



MENTAL HEALTH STATUS OF POLICE PERSONNEL IN KUTCH DISTRICT, GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The present study assessed the mental health of police personnel in Kutch District, Gujarat. The study was conducted in Kutch District, covering police personnel from selected police stations of Eastern and Western Kutch. A total sample of 360 police personnel, comprising 180 males and 180 females, was selected using a purposive random sampling technique based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data were collected through personal interviews. The data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The findings indicate that police personnel demonstrated favorable psychological well-being and that age, gender, and work experience did not significantly affect their mental health. To further enhance well-being, emphasis should be placed on work-life balance, recreational facilities, nutritional awareness, coping skills, and supportive work environments.

Keywords: Mental Health, Police Personnel, Well Being, Age, Gender, Work Experience

INTRODUCTION

Police personnel play an important role in maintaining law and order, preventing crime, protecting the public, and responding to emergencies. Their work often involves long, irregular hours, night duties, heavy workloads, unpredictable situations, public interaction, and exposure to hazardous environments. These occupational demands, along with inadequate rest, limited family time, difficult postings, and insufficient infrastructure, may negatively affect their physical health, psychological well-being, lifestyle, and job satisfaction.

Mental health refers to emotional, cognitive, and social well-being and influences how individuals think, feel, behave, manage stress, maintain relationships, and make decisions. According to the WHO, good mental health enables individuals to cope with normal stresses, work productively, and contribute to their communities. Biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors influence mental health, which can be promoted through healthy relationships, physical activity, adequate sleep, balanced nutrition, mindfulness, and social support.

Jahoda (1958) identified important dimensions of positive mental health, including autonomy, environmental mastery, positive attitudes toward self, personal growth, integration, and realistic perception. These dimensions highlight the ability to function effectively, adapt to challenges, maintain psychological balance, and manage stress. Therefore, good mental health is particularly important for police personnel to maintain emotional stability, make effective decisions, adapt, manage stress, and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study involved male and female police personnel from selected urban and marine police stations in Kutch District, Gujarat. Kutch District comprises 34 police stations, including Women's, City, Rural, and Marine stations. A total of 360 police personnel, consisting of 180 males and 180 females, were selected using a purposive random sampling technique based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Data were collected through personal interviews. The data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background information of the respondents

The respondent group consisted of 180 males and 180 females. Most participants (56.11%) were aged 20–30, 22.50% were aged 31–40, and 21.39% were aged 41–50 or older. While the sample was predominantly young, all age groups were represented. In terms of work experience, 42.50% had 4–7 years, 39.17% had 7–15 years, and 18.34% had 0–4 years. Most respondents had moderate to extensive professional experience, reflecting significant exposure to police duties.

Table 1: Assessment of mental health among police personnel n=360

Level of Score	N	%
Low	0	0.00
Moderate	0	0.00
High	360	100.00
Very High	0	0.00
Total	360	100.00

The present study found that all 360 police personnel (100%) had a high level of overall psychological well-being, with no participants in the low, moderate, or very high categories. Overall, the findings indicate good mental and emotional health, reflected in high autonomy, healthy social relationships, environmental mastery, emotional stability, and positive self-esteem. However, some concerns were identified in decision-making under pressure, self-confidence, emotional regulation, social anxiety, and future-related insecurity.

These findings are supported by Singh *et al.* (2022), who reported that occupational stress, coping strategies, and social support were important factors associated with the mental health of police personnel. Thus, strengthening coping skills, resilience, emotional regulation, and social support may further promote psychological well-being among police personnel.

Table 2: Comparing Mental Health Levels of Police Personnels with different age n=360

Age (years)	N	Mean	SD	f-value	Df	p-val	Result
Younger (20-30 years)	202	2.43	0.23	0.120	2, 357	0.887	NS
Middle (31-40 years)	81	2.41	0.21				
Elder (41-50+ years)	77	2.42	0.23				

The table shows that mental health did not differ significantly by **age** among police personnel ($F = 0.120$, $p = 0.887$). Mean scores were similar for younger (2.43 ± 0.23), middle-aged (2.41 ± 0.21), and older personnel (2.42 ± 0.23), indicating minimal variation across age groups. This suggests that police personnel, regardless of age, may experience similar occupational stressors, workloads, demanding schedules, and job-related pressures.

This finding is supported by Yadav *et al.* (2022) who reported that age was not significantly associated with symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress among traffic police officers in Kathmandu, Nepal. The similarity in findings suggests that age may not be a major determinant of mental health among police personnel.

Table 3: Comparing Mental Health of Male and Female Police Personnel's n=360

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t- value	df	p-val	Result
Male	180	2.42	0.23	-0.06	358	0.952	NS
Female	180	2.42	0.23				

The table presents the study's finding of no statistically significant difference in mental health between male and female police personnel ($t = -0.06$, $p = 0.952$). Both groups exhibited comparable mental health levels, indicating that gender is unlikely to be a primary determinant of overall mental health among police personnel. These results suggest that male and female personnel are exposed to similar occupational stressors and work-related pressures. Consequently, mental health promotion and support programs should be implemented for all police personnel, with consideration given to individual needs rather than gender.

The findings of the present study are supported by Bhatia and Pandit (2017) who examined mental health among police personnel and reported that there was no significant difference in mental health between male and female police personnel.

Table 4: Comparing Mental Health according work experience of Police Personnel's n=360

Work Experience	N	Mean	SD	f-val	df	p-val	Result
Less (0-4 years)	66	2.42	0.23	0.07	2, 357	0.930	NS
Medium (4-7 years)	153	2.43	0.22				
High (7-15+ years)	141	2.42	0.23				

The table shows that the study found no statistically significant difference in mental health by work experience ($F = 0.07$, $p = 0.930$). Mean mental health scores were nearly identical for personnel with 0–4 years (2.42 ± 0.23), 4–7 years (2.43 ± 0.22), and 7–15+ years of experience (2.42 ± 0.23). These findings indicate that service duration alone does not substantially influence mental health among police personnel. Factors such as occupational stress, coping strategies, social support, working conditions, and the organizational environment may exert a greater impact on mental health.

The results of the current study align with those of Foley *et al.* (2024), who examined mental health outcomes among police officers and found no significant differences in mental health among police personnel according to their work experience.

CONCLUSION

The present study assessed the mental health of police personnel in Kutch District, Gujarat. Respondents exhibited high psychological well-being, marked by autonomy, social relationships, environmental mastery, emotional stability, and self-esteem. Age, gender, and work experience did not significantly affect mental health. However, concerns related to decision-making under pressure, self-confidence, emotional regulation, social anxiety, and future insecurity were observed. Strengthening stress management, resilience, coping skills, social support, and work-life balance may help police personnel maintain psychological well-being and manage occupational demands effectively.

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Jahoda (1958) identified six dimensions of positive mental health: positive attitudes toward the self, growth and self-actualization, integration, autonomy, perception of reality, and environmental mastery.

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