

Exploring the Lived Experiences of Cumulative Trauma Among Traffic Police Officers

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ABSTRACT

Enforcing traffic regulations constitutes a profession fraught with preeminent risks, complemented by many stress-inducing factors. There have been some studies that explored the occupational stressors of professionals in this field, a notable gap in research exists, particularly concerning traffic police officers' experiences with traumatic accidents and the consequent repercussions. Further, it also aimed to see how they cope with cumulative trauma. The study qualitatively aimed to explore the lived experiences of cumulative trauma through exposure to traumatic accidents in traffic police officers of Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews were used as a tool for gathering data. Interviews of seven traffic police officers were analyzed by using reflexive thematic analysis. The four main themes it captured included i) perceived less straining law enforcement, ii) impact of traumatic accidents, iii) training deficiencies leading to trauma, and iv) coping mechanisms towards cumulative trauma. Findings indicate that exposure to traumatic accidents causes innumerable physical, mental, and financial trials to traffic police officers, coupled with excessive diurnal occupational challenges, a lack of training, and coping mechanisms available professionally to deal with the trauma aftermath. The accumulation of trauma ultimately leads to compromised professional law enforcement abilities which calls for trauma-targeted interventions to mitigate the adverse effects of traumatic experience.

Keywords: Traffic Police, Traumatic Accident, Cumulative Trauma

INTRODUCTION

Trauma refers to an individual's emotional and psychological response to an event or experience that is perceived as being physically or emotionally harmful or threatening. When numerous traumas accumulate, they build up the cumulative trauma that the sufferers experience (APA, 2021). On the road, traffic police officers come across many traumatic situations, which makes it a very challenging and demanding job for them (Hammad et al., 2012).

Maintaining the city's peace comes at a huge cost for traffic police officers who are meant to keep roads running no matter what chaos hits the roads (Hussain et al., 2022). Smooth running significantly impacts several daily life aspects, including public safety, transportation efficiency, and the environment. Effective traffic management can help reduce traffic congestion, minimize accidents, and improve the overall flow of traffic, leading to lower fuel consumption and a

healthier environment (Besagas & Branzuela, 2023). Additionally, well-organized traffic can facilitate the smooth transportation of goods and services, thus positively impacting the economy (Fanai et al., 2021).

In metropolitan areas with increasing population and vehicles on the road, there remains a challenge of commute and safety. Traffic congestion makes overall quality of life suffer with delays in reaching the destination, road accidents, and collective burden on finances and overall environment (Ali et al., 2015; Younas et al., 2015). Rawalpindi, being a pivotal city in the Punjab province of Pakistan, faces numerous challenges in terms of traffic management. The city's rapid urbanization, population growth, and the successive flood in vehicular density have placed immense pressure on the traffic management system (Younas et al., 2015). This traffic congestion is well-documented and a critical issue in Pakistan's urban areas, including Rawalpindi. Several studies and reports have highlighted the challenges posed by urbanization, traffic congestion, and their effects on cities (Ali et al., 2015).

As a result, traffic police officers are confronted with an array of stressors, including heavy traffic, erratic driving behavior, exposure to hazardous environments, and the responsibility for enforcing traffic laws while dealing with irate commuters affecting their overall health (Arshad et al., 2024). These factors contribute to what is termed "cumulative trauma," an intricate blend of psychological and physiological distress resulting from continuous exposure to traumatic events and occupation-based stressors over time (APA, 2018).

The cognitive theory by Beck (1976) suggests that the way people think about and interpret events can contribute to the development of trauma. In particular, people who experience trauma may develop negative or distorted beliefs about themselves, others, and the world, which can lead to ongoing emotional, behavioural, and psychological difficulties (Wakabayashi et al., 2006). Groome (1999) found that the brain uses past experiences and knowledge stored in memory to process information, which supports Beck's (1976) idea that recalling traumatic memories often affects how people feel and act in situations.

Police officers often ignore or downplay the emotional effects of traumatic events, which can result in suppressed anger or aggressive behaviors (Murphy et al., 2007). Moreover, police officers who are exposed to violence and trauma frequently are at a higher risk of developing psychological illnesses, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, suicide, high blood pressure, and other medical conditions (Chopko, 2010). As a consequence, police officers may act out their emotions in harmful ways in their professional life, such as physical violence, substance abuse, and suicide (Velden, et al., 2010). The negative psychological effects last long after the initial traumatic event. When exposed to trauma, previous mental schemas are disturbed as they try to make sense of the current distressing event, as Straker et al., (2002) pointed out. The repeated and uncertain nature of the traumas that police officers face prevents them from integrating these events into new mental schemas. There, police officers subconsciously struggle with processing cumulative trauma, making it hard for any new traumatic or violent event to fit into a new schema.

The complexity of the traumatic event adds to the distressing environment for the officers they are coming across. The fewer convulsions of the matter on the road, the less strain it can bring on their mental health, hence more efficient performance in the work field. It redirects to the basic demands of effective coping with high emotional, mental, and physical strength-building training that is required to deal with such situations (Marois et al., 2019).

According to the Frequent Exposure to Trauma and Violence (FETVI) model, encounters with pro-withdrawal responses to the unpleasant events can limit officers' ability to cope effectively with situations that involve violence, danger, tragedy, and unpredictability (Colwell et al., 2011). Long duty pressures during the COVID-19 on roads made traffic police experience high levels of stress due to various factors including fear of infection, concerns about their families (Anjum & Kumari, 2022).

The police often face unpredictable situations as they deal with rising crime at the street level, which is not uncommon (Marchand et al., 2015). However, they may be reluctant to share their mental health challenges for fear of being stigmatized or judged by their colleagues (Bullock & Garland, 2018).

Personality traits can make work pressure more or less stressful for different people. Literature revealed that openness, low neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness are important for good job performance in the police department (Masood et al., 2017). Likewise, Fatima et al. (2022) reported that traffic police personnel in Pakistan scored high on neuroticism and poorly on all four personality categories.

According to Samreen (2013), Pakistan has experienced a rise in violent crime. Police officers were threatened by the deaths. High levels of stress were produced as a result of recurrent exposure to hazardous and threatening situations. Moreover, rigid organizational structures, shift work, excessive overtime, and pressure to provide solutions, police officers displayed extreme despair, anxiety, and stress towards their occupation (Husain & Rehman, 2014). Yet there is a lack of ample research on the exposure and accumulation of trauma and its impact on professional efficacy and mental health qualitatively. Literature on the psychological and physiological effects of job on traffic police posed broader challenges of management and continuous exposure to distressing experiences (Ahmed, 2021).

It is required to understand the phenomenon of cumulative trauma from the perspective of those who have experienced trauma in their work environment on circadian and intermittent basis, and to capture the complexity and richness of their lived experiences it is suitable for this study to focus on the people who have directly faced the phenomenon of experiencing trauma differently in subjective terms (Bevan, 2014).

So, the purpose of the study was to investigate the experiences of traffic police officers who are exposed to traumatic events while performing their duties. The occurrence of traumatic incidents among traffic police officers not only poses a risk to their own physical and mental well-being but also has potential repercussions for the general public. Such events have been shown to lead to adverse mental health outcomes and impair the executive functioning and decision-making abilities of traffic wardens, which could increase the likelihood of accidents, injuries, and confrontations with members of the public. Therefore, it is imperative to address the mental and professional safety needs of traffic police officers and develop interventions to minimize the negative impact of these incidents on both the officers and the public.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Permission of the Chief Traffic Officer of Rawalpindi was taken to access the participants' information from the psychological testing register, which was conducted by the Headquarters in August 2023. Volunteering participants were approached through email and phone numbers to schedule semi-structured interviews, who agreed to participate in the research. Seven traffic police officers, having the rank of sub-inspector, were taken. The sample size was determined by data saturation, which is the point at which no new information is emerging from the data.

Inclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria of participants were

1. Traffic police officers who have a minimum of three years of practical experience in regulating and managing traffic on the roads.
2. Traffic police officers who have experienced at least one traumatic event while on duty.
3. Officers who have shown a history of collapse due to trauma.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Traffic law enforcement officers who possess less than three years of practical experience in regulating and managing traffic on the roads.
2. Officers who have not experienced a traumatic event while on duty.

Relevant demographics and identifiers are as follows because trauma is cumulative, and for the understanding of phenomena in a broader sense, it was required to understand the whole representation.

Table 1
Demographic Details of Participants

No.	Age	Joining	Experience	Designation	Accident
1	40	2007	17 Years	Sub-Inspector	2017
2	39	2006	18 Years	Sub-Inspector	2017
3	40	2006	18 Years	Sub-Inspector	2021
4	40	2006	18 Years	Sub-Inspector	2022

5	39	2007	17 Years	Sub-Inspector	2008
6	39	2006	18 Years	Sub-Inspector	2022
7	40	2007	17 Years	Sub-Inspector	2019

Instrument

A semi-structured interview guide was developed and followed for conducting interviews. It included open-ended questions, allowing participants to share their own experiences (Yin, 2014) and knowledge about trauma experienced. It assists in discovering new insights that might not have been previously known in the Rawalpindi police context.

Research Design

The phenomenological research design was used to approach the detailed analysis of the lived experiences of trauma in traffic police officers. It allowed for an in-depth exploration of their experience and the impact of trauma on their psychological and professional well-being.

Data Collection

The sample of the study consisted of 7 traffic police officers of sub-inspector rank belonging to Rawalpindi. These participants were selected through a purposeful sampling technique. The interviews were conducted on site. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. The observations were conducted in the work environment of the officers, and the focus was on the behaviors, interactions, and work practices.

Data Analysis

After data were collected through interviews, it was manually transcribed and analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis by Braun et al. (2022). It is a six-phase process that includes familiarizing oneself with the datasets, generating initial codes, making categories, searching and reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report theoretically (Braun et al., 2022). In the analysis, patterns and themes were identified. The data was analyzed inductively, starting with an open coding process to identify initial codes and categories. These codes and categories were then refined and grouped into theoretical themes. The themes were used to develop an understanding of the current physical and professional efficacy in contact with traumatic experiences on the road.

Codes and Themes

After gathering the information through semi-structured interviews the process of data interpretation took place through reflexive thematic analysis by selecting the subtext and making the thematic open codes. These were then categorized into sub themes by sorting the similarities in the content finally the sub-theme categories were translated into themes for drawing conclusions for the results. Later the theoretical themes were generated in relevance to research question.

It was 231 open codes in total and as the research analysis progressed and finally it broke down into thematic areas of

- Perceived Less Straining Law Enforcement
- Impact of Traumatic Accident
- Training Deficiencies Leading to Cumulative Trauma
- Coping Mechanisms Towards Cumulative Trauma

Table 3

Open Codes Comprising Individual Themes of Participants

Participants	Perceived Less Straining Law Enforcement	Impact of Traumatic Accident	Training Deficiencies	Coping Mechanisms	Total
1	4	12	4	5	25
2	3	16	3	7	29
3	2	15	4	4	25
4	4	16	7	4	31
5	3	24	9	7	43
6	2	22	9	5	38
7	2	27	5	6	31
total	20	132	41	38	231

Procedure

Interview were conducted after getting informed consent from the traffic police officers if they agreed to participate, every participating officer was guided about the confidentiality of the given information and the research aim and purpose was explained. Prior to the interview it was informed that interview will require 45 to 60 min of the participant and it will be recorded. The researcher used the semi-structured interview with open-ended questions that were transcribed. The researcher expressed gratitude to the participants after each interview completion.

Ethical Considerations

This study followed ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from the participants and ensuring that confidentiality was maintained. The participant was informed of the purpose and nature of the study and was given the opportunity to ask questions and withdraw their participation at any time. The data collected was stored securely and confidentially and was used only for the purposes of this study.

Participants were given the full access to not to answer any question they dint wanted to respond or share detail. Moreover, participants could leave the interview at any time they feel to

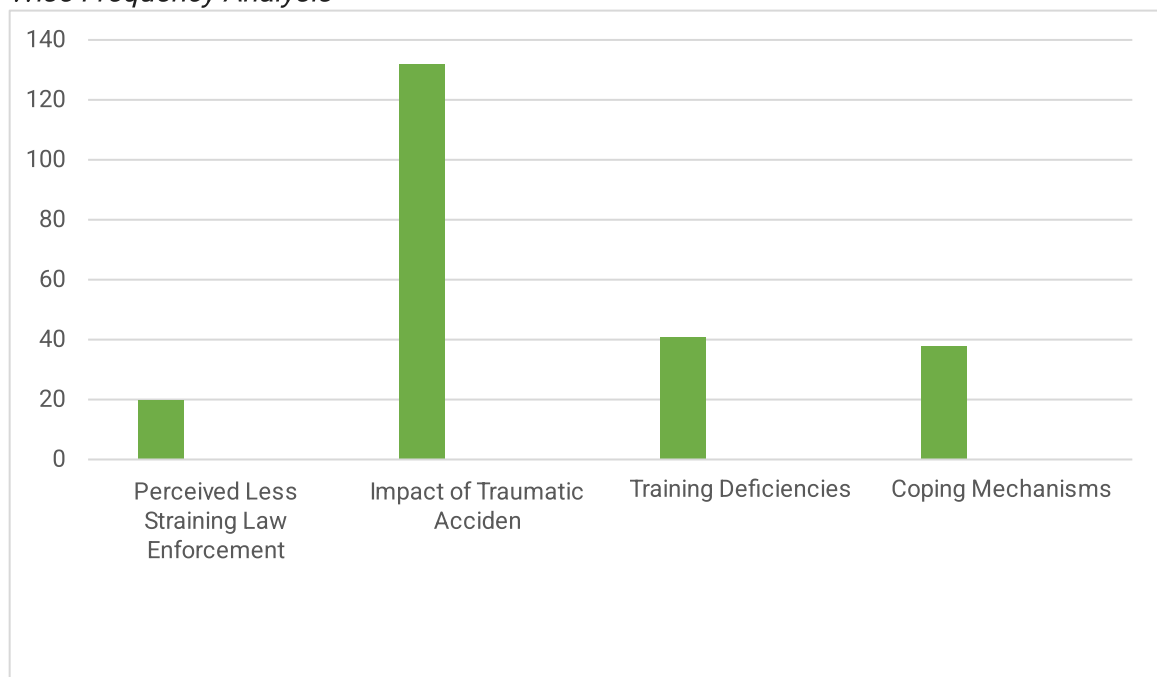
do so.

RESULTS

All the participants, who participated in the study belonged to age range 39 to 40 and had been serving the traffic police department of Rawalpindi for past 17 years within same rank i.e. sub inspector that they were recruited for. All of them suffered from traumatic injury while performing their road duties as traffic warden. Except 1 accident, all of the reported accidents were stated between 2017 to 2023 with variable recovery period i.e. ranging from 2 months to 4 years depending upon the complexity of injury occurred to them.

Figure 2

Theme Wise Frequency Analysis



The figure shows the prevalence of open codes in each theme and how much they are contributing to trauma in each participant. Statistically most trauma is related to theme 2 impact of traumatic accident leading to cumulative trauma

Theme 1: Perceived Less Straining Law Enforcement

The first emergent theme through semi-structured interviews analysis appeared to be career aspirations in the law enforcement professionals. Despite of the fact that traffic policing is high risk job and entangles a lot of occupational hazards still the professionals were continuing it for almost two decades. It generated two sub-themes including **perceived secure job** and **scale enhancement aspiration**.

In **perceived secure job** major intention of joining and continuing high risk job from analysis appeared to be permanent and secure government occupation. Moreover, participants

shared despite of numerous structural occupational deficiencies, secure job for life was one of the biggest reason for pursuing this career as private sector in Pakistan is insecure and unpredictable in terms of financial stability. One of the participants shared

"If we ask the truth, the reason was that government jobs are hard to come by, so it was relatively easy to obtain this one. Therefore, obtaining it was deemed necessary, and while the job is challenging, it is secure." (Participant 4)

3 of the participants (participant 2,3,7) were in other government jobs and shifted to this job for the **job scale advancement** pursuit. Besides, regular advancements have been pledged as the department of traffic police took initiated in 2006 which fascinated most of the professionals.

Theme 2: Impact of Traumatic Accident

The second emergent theme of the study was impact of the traumatic accident. Since the study included all the participants who faced some traumatic accident, the cumulative trauma was reflected in their all aspects of well-being.

Table 4

Nature and Type of Traumatic Accident of Participants

Participants	Traumatic Accident Type			Type of Injury	Recovery Period
1	Physical	Assault	By	Head and Arm	2 months
2	Gunshot By snatchers			Leg, Arm, liver	1.5 years
3	Vehicle (Bike) Collision			Knee	1 year
4	Car Accident	by Drunk Driver		Leg	6 months
5	Vehicle Defect (Chingchi)			Knee and Leg	4 years
6	Erratic Rider biking			Leg	6 months
7	Cat eyes slip			Leg	4 months

Given above is the list of traumatic accident, injury it caused and recovery time it took the participants to perform the duty in optimal ways. The theme was broken down into four sub themes of mental strain, fiscal challenges of traumatic accident, physical damages, ineffective treatment challenges.

Mental strain

Analysis revealed a profound emotional toll on participants. These law enforcement officers were young and fully functional when they met the accidents and suffered from the recovery period ranging from 2 months to 4 years depending on the complexity of the injury they suffered. One of the participants shared

"I was 25 years old and I was not completely operational for 4 years. It was very long duration treatment, I was tired and it took emotional, physical and financial toll on me." (Participant 5)

Therefore, becoming totally dependent and bed ridden for months unpredictably made them suffer psychologically and emotionally. Anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, guilt, resentment, anger was the commonly reported mentally straining themes by participants. Another participant also shared:

"Emotionally, I felt a lot of pain—restlessness, pressure, anger, and sorrow, all were experienced. I became very disheartened. In reality, no one truly understood the nature of my distress, and at one point I was just thinking to commit suicide to get out of this distress." (Participant 3)

Physical Damages of Injury

Participants highlighted various physical injuries resulting from accidents. Common physical damages included fractures, bruises, and chronic pain. It's because of the accidents resulted in operations, surgeries with plates, rods in legs, arm or permanent knee injury. They reported difficulty in consistent standing, running, sitting and chasing. Physio-therapy and regular medical keep up was reported by all the participants. One of the participant shared:

"Since my accident, I have had to take constant precautions. The biggest issue is that I have a knee joint problem that cannot be healed with surgery, so I haven't undergone any. The rest of my health suffers, and my muscles have become weak like threads, with pain persisting in the muscles". (Participant 3)

Fiscal Challenges of Recovery Period

Financial struggles during the recovery period were a significant theme. Participants discussed medical bills, loss of income, and challenges accessing necessary resources. Lack of government financial compensation for accident sufferers made the fiscal challenges heightened for all professionals. Lack of job income and increased medical financial burden made the recovery period challenging and straining for the police officers. A participant shared:

"It was financially difficult during this time, and I couldn't come on duty for six months. The cost of my treatment was around 6 to 7 lacs, and my salary was also cut." (Participant 4)

In effective/ Long-Term Treatment

Since there was lack of structural occupational policy for trauma sufferers' participants

discussed the extended duration of their treatment, emphasizing the importance of ongoing support for extended recovery periods. Further a participant shared

"I was 25 years old and I was not completely operational for 4 years. It was very long duration treatment, I was tired and it took emotional, physical and financial toll on me."

(Participant 5)

Theme 3: Training Deficiencies Leading to Cumulative Trauma

Third emergent theme of all the semi-structured interviews reflected inadequate professional training regarding exposure and handling of the traumatic event on duty by the governing bodies which ultimately led the participants suffer at their professional motivation and efficacy.

6 months professional training was provided to the traffic police officers before coming on to the duty. The training usually constituted of the physical training and learning of the laws relevant to it. Further participants added that no traumatic event training and psychological training was provided.

Participants mentioned that not having training since 17 years of employment after the initial training before joining the force and the inadequate training caused less efficient police duties. Another participant shared

"The training is all physical and no emotional, psychological training/counseling is done in the 17 years. Inaugural psychological testing has occurred in 2023 which shed light on how much traffic police department is neglected in this regard"

(Participant 1)

Theme 4: Coping Mechanisms towards Cumulative Trauma

The forth prevalent and emergent theme of all the interviews conducted reflected that all the participants coped the trauma in their own ways. There was no structural body available to help the trauma sufferers to better cope with the situation and its aftermath. It brought the two subthemes of **self-resolution coping** and **social support coping**.

Majority of the participants used the self-resolution coping where there was unavailability of the mental well-being and coping aid professionally. 4 participants reciprocated that they tried to self-resolve the trauma with the available surrounding them including turning to faith, socializing with family. One of the participants shared:

"What you feel is that within, you have to work hard yourself, make an effort, and see how you can handle this situation. It requires effort to bring about a positive change. You can spend time with friends or reach out to your department. Besides that, what else can you do?" (Participant 2)

3 of the participants shared that they used the adaptive trauma coping approach wherein they adapted to the available given possibilities and managed their shortcoming accordingly. They adapted the duty shifts according to the intensity of the injury and used the recovery period in other productive activities.

Other than self-resolution, most of the trauma suffering participants reported to seek help from their social surrounding that included their family members, friends and colleagues.

DISCUSSION

The study was conducted with Punjab city traffic wardens of Rawalpindi district. The statistical reflection of traffic force shows the insufficient professionals at road that perform varied functions at the road and offices. They are meant to safeguard citizens' lives and assets by upholding law and maintaining order. In the crowded city of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, where traffic congestion and vehicular chaos are an everyday reality, the role of traffic police officers is both essential and demanding (Ahmed, 2021). Nine hundred and seventy total traffic wardens were appointed for road duties in 2006-2007 along with three hundred and fifty traffic assistants (appointed 2020) that are given duty of around 2.4 million people of the city (TPP, 2023). According to the participants it creates work load on workforce to deal such large number of citizens on individual basis with ambiguity of various roles in the department and road. Consequently, it serves as one of the mentally straining and exhausting factor for professionals.

Analysis reflected that respondents were unaware of the complexity of the job and occupational challenges and perceived it less straining and ethical law enforcement which was contrary to reality. Further they added that this perception among themselves, citizen and government is one of the major causes of cumulative trauma in participants. These findings are congruent with the previous researches that reflect that most police personal joined the force accompanying the thought that this is secure and omnipotent law enforcement (Johnson, 2012). Moreover, work done by Schlosser et al. (2010) on the career choices among law enforcement professionals suggested that financial constraints and high unemployment rates were found to be the major contributing factors for the selection of the police job along with perception of power in this profession. Despite the unlimited challenges and deficiencies participants have been continuing their job for last seventeen years for the concern of being perceived secure job and due to the unemployment in Pakistan. Most of the law enforcement personnel were uninterested in the job but being in a government secure job was a reason making them continue it for around two decades. Jiskani, (2011) findings are supporting the government job opportunity in Pakistan is one of the confirming factor that makes employees remain in job despite of job dissatisfaction which ultimately adds to the trauma accumulation in the professional.

Traumatic Accident Impact: Participants were traumatic accident survivors and the accident impacted their holistic well-being in very stressful manner. The most prevalent impact was the physical damages of the injury. The physical damages included their bruises, fractures muscle and skeletal problems, stomach functioning disturbances. Eighty percent of the injuries that a participants suffered was the leg or knee injury wherein they suffered extreme disparities with reference to their occupational needs. Their basic professional ability declined excessively for the continuous standing duty for at least eight hours caused the loop whole for emotional and mental strains as well. In reference to physical damages literature supports the fact that traffic police officers go through numerous physical damages in their regular routine without any traumatic event. Therefore, there is a requirement for ongoing attention to officers' health, especially in terms of physical well-being. Additionally, there arises a question about the feasibility of continuing with one's professional endeavors after continual exposure to physical trauma. (Edwards & Kotera, 2020).

All of the participants reported to suffer from psychological strain after meeting accident. Mental stress majorly came from the long treatment journey coupled with structural disparities and reinforced with humiliation of perceived complete recovered normal ability of professional.

Recent surge shows that police officers go through internalized trauma distress as a result of frequent exposure to traumatic violent events and it then got translated in on the form of behavioral issues or disorders that include post-traumatic stress disorder, aggression, depression, insomnia health issues and even suicide thoughts (Bond et al., 2013). Participants added that mental strains also added to their personal and family problems, their quality of life, work life balance as well as the enjoying the recreational activities outside professional stream, which is aligned with the previous findings on law enforcement official coming across trauma with compromised work life balance and recreational time outs (Blue Help, 2019)

As reported by the participants the emotional and psychological strain came from the shame or humiliation that colleagues or department staff show towards their injury that translated into irritation aggression and resentment this is aligned with Bond et al., (2013) work. Complete dependence on the care givers created emotional strain among participants as for months they were not being able to delve into the normal routine. Out of seven participants five suffered from more than six months of treatment and one participant was not completely functional till four years of recovery period. Therefore, physical emotional and financial strain added to the depression, anxiety, hopelessness, irritability, resentment, suicidal ideation. One of the most depleted impact of traumatic accident was the financial challenges and damages that it brought to the officers which added to their cumulative trauma. As discussed earlier that there exist no government policies to compensate the accident finances or pay off the damages that has occur to the officer suffering from it. Else the deduction of the regular job salary also added to the financial and psychological strain at large. Literature supports the fact that financial instability in the recovery period brings innumerable issues and declines to the speed of recovery and to the contrast having facilitated recovery brings in better prognosis among the sufferers (Blue Help, 2019).

Training Deficiencies: Traffic police professionals go through many other challenges like in education training and counseling in regard to the accident or trauma exposure of any sort. Here in the reports (TPP, 2023) and the interviews given reflect, there is total six months of training given to the officers to manage the road and for seventeen years they are not given any sort of training again moreover in the initial six months training period there was no training given about the traumatic event exposure and it's coping and handling. Moreover, in 2023 inaugural psychological testing has been started by IG Punjab which is the reflection of neglected psychological health of traffic police officers (PP, 2023). Work done by Mumanthi, (2014). ensures the fact that lack of training and proper guidance can lead to exceedance stress and anxiety in professionals and regular counselling and professional training helps the law enforcement officers to deal with trauma in better way. Moreover, the lack in professional training adds to the experience of traumatic event where in the professional does not know how to defend a product himself (Garner, 2008).

Cumulative Trauma Coping: In reaction to trauma accumulation, the participants were using methods of emotional suppression referring it to solo or self-resolution coping where in no psychological counseling was available to help the professional. Moreover, the stigma of suffering from psychological issues or disorder also aided to acknowledge the trauma that traffic police faces. No one of the professionals sought the professional help and have had the symptoms of depression anxiety and resentment. The literature says that men in general seek mental health services less than women and this is due to gender roles or masculine ideologies which later translated into their physiological problems and quality of life as well (Straker, et al., 2002)

Social coping has played a huge role in all professionals' psychological health wherein they sought help from their social circle including friends, family as well colleagues. Recent surge also aids that optimism, social support, and coping strategies contribute to post traumatic growth (Arshad et al., 2011). Regardless of adversity sufferer can experience personal development and positive changes in their lives (Calhoun et al., 2022).

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to conduct exploration of the perceptions and experiences of traffic police officers exposed to traumatic events at road. The study was conducted in the limited time frame of 4 months and due to the time-intensive nature of interview the data collection and analysis processes it could include only 7 participants from the traffic police force.

- Another limitation is it included only sub-inspector rank traffic police officers. Variations of other traffic police department rank could have better representation of whole traffic force.
- I used the purpose a sampling which called for the inherent exclusiveness in participant's selection and makes the research findings limited for the generalization.
- These findings are reflection of the officers who have been through traumatic road accidents or event and for the general traffic police it has limited application scope.
- Moreover, another limitation of the study is that we included traffic wardens from only the city of Rawalpindi but to enhance the generalizability of the results, additional participants from other cities could be required to obtain a comprehensive understanding of their experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study finding opens the areas for further research in traffic police mental health. There are different recommendations that this study proposes. Firstly, the occupational challenges are needed to be addressed more with reference to the structural governmental policies that are essential to make for better functioning traffic force with minimized cumulative trauma.

Second recommendation is the psychological assistance program for traffic police officers particularly for their diminution of psychological and emotional cumulative trauma. Regular assessments, diagnosis and relevant assistance in this regard must be accessible for every warden.

Another important recommendation is officers should receive adequate training for preparedness for unforeseen traumatic circumstances at road. Such trial should be performed on a regular basis during the course of employment to deal with the trauma accumulation.

IMPLICATIONS

The foremost implication that is needed in the Pakistani culture is the social behavioral change toward cumulative trauma in traffic police officers. These frontliners are there on the road to keep the safety and peace of the city maintained, no matter how much chaos is out there. But study findings reflect that commuters' attitudes are very much disrespecting and non-complaint which ask for immediate change for better functioning society altogether. According to JDR model its essential to improve the resources and basic needs to deal with the cumulative trauma suffering in law enforcement professionals. In case there exists innumerable structural deficiencies in Punjab police traffic policies, the higher risk job demands and professional efficacy will remain compromised and will even build the higher problems for department as

well as for the society in the general as well.

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