



Impact of Occupational Environment on Health and Quality of Life among the Traffic Police, Civic Volunteers and Street Vendors: A Case Study of Ward number 22, Howrah

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ABSTRACT: *Workplace conditions have a big impact on a person's health, thus it's a vital part of their entire environment. Occupation and health are inextricably linked and play a significant impact in human well-being. In all seasons, traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors operate in a polluted (air and noise) environment alongside the road, which affects them in a variety of ways, both physically and mentally, and has a negative impact on their quality of life and personal relationships. This Study is tried to find out about the health status and quality of life. Most of the Traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors are below fifty years of age and disparity in educational qualifications and in monthly expenditure can be seen. Their working hours and work experience have become the cause of their physical and psychological difficulties. Their monthly earning and health satisfaction is a big issue to improve their Quality of Life. Here it is seen that street Vendors work long hours but their income and standard of living level is much lower than others. But their job satisfaction rank is much higher than traffic Police and civic volunteers. Civic Volunteers are satisfied with their sleep satisfaction and street vendors are dissatisfied about their health satisfaction.*

Key Words: Occupational Environment, Health, Quality of Life, Traffic Police, Civic Volunteers, Street Vendors

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Introduction

Workplace conditions have a big impact on a person's health, thus it's a vital part of their entire environment. Occupation and health are inextricably linked and play a significant impact in human well-being. In all seasons, traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors operate in a polluted (air and noise) environment alongside the road, which affects them in a variety of ways, both physically and mentally, and has a negative impact on their quality of life and personal relationships. Studies showed that the occupational health problems are due to - Long-time duty, work pressure, no time for family, inadequate salaries/income (basically for the street vendors), anti-social behavior, harassment, lack of health and job satisfaction. This study focuses on how occupation influences quality of life. Health problems such as digestive problems caused by work stress & eating disorders, joint pain due to long-time duty, dust allergy, asthma, Skin disease, headaches due to work in dust, smokey noise pollution, dizziness, nervous system problems, etc. are some occupational health hazard. But even then people have to do work due to various demands. In this case, workers try to get rid of their occupational stress such as spending some time on social media, consuming alcohol or tobacco, watching T.V, mobile gaming, drinking energy drinks, reading storybooks, taking some rest or exercising to keep fit themselves.

Review of Literature

Study by Chandra and Jana (2013) on “*Evolution of risk factors at Howrah slum for poor health status*” revealed that in a developing country, the concept of urbanization has been traditionally linked to development but actually, it is the growth of slums. It represents low-income groups, unemployment, endless poverty, poor nutrition based food habit, low-income base large families, illiteracy, drug addiction from childhood, indigent health treatment and tenacious disease these all are the base of slum dwellers. This paper has presented the real environment of slum areas and explained its solution as much as possible.

Patil et al. (2014) investigated the effects of environmental health on traffic police. The goal of this paper is to demonstrate how the employment environment influences traffic police' health. Traffic police work in an environment surrounded by vehicle-emitted smoke and noise pollution, which has been linked to respiratory diseases, allergies, and cancer. The authors attempt to describe how ordinary people are affected by air pollution..

Chettri and Rodrigues (2015) examines what have in the mind of traffic police to prevent occupational hazards. Through data analysis method majority of this subject(89%) of traffic police had insufficient knowledge for prevention of occupational hazards & the other 11% had low safety measures. This article uses some mathematical methods to show some significant relationships in the knowledge score on occupational hazard and score of the utilization of safety measures with age and income, but no significant results are found.

Objectives

1. This paper tries to discover the socioeconomic and demographic details of traffic police, civic volunteers & street vendors.
2. Attempts have been made to find out about their health status and quality of life.
3. Finally, this paper tries to understand how they cope with their daily work stress to keep their mind and body healthy.

Data and Methodology

This paper has been prepared using primary data. A total of 45 primary data have been collected by using an informative questionnaire. All these questions were collected from 15 traffic police, 15 civic volunteers, and 15 street vendors. Preliminary data were collected from ward Number 22 of Howrah Municipal Corporation. There are two types of queries created to collect primary data, both qualitative and quantitative so that the primary data can be collected accurately. Some questions of Socio-economic comprising about 26 items and health status-related and quality of life comprising a rating scale base on 14 items were used. This study is descriptive in nature.

Discussion

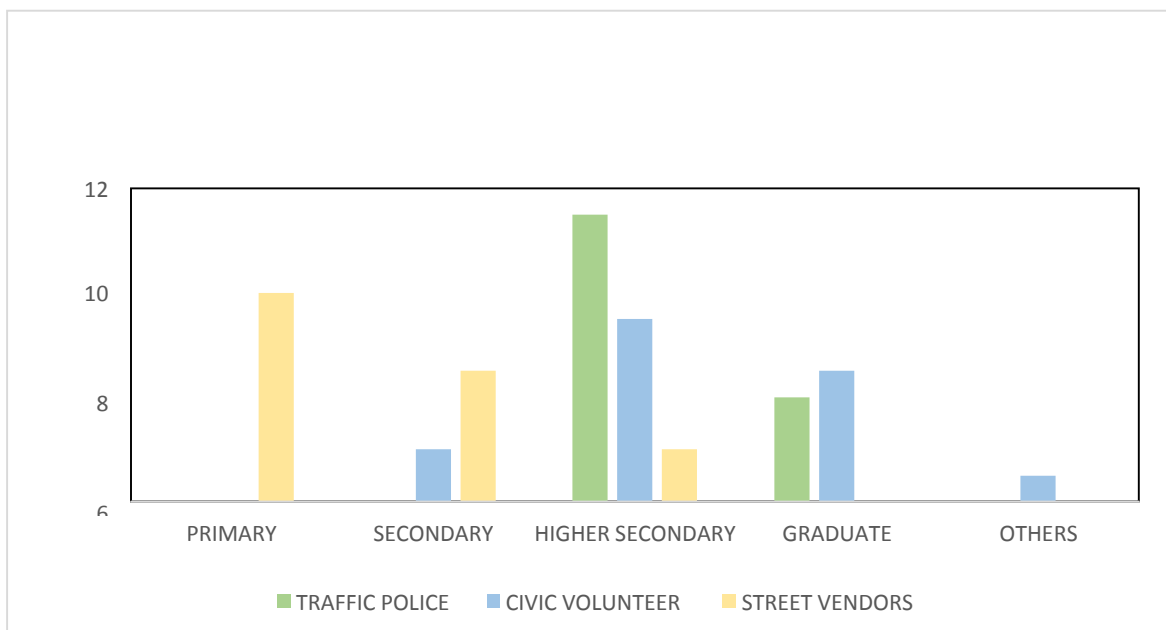
Demographic details are used to learn about a population's characteristics for different intentions.

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents

	Gender		Religion		Age		
	Male	Female	Hinduism	Muslim	<30	30-50	50+
Traffic Police	15	0	15	0	1	12	2
Civic Volunteers	8	7	12	3	12	3	0
Street Vendors	9	6	11	4	3	8	4

Table-1 reveals that 15 out of 45 respondents are male traffic police, more than fifty percent of civic volunteers are male and about sixty percent of street vendors are male. About 84 percent of respondents are Hindu and the rest are from the Muslim community. 51 percentage of respondents belong to the 30-50 age group category.

Graph 1 depicts the educational qualification of the traffic police, civic volunteers and street vendor. All the traffic police are studied above class twelve whereas most of the street vendors are studied up to primary level. Educational qualifications of civic volunteers varies from secondary to Graduate level.



Graph 1: Educational qualification

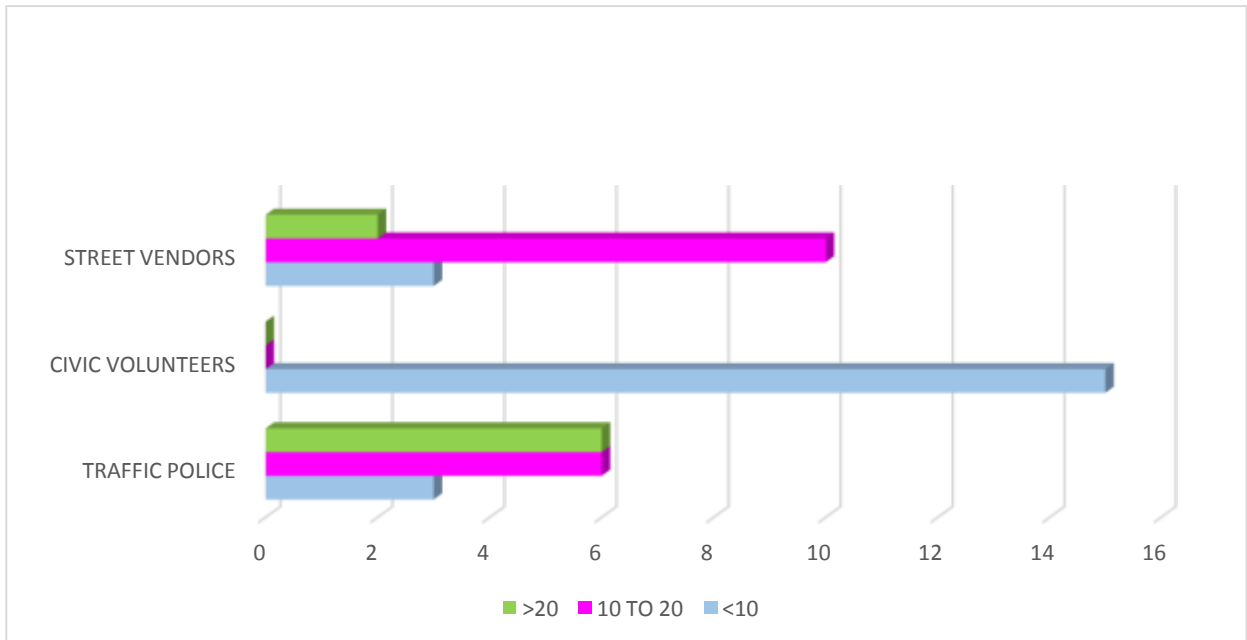
To find out the earning details of traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors, we have taken their monthly expenditure as proxy for income as members from unorganized sectors like street vendors are hardly tell about their exact income. The table-2 shows that about 86 percent of the traffic police spend more than Rs. 10,000 per month, whereas about sixty percent of civic volunteers spend above 10,000 per month. Among the street vendors most of them (about 84 percent) spend below 10000. It is obvious as traffic police and civic volunteers are salaried, they can spend more than the street vendors.

Table 2: Monthly Expenditure

Monthly Expenditure amount	Traffic Police	Civic volunteer	Street vendors
<10,000	2	2	11
10,000-15,000	3	9	3
>15,000	10	4	1

Health Status and Quality of Life

Occupational Health and quality of life are in some cases affected by working time and work experience. Traffic Police & Civic Volunteers are work for about 8 hours but working hours for street vendors varies from less than 5 hours to more than 8 hours but most of street vendors work for more than 8 hours. Sometimes work experience affects physical and mental health and which is responsible for human Quality of life. Prolonged work experience in some cases reduces the physical skills of the people and various diseases appear. The traffic Police and street Vendors who have been working for more than 20 years have problems like High blood pressure, sugar, asthma, nervous system problems, dust allergies, forgotten etc. Graph-2 depicts the working experience of traffic police, civic volunteers and street vendors.



Graph 2: Working Experience of Traffic Police, Civic Volunteers and Street Vendors

There are two street vendors and three traffic policemen with broken arms and legs, which makes it difficult for them to do their job properly. However, out of the total 45 samples, most of the respondents experience headaches, joint pain, and these are common problems.



Graph 3: Health and sleep satisfaction among the traffic police, civic volunteers and street vendors

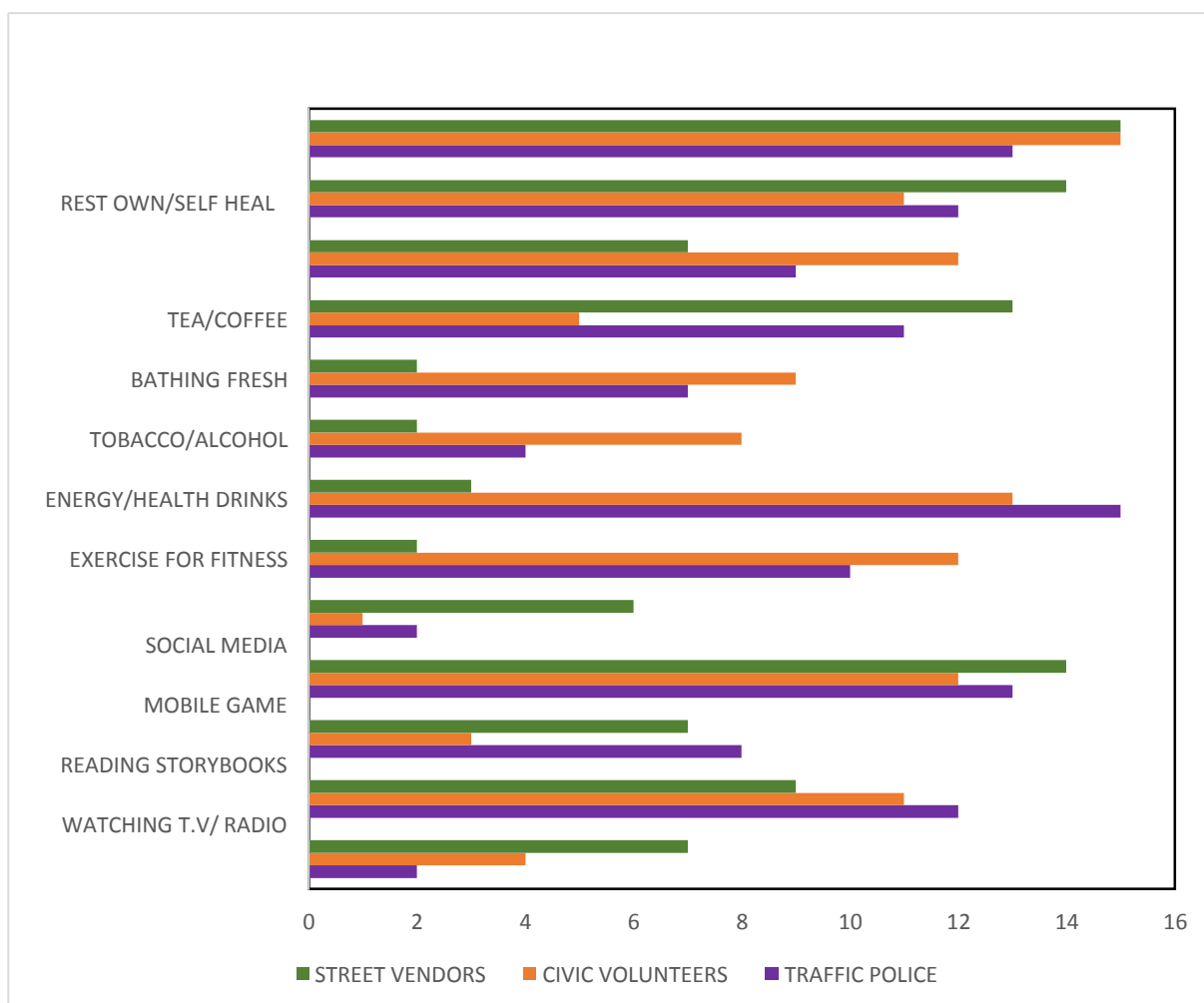
As we know that good health and good sleep help to energize our work and it is a significant factor in maintaining the overall Quality of life. Here we can see that the health and sleep satisfaction of almost all the workers is quite good to moderate (Graph 3).

Negative feelings, blue mood, anxiety, despair, and depression are very common as they have been associated with the same work for long time. Emotional problems can be noticed in some cases among the traffic police and in general in civic volunteers and street vendors. We know that getting insurance or saving money to stay safe in life is very important for the future. Generally, traffic police and civic volunteers receive the West Bengal Government provident fund but they have also additional Life Insurance coverage for them but most of the street vendors have no insurance for life savings. Almost all traffic police and civic volunteers have two-wheeler but street vendors have occupational-related vehicles or cycles.

Table 3: Job Satisfaction as Ranking Method

Rank	Traffic Police	Civic Volunteers	Street Vendors
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	2	0	0
5	1	2	0
6	1	5	0
7	5	1	1
8	3	2	7
9	1	3	4
10	2	2	3

The table 3 depicts the job satisfaction ranking of the traffic police, civic volunteers and street vendors. Traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors ranked their job satisfaction in 1 to 10 point scale. They realize their emotional problems such as – depression, anxiety, negative feelings, despair which bring problems in personal relationships or in family. They could not enjoy their life properly and their negativity, careless, bad behavior effected their working and home environment.



Graph-4: Activities to do relief from Occupational Stress

Graph-4 reveal how the traffic police, civic volunteers and street vendors cope with up their daily work stress to keep their mind and body healthy. Traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors try different ways to recover their occupational stress as they try to keep themselves well or gradually they protect themselves from this occupational stress. To get rid of this occupational stress, they go home after work all day, take rest, drink tea and coffee. They also resort to tobacco, alcohol, and energy drinks or exercise so that they can stay fit. They also read storybooks and watch T.V, Radio, and spend time with family and friends. So, they try to stay free from their occupational stress.

Limitation of the study

COVID-19 and lockdown have made it difficult to collect more number of samples. We have collected only 45 samples before the lockdown and due to the small number of samples it is very difficult to generalized the findings.

Conclusion

Most of the Traffic police, civic volunteers, and street vendors are below fifty years of age and disparity in educational qualifications and in monthly expenditure can be seen. Their working hours and work experience have become the cause of their physical and psychological difficulties. Their monthly earning and health satisfaction is a big issue to improve their Quality of Life. Here it is seen that street Vendors work long hours but their income and standard of living level is much lower than others. But their job satisfaction rank is much higher than traffic Police and civic volunteers. Civic Volunteers are satisfied with their sleep satisfaction and street vendors are dissatisfied about their health satisfaction.

In some cases, all workers can overcome their negativity or work stress through the help of medical treatment and they can relieve their stress in different ways, but in this case, it is better to avoid drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other bad addiction.

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