

IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF POLICE PERSONNEL: A CASE STUDY OF J&K POLICE

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ABSTRACT:

This study empirically investigates the impact of occupational stressors namely, role conflict, role ambiguity, supervisory support, individual personality and family environment on job performance of employees of police department in Jammu district, J&K, India. Data were collected from 986 police employees from 12 different departments through structured questionnaires. Exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling were used to test the hypotheses. Results revealed that occupational stress significantly affects the job performance of the employees. It further revealed that role conflict and role ambiguity negatively affect job performance whereas, superior support, individual personality and family environment positively affect the job performance of the employees in an organisation. Managerial implications and limitations have also been discussed in the paper.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Job performance, Role conflict, Role ambiguity, Superior support, Individual personality, Family environment.

1.1 Introduction:

Today everyone experiences a fair share of stress irrespective of personal and Socio-economic settings (Ranta, 2009), and, thus, no one is immune from it. The term stress means different things to different people due to divergent circumstances. In fact, stress is a nature of feeling experienced when a person perceives the demand exceeding his/her social resources (Richard, 2006). It is also defined as a non specific response of the body to any demand for change. Further, it is a state of physiological imbalance in the body having unpleasant emotional and cognitive components. Stress has significant negative impact on organisational citizenship behaviour thereby affecting the performance of the work group and the organisation as a whole (Jain and Cooper, 2012). Occupational stress relating to job, work and workplace has become one of the most serious health issues in the modern world (Lu, et. al, 2003). It is the inability of the individual to cope with the pressures on a job (Rees, 1997) which effects interpersonal relations at work (Manshor, Rodrigue & Chong, 2003), individual's productivity (Comish & Swindle, 1994) and effective work life & health (Davidson & Cooper, 1983; Dwyer, 1999). Occupational stressors are various job-related stressors which negatively influence the performance and well-being of the employees (Kang, 2005), since they exist in every organisation, though their degree may vary from

occupation to occupation and individual to individual (Gignac & Appelbaum, 1997).

1.2 Literature Review

Stress, being the force, pressure or strain exerted upon a material object, resists these forces and attempts to maintain its original state. It can also be defined as a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he or she desires, the outcome of the same is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Further, it can be explained as the by-product of modern life that results from our efforts of trying to balance the demands of the work place and family life. Occupational stress has received significant attention from the management, employees and other stakeholders (Ongori & Agolla, 2008) as it has been recognised as a serious problem in many organisations (Cooper & Cartwright, 1994; Varca, 1999; Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003). The same has been defined as the perception of discrepancy between environmental demands and individual's capacities to fulfill these demands (Topper, 2007; Vermunt & Steensma, 2005). Occupational stress produces a range of undesirable, expensive and debilitating consequences (Ross, 2005), which affect both individuals and organisations, as it is now-a-days becoming a major contributor to health and performance problems of an individual. It is not only a huge burden (Ben Bakr, et al., 1995), but one of the fastest growing concerns to contemporary organisations. Further, occupational stress can be associated with both pleasant and unpleasant events, and only becomes problematic when it remains unresolved (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2006). The negative effects of organisational stress are: reduced efficiency, increased conflicts, dampened initiative and reduced interest in work, increased rigidity of thoughts, lack of concern for the organisation & colleagues and a loss of responsibility (Ivancevish, et. al., 1990) which directly affects the job performance of the employees in an organisation (Schabracq & Cooper, 2000; McHugh, 1993).

When an individual lacks information about the requirements of his or her role, how those role requirements are to be met and the evaluative procedures available to ensure that the role is being performed successfully, it can be defined as role ambiguity (Beehr et al., 1976), Cooper (1991), Dyer and Quine (1998) and Ursprung (1986). It was further found that role ambiguity leads to the negative outcome as it reduces confidence, increases anxiety and depression (Jackson & Schuler, 1985) and (Muchinsky, 1997).

Performance of an employee means the extent to which an individual is carrying out assignment or tasks. Job performance is the most important dependent variable in the industrial and organisational psychology (Kahya, 2007). It refers to the degree of accomplishment of task that makes up an employee's job. Therefore, job performance refers to the effectiveness of the individual behaviour that contributes to organisational objectives. It can further be explained as the result of three factors working together i.e. skill (includes knowledge, abilities and competencies the employee brings to the job), efforts (means the degree of motivation the employee puts forth towards getting the job done) and the nature of work

conditions (means the accommodation of these conditions in facilitating the employee's productivity). Therefore, it is the net effect of an employee's efforts as modified by the abilities and roles at task perceptions. Stress is inherent in the concept of creativity. In Psychophysiology, stress refers to some stimulus resulting in a defect able strain that cannot be accommodated by the organism and ultimately results in impaired health or behaviour.

On the basis of aforesaid literature, a proposed theoretical model (Figure 1) is given as under:

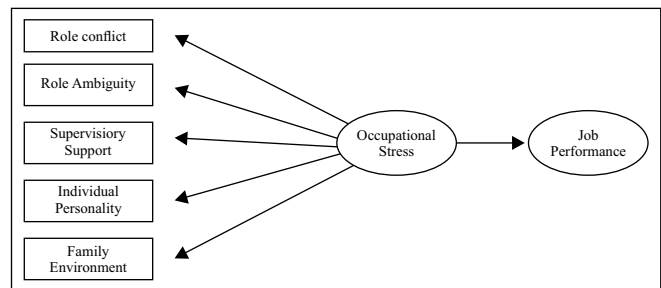


Figure 1: Conceptual model of the study

1.3. Hypothesis Development

In the present era, researchers and practitioners visualise the phenomenon of occupational stress in a new perspective. Each individual needs a moderate amount of occupational stress to be alert and capable of functioning effectively in an organisation. Occupational stress affects the job performance of the individuals in the organisation because a moderate level of stress can actually improve the job performance of an individual as stress is a necessary part of life and it does not always involve individual performance. Several studies have been conducted to support the detrimental effect of occupational stress on job performance with the help of various theories (Pincherle, 1972). A negative linear relation theory explains that low level of stress consequently results in low job performance (Meglino, 1977) whereas, a positive linear relation theory explains that stress works as a challenge that improves the job performance of the employees (Hatton, et. al., 1995; Kahn & Long, 1988). The inverted-U theory of stress-performance relation represents a merger of the negative and positive linear theories. It suggests that increasing stress is good for job performance up to a point beyond which it becomes bad (Sun, & Chiou, 2011).

(Rizzo et.al. 1970) opined that role ambiguity and role conflict are two related but distinctive constructs of role stressors. Consciously or unconsciously each person in the organisation has to face conflict which has a positive or negative impact on its personality (Jehn, 1997). Various researchers (Williams and Cooper, 1998; Elfering et al., 2005) found that reduced productivity, high turnover, frequent tardiness and absenteeism are common consequences of workplace stressors whereas, supportive behaviour of supervisors in the form of showing concern for subordinates' personal welfare helps in distressing the employees and induces positive attitude among them. Individual differences affects our perceptions and interpretations of events around us whereas,

personality variables including locus of control, self esteem, type A-behaviour pattern, hardiness and negative affectivity were found to be the most significant in analysing the source of stress and its level of impact on different individuals (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991; Lind & Otte, 1994; Murphy, 1995). Family and work life is mutually dependent and interconnected with each other as one area of life is affected by experiences in other area. Thus, it is hypothesised that:

- H1: Occupational stress significantly and negatively affects job performance.
- H1 (a): Role conflict and Role ambiguity negatively affect job performance.
- H1 (b): Superior support, Individual personality and family environment positively affect job performance.

1.4. Research Design and Methodology

1.4.1. Data collection

Both primary and secondary sources relevant to the research problem have been used in the study. Primary data have been collected through self-modified and well-structured questionnaire. Secondary sources are the books, newspapers and relevant journals. Unpublished and published information from internet and magazines has also been used to substantiate literature survey and primary information.

1.4.2. Technique of data collection

Questionnaire used consisted of two sections, one general and other dimension specific to elicit information about dimensions of occupational stress and job performance. The

data have been collected on five point Likert scale (5---1) 5 denoting strongly agree and 1 strongly disagree. Suggestions were kept in open ended form. After pretesting, the questionnaire was further modified and final survey was conducted on 986 police employees from 12 different wings of Jammu Province.

1.4.3. Scale purification –Exploratory factor analysis

The data reduction technique was performed in three steps. First of all, in the anti-image correlation the items with value less than 0.5 on the diagonal axis were deleted. In the second step, the extracted communalities were checked (amount of variance in each variable) and items with values less than 0.5 were ignored for the further analysis. In the third step, in rotated component matrices statements with multiple loadings and values less than 0.5 was deleted. Further, value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) above 0.7 or near to 0.7 and significant Bartlett's test of Sphericity (BTS) was considered as an indicator of appropriateness of using exploratory factor analysis (Malhotra, 2007). Besides these, variance explained (VE) above 50% has also been taken into consideration. The detailed explanation of the factors emerged after applying EFA separately on each construct is summarised in Table 1.

1.4.4. Scale validation- Confirmatory factor analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is the way of testing how well measured variables represent a latent construct (Hair et al., 2009). Fitness of the model has been assessed with various global fit indices like goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), normed fit index (NFI), Tucker-

Dimension	Factor loading	Mean	S.D.	Commonalities	Eigen value	% Variance	% cumulative	Alpha (a)
I) Occupational Stress								
A)Role Conflict								
F1								
I feel responsible for the happiness of the people around me.	.767	3.91	0.911	.588	1.683	66.096	66.096	.695
I am not able to satisfy the conflicting demands of my superiors and subordinates.	.749	3.05	1.183	.561				
I receive incompatible orders from two or more people at the same time.	.731	3.37	1.277	.534				
B)Role Ambiguity								
F1(Undefined role and scope)					2.567	24.687	24.687	.697
I don't get facts and information with enough clarity to work to my best ability.	.812	2.74	1.086	.660				
I am not clear about the scope and responsibilities of my job.	.756	2.37	1.092	.731				
There are no established procedures for handling a particular situation on my job.	.732	2.07	0.913	.537				
F2 (Unclear about career aspects and other's expectations)					1.499	20.425	45.112	.640

Dimension	Factor loading	Mean	S.D.	Commonalities	Eigen value	% Variance	% cumulative	Alpha (a)
I easily get frustrated with the job.	.779	2.81	1.193	.612				
I am more worried about my career prospects.	.710	3.63	1.579	.507				
I don't know what people, I work with, expect from me.	.584	2.80	1.185	.613				
F3 (Improper communication)					1.087	19.306	64.419	.654
My organisation lacks effective communication.	.858	2.70	1.288	.766				
I feel incentives are not linked with the performance in my job.	.849	2.75	1.225	.728				
A)Supervisory Support								
F1((Unparticipative)					1.913	37.718	37.718	.628
I feel it awkward in asking my superiors for help while performing my job.	.768	3.28	1.236	.600				
My superiors do not take personal interest in their subordinates.	.754	3.27	1.258	.593				
My superiors are not ready to help me in completion of my job.	.679	2.84	1.191	.597				
My superiors do not consider my opinion while taking important organisational decisions.	.526	4.08	1.108	.331				
F2(Unhappy working relations)					1.389	23.317	61.035	.781
I have developed bitter relationships with my co-workers due to non cooperation from them and superiors.	.778	2.55	0.885	.607				
Due to lack of cooperation from superiors, I respond angrily to any request from my co-workers.	.766	2.80	0.994	.593				
B)Individual Personality								
F1					1.529	60.975	60.975	.710
I want to be liked by all in the organisation.	.665	3.93	0.747	.443				
I hear every piece of information or questions as criticism for my job.	.762	3.06	1.070	.581				
If someone criticises my work, I take it as a personal attack.	.711	3.05	1.155	.505				
C)Family Environment								
F1					2.081	62.019	62.019	.665
Usually my office tensions disturb my family life.	.811	4.35	0.897	.657				
I get disturbed because of poor performance of my children in studies.	.754	3.48	1.076	.569				
I believe, I am living on the stretched budget and have financial obligations which are difficult to meet up.	.717	4.52	0.830	.514				
I blame my family, because of them; I have to stay in the job and don't take quick promotions.	.584	2.67	1.284	.341				

Dimension	Factor loading	Mean	S.D.	Commonalities	Eigen value	% Variance	% cumulative	Alpha (a)
2)Job performance								
F1 (Contendedness)					2.219	42.573	42.573	.789
I feel comfortable while working on my job.	.872	3.28	1.016	.779				
I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with the same organisation.	.860	3.19	1.120	.760				
All my achievements are recognised by my superiors.	.778	3.39	1.080	.621				
F2(Trainig & Orientation)					1.509	31.976	74.549	.716
I would quit immediately if I could just find something else to do.	.890	2.15	0.981	.794				
I would take almost any other job with similar earnings and benefits.	.867	.2.22	1.145	.774				

Lewis Index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), Root mean squared error (RMR) and Root mean square error of

SS=Supervisory Support, IP=Individual Personality, FE=Family Environment, OS=Occupational Stress, JP=Job Performance, e1-e7 are the error terms of manifest variables and latent constructs.

Figure 3: Dimension wise impact of occupational stress on

Table 2: Fit Indices of Measurement Models

Dimension/Construct	CMIN/df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMR
Role Conflict	3.708	.993	.975	.940	.922	.890	.056	.026
Role Ambiguity	4.408	.985	.965	.985	.981	.978	.062	.015
Supervisory Support	2,405	.939	.935	.918	.840	.816	.051	.015
Individual Personality	1.669	.968	.950	919	.856	.888	.037	.013
Family Environment	2.246	.953	.945	.927	.915	.909	.044	.014

Table 3: Reliability and Validity of Scales

Dimensions/Constructs	AVE	CR
Role Conflict	0.517	0.934
Role Ambiguity	0.787	0.983
Supervisory Support	0.863	0.876
Individual Personality	0.732	0.877
Family Environment	0.726	0.796

job performance.

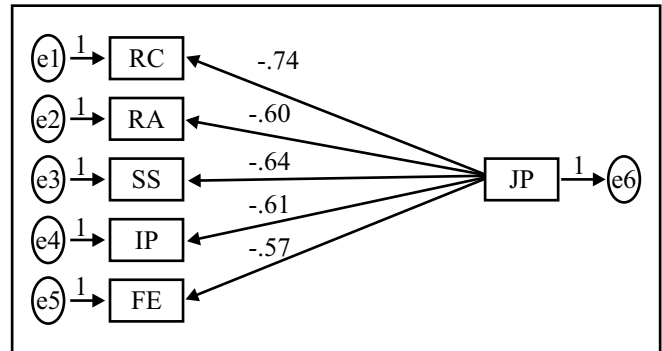
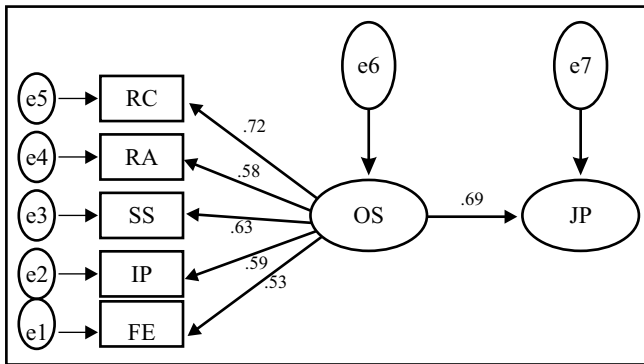


Table 4: Overall Fitness

Dimension/Construct	CMIN/df	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMR
Model 1	4.532	.921	.901	.940	.920	.914	.079	0.38
Model 2	3.682	.910	.899	.932	.902	.823	0.72	.028

1.6. Discussion:

Stress is a universal element experienced by employees around the globe. Stress has become major problem for employer particularly in developing nations where the employer doesn't realise the impact of stress on employee performance. Hence this paper attempts to understand the impact of the occupational stress on job performance among police employees of J&K police and to evaluate the impact of five different dimensions namely: role conflict, role ambiguity, supervisory support, individual personality and family environment on job performance. The results of present study provided a realistic and theoretical contribution to the existing literature of occupational stress. Firstly, there is a significant negative relationship between occupational stress and job performance which shows that the performance of employees of J&K police is negatively affected by the occupational stress. This study also revealed that role conflict and role ambiguity have a negative impact on job performance of the employees. This result is in line with the studies conducted by Dar et al, 2011. Whereas, (Latif & Gulzar, 2011, Abdullah et al., 2013 and Huffman et al, 2008) found positive impact of supervisory support, individual personality and family environment. It indicates that supervisory support, individual personality and family environment affect it positively. Proper support from the senior staff, family members enhance the motivation among the employees to perform well and increase the productivity of the organisation. So, it is very essential to have supporting superior staff and a

congenial family environment to reduce the negative impact of occupational stress and increase the job performance among the employees in an organisation. The findings and the interpretations of the present study provide valuable recommendations to the police department of J&K police.

1.7 Practical Implications:

Findings depict that police personnel have become more aware about occupational stress, its sources, consequences and its impact on job performance. As we know that occupational stress is negatively related to the performance of the employees. Higher level of stress reduces the efficiency of the employees and they are not able to give their best to their organisation. Thus it is very important to reduce it by concentrating on various aspects of occupational stress among police personnel. Stress level among the police personnel can be reduced: by explaining to the employees about their exact roles and duties, by providing them proper and adequate superior support, by understanding their personality traits and lastly by maintaining work-life balance among employees at each and every level of hierarchy in the organisation.

1.8 Limitations and Future Research:

The study covered only five dimensions of occupational stressors namely: role conflict, role ambiguity, supervisory support, individual personality and family environment. Thus, future research ought to consider other occupational stressors like role overload, role erosion, role stagnation, resource

inadequacy. The study is limited to 12 different wings of J&K police in Jammu province of the state. Thus, the results of the study cannot be generalized. The study covers police department only and future studies can apply this approach to Army, Air force etc. Moreover, a comparative study can also be explored in future.

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