STRESS AMONG WORKING WOMEN AT MADURAI CITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO WOMEN POLICE

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Abstract

Stress is a common 20th century phenomenon. It is a consequence of man's struggle to find balance between personality and environment. Change in technology and society leads to changes in personal and social relationships. Changes in user expectation, organization of work and increasing competence calls for constant changes in the function of institutions as well as individuals. Modern living has brought with it, not only innumerable means of comfort, but also a plethora of demands that tax human body and mind. Nowaday's everyone talks about stress. It is cutting across all socio-economic groups of population and becoming an urgent and serious malady.

Introduction

Women's stress can also mean additional cost in terms of expenditure towards health care and also leave of absence from work. Prolonged stress can increase the risk of developing chronic diseases-heart diseases or diabetes. This can require lingering and costly treatment leading to financial stress. Stress can also affect the entire system and make women vulnerable to other infectious diseases like cold and flu. Stressed women are also more likely to experience pain related conditions and become victims of anxiety, depression and drug abuse. Though the conditions of stress discussed here are common to employed women in general, they are also typical of women employed in services sector. Women working in service related profession where employees have to interact with others are particularly susceptible to stress. The job of teachers, priests, police officers, doctors and nurses can cause stress because these professions have very little control over their clients. Jon M. Shane shared that people working in the human service professions and those occupations where employees have an obligation for other people's health.

Need for the Study

Today the nature of society has become complex and complicated due to industrialization, urbanization, westernization, technological development and globalization. Hence one can observe a number of changes and problems in society. The delinquency in the family, schools, community, crimes in the family neighborhood, community institutions are increasing day by day.

Review of Literature

Dr. Martin Symonds published the first study of Police officers stress in 1970 in the American Journal of Psychoanalysis based on Selye's work, describing the psychological effects of stress in police officers.

McCafferty (1992) attributes suicide of police members to stressors at work. Factors that may contribute to distress include authoritarian structure, lack of participation in decision-making, poor interpersonal relationships with supervisors, lack of administrative support, unfair discipline, unfair promotion and the nature of police work.

Rao (1993) in his the study of women police coincided with the entry of Kiran Bedi into the Indian Police service. To what extent can women be entrusted with the rough and tumble of police life in the rapidly degenerating law and order conditions is, even today, a matter of controversy.

Statement of the Problem

Police job is a psychologically stressful work since the environment is filled with danger, high demands, and ambiguity in work encounters, human misery and more significantly exposure to death.

Stress among police is often viewed as an unlucky, but expected part of police work. Police are like real heroes, but most people are unaware of the amount of stress that police face every day.

The occupational stress of police is a widespread problem because of its numerous negative effects on individuals and on police organizations.

Workplace problems are distinct from other stressors, for example, difficulties in balancing job and family responsibilities or a person's personality traits and related methods of coping with workplace problems.

The present study is based on a survey to identify the problems faced by women constables in general, particularly in armed reserve police force and also to find out the different factors that are causing stress among women constables to constitute a research problem.

Scope of the Study

The present study is undertaken from the point of view of women police constables in the armed reserve police of Madurai city.

An attempt is to identify the factors causing stress to women constables. The study may reveal dominant factors which is responsible for stress. It is hoped that this research will help them to create and promote awareness of the stress in their job and also suitable suggestions will be given to overcome it in future by the researcher.

Objectives of the Study
1. To portray the profile of the women police constables.
2. To study the job behavior among the women police constables.
3. To measure the level of organizational stress among them.
4. To estimate the level of operational stress and its association with the profile of women constables.
5. To study the consequences of stress among the women police constables
6. To evaluate the linkage between the stress factors and the consequences of stress among them.
7. To study the implementation of coping strategies adopted by the women police constables and its impact on stress reduction.

Research Design
  Research design is the blue print of the various methods for conducting of research projects. It includes the procedures for obtaining the information needed, the way in which they are processed and the method of presentation of the result to solve research problems. Even though, the research designs are too many, the present study follows the "descriptive" research design.

  Since the present study makes an attempt to explain the level of stress among women police constables and also the implementation of coping strategies adopted by the women police constables and its impact on stress reduction, it is descriptive in nature. Since, the study also focuses on the consequences of stress and the linkage between the stress factors it is also diagnostic in nature. Hence, the applied research design of the study is descriptive and diagnostic research.

Table 1: Organisational Stress (ORS) among the Respondents

Sl. No.	Variables in ORS	Mean score among respondents		't' statistics
		Grade I	Grade II	
1.	Nature of work	3.2388	3.8168	-2.3896*
2.	Work load	3.4038	3.9022	-1.8919
3.	Favouritism	3.1853	3.7117	-3.1145*
4.	Higher accountability	3.3332	3.8812	-2.1886*
5.	Poor inter-relationship	3.2247	3.8493	-2.6673*
6.	Poor work environment	3.4434	3.3763	-0.1886
7.	Lack of recognition	3.1522	3.8204	-2.8084*
8.	Lack of advancement	3.3679	3.5010	-0.4556
9.	Poor motivation	3.2048	3.8895	-2.9266*
10.	Lack of job description	3.3765	3.5969	-0.5961

*Significant at five per cent level.

  The highly viewed organisational stress factors among the respondents in grade I are lack of job description and lack of advancement since their mean scores are 3.3765 and

3.3679 respectively. Among the respondents in grade II, these are work load and poor motivation since their mean scores are 3.9022 and 3.8895 respectively. Regarding the view of factors in ORS, the significant difference among the respondents in grade I & II have been noticed in the case of six out of 10 factors since their respective 't' statistics are significant at five per cent level.

Association between the Profile of Respondents and their View on ORS Factors

Since the profile of the respondents may be associated with their level of view on ORS factors, the present study has made an attempt to examine it with the help of one-way analysis of variance. All the twelve profile variables and their view on first five ORS factors are included for the analysis. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Association between Profile of Respondents and their View on Factors in ORS

Sl. No.	Profile variables	F-statistics in				
		Nature of work	Work load	Favouritism	High accountability	Poor inter-personal relationship
1.	Age	2.7881*	2.2667	2.3441	2.9094*	2.4541
2.	Community	2.2661	1.9667	1.8088	1.7173	2.0996
3.	Religion	2.5084	2.2667	2.8084*	2.2676	2.5119
4.	Level of education	2.3996*	2.5884*	2.0996	2.1441	2.1084
5.	Place of residence	2.8667	2.5884	2.7991	3.1464*	2.6642
6.	Marital status	2.4117	2.3884	2.5089	2.6441	2.7396
7.	Number of children per family	3.1441*	3.2345*	2.4141	2.8667	2.9091
8.	Number of dependents per family	2.5889*	2.1708	2.2899	2.4541*	2.6844*
9.	Monthly income	2.8084*	2.6676*	2.6554*	2.8082*	2.4117
10.	Years of experience	3.4151	3.2616*	3.3996*	3.8084*	3.4117*
11.	Frequency of out station duties per month	2.8413*	2.6541*	2.3996	2.2558	2.4089
12.	Days spent in outstation duties per month	2.9089*	2.1173	2.5084	2.6991*	2.7341*

*Significant at five per cent level.

The association between the profile of respondents and their view on last five ORS factors have been examined with the help of one-way analysis of variance. The result are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Association between Profile of Respondents and this View on Factors in ORS

Sl. No.	Profile variables	F-Statistics in				
		Poor work environment	Lack of recognition	Lack of Advancement	Poor motivation	Lack of job resumption
1.	Age	2.4542	2.7676*	2.5141	2.3996	2.9099*
2.	Community	2.0822	1.9969	1.8441	2.2193	2.0884
3.	Religion	1.8866	2.3441	2.5108	2.3914	2.4141
4.	Level of education	2.0667	2.3669*	2.4088*	2.1173	2.5149*
5.	Place of residence	2.5142	2.6639	2.7089	2.9414	2.7366
6.	Marital status	2.4112	2.5808	2.5303	2.4118	2.5071
7.	Number of children per family	3.2117*	3.0886*	2.0896	2.3441	2.5846
8.	Number of dependents per family	2.4511*	2.0996	2.2142	2.3996*	2.1881
9.	Monthly income	2.7374*	2.8454*	2.9161*	2.6562*	2.7089*
10.	Years of experience	3.2667*	3.8441*	2.4541	2.6569	2.9192
11.	Frequency of out station duties per month	2.8084*	2.6676*	2.5144	2.7331*	2.5108
12.	Days spent in outstation duties per month	2.7143*	2.8554*	2.9141*	2.8443*	2.6519*

*Significant at five per cent level.

Regarding the view on poor work environment the significantly associating profile variables are number of children per family, number of dependent per family, monthly income, years of experience, frequency of outstation duties per month and days spent in outstation duties per monthly since their respective 'F' statistics are significant at five per cent level. The significantly associating profile variables regarding the view on lack of recognition are age, level of education, number of children per family, monthly income, years of experience, frequency of outstation duties per month and days spent in outstation duties per month.

Discriminant Factors in ORS among the Respondents in Grade I and II

Since the level of perception on factors in ORS among the respondents in grade I may be differing the perception among the respondents II, it is essential to identify the important discriminant factors in ORS for among the group of respondents for some policy implications. Initially, the mean difference in each factors and its statistical significance have been computed. The discriminant power of each the results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Mean Difference and Discriminant Power of Factors in ORS (OSF) among Grade I and II Respondents

Sl. No.	ORS	Mean score among respondents in		Mean difference	't' statistics	Wilk's Lambda
		Grade I	Grade II			
1.	SONOW	3.2388	3.8168	-0.5780	-2.3896*	0.1433
2.	SOWL	3.4038	3.9022	-0.4984	-1.8919*	0.3145
3.	SOFM	3.1853	3.7117	-0.6959	-3.1145*	0.1011
4.	SOHA	3.3332	3.8812	-0.5480	-2.1886*	0.1732
5.	SOPIPR	3.2247	3.8493	-0.6246	-2.6673*	0.1088
6.	SOPWE	3.4434	3.3763	0.0671	-0.1886	0.5597
7.	SOLOR	3.1522	3.8204	-0.6682	-2.8084*	0.1216
8.	SOLOA	3.3679	3.5010	-0.1331	-0.4556	0.2944
9.	SOPM	3.2048	3.8895	-0.6847	-2.9266*	0.1774
10.	SOLJD	3.3765	3.5969	-0.2204	-0.5961	0.2596

*Significant at five per cent level.

The significant mean differences are noticed in the case of nature of work, favourtism, health aspects, poor inter personal relationship, lack of recognition and poor motivation since their mean differences are significant at five per cent level. The higher mean differences are noticed in the case of favourtism and poor motivation since its mean differences are -0.6959 and -0.6847 respectively. The higher discriminant power is noticed in the case of favourtism and lack of recognition since their Wilk's Lambda are 0.1011 and 0.1216 respectively. The significant factors in ORS are included to estimate the two group of discriminant function. The unstandardized procedure has been followed to estimate it. The estimated factors is

$$Z = -0.4991 - 0.1997 X_1 - 0.1332 X_3 - 0.1491 X_4 - 0.1088 X_5 - 0.1884 X_7 - 0.1774 X_9$$

The relative contribution of ORS factors in the total discriminant score (TDS) is estimated by the product of discriminant co-efficient and the mean difference of the respective components of ORS. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Relative Contribution of ORS Factors in Total Discriminant Score (TDS)

Sl.No.	ORS Factors	Discriminant co-efficient	Mean Difference	Product	Relative Contribution in TDS
1.	SONOW	-0.1997	-0.5780	0.1154	19.07
2.	SOFM	-0.1332	-0.6959	0.0927	15.32
3.	SOHA	-0.1491	-0.5480	0.0817	13.50
4.	SOPIPR	-0.1088	-0.6246	0.0679	11.22
5.	SOLOR	-0.1884	-0.6682	0.1259	20.81
6.	SOPM	-0.1774	-0.6847	0.1215	20.08
	Total			0.6051	100.00

Per cent of cases correctly classified: 78.24.

The higher discriminant co-efficients are seen in the case of nature work and lack of recognition since their respective discriminant co-efficient are -0.1997 and -0.1884 respectively. It shows the higher influence of above said two factors in the discriminant function. The higher relative contribution of factors in TDS is noticed in the case of level of recognition and poor motivation since its relative contributions are 20.81 and 20.08 per cent respectively. The estimated two group discriminant function correctly classifies the cases to an extent of 78.24 per cent. The analysis reveals that the important discriminant factors among the respondents in grade I and II are lack of recognition and poor motivation which are higher among the respondents in grade II than that among the respondents in grade I.

Major Findings

The important years of experience among the respondents are 7 to 9 and 3 to 6 years. The year of experience among the respondents in grade I is higher than that among the respondents in grade II.

The highly preferred outstation duties by the respondents in grade I are commercial violence control and political meetings whereas among the respondents in grade II, these are political meetings and election duties.

The dominant frequency of outstation duties per month among the respondents is 11 to 15 and 5 to 10. The higher frequency of outstation duties per month is seen among the respondents in grade II than among the respondents in grade I.

The most important time of intimation about the outstation duty among the respondents in grade I and II are just a day before and at that moment respectively. Majority of the respondents are not receiving any financial support from the department when they are on outstation duties.

The respondents in grade I are give importance to the accommodation arrangements at the outstation duties compared to the respondents in grade II.

The important operational stress factors noticed by the factor analysis are missing social life, work burden, health issues, risks in work, work-life imbalance, poor image and poor allowances.

The highly correlated variables in work burden are paper work and shift work. The four variables included in work burden explain it to a reliable extent.

The highly correlated variables in 'Risks in work' are traumatic events and risk of being injured on the job. The included three variables in it explain it to a reliable extent.

The highly viewed variable in psychological consequences by the respondents in grade I and II is anxiety. The significant difference among the respondents in grade I and II has been noticed in the case of all six variables in it.

Suggestions
1. Periodic Stress Audit
2. Counselling Programmes
3. Welfare Programmes
4. Management of Outstation Duties
5. Differential Strategies
6. Coping Strategies
7. Job Redesign
8. Communication System
9. Team Work
10. Social Support

Conclusion

The present study concludes that the operational and organisational stress among the respondents in grade II are higher than that among the respondents in grade I. The significantly associating important profile variables with the level of both operational and organisational stress are their years of experience, number children and dependent per family, frequency of instation duties per month and the days spent in outstation duties per month. The rate of implementation of stress management strategies' both self and organisational strategies' are lesser among the respondents in grade II than that among the respondents in grade I.

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