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## **IMPACT OF WORK STRESS ON JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG ISLAMABAD TRAFFIC POLICE PERSONNEL**

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### **Abstract**

The study investigates the impact of work stress on traffic police in Islamabad. With a focus on 200 male participants aged 25 to 45, holding various ranks, the research aims to investigate the influence of these factors on job performance among police officers. The research employed a purposive sampling technique to select participants from different ranks, family structure and socio-economic backgrounds in the sectors of Islamabad. Data collection involved the use of the revised Work Stress Questionnaire, Short Version of the Self-Assessment Scale of Job Performance, and a demographic sheet. The findings revealed a significant negative impact of work stress and its four dimensions on job performance in traffic police officers. The study suggests that strategies to mitigate work stress could enhance the job performance of police employees. Reducing the level of stress emerges as a key factor with positive implications not only for job performance but also for overall well-being in the context of traffic policing.

**Keywords** Islamabad Traffic police, work stress and job performance

## **Introduction**

Employee performance is intricately linked to stress, demonstrating a nuanced interplay with both beneficial and adverse impacts. This study centers on Islamabad traffic police personnel, acknowledging their exposure to stress-related health issues over the past three decades and the need to explore the connection between work stress and performance for police officers.

There is a common belief that policing is an extremely stressful profession and that police personnel are essential for maintaining public order (Gerber et al., 2010; Lucas et al., 2012). Police officers' effectiveness on the job is negatively impacted by occupational stress, according to research (Crews et al., 2013). As a result, more scientific study has been done on the causes and effects of job-related stress in police officers (Singh & Kar et al., 2015). Furthermore, conflicting results have been found in the studies on the relationship between stress and work performance (Verhage et al., 2013). In particular, some researchers (Chen, 2009; Wu, 2011) discovered a negative association between work stress and job performance, while others discovered a positive relationship between police job stress and police job performance (Wijayanti et al., 2020). Whatever job or role maybe, police officers are likely to experience work stress.

This study investigates the impact of work stress on job performance, focusing on traffic police personnel. It addresses the gaps in existing literature, especially in law enforcement studies, noting limitations in understanding stress theories. Prior research, including studies by Chen (2009) and Grawitch et al. (2010), has contributed, but inconsistencies exist. Empirical investigations, such as those by McCreary & Thompson (2006) and Wu (2011), show contradictory results. Hence, this research aims to fill these gaps and explore the relationship between job stress and job performance among police personnel.

The police officer dispatched to the scene of the incident is supposed to be capable of managing the incident both emotionally and physically, ensuring the society is successfully protected (McCandless, 2018). The ability to make decisions is essential to

a police department's practitioner's achievement. To guarantee their survival, police officers must keep composure.

A police officer who lacks self-control may be unable to defend the society or may be complicit in an unlawful use of deadly force. Although previous studies have shed light on issues related to fatigue in law enforcement, there has still been a significant research gap regarding the potential association between work-related stress, and job performance among police personnel (Acquadro et al., 2015).

Recent study findings reveal that job performance in Thailand's law enforcement is adversely affected by fluctuating job stress, impacting both directly and indirectly. Indirectly, through diminished job satisfaction, occupational stress further hampers overall job performance. The significant role of law enforcement in maintaining regional order underscores the urgency of addressing these issues, as stressed officers may struggle to find fulfillment in their crucial work (Kantor et al., 2021). Additionally, the type of work assigned to the worker may have a negative impact and lead to stress, which eventually lowers the person's performance. Stress has been shown in prior research to detract from an employee's overall performance (Istanti et al., 2021). The study also emphasized the need for further training on the detrimental effects of stressors on the productivity of law enforcement personnel, which could address social issues such as aggression, violence, poor health, and social cohesion (Ammons et al., 2005; Gershon et al., 2008). Thus, this study aimed to fill this research gap and contribute to a better understanding of the interplay between these factors.

## **Material and Method**

### **Design and participants**

This research was designed to assess the impact of work stress on job performance among Islamabad traffic police personnel. The purposive sampling was used to collect the data. Traffic police officers in Islamabad were the target demographic for this study. The table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of the demographic used. The sample

size of this study was only males 200. The age group of the respondents was taken (25-45) years. The sample was categorized on the basis i.e. Firstly, in terms of Socioeconomic Status, the majority of individuals belong to the Middle category (62.3%), suggesting that a significant portion of the sample falls within a moderate economic bracket. The distribution across Upper (16.0%) and Lower (21.7%) categories indicates some diversity in economic backgrounds. Secondly, Family Structure highlights that more than half of the sample is from Joint families (52.3%), emphasizing the prevalence of extended family structures within the studied population. Thirdly, when examining the occupational distribution by Rank, Constables constitute the largest proportion (36.3%), indicating that this rank is the most prevalent within the sample. Additionally, the distribution across other ranks, such as Assistant Sub Inspectors (19.3%), Head Constables (25.0%), Inspectors (9.0%), and Sub Inspectors (10.3%), provides insight into the hierarchical composition of the sample. Lastly, the mean age of 34.27 with a standard deviation of 5.831 indicates a relatively homogeneous age distribution with a moderate level of variability. This choice of ranks was made because the focus of this study was specifically on those personnel who work on the roads and handle traffic in emergency situations. These ranks are primarily involved in managing traffic and ensuring smooth operations on the roads. It should be noted that this research only included male participants. The inclusion criteria for volunteers were being the personnel of Islamabad traffic police workers having rank (Constable, Head constable, Assistant Sub Inspector, Sub inspector, Inspector) the only males from 25 to 45 years, were the excluded individual with any mental and physical disability.

### **Data Collecting Tools**

The following tools were used in data collection:

**Personal Information Form** The information form prepared by the researcher composed of 04 questions (e.g., Age, Economic status, Family Structure and Ranks).

## **Measurements**

The data were collected using revised Work Stress Questionnaire, Short Version of the Self-Assessment Scale of Job Performance, and a demographic sheet.

### **The Work Stress Questionnaire (Revised Version)**

The WSQ developed by Holmgren, 2008. The Work Stress Questionnaire (WSQ), in its revised version, is a comprehensive tool designed to evaluate work-related stress and its implications on individual well-being. Comprising 21 items, the questionnaire addresses four key themes related to work stress. The first theme delves into issues such as unclear organizational structure, conflicts, and decision-making challenges. The second theme focuses on individual work demands, including workload, time pressure, and job commitment. The third theme examines an individual's influence at work, encompassing decision-making processes, control over tasks, and effective use of skills. Lastly, the fourth theme assesses the extent to which work interferes with leisure time and personal life. The WSQ employs a Likert-type scale, yielding scores ranging from 0 to 4. The questionnaire serves the purpose of swiftly identifying individuals at risk of negative well-being effects due to work-related stress.

### **Self- Assessment Scale of Job Performance (Short Version)**

Developed based on the Sonntag and Frese (2002) model, this scale provides a comprehensive evaluation of an individual's technical abilities and contributions to the organizational context. The Personal Performance scale is a 10-item tool designed to measure controllable behaviors influencing an individual's contribution to organizational objectives. Utilizing a five-point Likert scale, it assesses two main dimensions: task-oriented performance, focusing on job-related skills and competence; and context-oriented performance, emphasizing interpersonal and emotional support for overall organizational functioning.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data was collected through standardized survey questionnaires from the Islamabad traffic police personnel. The purpose and objectives of the research were briefly explained to

obtain informed consent from the participants. Prior to the survey administration, participants were provided with research scales, as well as verbal and written instructions. The respondents were assured that their information would not be misused and would remain confidential between the researcher and the participant to alleviate any doubts or confusion on their part.

### **Statistical Analysis**

The data was collected by the researcher from each respondent at their residence after data collection through survey from the field; the next step was to analyze the data in a logical meaning so that it can make a complete sense. For analysis SPSS (IBM Version 21) was used to process and analyze the data. Research instrument's Reliability, Descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, range, and Cronbach's  $\alpha$ , were computed. Descriptive statistics were also computed to assess the normality of the data.. The analysis of linear regression was applied to study which key variable predict positive or negative significance outcomes in the sample. The data analysis procedures and steps for hypothesis testing are outlined in this section, including the preparation of data for statistical analysis and the obtained descriptive statistics.

**Results**

**Table 1**

*Demographic characteristics of the Sample (N=200)*

Variables	F	%
<b>Socioeconomic Status</b>		
Upper	48	16.0
Middle	187	62.3
Lower	65	21.7
<b>Family Structure</b>		
Joint	157	52.3
Nuclear	143	47.7
<b>Rank</b>		
Assistant Sub Inspector	58	19.3
Constable	109	36.3
Head Constable	75	25.0
Inspector	27	9.0
Sub Inspector	31	10.3
<b>Mean Age</b>	<b>= 34.27</b>	<b>Std. Deviation = 5.831</b>

*Note. f=frequency,%=percentage*

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Statistics and Alpha Reliability of study Variables(N=200)*

Scale	K	M	SD	α
WSQT	35	9.96	1.88	.80
JPST	10	33.07	7.76	.87

*Note. WSQT=Work Stress Questionnaire , JPST=Job Performance Scale, K= Number of items in the scale, M= Mean score, SD= Standard Deviation, α= Alpha Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) coefficient*

**Tables 3**

*Multiple Linear Regression Analysis impact of work stress on job performance among traffic police(N=200)*

Variables	B	S.E	$\beta$	t	$\square^2$	F	P
Constant	71.956	1.816					
IOC	-3.991	.490	-.290	-8.139	.653	138.889	.000**
IDC	-3.040	.569	-.233	-5.345			
IAW	-4.759	.487	-.414	-9.769			
WLI	-3.994	.417	-.334	-9.576			

*Note:* IOC= Indistinct organization and conflicts, IDC=Individual demands and commitment, IAW=Influence at work, WLI=Work to leisure time interference

**Discussion**

The study focused on investigating the relationship between work stress, and job performance among Islamabad traffic police personnel. A total of 200 participants aged 25-45 were surveyed using questionnaires in a co relational research design. The hypotheses suggested that higher work stress would be negatively correlated with job performance. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants from Islamabad, Pakistan. The study aimed to quantify the associations between these variables using statistical analyses. Given the crucial role of traffic police in maintaining order in large cities like Islamabad, understanding the impact of work stress on their job performance becomes essential for improving their overall well-being and effectiveness in their roles.

The findings of the current research suggests a negative impact of work stress on job performance, indicating that higher levels of work stress are expected to be associated with lower job performance. The table 3 showed that there is an impact of work stress on job performance among Islamabad Traffic police personnel According to the hypothesis,



there will be a negative relationship between work stress and job performance. The hypothesis that all four dimensions of work stress have a significant negative impact on job performance among Islamabad traffic police personnel implies that the stressors associated with these dimensions are expected to influence the officers' ability to perform their job effectively. The results of the multiple linear regression analysis presented in Table indicate a significant relationship between various dimensions of work stress and job performance among traffic police officers. The regression model shows that the constant term is 71.956, implying that when all predictor variables are zero. The dimensions of work stress, represented by D1 (indistinct organization and conflicts), D2 (individual demands and commitment), D3 (influence at work), and D4 (work to leisure time interference), the dimension 1 Indistinct Organization and Conflicts of work stress the standardized coefficient ( $\beta = -0.290$ ) indicates that this variable has a moderate negative impact on job performance. Lack of clarity in organizational structure and conflicting expectations can lead to confusion and uncertainty among traffic police personnel. Research (e.g., Cooper & Marshall, 1976) has shown that unclear roles and interpersonal conflicts can contribute to stress and hinder job performance.

Individual Demands and Commitment the dimension 2 of work stress has also this variable shows a negative impact ( $\beta = -0.233$ ) on job performance. High individual demands and low commitment may result in burnout and reduced motivation among traffic police officers. Previous studies (e.g., Maslach & Leiter, 2016) on job burnout highlight the detrimental effects on performance and overall well-being.

Dimension 3 Influence at Work: A decrease of approximately 4.759 units in job performance is associated with a one-unit increase in influence at work. The negative  $\beta$  value (-0.414) indicates a moderate impact. Issues related to power dynamics and lack of influence at work can lead to feelings of powerlessness among personnel. Studies (e.g., Karasek, 1979) on job strain emphasize the negative impact of limited control or influence on employee performance

Dimension 4 Work to Leisure Time Interference: The standardized coefficient ( $\beta = -0.334$ ) suggests a moderate negative impact. When work interferes with leisure time, it

can contribute to fatigue and reduced overall job satisfaction. Previous research (e.g., Frone, 2003) suggests that work-life interference can lead to stress, affecting job performance and satisfaction.

These findings lead us to accept the first theory since chronic stress can lead to serious disorders that affect the entire body. Ultimately, it may lead to a decline in human performance in all areas (Hayajneh et al., 2021; Wu et al., 2021). The combination of these stressors may result in increased stress levels among Islamabad traffic police personnel, leading to a decline in job performance. Research in organizational psychology (e.g., Cooper & Payne, 1992) has consistently shown that chronic stressors negatively impact cognitive functions, decision-making and overall job effectiveness.

According to this study finding by Chikwem's (2017) study explored the relationship between job stress and job performance in police officers. The empirical findings indicated a significant negative influence of job stress on the job performance of police officers. A noteworthy outcome was that approximately 80% of the variability in police officers' job performance (dependent variable) could be explained by their job stress (independent variable). This statistical relationship underscored the significance of job stress as a predictor of job performance among police officers. When interpreting the results through the stress-buffering hypothesis, the study proposed that the impact of job stress on job performance was negative. By reducing job stress, police exercise was associated with an improvement in job performance among police officers.

Considering the highly pressured and stressful nature of the traffic police department, where employees constantly face adverse conditions such as political and public pressure, as well as a performance-oriented management system, it becomes crucial for top management to provide support to frontline officers. Therefore, based on the analysis, the hypothesis would be accepted. The reason behind the negative relationships observed in this study imply that as traffic police officers experience higher levels of indistinct organization and conflicts, individual demands and commitment, influence at work, and work to leisure time interference, their job performance tends to decline. Possible explanations for these negative associations could include increased

psychological strain, reduced focus on job responsibilities, and elevated stress levels leading to impaired decision-making and task execution. Addressing and mitigating these stressors through targeted interventions and support systems may contribute to improved job performance and overall well-being among traffic police officers.

### **Limitations**

While a longitudinal design would have been preferable to track the impact of exercise on the connection between police officers' work stress and job performance over time, it was not feasible due to time constraints in this study. The research is further limited by its exclusive focus on male workers within a specific age range, reducing the generalizability of findings. Numerous employees cited being too occupied with their duties during data collection, particularly during Ramadan, impacting the quality of responses. Additionally, the data was sourced from a specific institute in the Islamabad sector, further limiting the study's applicability to a broader context. Future research endeavors may benefit from addressing these limitations and considering alternative designs for a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships under investigation.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this correlational study on the "Impact of Work Stress on Job Performance among Islamabad Traffic Police Personnel" revealed that while work stresses significantly correlate with job performance. The study, conducted with a purposively selected sample of male participants aged 25 to 45 from different ranks within the traffic police, employed reliable scales for data collection. The negative impact of work stress on job performance can be explained by the psychological and physiological consequences of stress, as supported by previous research in related domains. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing effective interventions and support mechanisms to enhance the well-being and performance of Islamabad traffic police personnel. The findings emphasize the need for interventions to enhance performance and overall well-being in this occupational group.

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