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Impact of Trauma and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on Journalists Performance

Abstract:

The present study dealt with a common and detrimental (PTSD) disorder. The aim of the study was to identify the influence of traumatic events experienced by journalists. Stress, anxiety and trauma are major psychological problems observed within people associated with different professions. This study specifically worked on journalists aiming to evaluate the impact of traumatic events on work performance, stress, anxiety and depression among them. The research was based on quantitative data in which 200 respondents were selected for survey data through questionnaire. The quantitative study used non-probability sampling technique in which purposive sampling was used for data collection. According to hypothesis testing depression is a prominent factor within the journalists that witnessed horrific incidents, further initial depression among the journalists led to PTSD among them. Similarly anxiety and stress showed positive influence over PTSD therefore the study revealed that such incidents are significant factors in affecting the psychological wellbeing of journalists.

Keywords: Trauma, PTSD, Journalists

Background of the study:

Trauma and stress is a problem which is seen as a raising problem around the globe individuals tends to face this disastrous problem when an individual goes through an incident which is shocking for them. In journalism it is majorly seen because the journalist go through different incidents and cases which they have to cover as their duty which further results into leading the journalists to enter the traumatic condition. This study will educate and create about the psychological condition or standing of the individuals with in the society. This study will also play a significant role in improving the mental condition of the journalist by providing the information regarding the trauma and stress. This study will also be beneficial in terms of creating awareness among the general public about the stress and trauma which has been neglected by the audience from a long time.

Introduction

According to American Psychiatric Society (1994) it was illustrated that an incident which tends to show afterwards effects in terms of psychological disorder anxiety which is occurring in an individual due to suffering a traumatic condition. The trauma tends to make the individual feel the same condition due to which the anxiety disorder is felt by the individual which tends to affect the mental condition of an individual as well.

According to Carney et al (2004) it was proclaimed that the individuals of armed forced which have been a part of war situation tend to have more traumatic disorders in terms of comparing to the individuals of armed forces which have never been a part of any war. The level of stress among the individuals which have not been part of any war was quite very less than those who have been part of war as they have witnessed some unusual scenes which have affected their mind for a long time.

According to Dworznik-Hoak,G. (2020) it was illustrated that journalist tend to feel the maximum level of stress and anxiety as the majority of journalists are found at the places of different incidents which are not easy to digest for a normal human due to which the majority of journalist tend to face problems which are distracting disturbing them regularly. The traumatic disorder tends to make it hard for the journalists to stay normal and to work with full efficiency all the time.

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According to Potter et al (2009) it is essential to decrease the traumatic disorders of anxiety and stress as it helps the journalist to work with a better condition of mental health as in journalism it is important to maintain good mental health as well. The traumatic disorders can be release through some of the ways among which time management is an essential way to remove traumatic disorder. Regular exercise also play significant role in coping up with traumatic disorders as it help the individual to stay physically fit which helps the individual to boost up its energy level.

According to Seely (2019) it was stated that journalists tend to deal with the trauma experience a lot as they go through various aspects or cases while doing their job which tends to leave harsh impacts on these journalist as these journalist tend to face the problem of having flashback of their traumatic experience which makes them feel as living those moments again and again which tends to affect their mental condition time to time. Therefore, the self-care is also an essential party of lives of journalist because it is necessary for them to take care and look out for counseling to cope up this traumatic disorder.

According to Selye (1993) it was illustrated that stress was also seen as increasing problem among the individuals which tend to affect the mental and physical condition of an individual which leads the individual to behavioral changes which could be leading the individual to perform unethical activities. The stress could be due to any traumatic reason in which any activity which tends to affect the mental condition of an individual leads it to get into the stressful situation.

Significance of the study

Traumatic disorders are problems which are being faced on a larger scale around the globe which needs to be stopped as it disturbs the mental health on a human. Among humans the people who tend to belong to the field of journalism tend to witness this problem more in comparison to any other individual as the journalists are the one which tend to cover crime scenes at first which could be problematic and stressful to these individuals. This research will play a significant role in terms of providing education to media sectors and to general public as well regarding the stress and traumatic disorders. This study will provide the solution to the problem off traumatic disorders which is necessary. Furthermore, this study will also play a beneficial role for the upcoming journalist as they can get to know about traumatic disorders and coping up with them. This study will also reveal further negative impacts of the stress which public is unaware about through which it will help them to manage their stress level positively.

Objective

1. To explore the relation between developing PTSD and exposure to violence among Journalists.
2. To investigate the relationship of mental health and PTSD.
3. To examine the effect of PTSD and mental health among Journalists.
4. To explore the difference of difference level of education and developing PTSD among Journalists, .
5. To examine the difference between job experience and developing PTSD among journalists.
6. To explore the level of mental health of trauma exposure journalists.
7. To explore the difference in developing PTSD among journalists who exposed to less and more traumatic event.

Research Question

R1. What is the relation between developing PTSD and exposure to violence among Journalists?

R2: What is the relationship of mental health and PTSD?

R3: What is the effect of PTSD and mental health among Journalists?

R4: What is the difference of difference level of education and developing PTSD among Journalists?

R5: What is the difference between job experience and developing PTSD among journalists?

R6: What is the level of mental health of trauma exposure journalists?

R7: What is the difference in developing PTSD among journalists who exposed to less and more traumatic event?

R8: How do journalists cope with stress when covering tragedies?

R9: Do journalists get any type of social support from newsroom to overcome the PTSD?

R10: What are the events journalists are exposed to on daily basis?

R11: What are the factors associated with PTSD among journalists?

Literature Review

McMahon (2001) conducted a study on traumatic disorders of journalists in which the researcher used the comparison technique in which there were two groups of journalist constructed among which one of them was representing the group of journalist had covered crime scenes in past three years whereas the other group of journalists did not experienced covering such crime scenes. The results of this research indicated that among the genders female gender was severely affecting by the traumatic situations as it tend to affect them more even after a long time whereas the people who were married tend to face less difficulty in coping up with the traumatic situation.

Pyevich (2003) conducted a study in which it was illustrated that the journalist tends to face pain and reminder of disturbing situations which they have covered during their career of journalism. The journalist tends to witness the problem of depression due to the repeated scenes of traumatic situation. The results of this study also indicated that many of the journalist did not came into the normal mental condition due to the trauma they had faced as the images and flashbacks of such disturbing event tends to come in front of them again and again due to which anxiety also increases.

Feinstein A et al (2002) conducted a research in which the journalist who were giving coverage during the war tenure were compared to the journalists who haven't give the news coverage during the war tenure in which the results indicated that the journalist who didn't gave coverage during the war were less affected by traumatic disorders whereas the journalists who gave war coverage were more affected with traumatic events. Moreover, the life of journalists who gave coverage during war is completely affected as they develop the habit of drinking alcohol due to the depression. These journalists were having less chance of recovering from such trauma attacks which had affected them.

Buchanan et al (2011) conducted a study on post traumatic disorders in which the findings of this study indicated that journalist were physically and mentally at a negative position due to the impacts which were possessed the events which were shocking and unusual for the journalists. Whereas the solution to such unhealthy problem the journalists adapted several ways such as starting to exercise, trying to forget memories, getting control over the thoughts which were from the traumatic situation.

Huda et al (2015) conducted a study regarding the professional stress in which the study was conducted by using the quantitative technique in which numbers of journalists were investigated regarding professional stress. The results of this study indicated that there were several reasons of stress among the profession such as harassment, unethical working environment. Moreover taking extra time on duty from the employees also caused stress and depression as this was against the willing of an employee.

Ozer et al (2003) conducted a study on the causes of post traumatic disorders in which the results had revealed different reasons which had caused traumatic disorders among which the reasons were getting the feeling of life being endangered due to the traumatic situation, lack of social support while facing such stressful conditions. Furthermore, the psychological problems from the family inheritance is also a cause of entering post traumatic disorders whereas staying in the fear which was created through trauma situation also tends to make an individual stay in traumatic disorder.

Himmelstein et al (2002) conducted a study on effects of traumatic condition on the journalist in which the results of this study indicated that there were both positive and negative impacts witnessed due to the traumatic condition. Some of the journalists portrayed the positive message by stating out to live everyday with positive feelings as the hard times could be faced unexpectedly. However, some of the journalist cannot cope up with such conditions due to which they lead themselves to portray negative messages.

Theoretical framework

Cognitive Theory

According to Ehler et al (2014) that stress and anxiety are major problems in traumatic disorders which have been affecting the individuals from a long a time whereas a theory in which an individual tends to feel and re-experience things which haven witnessed in the past. According to this cognitive theory it is stated that an individual who has gone through a traumatic situation tends re-feel it and re-experience it due to the stress or anxiety problem which have been the result of a certain traumatic situation. Cognitive theory is also considered as the cure to such traumatic conditions as the cognitive theory consists of different features which can play an impactful role in coping up the problem of traumatic disorders which are majorly found in the journalists.

Methodology

In this research the researcher has adopted survey methodology for which the sampling technique adopted by the researcher is non-probability sampling technique. The population of this study compromises the journalists belonging to the province Punjab whereas the sampling size of this study was 200 respondents. The two variables of this study consist of stress and anxiety.

Inferential Statistics

H1: It is likely that depression has a positive influence on PTSD in journalists.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.289 ^a	.083	.079	.965

a. Predictors: (Constant), DepScore

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	16.729	1	16.729	17.979	.000 ^b
Residual	184.226	198	.930		
Total	200.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

b. Predictors: (Constant), DepScore

The ANOVA (analysis of variance) table above tests whether the model reliably predicts the dependent variable. Since the significance value is less than the threshold of 0.05 the model can be considered as reliable.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.606	.332		1.823	.070
DepScore	.059	.014	.289	4.240	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

The above table shows us the model and tests if the independent variable depression influences PTSD. The results of the model indicate that a unit change in depression score increases the PTSD score by 0.059, which is a small influence, but a positive relation between the variables do exist. So, the hypothesis is **accepted**.

H2: It is likely that Anxiety has a positive influence on PTSD in journalists.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.378 ^a	.143	.138	.933

a. Predictors: (Constant), AnxScore

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.651	1	28.651	32.924	.000 ^b
	Residual	172.304	198	.870		
	Total	200.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

b. Predictors: (Constant), AnxScore

The ANOVA (analysis of variance) table above tests whether the model reliably predicts the dependent variable. Since the significance value is less than the threshold of 0.05 the model can be considered as reliable.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant) .736	.227		3.238	.001
	AnxScore .058	.010	.378	5.738	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

The above table shows us the model and tests if the independent variable anxiety influences PTSD. The results of the model indicate that a unit change in anxiety score increases the PTSD score by 0.058, which is a small influence, but a positive relation between the variables do exist. So, the hypothesis is **accepted**.

H3: It is likely that Stress has a positive influence on PTSD in journalists.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.432 ^a	.187	.183	.908

a. Predictors: (Constant), StrScore

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	37.561	1	37.561	45.517	.000 ^b
	Residual	163.394	198	.825		
	Total	200.955	199			

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

b. Predictors: (Constant), StrScore

The ANOVA (analysis of variance) table above tests whether the model reliably predicts the dependent variable. Since the significance value is less than the threshold of 0.05 the model can be considered as reliable.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.075	.312		-.242	.809
StrScore	.090	.013	.432	6.747	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PTSD

The above table shows us the model and tests if the independent variable stress influences PTSD. The results of the model indicate that a unit change in stress score increases the PTSD score by 0.090, which is a small influence, but a positive relation between the variables do exist. So, the hypothesis is **accepted**.

Conclusion

The crux of this study reveals that journalists who have gone through unusual and traumatic events are witnessed to be facing the problem of depression more than the other of journalist. Stress was also considered as a major problem among the journalists as the health of a journalist on physical and mental scale was disturbed which lead the journalist to post traumatic disorders. The conditions which are stressful and traumatic tend to cause the journalist to affect themselves to negative results.

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