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Mental Well-Being Influencing Daily Duty Performance among Police Personnel in Kottayam

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Abstract: This study examined police personnel's self-assessment of mental well-being, working conditions and duty performance in Kottayam, Kerala, and the kind of support they need. A cross-sectional online survey was conducted from 28 to 30 August 2026 with 61 police personnel (convenience sample). The questionnaire had 15 five-point Likert items and one open-ended question on the support needed. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Spearman's correlation, and the Mann–Whitney and Kruskal–Wallis tests. Well-being was moderate (M = 3.33, SD = 0.80; scale 1–5). Social resources were relatively strong: 67.2% felt supported by colleagues and superiors and 55.7% could maintain relationships with family and friends. The weakest areas were rest (19.7% agreed their workload allows adequate rest), departmental support for psychological well-being (23.0% agreed) and stress from administrative pressure and public scrutiny (76.7% agreed). Self-rated duty performance was fairly high (72.1% were satisfied with their performance), yet 58.3% said stress and fatigue had recently affected it. Duty performance was positively associated with well-being ($\rho = .34$, $p = .010$) and with working conditions ($\rho = .28$, $p = .032$). Of 53 substantive open-ended responses, the most common requests were fixed duty hours (37.7%), weekly rest and leave (35.8%), more personnel (28.3%) and emotional and moral support (24.5%). Interpreted through Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the gaps lie in basic needs (rest and security) rather than in social support.

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Roistering, staffing, supervisory support and mental health support are discussed. Findings are indicative given the small, non-random sample.

Keywords: *Police Personnel; Psychological Well-Being; Performance of Duties; Maslow's Theory of Needs; Kottayam, Kerala; Police Social Work*

1. Introduction

1.1. *Background of the study*

Policing is an extremely challenging profession. The police workforce is called upon to work in shifts, is faced with issues of criminal activity, accidents, disturbances, human misery, and has to answer to a rigid hierarchy as well as an observant public. Such factors can impact the psychological state of the personnel, their interaction with family members, and efficiency of performance of their duties. It is for this reason that the psychological state of police personnel is a question of occupational health, service effectiveness, and public safety.

The World Health Organization defines mental well-being as a state in which a person realizes his or her potential and skills, successfully copes with life's challenges, performs effectively and contributes to society (World Health Organization, 2004). This definition is used in the current research since it explicitly establishes the relationship between well-being and effective productivity. If a police officer is unable to cope with the challenges of work and to rest, he or she will be unable to perform effectively in terms of being vigilant, making correct decisions and accomplishing assigned tasks.

1.2. *Statement of the problem*

Research on stress among the police force in India has increased, but much of it has focused on the measurement of stress levels and its associated factors (Mini et al., 2025b; Vivek et al., 2019; Mini et al., 2025a; Linjiya and T.T., 2025; Furmeen and Reddy, 2019; Yadav et al., 2025; Singh et al., 2022). Very little is known regarding the way in which police personnel feel about their own psychological state in terms of performing their duties and what might assist them. In the case of Kerala, studies undertaken by researchers have focused primarily on the district of Thiruvananthapuram (Mini et al., 2025b; Vivek et al., 2019; Mini et al., 2025a). To the best of the researcher's knowledge, no such study has been undertaken for Kottayam district.

1.3. *Theoretical framework*

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is used as the basis for analysis (Maslow, 1943). Maslow suggested that the needs of humans can be categorized into levels – physiological needs (food, sleep), safety/security, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological needs

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should be satisfied first, and unfulfilled low-level needs may preclude any satisfaction at the higher levels of the hierarchy. When the theory is applied to the policing occupation, the physiological needs correlate with good rest and manageable shifts, safety needs imply a sense of protection while performing the duties and not being under too much stress, belonging implies support from fellow officers, superiors, and family members, esteem means being able to have a say and to be happy with one's performance, and self-actualization refers to utilizing one's capabilities in meaningful work. The definition of mental health by the World Health Organization (2004) is used as the definition of well-being.

1.4. *Review of literature*

In Kerala, studies have consistently indicated stress among police personnel. One study conducted on 253 police officers working in 14 randomly selected police stations of Thiruvananthapuram district indicated that 75.5% and 65.6% respectively had high operational stress and high organizational stress, and these were associated with physical inactivity, substance use such as alcohol or tobacco, and diabetes and hypertension. The researchers suggested stress management, mental health interventions and flextime (Mini et al., 2025b). In another study among 253 police officers in 14 police stations, operational and organisational stress were found to be associated with sleep apnoea, with 56.5% suffering from excessive daytime sleepiness (Mini et al., 2025a). Organisational and operational stress were prevalent among women police officers in Thiruvananthapuram city, where 80% of participants had moderate or high levels of organisational stress and 90% had moderate or high levels of operational stress, with staff shortage being the major organisational stress factor (74%) and having time to maintain fitness being the most common operational stress factor (76%) (Vivek et al., 2019). More recent research on women police officers in Kerala identified stress resulting from role conflict, inability to achieve work–life balance, exposure to trauma, and lack of institutional support (Linjiya and T.T., 2025).

Other studies from elsewhere in India corroborate this. In Chitradurga, Karnataka, 70.9% of 282 police personnel fell into the category of being stressed, where fatigue, overtime work, and lack of family/friend time were identified as the most stressful circumstances, while stress was significantly related to lack of personal time and family time (Furmeen and Reddy, 2019). In a study carried out in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on 2,144 police personnel, increased daily work hours and no monthly leave were significantly correlated with high levels of operational and organisational stress, and the authors suggested restricting unnecessary administrative jobs and night shifts (Yadav et al., 2025). In a study conducted in Uttar Pradesh on 300 male police personnel, social support, including belongingness and appraisal support,

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was one of the primary predictors of mental well-being, but this varied with rank (Singh et al., 2022).

Taken as a whole, these studies indicate that extended or uncertain duty times, inadequate time for sleep and family interaction, understaffing and lack of organisational support persist as causes of stress, while social support seems to shield against poor mental well-being. Their limitations include the fact that the Kerala studies are confined either to a single district (Thiruvananthapuram) or a specific subset, and that all these studies assess stress or its determinants rather than the association between well-being and duty performance.

1.5. *Rationale and research gap*

Three reasons explain why this research is necessary: (1) no research had been conducted in the Kottayam district; (2) as far as the researcher knows, there was almost no measurement of how duties were performed together with an assessment of well-being; and (3) in the state of Kerala, there was no information on what personnel need from their own perspective together with measures of their well-being and duties performed.

1.6. *Objectives*

- To describe the degree of psychological well-being exhibited by police officers in Kottayam.
- To describe their work environment, including breaks, safety, decision-making, and support by the department.
- To assess their own daily task performance.
- To investigate the link between well-being, work environment and duty fulfilment, and variations according to gender, age group, and length of service.
- To find out the assistance that will enhance the welfare and effectiveness of their duties.

1.7. *Research questions*

1. What is the self-rating of mental health and work environment among Kottayam police personnel?
2. How well do they perform on a daily basis?
3. Is there a relationship between well-being and job performance?
4. Do these figures differ by gender, age, or number of years served?
5. What kind of assistance do they think is most useful?

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2. Methodology

2.1. *Research design*

A cross-sectional, descriptive survey research design consisting of a quantitative section and a qualitative section (open-ended question) was employed.

2.2. *Setting and participants*

Participants were serving police personnel from Kottayam district of Kerala state. Data collection was done anonymously using an online questionnaire from 28 August 2026 to 30 August 2026. Sixty-one participants took part in the study, and all 61 questionnaires were analysed. Participants were accessed using a common link; hence the sampling procedure adopted was non-probability convenience sampling. Ranks and police station information were not taken.

2.3. *Research instrument*

The survey instrument had three components. The first component included age category (21–30, 31–40, 41–50, 51+ years), gender, and number of years served (less than 5, 5–10, 11–20, more than 20). Component B had 15 statements (Q4–Q18) scored on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Component C had one open-ended question (Q19): "What kind of assistance is needed to improve well-being and duties of police force?" The Likert scale items were classified under three scales:

- ***Psychological well-being (Q4–Q9, six items):*** ability to manage emotions, purposefulness, colleagues' and superiors' support, family and friend relations, effective stress management, and not being overwhelmed.
- ***Work environment and support (Q10–Q13 and Q18, five items):*** time for rest; safety and support during work; voice in decision-making; stress from administration and public scrutiny (reverse); support from the department for well-being.
- ***Duty performance (Q14–Q17, four items):*** efficient duty performance, alertness and decision-making abilities, effect of stress/fatigue on performance (reverse item), and self-satisfaction regarding performance.

Higher scores on each scale indicate more favourable well-being, working conditions or performance. Internal consistency (Cronbach's α) was .86 for well-being, .73 for working conditions and support, and .52 for duty performance. The low value for the performance scale means that its composite score should be read cautiously, and item-level results are therefore also reported. The instrument was not a standardised scale, and no formal validation was undertaken. For the discussion, items were also mapped to the levels of Maslow's hierarchy: physiological (Q10), safety and security (Q11 and reverse-scored Q13), love and belonging

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(Q6, Q7), esteem (Q12, Q17) and self-actualisation (Q5). This mapping is interpretive and rests on one or two items per level.

2.4. *Data cleaning*

Because the online form allowed more than one option to be ticked for some questions, a few respondents selected two answers where one was expected: one respondent ticked two age groups and one ticked both genders, and one respondent did the same on each of Q8, Q13 and Q16 and two respondents on Q14. These values were treated as missing for the affected item only, so the number of valid responses (n) is reported with each result. No respondent was removed.

2.5. *Data analysis*

Frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were calculated. In the item table, "disagree" combines strongly disagree and disagree, and "agree" combines agree and strongly agree. Associations between scale scores were tested with Spearman's rank correlation, and group differences with the Mann–Whitney U test (two groups) and the Kruskal–Wallis H test (more than two groups), because the data are ordinal and some groups are small. The level of significance was set at $p < .05$. These tests are exploratory, and no correction for multiple comparisons was applied. The open-ended responses were read repeatedly and coded into themes by the researcher; one response could carry more than one theme. One response in Malayalam was translated into English by the researcher.

2.6. *Ethical considerations*

Participation was voluntary, and no names or identifying details were collected. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study.

3. Results

3.1. *Profile of the respondents*

Of the 61 respondents, most were male (83.3% of 60 valid responses), and the largest age group was 31–40 years (43.3%). More than four in ten (42.6%) had served for over 20 years, and 37.7% had served 5–10 years (Table 1).

Table 1. *Socio-demographic profile of respondents.*

Characteristic	**n**	**%**
Gender (valid n = 60)		
Male	50	83.3
Female	10	16.7

Age group, years (valid n = 60)		
21–30	6	10.0
31–40	26	43.3
41–50	12	20.0
51 and above	16	26.7
Years of service (n = 61)		
Less than 5	5	8.2
5–10	23	37.7
11–20	7	11.5
Above 20	26	42.6

Note. One respondent ticked two age groups and one ticked both genders; these were treated as missing.

3.2. *Item-level responses*

Table 2 and Figure 1 show how respondents answered each statement. Social resources were the strongest area: two-thirds (67.2%) felt supported by colleagues and seniors (Q6) and over half (55.7%) could maintain healthy relationships with family and friends (Q7). About half (50.8%) felt that their job allowed them to use their abilities and gave a sense of purpose (Q5).

The weakest areas concerned rest, support and stress. Only 19.7% agreed that their workload and duty hours allow adequate rest and personal life (Q10), while 42.6% disagreed. Only 23.0% agreed that the department provides adequate support for mental well-being (Q18), and 41.0% were neutral. Three-quarters (76.7%) agreed that administrative demands and public scrutiny add significant stress (Q13). Emotional regulation, being overwhelmed and stress management were split, with the largest share neutral or evenly divided between agreement and disagreement (Q4, Q8, Q9).

Self-rated performance was comparatively high: 72.1% were satisfied with their own performance (Q17), 67.8% could complete assigned duties efficiently (Q14), and 67.2% remained alert and able to make sound decisions under pressure (Q15). At the same time, 58.3% agreed that their performance had been affected by stress or fatigue in recent months (Q16).

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Table 2. *Responses to the 15 questionnaire items (Likert scale 1–5).*

Item	n	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	M	SD
Q4. I generally feel calm and in control of my emotions during duty hours.	61	18.0	42.6	39.3	3.20	1.05
Q5. My job allows me to use my abilities effectively and gives me a sense of purpose.	61	14.8	34.4	50.8	3.39	0.84
Q6. I feel supported by colleagues and seniors when facing difficulties at work.	61	9.8	23.0	67.2	3.67	0.91
Q7. I can maintain healthy relationships with family and friends despite work demands.	61	24.6	19.7	55.7	3.36	1.24
Q8. I have healthy ways of managing work-related stress.	60	35.0	28.3	36.7	3.03	1.13
Q9. I rarely feel overwhelmed by the demands of my duty.	61	19.7	41.0	39.3	3.25	1.04
Q10. My workload and duty hours allow adequate time for rest and personal life.	61	42.6	37.7	19.7	2.64	1.14
Q11. I feel safe and adequately supported while performing operational duties.	61	26.2	41.0	32.8	3.00	1.10
Q12. I have a say in decisions that affect my day-to-day work.	61	16.4	37.7	45.9	3.31	0.94
Q13. Administrative demands and public scrutiny add significant stress to my job.	60	5.0	18.3	76.7	3.90	0.82
Q14. I am able to complete my assigned duties efficiently on most days.	59	1.7	30.5	67.8	3.75	0.71
Q15. I remain alert, focused and able to make sound decisions under pressure.	61	11.5	21.3	67.2	3.59	0.86
Q16. My overall performance has been affected by stress or fatigue in recent months.	60	11.7	30.0	58.3	3.57	0.83
Q17. I am satisfied with my own performance in my current role.	61	8.2	19.7	72.1	3.87	0.92

Q18. My department provides adequate support for maintaining mental well-being.	61	36.1	41.0	23.0	2.77	1.07

Note. Disagree = strongly disagree + disagree; Agree = agree + strongly agree. Q13 and Q16 are negatively worded (agreement indicates more stress or impact); their means are shown unreversed.

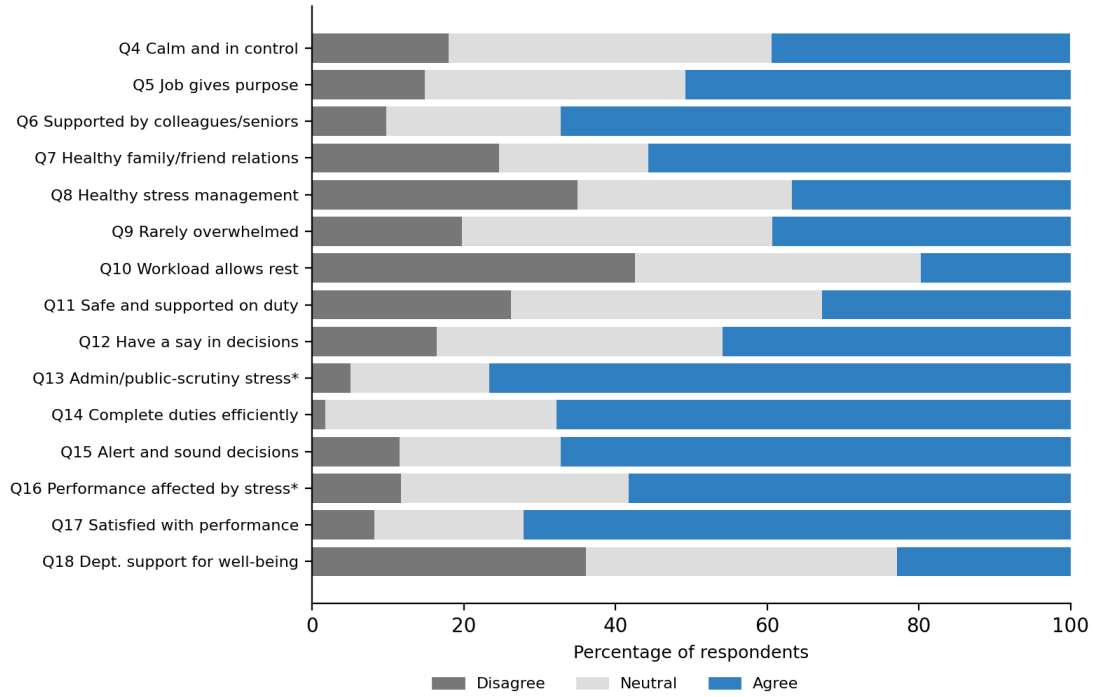

Figure 1. *Distribution of responses to Q4–Q18 (disagree, neutral, agree). *Items marked with an asterisk are negatively worded.*

3.3. *Scale scores*

The mean score for mental well-being was 3.33 (SD = 0.80, n = 60), for working conditions and support 2.77 (SD = 0.70, n = 60), and for duty performance 3.40 (SD = 0.53, n = 58). Working conditions and support was therefore the lowest-rated area, below the neutral midpoint of 3.

3.4. *Needs mapped to Maslow's hierarchy*

When items are grouped by level of need (Table 3), the lowest scores were for safety and security (M = 2.55) and for the physiological need for rest and manageable duty hours (M = 2.64). Belonging (M = 3.52) and esteem (M = 3.59) scored highest, with self-actualisation in between (M = 3.39).

Table 3. *Mean scores by level of Maslow's hierarchy.*

Level (items)	n	M	SD
Physiological: rest and duty hours (Q10)	61	2.64	1.14

Safety and security (Q11; Q13 reversed)	60	2.55	0.66
Love and belonging (Q6, Q7)	61	3.52	0.94
Esteem (Q12, Q17)	61	3.59	0.77
Self-actualisation: purpose and use of abilities (Q5)	61	3.39	0.84

Note. Scores are on a 1–5 scale; higher scores indicate needs that are better met. Where a level has two items, the score is their mean.

3.5. *Relationships between scales*

Well-being and working conditions were strongly and positively related ($\rho = .62$, $p < .001$, $n = 59$). Duty performance was positively but more weakly related to both well-being ($\rho = .34$, $p = .010$, $n = 57$) and working conditions ($\rho = .28$, $p = .032$, $n = 58$) (Table 4). Departmental support for mental well-being (Q18) was positively related to the well-being score ($\rho = .44$, $p < .001$, $n = 60$).

Table 4. *Spearman correlations between scale scores.*

Scale	1	2	3
1. Mental well-being	—	.62 ($p < .001$)	.34 ($p = .010$)
2. Working conditions and support		—	.28 ($p = .032$)
3. Duty performance			—

Note. Values are Spearman's ρ. n ranges from 57 to 59.

One item behaved differently from the rest. Agreeing that performance had been affected by stress or fatigue (Q16) was unrelated to the overall well-being score ($\rho = .00$, $p = .998$, $n = 59$), to rest (Q10, $\rho = .06$) or to departmental support (Q18, $\rho = .01$). It was, however, related to agreeing that administrative demands and public scrutiny add significant stress (Q13; $\rho = .31$, $p = .018$, $n = 59$). Among the 35 respondents who agreed that stress or fatigue had affected their performance, 24 (68.6%) also agreed that they were satisfied with their performance.

3.6. *Differences by gender, age and years of service*

No significant differences were found between men and women on any scale (Table 5). Well-being and working-conditions scores did not differ significantly by age group or years of service. Duty-performance scores differed by age group, $H(3) = 8.94$, $p = .030$, and by years of service, $H(3) = 13.28$, $p = .004$: personnel aged 21–30 had the lowest mean (2.90) and those aged 51 and above the highest (3.62), and personnel with less than 10 years of service had lower scores than those with 11–20 years or more than 20 years. The groups at the younger and

shorter-service end are small (6 and 5 respondents), so these differences should be treated as tentative.

Table 5. *Scale scores by gender, age group and years of service, M (SD).*

Group	n	Well-being	Working conditions	Duty performance
Gender				
Male	50	3.32 (0.86)	2.72 (0.76)	3.37 (0.57)
Female	10	3.48 (0.43)	2.98 (0.29)	3.55 (0.35)
Age group (years)				
21–30	6	3.83 (0.67)	3.10 (0.59)	2.90 (0.45)
31–40	26	3.25 (0.75)	2.85 (0.58)	3.36 (0.43)
41–50	12	3.44 (0.84)	2.67 (0.82)	3.40 (0.47)
51 and above	16	3.18 (0.90)	2.59 (0.84)	3.62 (0.66)
Years of service				
Less than 5	5	3.80 (0.79)	3.12 (0.50)	3.19 (0.47)
5–10	23	3.27 (0.74)	2.78 (0.73)	3.11 (0.48)
11–20	7	3.48 (0.85)	2.83 (0.84)	3.75 (0.48)
Above 20	26	3.26 (0.85)	2.68 (0.69)	3.58 (0.49)

Note. Gender (Mann–Whitney): well-being U = 263.5, p = .715; working conditions U = 287.5, p = .394; performance U = 279.5, p = .349. Age (Kruskal–Wallis, df = 3): well-being H = 2.71, p = .438; working conditions H = 2.09, p = .555; performance H = 8.94, p = .03. Service (Kruskal–Wallis, df = 3): well-being H = 1.18, p = .758; working conditions H = 1.81, p = .613; performance H = 13.28, p = .004. Group n is the number of respondents in the group; valid n per scale is slightly smaller.

3.7. *Support suggested by respondents (Q19)*

All 61 respondents answered Q19. Eight responses could not be coded for content (three “nil” or “nill”, one full stop, one “I am satisfied”, and three too brief to interpret, such as “Always my support required”), leaving 53 substantive responses. Six themes were identified, and percentages in Table 6 are of these 53 responses. Several responses named more than one need.

Table 6. Themes in respondents’ suggestions for support (n = 53).

Theme	n	%	Illustrative response
Fixed and predictable duty hours, shift systems	20	37.7	“8 hours duty”
Weekly off, leave and rest	19	35.8	“Rest at least once in a week”

More personnel / adequate strength	15	28.3	"Increase police strength"
Emotional and moral support, including from seniors and the department	13	24.5	"Mental support of superior officers"
Less pressure and more say in duty decisions	6	11.3	"Take the police personnel into confidence"
Equipment and technology	2	3.8	"Modern technological equipments"

Note. Themes are not mutually exclusive. Percentages are of the 53 substantive responses. One response about income ("Good income") is not counted in a separate theme.

The three most frequent themes are connected: respondents tied rest to staffing and to the unpredictability of duty hours. One respondent wrote that because there is not enough strength in police stations, personnel "have to do more duties," and that "police officers need enough rest to spend with their families." Another asked for fixed working hours and predictable weekly offs, and for relief from several simultaneous duties so as to focus on one primary task at a time. A smaller group asked for mental-health support, cooperation from co-staff and support from higher officers, and one for more support from government, the judiciary and the public. Two responses asked for less pressure from superiors and for personnel to be consulted on duties.

4. Discussion

4.1. *Interpretation of main findings*

Three results stand out. First, well-being among these personnel was moderate rather than poor, and was supported by strong social resources. Colleague and senior support (Q6) and family relationships (Q7) were the most favourable rated areas. This suggests that the informal support structure inside the force and at home is a real asset.

Second, the conditions of work were rated least favourably. Few respondents felt that their duty hours left room for rest, fewer than one in four felt that the department adequately supports their mental well-being, and three in four said administrative demands and public scrutiny add significant stress. The open responses point to the same cluster: fixed hours, weekly rest, and more personnel. In other words, respondents themselves located the problem in how duty is organised, and the remedies they named are largely organisational.

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Third, respondents rated their duty performance fairly highly, while most also said stress or fatigue had affected it. This is not necessarily a contradiction. The pattern is consistent with personnel continuing to meet the demands of duty at a personal cost, which may not show up as a fall in self-rated performance. This reading is only tentative, since performance was self-rated, and since the performance scale had low internal consistency.

4.2. *Well-being, working conditions and performance*

Both well-being and working-conditions scores were positively associated with performance scores, although the associations were modest ($\rho = .28$ to $.34$). Because the design is cross-sectional, the data show association only and cannot show that well-being causes better performance. The strong association between well-being and working conditions ($\rho = .62$) and between departmental support and well-being ($\rho = .44$) is in line with the view that how work is organised and supported goes together with how personnel feel.

The item on performance being affected by stress or fatigue (Q16) followed a different pattern. It was linked to administrative and public-scrutiny stress (Q13) but not to the general well-being score. A possible interpretation is that personnel connect the loss in performance mainly to organisational and external pressure rather than to their emotional state. This is a post hoc observation from a small sample and should be tested in future work.

4.3. *Theoretical implications: Maslow's hierarchy*

The mapping of items to Maslow's levels gives a pattern that matches the theory's logic. Needs at the base of the hierarchy, rest (physiological) and safety and security, had the lowest scores, while belonging and esteem were rated higher. If lower needs are not adequately met, interventions aimed at higher-level needs, such as workshops on stress management or motivation, are likely to have limited effect. The respondents' own requests were mostly for these basic conditions. The mapping used one or two items per level, so this should be seen as a framework for interpretation and not as a test of the theory.

4.4. *Comparison with existing literature*

The study did not use the Police Stress Questionnaire (McCreary and Thompson, 2006), so its results cannot be compared numerically with the stress prevalence reported in Thiruvananthapuram (Mini et al., 2025b; Vivek et al., 2019). The themes are nevertheless similar. Staff shortage was the most commonly reported organisational stressor among women police officers in Thiruvananthapuram (Vivek et al., 2019), and in the present study more personnel was among the three most frequent requests. The sleep and fatigue findings reported for Kerala police (Mini et al., 2025a) fit with the low ratings for rest. The concerns about work–

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life balance and institutional support described for women officers in Kerala (Linjiya and T.T., 2025) also appear here.

One finding differs from earlier work. A larger Thiruvananthapuram study found higher operational stress among older officers (Mini et al., 2025b), whereas in the present study older and longer-serving personnel gave higher, not lower, performance scores, and well-being did not differ by age or service. The measures differ, so the results are not directly comparable. A possible explanation is that more experienced personnel have more confidence in their own performance, or that those who remain in service are those who have adapted, but these explanations were not tested.

4.5. *Implications for practice and policy*

The results point to several priorities for the police department and for professionals who support personnel:

- **Duty rosters.** Fixed or predictable duty hours protected weekly rest and leave, and shift rotations that limit sleep disruption were the most frequent requests.
- **Staffing.** Adequate strength in police stations was repeatedly linked by respondents to the ability to rest and to the stress of carrying multiple duties.
- **Supervisory and departmental support.** Few respondents felt the department supports mental well-being, while support from colleagues and seniors was valued. Training supervisors to give emotional support, and routine, confidential access to counselling or peer support, build on a strength that already exists.
- **Participation and pressure.** A minority asked to be consulted on duties and for less pressure from superiors; involving personnel in duty planning addresses the esteem and participation dimension.
- **Police social work.** Social workers and counsellors can offer psychoeducation on stress, family-oriented support, and referral pathways, and can help departments review rosters and workloads from a well-being perspective. Such services need the structural changes above to be effective.

5. Limitation

The study has several limitations. The sample is small (61) and non-random, was reached through an online link, and is mostly male, so the findings cannot be generalised to all police personnel in Kottayam or Kerala. All data are self-reported and may be affected by social desirability, especially in a hierarchical organisation, although the survey was anonymous. The design is cross-sectional, so no causal conclusions can be drawn. The questionnaire was not a

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standardised instrument; the duty-performance scale had low internal consistency ($\alpha = .52$), and performance was self-rated and not measured against any objective indicator. The Maslow mapping rests on one or two items per level. Rank, police station and type of duty were not recorded, so these could not be examined. Group comparisons involve small cells and multiple tests without correction. Finally, because some multiple-answer responses were set to missing, a few items have slightly fewer than 61 valid responses.

6. Recommendations and Future Research Directions

- Repeat the study with a larger, stratified sample across police stations and ranks in Kottayam and other districts.
- Use validated measures of well-being (for example, WHO-5), burnout and police stress, with performance assessed by supervisors or records as well as self-report.
- Use longitudinal or intervention designs to test whether changes in duty rosters or staffing improve well-being and performance.
- Examine differences by rank, type of duty and gender with samples large enough to compare groups, and study women personnel separately.
- Combine surveys with interviews or focus groups so that personnel's own accounts can explain the patterns found here.

7. Conclusion

Police personnel in Kottayam who responded to this survey reported moderate well-being, strong support from colleagues, seniors and family, and generally favourable views of their own duty performance. They also reported little time for rest, limited departmental support for mental well-being, and heavy stress from administrative demands and public scrutiny, and most said that stress or fatigue had affected their performance. Well-being and working conditions were positively associated with duty performance. Read through Maslow's hierarchy, the main gaps lie in basic conditions: rest, safety and security. The personnel's own recommendations (fixed duty hours, weekly rest, more personnel and emotional support) are practical and point to organisational change as well as individual support. Because the sample is small, these findings should be read as indicative and should be tested in larger studies. By surveying police personnel in Kottayam, measuring duty performance alongside well-being, and recording personnel's own suggestions for support, the study addresses the gaps identified in the literature.

Declarations

Author contribution statement: Ammu Anna George and Neha Sunil: Conceived and designed the study; collected and analysed the data; wrote the paper.

Ethics approval and consent to participate: Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and no identifying details were collected. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study before taking part.

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