

# Hey Stress, I Stress to De-Stress Me from Distress: A Study on Indian Police Constables

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## ABSTRACT

**Objective** – What are the work-related issues which contribute to police constables stress? How do police constables get rid of their stress? Because stress and copings are the two most important factors that influence work-related wellbeing. This paper aims to understand the theoretical framework of police stress and coping procedures. The ideas that make up this system can be used in the appraisal, intervention, and assessment of the police stress reaction and the coping forms utilised after stressful situations.

**Methodology/Technique** – 492 Tamil Nadu state police constables were chosen randomly. Information was gathered utilising two self-report questionnaires which include questionnaire related to police stress and coping strategies. Researcher measured the reliability and validity of the multiple-item research scales by analysing the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis. Correlation analysis investigative the relationship between police stress and coping strategies, it found that it was positive and significant. Further, the researcher used the SEM approach to testing the relationship between police stress and coping strategies.

**Findings** – SEM approach concludes that overall police stress influences self-supported emotional focused coping strategies positively and that overall police stressors have a positive impact on social supported emotional focused coping strategies. Furthermore, there is a positive impact on overall stress and problem-focused coping and avoidant coping strategies.

**Novelty** – The outcomes can be utilised to help researchers and policy makers foresee police work execution and aid government consider police's identity attributes.

**Type of Paper:** Empirical

**Keywords:** Police Stress, Coping Strategies, Active Copings, Emotional Copings, Tamilnadu Police.

**JEL Classification:** J24, J28.

## 1. Introduction

Police constables experience various stressors as a major aspect of their expert obligations. Separation, the dividing from mindfulness considerations, sentiments, or recollections of stressful occasions, is one mental barrier connected with shirking of candidly excruciating material (Aaron, 2000; Jordan et al., 2015; Mostert & Joubert, 2015; Gomes & Afonso, 2016; Kaur et al., 2013). Different scientists likewise depict police act as one

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of the society's most stressful occupations (Ghosh et al., 2016; Singh & Kar, 2015; Suresh et al., 2013). Seeing how organisational stressors impact police personnel's reaction to stress, and also how a stress-related reaction further impacts work related stress and results, is a critical test to those contemplating hierarchical execution. Further, these occupation related strains regularly bring about abatements in employment fulfilment and resulting in a representative turnover (Jones et al., 2007, Lewin & Sager, 2008; Fornell et al., 2006).

Police stress, for quite some time, has been viewed as a difficult issue due to the result of its various negative impacts. Police constables who encounter an abnormal state of stress have reported a set of matters that incorporate wretchedness, tension, mental clusters, liquor and medication consumption, divorce, burnout, work disappointments, and even suicide intentions (Ramakrishnan et al., 2013; Ganesh et al., 2015; Walvekar et al., 2015). It is in this way crucial to archive the association of specific stressors to stress. Moreover, if coping assets or strategies are contrarily identified with high stress, they might be viable; yet in the event that they are decidedly related, they are inadequate or may even build stress (Grubb et al., 2015; Smoktunowicz et al., 2015).

Coping procedures comprise of behavioural and/or psychological efforts to oversee special situational requests which are assessed as saddling or surpassing one's capacity to embrace. Coping efforts might be engaged or at the emotional responses which frequently go with those loads and demands (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1999). Most researchers assume that individuals' high in self-esteem or perceived control would probably utilise problem focused or active coping reaction; low esteem ought to foresee more uninvolved or avoidant and emotional coping (Glanz & Schwartz, 2008; Bian et al., 2011). Menaghan (1983) study on individual coping efforts presumes that a related idea is that of coping styles, which are frequent inclinations for drawing closer issues; these are broader coping practices that the individual utilizes when confronting stressors over an assortment of circumstances like pull back or approach, deny or go up against, get to be dynamic or stay aloof (Billings et al., 1984).

We do realise that formative, misfortunes influence police personnel distinctively at different ages and stages. For instance, low experienced and the female police constables are defenceless populaces that require exceptional consideration (Pratap, 2016; Kim et al., 2016; Ma et al., 2015; Mostert & Joubert, 2015; Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012; Chitra & Karunanidhi, 2013). Subsequently, psychological wellness experts keep on developing clinical projects to address the exceptional needs of, especially helpless populaces. Be that as it may, even among less defenceless populaces, there are wide fluctuations in how people adapt after some time to the debacle, possibly traumatic occasions, or terrorism-related stressful encounters (Kuo et al., 2015; Matthieu & Ivanoff, 2006). Keeping in mind the end goal to better serve all demographic gatherings, more particular information about coping with the mental effect of stressful occasions is vital (Carvalho et al., 2015; Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012). This information will aid police organisation all the more successfully treat police personnel and at last help them improve pessimistic impacts on overall wellbeing, working examples, and general prosperity (Louw & Viviers, 2010; Matthieu & Ivanoff, 2006; Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012).

The greater part of the information was gathered through the Tamil Nadu police division, India, which serves one of the fifth biggest state police compel in India (Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012, Sekar et al., 2013, Natarajan, 2016). Tamil Nadu has a police populace proportion of 1:632 which makes police constables with more obligations and causes the compelling level of stress (Natarajan, 2014; Kethineni & Srinivasan, 2013; Gaikwad et al., 2016). This is additionally valid for police constables in the India, where the financial and political issue of the previous decades is described by an abnormal state of wrongdoing and savagery (Lambert et al., 2016; Priyanka et al., 2016; Majumdar et al., 2016; Bayley, 2015). In any case, research on occupational stress and coping strategies in Indian police are portrayed by ineffectively planned studies, an absence of recent measurable investigations and inadequately controlled studies (Almale et al., 2014; Mostert & Joubert, 2015). Besides, examined scarcity regarding occupational stress and coping strategies appears to win in the multicultural Indian Police connection (Natarajan, 2014; Kumar & Mohan, 2013).

This paper purpose is to conclude the theoretical framework of police stress and coping procedures. The ideas that make up this system can be used in the appraisal, intercession, and assessment of the police stress reaction and the coping forms utilised after a stressful or different emergency circumstance. A comprehension

of the complete police stress reaction process permits the approach policy makers and police organisation to welcome the way of stress, and its physiological and mental impacts and to view it all the more comprehensively as a cooperation of the brain and the body. Also, this paper will look at coping styles and procedures, how police adapt and what methodologies they use to adjust to a given stressor or a great occasion characterised by numerous copings as requesting. Coping procedures are recognised from coping styles as present states displaying a dynamic transaction of individual and environment.

## 2. Proposed model and Hypothesis development

The proposed model that comprises the hypothesised dealings and it examines the relationships between overall police stress and copings is displayed in Figure 1.

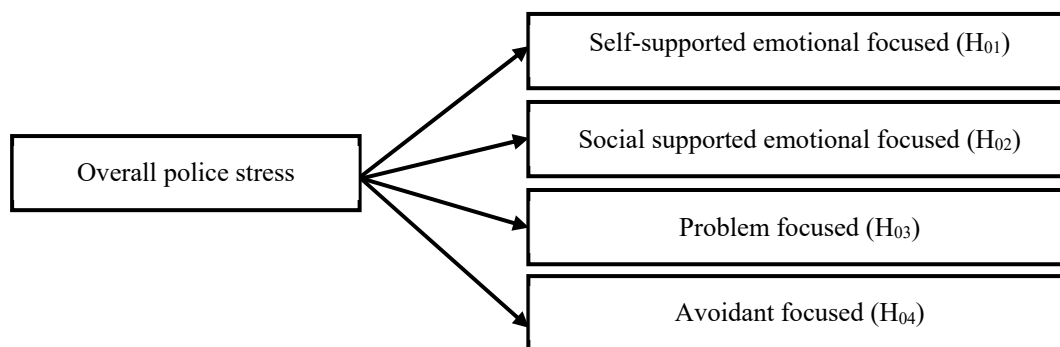


Figure 1. Proposed model

Based on the literature survey and theoretical model, the researcher proposed the following hypothesis. H01: Overall police stress significantly influences self-supported emotional focused coping strategies (Patterson, 2003; Coyne & Downey, 1991). H02: Overall police stress significantly influences social-supported emotional focused coping strategies (Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988; Cutrona, 1990; Patterson, 2003). H03: Overall police stress significantly influences problem-focused coping strategies (Latack & Havlovic, 1992; Evans, Coman, Stanley & Burrows, 1993; Windle & Windle, 1996). H04: Overall police stress significantly influences avoidant focused coping strategies (Ortega, Brenner & Leather, 2007; Renk & Smith, 2007).

## 3. Methods

The respondents included in the study were 492 Tamil Nadu state police constables between 25-55 years of age. Respondents were chosen randomly. Information was gathered utilising two self-report questionnaires. The first was the Police Stress Inventory (PSI, Pienaar, and Rothmann, 2003) which incorporates 44 stress related actions. Items were scored from 1 (very low stress) to 5 (very high stress), and this questionnaire was a self-administered questionnaire. The second was brief Coping Orientation for Problem Experienced Questionnaire (brief COPE, Carver, 1997) was utilised to measure the respondents' general stress coping strategies. The COPE is a multidimensional 28 items survey demonstrating the distinctive routes in which people cope in various circumstances. Five point scale were used 5 (All the item) to 1 (Never). It was also a self-administered questionnaire in which 10 items assessed self-supported emotional coping, 6 items assessed social supported emotional coping, 4 items assessed actual problem focused coping and 8 items assessed avoidant coping. The researcher used random sampling for data collection. A biographical and demographical questionnaire was also developed. Respondents were given the choice of giving their names and contact subtle elements on account of feedback. Other data accumulated includes designation, age, educational qualification, sex, marital status and experience. The researcher utilised IBM SPSS and AMOS to demonstrate the research objectives.

#### 4. Results

The target respondents of this study were police constables working in Tamilnadu police service, India. The questionnaire was sent to 492 law and order police constables. Firstly, descriptive statistics was performed. Of all these samples, 254 respondents were male, and 238 respondents were females had entirely completed the questionnaires, and sample ages ranged from 25 to 56 years with the mean age being 36.59 years with the standard deviation of 7.23 years.

According to Arbuckle (2010) study, we measured the reliability and validity of the multiple-item research scales by analysing the measurement model using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood estimation (MLE), and the results are showed in table 1. The results of IBM SPSS AMOS (Byrne, 2013) showed that the indicator reliability of all item loadings is significant, higher than the recommended minimum acceptable value of 0.40, and close to the preferred level of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2012). Standardised loadings are greater than 1.96 and statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ) which supports the construct validity of the construct. To additional confirming the reliability and validity of the Police stress inventory and brief COPE, their construct validity, and convergent validity was also studied using average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR). Hair et al., (2012) studies suggested the use of composite reliability (CR) as a replacement for Cronbach alpha reliability. As Table 1 shows, these values are larger than 0.7, indicating a high level of internal consistency reliability among all research variables. For convergent validity, each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) is assessed. Table 1 concludes that all of the average variance extracted (AVE) values are greater than the fair cut-off point 0.5, confirming convergent validity.

Table 1. Reliability and Validity of the research scales

Research scale	Research subscale	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Self-supported emotional focused coping	Positive Reframing	0.870	0.773
	Acceptance	0.810	0.681
	Humor	0.777	0.636
	Religion support	0.738	0.590
	Self-distraction	0.809	0.680
Social supported emotional focused coping	Emotional social support	0.823	0.700
	Instrumental social support	0.748	0.597
	Venting	0.869	0.773
Problem focused coping	Active	0.818	0.692
	Planning	0.812	0.683
Avoidant focused coping	Mental disengagement	0.749	0.613
	Denial	0.796	0.661
	Substance use	0.775	0.633
	Self-blame	0.752	0.606
Overall stress	Job demand	0.979	0.723
	Lack of resources	0.972	0.718
	Occupational stress	0.950	0.783

Table 2 shows the inter-correlation between overall stress and stress coping strategies and the results are significant statistically at 1 percent level. Three police stress dimensions like job demand, lack of resources and occupational stress have positive and significant relation with other police stress dimensions ( $p < 0.01$ ). The coefficient of correlation range is from 0.698 to 0.801 for police stress dimensions. Emotional support



coping strategies, Problem focused, and Avoidant focused coping strategies have an average level positive relationship with each other coping strategies significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ), and the coefficient of correlation range for coping strategies are between 0.289 to 0.399. After closely investigative the relationship between police stress and coping strategies. Further, the researcher used the SEM approach to testing the relationship between police stress and coping strategies.

Table 2. Correlations among police stress and coping strategies

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Job demand	1						
2. Lack of resources	.698**	1					
3. Occupational stress	.801**	.753**	1				
4. Self-support emotional focused	.243**	.253**	.225**	1			
5. Social support emotional focused	.308**	.332**	.277**	.383**	1		
6. Problem focused	.432**	.483**	.427**	.359**	.399**	1	
7. Avoidant	.408**	.458**	.430**	.289**	.338**	.396**	1

\*\* Significant at 1 percent level

Structural equation modelling was applied to reveal the relationship between Proposed model, and it was showed in Figure 1. The CMIN/DF is 4.872 (Heck & Thomas, 2015; Schermelleh et al., 2003). The Goodness of Fit Index is 0.917 (greater than 0.9), the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index is 0.902, the Comparative Fit Index is 0.921, and the Normed Fit Index is 0.899, which shows a good model fit. (MacCallum and Hong, 1997; Hooper et al., 2008). RMSEA is 0.803 (MacCallum and Hong, 1997; Hooper et al., 2008). Figure 2 shows the standardised path coefficients of the hypothesised model.

In this study, four hypotheses were examined, and results are displayed in figure 2. Standardized estimates and p-value ( $p < 0.001$ ) values shows are greater than 2.58. Therefore, all of the hypotheses (H01-H04) could be accepted. It is noted that overall police stress influences self-supported emotional focused coping strategies ( $\beta = 1.054$ ,  $t = 4.436$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) positively and that overall police stressors have a positive impact on social supported emotional focused coping strategies ( $\beta = 0.881$ ,  $t = 4.504$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Furthermore, there is a positive influence among overall stress and problem-focused coping ( $\beta = 0.677$ ,  $t = 3.768$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and avoidant coping strategies ( $\beta = 0.713$ ,  $t = 4.393$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

## 5. Discussion and Conclusion

The research data obtained from Tamilnadu police constables in India has proven that a positive correlation exists among police stress and coping strategies. Considering the specific operational characteristics of police constables and organisational conditions of police institutions, the research finding is not surprising. Because police constables in India are exposed to difficult work environment such as the staff shortage, lack of resources, bureaucratic red tape, shift work, overtime demands, traumatic events, periods of inactivity, assignment of disagreeable duties and assignment of new or unfamiliar duties (Pienaar & Rothmann, 2003; Pratap, 2016; Kim et al., 2016; Ma et al., 2015; Mostert & Joubert, 2015; Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012; Chitra & Karunanidhi, 2013). In addition, police service is an occupation where thorough, quick, serious and radical changes are knowledgeable about common sense (Sundaram & Kumaran, 2012).

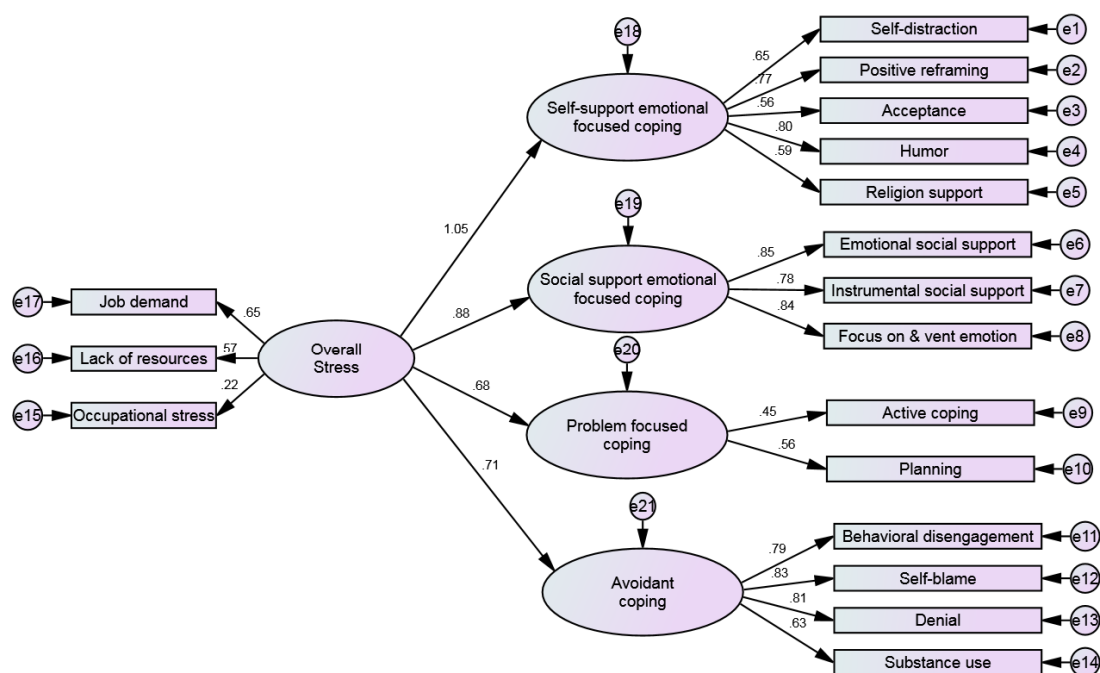


Figure 2. Standardised path coefficients of the hypothesised model

Occupational stresses are occurrences that are more regular in present day times than it is commonly believed. It significantly affects both society and individual. A comprehension of the nature and impacts of occupational stress propose that it represents a significant danger to employee's wellbeing and it likewise goes about as a source of business expense (Kim et al., 2016; Ma et al., 2015). The paper proposes and exactly assesses a model which creates a series of hypotheses with respect to stress by utilising the judgments and variables that are liable to impact coping strategies. The aftereffects of this study yielded some significant findings and for the most part upheld past looks into. The outcomes demonstrated that occupational stresses made outstanding contributions to coping strategies. The present findings are steady with previous studies in recognising a causal relationship between police stress and coping strategies (Natarajan, 2014; Kethineni & Srinivasan, 2013). It finishes up representatives who see the abnormal state of police stress tends to utilise higher coping strategies. Policy makers generally have controlled HR by applying the same arrangements and techniques to all workers. However the consistent results introduced here to propose that police constables contrast, and that the distinctions are showed in view of police stress and coping strategies.

The study contended that we could have a superior comprehension of the normal for Indian police constables and the causal relationship between police stress and coping strategies. Utilising the model of this concentrate, each of the variables demonstrated an immediate impact on police constables. Hence, the proposed model can be helpful to enhance the acts of HR administration and strategies of significant police commercial enterprises. The findings have a few implications for the policy makers of the police department and researchers at the police department. They propose that organisation officers specifically should know about necessary psychological qualities between work related stresses and particularly, that coping strategies decide how police are dealt with in an association and impact how they react. The long haul results of high amounts of employment stress and low copings should be mulled over while ascertaining the short versus significant haul advantages of the psychological emotionally supportive network working of an association. The outcomes can be utilised to help researchers and policy makers foresee police work execution and aid government consider police's identity attributes.

Police constables are frequently presented to profoundly stressful and traumatic occasions throughout their work. This introduction can effectively affect mental and physical well-being. In spite of introduction to stress and the subsequent physical and mental repercussions, police constables are called upon to play out their obligations in crisis circumstances. In selecting and preparing police officers, hence, it is basic to decide the best strategies for coping with stress to guarantee the well-being of both police officers and people in general that are served. In many reviews, coping was connected with the level of execution. This focuses on the capacity of police to depend on their preparation and ability sets in stressful circumstances, paying little mind to the techniques by which they oversee passionate reacting in such conditions. This has significant ramifications for preparing projects and indicates the need to urge enlisted people to grow more errand centred methodologies to guarantee their well-being. At last, extraordinary coping styles related to the different examples of stress side effects, recommending that several gathering bunches of indications under a similar general determination may restrain our comprehension of occupational stress.

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