

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Work-Life Balance and Occupational Stress of the Non-Gazetted Central Reserve Police Force Jawans in Chandauli

Gunjan Singh¹, Manushi Srivastava², Mona Srivastava³, Ratan Kumar Srivastava⁴, Priya Srivastava⁵

^{1,2,5}Department of Community Medicine, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh;

³Department of Psychiatry, Institute of Medical Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh;

⁴Department of Community Medicine, Prasad Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract	Introduction	Methodology	Results	Conclusion	References	Citation	Tables / Figures
--------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------	----------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------	----------------------------------

Corresponding Author

Miss. Priya Srivastava, B-36/38 E4A Kabir Nagar Colony, Durgakund, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh 221005
E Mail ID: srivastava.priya6975@gmail.com



Citation

Singh G, Srivastava M, Srivastava M, Srivastava RK, Srivastava P. Work-Life Balance and Occupational Stress of the Non-Gazetted Central Reserve Police Force Jawans in Chandauli. Indian J Comm Health. 2023;35(3):324-328. <https://doi.org/10.47203/IJCH.2023.v35i03.013>

Source of Funding: Nil Conflict of Interest: None declared

Article Cycle

Received: 25/02/2023; Revision: 05/07/2023; Accepted: 30/08/2023; Published: 30/09/2023

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). ©The Author(s). 2023 Open Access

Abstract

Background: A good work life balance is essential for the employees of any organization because it emphasize on balancing the personal and professional life. However there is scarcity of studies focusing work-life balance of defense force employees in India. **Aims & Objectives:** The present study explores the Work-Life Balance and Occupational Stress of the Non-Gazetted Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Jawans. The main objective behind conducting this study is to investigate the relationship between Work Life Balance and Occupational Stress among the Non-Gazetted CRPF Jawans. **Methods:** The present study is a quantitative cross-sectional study based on data collected from 354 non-gazetted officers of 148th battalion in Chandauli, Uttar Pradesh, India. Data was collected from after receiving written consent from the respondents. A semi-structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data which included questions related to socio-demographic characteristics, 13 self-developed questions related to work life balance and 46 items Occupational Stress scale developed by Srivastava & Singh. **Result:** Most of the CRPF Jawans had moderate occupational stress and high work-life balance. The study found moderate negative correlation between Work Life Balance score and Occupational Stress score among the non-gazetted CRPF Jawans.

Keywords

Occupational Stress; Work-Life Balance; CRPF Jawans; India

Introduction

A good work life balance is defined as a situation in which one feels that they are capable of balancing their work and non-work commitments, or for the most part, do so. The degree to which employees of work organizations are able to satisfy important personnel needs is defined by the favorable environment of the job(1)

Work-life balance basically deals with an employee's ability to properly balance between work and lifestyle, social life, health, family etc. It generally influences employee's productivity, performance and job satisfaction. If there is a proper balance between work and life, employees usually give their best at work and enjoy happy family life. (2)

Work-life balance has now become an important concern to both employers and employees of most of the organizations.

The 21st century is called the "centaury of the stress" since stress is perceived by subjects from all spheres of society and it affects individuals irrespective of age, gender, class and ethnicity. (3)

Stress is a non-specific response of the body to any demand. Even under identical situations, stress can vary from one person to another person. It depends upon an individual how much stress they can sustain. Hence the term "perceived stress" exists in literature. A Perceived stress refers to the extent to which one perceives one's situation to be uncontrollable and burdensome. Individuals with high levels of perceived stress exhibits

symptoms like nervousness, frustration, irritability, and generalized anxiety. Perceived stress has also been found to be linked to Work-life Balance, job dissatisfaction, depressed feelings, work absence, and low turnover. (2) Stress is not always harmful. Sometimes it is necessary for adequate functioning of an individual. However, excessive or prolonged stress can be harmful. So every individual should know their level of stress that allows them to perform optimally in life.

Out of all occupations, the CRPF Jawans have been facing comparatively higher stress. The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is India's largest paramilitary force and one of seven Central Police Forces (CPFs) controlled by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The central government designed the force to deploy quickly to aid state government forces during crises. CRPF is the only CPF tasked with the full spectrum of internal security duties, from counterinsurgency and counterterrorism to riot and crowd control to infrastructure protection. It also participates in UN peacekeeping missions. (4) It is the most overworked force, and has to work in extremely hostile conditions. (5) They bear a large amount of physical and psychological stress to maintain law and order situations at different corners of the country at different situations.(6)

The CRPF troops move across the country with little training or preparation. The dramatic changes in weather conditions, security conditions coupled with the lack of basic facilities like proper accommodation, few leaves results in debilitating stress for these officers.

The stress level among CRPFs is also left unmonitored. While the Army has a full-fledged directorate that analyze causes of mental health issues, conducts research and offers counseling to Jawans, there is nothing of this sort for CRPF or any CAPF,"

According to the recent data, there has been 55 per cent increase in the number of suicides among Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel over the last five years.(7) In 2020, there were 45 cases of suicides in the CRPF, including a trooper who shoots himself with his service rifle in the Wadodara area of Sopore, Kashmir as reported by The Print media. The government has identified "personal and domestic problems" as the main reasons behind the suicides.(7) Hence, the present paper is written with the aim of evaluating the relationship between Work-Life Balance and Occupational stress among the CRPF Jawans.

Aims & Objectives

- 1) To study the level of Work-Life Balance and occupational stress among CRPF officers.
- 2) To identify the factors influencing the work-life balance of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers.
- 3) To study relationship between Work-Life Balance and Occupational Stress of Central Reserve Police Force.

Material & Methods

The present study is a cross-sectional study based on primary data collected from Non-Gazetted officers of 148th battalion in Chandauli district of Uttar Pradesh. There were seven companies in 148th Battalion of CRPF. In each company there were one Gazetted officer and remaining Non-Gazetted Jawans. The Gazetted officers were Group 'A' officers while Non-Gazetted officers belong to Group 'B' and Group 'C'. The Gazetted officers have more administrative role than Non-Gazetted officers. Considering each of the company as individual stratum, 353 Non-Gazetted officers were selected randomly through stratified random sampling opting proportional allocation. The proposed study is purely quantitative.

For collection of data, a bilingual (Hindi & English), semi-structured questionnaire containing written consent form was designed and this tool contained questions regarding socio-demographic profile of respondents and 13 questions (self-developed) for measuring work life balance of the CRPF Jawans. Each question measured on a three-point scale. False keyed items are the set of questions which negatively affect work-life balance. It consisted of 7 false keyed items and 6 true keyed items. The scores were reversed for the false-keyed items. The total score ranged from 13 to 39. The score below or equal to 26 was considered low work-life balance and the score above 26 was considered high work-life balance. The scale was validated by Delphi method. The Cronbach's alpha value for the scale was found to be 0.741. To Occupational Stress (OS), the OS index (8) was used which measures stress that employees perceive as arising from various constituents and conditions of their job. The scale consists of 46 items, rated on a five-point scale. The reliability index was ascertained by split-half (odd-even) method and Cronbach's alpha-coefficient for the scale as a whole was found to be 0.935 and 0.90 respectively.

Descriptive statistics, chi-square test of association and correlation were used to analyze the data to meet the objectives. SPSS version 20 was used to analyze the data.

Results

Majority of CRPF Jawans belongs to 30-40 years of age-group, were undergraduate, married and having more than 12 years of work experience, belonged to C group and were getting salary between Rs. 30001 to Rs. 50000 ([Table.1](#))

Level of Occupational stress: Majority of the CRPF Jawans (72.2%) had moderate occupational stress, followed by 26.1% having low occupational stress and few (1.7%) had high occupational stress. ([Table.2](#))

Level of Work - Life Balance: Majority of the CRPF Jawans (65.2%) had high level of work-life balance or low level of Work-Life imbalance and nearly one third (34.8%) CRPF Jawans had low level of work-life balance or high level of Work-Life imbalance, as shown in [Table 3](#).

Factors influencing the Work-Life Balance of CRPF

Jawans: Chi-square test of association was applied to study association between socio-demographic variables and Work-Life Balance of CRPF Jawans as shown in [Table 4](#).

Among the Socio-demographic variables included in the study, age and present salary of the CRPF Jawans were found to be significantly associated with the level of Work-Life Balance at 5% level of significance as shown in [Table 4](#).

Relationship between Occupational Stress and Work-Life

Balance: Spearman correlation was used to evaluate the relationship between Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance, as shown in [Table 5](#).

From the above table, it is clear that there exists a moderate negative relationship between Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance of CRPF Jawans as the value of correlation coefficient is -0.528. That is, increase in Occupational Stress decreases Work-Life Balance and vice-versa. The P-value for two-tailed test is less than 0.01. Hence, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant correlation between the level of Occupational Stress and the level of Work-Life Balance.

Discussion

The present study was conducted with the objectives of investigating the occupational stress and Work-Life Balance of Non-Gazetted CRPF Jawans and determining whether there exists any relationship between the occupational stress and work-life balance. The results of the study revealed that moderate level of Occupational Stress and High Work-Life Balance was noted among CRPF Jawans. The correlation analysis identified a statistically significant negative correlation between occupational stress and work life balance of CRPF Jawans in India. The age of the CRPF Jawans and their present salary were found to be significantly associated with their work-life balance.

The finding regarding the occupational stress was similar to the research conducted by Ragesh et.al (9) and Kamble et.al (10) on occupational stress among police officers. Another study conducted by Singh V.K. et.al (11) on Indian army personnel also found moderate level of occupational stress. Similar to our study, a study conducted on “Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance of Female Faculties of Central Universities in Delhi, India” by Zaheer A. et.al (12) found significant correlation between the level of occupational stress and the level of work-life balance. Another study which was conducted by Aruldoss A. et al.(13), titled, “the relationship between quality of work life and work-life-balance mediating role of job stress, job satisfaction and job commitment: evidence from India” also found that job stress is negatively related to Work-Life Balance.

Conclusion

The study provides valuable insights into the demographic characteristics, occupational stress levels, and work-life balance of CRPF Jawans. The significant associations

between age, present salary, and work-life balance, along with the observed correlation between occupational stress and work-life balance, highlights the need for further research and interventions aimed at improving the well-being and quality of life of CRPF Jawans. It is imperative that organizations and policymakers take these findings into consideration to implement measures that can enhance the work environment and the overall life satisfaction of these dedicated individuals who serve our nation.

Recommendation

In light of the findings from this study, several recommendations for future research and policymakers emerge. Firstly, similar studies should be conducted in future following longitudinal study design so that the causes of the occupational stress within the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) can be identified.

Qualitative research can complement quantitative findings by delving into the lived experiences of the CRPF Officers.

Furthermore, we recommend the development and evaluation of intervention strategies to effectively address work stress and support the work-life balance.

Finally, policies should be drafted to guide organizations and governments toward improving workplace conditions and maintaining a healthier work-life balance.

Limitation of the study

The Study has few limitations too. Firstly, respondents were only male CRPF officers as no female CRPF officers were present at the study area during the data collection period.

However majority of studies which focuses on work-life balance are based on female employees only. So, our study puts light on male employees work-life balance dimension. Another methodological limitation of the study was that it was a cross-sectional study design which fails to establish cause and affect relationship. Hence, future studies will be needed to have a more in-depth insight to the problem.

Lastly, some responses could be biased. Due to confidential nature of defense force, the Jawans were hesitant to disclose their true perspectives.

Relevance of the study

No study till now could be found to the best of our knowledge examining the relationship between occupational stress and work-life balance of the CRPF officers in India. Hence, implication of this article is notable since little or no research prevails concerning occupational stress and work life balance, as well as factors associated with Work-life Balance among CRPF officers in India. Also the study found age and the present salary of the CRPF Jawans to be associated with their work-life balance. This information can be used to plan intervention for improving work-life balance of the CRPF

Jawans. Also it is found that occupational stress are negatively correlated to work-life balance of the CRPF Jawans, hence, changes in one variable may be used to make changes in another. This information may help in framing appropriate policies and practices for CRPF force.

Authors Contribution

All authors have contributed equally.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the CRPF officers who participated as respondents in this study. Their willingness to share their experiences was invaluable for completion of this research. We appreciate their time, and cooperation.

References

1. Ragothaman CB, Chitra RN. A Study on the factors affecting the Work Life Balance of employees in BPO sector. 2018;7(2):1388-1394
2. Kaur J, Randhawa D.S. Work-life balance: It’s Relationship with Stress, Mental Health, Life and Job Satisfaction among Employees of Private Sector Banks of Chandigarh and Adjoining areas (Mohali and Panchkula). Sch Res J Interdiscip Stud [Internet]. 2017;4(37): 8464 – 8490.
3. MYPROJECT | PDF | Occupational Stress | Health Care [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.scribd.com/document/444775983/MYPROJECT-pdf>
4. India - Departments [Internet].. Available from: <http://www.allgov.com/india/departments/ministry-of-home-affairs/central-reserve-police-force?agencyid=7558>
5. Stressed and overworked, jawans push the suicide button - India News [Internet]. Available from:

https://www.indiatoday.in/india/north_/story/suicide-cases-in-paramilitary-forces-central-reserve-police-force-crpf-anti-maoist-ops-167481-2013-06-21

6. Swain SP, Kumar Dash M, Patnaik JI, Rath N. An analysis of occupation related mental health referrals of paramilitary forces to a tertiary care hospital. Int J community Med public Heal [Internet]. 2017;4(4):1131–6.
7. Suicides among CRPF personnel up 55% since 2016, govt blames “personal problems” [Internet]. Available from: <https://theprint.in/india/suicides-among-crpf-personnel-up-55-since-2016-govt-blames-personal-problems/547942/>
8. Srivastava AK, Singh AP. Occupational Stress Index - PsycNET [Internet]. Available from: <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Ft53532-000>
9. Ragesh G, Tharayil HM, Raj MTP, Philip M, Hamza A. Occupational stress among police personnel in India. Open J Psychiatry Allied Sci. 2017;8(2):148.
10. Kamble S, Association DP-J of the IM, 2011 undefined. Study of occupational stress as a risk factor for various morbidities among policemen. researchgate.net [Internet].; Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Suchit-Kamble/publication/51905359_Study_of_occupational_stress_as_a_risk_factor_for_various_morbidities_among_policemen/links/562f485908ae518e34848fce/Study-of-occupational-stress-as-a-risk-factor-for-various-morbidities-among-policemen
11. Singh VK, Adhikari R. Impact of Yoga Practices on Occupational Stress among Indian Army Personnel. Int J Yoga Allied Sci. 2016;5(2):2278–5159.
12. Asma Zaheer, Jamid Ul Islam, Nahid Darakhshan. Occupational Stress and Work-Life Balance: A Study of Female Faculties of Central Universities in Delhi, India. Journal of Human Resource Management. 2016;4(1):1-5.
13. Aruldoss A, Kowalski KB, Parayitam S. The relationship between quality of work life and work life balancemediating role of job stress, job satisfaction and job commitment: evidence from India. J Adv Manag Res. 2021;18(1):36–62.

Tables

TABLE 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CRPF JAWANS

Socio-demographic variables		Frequency (n= 353)	Proportion (%)
Age	20-30	31	8.8%
	30-40	220	62.3%
	40-50	76	21.5%
	50-60	26	7.4%
Education	Undergraduate	184	52.1%
	Graduate	164	46.5%
	Post graduate	1	0.3%
	Other	4	1.1%
Marital Status	Unmarried	18	5.1%
	Married	335	94.9%
Work Experience	3 Years	1	0.3%
	3 To 8 Years	29	8.2%
	8 To 12 Years	58	16.4%
	More Than 12 Years	265	75.1%
Rank/Designation	B group	18	5.1%
	C group	335	94.9%
Present Salary	30001-50000	277	78.5%
	50001-100000	76	21.5%

TABLE 2: LEVEL OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN THE CRPF JAWANS

Level of Occupational stress	Frequency (n=353)	Proportion (%)
Low Occupational Stress	92	26.1
Moderate Occupational Stress	255	72.2
High Occupational Stress	6	1.7
Total	353	100.0

TABLE 3: LEVEL OF WORK - LIFE BALANCE IN THE CRPF JAWANS

Level of Work - Life Balance	Frequency (n=353)	Proportion (%)
Low Work-life Balance	123	34.8
High Work-Life Balance	230	65.2
Total	353	100.0

TABLE 4: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND LEVEL OF WORK - LIFE BALANCE AMONG CRPF JAWANS

Socio-demographic Variables		Work-Life Balance		Chi-square	P-value
		Low Work-life Balance	High Work-life Balance		
Age	20-30 (n=31)	48.4%	51.6%	8.536	0.036*
	30-40 (n=220)	37.7%	62.3%		
	40-50 (n=76)	26.3%	73.7%		
	50-60 (n=26)	19.2%	80.8%		
Education	Undergraduate (n=184)	35.3%	64.7%	2.712	0.438
	Graduate (n= 164)	35.4%	64.6%		
	Post graduate (n= 1)	0%	100.0%		
	Other(n= 4)	0%	100.0%		
Marital Status	Unmarried (n=18)	44.4%	55.6%	0.770	0.448
	Married (n=335)	34.3%	65.7%		
Work experience	3 years (n=1)	0%	100.0%	3.491	0.322
	3 to 8 years (n=29)	41.4%	58.6%		
	8 to 12 years (n=58)	43.1%	56.9%		
	More than 12 years (n= 265)	32.5%	67.5%		
Rank / Designation	B group (n=18)	22.2%	77.8%	1.331	0.315
	C group (n=335)	35.5%	64.5%		
Present Salary	30001-50000 (n= 277)	38.6%	61.4%	8.114	0.004*,**
	50001-100000 (n= 76)	21.1%	78.9%		

*. Chi-square test is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **. Chi-square test is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

TABLE 5: CORRELATION BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL STRESS SCORE AND WORK - LIFE BALANCE SCORE AMONG CRPF JAWANS

Spearman's rho	Occupational Stress	Occupational Stress		Work-Life Balance	
		Correlation Coefficient	1.000	Correlation Coefficient	-0.528**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	Work-Life Balance	Correlation Coefficient	-0.528**	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	Sig. (2-tailed)	.

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).