

## Bullying, Job Performance and other Psychological Factors among Army Personnels

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### Abstract

In various professional sectors, including the military, workplace bullying, encompassing forms like verbal abuse and social isolation, adversely impacts employee performance and emotional well-being. This study explores the link between workplace bullying, job performance, stress, and emotional intelligence in the military context. Conducted on 50 army personnel aged 24-43 years, the study revealed a positive correlation between workplace bullying and job performance, however, it was also significantly positively correlated with stress, anxiety, and depression. This research emphasizes the importance of addressing workplace bullying to enhance military personnel's mental well-being.

**Keywords:** Workplace bullying, Army, Stress, Emotional intelligence, Job performance

### Introduction

Employees' job performance doesn't just shape a company's reputation; it also impacts an individual's career and success [1]. When employees feel good about their work and are successful, they are more motivated and engaged [2]. Many things at work affect how well employees do their jobs, like job satisfaction, clear goals, and training [3]. Stress at work, including bullying, can seriously affect job performance. Bullying creates a hostile work environment, causing stress and anxiety [6]. When someone is bullied, they may feel scared and powerless, making them less productive and engaged [7], [8]. Work stress has become a big problem, with overloaded schedules and job insecurity making people feel stressed [9]. Stress can affect how well people work, sometimes in a good way, but often in a bad way [10]. Long-term stress can even cause health problems like high blood pressure and depression.

In the Indian army, work stress has led to tragic incidents. Over a thousand soldiers have committed suicide since 2003, a situation disclosed by the former Defence Minister of India, Mr A K Antony. Referring to report submitted by former Defence Minister of India Mr A K Antony

to the Lok Sabha, on November 12, 2012, cited that "...suicide and fragging (to kill a fellow soldier) cases continue to remain as high as ever. Around 1,020 soldiers have committed suicide just since 2003. Disclosing the figures, Antony said while 96 soldiers had committed suicide in 2009, the figures stood at 115 in 2010, 102 (2011), and 81 till now this year"[11]. This shows how important it is for organizations to address stress and create supportive work environments for their employees' well-being.

Emotional intelligence is a vital tool in handling emotions at work. It enables individuals to understand and manage their own emotions as well as others, guiding their thoughts and actions [12]. People with high emotional intelligence can identify their feelings and use strategies to regulate them, making them better at managing stress [13]. Additionally, emotional intelligence allows individuals to adapt to the emotions of higher authorities in the workplace, aiding in effective situation management [14]. Studies have shown a strong link between emotional intelligence and stress management. Individuals with high emotional intelligence exhibit better flexibility in handling stressors [15]. This quality is particularly crucial in high-stress professions like the military, where soldiers face demanding situations both emotionally and physically [16]. By developing emotional intelligence, army personnel can effectively cope with the stressors inherent in their jobs.

In the context of the Indian Army sector, our study aims to explore the connections between workplace bullying, job performance, stress, and emotional intelligence, highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence in managing workplace challenges.

### Methods

#### Sampling

This study followed the Purposive sampling technique. A total of 50 individuals, who were army personnel aged between 24-43 years, who were working in army for at least 2 years, and not having any known chronic psychological disorder, were drawn following purposive sampling.

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**Measures**

**Information sheet**

An information schedule was prepared for collecting the socio-demographic details like-gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, service rank/post, duration in the service, history of any psychological illness, history of any serious physical illness.

**Workplace Bullying Scale (WBS)[17]**

The workplace bullying scale consists of 21 items, it was used to measure bullying in workplace. The scale scored based on a five-point Likert rating scale, where 1= Never and 5 = Daily. Cronbach’s alpha of WBS is 0.91.

**The Individual Work Performance Scale[18]**

The 18-items self-report scale was used to measure employee performance. The scale is scored by a four-point Likert rating scale, where 0= Occasionally,1= Sometimes, 2=Regularly,3= often, 4= always. The reliability coefficient for each dimension, task performance is 0.931, contextual performance is 0.904, and counterproductive work behaviour is 0.834.

**Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS-21)[19], [20]**

The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale - 21 Items (DASS-21) is a set of three self-report scales designed to measure the emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. It has four response options: 0 “Did not apply to me at all–Never”, 1 “Applied to me to some degree, or some of the time–Sometimes”, 2 “Applied to me to a considerable degree, or a good part of time–Often” to 3 “Applied to me very much, or most of the time–Almost always”. The internal consistency reliability of the scale was 0.88 for the overall scale.

**Wong and Law’s Emotional Intelligence Scale(WLEIS)[21]**

Consisting of 16 items to measure EI based on the revised model of Mayer and Salovey [22], [23]. The scale is composed of 16 items rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), measuring four dimensions of Trait EI- Appraisal and expression of emotion in the self, Appraisal and recognition of emotion in others, Regulation of emotion in the self, and use of emotion to facilitate performance. Reliability coefficients as indicated by Cronbach’s alpha, the reliability coefficient for the overall test was .83.

**Procedure**

Central Reserved Police Force (CRPF) personnels were contacted individually. Informed consents were obtained from each participant. Measures were administered in individual settings.

**Result**

A total of 50 participants took part in the study, with ages ranging from 24 to 43 years and a mean age of 32.30. The participants' education levels varied from 10th to 12+3 standard, with a mean education level of 11.84 years. The majority of participants were married males (86%), and there was a higher percentage of Rank-Sipahi (38%) compared to other ranks (Table 1).

**Table 1. Descriptive of the participants (N=50)**

Variable		Mean (SD)
Age		32.30 (5.73)
Education		11.84 (1.83)
		Frequency (%)
Marital Status	Married	43 (86)
	Unmarried	7 (14)
Ranks in CRPF	Sipahi	19 (38)
	Havildar	16 (32)
	Subedar Constable	5 (10) 10 (20)

Participants exhibited varying levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Specifically, 96% of participants fell within the normal range for stress, while 50% were within the normal range for anxiety. For depression, 78% of participants were in the normal range (Table-2).

**Table2. Severity on DASS for the participants (N=50)**

	Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Stress	Normal	48	96.0
	Mild	1	2
	Severe	1	2
Anxiety	Normal	25	50
	Mild	9	18
	Moderate	15	30
	Severe	1	2
Depression	Normal	39	78
	Mild	10	20
	Extremely severe	1	2

The correlation table (Table 3) provides valuable insights into the relationships among the studied variables. Positive correlation between the

duration of service (DUR) and age, indicating that older individuals tend to have longer tenures in the army. However, this experience does not necessarily translate to better job performance (PER), as indicated by the negative correlation between job duration and performance. This implies that while experience and age increase, job performance tends to decrease. Furthermore, the table reveals a significant positive correlation between workplace bullying (WPB) and anxiety (ANX) as well as depression (DEP). This underscores the detrimental impact of workplace bullying on the mental health of army personnel, leading to higher levels of anxiety and depression. Additionally, emotional intelligence (EI) shows a negative correlation with job duration.

**Table 3. Zero-order correlations among study variables.**

	AGE	ED	DU	PE	WP	EI	ST	AN	D
		U	R	R	B		R	X	EP
AGE	1								
ED	-.1	1							
U	.18								
DU	.826	-.1	1						
R	**	.91							
PER	-.3	.04	-.3	1					
	.01*	.3	.30*						
WP	-.2	.23	-.0	.29	1				
B	.00	.9	.96	.8*					
EI	-.13	.02	-.3	.03	-.1	1			
	.3	.8	.37*	.1	.45				
STR	-.10	-.0	-.0	.16	.29	-	1		
	.6	.30	.44	.8	.3*	.0			
						.34			
AN	-	.08	-	.61	.46	.01	.47	1	
X	.280	.6	.02	.7**	.1**	.4	.3**		
	*		.37						
DEP	-	.19	-.2	.32	.34	.0	.55	.65	1
	.286	.2	.33	.4*	.9*	.59	.5**	.8**	
	*								

Note. Edu= Education; DUR= Duration; PER=Performance; WPB= Workplace Bullying; EI= Emotional Intelligence; STR= Stress; ANX= Anxiety; DEP= Depression

**Discussion**

The Present study aimed to investigate the association among workplace bullying, job performance, stress and emotional intelligence in

Army sector. The data was obtained from the 50 army personnel.

The findings of the current study underscore a significant positive correlation between stress and workplace bullying among army personnel, indicating that bullying behaviors could be a significant source of stress within this demographic [24]. Previous research has consistently demonstrated the relationship between stress and various mental health problems, adding weight to our results [24]. Notably, our study also revealed a positive correlation between workplace bullying and depression and anxiety, aligning with existing literature highlighting the detrimental impact of workplace bullying on mental health [25]. Individuals subjected to workplace bullying often experience severe consequences, including psychological distress, burnout, and a range of mental health challenges, such as sleep disturbances, fatigue (especially in women), and diminished vigor (particularly in men) [26].

Surprisingly, our study demonstrated a positive correlation between workplace bullying and job performance among army personnel, indicating that bullying behaviors might create performance pressure, potentially leading to improved work-related outcomes, although at the expense of employees' well-being [26]. Job performance issues can stem from various factors, including low job satisfaction, inadequate remuneration, or skill deficiencies [26]. Strikingly, research from Nigeria indicated that employees perceiving lower levels of workplace bullying tend to outperform their counterparts experiencing higher levels of bullying, suggesting a complex interplay between workplace dynamics and performance outcomes [27]. However, it is crucial to note that excessive workplace bullying negatively impacts job satisfaction, potentially diminishing overall performance [28]. High job satisfaction is closely linked to enhanced performance, emphasizing the delicate balance organizations must strike to foster a productive yet supportive work environment for their employees [29].

These findings emphasize the critical need to address workplace bullying for the holistic well-being and productivity of employees within organizational settings. Surprisingly, the present study did not reveal a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance, contrasting with existing academic research suggesting a notable impact of emotional intelligence on employee performance [30], [31]. Emotional intelligence's positive influence on job satisfaction has been observed in previous studies, where it aids employees in managing negative emotions while enhancing positive feelings, ultimately improving job performance [32].

Furthermore, our study indicated no direct association between emotional intelligence and stress, although extensive academic research suggests otherwise. Studies have shown that higher emotional intelligence enables individuals to cope more effectively with stress, leading to reduced stress levels [33]. However, the relationship between emotional intelligence and stress is intricate; while some studies did not find a direct correlation between overall emotional intelligence and stress, specific subscales of emotional intelligence were linked to certain stressors [33]. In the present study, we discovered a significant positive correlation between workplace bullying and anxiety and depression in the army sector, indicating the adverse impact of bullying on victims' physical and psychological well-being. This impact was further mediated by anxiety and partially by depression, highlighting the complex interplay between workplace bullying, anxiety, depression, and stress [34].

Moreover, our research shed light on the interconnectedness of anxiety and depression, revealing a mutual positive correlation. This suggests that the presence of anxiety significantly heightens the likelihood of developing depression, emphasizing the importance of addressing both conditions to foster a mentally healthy work environment [35]. Stress, acting as a predictor for both depression and anxiety, underscores its pivotal role in determining mental health outcomes [36]. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of emotional well-being within the workplace, indicating the necessity for comprehensive strategies that address emotional intelligence, workplace bullying, stress, anxiety, and depression to promote a psychologically healthy work environment for employees.

### Conclusion

In light of recent study, we can conclude that, army personnel face anxiety and depression in mild to severe range. And workplace bullying directly or indirectly inducing stress within them which may lead performance pressure, thus their job performance positively correlated with stress.

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