Policy Prespective: A Psychological Analysis of Job Satisfaction and Burnout Among Police Officials in India

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Abstract: Objectives: 1. The study uses psychological tools of Burnout and Job Satisfaction to understand the nature of work, environment and lifestyle of the police officials in India with an insight into the problems the police force comes across in their workplace

2.The paper aims to explore the possible solutions to these problems through the implementation of Public Policy

Significance: The research holds importance in trying to bring out the nature of work and the effects of the working style and conditions on the work and lifestyle of the police officials. With the help of Psychological tools , the research tends to put forward certain possible solutions to the problems they face in their workplace and points out the aspects of work to be rectified or modified in order to bring out a congenial working environment and a healthy lifestyle of the police officials through public policy.

Some of the changes the Policy would like to put forward are- appointment of a counselor in the workplace of the police officials, workshops on stress management techniques to be conducted, sensitivity training programmes and so on.

Methodology: Personal Interviews, Field study, Administration of Job Satisfaction Scale by Dr. Paul Spector and Copengham Burnout Inventory on the police officials.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Burnout, Public Policy, Police officials

INTRODUCTION

A public policy is a plan of action undertaken to achieve some broad purpose affecting large segment of the citizenry. Public comprises a domain of human activity which is regarded as requiring governmental interventions or common actions. Policy is a purposive course of action taken or adopted by those in power to pursuit certain goals and objectives. Public policy inputs shape a government's policy decisions and strategies to address problems. A government's public policy is a plan of action undertaken by government officials to achieve some broad purpose affecting a substantial segment of a nation's citizens. Maintenance of public order and the rule of law is a key sovereign function of the Government. . Police, which is a part of the civil administration, is at the forefront in maintaining law and order. Policy reforms catering to the maintence and development of the police force in India have transformed them into representatives of the society working under the framework of law. However the increasing suicide rate, degrading job satisfaction, rampant job vacancy and workplace burnout have increased the need to introduce policies catering to the overall development and welfare of the

officials by throwing more focus on the areas of mental health and work life balance along with an improvisation of technology and workplace environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Occupational stress among police personnel in India: a study of occupational stress and associated physical and mental health amongst police officials in India by Ragesh G and Ameez Hamza. Cross-sectional survey was conducted among police personnel (both male and female) in Calicut urban police district, Kerala state, India. Police personnel from all designations (ranks), except from the all India services (Indian Police Service) were included in the study. Data were collected using a specifically designed datasheet covering socio-demographic profile, physical and mental health related details which was prepared by researchers. Occupational stress was measured using Operational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-OP) and Organisational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-ORG). Result: The study found that both operational and organisational stress was significant among the police officers. Organisational stress was experienced in moderate level by 68% and in high level by 14%. Operational stress scores were in the moderate range in 67% and in high range in 16.5%. The younger age group (21-35 years) and lower level rank police personnel had higher stress. Stress was higher among female police personnel compared to males. While 23% of them had been diagnosed with physical illnesses, a significant four per cent of them with mental illness, and 29% of them reported substance abuse. Conclusion: The results point to the high level of stress among Indian police personnel and the need for urgent interventions from the government to address the occupational stress.

Sources of occupational stress in the police personnel of North India: The study by Swetha Singh and Sujata Kumar aimed to explore various sources of stress among police personnel. In this study, 100 constables, 100 inspectors and 100 police officers of Uttar Pradesh, were evaluated using the occupational stress questionnaire. This was subjected to the quantitative as well as the qualitative analysis. Occupational stress was commonly perceived among all police personnel, but the major attributes of stress in various groups were diverse

Burnout in U.K. Prison Officers: The Role of Personality by Rebecca Brown. The study assessed the role of personality on burnout in prison officers. About 120 U.K. prison officers completed questionnaires assessing three dimensions of burnout, the "big five" personality variables, and locus of control. Neuroticism predicted emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment, and locus of control predicted all burnout dimensions. Prison officers higher in neuroticism and with an external locus of control might be at greater risk for burnout. Future studies might examine whether stress-management interventions alleviate officer burnout, with particular attention to officers whose personality profile places them .

Methodology And Analysis

The policy aims to address the problems faced by the police officials in their workplace by throwing light on their deteriorating mental health, increasing burnout, low job satisfaction, increase in suicides, job vacancy and depleted workplace environment with the help of primary and secondary data collected.

Operational Defination

1. Job Satisfaction

In general, most definitions cover the affective feeling an employee has towards their job. This could be the job in general or their attitudes towards specific aspects of it, such as: their colleagues, pay or working conditions. In addition, the extent to which work outcomes meet or exceed expectations may determine the level of job satisfaction. However, job satisfaction is not only about how much an employee enjoys work. Taber and Alliger found that when employees of an American educational institute rated how much they enjoyed individual tasks within their role, their scores were moderately correlated to satisfaction with the work itself, and associated (although weakly) with global job satisfaction. Taber and Alliger also found that other measures (such as, level of concentration required for the job, level of supervision, and task importance) all had no impact on satisfaction. This study demonstrates that the accumulating enjoyment of work tasks added up to

overall job satisfaction. However, the low relationship does suggest that other factors, besides enjoyment, contribute to how satisfied employees feel at work

2. Burnout

The term "burnout" was coined in the 1970s by the American psychologist Herbert Freudenberg. He used it to describe the consequences of severe stress and high ideals in "helping" professions. Doctors and nurses, for example, who sacrifice themselves for others, would often end up being "burned out" – exhausted, listless, and unable to cope. In the words of Meshach (1982), "Burnout is a psychological syndrome involving emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment that occurred among various professionals who work with other people in challenging situations

Primary Data: The study was conducted on 30 police officials from the Northeastern part of India. With the help of questionnaire, field study and interviews under survey research design the following results were derived-

A) **Questionnaire:** Job Satisfaction Scale by Dr. Paul E Spector and Copenhagen Burnout Inventory was administered on 30 police officials. The data was tabulated in MS Excel and the results showed a significantly high burnout and a simultaneously low job satisfaction of the sample. With the help of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, a negative correlation between job satisfaction and burnout
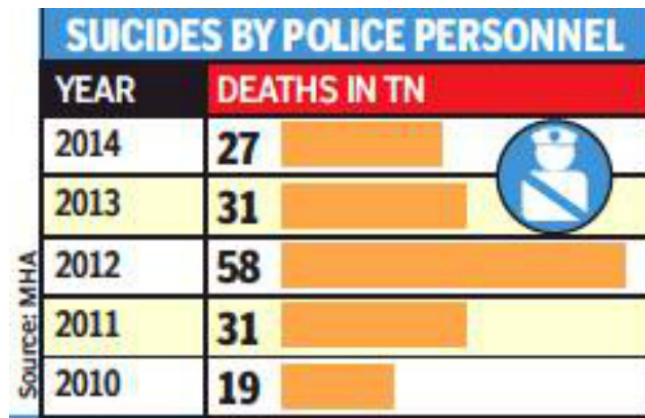
Correlations	Burnout	Job Satisfaction
Pearson Correlation		
Sig. (2-tailed)		-0.0499199399
N	30	30
Note: *p<0.05 **p<0.01		

B) **Field Study and Interview:** After interviewing 30 personnel and surveying their area of work [police stations] the following information was derived-

1. Deplorable working environment with lack of proper infrastructure and workspace

2 In most of the cases, barracks and quarters of the police personnel is in a deplorable condition leading to an unhealthy environment.

3. Political interference appears as a hindrance in their functioning very often

4. Inadequate strength in most of the police stations creates overload of work on the existing staff

5. Frequent bandhs/ strikes in the Northeastern region of India creates an unscheduled work pressure on the police force and round the clock duty towards maintence of law and order of the particular locality.

Secondary Data

1. According to the World Health Organization, at least 15 suicides took place every hour in the country. The rate of police officials ending life is going up every year. The following table shows the rapid increase in the rate of suicides amongst police officials in India. Maharashtra tops the list with 200 cases reported from 2006 to 2011 according to a report by the National Crime Reports Bureau.

SUICIDES BY POLICE PERSONNEL

YEAR	DEATHS IN TN
2014	27
2013	31
2012	58
2011	31
2010	19

Source: MHA

Former Indian Police Service Officer turned lawyer Y.A Singh said that excessive pressure and failure to accomplish desired professional ambitions may act as a primary or major contributory reason for suicide among the police officials.

2. Around five lakh police posts of the sanctioned strength of 22.63 lakh are lying vacant across the country. According to Home Ministry statistics, there are 22,63,222 sanctioned posts in police forces of all states in the country, of which 17,61,200 are occupied while 5,02,022 posts are lying vacant The highest 1.80 lakh posts are lying vacant in Uttar Pradesh where the sanctioned strength of police force is 3,64,200 personnel.

Meanwhile , according to a report of the Bureau of Police Research and Development there are 188 police stations in the country which have no telephone connections, 134 police stations don't have wireless sets and 65 have neither a telephone nor a wireless set.

Action Plan/ Policy Suggestion: Keeping into consideration the occupational and individual problems faced by the police officials in India validated by the primary and secondary data found the following policies or action plans can be suggested.

1. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances can constitute a high power committee comprising competent retired police officers from every district to initiate a survey in every police station. The committee will carry out their survey centering around manpower strength, vehicles to be used, proper accommodation facilities, educational and family expenses   working environment congeniality and submit their report annually to the implementing authority. The Department in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Technology can form an outsourcing or contractual team of efficient IT professionals to implement a Remote Monitoring and Control System with Centralised Server alongwith a Real Time CCTV survillience operation in each state level headquarter.

2. National Mental Health Programme under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare can appoint a District Level Committee under the strata of District Mental Health Programme focusing mainly on organizational mental health of police officials.The committee will include the following-

   • **Manpower**: 2 clinical psychologists, 1 organizational psychologist, 2 Counselors

   • **Services**: a) Weekly counseling sessions to be undertaken under the premises of a police station[includes family and group counseling]

   b) Sensitivity Training Programmes alongwith workshops on stress management techniques to be conducted on a monthly basis

c) A 24X7 availabilty on call service to be provided.

d) A mental health survey report of the police officials to be submitted to the authorities concerned on a yearly basis.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in collaboration with the ministry of information and technology can launch an application based programme designed exclusively for the police officials where they can anonymously share their grievances and receive help in matters relating to personal as well as occupational grievances.

Conclusion

The policies put forward for kind acceptance and necessary persuasion with appropriate authority for proper implementation to upgrade the occupational performance and wellbeing of the police officials, alongwith preservation of individual mental as well as physical state and thereby contributing to the overall welfare of the society.

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