



## Original Research Article

# WORK STRESS DURING COVID LOCK DOWN AMONG POLICE PERSONNEL IN KURNOOL TOWN: A DESCRIPTIVE OBSERVATIONAL STUDY

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**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Corona virus disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus-2(SARS-COV2) created a huge impact on police department. This has created impact on their physical and mental health. Almost 900 policemen died in our country due to covid 19. **Aims and Objectives:** To know the stress level among police personnel during lockdown. To know the impact of stress on their physical and mental health.

**Materials and Methods:** Study Design-Community based cross sectional study. Study period -1-month (15/9/2021-15/10/2021) Study population- All police officers doing work in police department. Study tool: pre- designed, pre- validated, semi-structured questionnaire. Inclusion Criteria-All police persons who are willing to give written informed consent and those present at the time of study. Exclusion criteria-All police persons who are not willing to give informed written consent and those absent at the time of study. Sampling method – Convenient sampling. Statistical analysis- SPSS version22. Sample size-100(approximately).

**Results:** Almost 57% males and 42% females were included. On a whole, 54% are not able to sleep properly. 69% felt being distracted from family and 75% were facing increased work load.

**Conclusion:** Police personnel in our country faced so many problems in our country during lock down. Government has to take many steps such as increased wages, compensations, providing health facilities at low cost etc.

**Key words:** Stress, police, health.

**INTRODUCTION**

Corona virus Disease 2019(COVID-19), caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus-2 (SARS COV-2) had been an impact on the police department, especially during lock down. This virus also caused havoc effect on the physical and mental health. Around 900 police men died due to covid19 in our country.<sup>[1]</sup>

Government had taken strict measures and given various guidelines to the police officers. The government helped the police in form of compensation, increase in wages etc., for the police individuals. The major reason is many of them do

not know about the consequences of the disease and what impact it will show to them and to their families. Psychological and behavioral problems such as anxiety, irritability, Depression, alcohol and drug abuse and feeling low morale had developed.<sup>[2]</sup> This work stress includes the effects like Absenteeism (the practice of regularly staying away from work without good reason), poor decision making etc., Hence this research highlights the work stress among police personnel in Kurnool town of Andhra Pradesh using professional work stress scale questionnaire to find the amount of stress.

**Objective:** To assess the stress level among police personnel during lockdown. To know the impact of stress on their physical and mental health.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was a community based cross sectional study conducted on police personnel of Kurnool town. 104 police personnel were available at the time of study. Method of sampling is convenient sampling. The study period was for one month (15th September 2021 to 15th October 2021). The persons who are willing to give written informed consent and participate in the study were included. The participants who are not willing to give written informed consent and who are not available at the time of study were excluded. Many of them were busy of continuous covid duties. The participants were given a pre- tested, pre- validated, semi-Structured questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed later using statistical analysis SPSS version 22.

## RESULTS

The study population consists of 60 males (57.7%) and 44 females (42.3%) as shown in the figure 1. Among 104 participants, 13 (12.5%) was under the age group of 18-25 years, 33 (31.7%) was under the age group of 26-32 years, 28 (26.9%) was under the age group 33-40 years and the remaining 30 (28.8%) belong to more than 40 years as shown in figure 2.

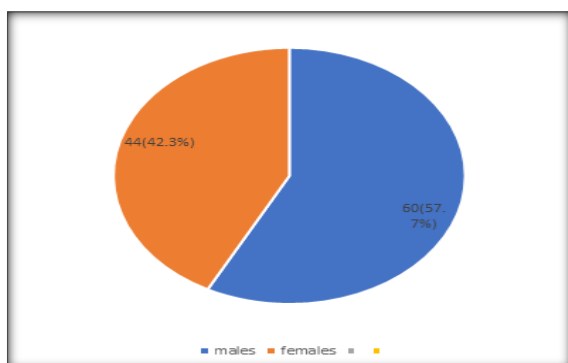


Figure 1: Distribution of study population based on gender

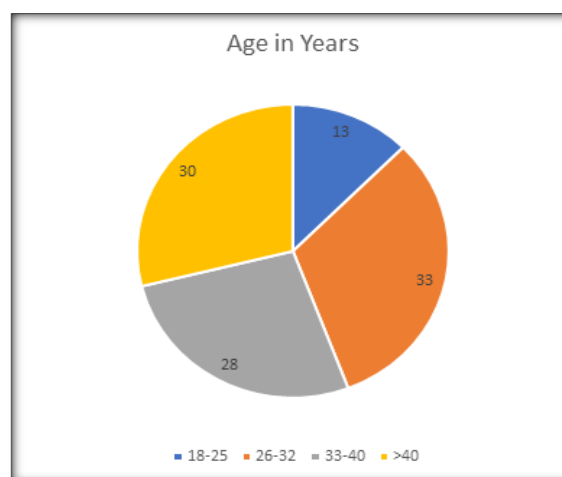


Figure 2: Distribution of study population according to age

This study was done among the police personnel of Kurnool town. The study period was from 15/9/2021 to 15/10/2021 for one month.

In the study, 52 males (50%) and 52 females (50%) felt stressed while performing the duties. Out of 104 individuals 83 (79.8%) were not scared of death and 21 (20.2%) persons were scared of death due to covid 19. When the participants were asked about their commitment towards work, 80 (76.9%) individuals said they were feeling proud and 24 (23.1%) said they are not feeling proud. Out of 104 individuals 57 (54.8%) members are not able to sleep properly and 47 (45.2%) are able to sleep properly without any sleep disturbances. During the duty hours 61 (58.7%) persons felt like running away from work and 43 (41.3%) were not feeling like that. When comes to the family association, 68 (65.4%) is scared of infecting family members and 36 (34.6%) were not feeling like that. Out of 104 individuals, 78 (75%) felt tensed with increased work load and 26 (25%) were not feeling tensed.

Table 1: Percentage distribution of study population

S. No	VARIABLE	YES (%)	NO (%)
1	Feeling stressed while doing duty	52(50)	52(50)
2	Feeling proud	80(76.9)	24(23.1)
3	Feeling disconnected from family	72(69.2)	32(30.8)
4	Scared of infecting family members	68(65.4)	36(34.6)
5	Scared of Death	21(20.2)	83(79.8)
6	Able to sleep properly	47(45.2)	57(54.8)
7	Felt like running away from work.	43(41.3)	61(58.7)
8	Feeling tensed with increased work load.	78(75)	26(25)

## DISCUSSIONS

Our study was aimed to know about the impact of covid19 on the physical and mental health of the police individuals. The study population consists of 104 individuals (60 males and 44 females). Males showed high stress when compared to females. This

might be due to the additional responsibility. People in the study are stressed because of overwork, work overload, job insecurity.

In this study the persons aged more than 40 years are having more stress. In the study almost males and females are expressing similar view i. e, they

were feeling very much proud while doing the duty during the pandemic times.

There is a paucity of literature on on-the-job stress among police personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our findings match with many other studies<sup>[5,6,7,8-11]</sup> Operational stress is more in younger officers and it may be because of their early service period and our finding matches with previous studies.<sup>[10,11]</sup> The mean score of stress ( $3.08 \pm 0.97$ ) was maximum among the constables. However, in the study conducted by Singh et al among the police personnel of North India, the inspector in charge of the police station had maximum stress as they are responsible for maintaining law and order in his jurisdiction.<sup>[10]</sup>

In this study, we focused on the police personnel commitment towards the tough times. No body resigned from the work but majority of them felt like running away from work. The married individuals derived some emotional support and got committed towards the work while the single individuals won't get that support.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, participants working for more than 8 hours per day was increased by 32% and it may be due to COVID-19 related activities for enforcing lockdown, manning the containment zones, and quarantine centers. Citizens refusing to comply with the new government guidelines and fear of contracting the virus were the reasons cited by the participants while ensuring compliance with the new regulation and restrictions. Staffs shortage, police personnel, or their family members contracting the virus, and fear of stigma from the public were some of the limiting factors faced by the participants in their department. The concern about being infected from the community and workplace may also be a potential source of fear among police personnel furthermore concerns about carrying the infection to the family members may also be a source of psychological distress.

## CONCLUSION

India being the most populous country fought very hard against covid. In this aspect police bravely

fought during this pandemic. This duty tension affected their physical and mental health. Too much working hours also causes serious consequences, so almost 900 police men died during their working hours. So, Government needs to take care of them by providing PPE (Personal protective equipment) and should give special incentives in the form of additional wages etc.

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