

## Work Stress for Traffic Police in Chennai City

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### Abstract

Stress at work is a new phenomenon of modern lifestyles. The nature of work has gone through drastic changes over the last century and it is still changing at whirlwind speed. It has touched almost all profession. Stress percentage is higher in police profession compared to any other profession. The Chennai city crime and traffic police have high level stress because of more crime and heavy traffic congestion. So this study was chosen to explore work stress for traffic police. The main impact of traffic police stresses are work overload, poor work environment, lack of resources, infrastructure facilities, and number of traffic police proportionate to population and number of vehicles. Secondary data are used for this study. This study focuses to find out reason for work stress and suggestions to reduce work stress for traffic police.

### Introduction

The origin of the concept of stress predates antiquity. During eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, stress was equated with "force, pressure or strain" exerted on a material object or person, which resists these forces and attempts to maintain its original state (Hinkle, 1973)

There is ample evidence that work stress has an impact on workers mental and physical well-being (Khan & Bysoiere 1992). Although stress is almost universally thought of as something bad, it potentially has a positive aspect. To some extent everyone encounters

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stressors and in some degree stress inevitably follows or, as Selye (1974) put it, 'a complete absence of stress is death.

Therefore stress is required at optimum level for motivation. But Modern lives are full of stress. Police work is often considered to be a highly stressful occupation. It's including traffic police officers too. In this context Chennai traffic police occupation have high level of work stress because of so many reasons. So In the present article focuses on the reason for work stress.

### **Objective**

1. To find out reason for stress among traffic police.
2. To identify ways to control stressful situation and reduce stress in work.

### **Reason for work stress**

Many reasons are there for traffic police work stress. Based on study it is found that the following reasons influence high amount of work stress. They are discussed below.

### **Work overload**

The work load for traffic police is too high. Employee can perform very well when

they have optimum work load. If work load is high then they cannot do any one of the work properly. In this parameter, traffic police have too much of work in Chennai city. Work is also heavy due to their nature of work like standing in sun light for long hour and moving here and there continuously and so on. They work for hours every day due to lack of manpower, more population and number of vehicles, more no of people violating traffic rule and high rate of accident. Traffic police used to get tired very soon because of constant vigil for long hours. These are the reasons for the high stress level. This study found that the following important reason creates work overload in Chennai traffic police.

1. Constantly increasing vehicle population.
2. Traffic jams creates more work.
3. Poor maintenance of vehicles resulting in sudden breakdowns on the road and it creates more traffic jam.
4. Managing security for VIPs increase work load.

5. Digging roads for public utilities like telephone cable, water supply, electricity, drainage disturb the work and create more traffic congestion.
6. No provision for pedestrians on some roads and encroachments and shops on pedestrian paths create traffic jam.
7. Erratic cattle and pets movement on the road.
8. Public & party meetings/functions/processions.
9. Accidents and collisions.
10. Traffic rules violation.

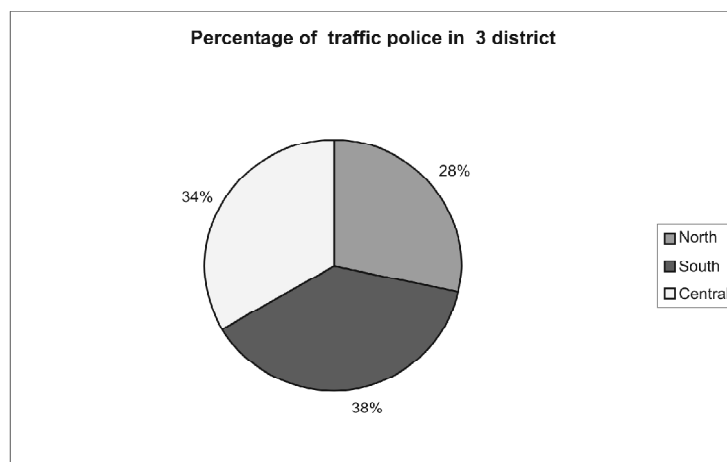
### Lack of man power

The number of traffic police did not increase much for the past few years but the people and vehicles population have increased rapidly. It is one of the prime reasons for stress. More people transit from semi urban and rural area to Chennai city for job opportunities, education, tour, business and so on. Due to good income vehicle buying potential also get increased, leading to more Compared to vehicle number and population, numbers of traffic police are very less. Below table shows number of traffic police in three districts which belongs to Chennai city.

**Table: 1 No of traffic enforcement police in Chennai city as on July, 2008**

Designation	North	Central	South	Total
RI	9	14	11	<b>34</b>
RSI	39	61	68	<b>168</b>
HC	381	408	475	<b>1264</b>
G-I	101	122	121	<b>344</b>
G-II	53	92	112	<b>257</b>
<b>Total no of police</b>	<b>583</b>	<b>697</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>2067</b>

**Source:** Data collected from traffic police department, Chennai



### Increasing population:

India's strength and weakness is population. Because of too much of population number of vehicles also gets increased.. Ultimately it gives more work and stress to traffic police. Particularly if you take main areas in Chennai like T.Nagar , Purasaiwalkam, Central station and so on people movement are high. Even pedestrian areas are not enough to walk due to large number of peoples on the road. It's disturbs vehicle movement and creates traffic jam and accident. Traffic police are not able to control that much crowd of people because of less number of traffic police. As per wikipedia.org information Chennai city has **75 lakh** populations in the year of **2007**. Below table shows census of Chennai city population around **42 lakh**. It has taken by Indian government on **2001**. This information shows that with in six years, populations become double in Chennai city.

**Table no: 2 Chennai population censuses as on 2001 in Chennai**

Census Data	Males	Females	Total
Total Population	21, 61,605	20,54,663	42,16,268
Total working population	11,92,924	2,48,458	14,41,382

Sources: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chennai>

### Increasing number of vehicles

The numbers of vehicles are increasing in high percentage year by year. Every year vehicles number used to increase minimum 15% to 20%. The prime reason for the increase in vehicles are due to increased buying potential, people movement from various places to Chennai for job opportunities and various other reasons, increase in floating vehicle population because of tour, travel, education and business purposes. Because of these reasons traffic jam occurs often. The below table mentioned the number of vehicles registered by Chennai division. It's excluding other district registration vehicles which are moving in Chennai.

**Table: 3 No of vehicles in Chennai as on April, 1, 2008**

Vehicle type	No of vehicles
Two wheeler	20,38,875
Auto (Three wheeler)	51,113
Own used cars	4,25,835
Taxi (Rental cars)	30,321
Van	61,255
Jeep	35, 822
Ambulance	3,590
Bus	4,809
<b>Total</b>	<b>26,51,620</b>

**Source: Times of India, page no.10, dated 17-06-08**

### Work Environment

We are living in an era of growing complexities and pressures. The stresses relating to work have become a predominant feature of modern life. Margolis and Kroes (1974) defined job stress as a condition interacting with work characteristics to disrupt psychological or physiological homeostasis.

Work environment is very important for any organization to create interest and involvement in job for their employees and make them happy and healthy relationship among peers, juniors and superiors. This study found that traffic police job not have good work environment because of the following reasons.

1. Job exposed to high levels of air pollution.
2. Job environment is often too hot.
3. Job environment is often very dusty.
4. Job environment is often very noisy.
5. Glare of powerful head lights during nights.
6. Nervousness due to high speed vehicles, moving all around.

7. No protection from weather.
8. Disturbed mood when witnessing accidents.

### Increasing no of accident

Traffic police get stress because of frequent accidents. It affects them mentally and physically. The numbers of accident in Chennai city is very high compared to any other city in India. In 2006, number of accident are 7, 359. Out of this accident 1,136 lost their life. In 2007 numbers of accident are 8,680. Out of this accident 1,146 are lost their life. Most lives were lost in 2005 between 9pm and midnight and most lives were lost in 2006 between 3pm and 6pm. According

to the Corporation commissioner Mr. Rajesh Lakhoni revealed research study that a majority of the accidents took place because of heavy pedestrian interruption in the arterial roads and junctions. This study also identifies 22 accident prone areas in Chennai city and 50 danger zones across Tamilnadu state. From table 4 shows that accident rates are getting increased year by year. Table 5 shows that two wheeler vehicles accident are more in number compared to other type's vehicles. In the year of 2007 two wheeler accidents number are double compared to year 2006. Compared to private buses, the government bus accident numbers are very high.

**Table: 4 No of vehicles met with accident for the following years in Chennai**

1995		2000		2004		2005		2006		2007	
Total	Fatal	Total	Fatal	Total	Fatal	Total	Fatal	Total	Fatal	Total	Fatal
4,987	564	4,878	640	4,873	—	7875	1,190	7,359	1,136	8,680	1,146

Source: Times of India, dated 21-04-08, Page no.2

**Table: 5 Types of vehicles met with accident in Chennai**

Year	Government trucks	Private trucks	Government buses	Private buses	Cars/Vans/Jeeps	Three wheelers	Two wheelers
2006	6	357	149	42	241	5	115
2007	—	275	156	41	219	54	238

Source: Times of India, dated 21-04-08, Page no.2

This study found that the following important causes for accidents.

1. Over-speeding
2. Rash driving
3. Signal violation
4. Lane-jumping
5. Driving without license
6. Drunken-driving
7. Violating U-turns
8. Using cell-phones while driving
9. Riding without helmets

#### **Lack of Infrastructure and resources**

Narrow road and poor road condition creates traffic congestion and accident. People and vehicle population are increased day by day but road facilities not yet improved. Traffic congestion will be more because no pedestrian space and encroachments on pedestrian space.

This study found that because of following lack of resources and facilities traffic police are used to get work stress

1. Lack of signal points at major junctions
2. Lack of power back up for signals at junctions
3. Lack of basic amenities like drinking water, toilet and so on

4. Insufficient number of traffic police persons at important places
5. Lack of information for duties and responsibilities
6. Lack of modern communication system
7. Lack of basic equipments like night jacket, batters, mask, rain coat, bumboat and so on

#### **Lack of public support**

Public support is very much needed for any kinds of government rules. Organizations only achieve success when their employees follow the company rules and regulation. Many accidents used to happen because of violating traffic rules. There are two types of violation. One is knowledge about traffic rules and regulation but not follow another is not aware of traffic rules and regulation. Traffic violations are increasing every year. Violating traffic rule not only gives work load and also de-motivating traffic police. The following factors affect work involvement and performance that are having poor image on traffic police among public and distorted information by print and broad coast media. In the year of 2007 traffic police registered 2, 52,196 cases for traffic violation. The below table show the year wise fine collected from public. Table 6 shows that traffic violating percentage increasing continuously.

**Table: 6 Traffic violation fine collections in Chennai**

Year	Amount of Fine
2005	Rs.3.8crore
2006	Rs.4.6crore
2007	Rs.9.6crore

**Source: Times of India, dated 21-04-08, Page no.2**

#### **Recommendation**

1. Traffic police manpower should be increased according to population and vehicles numbers.
2. Social workers, school and college students should help traffic police at peak hour in major junction.
3. Public should cooperate with traffic police and strictly follow the traffic rules.
4. Road quality and width should be increased as much as possible.
5. Important junction signal should have power back up.
6. Resources like night jacket, nose mask and so on should be distributed with out any delay.

7. Proper shelter for traffic police should be made to protect from weather.
8. Traffic rules and regulation should be incorporated in school syllabus
9. Every signal or traffic police should have first aid box at their work place for emergency use.
10. Every five 5 km ambulance facilities should be available.
11. To avoid more number of accidents strict rules should be implemented for vehicles speed limit, rash driving and separate track or lane for two wheelers and four wheelers.
12. Implement a traffic rule that whoever made accident for the first time they will get severe warning with fine and when the same person do an accident again driving license should be canceled. This rule helps to reduce accident number drastically.

#### **Conclusion**

The causes of traffic police work stress have been identified. In the busy world, stress can not be avoided for any kind of work. "Prevention is better then cure" based on this idioms meaning one can understand that instead of suffer or mull over with difficult situation you should be



well preferred to face the situation. For that you have to develop lot more strategy and training within you. Apart from this traffic police department should arrange tour or some entertainment event for monthly once do get relax from their routine work schedule and refreshment.

**Learn to love what you do for  
your living**

I want to share my most interesting discovery with you. Make it your light house:

If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap,

If you want happiness for a day, go on a picnic,

If you want happiness for a week, go on a vacation,

If you want happiness for a month, get married,

If you want happiness for a year, inherit wealth,

But if you want happiness for a lifetime, learn to love what you do for your living!

By Promod Batra

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