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RESEARCH ARTICLE

EFFECT OF STRESS INTERVENTION PROGRAMME ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS
AMONG THE POLICE PERSONNEL IN CHENNAI CITY

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ABSTRACT

The paper attempts to study the effect of stress intervention programme on occupational stress among the police personnel in Chennai city. In the present investigation a total sample of 100 police personnel were taken with equal number of them belonging to both the gender. The tools used to assess the occupational stress among the police personnel was Police stress inventory - by Pioneer and Rothman (2006). The data obtained was subjected to statistical interpretation using SPSS (version 17). Results revealed that there was significant difference in the pre test and post test scores of stress for male and female police personnel and also for police personnel on whole. The post test scores were found to be less than the pre test scores which indicates that the stress level had decreased for the police personnel of both gender after the intervention programme. When the pre test and post test stress scores were observed separately for both genders there was not found to be any difference between them. It was also observed that female police personnel were on the higher side of stress in comparison to male police personnel.

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INTRODUCTION

Technological and information revolution, fast materialistic life, innovation and growing competition have generated in man a feeling of powerlessness, helplessness, meaninglessness and in turn a source of consequent stress. As a result, today man experiences unprecedented turmoil's, traumas and psychological conflicts (Shekhar and Kizhakekkara, 2013). Even in the present days, work environment differs considerably from the working environment of past decades; longer working hours, frequent changes in structure and function of jobs as well as a sense of job insecurity, has lead to greater incidence of work-related stress. Therefore, work stress is becoming a global phenomenon affecting every country, professions and all categories of workers. Work-related stress is seen as one of the major psychosocial risks of work. Work-related stress is one of the problems confronting human resources. It is of great apprehension to employees, employers and psychologists, because of its escalating rate in ill- health, as a result of long working hours of some employees.

Jobs that include long hours, work overload, time pressure, difficult or complex tasks, lack of breaks, lack of variety, and poor physical work conditions lead to anxiety, depression, irritability, fatigue; behavioral problems like being withdrawn, aggressive, tearful, unmotivated; psychological problems like difficulties of concentration and problem solving and physical symptoms like palpitations, nausea, headaches. If stress persists, there are changes in neuroendocrine, cardiovascular, autonomic and immunological functioning, leading to mental and physical ill health (Michie, 2002).

Every person is subject to stress, while police staff is at greater risk than other people (Mc Cafferty *et al.*, 1990). When compared to the other occupations, police service is considered highly stressful (Sever and Cinoglu, 2010; Gul, 2008; Buker and Wiecko, 2007; Yeşilorman, 2003) as they have to deal with angry mobs, counter-insurgency operations, traffic control, VIP security, political rallies, religious festival crowd control, and work twelve hours in a day or 36 hours at stretch. They have to face potentially hazardous situations that can result in physical or mental trauma or even death in the line of duty. Their work stress can be further aggravated because of their personality traits or wrong coping methods and dual role responsibility (Kaur *et al.*, 2013).

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Research conducted by WHO Health Forum (Phoon, 1983) has revealed that since the 1980s, the governments have not paid foremost attention to the concerns regarding occupational health and stress in developing countries, because of inadequate strategies and policies for human resources which has aggravated the problem. Therefore keeping all this in mind the research was conducted to find the effect of stress intervention programme in reducing the occupational stress among the police personnel in Chennai city.

Aim of the study

The present investigation was undertaken with aim to find the effect of Stress intervention programme on occupational stress among the police personnel in Chennai city.

Objectives

To plan, implement and evaluate the impact of stress reduction training programme among police personnel.

Intervention programme was conducted for 3 months (91 days) in 2 sessions, the first session being carried for 1 month (4 sessions with duration of 4 - 5 hours per session) involve didactic input as well as experiential activities; a number of handout sheets and video tapes were used to facilitate stress reduction techniques. A follow up study was carried out after 2 months of the intervention study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The above table shows that significant difference is observed in stress between the pre test and post test score among male police personnel as the calculated 't' - value ($t = 15.090$) is greater than the table value ($t = 2.56$) at 1% level of significance. The mean values also depicts that the post test score for male was found to be less than the pre test score. The tabulated data shows that there exist significant difference in the pre test and posttest score of stress among female police personnel as the calculated 't' - value ($t = 11.117$) is greater than the table value ($t = 2.56$) at 1% level of significance.

Comparison of pretest and posttest scores of stress among male police personnel

Stress	Intervention	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean	't' - value	Level of significance
Male	Pretest	50	164.26	27.981	3.957	15.090	P<0.01
	Posttest	50	130.10	31.561	4.463		

Comparison of pretest and posttest scores of stress among female police personnel

Stress	Intervention	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean	't' - value	Level of significance
Female	Pretest	50	171.74	22.489	3.180	11.117	P<0.01
	posttest	50	133.52	30.707	4.343		

Comparison of overall pretest and posttest scores of stress among police personnel

Stress	Intervention	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean	't' - value	Level of significance
Overall	Pretest	50	168.00	25.533	2.553	17.586	P<0.01
	posttest	50	131.81	31.027	3.103		

Comparison of pretest scores of stress among male and female police personnel

Stress	Intervention	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean	't' - value	Level of significance
Pretest	Male	50	164.26	27.981	3.957	1.473	NS
	Female	50	171.74	22.489	3.180		

Comparison of post test scores of stress among male and female police personnel

Stress	Intervention	N	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error mean	't' - value	Level of significance
Post test	Male	50	130.10	31.561	4.463	0.549	NS
	Female	50	133.52	30.707	4.343		

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Tools

The tools used to assess the occupational stress among the police personnel was Police stress inventory - by Pioneer and Rothman (2006).

Sample selection

Stress reduction training programme was targeted for police personnel who had high level of stress ($N = 258$). Basedn their willingness a subsample of 100 participants (50 men and 50 women) with high level of stress were selected from the St. Thomas mount armed reserve police headquarters.

Further perusal of the table shows that stress intervention programme result in lower posttest scores. The table reveals that there exists a significant difference in the pre-test and post test scores of stress among the police personnel. From the above table it is revealed that there exist a significant difference at 1% level ($t = 17.586$) among the police personnel. There was found to be a decrease in the post test score of stress among the selected police personnel. It is clear from the table that the pre test scores did not differ significantly between the male and female police personnel as the calculated 't' value ($t = 1.473$) is less than the table value ($t = 1.98$) at 1 % level of significance.

A perusal of the table shows that stress was found to be high among the female police personnel than the male police personnel. It is lucid from the table that no significant difference is seen in post test scores between the police personnel of different genders on the stress level.

Conclusion

The result shows that there was significant difference in the pre test and post test scores of stress for male and female police personnel and also for police personnel on whole. The post test scores were found to be less than the pre test scores which indicates that the stress level had decreased for the police personnel of both gender after the intervention programme. When the pre test and post test stress scores were observed separately for both genders there was found to be no difference between them. It was also observed that female police personnel were on the higher side of stress in comparison to male police personnel.

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