

Comparative Study

Burnout and type a behaviour among police constables: a comparative study

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ABSTRACT

The most important aspect of the security and safety of the citizens of a country is the main responsibility of police. It is said that the most visible segment of any government is the uniformed policemen. Though the police department functioning is within the controls of ministry of home affairs; yet the state power and responsibility of the structure and dynamics lies with the Inspector General of police. Occupational stress can be defined as the physiological and emotional responses that occur when workers perceive an imbalance between their work demands and their capability and resources to meet these demands. The data was collected from 300 police constables (an equal number of male and female) in the age range of 25 to 40 years utilizing random sampling technique. Maslach Burnout Inventory by Maslach and Jackson (1986) and Type A Behaviour was assessed with the help of Pace of Life Index by Schafer (1978). Results were obtained by applying t-test which revealed that male and female police constables are significantly different in Burnout and Type A Behaviour. Female police constables were found to be high in Total Burnout than male police constables whereas Male police constables were found to have higher mean scores on Type A Behaviour than female police constables.

Keywords: Mental Health, Depression, Anxiety, Psychological Distress, Supportive Therapy

The need for police reforms in India is long recognized. Several Committees have been set up over the years, those have made practical recommendations for police reforms but unfortunately, they have not been implemented. The Supreme Court pronounced a historical judgment on 22nd September, 2006 for reforming the criminal justice system and strengthening the rule of law in the country, for making police administration more accountable and to protect it from political interference (Rauch, 2000). Some of the recommendations of the Committee are summed up as follows: setting up of a State Security Commission in every state to ensure that state government does not exercise unwarranted influence or pressure on the police; DGP of state to be selected from among three senior-most officers, will have fixed tenure of at least 2 years; IG, Deputy IG, SP and SHO will have minimum fixed tenure of 2 years; investigating police will be separated from law and order police to ensure speedier investigation, between expertise and improved rapport with

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people; police Establishment Board in each state to decide on transfers, postings etc. and service related matters of officer's up to DSP; police Complaints Authority at district level to look into complaints against police officers till DSP; centre to set up National Security Commission for selection and placement of Chiefs of Central Police Organizations (Rauch, 2000).

Functioning of police

According to Miller (2005), law enforcement is one of the important professions in which employees deal with a range of individuals from different levels of society. Police officers interact with criminals; they have many relationships with other community members and they have mutual communication with other law enforcement professions. Even though people working in law enforcement agencies are trained to manage interactions with different kinds of people, the necessity of making decisions under time constraints for specific circumstances creates significant stress for law enforcement.

Maslach and Jackson (1986), defined burnout as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment that may occur among individuals with human service professions. Further, Friedman and Rosenman (1974) gave the following definition of Type A behavior pattern, "an action-emotion complex that can be observed in any person who is aggressively involved in a chronic incessant struggle to achieve more and more in less and less time and if required to do so, against the opposing effects of other things or persons".

Burnout and type a behavior

Personality is the most important and most noticeable part of an individual's life. Almost each one of us in day-to-day life finds ourselves describing and assessing the personality of those around us. Earlier it was viewed that personality does not matter regarding the understanding of employee's performance, therefore management people in the organization put greater emphasis on the reward structures in the corporate culture as important criteria for employee's performance. But now it has been realized that the personality plays an important role in the performance of an employee (Khan, 2011).

Type A behaviour has long been implicated as risk factor for health. Type A behaviour personality as conceptualized by Friedman & Rosenman (1974) describes such type of people who are impulsive, competitive, aggressive, impatient and more susceptible to develop the symptoms of coronary heart disease. Marmot and Syme (1976) reported that Type A were experience more at risk to coronary heart disease than Type B. Caplan and Jone (1977) found that the relationship between workload and anxiety was greater for Type A behavior than Type-B behavior. Williams (1984) suggested that not all Type A behaviour were unhealthy but hostility and anger were the most damaging components of Type A in terms of coronary heart disease. Abush and Burkhead (1984) investigated the relationship between Type A personality, perceived job characteristics and feeling of job tension. The results revealed a significant relationship between job tension and linear combination of Type A personality and job characteristics. The personality traits of external locus of control and type A behaviours were associated with higher perceived levels of stress originating from work place dimensions (Kirkcaldy, Shephard & Furnham, 1995).

In a significant study, Sharpley, Dua, Reynolds and Acosta (1995) studied the direct and relative efficacy of cognitive hardiness, Type A behaviour pattern, coping behaviour and social support as predictors of stress and ill-health among 1,925 staff of an Australian

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University. Data showed moderate levels of anxiety, fairly good average health and moderate job stress and daily hassles. High job stress, high type A behaviour scores, low social support, ineffective coping, and low cognitive hardiness predicted poorer physical and psychological health. Men appeared healthier than women. Cognitive hardiness most powerfully predicted overall good health and lower job stress. On Similar line, Farahbakhsh (2009) investigated the level of job burnout among the top managers. The results showed that the participants had more frequency in depersonalization, lack of personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion dimensions of job burnout respectively. Further, Deshmukh (2009) found that personality had a significant influence on the stress of employees. For this purpose, 100 employees were taken. It was found that employees with Type A personality had higher stress than employees with Type B personality. Therefore, the present study was formulated to understand gender difference in Burnout and Type A Behaviour in police constables of Union Capital territory Chandigarh. Saxena (2008) examined the relationship between Type A behavior pattern and coronary heart disease. The study was carried out on a sample consisting of different ranks of police officers viz. police constables, head constables, sub inspectors, and inspectors of police in Andhra-Pradesh. 40.5% of police constables, 41.5% head constables, 30% of sub inspectors, and 25% inspectors of police were found to have very high Type-A Behavior. He found that Type A behavior lead to coronary heart disease because it included more stress and typical Type A behavior were of intense sense of time urgency, polyphasic behavior, hostility, aggression etc. Khan (2011) examined the relationship of job burnout and Type A behaviour with psychological health. The obtained results revealed that anger had been found to be significantly related with personal accomplishment and overall job burnout. Tension was found to be positively and significantly related with impatience, job involvement and Type A behavior. Overall job burnout emerged as a significant predictor of anger. Emotional exhaustion and depersonalization emerged as the significant predictors of tension. Varvarigou et al. (2014) conducted a study to find the association between risk of sudden cardiac death and stressful law enforcement duties compared with routine/non-emergency duties. For this purpose, summaries of deaths of over 4500 US police officers provided by the national law enforcement officer's memorial fund and the officer down memorial page were taken. The results of the study showed that sudden cardiac death was associated with restraints/altercations (25%, n=108), physical training (20%, n=88), pursuits of suspects (12%, n=53), medical/rescue operations (8%, n=34), routine duties (23%, n=101), and other activities (11%, n=57). Compared with routine/non-emergency activities, the risk of sudden cardiac death was 34-69 times higher during restraints/altercations, 32-51 times higher during pursuits, 20-23 times higher during physical training, and 6-9 times higher during medical/rescue operations.

Aim of the study is to understand how male and female police constables of Union Capital Territory Chandigarh different from each other in terms of Burnout and Type A Behaviour. Keeping this aim in mind the following mentioned objective was framed.

Objective

To study gender differences in Burnout and Type A Behavior among police constables.

Hypothesis

1. Female police constables were expected higher on Burnout and its dimensions than male police Constables.
2. Male police Constables were expected higher on Type A Behavior than Female police Constables.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is designed to explore gender difference in Burnout and Type A Behaviour among Chandigarh police constable. Therefore, the data is collected keeping in mind the objective of the study. In the subsequent section's necessary information about sample, tools used and the procedure employed for obtaining the relevant information has been presented.

Sample

The data was collected from 300 police constables (an equal number of male and female) serving in different police departments of Chandigarh such as Police stations, traffic departments and Police Control room department, in the age range of 25 to 40 years utilizing random sampling technique. Only married constables were selected. And also, only those constables were selected who had been working from at least last 3 years. Educational qualification of the individuals participated in the study was restricted to minimum 10th to graduation.

The following Tools were used:

- 1. MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY (Maslach & Jackson, 1986):** This test was developed by Maslach to measure Burnout which is a syndrome of Emotional Exhaustion, De-personalization and Reduced Personal Accomplishment. There are 22 items, which are divided into three subscales of Emotional Exhaustion, De-personalization and Reduced Personal Accomplishment. Emotional Exhaustion pertains to the feeling when an individual loses his/her emotional forces and is no longer able to maintain emotional relations with others. The second dimension of Burnout is De-personalization. This parameter of attrition pertains to non-sentimental and rude responses to visitors and co-workers. Individual's suffering from attrition syndrome has negative and reproachful feelings and outlook towards others. Reduced Personal Accomplishment refers to individual's negative understanding of their vocational effort, and the feeling that there is no progress in the work and their efforts do not yield positive results. The items are answered in terms of the frequency with which the respondent experienced these feelings on Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (0) to strongly agree (5). The reliability index measured by Cronbach's alpha was .90 for Emotional Exhaustion, .70 for Depersonalization and .71 for Reduced Personal Accomplishment. Many researchers have used this test in India successfully viz..Sahu and Yadav (2008), Shukla and Trivedi (2008) and Savneet (2012).
- 2. PACE OF LIFE INDEX (Schafer, 1978):** The Pace of Life Index was used to measure Type A behaviour. This scale was developed by Schafer (1978). Presented as a series of 20 questions, it examines personal, daily habits to determine if a person is in a state of "high hurry", "medium hurry" or "low hurry". For each question, three possible answers exist, ranging from "Always" to "Seldom" and "Never". The higher the score the higher is an individual's velocity of life. The test is reported to show adequate reliability and validity. The Pace of life Index has been used in India by Pasandideh (2011), Saini (2014) and Thakur (2015).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The t-test was applied to study the gender differences in Burnout and Type A Behaviour among police constables of Union Capital Territory Chandigarh. The results obtained on applying t-test on the data collected from male and female police constables on the variables of Burnout and Type A Behaviour is presented below in the Table-1.

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Results obtained on applying t-ratios reveal significance difference between two means. The Table shows the mean, standard deviation and t-ratios of the measured variables in male and female police constables in the age group of 25 to 40 years. The group differences are examined on all the variables using t-ratios.

Table-1 Mean, SD & t-Ratios on the Variables of Burnout and Type A Behaviour

Sr. No.	Variables	Male Police Constables (n=150)		Female Police Constables (n=150)		t-ratios
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1.	Emotional Exhaustion	25.56	5.96	24.51	7.03	1.41
2.	De-personalization	19.24	5.33	19.93	5.94	0.94
3.	Reduced Personal Accomplishment	10.74	7.86	7.95	3.02	3.75**
4.	Total Burnout	34.03	8.29	36.62	10.08	2.80**
5.	Type A Behaviour	40.03	10.25	30.20	7.51	9.48**

*t-value significant at 0.05 level=1.97

**t-value significant at 0.01 level=2.60

Table-1 shows means, SD and t-ratios comparing male and female police constables. The comparison revealed the following t-ratios to be significant. Female police constables scored significantly higher on Total Burnout ($t = 2.80, p < .01$) than male constables. Male Police Constables scored higher than Female Police Constables on Reduced Personal Accomplishment ($t = 3.75, P < .01$) and Type A behaviour ($t = 9.48, P < .01$).

Thus, hypothesis 1 regarding the Female police constables were expected higher on Burnout and its dimensions than male police Constables is accepted here. Earlier studies revealed that similar trends regarding Burnout and Type A Behaviour. Pradhan and Misra (1996) examined the relationship between Type A behaviour and burnout. The results indicated that the moderate level of Type A behaviour pattern subjects showed lower levels of burnout. Van, Peter & Schalk, (1997) studied the relationships between the Type A behaviour pattern, work overload, role related stress and well-being in computerized office among employees holding office jobs in a large insurance company, a library and a staffing organization. Path analysis showed that work overload partially mediated the relationship between Type A behaviour and well-being, and that role related stress and work overload strongly affect well-being in this type of work. Work overload did not moderate the relationship between Type A behaviour and well-being. Jamal (2004) examined the relationship between non-standard work schedules (shift work and weekend work) and job burnout, stress and psychosomatic health problems. Results indicated that employees involved with weekend work and non-fixed day shifts reported significantly higher emotional exhaustion and health problems than other employees. Hypothesis 2 pertaining to the Male police Constables was expected higher on Type A Behavior than Female police Constables is accepted here. Previous studies indicated similar findings (Pradhan & Misra, 1996; Khan, 2011).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Female police constables scored higher than male police constables on Total Burnout whereas male constables scored high on Type A Behaviour. Research also revealed that as compare to other professions like teaching, police constables have been found to score higher in Burnout. Based upon the present study, one may conclude that gender differences have clearly emerged in burnout and Type A Behaviour.

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Therefore, the present investigation is the modest attempt ad helped to gain understand about the burnout experienced by the police constables. It is therefore suggested that in order to create a stress-free environment, restricting of male female duties. There is a dire need to provide awareness to the police Department, the burnout experienced by the police constables and furthermore provide them psychological assistance through training.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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