INSECURITY AMONG SECURITY PERSONNEL
A PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF CISF PERSONNEL

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*T*ODAY *we operate in an environment full of uncertainties, turbulence and even hostility. Competition has increased manifold with its attending consequences both good as well as bad. It is logical to surmise that stress levels have gone up and burnout is not far. Stress can be as debilitating as heart disease, because as much time off from work as the common cold and is more far reaching than cancer. The leading source of stress is the workplace. The workplace holds a plethora of anxiety producers. Many are from unpredictable sources such as sudden job losses, relocations, loosing co-workers, work-personal life balance or having multiple bosses in quick succession. Controlling workplace stress is no more optional than the control of any other hazards. The paper calls for professional psychologists to identify and safeguard against all risks to health and safety.*

The paper aims to identify the source of stressors among CISF personnel-a study of high pressure work environment and its impact on person's mental health. A purposive sample of 100 CISF personnel was chosen. Occupational Stress Index developed by Srivastava and Singh was implemented, followed by structured interview. Various statistical techniques such as Mean and S.D. were used to analyze the data prioritizing stress related problems in small sample of police personnel. It was concluded that stress needs to be dealt with by looking for the causes and not by simply patching up the injured soldiers of the work place. Employers need to look closely at the hours their staff are working and how their work and home lives are balanced.

Keyword: Strem, CISF Personnel Occupational Strem, Mental Health, etc.

Introduction

One can hardly pickup a newspaper or magazine or watch television without seeing or hearing some reference to stress. Why all the sudden fuss and fascination? After all stress has been around since Adam and eve were evicted from the Garden of Eden. Is it because there is much stress today or is it because the nature of contemporary stress is some how different and more dangerous or is it because scientific research has increasingly confirmed the crucial role stress can play in causing and aggravating different disorders and the diverse mechanisms of actions responsible for mediating its multitudious effects? The answer to all these questions is very resounding – Yes.

Stress is an unavoidable consequence of life. As Hans Selye noted, "without stress there would be no life". However just as distress can cause disease, it seems plausible that there are good stresses that promote wellness. Winning a competition can be just as stressful as loosing or more so but may trigger very different biological responses. Increased stress results in increased productivity up to a point.

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However, this level differs for each of us. It is very much like the stress on a Sitar String where right degree can create a magnificent tone. We all need to find the proper level of stress that allows us to perform optimally and make a melodious music as we go through life.

Stress is unique in the category of diseases. It has become the most debilitating medical and social problem of the present century. Also the stressful life events are causally implicated in a variety of undesirable effects on our performance and health. Studies of life stressors and their effects on health has proven the role of stressful life events in the etiology of various diseases (Singh and Kaushik,1993).The age, personality and general intellectual ability also plays a dominant role in experiencing stress. The influences of these factors on the stress experience were limited but significant (Reddy and Ramamurti, 1991).The stress experience may be better conceived as interplay of the situational and organizational factors. The extent of stress is, however, a matter of degree. The present researcher feels that it is the responsibility of the organizations to generate a harmonious work atmosphere. One of the key concepts to understand the human behavior and the integration of the individual with an organization is the role assigned to him. It is through this role that the individual interacts and gets integrated with the system. Studies related to police professional have examined the differences in experiencing various role stressors. Role erosion and inter-role distance were found to be most dominant contributor of role stress in a group of officers belonging to Central Reserve Police Force (Singhvi and Mathur, 1997).The study suggested an action plan to reduce stress factors and develop healthy organizational culture. The impacts of occupational stressors on adjustment among different categories of railway personnel (Barnes, 1992) have revealed no significant differences between job level groupings in their adjustment to stressors, but more important was the source of stress. It was because they found their job not only mechanical and boring but also intellectually unchallenging and hence, had low self-concept and personal morale.

During the review and analysis of the literature related to the coping styles, it was found that empirical studies of coping are relatively small in number. A major problem was how to measure various aspects of coping. Gender differences were observed in relation distress and coping style (Verma et al., 1995). How well the coping styles work depends on the situation. Intellectualization, rationalization, isolation and denial have been suggested as effective coping strategies (Lazarus,1966),but some organizational interventions at the management level, such as, selection of suitable personnel, proper job designing and training adequate work conditions, effective supervision and incentive system, effective communication system, participative management, etc., has also been suggested (Srivastava,1997) to prevent the undesirable consequences of stress. It has been (Pestonjee and Pandey, 1996) emphasized that there is a need for conducting role efficacy interventions to strength and reinforce positive behaviors and weaken negative behaviors. We should realize the fact that role based stresses not only affect the work environment adversely and increase general fatigue but also reduce one's potential to perform effectively (Pareek,1998).Regarding coping mechanisms a number of studies have reported benefits of indigenous methods. Yogic meditation was reported to be effective in reducing the frequency of tension headaches (Vasudevan et al., 1994). Meditation played a significant role in regulating blood pressure, as indicated by electrophysiological parameters (Dixit et al.,1994).

In the light of these findings it may be mentioned here that stress is the state of tension experienced by the individual facing too many demands, constraints or opportunities. Work is sometime stressful and can easily disrupt a person's work-life balance. Work related stress comes from numerous factors, such as too many task demands, role conflicts, job boredom, ethical dilemmas or inter-personal problems. Poor career development and physical environment are also cause of workplace stress. Information technology growth and globalization, which on one hand enhances workplace productivity is on the other hand increasing stress on employees. Too many expectations and too many changes in work practices are further causing burn outs. Stress at work has been reported as the second largest cause

of occupational illness accounting for low productivity. These facts on workplace stress can be terrifying for all industries and is a major cause for concern and challenge, not only because of the health effects on individual but also because of the economic impact and social costs to industry and government.

To develop a better understanding of how to tap into the vast innate potential that resides in each of us for preventing disease and promoting health has become the need of hour. The present paper examines that workplace stress has increased as technological advances have increased and indicates that employees are now allowing workplace stress to invade their personal lives. Maintaining a balance between work and home life is a major source of stress. Findings of the study showed that CISF personnel felt overloaded and believed that its effect on home life made the greatest contribution to their job stress. They also felt that having good relations with superiors and colleagues made the greatest contributions to the job satisfaction. It was further noted that 35 per cent of them felt insufficiently trained in communication skills. Workplace stress thus leads to health risks and has become an increasingly important issue for organizations. Reflecting on the meager attention paid to the problems of CISF personnel, the objectives of the present investigation were as follows:

Objectives
1. To identify the sources of stress in CISF personnel.

2. To determine the level of stress in the target group.

3. To discuss the impact of high pressure work environment on person's mental health.

4. To facilitate the planning of stress management package for CISF personnel to be worked out by professional psychologists.

Research Methodology
A purposive sample of 100 CISF personnel was chosen for the study. These were of varied ranks and based in Varanasi.

After careful planning and designing of research procedure the subject of investigation were approached. Occupational Stress Index (OSI) and a workplace stress scale was administered to 100 CISF personnel of varied ranks, followed by structured interview.

Result and Discussion
In order to analyze the data and arrive at a conclusion of the present topic, statistical techniques such as mean and standard deviation were used. The statistical analysis was done in the light of aims framed for the study. The mean and SD of CISF personnel on OSI are given in Table 1.

Table 1

	Low	**Moderate**	**High**
Mean	106.6	137.0	175.6
S. D.	8.5	9.86	18.03

Taking into account, the mean and SD of CISF personnel as shown in the table, high stress was observed in the group. The categorization of stressors prevalent in the sample population is indicated in the Table 2.

Table 2

Occupational Stressers	Low (%)	Moderate (%)	High (%)
Role Overload	6	64	30
Role Ambiguity	36	26	38
Role Conflict	24	36	40
Unreasonable Grp. and Political pressures	24	42	34
Responsibility for Persons	26	44	30
Underparticipation	12	28	60
Powerlessness	16	46	38
Poor Peer Relations	24	46	30
Intrinsic Impoverishment	24	40	36
Low Status	46	44	10
Strenuous Working Conditions	18	48	34
Unprofitability	4	38	58

It can be inferred from the results that majority of sample have moderate to high stress, which indicates immediate professional assistance for better utilization of their potentialities.

Conclusion

Having employed OSI followed by structured interview the investigator has arrived at certain conclusions. The attempt here was to identify the stressors and determine the level of stress in the target group.

Such results can be attributed to the fact of growing complexities of the world which arise factors as insecurity, suspiciousness, conflicts and frustration. The personal interview revealed that life at work was sometimes miserable for them. Their job required them to stand at the entrance gate with their 7.62mm light machine gun, to carry 50 live rounds of ammunition, to be constantly alert and to prevent intruders and unauthorized persons from entering the airport. Constantly, being alert checking the passengers, guiding the people in general and often being in the night shifts tend to be more taxing for them. Their schedule was fixed with no holidays even on Sundays or other public holidays, there are no entertainment options and lesser opportunities to meet people outside the CISF circle. The core problem which I observed was that they resent taking orders from their lesser qualified seniors. They committed that some times they have too many unreasonable deadlines and/or too much work to do and feel they some time rarely or never have adequate control or input over their work duties.

This was revealed that each one of us have our own levels of how much stimulation or stress we need in our lives to keep us from getting bored. Others however, have a much lower tolerance for stress stimuli. So authorities must be able to look at each individual and decide if the individual has a high or low tolerance for stress. Managers need to be able to recognize these signs of stress in the work place so that productivity won't be hurt and the quality of life for the employees remain high. The time has come for the employers to make sure that they educate their employees about how to handle stress. There are many avenues to take that help relieve stress. These programs could be set by the joint effort of professional psychologists and medical experts.

In today's society where pressures are becoming more and more extreme organizations, leaders, and managers need to be aware of the stress that their work force encounters and set up some type of program to deal with them. This study helped the jawan to realize that programs dealing with stress related problems before they become chronic can be a major contributor to the quality of work life for employees thus enhancing their job performance. The leaders must look at their personnel and see what kind of pressure they are experiencing if they want to be effective. In fact the CISF personnel need to be even more vigilant for signs of stress because they must be sure that an individual is ready to go to combat, both in a physical and mental state, at a moments notice.

The present research recommends stress awareness training so that the commander is able to stop chronic stress before it occurs. Further each unit should support these programs by assuring the individuals have allotted time to participate in them. Lastly, stress has become the emotional toothache of the workplace. It leads to serious impairment that can cause big mistakes and serious injuries. As the economy worsens, we need the equivalent of a root canal where employers need to help, educate their people on how to fight the infection and ease the pain (Frank Kenna president of The Marlin company).

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