

Study on Stress among Indian Army People: Evidence from various Literature Studies

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Abstract : *The study aims to identify various factors responsible for stress among Indian army people and tries to suggest some measures to reduce stress. Reviewed literature highlights the stress causing factors that are conflict in roles, lack of work control, lack of awareness of profession or work, work pressure and job load, different attitude of boss and supervisors, lack of support from colleagues, improper training, ineffective leadership, and lack of role clarity, working conditions, family separation and demographic variables. It is highlighted that stress among army personnel spoils their marital relations, create tensions, and reduce effectiveness of soldiers. It is recommended to implement yoga practices, redressal of grievance mechanisms, psychological counsellors and recreational activities so that stress level can be reduced and manage in a proper manner.*

Keywords : Stress, Factors causing stress, Army Personnel, Indian Army.

Introduction: Stress is the crucial part in today's life and it is one of the important subject for researchers. Stress is a situation of individual where a person confronted with demand, opportunities and resources related to individuals' desire. Due to stress the perceived outcome could be taken in both ways i.e. important and uncertain. Like every coin has two sides; likewise stress has also two contexts i.e. positive context and

negative context. Positive stress is not bad for individual because it is mandatory to take work seriously and fulfil the desires and demands of personal life. When stress is taken in positive context, it relates to an opportunity that offers potential gain.

Particularly, stress is linked with demand and resources. Demands include duty, responsibilities, commitment, pressures and it could be some uncertain situations that an individual faces. Resources are used to settle demands and also lie within the control of an individual. Stress can be experienced at any level whether it is at individual, group, organization or at societal level.

At present Indian army is facing shortage of army personnel in both categories i.e. officers as well as jawans. This shortage leads to increase in work load, stress. As army personnel's are working in field and peace units. They are serving our nation; protecting our national boundaries from all three sides i.e. land (Indian Army), air (Indian Air Force) and water (Indian Navy). It is important to explore various factors which become the cause of stress among Indian Army so as to protect them from all these bad effects.

Review of literature

Definitions of stress: Stress can be defined as "a physical or psychological stimulus that can produce mental tension or psychological reactions that may lead to illness."

According to Richard S Lazarus, Stress happens when an individual thinks that "the demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize."

According to Dr. Seyles "stress is non-specific response of body to the situation."

According to Dr. Pestonji of I.I.M. Ahmedabad, there are various categories of stress:

Eustress: Eustress is also known as positive stress because it is not harmful. It is a state of over joy and happiness. It is neither permanent nor long lasting, its being occasional.

Distress: Distress is also known as negative stress. It is completely opposite of eustress. It happens when an individual is sad or angry. Distress is very harmful. It is experienced due to demands of life and effort to cope with them. The consequences of this type of stress results in nervousness, anxiety, loss etc.

Sivasubramanian and Rajandran (2017): The study investigated the impact of family and relatives separation on stress level of people of Indian Air Force those are employed in various upper units of Indian Air Force. Data was gathered in both ways i.e. primary data (direct meetings and telephonic interview using prepared structured questionnaire) and secondary data (research papers, journals, library, newspapers, magazines and various web sites). Data was collected from frontier respondents of

Indian Air Force situated at Nal, Bikaner and Suratgarh in Rajasthan. Sample size for data collection was 80 Indian Air Force soldiers. Tools used for collection and analysis of data were convenient sampling, multiple regression and descriptive statistics. In findings, researchers find out that the significant effect of family distance on stress level of Indian Air Force people. Family separation has direct impact on soldiers like there is stress level on soldiers, in certain situations it spoils marital life, create tensions, reduce effectiveness of soldiers, bad health situations of soldier men and their families.

Sudhakar, Bhaskararao, and Laksmi (2017): The study explored the impact of socio demographical variables on job stress among Indian army soldiers. Data was collected from 417 soldiers through questionnaires. Tools used for analysis of data were T-test and ANOVA. Results indicate that personnel above 40 years of age are experiencing more stress in individual, group and organizational stress as compared to soldiers that are below 40 years of age. In respect of designation, JCO felt that they are working on many jobs and people have feeling that they did not get enough time to spend with family members. Soldiers having below 5 members in their family felt that they are working too hard and are depressed by working environment, they have feeling that they are doing tough job. Researchers also reported that soldiers of south India are experiencing more stress as compared to soldiers of north India.

Gulab & Mehta (2015): The study reviewed stress management in the Indian Air Force. Researchers formulated four objectives i.e. 1. To study the impact of 31st standing committee on stress management in Indian Air Force. 2. To find out which recommendations of the committee are satisfactorily executed in Indian Air Force. 3. To identify the present occupational stress among senior non-commissioned officers (SNCOs) and Airmen in the Indian Air Force. 4. To find out which dimension contributes as a major source to present day occupational stress of SNCOs and Airmen in the Indian Air Force. Data was collected from 60 Airmen and SNCOs. Sample was from field and piece units of the Indian Air Force. Initially random sampling was used for selection of field and piece units, further multistage stratified random sampling was used to select sample size based on their trades and ranks. In findings, to manage stress more thrust was given to yoga, physical exercises, counselling's and recreational activities. In most of the stations/units psychological counsellors were available. Redressal of grievances mechanisms was rare. Main source of stress level was found at lower level due to role overload, resource inadequacy and role erosion. Researcher has recommended using large sample with equal representation from all command for reassurance of outcome.

Sharma (2015): The study aims to find stress related to occupation in the army forces. They aimed to identify various factors causing stress related to occupation in the Indian soldiers. Data was collected from 415 Indian army soldiers through a structured questionnaire. Data was gathered from most sensitive regions of India where a majority of fratricidal and suicidal cases have been identified in past. Researcher have found 9 dimensions of stress related to occupation in the Indian army that are less control at work, conflict of role, improper awareness and knowledge about profession, work load & job load in differential organisational attitudes, lack of support from colleagues, inadequate and improper training, and ineffective leadership. In this study researcher only focused on organisational factors, they have suggested to include other factors as well i.e. personality types & domestic problems. Further research can be conducted to find out the results of stress related to occupation and impact of stressors.

Cheema & Grewal (2013): The study assessed the level of stress among army personnel, to recommend measures to improve the stress coping measures of army personnel and suggested special measures to combat stress in army personnel deploys in insurgent and difficult areas. Researchers have formulated three hypotheses i.e. 1. Army personnel in the insurgent areas are stressed. 2. There is a relation between working condition and stress among individuals. 3. Mediation provides effective solution against stress. Geographical focus for gathering of data was North Eastern states of India. Data was collected from sample of 37 faculty members, 51 soldiers from relatively less insurgent areas and 115 from deep insurgent areas. There blood reports were taken along with medical examination of soldiers. After analysis of data researchers reported that army personnel in insurgent areas are more stressed and there is relationship exist between working conditions and stress. For future study researcher suggested that a study could be conducted to compare quality of work life and remuneration paid to soldiers with civilians. Future study can be conducted to measure stressed condition in piece and field condition of a soldier.

Pawar, et al., (2012): Examined the level of stress in Indian navy individuals and to examine the impact of social support on stress related to occupation. Data was gathered through primary sources from 5077 naval personnel. Data was analysed through non-parametric & chi-square test. In findings, researchers reported that personnel serving afloat were reported highly stressed as compared to those serving ashore, junior sailors were reported highly stressed as compared to officers, stress related to occupation was found to be connected with psychological health, social support was found to be effective in reducing and managing stress related to occupation in senior sailors officers but not applicable in junior sailors.

Sharma, Kaur and Sharma (2011): The study aims to investigate the impact of stress related to occupation and organisational stressor in Indian army. The study reveals the results that in Indian army there is moderate rate of stress. The stressor those have significant impact on individuals are work and job load and indifferent attitude of people in force. The study also concludes that this stress among the army people can be reduced and managed through implmtig proper strategies and procedures for the well being of our brave solders.

K, A. (2011): Examined the relationship of organizational role stress and burnout in military aircrew officers, to identify the predictor of stress on burnout and to conclude the interference of presence of these stressors. Geographical focus of study was Western Air Command of IAF. Data was gathered from 58 military aircrews (26 pilots, 19 navigators). Tools used for the study were organizational role stress scale of Udai Pareek, zero order correlation and stepwise multiple regression. In results, researcher revealed that the more the person experiences inter-role distance, the more he/she will experience emotional exhaustion. Inter-role distance is also predictor of depersonalization. No stress variable is linked with personal accomplishment. Role stressors (personal inadequacy and inter role distance) are accountable to feeling of burnout. Burnout leads to reduced well-being and job-satisfaction. For future study, researchers suggested to take large sample size from all command.

Adhikari (2008): The study explored the impact of meditation or yoga training practices on stress among serving Indian Army individuals. The period of the study taken was 30 days. Data was collected from 60 army individuals ranging from rank of jawan to JCO through questionnaire. Geographical focus for the study was 4th Battalion Rajput Regiment, Saharanpur, UP. In findings researcher reported that physical and mental efficiency has been improved due to pranayamas and asanas. Yoga practices have a positive and effective impact in management and reduction of stress related issues.

Kumar (2011): The study examined the difference in stress level among Indian army officers and jawans and to study the difference in organizational commitment level among officers of Indian army. Researcher proposed two hypotheses i.e. 1. There would be high stress level among jawans as compared to officers of Indian army. 2. Officers are highly committed to organization as compared to jawans of Indian army. Data was collected from sample of 100 jawans and 100 officers. In findings, it was accepted that jawans of Indian army are more stressed as compared to officers. It was predicted that jawans are more committed to organisation as compared to officers.

Objectives : 1. To explore the factors causing stress among army people of the Indian Army.
2. To suggest remedial measures to reduce the level of stress among army people of the Indian Army.

Research Methodology : The current study provides the descriptive review of literature. The study uses various articles, journals and related material of stress among Indian Army people for exploring the various causes of stress. The data collection for the study is done through secondary sources mainly.

Secondary sources include data from various published and reputed journals and magazines. The study also makes use of different databases like Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Shodhganga etc.

Result & Discussion : The literature that has been reviewed states that there are many factors responsible for stress among army people of the Indian army. According to reviewed literature factors responsible for stress are lack of work control, lack of awareness of profession or work, work pressure and job load, different attitude of boss and supervisors, lack of support from colleagues, improper training, ineffective leadership, and lack of role clarity, working conditions, family separation and demographic variables.

On basis of literature, Army personnel in insurgent areas are more stressed as compared to army personnel deployed in relatively less insurgent areas or in peace areas. Level of stress is also impacted by working conditions. There is significant effect of family separation on stress level. It spoils marital relations, create tensions, and reduce effectiveness of soldiers. Demographic variables also impacts stress level of army personnel. Soldiers having below 5 members in their family felt that they are working too hard and are depressed by working environment, they have feeling that they are doing tough job. Main source of stress level was found at lower level due to role overload (Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011), resource inadequacy (Fareed and Naeem, 2019) and role erosion. Jawans of Indian army are more stressed and more committed to organisation as compared to officers.

From the past literature it has been observed that yoga practices, physical exercises, counselling's and recreational activities are helpful to manage the stress level. Yoga practices have a positive impact in reduction and proper management of stress and stress related problems. Physical and mental efficiency has been improved due to pranayamas and asanas.

Main Causes Identified Of Stress Among Indian Army People

From the study of available literature following are the main causes identified among Indian Army people:

S. No.	Factors	Literature Survey
1.	Role Overload	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Arora, 2014; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Brooks, 2017; Adhikari, 2008; Joseph, 2016; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
2.	Resource Inadequacy	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Cheema and Grewal, 2013; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
3.	Role Erosion and Inadequate Salary	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Mohan and Arora; 2013; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013; Brooks, 2017;
4.	Conflict in Roles	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Brooks, 2017; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
5.	Lack of Work Control	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
6.	Lack of Awareness of Profession or Work	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009;
7.	Work Pressure and Job Load	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Mohan and Arora; 2013; Sharma, 2015; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Brooks, 2017;
8.	Different Attitude of Boss and Supervisors	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Chandel, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
9.	Lack of Support from Colleagues	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Chandel, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Singh and Adhikari, 2016;
10.	Improper Training	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
11.	Ineffective Leadership	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Joseph, 2016;

S. No.	Factors	Literature Survey
12.	Lack of Role Clarity	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Cheema and Grewal, 2013
13.	Working Conditions	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013;
14.	Family Separation	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Saravanan and Panchanatham, 2017; Chandel, 2013; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Bokti and Talib; 2009; Arora, 2014; Brooks, 2017;
15.	Demographic Variables	Sharma, Kaur and Sharma, 2011; Sharma, 2015; Fareed and Naeem, 2019; Velayudhan and Benedict, 2013; Munir, Rahman and Ahsan, 2017; Chhabra and Chhabra, 2009; Adhikari, 2008; Joseph, 2016;

Remedial Measures To Reduce Stress Among Indian Army People

- **Liberal Policies of Indian Army:** Liberal Policies of Indian Army can help army people to reduce stress up to some extent. Although discipline is very much essential in army but by considering the mental health of soldiers so win-win situation must be created.
- **Daily Yoga Practices:** Yoga practices are very much helpful in reducing any type of stress. It is considered as one of the stressor to make a human body calm and active (Singh and Adhikari, 2016). Daily yoga practices are necessary for army people where they have to follow strict duty (Adhikari, 2008).
- **Daily Physical Exercises:** Physical exercise is very good for every human body especially for people who are doing duty in Indian army. Daily physically exercise helps in maintaining proper body and keeps a person active for work. It reduces fat from human body and burn extra calories. For soldiers it is must to make body fit to fight with enemies.
- **Regular Counselling's and Recreational Activities:** One of the another important measure of reduce stress in Indian army people is regular counselling and activities which makes them fresh like music, fun days and off from duty etc. Regular counselling makes their mind in a way that they are ready for any type of situation.
- **Possible improved Working Conditions:** Improves working conditions helps a lot to person to work freely and without any hurdles. But for army people because of their duty they have to stay in worst conditions. So by taking some protective measures by government working conditions of Indian army can be improved to some extent.
- **Implementation of proper Grievances Redressal Systems:** Sometimes due to misunderstanding and other causes grievances may arise between army men. By

implementing some proper grievances redressal systems and proper policies this can be reduced. Many of the times people take stress because of misunderstanding between people.

- **Focus on Physical Fitness:** Physical fitness is extremely important for army people because of the type of duty they are doing. Stress can also be reduced when a person is fit from physical and mental side both. For physical fitness yoga and meditation are important (Cheema and Grewal, 2013).
- **Immediate care and support to Family in case of Emergency:** As army people perform their duty without the immediate care of family. Their families are far from their place and they are not allowed to take leave frequently. When there is something important on duty then their leaves sometimes get cancelled. Due to this they have tension for their family and their care (Mohan and Arora; 2013). So when their families have support by government in case of emergency then the stress level of army people can be reduced to some extent.
- **Improved Health Care Practices:** In Indian army there is need to provide best health care services so that army people can have relief from the medical expenses burden. In army due to the duty of army people in remote areas they are not able to get proper treatment for the health. But improved and better health care practices can work to reduce stress up to some extent. On the other hand when an army person feels stress they must be given with proper counselling and mental treatment.
- **Proper leadership Roles:** Inadequate and improper leadership role creates stress among army people. So this is essential to have proper leadership roles in Indian army so that one person is directly for one work only.

Conclusion : The study concludes that no doubt in Indian Army the level of stress is high at different levels. Many suicide cases were reported in Indian Army due to the cause of stress among Indian army people. The cause of stress includes the tuff job situations of Indian army. As army job is not easy to do and people in Indian army have to stay separate from their families for the long time. Sometimes they do not get enough time for their own maintenance. Lack of job control and less support from other army people makes a person alone and become a patient of stress. The stress can only be controlled by positive and healthy mind set. So it is mandatory to adopt some preventive measures to control stress.

Limitations of Study : The present study is not free from limitations because study can be conducted at large levels with taking primary data into consideration. Interview method of data collection can be used to get more clarity about the level and type of

stress among Indian army people. Moreover study can be conducted by taking female respondents as sample. As problems of female army is different from male army.

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