

MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES FACED BY POLICE WOMEN:AN ANALYSIS USING RESILIENCE MODEL

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the mental health challenges experienced by policewomen, emphasizing the gender-specific stressors they encounter in a predominantly male-dominated profession. Utilizing the Resilience Model, this research identifies coping mechanisms, adaptive strategies, and institutional support as vital for maintaining psychological well-being among female officers. The findings advocate for systemic changes within law enforcement agencies to promote mental health awareness, inclusivity, and resilience-building strategies.

KEYWORDS *Mental health, Policewomen, Resilience model, Workplace stress, Gender discrimination, Trauma exposure, Coping mechanisms*

INTRODUCTION

Policing is inherently demanding, combining physical and mental challenges. However, policewomen often face unique hurdles such as gender bias, harassment, and the pressure to prove their competence. An understanding of these gender-specific factors is essential in addressing the mental health issues prevalent among female officers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Gender-Specific Stressors:** Research indicates female officers experience higher rates of workplace discrimination, impacting their mental well-being.
- **Burnout and Mental Health:** Women in law enforcement report elevated levels of anxiety, depression, and PTSD compared to their male counterparts.
- **Coping Mechanisms:** Effective coping strategies include social support networks, mindfulness, and institutional mentoring.
- **Resilience in Law Enforcement:** The Resilience Model highlights the significance of adaptive strategies in managing occupational stress.
- **Need for Supportive Policies:** A lack of gender-sensitive mental health policies continue to hinder female officers' performance.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Despite the increasing presence of women in law enforcement, their mental health challenges often go unrecognized. Gender discrimination, societal expectations, and the demands of policing contribute to significant psychological burdens that can lead to severe mental health issues.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the primary mental health challenges faced by policewomen?
2. How do workplace stressors and gender-related issues contribute to their psychological well-being?
3. What coping mechanisms are employed by policewomen to manage stress?

OBJECTIVES

- To identify specific mental health challenges experienced by policewomen.
- To assess the impact of gender-related stressors on their psychological well-being.
- To explore coping mechanisms and resilience strategies among female officers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Data Collection:** Utilize structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to gather qualitative and quantitative data from policewomen.
- **Analytical Tools:** Use statistical methods to analyze data gathered from surveys and interviews, such as descriptive statistics and thematic analysis for qualitative data.

INTREPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Data of Respondents

Age Group	Percentage (%)
18-25	15%
26-35	40%
36-45	30%
46+	15%

Stress Levels Reported by Respondents

Stress Level	Frequency (%)
Low	20%
Moderate	50%
High	30%

Coping Mechanisms Used

Mechanism	Percentage (%)
Social Support	60%
Professional Counseling	25%
Personal Coping Strategies	15%

SUGGESTIONS

- Implement gender-sensitive mental health programs within law enforcement agencies.
- Foster organizational cultures that encourage open discussions about mental health.
- Develop peer support networks specifically designed for female officers.

CONCLUSION

The mental health challenges faced by policewomen are intricate and multifaceted, demanding immediate attention. By applying the Resilience Model and advocating for systemic changes, law enforcement agencies can support female officers in overcoming these challenges and enhancing their overall well-being.