

***Police Stress in Hong Kong:
Officers of the Emergency Unit, Gender Analysis and the Needs
for the Development of Stress Management***

By

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A Thesis submitted to University of Technology, Sydney
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

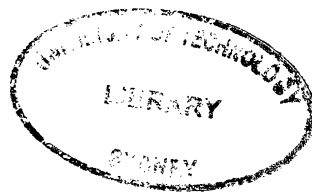
2010

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Certificate of Authorship and Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.



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Acknowledgements

I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to those who provided their assistance and support in leading to the completion of this study, in particular:

- My principal supervisor, Professor Alison Lee, for her motivational support, and professional guidance in seeing me through from research proposal to final submission, and enhancing my research competency and academic writing.
- My co-supervisor, Associate Professor Bob Pithers, for his consistent support, and professional advice on aspects of the survey design and statistical analysis.
- My learned colleague, Mr. Eddie Li, Senior Police Clinical Psychologist, for his professional comments to the research proposal, and most valuable experience sharing on the development of stress management in Hong Kong policing.
- My learned colleague, Mr. K.H. Tang, Superintendent of Police, for his support in facilitating his officers in the Emergency Unit of the Hong Kong Island Region in participating in this study.
- The voluntary participants in this study for their ongoing interest, time and effort in sharing their experiences in the interview study.
- My supporting friends, Sadie Chen and Alex Fung, for their prompt service and statistical assistance in the survey study; and three remarkable editors from the EditAvenue.com for their editorial assistance.
- My dearest wife, Amy and children Vera and Kevin, for their love and support throughout this entire project. Above all, I owe my deepest gratitude to my wife, Amy, who with the love and wisdom from our Lord has been patient and encouraging as my listener and adviser in this pilgrim of life.

May God Almighty bless all the persons above with His love, joy and peace, and keep them as His blessing instruments to the people they encounter.

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Abstract

Stress in policing affects not only serving officers, but also the community they serve. In particular, officers in the Emergency Units may be expected to experience high levels of stress. While there has been a growing body of research on stress and policing among developed countries, there is a lack of comparable research in the Hong Kong context. In response to environmental changes, female officers were admitted to the Emergency Unit since 1997, and now they perform the same duties as their male counterparts. What are the causes and levels of stress of such officers in EU? What are their ways of coping with stress and are such ways effective? Are there any gender differences in police stress?

This study investigates these pressing questions with a view to developing understandings and strategies to improve the situation for serving officers and for the Hong Kong Force. The research design consists of an historical overview of stress in Hong Kong policing, together with a combination of quantitative and qualitative investigative approaches, replicating a validated international study by McCreary & Thompson (2006) in order to generate comparable results with other countries. Interviews and focus group discussion provided a more fine-grained analysis of sources of stress and strategies for managing stress, and identified strategies for stress management. Results of the study identify, in general, that organizational stressors are significantly greater than operational stressors. Further, significant differences were found between male and female officers in relation to sources and levels of stress.

Implications of these results include an argument for more organizational efforts to address related issues, and further comparative research in other police units. In particular, the thesis argues the need for continuous development of stress management within the Hong Kong situation, and contributes an international comparative reference.