

***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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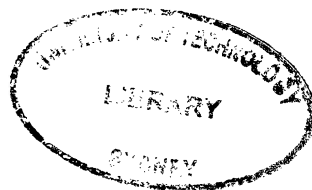
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Certificate of Authorship and Originality

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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Table of Contents

Certificate of Authorship and Originality	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Figures and Tables	vi
Abstract	vii
1 Research Introduction	1
Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research Background.....	1
1.2 Scope and Focus.....	4
1.3 Research Objectives.....	7
1.4 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.5 Overview of Thesis Structure.....	10
2 Historical Development of Stress Management in the Hong Kong Police Force (HKPF)	12
Introduction.....	12
2.1 Social Status of Hong Kong Police and Related Stress between 1950s and 1970s.....	13
2.2 Recognition of Police Stress and Welfare Issues in the 1980s.....	22
2.3 Stress Management in the 1990s.....	25
2.4 Increasing Stress and Recent Interventions in the New Millennium.....	30
2.5 Continuous Improvement in Stress Management.....	39
3 Literature Review	41
Approaching the Topic of Stress.....	41
3.1 Conceptualisations of stress.....	42
3.2 Police Stress.....	46
3.3 Gender Stress and Women Policing.....	51
3.4 Stress Management.....	61
3.5 The Link to Research of Police Stress in the Hong Kong Context.....	75

4	Research Design and Methodology	76
	Introduction.....	76
	4.1 The Reasons for a Multi-Method Approach.....	76
	4.2 Identifying an Appropriate Questionnaire.....	77
	4.3 Developing the Interviews.....	81
	4.4 Commentary on Methodology.....	85
	Summary of Methodology.....	90
5	Survey Results	92
	Introduction.....	92
	5.1 Demographic Information of the Sample in EU HKI.....	93
	5.2 Responses to Police Stress.....	96
	5.3 Responses between Male and Female Constables to Police Stress.....	100
	5.4 Ways of Coping with Stress.....	107
	Conclusion.....	109
6	Interview Results	110
	Introduction.....	110
	6.1 Summary of Main Response from Individual Interviews.....	111
	6.2 Summary of Main Responses from Focus Group Interview.....	136
	Next Chapter.....	139
7	Analysis and Discussion of Findings	140
	Introduction.....	140
	7.1 Responses to Operational Police Stress.....	141
	7.2 Responses to Organizational Police Stress.....	150
	7.3 Comparison between Operational & Organizational Police Stress.....	157
	7.4 Gender Differences in Police Stress.....	159
	7.5 Understanding about Stress Management.....	167
	Next Chapter.....	175
8	Conclusion: Implications for Development and Further Research	176
	Introduction.....	176
	8.1 Occupational Stress – an Individual and Organizational Issue.....	177
	8.2 Continuous Development of Stress Management and Related Training.....	182
	8.3 The Implications for Further Comparative Research.....	188

Appendices	191
Appendix A: Police Stress Questionnaires (PSQ)	191
Appendix A1: Operational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-Op)	191
Appendix A2: Organizational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-Org)	192
Appendix B: PSQ with adaptations for HK context.....	193
Appendix C: Follow up Questions for Individual Interviews.....	196
Appendix D: Consent Form for Individual Interviews.....	197
References	198

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Top 6 factors affecting Force morale in Staff Opinion Survey 2007.....	39
Figure 2: Culture-Work-Health Model.....	69
Figure 3: Good practice model in stress prevention (UK)	72
Figure 4: Comprehensive workplace healthy model (Canada)	74

List of Tables:

Table 1: Top 12 stressors identified during HKMC 2005.....	37
Table 2: Top 12 stressors categorized into four types.....	37
Table 3: Lessons learnt on psychological preparation for large-scale incidents.....	38
Table 4: Historical development of stress management in 4 stages	39
Table 5: Demographic Information of Sample by Platoon.....	93
Table 6: Demographic Information of Sample by Gender.....	94
Table 7: Demographic Information of Sample by Rank.....	94
Table 8: Demographic Information of Sample by Age Group.....	95
Table 9: Demographic Information of Sample by Years of Service.....	95
Table 10: Results of One-Sample Statistics and One-Sample Test for PSQ-Op.....	97
Table 11: Results of One-Sample Statistics and One-Sample Test for PSQ-Org.....	98
Table 12: T-test for Paired Samples: Operational and Organizational Police Stress.....	99
Table 13(a): Mean and Median of PSQ-Op Items by Gender.....	101
Table 13(b): NPar Tests, Mann-Whitney Test of PSQ-Op Items by Gender.....	102
Table 13(c): NPar Tests, Test Statistics of PSQ-Op Items by Gender.....	103
Table 14(a): Mean and Median of PSQ-Org Items by Gender.....	104
Table 14(b): NPar Tests, Mann-Whitney Test of PSQ-Org Items by Gender.....	105
Table 14(c): NPar Tests, Test Statistics of PSQ-Org Items by Gender.....	106
Table 15: Ways of Coping with Stress in Descending Order.....	107
Table 16: Duty Roster in the EUHKI.....	113

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.