

# Prevalence of psychosomatic diseases among police personnel of Navi Mumbai

Satish More<sup>1\*</sup>, Amol Gaikwad<sup>2</sup>, Pallavi Shelke<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Nerul, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, INDIA.

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, JIU'S IIMS and R, Warudi, Tq. Banapur, Jalna, Maharashtra, INDIA.

<sup>3</sup>Professor, Lokmanya Tilak Municipal Medical College, Sion, Mumbai, Maharashtra, INDIA.

Email: [satishcmore@gmail.com](mailto:satishcmore@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Stress manifests itself in different ways and may limit the performance of police personnel. It manifests as fatigue, chronic headaches, irritability etc. A cross sectional study was conducted to identify various psychosomatic disorders among police personnel by using stratified random sampling with proportional allocation. Data was collected with the help of pretested and semistructured proforma by personal interview. Data was analyzed using statistical techniques like percentage, proportion. Among all 240 participants 85.42% were male and 14.58% female majority of them were from the age group of 30 – 49 years, study reveals that Disturbed sleep (75.83%), Acidity (42.08%), Anxiety (37.91%), Headache (33.75%), Backache (28.90%) and Depression (28.30%) were the common psychosomatic diseases among the participants. Study also reveals the significant association of Acidity and Hypertension in Class II cadre of police personnel.

**Keywords:** Stress, Police personnel, psychosomatic diseases.

## \*Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Satish More, Assistant Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Dr. D. Y. Patil Medical College, Nerul, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, INDIA.

Email: [satishcmore@gmail.com](mailto:satishcmore@gmail.com)

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## INTRODUCTION

Police services have always been one of the most challenging and stressful services in India and with changing times it is becoming even more so. They have to deal with angry mobs, counter insurgency operations, traffic control, VIP security, political rallies, religious festival, crowd control and various other law and order duties without losing their composure and sensitivity. A majority of Indian<sup>1,2</sup> and international<sup>3,4</sup> studies have found high stress levels in police. Stress can be defined as a physiological response to physical and mental demands or "An interaction between environmental forces and

events called stress precipitators, which appear threatening to the person's reaction to the threat"<sup>5</sup>. The reasons for stress among police personnel are plenty such as long working hours, irregular eating habits, and sleepless nights, poor living conditions, ill treatment by seniors, disturbed personal life and the dwindling public confidence in the police force. When stress occurs, the body undergoes several physiological and biochemical changes. Stress manifests itself in different ways, including fatigue, chronic headaches, irritability; swings in appetite or mood, low self-esteem and diminished sex drive. Such adverse reactions are seen to contribute to mental and physical illness. As the Stress manifest itself in different ways and may limit the performance of a police personnel. Hence present study was conducted to identify various psychosomatic disorders among police personnel of Navi Mumbai.

## METHODOLOGY

A cross sectional study was conducted in Navi Mumbai Police Commissionerate area where 11 police station and a commissioerate were in place. A list of all police personnel was taken from the commissionerate under his area of jurisdiction. By using stratified random sampling

with proportional allocation 11 police inspectors and 42 Sub Inspectors (class I) and 15 Assistant Sub Inspectors, 46 Head constables, 24 Police Naiks, 102 Police constables (class II) in total 240 police personnel were selected in the study. A prior permission from commissioner’s office and ethical approval from the institutional ethical committee was taken. Data was collected with the help of pretested and semistructured proforma by personal interview. The proforma mainly divided into two parts. The first part sought information about sociodemographic variables and occupational information. Second part dealt with questions on various aspects of job related stressors and examination findings. In morning hours the study participants were interviewed

and examined for any psychosomatic diseases. Data was analyzed using statistical techniques like percentage, proportion.

### RESULT

Table 1 shows the Sociodemographic distribution of study participants. 37% (78) police personnel were up to the 29 years of age, majority of police personnel were from the age group of 30 – 49 years i.e. 58.75% (141). Among all participants 85.42% were male and 14.58% female. Majority i.e. 84.6% of participants were married and 47.5% had joint type of family structure.

**Table 1: Socio-demographic profile of police personnel**

Category	Number	%
<b>Age(Yrs)</b>		
≤ 29	78	32.5
30 – 39	82	34.2
40 – 49	59	24.6
≥ 50	21	8.7
<b>Sex wise distribution</b>		
Male	205	85.42
Female	35	14.58
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Unmarried	36	15.0
Married	203	84.6
Divorced	01	0.4
<b>Type of Family</b>		
Nuclear	126	52.5
Joint	114	47.5

Table 2 shows the prevalence of various psychosomatic diseases among police personnel and also their association with class of police personnel. This study reveals that Disturbed sleep (75.83%), Acidity (42.08%), Anxiety (37.91%), Headache (33.75%), Backache (28.90%) and Depression (28.30%) were the common psychosomatic diseases among the participants. 15% of

participants were suffering from Hypertension which was significantly seen in Class II police personnel as compared to Class III police personnel (P – 0.037). similarly we also found that Acidity was more common among Class II police personnel (P – 0.006). we found only 14.16% of police personnel doesn’t showed any signs or symptoms of psychosomatic diseases.

**Table 2: Psychosomatic Diseases among police personnel**

Diseases	Class II(N=53 (%))	Class III (N=187 (%))	Total (N=240 (%))	P-value
Anxiety	21(39.6)	70 (37.4)	91 (37.91)	0.774
Depression	22 (41.5)	53 (28.3)	75 (31.25)	0.068
Acidity	31 (58.5)	70 (37.4)	101 (42.08)	<b>0.006</b>
Headache	15 (28.3)	66 (35.8)	81 (33.75)	0.342
Backache	16 (30.2)	54 (28.9)	70 (29.16)	0.853
Disturbed sleep	37 (67.9)	145 (77.5)	182 (75.83)	0.246
Hypertension	13 (24.5)	24 (12.8)	37 (15.14)	<b>0.037</b>
None	05 (9.4)	29 (15.5)	34 (14.16)	0.263

### DISCUSSION

In our study we found Disturbed Sleep, Anxiety, Acidity, Headache and Depression as common psychological disorders among the police personnel. Barnnet *et al*

(2004)<sup>6</sup>, Caplan (1994)<sup>7</sup> also found the depression and anxiety as significant outputs in stressful work setting. In different cadre of police personnel the level of stress is also different, the Class II cadre of police personnel has to

fulfil managerial role also. They have to face in addition, pressure from higher authority and from political personnel, pressure of deadline and work load. On the other hand Class III cadre of police personnel have to face no or minimal managerial role. Study reveals the significant association of Acidity and Hypertension in Class II cadre of police personnel. Irrespective of their cadre most of them had psychosomatic disorder as anxiety, depression, body pain, sleep disturbance. This is mainly due to the various stressors and the different level of stress.

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