

A Study on Re-Employment Process to Mitigate the Stress in Central Armed Police Forces

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Abstract

This research study strives to explore aspects influencing stress in the workplace by Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) personnel and apprise the applicability of the scale for measuring stressors in the workplace and the influence of additional stress factors from family and various occupational and domestic factors which leads them to unable to cope up the overwhelming distress and prolonged stress and go for extreme steps like suicide or fratricide. The extent and ferocity of this problem are terrifying, it requires extensive research to find the root genesis that is mainly conceiving other professional, personal, and domestic stressors, and a benevolent perspective and well-researched policy are needed to be chalked out in detail so that may mitigate their stress by securing their future and by guiding them into the light of hope which would lead them to a happy and healthy life with an expectant and optimistic mindset. The main objective of this study is to understand the nature and extent of the Provision of courses and training on skill development during the service, to make them confident and their life happy and stress-free, and to analyse the reasons for stress due to the non-availability of any other option after voluntary retirement from service and appropriate measures to mitigate the stress level in CAPF personnel. A well-designed survey questionnaire is utilized to get first-hand information from a sample of 400 CAPFs workers to develop the conclusions & findings. Data tabulation and information representation in diagrams are used to help in data analysis and interpretation.

Keywords: CAPFs, Stress, Stress in the workplace, Stress management, suicide, Re-employment.

Introduction

“Central Armed Police Forces”- Vide office memorandum No. 1-45020/2/2011-Pers-II Dt/ 18th March 2011, Ministry of Home Affairs under Govt. of India adopted a uniform nomenclature of “Central Armed Police Force” (CAPF) while referring to the Border Security Force (BSF), the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB). Two Forces Assam Rifles (AR) and National Security Guard (NSG) are Army-controlled and NSG is completely a deputations Force.

The mandate of the Central Armed Police Force is to protect India by guarding the Border of the nation and against Internal threats such as riots, ethnic violence, Kashmir and North East Insurgency, Left-Wing Extremism. CAPFs are organized with the primary role of border guarding for Border Security Force (BSF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), and Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) and Assam Rifles; Security of sensitive establishments by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Assisting Police to tackle Law & Order, Counter Terrorist Operations, Counter Naxal Operations by Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and National Security Guards (NSG). Apart from the primary role, all CAPFs are involved in assisting Police in Law & Order situations and also Army in Counter Terrorist Operations. BSF & CRPF have assisted the Army during external aggression in the past. CAPFs work along with both Army & Police in different roles assigned to them.

In addition to the basic mandate, the CAPFs, over a period of time, evolved and metamorphosed into fine task forces competent to perform the multifarious, challenging roles assigned by the Government and have been performing their duties with dedication and professionalism. As the deployment of the personnel is spread throughout the country, CAPFs personnel remain deployed in remote, far flung and disturbed areas of territorial limits of the country with limited basic amenities including family accommodations. Because of

these circumstances, the personnel have to perform tough and difficult nature of duty against insurgency, very harsh climatic and topographic conditions. In addition, the prolonged separation from family makes them vulnerable to acute stress and arising a sense of feeling of isolation among them. Feeling of deprivation of family life, education problems for children, absence of social life also have detrimental impacts on their mental and physical health. Despite of all these difficulties and stressful environments in the place of duty, the CAPFs personnel keep continue with their job because of the feeling of an insecure future or no other option available for them. Only factual analysis, a humane approach to the problem and a genuine solution for the problem of stress among CAPFs personnel can eradicate the cause of stress and make them live a happy life.

Stress

There has been a significant increase in stress levels amongst personnel during approximately the last two decades due to operational and non-operational stressors. The CAPF organisations have been losing more personnel every year in suicides, fratricides and untoward incidents than in any enemy action. Though various stress management measures implemented by the CAPFs and the MHA during the last years but much is still to be done.

The main reasons for stress due to job/social/domestic related issues in CAPFs are:

- a) Tough and difficult profession.
- b) Rift between the wife and his family members.
- c) Prolonged separation from family.
- d) Fail in social responsibilities/obligations.
- e) Absence of supportive family members in a nuclear family.
- f) Lack of emotional support.
- g) Fear of an uncertain future after VRS.

The present Research Project is on “A Re-Employment Process to mitigate the stress in CAPFs” where in the problem of stress in CAPFs personnel, in 5 CAPFs out of the above-mentioned list i.e., CRPF, ITBP, SSB, BSF, CISF were studied.

Review of Literature

➤ **Rabbing, Bjorkelo, Fostervold, Stromme& Lau (2022)**

opined that one of the best ways to measure the level of stress is to investigate particular police stressors like acute or chronic stressors, every day difficulties, or dangerous events for police force. Another way is to ask participants to give a rating to their perception towards stress. This way makes a contribution towards the understanding of general and individual elements that are related with perceived stress that might not necessarily specific to the occupation of police. One more method of measuring stress level is to analyse the occurrence of reactions and results like distress and strain, like as the influence on cognitive capacity, taking of risk, withdrawal, anger, and anxiety, physical and mental illness.

➤ **Elango&Fonceca (2021)**

revealed that work-life balance is a considerate and a far-reaching combination of an individual's life. There are different parts of a person's life that can make an impact on work and at the same time family. Work-life of an individual is multidirectional, for example when any singular life intervenes with the family there might be a disruption in the family. In the same way, there will be an imbalance in work and life both will ultimately bring frustration and annoyance in life. In the fastest growing lifestyle, the crime rate is increasing at the fastest pace and it has become difficult to maintain law and order in society, and it is the responsibility of the police force to maintain and enforce law in the society. Police department plays an essential role in the maintenance of law and order in society.

➤ **Galanis, Fragkou&Katsoulas (2021)**

stated that to reduce the level of stress and to maintain healthy life there is a need to have regular monitoring and regular assessment of health like blood pressure, sugar, diabetes, weights, etc. Early

identification of high levels of risk would help in preventing the chances of other diseases like mental disorders, thoughts of suicides, change in behaviour, etc.

➤ **Bindu (2020)**

studied the term stress which refers to the feeling of dissatisfaction from life that can be personal or professional, it is the feeling felt by a person in a certain scenario resulting in unique behaviour. Stress generates a physiological response in the body of a person. A worker might experience stress as an outcome of varied reasons internal as well as external. Usage of internet must be avoided as a source of stress for workers. Dissatisfaction with job and men are the outcome of internal problems. As an outcome, turnover and absenteeism from job occur among police personnel. The research shows that female police personnel experience high range of stressors at workplace and experience mental stress due to many responsibilities on their shoulders. Police personnel is recommended to perform yoga and meditation for mental exercise and wellness that help them to have better health and good performance at work as well. It is not easy to compare the stress level of female workers in police force and females in other professions.

➤ **Edwards, Eaton-Stull & Kuehn (2020)**

found in a survey that respondents of the study are experiencing stress in different areas like stress coping strategies, relationship between society and police, and spending lot of years in the enforcement of law. The perspective of respondents regarding their requirements and recommendations for the needed actions contributes to the data-driven policy suggestions with reference to the reduction of symptoms as well as prevention approach towards stress. The response of the department of police is dependent upon the examination of origin of stress which can be operational or organizational, and its probable intervention like aiding flexibility or elimination of stressors. Operational stressors are those that occur at the workplace like while responding to calls that come for help, shooting activities, etc.

Objective of the Study:

1. To analyse the alternate options after retirement for reduce the stress.
2. To understand the nature and extent of Provision of course and training on skill development during the service, to make them confident and their life happy and stress-free.

Research Methodology

The study is constituted of primary and secondary data. As the respondent is himself a member of CAPFs, the primary data was collected from personnel of BSF, CRPF, SSB, ITBP and CISF by interaction with them, observance and practical experience during the service. The secondary data is collected from Govt. sources, reports and literature. The methodology adopted was a structured questionnaire and personal interaction and responses were sought through Google form from all NGOs of CAPFs on the subject with an aim to elicit close-ended and open-ended responses which enabled the researcher to receive feedback and responses in the form of qualitative and quantitative data. The goal is to understand the problem, rather than proving or disproving hypothesis or looking for corroboration, since there is negligible research study that has been carried out on the subjects. Sincere efforts were made to gather data from personnel up to the rank of Inspector

Analysis and interpretation of data

The study has included data from five CAPFs that is BSF, CRPF, SSB, ITBP and CISF deployed in numerous types of duties in their respective roles extending from guarding the international border to vital installation, deployed in internal security duties like anti-insurgency roles, maintaining law & order etc.

In consonance with the study, a total of 400 personnel responded of ranks from Constables up to Inspectors from the five CAPFs which are directly dealing with day-to-day functioning.

1. According to data 72% of personnel are living in nuclear family whereas 28% are living within joint family.

Family

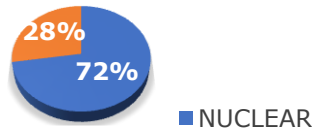


Fig-1

2. Only 8% of the personnel are living with family in the workplace. The majority of CAPFs personnel i.e., 92% are not able to reside with their family in their respective workplace due to their nature of duties, no or very limited family accommodation at the place of deployment or because of uncertain deployment and movements.

Living with family in workplace

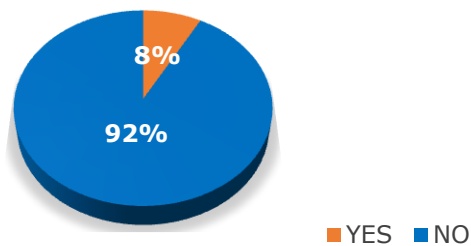


Fig-2

3. Only 0.5% of respondents reveals that they had been posted in their hometown during the entire tenure of service.

Posted in Hometown

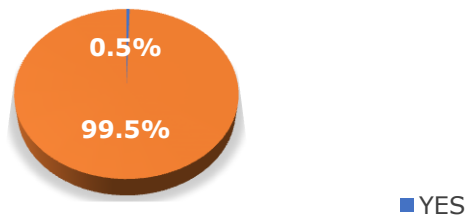


Fig-3

4. As per the data, the majority of participants 95% joined the organisation to earn their livelihood.

Joined the Organisation to earn livelihood

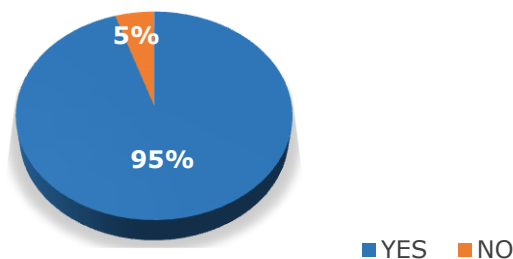


Fig-4

5. The data says only 15.5% of personnel have any secondary (other) source of income apart from their service.

Have secondary source of income

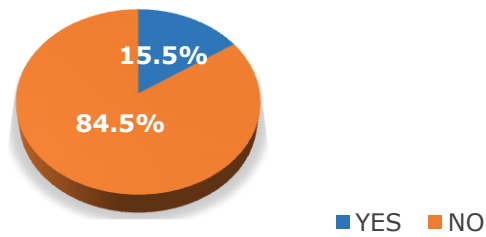


Fig-5

6. As per the data collected, the majority of personnel (47%) sometimes feel stressed on the Job, 4% every time feel stressed on their job whereas 49% of participants never feel stressed at work.

Feel stressed on Job

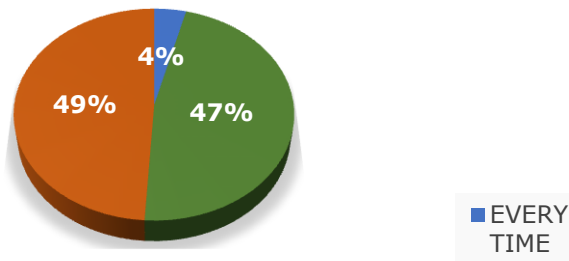


Fig-6

7. Data depicts that 7% of personnel would opt for VRS, rest 93% choose to continue the Job.

Opt for VRS

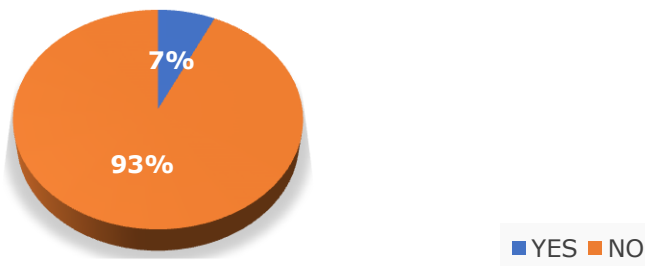


Fig-7

8. 15.5 % of personnel reveal that they have family businesses other than the service. The majority of people do not have.

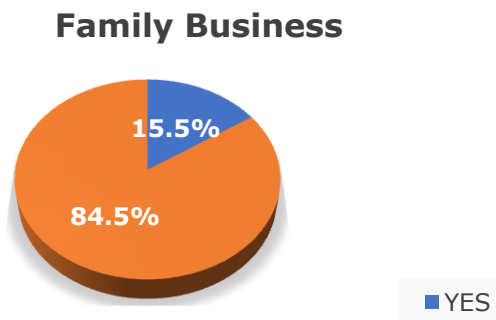


Fig-8

9. As per the data, 80% of personnel do not have the skill that would help them for re-employment or starting a business after VRS.

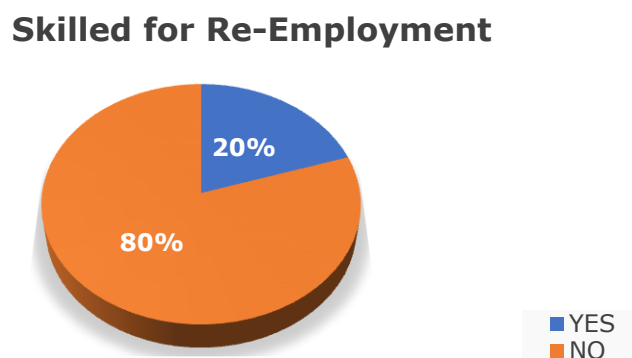


Fig-9

10. 63.5% of Personnel expressed their willingness for undergoing skill development courses during their tenure in service and according to the data 71% agreed that the department should help them to undergo such skill development courses.

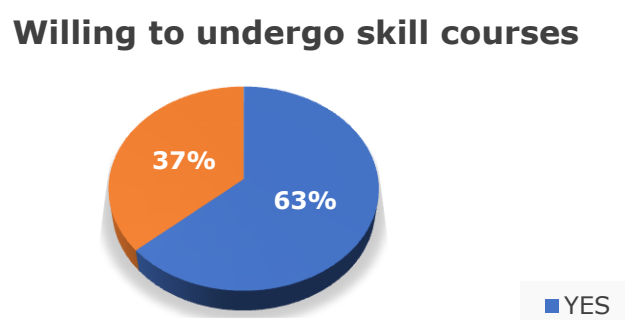


Fig-10

Department's help in skill courses

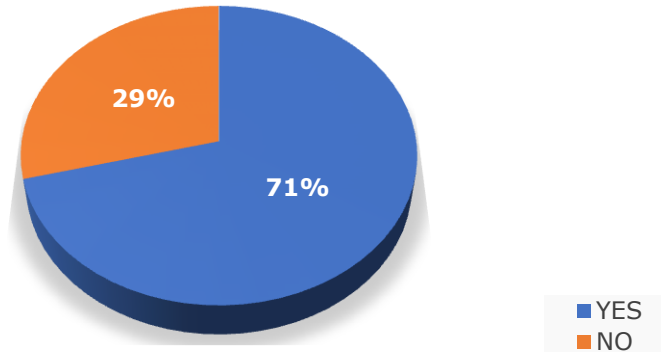


Fig-11

11. As per the data, 74% of participants concurred that they are willing to be reappointed in other Companies/Firms if the alternative job is assured for them and 70.5% want the department's assistance in getting placement for the job.

willing for re-appointment after VRS

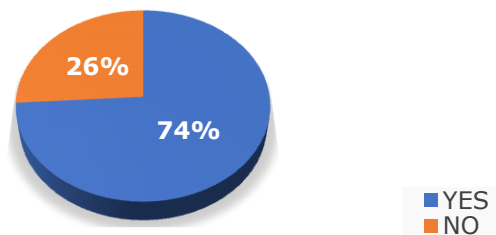


Fig-12

Department's assistance in Placement

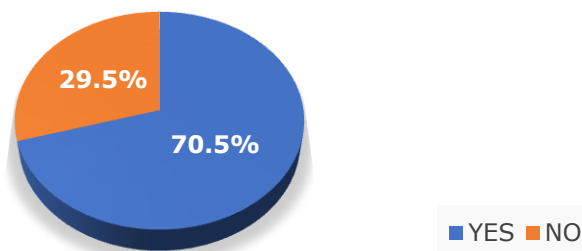


Fig-13

12. The data also says 82% of the personnel want placement for their job in their hometown/city.

Re-appointment in hometown/city

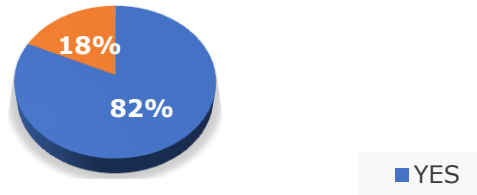


Fig-14

Major Findings:

- As per the data collected in the survey, the majority of the personnel are living in the nuclear family whereas very few people are able to keep their family with them because of the nature of their duty, deployment in remote areas, no or very limited family accommodation at the duty places and due to the uncertainty of their deployment.
- Very few people have ever been posted to their hometown during their entire service, most of them remain deployed away from home in the remote and disturbed areas throughout the year.
- The majority of people joined the organisation for earning their livelihood only and very few personnel have a secondary source of income other than their job. That makes them to continue the service because of no alternative source of income.
- A greater number of people think they sometimes feel stressed in their job, whereas some personnel expressed that they always feel stressed in the workplace. Very few people reveal that they do not feel stressed at all.
- About 7% personnel would opt for or considering for VRS due to the stress.
- The majority of the personnel do not have any family businesses or any other source of income.
- Majority of them do not have any skill/aptitude for the job they wish or plan to join after VRS and most of the people said they would like to undergo skill development courses during his service.
- A greater number of people liked to be reappointed in any company or firm if any job assured them and they also supported the concept of the department's assistance in getting the job. And the majority of personnel also liked to be reappointed in their hometown/ city or nearby.

Challenges/ Threats

1. Personnel tend to undergo skilled courses more rather concentrate on operational duties or have less interest in being detailed in profession-related courses/ cadres.
2. Chances of increase in high attrition rate leading forces to deal with the paucity of manpower.

Suggestions

A new initiative of the home ministry provides portal under 'CAPFs Punarvaas' the beneficial scheme for personnel belonging to central armed police forces seeking re-employment after their retirement. The re-employment scheme can also be linked with 'Punarvaas' in which department/ organisation may assist their personnel in following ways:

- ✓ Personnel during their fag end of career of service or VRS, can be sent for skill training/courses which help the person to earn a livelihood after their retirement/voluntary retirement.
- ✓ Re-employment cell can be created within the CAPFs where the database of skilled, skill course qualified and aptitude of CAPFs personnel would be kept and maintained. Based on their aptitude, skill and professional knowledge companies/firms can be approached by the Re-Employment Cell for their re-employment for providing them placement as per their aptitude preferably in their nearby town or home State.
- ✓ As the feeling of "no other option available" is one of the major stressors among CAPFs personnel, re-employment based on aptitude and skill will motivate personnel to develop skills and competency within

their period of service in CAPFs, which eventually encourage skill development among the CAPFs and reduce the stress among personnel to a great extent.

Conclusion

The personnel of the CAPFs have been rendering yeomen service to our country and have been contributing to preserving the unity and integrity of the nation, upholding the values of secularism and strengthening “unity in diversity”. The CAPF personnel have their family responsibilities and social obligations and the advent of the nuclear family system in society has increased their problems and grievances in these job conditions. The stress problems of CAPFs personnel due to professional and domestic issues require an effective but practical solution. A comprehensive humane approach and policy are needed in this regard which can only be derived after we understand the dynamics and the nature of the job. In such a way the stress level among CAPFs personnel can also be reduced by introducing the Re-employment concept to mitigate the stress in CAPFs and help them to live a happier, healthier, more productive life.

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