



COPING MECHANISM OF WOMEN POLICE PERSONNELS IN KERALA

Shabana S* & Dr. P. Bruntha**

* Ph.D Research Scholar, PG& Research Department of Commerce, NGM College, Pollachi, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

** Associate Professor & Head, PG& Research Department of Commerce, NGM College, Pollachi, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu

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Abstract:

Policing is a challenging and high-stress occupation, and women officers may encounter further stressors related to gender discrimination, work-family conflict, and social expectations. Coping mechanisms are the strategies individuals employ to manage stress, adapt to tough situations, and maintain their mental health. Women police personnels employ a range of coping mechanisms to steer the demanding and sometimes traumatic nature of their work. The main objective of the study is to explore coping strategies utilized by women police personnel in Kerala. The study is based on both Primary and Secondary data. The questionnaire contains questions relating to Personal profile, Motivational factors, and Job factors for joining Police and Coping (Carver Cope scale). The gathered data have been appraised using the appropriate statistical tools like Weighted Average, Correlation, Multiple Regression, Step-wise Regression and Garret Ranking. These findings provide valuable insights that can inform the development of supportive interventions and policies aimed at improving the well-being and job satisfaction of women in the police force in Kerala. The Women Police personnels show mixed pattern of coping strategies. Emotion focused coping has a greater weight than the other factors. Among that most of the Women police personnels adopt put their trust in God as a coping strategy.

Key Words: Women Police Personnels, Coping Mechanisms

Introduction:

Law enforcement agencies play a serious role in maintaining law and order, warranting the safety of communities, and upholding justice. Within these activities, police personnels face exclusive challenges and demands that can impact their emotional well-being and psychological flexibility. While studies have sightseen the experiences of police officers in general, there is a need for research specifically focused on women police personnels to understand their coping mechanisms. Kerala, a state in southern India, is known for its broad-minded approach to gender equality and has witnessed an increase in the recruitment of women police personnels in recent years. This study aims to fill the existing research gap by converging specifically on the coping mechanisms of women police personnels in Kerala. By examining their experiences, challenges, and strengths, this research seeks to provide evidence-based insights that can inform policies, interventions, and support systems aimed at improving the mental health and overall well-being of women police personnels in the state. Eventually, this study attempts to contribute to the creation of a supportive and empowering environment for women in law enforcement, promoting their professional growth and ensuring their holistic well-being.

Review of the Literature:

Daniela Maren (2020) in their study " Characteristics Of The Stocking Can Find Consequences And Coping Strategies For Men And Women That Report Their Victimization To Police" the study describe the types of stalking compliance and coping strategy for men and women police. It is found that the coping strategies used by men victim were not effective and it is even risked to hamper the work of the police officer superseding and investigating on the cases.

Abhay Prathap Singh (2016) in their study " Coping with work stress in police employees" aimed to investigate the level of objective work stress and feeling of work stress among different groups of police employees and to access the level of coping strategies among different groups of police employees. The correlation results evinced that active and adaptive related copying responses have an inverse like with the work stress and the adaptive coping responses have a positive relationship with work stress.

Vilas Balgaonkar (2014) in their study "A study on copying strategies used by police for managing stress" A sample of 150 police both male and female were chosen. The results revealed that in order to contest role stress when compared to female police male police adopt submissive copy which embraces the strategies like day dreams, complaining, smoking, taking alcohol, writing stress diary sleeping more and quitting job where as female police adopt relaxation coping like physical exercise, meditation, yoga etc relax and burn that extra energy encouraged by stress in comparison to male police.

Statement of the Problem:

The present study aims to examine the coping mechanisms of women police personnels in Kerala. Despite the growing representation of women in the police force, there is a lack of research on the specific challenges faced by women police personnels and their impact on their strategies. Coping mechanisms are the strategies people employ to deal with stress, adversity, and challenging circumstances. The study aims to investigate the coping mechanisms adopted by women police personnels in Kerala and assess their efficacy in managing the specific stressors connected with their profession. The findings of the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by women personnels and apprise the development of supportive interferences and policies to enhance their overall well-being and job satisfaction.

Objective of the Study:

The objective of the study was:

- To assess the Motivational factors and Job factors for joining police
- To explore coping strategies adopted by women police personnel
- To understand the level of Coping mechanism among Women police personnel.

Research Methodology:

The methodology adopted in the present study is briefed in the subsequent paragraphs.

- Source of Data: The study is based on both Primary and Secondary data. The questionnaire contains questions relating to Personal profile, Motivational factors and Job factors for joining Police and Coping (Carver Cope scale)
- Sampling: The study focuses on the Women Police Personnels in Kerala from various districts (Palakkad, Thrissur, and Ernakulam). A sample of 402 Women Police personnels has been selected by applying snowball sampling technique.

Framework of Analysis:

The gathered data have been appraised using the appropriate statistical tools, (i) Weighted Average score (ii) Garret Ranking (iii) Correlation (iv) Regression (v) Step wise

Significance of the Study:

The significance of studying coping mechanism of women police personnels in Kerala is multi-layered and holds several important consequences. Examining these aspects specifically among women police personnels is decisive because women often face inimitable challenges and experiences in male-dominated professions, such as policing. Policing is a challenging and high-stress occupation, and women officers may encounter further stressors related to gender discrimination, work-family conflict, and social expectations. Understanding how women police officers cope with the challenges they face can be advantageous in emergent strategies to support their coping efforts efficiently. This study can recognize the coping mechanisms used by women police personnels, such as seeking social provision, self-care practices, or utilizing professional possessions. The findings of this study may contribute to evidence-based policymaking in Kerala's law enforcement sector, particularly for addressing the specific needs of women police personnels.

Garret Ranking Analysis:

Motivational Factors for Joining Police:

Table 1

Factors	Rank
Government Job	2
To serve the society	1
Great Compensation	6
Ambition from the childhood	3
Recognition	5
Growth Opportunities	4

Table 1 reveals the Motivational factors for joining police of Women Police Personnels in Garrett rankingtable. The Garrett ranking table shows the motivational factors for women police personnel in joining the police force. It highlights that serving society is the top motivator, representing a strong sense of humanity. The appeal of a government job and childhood ambitions rank second and third, correspondingly, showing the significance of stability and long-standing ambitions. Recognition and growth opportunities follow, though great compensation ranks last, suggesting that it is not the prime driving factor. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of public service and personal execution for women pursuing careers in law enforcement.

Job Factors for Joining Police:

Table 2

Factors	Rank
Promotion / Extra - service benefit	5
Freedom of expression	6
Responsibility	1

Challenging assignment	2
Working condition	3
Relationship with co-workers	4

Table 2, reveals the job factors for joining police of Women Police Personnels in Garrett ranking. The Garrett ranking table shows insight into the job factors that influence women police personnel in joining the police force. Responsibility ranks first, representing that these individuals are motivated by the sense of duty and the opportunity to take on chief responsibilities. Challenging assignments follows second place, signifying that women in law enforcement seek stimulating and challenging tasks that allow them to test their skills. Working conditions rank third, highlighting the importance of a encouraging and supportive work environment. The relationship with co-workers' spots fourth, representative that positive and collective interactions with colleagues are valued. Promotion/extra-service benefits and freedom of expression rank fifth and sixth, respectively, signifying that these factors have relatively lower influence compared to the others.

Coping - Weighted Average Score:

Table 3

S.No	Items	Weighted Average Score	Aggregate Weighted Average Score
1	Problem focused coping		
	I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it	3.07	2.77
	I decide of action	2.87	
	I keep myself from getting distracted by other thoughts or activities	2.36	
2	Emotion focused coping		
	I try to grow as a person as a result of the experience s	3.21	3.08
	I force myself to wait for the right time to do something	3.13	
	I accept that this has happened that it cannot be changed	2.85	
	I put trust in God	3.38	
	I laugh about the situation	2.86	
3	Social support focused coping		
	I ask people who have had similar experience what they did	2.68	2.59
	I discuss my feelings with someone	2.65	
	I get upset and let my emotions out	2.44	
4	Avoidant coping		
	I say it to myself this "isn't real"	2.29	2.24
	I admit myself that I can't deal with it and quit trying	1.75	
	I turned to work or other substitute activities to make my mind off things	2.68	

Problem-Focused Coping:

The Women Police personnels show a moderate level of problem-focused coping. They concentrate their efforts on acting and deciding of action. Though, they have a lower score in terms of keeping themselves from getting distracted by other thoughts or activities. The weighted average score for problem-focused coping is 2.77.

Emotion-Focused Coping:

The Women Police personnels show a high level of emotion-focused coping. They try to grow as a person as a result of their experiences and force themselves to wait for the right time to act. They also accept that confident situations cannot be changed and put trust in a higher power (God). However, they have a lower score in terms of laughing about the situation, which suggests that they may not often use humour as a coping mechanism. The weighted average score for emotion-focused coping is 3.08.

Social Support-Focused Coping:

The Women Police personnels show a moderate level of social support-focused coping. They seek guidance from people who have had parallel experiences and discuss their feelings with someone else. Still, they have a lower score in terms of getting upset and letting their emotions out, indicating that they may not rely deeply on emotional expression as a coping strategy. The weighted average score for social support-focused coping is 2.59.

Avoidant Coping:

The Women Police personnels show a moderate level of avoidant coping strategies. They may use certain mechanisms such as saying to themselves that the situation is not real and turning to work or other substitute activities to distract themselves. Yet, they have a lower score in terms of confessing to themselves that they cannot deal with the condition and quitting trying. The weighted average score for avoidant coping is 2.24.

Hence, it could be inferred that The Women Police personnels show mixed pattern of coping strategies. Emotion focused coping has a greater weight than the other factors with 3.08 Aggregated weighted score. Among that most of the Women police personnels adopt put their trust in God as a coping strategy with 3.38 Average weighted score.

Nature of Association of Selected Variables with Coping:

In order to examine the nature of association with selected variables with Coping, Correlation analysis is used. Out of twenty-three variables selected for correlation analysis, ten variables are found to be significant. Age, Educational Qualification, Marital status, Children in the family, taking care of Children, Gross monthly income(self), Satisfaction of social status in the society, Satisfaction with the coping tendency among colleagues, Use of positive Emotion, Management of Negative Emotion are found to be significant at 5 five percent level and at one percent level of significance.

Variables prominently associated with Coping - Correlation Analysis:

Table 4

Variables	R	R ²
Age	-.105*	0.011
Educational Qualification	.271**	0.073
Marital status	.171**	0.029
If Married, Job nature of your spouse	-.066	0.004
Area of residence	-.019	0.000
Type of family	.042	0.002
Status in family	-.004	0.000
No. of members in family	.034	0.001
Children in the family	.148**	0.022
If Yes, No of Children	-.055	0.003
Taking care of Children	-.222**	0.049
No. of earning members in the family	.024	0.001
Gross monthly income(self)	.382**	0.146
Gross family income	-.292	0.085
Satisfaction of social status in the society	.105*	0.011
Satisfaction with the coping tendency among colleagues	.121*	0.015
Job challenging	.028	0.001
Thought of resigning from the Police Service	-.037	0.001
If yes,	.054	0.003
Entrance of Job	.026	0.001
Awareness of Emotion	.014	0.000
Use of positive Emotion	.225**	0.051
Management of Negative Emotion	.139**	0.019

*Significant at five percent level

** Significant at five percent level

Determinants of Coping- Multiple Regression Analysis:

In order to ascertain the variables that determine the level of Coping in Women Police Personnel, the selected twenty-three variables have been regressed on coping index. The result of the regression analysis is shown in the table.

Multiple Regression Analysis:

Table 5

Variables	Regression Co-efficient	Standard Error	t
Age	-.861	.765	-1.127
Educational Qualification	3.416**	.688	4.967
Marital status	-3.507	1.952	-1.796
If Married, Job nature of your spouse	-1.002	.580	-1.726
Area of residence	-.705	.670	-1.052
Type of family	1.094	1.229	.890
Status in family	-1.921	2.156	-.891
No. of members in family	-1.207	.945	-1.278
Children in the family	-5.831*	2.750	-2.120
If Yes, No of Children	-.087	.750	-.117
Taking care of Children	-3.580**	1.207	-2.966
No. of earning members in the family	.150	1.272	.118

Gross monthly income(self)	-2.755**	.640	-4.303
Gross family income	-.421	.790	-.533
Satisfaction of social status in the society	1.449	1.308	1.108
Satisfaction with the coping tendency among colleagues	.666	1.193	.559
Job challenging	-.767	1.006	-.763
Thought of resigning from the Police Service	2.033	1.824	1.115
If yes,	.137	.608	.225
Entrance of Job	-2.874**	1.091	-2.633
Awareness of Emotion	-1.259	2.660	-.473
Use of positive Emotion	.528	.489	1.079
Management of Negative Emotion	.186	.310	.599

Constant: 90.659

Adjusted R Square: 0.218

Std Error: 9.463

RSquare: 0.263

$$\text{Coping} = a + b + b_1 \text{AG} + b_2 \text{EQ} + b_3 \text{MS} + b_4 \text{IMS} + b_5 \text{AOR} + b_6 \text{TOF} + b_7 \text{SF} + b_8 \text{NMF} + b_9 \text{CIF} + b_{10} \text{NOC} + b_{11} \text{TCC} + b_{12} \text{NEM} + b_{13} \text{GMI} + b_{14} \text{GFI} + b_{15} \text{SSS} + b_{16} \text{SCT} + b_{17} \text{JC} + b_{18} \text{TRP} + b_{19} \text{YTRP} + b_{20} \text{EOJ} + b_{21} \text{AOE} + b_{22} \text{UPE} + b_{23} \text{MNE} + e$$

Where,

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| COP | = | Coping | |
| a | = | Intercept Term | |
| b ₁ ...b ₂₃ | = | Regression Co-efficient | |
| AG | = | Age | |
| EQ | = | Educational Qualification | |
| MS | = | Marital status | |
| IMS | = | If Married, Job nature of your spouse | |
| AOR | = | Area of residence | |
| TOF | = | Type of family | |
| NMF | = | No. of members in family | |
| NOC | = | If Yes, No of Children | |
| NEM | = | No. of earning members in the family | |
| SSS | = | Satisfaction of social status in the society | |
| SCT | = | Satisfaction with the coping tendency among colleagues | |
| JC | = | Job challenging | |
| TRP | = | Thought of resigning from the Police Service | |
| YTRP | = | If yes, | SF = Status in family |
| EOJ | = | Entrance of Job | CIF = Children in the family |
| AOE | = | Awareness of Emotion | TCC = Taking care of Children |
| UPE | = | Use of positive Emotion | GFI = Gross family income |
| MNE | = | Management of Negative Emotion | |

Variables Prominently Associated with Coping:

Step-Wise Regression Analysis:

Table 6

Step	Constant	GMI	EQ	EOJ	TOC	CIF	R ²
1	77.382	-3.466	-	-	-	-	.146
2	71.778	-3.096	2.011	-	-	-	.185
3	74.107	-2.989	2.722	-2.923	-	-	.204
4	75.273	-2.800	2.548	-2.642	-1.535	-	.213
5	81.664	-2.769	3.219	-2.699	-3.302	-5.351	.228

GMI : Gross monthly income (self)

EQ : Educational Qualification

EOJ : Entrance of Job

TOC : Taking care of Children

CIF : Children in the family

The result of step-wise regression test disclose that two variables are found to be significantly associated with Coping. In the first step the variable Gross monthly income (self) has been introduced. The variable contributes 1.46% to the variation in Coping. In the second step the variable Educational Qualification has been introduced. The variable contributes 1.85% to the variation in Coping. In the third step the variable Entrance of Job has been introduced. The variable contributes 20.4% to the variation. In the fourth step the variable Taking care of Children has been introduced. The variable contributes 21.3% to the variation. In the

fifth step the variable Children in the family has been introduced. The variable contributes 22.8% to the variation in Coping.

Limitation of the Study:

As the present study is mainly based on the primary data in which the opinion is given by the women police personnels may be biased in nature. Further the study focuses on the Women police personnels who are working in Palakkad, Thrissur, and Ernakulam only. Hence, due care must be taken in generalizing the results of the study to other areas.

Conclusion:

The challenges faced by women in the police force and have significant implications for implementing supportive interventions and policies to enhance their overall well-being and job satisfaction. Moreover, variables such as gross monthly income, satisfaction with social status in society, satisfaction with coping tendencies among colleagues, utilization of positive emotions, and effective management of negative emotions exhibited positive correlations with coping. This implies that women police personnel with higher incomes, satisfaction in their social status and relationships, active utilization of positive emotions, and effective management of negative emotions generally displayed better coping abilities. The regression analysis further supported these findings, revealing that educational qualification had a positive influence on coping skills. Equally, having more children in the family, being responsible for their care, higher gross monthly income, and longer job tenure had negative influences on coping skills. The step-wise regression analysis highlighted the significant contributions of various variables to coping. Gross monthly income, educational qualification, entrance of job, taking care of children, and having children in the family were all found to be significantly associated with coping. These findings provide valuable insights that can inform the development of supportive interventions and policies aimed at improving the well-being and job satisfaction of women in the police force in Kerala. The Women Police personnels show mixed pattern of coping strategies. Emotion focused coping has a greater weight than the other factors. Among that most of the Women police personnels adopt put their trust in God as a coping strategy.

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