is exhibited in Table 3. From the table the calculated Z value is -5.60. It is less than the tabled value of -1.645. It indicates that the test is significant. So it is concluded that the level of personal stress of Women Civil police Officers is stressful. Therefore the hypothesis is rejected.

10.2. Analysis of the consequences of Job stress

Table 4: Mean, SD, Mean % Score and Z value Consequences of mental stress

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	Z	p value
Consequences of mental stress	60	24.25	7.42	48.50	30.59	-0.783	0.437

The mean percentage score of the Consequences of mental stress of Women Civil police Officers is 48.50% which indicate that the mental stress of Women Civil police Officers is moderate. The CV indicates that this score is not stable as the value is more than 20%. To test whether the sample information that is observed exists in the population or to verify that the mental stress Women Civil police Officers is of low or moderate, hypothesis is formulated.

Testing of Hypothesis

H_0 : Consequences of mental stress of Women Civil police Officers are not moderate

To test the above hypothesis one sample Z test and the result is exhibited in Table 4 are used. From the table the calculated value of Z is -0.783 which is higher than the tabled value of -1.645 indicates that the test is not significant. So it is

concluded that Consequences of mental stress of Women Civil police Officers is moderate. Hence, the hypothesis that Consequences of mental stress of Women Civil police Officers is not moderate is rejected.

Table 5: Mean, SD, Mean % Score and Z value Consequences of physical stress

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean % score	CV	Z	p value
Consequences of physical stress	60	15.08	5.86	43.10	38.88	-3.19	<0.001

The mean percentage score of the Consequences of physical stress of Women Civil police Officers is 43.10% which indicate that the physical stress of Women Civil police Officers is moderate. The CV indicates that this score is not stable as the value is more than 20%. To test whether the sample information that we observe exists in the population or to verify that the physical stress Women Civil police Officers is of low or moderate, formulate the hypothesis:

H₀: Consequences of physical stress of Women Civil police Officers are not moderate

To test the above hypothesis one sample Z test and the result is exhibited in Table 1.5 are used. From the table the calculated value of Z is -3.19 which is less than the tabled value of -1.645, indicates that the test is significant. So it is concluded that there are physical consequences of stress among Women Civil police Officers.

The following table gives the various coping strategies adopted by the Women Civil police Officersto overcome the Job stress.

Table 6: Coping strategies

	Coping strategies	Yes	No
1	Medicate	16(26.7)	44(73.3)
2	Yoga	15(25.0)	45(75.0)
3	Exercise regularly	24(40.0)	36(60.0)
4	Counseling	7(11.7)	53(88.3)
5	Workshops and training programs	21(35.0)	39(65.0)
6	Trips	28(46.7)	35(53.3)
7	Organizational get together	36(60.0)	24(40.0)
8	Take refuge in family and friends	52(86.7)	8(13.3)

From the table one can observe that about 26.7% of Women Civil police Officers adopt medication, 25% adopt Yoga, 40% do regular exercise, 11.7% go for counseling, about 35% attend Workshops and training programs, 46.7% go for pleasure trips and 60% for Organizational get together. Majority of the officers (86.7%) take refuge in family and friends.

11. Findings

1. The study indicates that the WCPOs feel frustrated in carrying out their work along with family responsibilities and it leads to stress.
2. The resistance to illness is lower among WCPOs.
3. The WCPOs are eating more or less, drinking more coffee or tea etc. to cope with job and it leads to stress.
4. The WCPOs are forgetful and facing sudden outburst of anger which ultimately result in stress.
5. The WCPOs are worried about their health which leads to job stress.
6. It is found that that WCPO were facing difficulties in family life.

7. The WCPOs do not have the problem of conflicts and differences in opinions among family members.
8. The WCPOs are facing the problem of hypertension and high Blood pressure.
9. It is also found that the WCPOs feel tired and exhausted which leads to stress.
10. As a whole, the personal factors of women civil police officers are stressful.

Coping strategies

The various coping strategies adopted by WCPO are meditation, yoga, exercise, counselling etc. Study reveals that spending time with friends and family is the most important and most frequently used coping strategy of WCPO, about 86.7% are taking using this. Other strategies were for organizational get together (60%), trips (46.7%), exercise (40%), attending workshops and training programs (35%), meditation (26.7%), yoga (25%) and counselling (11.7%) to overcome job stress.

Consequences of stress

Stress to a certain extent is inevitable in modern life and everyone is expected to cope with the normal stress. But consecutive high level of stress at work place or due to other factors will adversely affect the physical and mental health of the affected person. The analysis of the responses in this regard reveal that stress create negative mental and physical health of the WCPO.

Among the mental consequences of stress, anxiety and worrying a lot are the major problems faced by them. Getting easily frustrated, aggressive behaviour, want to be alone always and feels out of control are the other consequences.

When it comes to physical consequences, the major problem faced by WCPOs is headaches. Even though diseases like high BP, stiff & sore muscles, trouble sleeping, decreased immunity are faced by certain officers, but most of them are overcoming it.

11. Conclusion

The Current study shows that among the personal factors, carrying out work along with family responsibilities, lower resistance to illness, change in appetite, being forgetful and angry, worries about health, difficulties in family life, hypertension & BP and tiredness are the major factors which lead to stress among WCPOs. A compromising and adjusting family is must for the successful career of WCPOs. They have such a family and so, WCPOs do not have the problem of conflicts and differences in opinions among family members.

There are different kinds of coping strategies adopted by WCPOs. Among them spending time with friends and family is the most important and most frequently used coping strategy. Other major strategies are organizational get together, trips, exercise, attending workshops and training programs, meditation, yoga and counselling

Among the mental consequences of stress, anxiety and worrying a lot are the major consequences. These problems create negative impacts on the mental health and efficiency of WCPOs. Among the physical consequences, headache is a major consequence of stress. And most of the WCPOs are not facing much physical problems.

12. Suggestions

1. There is a feeling among the WCPOs that their salary is not commensurate with their tedious work. Hence, it is necessary to introduce a reasonable hike in their pay scale which will to a significant extent it will help to reduce their stress in this regard.
2. The police department is not providing adequate attention regarding the stress coping strategies. The study reveals that spending time with friends and family is the important and most frequently used coping strategy among WCPOs, which is a personal measure. So the police department should provide more effective strategies to cope with the stress arising from their work especially for WCPOs.

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