

The Moderating Role of Organisational Support in the Relationship between Occupational Stress and Job Performance among Women Police Constables: A Study of Narcotics Bureau of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Occupational stress is a critical concern in high-risk professions, particularly law enforcement. In Sri Lanka, female police constables serving in the Narcotics Bureau encounter multiple stressors arising from the dangerous nature of narcotics work, gender-specific challenges, and inadequate organisational support. These stressors influence both their task and overall job performance. While stress management in policing has been studied globally, limited research has examined the relationship between occupational stress and performance among women officers in South Asia, leaving a significant gap in knowledge. This study aims to investigate the effects of operational stress, workload stress, emotional stress, and job insecurity on job performance, while also assessing the moderating role of organisational support. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was applied, and data were gathered through structured questionnaires from a stratified random sample of 56 female constables. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS, applying Pearson correlation and multiple regressions to test the proposed relationships. The findings indicate that operational stress ($\beta = -0.027$, $p = 0.798$), workload stress ($\beta = 0.189$, $p = 0.071$), and emotional stress ($\beta = -0.015$, $p = 0.875$) show insignificant negative influence on job performance, whereas job insecurity ($\beta = 0.742$, $p = 0.000$) demonstrates a significant positive influence on job performance. Importantly, organisational support mitigates these negative effects and improves performance. The findings carry significant implications for policymakers, HR professionals, and law enforcement leaders. As one of the first studies in Sri Lanka to explore gender, occupational stress, and job performance in high-risk policing, it underscores the urgent need for gender-sensitive stress management initiatives, professional development, and supportive systems tailored for women officers in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: job performance, occupational stress, organisational support, Sri Lanka, women police constables