



EFFECT OF JOB STRESS AMONG POLICE OFFICERS

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Abstract

Police work is a most dangerous, challenging and stressful job comparison to other organization. Stress is a very important factor, affected employees physical and mental health. Job stress is a degree of dissatisfaction and unhappy feeling on their job. The purpose of this research is to identify the consequences of job stress among police officers. Among police officers, job stress consequences are employees' aggression, anxiety, depression, absenteeism, health problems, premature death, family relationship, job burnout, job turnover, substance abuse, job dissatisfaction, and low job performance. All variables are associated with job stress.

Keywords: Job Stress, Police Officers, Health Problems.

Introduction

Police job is one of the most stressful jobs in public sector organizations around the world (Bano, 2011; Hammad, Awan, Akhtar, & Imdadullah, 2012). Police profession is highly dangerous and vulnerable profession because of several reasons including traumatic events (Naz & Gavin, 2013). Researchers have founded the police as one of the most stressful occupations around the world (Luo & Ruiz, 2012;). Job stress is defined as a feeling of psychological strain and tension from the job, which results from exposure to stressors (Gershon, Barocas, Canton, Li, & Vlahov, 2009; He *et al.*, 2002; Kurtz,

2011). Research indicates that law enforcement work can be stressful job (Martinussen, Richardsen, & Burke, 2007; Ranta & Sud, 2008; Selokar, Nimbarte, Ahana, Gaidhane, & Wagh, 2011; Stinchcomb, 2004). Prolonged exposure to stress can have many negative effects, such as health problems, aggression, depression, job burnout, absenteeism, turnover, substance abuse, lower job satisfaction, lower work performance, and even premature death (Gershon *et al.*, 2009; Howard, Donofrio, & Boles, 2004; Martinussen *et al.*, 2007; Morash *et al.*, 2006; Ranta & Sud, 2008; Tyagi & Lochan Dhar, 2014; Violanti *et al.*, 2015). In light of the harm, research has focused on identifying the forces which may lead to increased job stress for officers (Chhabra & Chhabra, 2013; Jaramillo, Nixon, & Sams, 2005). This research has identified several factors relating to the nature of police work, such as critical incidents (e.g. dealing with unwilling witnesses and suspects, threats, danger, and seeing horrific events) that are linked with job stress (Gershon *et al.*, 2009; Morash *et al.*, 2006; Ranta & Sud, 2008). In addition, workplace factors, such as ineffective communication, harassment, role ambiguity, role overload, lack of organizational support, poor supervisor support, poor training, and lack of promotional opportunities have been found to contribute to job stress for officers (Gershon *et al.*, 2009; Jaramillo *et al.*, 2005; Morash *et al.*, 2006; Selokar *et al.*, 2011; Shane, 2010; Tyagi & Lochan Dhar, 2014). In police organization workplace factors influenced by police administrators, if these factors are controlled by the administration help for reducing job stress for employees. In fact, Shane (2010) contended and found that workplace factors contribute more to job stress for officers than the nature of police work. Work-family conflict was a contributes to amplify stress in police employees, including those in India and other country. Stress has been a topic of vital importance because of the mental and physical suffering it can cause individuals (Glass, 1977; Sarason and Spelleager; 1979). Job induced stress has been label as one of the most serious occupational hazards of our time (Delay & Perfill, 1996; Jamals & Bada 1992). Work related stress results in organizational problems of job dissatisfaction, burn-out, poor commitment and high turnover intention among workers (Jamal, 1984; Jamal, 1985; Jamal & Bada 1995).

Job Stress and Health Problem: In the police job, workplace stress effected every condition in physical and psychological health employees' behaviour in organization. Police officers experienced many psychological problems like- stress, anxiety, and irritability. In compare to the other working organization employees' police

officers suicide rate is higher, and researchers found the police employees experienced many stress-related illness, low creativity, absenteeism during illness, and employees take early retirement (Collins & Gibbs, 2003; Schmidtke, Fricke & Lester; 1999). Increased alcohol consumption, smoking, and drug abuse are additional negative consequences that occur as a result of stress in their workplace (Smith, Devine, Leggat & Ishitake, 2005; Pinfold, Huxley, Thornicroft, Farmer, Toulmin & Graham, 2003). Police personnel face many occupational health and safety risks that can impact their physical, mental, and interpersonal relationships (Kavya & Chandrashekar, 2016). Occupational health problems among police constables are associated with insufficient salaries, facilities, duty hours, duty time, family times, bad relationship with co-workers, harassment, role ambiguity, and negative public image are many factors of leading to psychological stress and burn out (Suresh et. Al; 2013).

Job Stress and Burnout: Job burnout has also emerged as a psychological syndrome in response to chronic interpersonal stressors in the job (Bakkar & Shaufeli, 2000; Burke, Greenglass, Schwarzer, 1996; Carlson & Thompson, 1995). Freudenberg (1974) first used the term burnout to describe a syndrome consisting of a combination of long-lasting emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue, absence of job involvement, dehumanization of recipients of one's service, and lowered job accomplishment. Constant exposure to society's interpersonal violence, negative or confrontational interactions with individuals, a sense of personal endangerment, fear of revenge from criminals, and subservience to an ambivalent, watchful public produce negative emotional repercussion that can affect police officers on a chronic basis (Burke, 1994; Sewell, 1983). Burnout is an extended response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors during job, and has 3 key dimensions of overwhelming emotional exhaustion; depersonalization and detachment from the job, and a sense of ineffectiveness and failure (Maslach 1982; Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Job burnout was first identified by Freudenberg (1974) from his observations of the extreme psychological strain often experienced by workers in the human service professions (e.g., police). In the field of psychological stress, burnout was a relatively new idea that had drawn a lot of attention as a particular kind of strain. Burnout was described as "psychological strain resulting from human service work" by Shinn, Rosario, Morch, and Chestnut (1984). According to Cherniss' (1980) proposal, the causal order of significant variables is as follows:

characteristics of the work environment → work stresses → burnout → job discontent. Along the same line, Koeske and Koeske (1993) posited the relationships among relevant variables as follows: work stressors → stress → burnout → job dissatisfaction. These models are provided a basis for conceptualizing and testing the value of burnout and job dissatisfaction. Besides Cherniss and Koeske, quite a few researchers have considered burnout to be a cause of job dissatisfaction (Lee & Ok, 2012). The strong connection between job stress and occupational burnout may have serious implications for women police officers, especially with the current call for an increase in the number of women in the police (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015).

Job Stress and Turnover: Turnover intention is a conscious and deliberate willingness to leave an organization (Teff&Meyer, 1993; Loyon, 1971). Despite its clear impact on the survival of the organization, it has not gotten the same attention as other workplace behavioural results. The turnover intention is negative impacts on employee performance (Wong, Wong, & Wong, 2015). Employees they are intended to leave an organization normally low attention in jobs and lack of responsibility. It also causes difficulties for an organization to recruit skilled and committed employees who are crucial for the organization to gain competitive advantage. It is a great challenge for an organization to keep them to work for the organization (Perryer *et al.*, 2010). In past few decades, researchers focusing the factors they influenced turnover intention of employees have found various factors associated with turnover intention. Limyothin (2010) found four factors influencing turnover intention of hotel staff. These are the organizational commitment, job satisfaction, quality of work life, and organizational culture.

Job Stress and Substance Abuse: Alcohol use is a big problem in law enforcement department. A considerable amount of previous research has focused on police alcohol use as a consequence of demographics, job stress, and the police culture (Lindsay & Shelley, 2009). In police organization substance abuse like alcohol has been many risks factor, employees start alcohol consuming in psychological problems like anxiety, depression, stress, isolation, peer pressure, young officers and other cultural factors employees drink together. The police network is reluctant to report a fellow officer for alcohol related difficulties. Officers may go to great lengths to protect fellow officers in trouble (Kirschman, 1997). Davy *et al.* (2000) correlated alcohol consumption

with frequent social interaction among police officers. Obst, Davey, and Sheehan (2000) found that risk of harm from alcohol increased for the police recruits as their training progressed, suggesting that the training process introduces recruits into a culture of alcohol consumption. Beehr *et al.* (1995) also attributed drinking behaviour to the influence of the police subculture. Violanti (2001) found that high stress police academy training led to maladaptive coping strategies among recruits, with the use of alcohol being a prominent strategy. Some studies found police officers lifestyle and chronic stressful situation are contributing high rate of smoking and alcohol dependence (Richmond RL, Wodak A, Kehoe L, Heather N,1999).

Job Stress and Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction is an attitude of contentment, enjoyment and fulfilment felt on one's job (Croham (1989). Hopkins (1983) defined job satisfaction as "the fulfilment or gratification of certain needs that are associated with one's work". According to Locke's (1976) proposal, job satisfaction stems from the discrepancy between an employee's expectations and the actual work environment. Employee job satisfaction decreases as expectations become more and more at odds with the realities of the work environment. Satisfaction of most workers including the police personnel in the country is only hinged on pay or salary (Banjoko, 1996). Other reasons that may be causing dissatisfaction among the police personnel are transfer inconvenience, poor equipment etc (Oladele, 2009). When police officers not satisfied and happy to our job then create more difficulties in organization. Researchers found across a number of occupations have consistently found a link between low employee job satisfaction and high employee turnover and absenteeism (Gerhart, 1990; Mobley, 1977), low productivity (Podsakoff & Williams, 1986), and low organizational commitment (Jayaratne, 1993). Job satisfaction of police employees is a important issue for policing management, authority needs to further investigation because researcher noted to insufficient research work in police job satisfaction (Zhao, Thurman &He; 1999).

Job Stress and Job Performance: Stress is unavoidable on workplaces, employees who feel stress are more likely to be less motivated, less satisfied, show poor performance, and less productivity (Leka, 2005). Performance as the quality and quantity of work, which is the result of accomplishment efforts by individuals or groups (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2005). Job performance is also considered as the behaviour involved

while working (Jex & Britt, 2014). Various factors that affect job performance include individual and environmental (Byar & Rue, 2011). Ability and motivation are affected job performance and job satisfaction (Mangkunegara & Prabu, 2005). In every organization performance is a most important characteristic for employees and organization, individual factors included effort, ability, eligibility, job role, task perception, environmental factors included physical conditions, work condition, equipment, duty hours, duty shift, supervisors, co-workers and others are affected employees low and high job performance in organization. Employees experiencing job dissatisfaction tend to have high intention to leave that organisation (Ashraf & Joarder, 2010; Chew & Chan, 2008; Reichheld, 1993; Schmalenberg & Kramer, 2008).

Job stress have been showed many negative consequences such as physical health problems, psychological health problems-aggression, depression, trauma, PTSD, absenteeism, and even premature death. Some research found the job stress increase work family conflict and interpersonal relationship with siblings and employees faced many psychological health problems. Job stress is basically a subjective phenomenon that are affected many problems in organization. In this organization are a most strain and tens in comparison to other public organization. Many studies found the relationship between job stress and health (physical & mental). Employees are experience many health issues, low productivity, absenteeism, morbidity, premature death, anxiety, depression, PTSD and found interpersonal relationship with co-workers and sibling. Some study found the positive relationship with job stress and salaries, facilities, no time for family, negative interaction with co-workers, harassment, are affected employees' health. Job stress is a very crucial term for any organization, some study found suicide rate of police organization are high in compare to other working organization like banking, teacher and others sector of employment. Cherniss (1980) proposed, job burnout variables are, who affected if employee are felling work stress in chronic-situation then employees exhausted and burnout then employees dissatisfied in our job. Koeske and koeske (1993) found the relationship with stress, satisfaction and burnout when employees face work stressor then feel stress and stress related to burnout and a long time of burnout in job employees are dissatisfied our job. Alcohol use is an important problem among police officers, because police are a discipline and responsible job. Previous study founded employees are take drink in stress situation. When employees not cope with stressful environment,

they are takes drink with peers' pressure, stress, isolation, and cultural belief. In this study researchers found that many factors affected the job stress including, employee's health (physical & psychological), burnout, turnover intention, substance abuse, poor job satisfaction, poor job performance. On the basis of literature review job stress is a most common factors affect to employee's leave the organization.

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