

Research Article

Psychological, Social Work Environment, and Job Satisfaction among Police Officers: The Case of Awi Zone, Ethiopia

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Received: September 02, 2021; Accepted: September 16, 2021; Published: September 23, 2021

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Abstract

The study attempted to investigate the relationship among psychosocial work environment and job satisfaction among police officers in Injibara Town Awi zone in Amhara regional state. Adopting a cross sectional design, a total of 38 police officers were taken comprehensively from the town police office. Using pilot tested standardized scales data were collected. T-test, one way ANOVA and Multiple Regressions along with descriptive statistical techniques. Results of the study disclosed that According to the result, quantitative demands have been found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with emotional demands ($r=.224, p<0.01$) the quantitative demand has statistically significant negative association with degree of freedom ($r=-.352, p<0.05$) and social support ($r=-.605, p<0.05$). Similarly, emotional demands has statistically significant positive relationship with role conflict ($r=.669, p<0.01$) the emotional demands have statistically significant negative association with social support ($r=-.178, p<0.05$) and job satisfaction ($r=-.123, p<0.001$).

Keywords: Psychosocial work environment; Job satisfaction; Police officers

Introduction

The police is one of the institutions that exert efforts mainly on controlling crime through patrol and other crime prevention programs. However, once crime happened, their secondary effort is to find out the perpetrators through collection and compilation of evidence. The definition given to the police and the scope of its responsibility vary country to country. However, with elements common to all, Dempsey as cited in [1] defined it as the bureaucratic and hierarchical bodies employed by the state to maintain order, prevent and detect crime. With similar ideas, Funk and Wagnalls also defined the police as regulating the internal state of the government, city or town. They also added that the police maintains law and order and prevents, detects or deals with crime. Observing the condition in Ethiopia, we get a little bit different definition of the police. At the individual level, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia defined police as member of the Federal Police

Commission who has received basic training in the police profession and is employed by the Commission.

Moreover, Schaufeli and Peeters added that police officers are continually exposed to high job demand, low control, and lack social support in their working environment. As a result, they are highly vulnerable to psychosocial problems such as overstrain, chronic job stress and burnout [2]. Thus, it is obligatory to give special attention to burnout and psychosocial factors in police officers as its negative consequences affect the service recipients, the organization and the police officers themselves.

Therefore, examining the relationship among psychosocial work environment, in the context of police officers of the study area has paramount advantage because these variables have multiple impacts to the overall effectiveness of the police force as indicated by the above empirical literature. Thus, the current researcher believes that if there are positive and enhancing psychosocial work environment, the police could have better job satisfaction. Moreover, as far as the knowledge of the current researcher is concerned, there are no empirical studies conducted on the relationship among these variables in any profession of the study area. Consequently, there is a dearth of empirical literature. Moreover, the selection of the police profession as the focus of the study was made with the belief that the police profession more than any other profession is susceptible to violence, cruelty and aggression which expose its personnel to high level psychological responses like high level of burnout and poor job satisfaction.

Statement of the problem

The importance of police in every society is unquestionable because it plays significant role in keeping stability and peace. Members are professionally trained to detect,

tackle and fight crimes of different types and level in any time. The involvement of police in crime prevention and ensuring justice ranges from devoting their full time and labor up to self-scarification (Finkelstein). Thus, viewed in these respects, the police work environment has significant implication to the social and psychological wellbeing of the professionals and members' level of satisfaction in their job is tied with the nature of their profession among other factors. In support of these, it is argued that job dissatisfaction has negative impacts on the organizational productivity. And it could result in nonconformance to procedures and policies, employee absenteeism and turnover, decline in productivity, increases in work accidents and deterioration of mental and physical health [3]. However, a number of researchers have demonstrated the importance of job satisfaction to an organization in terms of its positive relationship with individual performance, productivity, employee relations, physical and mental health and life satisfaction.

This study aims at exploring the social and psychological factors that intermingle in the police work environment and their relationship with the job satisfaction of police officers. In the context of police profession, in some of the studies, it is identified that police officers who were subject to high levels of work stress report a high incidence of physical syndrome and psychological problems that affect their work performance and effectiveness [4]. Moreover, many researchers also documented that violence, traumatic events, murder, assault are important factors which affect the police officers and their job and which in turn result to work stress such as burnout.

Consequently, research on job satisfaction among police officers may provide valuable information that can improve the quality of police services.

Generally viewed, these empirical evidences have an implication that the police psychosocial work environment, job satisfaction do interact though the work culture and psychosocial environment of police institutions of Ethiopia may be different from those indicated above. Moreover, comprehensive and deep investigation on those variables should give due attention in our context. Hence, it is important to investigate the relationship among psychosocial work environment, job satisfaction and burnout in the study area. With this intention, the study tried to seek answers to the following basic research questions.

1. Is there a statistically significant relationship between psychosocial work environment, and job satisfaction among police officers?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in job satisfaction among police officers due to demographic variables (sex, position)?
3. Which best predict job satisfaction among psychosocial work environment factors (quantitative demands, cognitive demands, emotional demands, degree of freedom, role conflict and social support)?

General objectives

The general objective of this study was to explore the relationship of the psychosocial work environment, and job satisfaction of police force.

Specific objectives

This study tried to address the following specific objectives

1. To explore whether there is statistically significant the relationship between psychosocial work environment, and job satisfaction among police officers in?
2. To identify whether there is statistically significant differences in job satisfaction level among police officers due to demographic variables (sex, position).
3. To determine the predictive value of psychosocial work environment and demographic variables on job satisfaction of police force.

Methods

Research design

To attain the research objective, a descriptive survey study design, specifically cross-sectional was employed. This method was chosen because the samples were drawn from a population at one time, and information was gathered from respondents through a questionnaire at a single point in time [5].

Population and sampling techniques

The actual participants of the study were members of the police force found in at Injibara Town. Their total number is 38. Thus, simple random technique was used to make all members as participants of the study.

Data collection instruments

Three pre-established standardized self-administered scales were adopted to collect quantitative data; namely Copenhagen psychosocial work environment questionnaire,

Maslach Burnout Inventory and Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (short form) were adopted to collect the required data.

Procedures of data collections

After getting permission from officials of the injibara town police office and individual police officers, self-report items were administered by the researcher moving door to door. Furthermore, participants were asked to complete the mentioned measures as honestly and completely as possible and were told that they could refuse to answer any items in the questionnaire that may make them uncomfortable. Then, the questionnaires were left with the police officers so that they could complete them at appropriate time. Later they were collected by the researcher at agreed date and time.

Results

Relationship among psychosocial work environment and job satisfaction

To know whether there are statistically significant relation-

ships among psychosocial work environment, job satisfaction and burnout, Pearson correlation was computed. The result of the correlation analysis is presented in the following Table 1. Pearson correlation was computed for each sub-scale. The relationship between psychosocial work environment (quantitative demands, cognitive demands, emotional demands, degree of freedom, role conflict and social supports), and job satisfaction of the study participants. According to the result, quantitative demands have been found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with

emotional demands ($r=.224, p<0.01$). However, the Table 1 indicates that quantitative demand has statistically significant negative association with degree of freedom ($r=-.352, p<0.05$) and social support ($r=-.605, p<0.05$). Similarly, emotional demands has statistically significant positive relationship with role conflict ($r=.669, p<0.01$) However, emotional demands have statistically significant negative association with social support ($r=-.178, p<0.05$) and job satisfaction ($r=-.123, p<0.001$).

Table 1: Independent samples t-test for burnout and job satisfaction by sex

Dependent variables	Female(n=14)		Male(n=24)		T-value	DF
	M	SD	M	SD		
Job satisfaction	62.22	7.15	64.33	11.6	-0.766	38

Results also confirmed that degree of freedom have a statistically significant positive association with social support ($r=.025, p<0.05$), and job satisfaction ($r=.339, p<0.01$). However, degree of freedom has been found to have statistically significant negative association with role conflict ($r=-.259, p<0.05$) and cognitive demands ($r=-.142$). Social support this also been found to have statistically significant positive relationship with job satisfaction ($r=.177, p<0.05$). In addition, social support has significant negative association with role conflict ($r=-.182, p<0.05$).

Gender-based comparisons of respondents on the level of job satisfaction

At the second objective, this study tried to see the difference in the level of job satisfaction of the police officers across gender (male and female). The following Table 1 illustrates results of the analysis of independent samples T-test. Results of the analysis of independent samples T-test for job satisfaction have been presented in Table 1. However, the Table 1 indicates that there is no statistically significant difference ($t(38)=13, p<0.01$) in the reported level of job satisfaction between the two sexes. However, the Table 1 indicates that females' mean scores of job satisfaction ($M=62.22, SD=7.15$) is more or less equivalent with males' mean score of job satisfaction ($M=64.33, SD=11.60$)

Discussion

Relationship between psychosocial work environments, job satisfaction among police officers

According to the results, quantitative demands have been found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with emotional demands. These associations indicate that as there is high job demand (quantitative demands) in the work environment, there are adjacent increments in emotional and cognitive demands. Thus, equivalently speaking, police officers who have been exposed to quantitative demands are more likely to exhibit high emotional manifestations, cognitive agitation accompanied by emotional worn out. Results also revealed that quantitative demands have statistically significant negative association with degree of freedom and social support which imply that the more freedom and social supports

workers have in their work place (police officers in this case), the better they will be able in their cognitive thinking. Thus, adequate degree of freedom and social support are vital inputs to police officers' work effectiveness and psychological wellbeing such as low level of burnout. Similarly, results indicate that emotional demands have statistically significant positive relationship with role conflict, cognitive demands. These associations clearly indicate that negative work environment factors experienced by workers support each other to negatively affect the social and psychological wellbeing of workers (police officers) such as intensifying their job dissatisfaction. However, results also indicated that emotional demands have statistically significant negative association with social support, and job satisfaction. These have implications that increasing the level of social support and lessening emotional demands of police officers would help them to have better personal accomplishments and success in their job and it enhances the level of their job satisfaction. Results also confirmed that degree of freedom have a statistically significant positive association with social support and job satisfaction. However, degree of freedom has been found to have statistically significant negative association with role conflict and cognitive demands. Social support has also been found to have statistically significant positive relationship job satisfaction. In addition, social support has significant negative association with role conflict. Moreover, results have also shown that role conflict is statistically significantly positively associated with cognitive demands. But cognitive demands have statistically significant negative association with job satisfaction.

Generally, the above findings are supported and go in line with the findings of [6] that favorable work environments have been found to be related to work engagement in human services professions and reducing the risk of burnout and increasing the level of job satisfaction. In the contrary, a poor work environment has been found to create stress and burnout and job dissatisfaction [7].

The role of sex and position for job satisfaction

There is no statistically significant difference in the reported level of job satisfaction between the two sexes. However, this finding of the current study is inconsistent with the

findings [8] that male police officers had higher job satisfaction levels than female police officers. The men were more likely to change police departments, while the women were more likely to accept a job offer different from policing. In addition, Analysis of one way ANOVA revealed that there are statistically significant mean differences in the levels of job satisfaction among groups of participants in different positions. Similarly, participants who are working in crime investigation department have shown.

On the other hand, with respect to job satisfaction, post hoc analysis indicated that participants who are working in traffic control and human resource processes have shown statistically significant mean difference and higher level of job satisfaction as compared to participants who are working in crime prevention and crime investigation departments. Similarly, participants who are working in human resource departments have been found to have higher level of job satisfaction as compared to participants who are working in traffic control departments.

Prediction of job satisfaction among psychosocial work environment

Summary of regression analysis have shown that the linear combination of psychosocial work environment factors and demographic variables for the prediction of officers' level of job satisfaction have shown a statistically significant relationship. The combined effects of psychosocial work environment (quantitative demand, cognitive demand, emotional demand, degree of freedom, role conflict and social support) as predictor variables for variation in job satisfaction of police officers account for 35%. The remaining 65% variation in job satisfaction is explained by other factors. Moreover, the combined effects of psychosocial work environment (quantitative demand, cognitive demand, emotional demand, degree of freedom, role conflict and social support) as predictor variables for variation in burnout level of police officers account for 57%. The remaining 43% variation in job satisfaction is explained by other factors. The analysis of standardized beta values revealed that quantitative demands, cognitive demands and emotional demands have greater effect than on job satisfaction of police officers.

Conclusion

To make a conclusion, this study has indicated the existence of significant relationship among variables of psychosocial work environment, job satisfaction in the police work environment. In specific terms, the study disclosed that quantitative demands have been found to have a statistically significant positive relationship with emotional demands, cognitive demands. However, quantitative demands have statistically significant negative association with degree of freedom and social support. However, there is no statistically significant difference in the level of job satisfaction between the two sexes. Results of the current study have also indicated that there are statistically significant differences in the level of job satisfaction across positions.

Ethics

Ethical clearance was secured from ethical review board of Injibara University College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. Appropriate and full detailed information were taken according to the respondent's willingness after getting a written and verbal consent from respondents. The confidentiality of the respondents would not be exposed and any information that they would give would only be used for the study purpose.

Consent for Publication

Consent was obtained for publication.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

Author Contribution

MA-participate in all phase of the study process. DT-participated in developing manuscript. All authors approved the final manuscript for publication.

Acknowledgement

We like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Injibara University for encouragement for publication. Also we would like to thanks all data collectors, study participants and all others individuals who had contribution in this study.

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