

Ways to Reduce Occupational Stress in Indian Military Settings

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ABSTRACT

Military organization is that organization of every country because of which country inner machinery runs smoothly. Military man always protects the people of its country but defense forces people themselves dealing with so many factors like postings, harsh climatic conditions, frequent separation all these things give them immense amount of occupational stress which affect the personal and professional fronts. Counselling, music therapy, Yoga practices, Spiritual healing help them in a better way to deal with stress.

Keywords: *Occupational Stress, Military Psychology, Stress, Counseling Etc.*

Military is a organization of discipline, sense of urgency, fitness freak people. As it said that military persons are very strong to deal with various situation like frequent exercises, postings, hard postings, frequent climatic changes, leaving there family behind it make them strong but also give them stress a kind of emotional turbulence, leaving their family behind, adjusting to the new places with all together with harsh and new climatic conditions of Leh and ladhakh and north east.

Indian defence force has Army, air force, Navy protecting our country's borders. There are various type of ups and down happening in a person's life both in personal and professional life. Defence personnel our superheroes but army man are also normal human being.

Occupational stress

Stress is something which enhances our performance that is Eustress when stress is become wear and tear it leads to distress which make our performance low. People work in different organization with a sense of commitment, deadlines, competition, appraisals, professional ethics it gives stress to the people. 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 organization, though their degree may vary from occupation to occupation and individual to individual (Gignac & Appelbaum, 1997).

Various kinds of stressors available in different kind of profession. Organisational support is helpful in dealing with occupational stress in turn it helpful in psychological well-being. From last decade Indian army didn't fought any war but have faced various secret

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operations, New type of war strike Uri strike, Balakot strike which proves its successful planning. It is work of full of stress. Occupational stress arising out of routine military work environment is found to have significant negative impact on the mental health of military personnel. There is lack of research on the stress of military people in India.

As per the figures presented by the Defence Minister A K Antony to the Lok Sabha on March 6, 2013, a total of 368 defence personnel committed suicide from 2010 to 2012, out of which 310 soldiers belong to the Indian army alone; in 2010, 115 cases were reported as compared to 102 in 2011 and 93 in 2012. In addition, the Indian army was reported to be facing a shortage of 26,433 personnel below officer rank (Indian Military News, 2013).

A study published in The Tribune 2022 that army officers have higher stress but lower quality of life than other ranks. It is also a DRDO study. For this 150 male personnel aged between 25 to 45 years. 50 commissioned, 50 junior commissioned, 50 non commissioned. Descriptive statistics by researchers shown higher occupation stress. Officers were found to have higher stress level and lower quality of life and psychological well-being while Jco has higher level of psychological well-being and quality of life followed by other non commissioned personnel.

There is enormous amount of stress available in the armed forces profession but it is the most underrated topic to study the stress and ways to control it .In this highest number of risk is involved like separation from families, Temporary duties, frequent postings, emergency deployment in various operations, transfers to far flung areas and isolated areas, no connectivity zone, lack of freedom, fear from death, no flexibility in routine, leave should be planned ,harassment of juniors by seniors, seniors overloaded with work and duties, improper sleep and rest .All these factors lead to tremendous amount of stress in armed forces.

Recent covid times also make the mental health of army personal. Covid again gives army people strain. Leave cancelled, postings cancelled, plans cancelled, Quarantine time, disciplined restrictions and strict protocols during covid yet not taken seriously how the stressors lead to strain and yet very limited research to deal with stress.

Occupational stress is very high in military profession; nobody can deny that If people, our intellectual professional should work to help the military people to make a greater contribution towards the national interest. In this article it was focused on the ways to cope with the different type of stressors.

Intervention to cope with the stressors in military settings

- **Identification:** In this train the military person that they can understand the stressors. Identify the stressors timely so that personnel can work timely work on triggers.
- **Support system:** When people in they need various type of support like information support, tangible support, social support. In military settings there should be a good network so that they provide the support.
- **Counseling center:** There should be proper counseling centers with therapy interventions that the soldiers can openly talk about the problem and get the proper solution.

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- **Regular Dialogue forum:** At every station in army there should be a dialogue forum which should be happen on regular on diverse topics like digital addiction, alcohol addiction, sexuality, marital relationships, financial instability. topic which are not come in limelight or people should not vocal about must be discussed with lots of courteously.
- **Meditation practices:** Meditation practices come to the practices by the military personnel, sahad yoga, pranayams include in the routine of the military personnel.
- **Suggestion box:** A complaint box placed in every unit so that military men place their complaint of any harassment, anything disturbance military man can write about. Military man families feel free to write their things in complaint box. Confidentiality and privacy maintained
- **Family Welfare and family counseling:** At every unit family welfare must taken care of. In every unit wives of military man feel free to talk about the mental health issues which are faced by them. Discorded marital relationship between the spouses discussed freely .couple counseling must be done.
- **Therapy session:** Mental disorder not only solved by medication but also by therapy session. Cognitive behavioral therapy, psychoanalytic therapy, dreams analysis session must be practices by psychotherapists.
- **Health routine:** Military settings have routine settings, senior official taken care of junior official about their sleep routine, health routine, duty schedule so that soldiers don't get unnecessary strains or demotivation to work.
- **Emotional Management:** Managing emotions is very difficult in soldiers like anger, loneliness, and stay away from families so better management of emotions activities, seminars must be taken place in every station.
- **Civilian culture connect:** Time to time there should be tour and programmed should me managed so that defence people engaged with the civilian people so that they feel connected, feel refreshed and a new energy and a change of environment.
- **M TO M Therapy:** Music in military setting. Various types of music, rags must be introduced with timely session in every unit. It not only relieved the stress but it gives peace, solace to the stressful environment of military routine. Sufi music, Indian music meditation, Rags.
- **Bhakti therapy:** In Indian context and with Indian military personnel bhakti yoga. In Bhakti Yoga, the emotional life of the aspirant or seeker undergoes a gradual transformation and (s) he begins to reside more and more in a state of pure and unconditional love of, and for the Divine. The role of love in the healing of psychological wounds and hurts, and the transformative power of love in its encounter with evil, is only beginning to be fully appreciated by psychologists in India.
- **Life goals:** Stress can be induced by goal setting .Some people set very high goals and expectation but they can't meet up so it again gives you stress. Readjustment of goals is really helpful to military forces.
- **Time Management:** This is an important key of managing stress. Time management is really helpful in following goals and performing daily routines.

CONCLUSION

- Military personnel education is really important in dealing with stress.
- Exercise, Yoga practices must be practiced by the military people.
- Time management, emotional management taught to the military people

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- Bhakti yoga spiritual healing, music therapy helped military people in a positive way.

Recommendations

- Psycho education at every station related to the stress management must be there.
- Activities, program that is happening in every station must be supervised properly not only for papers.
- Suggestion –box complaints must be take care of with full privacy and confidentiality.
- Many sectors of society have a role to play, including governments, educators, doctors, paramedical staff, counsellor, the media and individuals themselves to highlight the mental health of military person.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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