

Occupational Stress among Police Personnel in Gajapati District

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Introduction

Stress is simply a reaction to a stimulus that disturbs the physical or mental equilibrium. In other words, it is an omnipresent part of life. It is associated with the number of adverse organizational outcomes and many studies consistently found that the higher levels of job stress lead to lower levels of job satisfaction. Occupational stress is a major hazard for many workers. Increased workloads, Downsizing, overtime, hostile work environments, and shift work are just a few of the many causes of stressful working conditions. This factsheet addresses some of the causes of workplace stress and solutions for change. Police stress refers to the negative pressures related to police work. Police personnel are not super humans. According to Gail Goolkasian³ 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. The major source of stress identified in police work is associated with the unique work environment of police personnel. There may be an expectation that the main source of police work-related stress would be from physical/psychological threats. The working conditions of law enforcement officers are not likely to change given the realities of the current police officer comforting officer economy.

Literature Review

Malini Nandi Majumdar (2016)¹, the present study reveals that the existing coping mechanisms in West Bengal Police is to develop an instrument (scale) suitable for measuring the validity of the coping factors adopted by police personnel and suggest various measures to combat against work related stressors more effectively. The methods used were Brief COPE (28 items) have been applied to identify the coping mechanisms adopted by police personnel. Exploratory Factor Analysis method (EFA) is being conducted by using SPSS 23 that reveals ten coping mechanisms and further Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is being applied by using AMOS 22 to confirm the construct. The Regression Analysis identifies the significance of each Coping mechanisms for combating with different stressors at work. Spatial survey method has been applied for conducting the survey. The findings of the study were ten unique coping mechanisms such as Positive Planning, Self-blame, Behavioral disengagement, Self-distraction, Instrumental support, Religion, Active coping, Humor, Substance use and Acceptance have been identified as highly relied coping mechanisms among West Bengal Police force.

Hao Yu et. al. (2016)¹⁹, the purpose of the study is to explore the relationship between occupational stressors and the incidence of type 2 diabetes mellitus among police officers. The methods used were baseline data were collected from policemen who completed the Occupational Stress Inventory-Revised (OSI-R) questionnaire, a self-designed questionnaire, and underwent free clinical measurements at the Medical Center of Police Hospital in Tianjin, China, in April 2007. A total of 5811 policemen participated in follow-up with the dynamic observation of new-onset diabetes (NOD) events occurring annually between 2008 and 2011. Occupational stress was measured by the OSI-R questionnaire, which contains 14 different scales. Cox proportional hazards regression was used to calculate the hazard ratios (HR) of the incidence of 53 type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) by occupational stressors. The results were a total of 3.1 % of the participants (n = 179) developed NOD in the follow-up period from 2008 to 2011, and the incidence rates of NOD were 0.58 % in 2008, 0.98 % in 2009, 0.52 % in 2010, and 1.01 % in 2011. Role

overload (RO), role boundary (RB), physical environment (PE), interpersonal strain (IS), and physical strain (PHS) were associated with the incidence of T2DM (RO: HR = 1.574, 95 % CI = 1.071–2.372; RB: HR = 1.645, 95 % CI = 1.144–2.365; PE: HR = 2.292, 95 % CI = 1.545–3.400; IS: HR = 1.537, 95 % CI = 1.079–2.191; and PHS: HR = 1.680, 95 % CI = 1.167–2.006) after adjustment for confounding factors. A subgroup Cox regression analysis among traffic control police officers showed the specific work stressors remained robust except RO. It concludes that several aspects of stressors were independent predictors of T2DM in a prospective cohort study in Tianjin, China. This practical information can be applied to the development of psychological interventions against T2DM.

A research on “Workplace stress –Factors that contribute to workplace stress”, undertaken by Maria Parkinson (2010) [9], concludes that the workplace stress is becoming a major problem in today’s society. A quarter of employees view their job as the major stress in their lives. Several factors contribute to workplace stress like one factor is longer working hours. She also says that police officers reported more suicidal thoughts than the general population. Policing is an inherently psychologically stressful job where officers face danger, possible death, violence and very high demands.

The Effects of Stress

- Stress can cause chronic fatigue, digestive ailments, headaches, and back pain.
- Stress can affect the blood cells that help you fight off infection, so you are more prone to be infected by colds or other diseases.
- Constant stress can elevate blood pressure and can increase the risk for stroke.
- Stress can increase the occurrence of heart attacks particularly if you are often angry and mistrustful.
- Stress can make an asthma attack worse.
- Stress triggers behaviors that contribute to death and disability, such as smoking, alcoholism, drug abuse, and overeating.
- Stress can lead to diminished sexual desire and an inability to achieve orgasm.
- Stress makes it harder to take remedial steps to rejuvenate health, such as giving up smoking or making better dietary choices.

Objective of the study

1. To study the socio-economic aspects of the police personnel of Gajapati district of Odisha State.
2. To know the perception of occupational stress among police personnel.

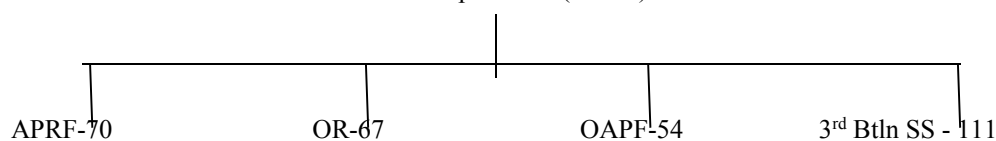
Hypothesis of the study

The selected domains of Personal, Work, Organizational, Interpersonal, Social, Family, Health and Wellbeing, Physical, Mental and Coping strategies will positively and significantly relate to and predict their occupational stress.

Methodology

Data has been collected from the constables of Gajapati District, Odisha through a structured Questionnaire. The total strength is around 1010 which constitute the universe of the study. The Universe consists of 235 Armed Police Reserve Force, 225 Other Reserve force, 180 Odisha Armed Protection Force and 370 3rd Battalion SS Force. The sample consists of 70 Armed Police Reserve Force (30%), 67 Other Reserve (30%), 54 Odisha Armed Protection Force (30%) and 111 3rd Battalion SS Force (30%) which belongs to different departments in Odisha Police Service.

Total Respondents (n=303)



To fulfill the objectives and to test the hypothesis, primary data is collected from the police constables by using structured questionnaires. Some open ended questions are 76 however included to have the knowledge of individual respondent’s specific and personal views. Personal interviews are also the primary source of data collection in this

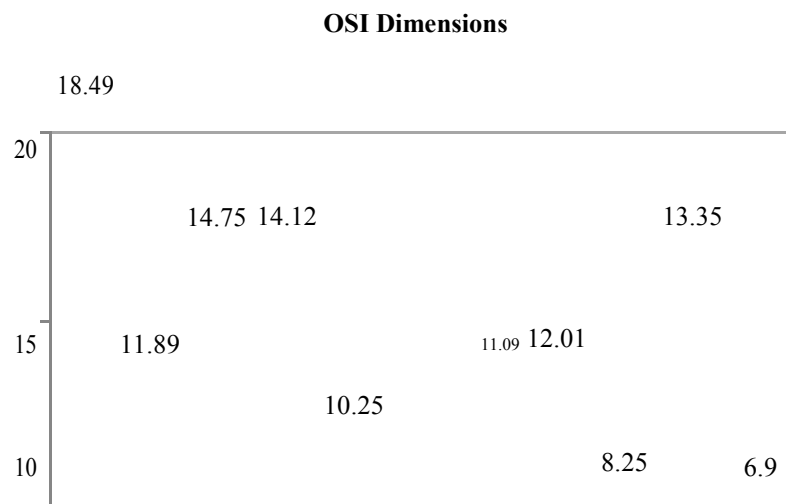
study. The Scale’s internal consistency reliability (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.911$) was tested and found satisfactory. The scale was developed on a Likert’s 5- Point Scale Summated Rating Scale 5= Strongly Agree to 1= Strongly Disagree. Independent Samples T- Test and Descriptive Statistics were used to know significant variance in Mean perceptions of Specific respondent groups. Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) is a measure of the linear correlation between two

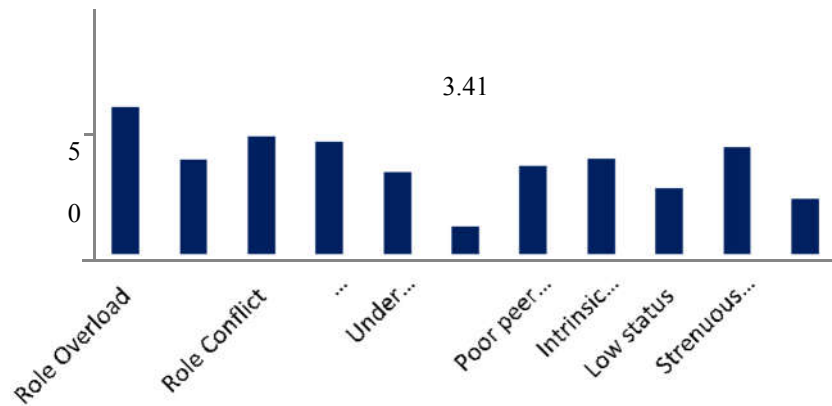
variables, giving a value between +1 and -1 inclusive, where 1 is total positive correlation, 0 is no correlation, and -1 is total negative correlation were applied through SPSS 21.0 to test the Hypothesis.

Showing Descriptive Statistics of Occupational Stress Index

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Role Overload	475	8.00	25.00	18.49	3.49
Role Ambiguity	475	4.00	20.00	11.89	2.89
Role Conflict	475	6.00	24.00	14.75	2.92
Unreasonable group and political pressure	475	6.00	20.00	14.12	3.13
Under participation	475	3.00	15.00	10.25	2.65
Powerlessness	475	1.00	5.00	3.41	1.14
Poor peer relations	475	4.00	17.00	11.09	1.86
Intrinsic impoverishment	475	4.00	20.00	12.01	2.86
Low status	475	3.00	15.00	8.25	2.65
Strenuous working conditions	475	5.00	20.00	13.35	3.22
Unprofitability	475	2.00	10.00	6.90	1.74
Occupational Stress Index	475	75.00	183.00	121.68	22.13

GRAPH 1: Showing Descriptive Statistics of Occupational Stress Index for HC/PC





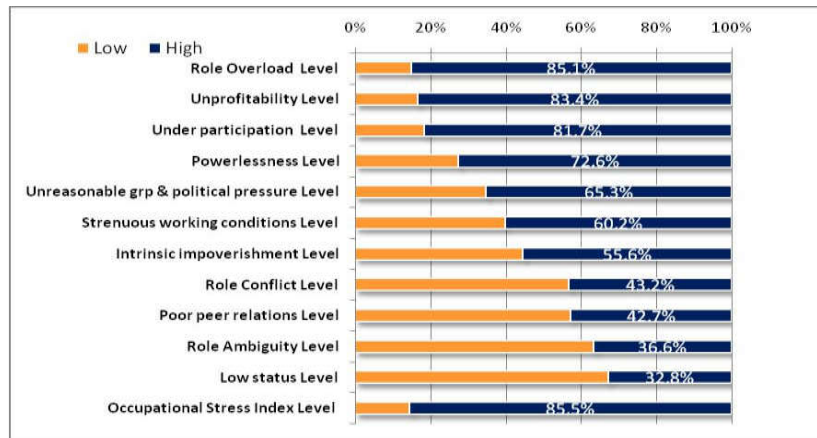
The descriptive statistics of occupational stress assessed from 11 dimensions is given above. The maximum and minimum scores, mean and standard deviation are given in the above table. It can be observed that among the minimum scores, „Powerlessness“ is scored least followed by „Low status“ scoring 1. The highest score is 8 for „Role overload“. When the maximum scores are compared, the least score of 5 is for „Powerlessness“ and the highest score of 25 is for „Role overload“ and other dimensions have scores in between. The average score is Highest for „Role overload“ 18.49 with the high hest standard deviation 3.49 and the least is for „Powerlessness“ with mean 3.41 and least Standard deviation 1.14. The Overall Stress Index has a mean score 121.68 with standard deviation 22.13.

TABLE 7: Showing Occupational Stress Index Score for HC/PC

	Low	High
Role Overload	14.9%	85.1%
Unprofitability*	16.6%	83.4%
Under participation	18.3%	81.7%
Powerlessness*	27.4%	72.6%
Unreasonable group and political pressure	34.7%	65.3%
Strenuous working conditions	39.8%	60.2%
Intrinsic impoverishment	44.4%	55.6%
Role Conflict	56.8%	43.2%
Poor peer relations	57.3%	42.7%
Role Ambiguity	63.4%	36.6%
Low status	67.2%	32.8%
Occupational Stress Index	14.5%	85.5%

*Less number of items

GRAPH 2: Showing Occupational Stress Index Score for HC/PC



The above graph shows the dimensions which are causing high stress. Role overloads 85.1%, unprofitability 83.4%, under participation 87.1%, powerlessness 72.6%, unreasonable group and political pressure 65.3%, strenuous working conditions 60.2% and intrinsic impoverishment 55.6%. These are the major dimensions which are causing high stress among the HC/PC of police department. Overall Occupational Stress Index has shown 85.5% high stress in Police Department.

TABLE 8: Showing Occupational Stress Index Level in HC/PC

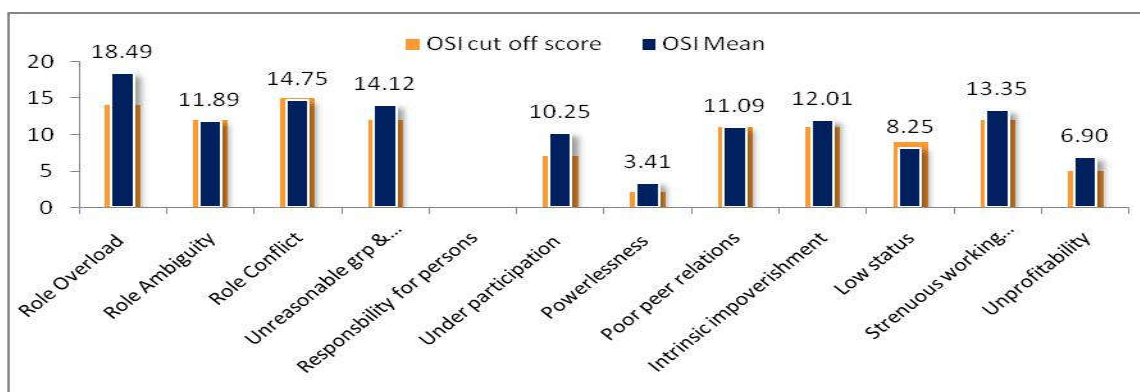
Occupational Stress Index Level	Frequency	Occupational Stress Index Level
LOW OSI	69	14.5
HIGH OSI	406	85.5
Total	475	100.0

Table 9: Showing OSI Dimensions Score with Cut off Score for HC/PC

	OSI Mean	OSI cut off Score	Std. Deviation
Role Overload	18.49	14	3.49

Role Ambiguity	11.89	12	2.89
Role Conflict	14.75	15	2.92
Unreasonable group and political pressure	14.12	12	3.13
Under participation	10.25	7	2.65
Powerlessness	3.41	2	1.14
Poor peer relations	11.09	11	1.86
Intrinsic impoverishment	12.01	11	2.86
Low status	8.25	9	2.65
Strenuous working conditions	13.35	12	3.22
Unprofitability	6.90	5	1.74
Occupational Stress Index	121.68	97	22.13
Distance from Base (%)	25%		

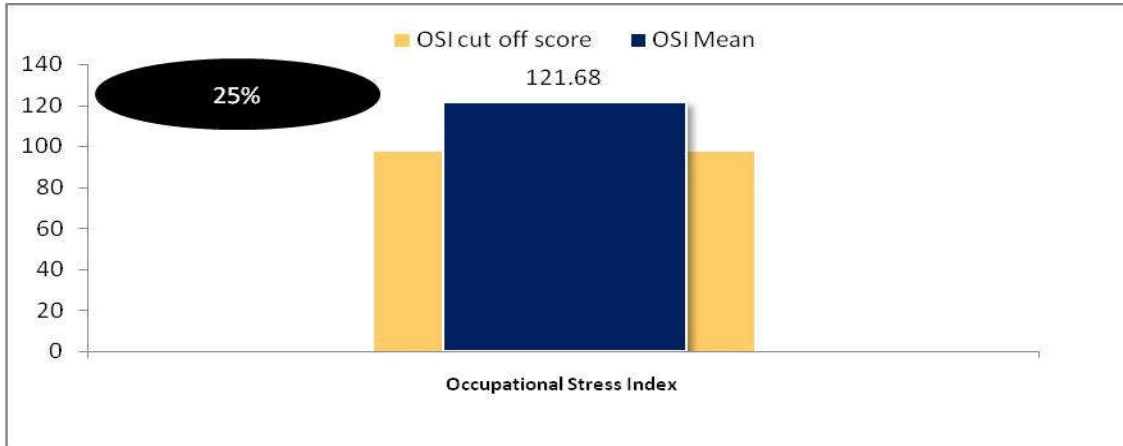
Graph 3: Showing OSI Dimensions Score with Cut off Score for HC/PC



When the average scores are compared with the cut off scores, it is observed that except for the three dimensions-Role ambiguity, Role conflict and Low status, all the other nine dimensions the mean score is higher than the cut off score. This indicated that those 9 dimensions cause stress at a higher degree. Of these dimensions, role overload that has the highest difference from cutoff score. The least difference is for Poor peer relations.

The overall Stress Index has mean score 121.68, much higher than the cut off score 97 indicating a high stress level prevailing among the respondents.

Graph 4: Showing Occupational Stress Index Level, Percentage of Change



Occupational Stress Index Mean is 25% more than the cut off score. It means that the HC/PC are experiencing more stress.

Discussion of Results

The results observed from the analysis have demonstrated that among eleven dimensions, except for the four dimensions- Role Conflict (43.2%), Poor peer relations (42.7%), Role ambiguity (36.6%), and Low Status (32.8%), all the other seven dimensions the mean score is higher than the cut off score. This indicates that those dimensions cause stress at a higher degree. The seven dimensions are Role Overload (85.1%), Unprofitability (83.4%), Under participation (81.7%), Powerlessness (72.6%), Unreasonable group & political pressure (65.3%), Strenuous working conditions (60.2%), & Intrinsic Impoverishment (55.6%). Of the seven dimensions, role overload that has the highest difference from cutoff score followed by Under participation. The least difference is for Poor peer relations. It means that the stress in police department among HC/PC is more mainly because of Role overload, Unprofitability, Under participation, Powerlessness, Unreasonable group & political pressure, Strenuous working conditions, & Intrinsic Impoverishment. The overall Stress Index has mean score 121.68, much higher than the cut off score 97 indicating a high stress level, which indicates the stress level is 25% more than the cutoff score signifying high level of stress.

Conclusion

Out of the dimensions, seven dimensions are causing high stress in police department. Those are role overload, unprofitability, under participation, powerlessness, unreasonable group & political pressure, strenuous working conditions, and intrinsic impoverishment, whose mean score is more than the cut off score. Among these, role overload, unprofitability, under participation, powerlessness, unreasonable group and political pressure, strenuous working conditions, and intrinsic impoverishment are the main causes for high stress among HC and PC. Overall occupation stress index has shown 85.5% high stress in police department, which states that among 475 respondents, 406 respondents are experiencing high stress.

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