



ASSESSMENT AND COMPARISON OF CHALLENGES AMONG CRPF PERSONNEL AND THEIR WIVES

Nidhi Singh

Research Scholar and Assistant Professor

Department of Human Development and Family Studies (Home Science)

Institute of oriental philosophy, Vrindavan Mathura

College of Community and Applied Sciences, MPUAT, Udaipur Rajasthan

Suman Audichya

Professor

Department of Human Development and Family Studies

College of Community and Applied Sciences, MPUAT, Udaipur Rajasthan

Abstract

Every family is subjected to challenges in various aspects but the defence families are at a greater risk of challenges than other families. CRPF personnel and their families are more prone to challenges as maximum number of suicidal and fratricidal cases are reported since 2011 to 2017. To accomplish the objective the research study was undertaken in the three districts of Rajasthan i.e. Ajmer, Jaipur and Mount Abu. Total 180 sample were taken for the study including 90 CRPF personnel and their wives. Proportionate sampling technique were used. In order to assess physical, psychological, financial and socio-emotional challenges of personnel and their wives, PPFS-E scale was developed by investigator. Frequency, percentage, mean, sd and Z test were used for data analysis. For the overall challenges, majority of wives experienced challenges at moderate level. For the dimension wise challenges, majority of personnel and their wives experienced psychological and socio-emotional challenges at moderate level. For the overall comparison of challenges, personnel face more challenges as compared to their wives and significant difference was observed in their socio-emotional challenges.

Every family is subjected to challenges in various aspects but the defence families are at a greater risk of challenges than other families. These challenges not only affect their family life but their professional life also. Continuous challenges affect not only personnel's physical fitness, psychological stability, financial security and socio-emotional status but also their family, which, in turn, causes a situation in which work-related challenges and family responsibilities interfere with each other. Similarly, wives of the personnel also experienced various challenges i.e. changes in physiology, demands of parenting of different age group of

children, financial predicament and disturbance in socio-emotional relationships. It has been accepted that personal satisfaction, familial satisfaction and job satisfaction lead to life satisfaction. However, different types of challenges not only cause dissatisfaction among personnel and their wives, but also likely to impact personnel's professional outcomes (Clark et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2017). Following the concept, it can be inferred that conflicts arising from work or family (any one) affect an individual's outcomes in the work or family (any one). Moreover, challenges also upset the interpersonal relationships of personnel and their wives. Central Reserve Police force is an important segment in society, which is responsible for maintaining law and order, and serves as surgeon of the society. CRPF personnel and their families are more prone to different types of challenges as maximum number of suicidal and fratricidal cases are reported (MHA, 2017). Therefore, this study proceeded with the over-all objective of " Assessment and comparison of challenges among CRPF personnel and their wives".

Methodology

Locale of the study: For the feasibility of researcher and availability of sample the research study was undertaken in the three districts of Rajasthan i.e. Ajmer (Group centre (GC)1 & Group centre (GC) 2) , Jaipur (Sector office & RAF) and Mount Abu (ISA, Training centre).

Sample and its selection: As per the objective of the study, families were selected from CRPF who belonged to Sub-Ordinate Officers (SO's rank i.e. -ASI-Assistant Sub Inspector, SI- Sub Inspector & I – Inspector) and their wives of expanding stage of family life cycle. Wives of the SO's were housewives.

Procedure of sample selection: The sample for present study was proportionately selected and respondents were personally contacted.

Research tools and their description: occupational challenges scale for CRPF personnel

Scale for measuring Challenges: In order to explore the physical, psychological, financial and socio-emotional challenges a scale viz. **PPFS-E** scale was developed by the investigator and was standardized by validity and reliability. **PPFS-E Scale** has four aspects i.e. **Physical challenges** (15 statements), **Psychological challenges** (21 statements), **Financial challenges** (15 statements) and **Socio-emotional challenges** (25 statements). Five alternatives and score were assigned to each alternative such as always (5), very often (4), sometimes (3), rarely (2) and never (1). High score describes extreme level of challenges; moderate score represents average level of challenges while low score depicts the lower level of challenges.

Coping Strategies Scale: This scale was used for measuring coping strategies of CRPF personnel and their wives. The measure consists of 54 items, including 27 items for **positive coping strategies** and 27 items for **negative coping strategies**. There were three alternatives and score assigned i.e. always (3), sometimes (2) and never (1). A higher score on a positive scale means more positive coping used by the person to face different challenges, whereas a higher score on a negative coping scale means more negative coping exercised by the person to face challenges.

All of ethical considerations were considered in this study. Before completing the questionnaire, all participants were assured about the confidentiality of their responses and anonymity of their participation and verbal informed consent was obtained.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 Distribution of overall challenges experienced by CRPF personnel and their wives

| Level of Challenges | CRPF Personnel n=90 (%) | Wives n=90 (%) |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| High | 16.95 | 22.22 |
| Moderate | 35.83 | 46.11 |
| Low | 47.22 | 31.67 |

n=180

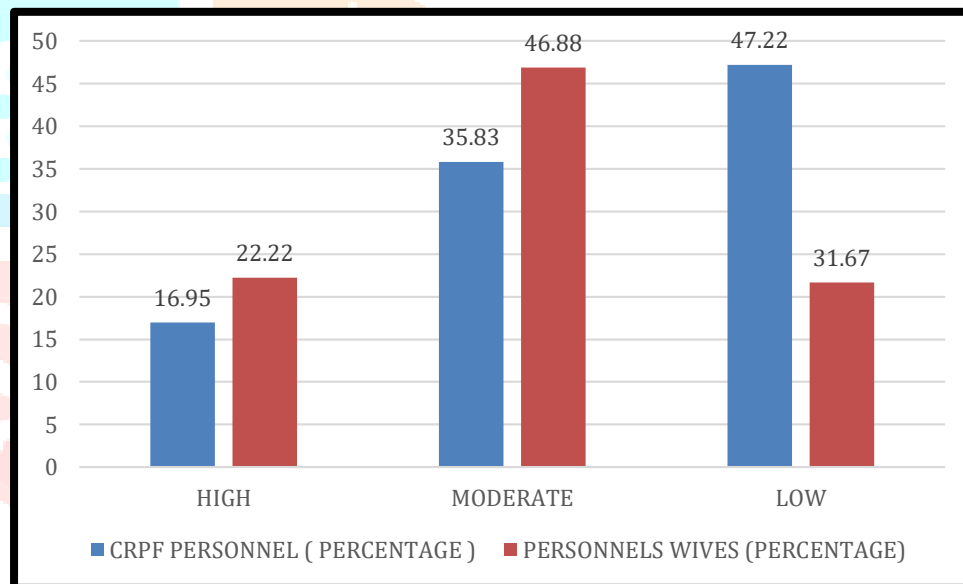


Fig. 1 Distribution of overall challenges experienced by CRPF personnel and their wives

Table 1 and Fig. 1 represent the percentage distribution of CRPF personnel and their wives for their overall challenges experienced. It is clearly evident from the data that majority of personnel (47.22%) faced low level of challenges followed by their wives (46.88%) who faced moderate level of challenges. 35.83 per cent of CRPF personnel faced moderate level of challenges. It is also illustrated from the figure that 22.22 per cent of wives and 16.95 per cent of their counterparts faced high level of challenges.

Problems with work life balance, difficulties in house hold management, financial and legal problem, relationship problems, constraints with child wellbeing, personnel well- being and spouse wellbeing are the main challenges faced by CRPF personnel and their wives.

Table 2 Distribution of dimension wise challenges experienced by CRPF personnel and their wives

| Areas of Challenges | Level of Challenges n=180 | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| | High f (%) | | Moderate f (%) | | Low f (%) | |
| | CRPF Personnel n=90 | Wives n=90 | CRPF Personnel n=90 | Wives n=90 | CRPF Personnel n=90 | Wives n=90 |
| Physical Challenges | 5 (5.56) | 16 (17.78) | 16 (17.78) | 44 (48.89) | 69 (76.67) | 30 (33.33) |
| Psychological Challenges | 28 (31.11) | 22(24.44) | 37 (41.11) | 47 (52.22) | 25 (27.78) | 21 (23.33) |
| Financial Challenges | 0 (0.00) | 10 (11.11) | 37 (41.11) | 28 (31.11) | 53 (58.89) | 52 (57.78) |
| Socio-Emotional Challenges | 28 (31.11) | 32 (35.56) | 39 (43.33) | 47 (52.22) | 23 (25.56) | 11 (12.22) |

Table 2 depicts frequency and percentage distribution of CRPF personnel and their wives for their level of physical, psychological, financial challenges and socio-emotional. As per data depict in the table, 41.11 per cent of respondents faced moderate level psychological challenges. Likewise, 43.33 per cent of respondents encountered with moderate level of socio-emotional challenges whereas majority of personnel experienced low level of physical (76.67%) and financial (58.89 %) challenges respectively. As far as wives of CRPF personnel are concerned 48.89 per cent of them faced moderated level of physical challenges. As far as psychological challenges are concerned more than half of the population felt moderate level of challenges. Similarly, 52.22 per cent of personnel encountered with moderate level of socio-emotional challenges. 57.78 per cent of wives faced low level of financial challenges.

As per data depicted in table, majority of CRPF personnel reflects low level of physical challenges while wives of CRPF personnel show moderate level of physical challenges. CRPF personnel and their wives experienced different health conditions; some health-related issues affect women differently and more commonly and were related to age and biological changes. Though all the women were taken from expanding stage of family life cycle for the study, where physical activities were high. Females go through different age-related changes, facing problem with changing bodily functions due to child birth, lower physical capability due to aging and facing some health-related issues. Despite of this most of the

women tried to maintain their physical fitness by joining CRPF family welfare programme (CWA), health camp and different disease preventive schemes.

As far as psychological dimension is concerned, noticeable outcomes were observed in psychological challenges where the substantial number of CRPF personnel and their wives reported moderate level of psychological challenges. The personnel work in extremely difficult conditions, often with the fear of mis-happening looming large. In addition to this, the long working hours affected their communication with their spouse, children, parents and friends. They were not getting satisfaction with their existing situation. The constant separation from their families only compounds the problems. Due to this dissatisfaction arose and that led to psychological challenges. The family problems were one of the prominent factors wherein both personnel and their wives were suffering. In line with the finding, Daga, 2019 stated that “stress, depression, anxiety PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), especially relating to their family lives, is major issues for the CRPF personnel. This adds to the tension, stress and anxiety, and sometimes they do not understand how to handle it and when they realize they have no way of resolving them, they sometimes take drastic measures”.

Most of the time, wives of CRPF personnel have responsibilities to run their families. The major task for them is to raise their kids, and majority of them find it challenging to do so alone. Most often they don't know how to tackle with day-to-day problems. CRPF personnel' wives felt “they do not wear uniform, they do not have shoulders which have stars (rank), but they constantly live up to admiration of uniform, follow the discipline, routine and norm of CRPF as their husbands do” which make them different from the civil life. It is not just the CRPF personnel who are in force; the discipline and sacrifice are woven in every act and part of lives of the wives of CRPF personnel too.

In view of financial dimension, both husband and wife were satisfied with their financial status. Most of the personnel felt that perks and benefits were the main motivation of this job. The salary was only the source of income and much of time it was enough to fulfil maximum demands of the family members. Force personnel serving the need of national security should be paid the highest (Nair, 2016). Bank Loan is granted with minimum formalities to CRPF personnel to enhance their living condition, future security and to meet the educational status of children and their family members. Wives of the personnel also felt that the facilities like canteen services, transportation services, children's education and medical facilities helped them in savings and fulfilling the long term goal of the family. Few of the personnel felt that financial benefits are not at par with other defence personnel such as Army and they believed there should be one rank one pension policy. Insecure future financial liabilities (such as pension) are a major cause of concern to some of CRPF personnel. Another factor that influenced the financial behaviour were age, social and professional status, education, number of children, stage of family life cycle, or place of residence (Walczak and Kamieniecka, 2018).

Socio-emotional challenges are one of the main challenges which affect both the personnel and their wives. The main reasons for that were poor communication between CRPF personnel and their wives

which led to dissatisfaction in their relationships. A contradictory remark given by the officials that “due to frequent communication personnel cannot reach at the location of emergency every time, this create socio-emotional deprivation among them.

The other causative factors were due to prolonged duty hours of husbands. Wives having single responsibility of home, less contact with friends and relatives raised the feeling of social isolation.

The wives of CRPF personnel felt that inability to settle family issues and comply with social responsibilities, feels cut off from main stream of society. As per the voluminous analytical report (Annual report, 2016) prepared on the current status of the personnel of CRPF, stated that personnel undergo trauma in marital and family issues and are unable to ensure good parenting for their children. 'Within the extended family too, the report said, since a CRPF jawan is “most of the time absent during social functions and ceremonies like marriages, betrothals, funerals and other rituals on account of his official commitments, he continues to be socially isolated even within his own family.” Children are mostly deprived of adequate parental control. This has tragic consequences in many cases (Deccan Chronical, 2016).

Table 3 Comparison of overall and dimensions wise challenges experienced by CRPF personnel and their wives

n=180

| S. N. | Areas of Challenges | CRPF personnel n=90 | | Wives n=90 | | 'Z' value |
|-------|----------------------------|------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|--------------------|
| | | Mean Value | S.D. | Mean Value | S.D. | |
| 1. | Physical Challenges | 38.5 | 28.99 | 45.28 | 35.35 | 1.4 ^{NS} |
| 2. | Psychological Challenges | 63.8 | 58.68 | 54.16 | 38.18 | 1.3 ^{NS} |
| 3. | Financial Challenges | 41.34 | 37.47 | 34.62 | 30.40 | 1.32 ^{NS} |
| 4. | Socio-Emotional Challenges | 89.95 | 57.98 | 68.54 | 36.76 | 2.95 [*] |
| | Overall Challenges | 58.40 | 47.56 | 50.65 | 35.29 | 1.64 ^{NS} |

*= significant at 5% level of significance

**=significance at 1% level of significance

Table 3 clearly describes the mean value, standard deviation and Z score for physical, psychological, socio-emotional and financial challenges faced by CRPF personnel and their wives. For the physical challenges mean score for male is 38.5 and for female 45.28 and there is no significant difference found. Mean score for male 63.8 and for the female 54.16 and there is no significant difference found for psychological challenges. Similarly, mean score financial challenges for male is 41.34 and for female is 34.62 and there is no significant

difference found. Z score denotes a significant difference for socio-emotional challenges for male and female where the mean score for male is 89.95 and for female is 68.54. As far as overall challenges are concerned personnel having higher mean score as compared to their wives and no significance difference is found.

As far as physical challenges are concerned wives scored higher mean value than the personnel because most of the female faced some age-related changes in different sub stages of expanding stage of family life cycle. The biological changes may be the reason for this. Most of the females were complaining for the age-related changes such as greying hairs, joint pain, fluctuating blood pressure, symptoms related to menopause etc. Despite of this, most of them agreed with the statement that they maintained their health just because they followed the routine work with their husbands. They also availed various health facilities from the campus. Physical fitness is one of the mandatory domains for the force. CRPF personnel showed their medical fitness to the department every year.

In case of financial challenges, CRPF personnel scored higher mean value as compared to their wives. The reason may be the comparative nature of CRPF personnel to the other CAPF personnel (such as CISF, BSF, ITBP and SSB) and other defence personnel (such as Army, Navy and Airforce). They were complaining that Indian armed forces such as Army and state police are getting more benefits and incentives for the same rank. CRPF personnel are always complaining for the same benefits and perks because of their similar nature of their duties and risk. According to Deaton (2008), income is also seen as relative importance compared to other life domains such as family circumstances, employment status and health. Wives of the CRPF personnel were quite satisfied with their current income status. Most of them are proud of being a force personnel spouse.

Psychological challenges are one of the important challenges faced by CRPF personnel. As per the data shown in the table 3, CRPF personnel attained higher mean value as compared to their wives. Most of them found difficulty in achieving quality of life. Complete dedication and commitment towards duty create difficulty in fulfilling family and societal obligations such as maintaining familial wellbeing, maintaining affectionate relationships with spouse, passing social and ethical values to children, establishing emotional bonding with the extended family members and getting satisfaction by fulfilling societal tasks.

Socio emotional challenges are one of the challenges which affect both CRPF personnel and their wives. As per the data shown in the table 3, it was observed that the mean value of CRPF personnel is higher than the mean value of their wives. It was also noted that there is a significant difference between CRPF personnel and their wives in relation with socio emotional challenges. This may be because CRPF personnel get overloaded with works and official tasks every time and due to this they are not able to communicate frequently with their friends and families. Most of the time they cannot attend their family and civic functions. They cannot share their emotional feelings to their family members and friends and hence show some emotional trauma. In a tight duty schedule, they cannot even discuss their feelings to their colleague. As far as personnel wives are concerned, somehow, they get time to share their feelings to their family members, friends and relatives. In the residential area, they agreed with the statement that they have a community to whom they can share their feelings, ideas and thoughts. They have another family called CRPF family to whom they can spend time

while their husbands are on duty. Most of the wives agreed with the statement that due to their husbands' duty and family responsibilities they were unable to attend family functions and other civic responsibilities. Apart from that, interpersonal relationships are also suffered. Both personnel and their wives do not properly communicate with each other. Hall and Halder (2006) concluded that good and close relationships with others-partners and spouse, parents and children, Kinmen, friends, neighbours, workmate are major source of life satisfaction. These give some sort of psychological relief among force personnel.

Conclusion: CRPF personnel and their wives experience different challenges in their day to day lives. From the above discussion, it has been concluded that personnel encounter more psychological, financial and socio-emotional challenges as compared to their wives. Most of the CRPF personnel and their wives struggle with socio emotional challenges because of their interpersonal relationships. Despite of all these challenges, CRPF personnel and their wives of expanding stages of family life cycle fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Wives always stand with their husbands in order to fulfil their national responsibilities.

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