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A cross sectional study to assess anxiety and depression among central industrial security force (CISF) workers

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Abstract

Anxiety and depression are frequent in the working population. The CISF personals all over India are under continuous stress at workplace which is reflected also in different domains of their life. Here we conducted a cross sectional study to assess the depression and anxiety among them.

Keywords: Anxiety, depression, CISF personnel, occupational stress

Introduction

Anxiety and depression are frequent in the working population and they are associated with less work functioning, days lost from work [1]. Many studies have highlighted potentially modifiable risk factors for depression and anxiety in the working population [2, 3]. Though, some studies have been cross-sectional in nature and do not provide cause-effect relations [4, 5]. Majority of them inferred that high psychological job demands and conflicts with senior managers were associated with anxiety [4, 5]. Poor psychosocial support and low decision latitude were associated with depression where as emotional demands at workplace were associated with both anxiety and depression [5]. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is a vital element of functioning of a country. The CISF personals are under continuous stress at workplace which is reflected also in different domains of their life [6, 7]. Here we conducted a cross sectional study to assess the depression and anxiety among them.

Methodology

A total of 4625 individuals working at various airports across India were recruited for the study. Proper permission was taken from concerned authorities regarding interviewing the personals as one of our co authors was a part of mental health evaluation team at various airports. Hamilton Depression Rating Scale 21 [8] and Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale [9] were applied among the individuals and the results were interpreted accordingly and social demographic profile was analysed using modified kuppaswamy scale [10].

Results

Table 1: Distribution of sample as per age group

Age group (in years)	Sample distribution
Above 60	256
50 to 60	765
40 to 50	2565
30 to 40	868
Less than 30	171

Table 2: Distribution of sample as per Modified kuppaswamy Scale

Socio economic class	Total samples in each class
Upper class	0
Upper middle	1186
Lower middle	1205
Upper lower	1655
Lower	579

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Table 3: HDRS 21 score interpretation

Total Sample	Significant score in HDRS 21 scale	P value
4625	3984	<0.05

Table 4: HAM A score interpretation

Total Sample	Significant score in HAM A scale	P value
4625	4281	<0.05

Table 1 and 2 represents the distribution of sample as per socio economic status and age groups.

Both the tables (Table 3 and Table 4) revealed significant association.

Discussion

The current Indian society is undergoing frequent alterations in various aspects due to rapid urbanization, industrialization, migration [11]. The resultant changing qualities of life have changed the occupational nature and health situation of the people to a major degree [11]. An important occupational group which has evolved as a consequence of these changes is the 'Central Industrial security force'. The CISF force provides security cover to over 267 units situated all over the country comprising vital industrial sectors like Atomic power plants, space installations, defence production units, oil fields and refineries, major ports, steel plants, barrages and fertilizer units etc [12, 13]. Majority of these are located in difficult terrains of the country with extreme climates. Although created with the goals of securing the Nation's sensitive undertakings, the CISF now is nowadays increasingly being summoned to perform important duties beyond its charter like internal security, airport security, security of highways, election duties and during national disasters as well [14, 15].

So, unlike the other work forces the CISF force does not have a fixed work pattern and they are under constant pressure to meet unexpected emergencies for unspecified periods of time. A culmination of these pressures has resulted in increasing stress on a daily basis. This subjective stress may lead to various minor mental health problems leading further to changes in job performance and quality of life [16, 17]. Our present study aimed at studying psychiatric co morbidities among CISF personals.

There can be many potential reasons behind the increased amount of anxiety and depression among the CISF officials [18].

One of them is the strict hierarchical pattern in CISF workers is different from the police and Armed forces as is their work environment [19]. We have taken care so that thorough stratification is done to include persons working in all ranks from all areas of posting and have taken considerable size of the sample so as to enhance the statistical power of the observations made. In the total sample screened, majority were Males in the age group of 40 to 50 yrs, married and having at least intermediate level of education. In our study majority of the individuals belonged to lower middleclass strata as per the scale. 86 percent of them were found to be depressed and 92 percent suffering from clinical anxiety. These are similar to the studies conducted in the past [20, 21, 22]. Also during the study we have found that the CISF persons are facing considerable amount of stress and the various factors operating in the family and at work are considered as their reasons behind stress. Coming to other stressors majority are related to work such as 'having no regular timings of work' and 'having to work excess time in

need', 'having no well defined roles' I.e. being trained to do something and made to work in a different field, 'getting no appreciation from seniors' and 'having no close or personal relations'. Other than the causes like, 'staying away from their families' was found to be an important cause of stress in the CISF personnel and majority especially felt that the time they spent with their families was inadequate, and so they felt that they are unable to take enough responsibility in the families [22, 23]. These led to perceived work load, significantly large number of personnel from high stress areas, have felt that their work load.

Conclusion

The present study highlights a concerning prevalence of anxiety and depression among CISF personnel. The unique occupational demands, irregular work hours, absence from family, and lack of defined roles significantly contribute to the psychological distress in this population. A vast majority of participants exhibited clinically significant symptoms of anxiety and depression, suggesting a pressing need for systemic mental health interventions within the force. These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating regular psychological evaluations, stress management programs, and supportive work environments to safeguard the mental well-being of CISF members. Addressing these issues is essential not only for improving their quality of life but also for maintaining operational efficiency and national security readiness.

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