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## INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRESS DUE TO INADEQUATE SALARY AND REWARDS AND MARITAL DISCORD: A STUDY OF INDIAN ARMY OFFICERS

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**Abstract:** *The main objective of this study has been to study the relationship between inadequate salary and rewards and marital discord among Indian Army personnel. In order to complete the study a sample comprising of 50 officers from Indian Army was selected. The sample consisted of officers from various designations of Indian Army. The study focuses on two dimensions of stress inadequate salary and reward and marital discord among army personnel. To see the difference between the two means t test was applied and to study the relationship between the two dimensions of stress Pearson's correlation was applied. The results reveal that the army personnel are more stressed because of the non-availability of their spouse/girlfriend suggesting that physiological and physical need deprivation leads to stress. Also, the results show that there exists a significant positive correlation between inadequate salary and rewards and marital discord which connotes that dissatisfaction from salary and reward also causes stress.*

**Keywords:** *Impact-influence, AFMC-Armed Forces Medical College.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Stress is disruption of mental order. It is a kind of strain; some kind of psychic dislocation. It is a form of pressure. Stress is product of inopportune climate in life. Stress is both additive and cumulative. It adds up over time until a state of crisis is reached and symptoms appear.

“stress or stress response, is the unconscious preparation to fight or flee a personal experience when faced with any demand”.

According to the penguin medical encyclopedia stress is any influence which disturbs the natural equilibrium of the body and includes within in its reference physical injury, exposure, deprivation, all kind of diseases and emotional disturbances. In medical parlances ‘Stress’ is defined as a perturbation of body’s homeostasis.

Stress is one of the major life style problems affecting the whole world in epidemic proportions. It is seen that over two thirds of office goers who visit doctors are for stress related illness. Stress is the state of tension that is created when a person responds to the demand and pressures that come from work, family and other external sources as well as those that are internally generated from self imposed demands, obligations and self criticism.

Stress is exceedingly complex concept that doesn’t lend itself to a simple definition. Stress is not caused due to the simple presence of stressors, but by nature of response to stressors. Stress can be considered as a state of mind which reflects certain biochemical reactions in the human body and is projected by a sense of anxiety, tension and depression. Our body goes through the series of biochemical changes that vary in intensity depending on severity of stress and the length of time over which the stress is experienced.

Not necessarily all stress is bad. At times a mild degree of stress and tension can sometimes be beneficial. Feeling mildly stressed when carrying out a project or assignment often compels us to do a good job and to work energetically. This is called the good stress or eustress. It is only when stress is overwhelming or poorly managed; that its negative effects appear called distress or bad stress. Stress carries a negative connotation for some people, as though it were something to be avoided.

Since stress is determined by the nature of responses to stressors and these responses are shaped by attitudes, it is important and necessary to alter and modify mental attitudes in order to block any negative psychological or physiological impact of stressors. Stress is



major contributing factor either directly or indirectly, to coronary artery disease, cancer, respiratory disorders, cirrhosis of the liver, accidental injuries and suicide. In stress mind becomes unstable, psyche is disturbed, attention is diverted, single mindedness is found lacking and concentration parches up, job is partially done, job satisfaction is practically lost, family finds him unsettled. These can be subsumed under three general categories:

- 1 physiological symptom
- 2 psychological symptoms
- 3 Behavioral symptoms

If the stress continues over a period of time, it could lead to break down: in immune system resulting in serious health problems such as high blood pressure, Ulcer, depression and heart attacks. Few work related symptoms which lead to stress include having no participation in decision that affect one's responsibility, lack of effective communication to and from seniors, excessive time spent away from home and family.

#### **Role of Stress in Armed Forces:**

According to the national institutes of health, 80-90% of all illnesses are caused by stress, either directly or indirectly. Army personnel and their families suffer from various types of stress like

Wartime stress: War, Terrorism and other catastrophic events fill everyone with dread and fear, the families of deployed military personnel are among the most likely to suffer from severe emotional stress.

Time deficient: A successful officer should also be great boss, husband/wife, father/mother, friend, son/daughter, even a great master to his/her golden retriever. He/she could hold meetings round the clock and yet should find time to indulge his/her family with long dreamer vacation.

The events that cause maximum stress in Army Personnel as per the AFMC life event scale are illicit relations of spouse, court martial, amputation, divorce, going abroad on posting, receiving medal for bravery during war, loss of identity card, fighting enemies, child getting job and getting married, strained joint family system, physical and emotional insecurity of family if living alone, increased financial demands from family, insecurity for landed property, denial of leave.



Military psychologist refers to the stresses of combat duty for both military personnel and their loved ones- as occurring in three stages:

**Predeployment:** Predeployment stresses include uncertainties about time and length of deployment, uncertain expectation of outcomes, fear of physical harm and separation anxiety

**Deployment:** Deployment stress includes many of the stressors of predeployment phase, along with physical separation and resultant lack of communication and social support among family members.

**Reunion stress:** Reunion stress should also not be underestimated. While families experience relief and joy with reunion.

India won the independence but failed to govern it. Lack of good governance has led to economic and social disparities. This social injustice and economic inequity compelled sections of our society in different parts of country to take up arms to seek justice leading to situations deteriorating well beyond normal law and problem necessitating the employment of the army. The Indian Army has thus been exposed to LIC/ terrorism or militancy since 1960's; the hall mark of such involvement has been that they have carried out these assignments successfully. However the fine performance has not been without a price; both in terms of human and financial cost. Such commitments have taken a heavy toll and presently the Army has been afflicted with the maladies of Stress. This has led to crisis within the Army.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Dixit K C (February, 2011) tried to address the issues related to stress in army in his study "Addressing stress-related issues in Army". Stress can be triggered among soldiers due to any change or event that happens. The author carried out field trips to interact with officers, JCOs and other ranks in formations and units of northern command. The interaction was through a set of two separate questionnaires. The survey sample data consisted of 100 officers, 100 JCOs and 300 other ranks. The questionnaire was aimed at evaluating operational and domestic environment and assessing presence of stress among army personnel. It is not necessary that all factors brought out in this paper cause stress in an individual. It could be a single factor or it could be a number of factors depending upon the personality traits of an individual that make him/her react to stressor. The effort is to bring



out all the factors that may initiate stress reaction in soldiers due to typical working environment, compulsions and restrictions imposed on soldiers during their service period. One of the most significant parameter of stress related issues in soldiers is the importance of welfare in their lives. Welfare, motivation and stress intensity in a soldier's service to nation are closely interlinked and mutually interdependent. A soldier whose professional, social, domestic and financial needs are met adequately remains motivated to give his/her ultimate to the nation. An analysis factor in the sample survey related to operational as well as domestic environment suggests that the cumulative efforts of professional and domestic pressures induce varying level of stress in army personnel. The operational environment has been covered with relation to facets of job satisfaction, living conditions including pay and allowances, food, leave, promotion, posting and tenure in operational and high altitude/difficult areas, and aspect of interpersonal communication among peers, colleagues and subordinates. As far as domestic environment is concerned, the factors that play significant role in performance within constraints of the organizational climate have been addressed. The domestic factors considered during the interaction, the compounded effects of which bears significance in discharge of duties by army personnel are domestic worries regarding housing problems, education of wards, marital discords, medical problems of family members, financial problems and inability to resolve disputes during leave.

Col. (Ret.) Vasudeva P K (August, 2007) studied the rising rate of suicides in Indian Army in the past five years. Over 100 soldiers took their lives last year alone. This along with killings by subordinates and colleagues has brought shame to the army. The main causes of the suicides can be broadly put across as: First, poor leadership. Second, the soldiers' pay and allowances are less than that of a skilled labourer in the industry.

## **OBJECTIVES**

1 To study the relationship between inadequate salary and rewards and marital discord among Indian Army Personnel.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

1. There would be a positive relationship between inadequate salary and reward and marital discord among Indian Army personnel.



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### I Research Design

The sample of this study consisted of 50 Indian Army Officers from various units and regiments of Indian Army.

### II Sample

Random sampling technique was applied in order to obtain a representative sample. Officers were selected randomly.

### III Tools

A questionnaire has been developed by the researcher. It consists of 29 items. Out of 29 statements 3 statements are negatively phrased and reversely scored to reduce response bias. Test is based on 5 points Likert scale with the anchors- True to almost no extent, True to small extent, True to some extent, True to great extent, True to very great extent. The average of scores for the 29 statements provides the index of stress. Higher scores indicate more stress. The cronbach's alpha value for the scale is 0.71.

## RESULTS

The results were analysed using t-test and correlation test.

### 1 Findings of t test

The value of t-test is shown in table 1. It is observed that the value of t is equal to 1.235\*\* which is highly significant at 0.01 alpha level. This implies that there exists a highly significant difference between the variables of marital discord and inadequate salary and reward of Indian Army personnel.

Table 1: Significance of mean difference, (value of t-test);

	Mean	SD	N
Marital discord	9.24	3.15	50
Inadequate salary & reward	5.78	2.25	50
t-value =4.235**		**p<0.01	df=98

### 2. Findings of correlation

The value of correlation is shown in Table 2. It is evident that value of correlation is 0.314 which is positively significant at 0.05 level. This implies that there is a significant positive



correlation between inadequate salary and reward and marital discord among Indian Army officers.

Table 2: Correlation values for salary and marital discord

		Correlations	
		SALARY	MARITAL_DISCORD
SALARY	Pearson Correlation	1	.314*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026
	N	50	50
MARITAL_DISCORD	Pearson Correlation	.314*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	
	N	50	50

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

It can be recalled that the principle objective of the present study was to study the interrelationship between the two dimensions of stress viz; marital discord and inadequate salary and reward. The results show that there exists a highly significant difference between the two. It is revealed that army personnel are more stressed because of separation from their spouse/girlfriend, deprivation of physical and physiological needs leads to anxiety. The results also indicate that the problem and anxiety resulting from the non-availability of the spouse results in strained relationship with the spouse. This is in agreement with the AFMC life events scale which says that divorce and illicit relationship of the spouse are amongst the events that cause maximum stress among army personnel.

On the other hand, the dimension of inadequate salary and rewards is comparatively less stressful than the dimension of marital discord. According to the findings the policies which are being followed for promotion are biased and not merit based. There is also discontent over salary. They feel that the salaries are less than they deserve. A soldier whose professional, social, domestic and financial needs are met adequately remains motivated to give his ultimate to the nation. An analysis factor in the sample survey related to operational as well as domestic environment suggests that the cumulative efforts of professional and domestic pressures induce varying level of stress in army personnel. The



operational environment has been covered with relation to facets of job satisfaction, living conditions including pay and allowances (K C Dixit, 2011).

The correlation results reveal that there is a significant positive relationship between the dimensions of marital discord and inadequate salary and reward. This implies that as the level of stress rises because of inadequate salary and rewards, marital discord also increases.

## **CONCLUSION**

On the basis of present research, it can be concluded that the paper attempts to reveal the most hushed up aspect of Indian Army personnel which is sexual deprivation as a result of separation from wife or girlfriend. Also it is observed that the Indian Army personnel are dissatisfied with their salary and promotion policies.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The major limitation of this study is that it is confined to the Indian Army officers so the findings cannot be generalized. These findings are not applicable for the armed forces of other countries or other organizations.

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