

STRESS MANAGEMENT OF WORKING WOMEN DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on the stress management done by working women during Covid-19 Pandemic. It includes analysis of reasons of stress among working women during Covid-19. The researcher suggests to working women on measures to control the stress and live happy and healthy. The purpose of this study is to understand the impact of Covid-19 on the health of working women. Women are the part of social development. Women led development is the priority on the national agenda. The objective of sustainable development is achieved with the good physical and mental health of women. Hence, the researcher has selected the topic titled, Stress management of working women during Covid-19 Pandemic. The present study is based on primary and secondary data. It is the exploratory research. It was found that main reason of stress is fear about Covid-19 among the majority of working women. Working women had done precautionary measures to minimize the stress like Yoga, Pranayam, Suryanamaskar, Healthy and Hygienic Food.

Key words: *Stress, Stress Management, Working Women, Covid-19 Pandemic*

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Introduction:

Stress is the state of mind where negative emotions and thoughts, sad behaviour, anxiety, depression and fear stays. It is called as tension due to happening of any event with us. When the things go wrong and not according to our expectations then there is imbalance between the expectations and capacity of each person in life. Stress is shown through person's behaviour and attitude towards other. 25% Stress is due to Physical Problem while 75% Stress is relating to Psychological, Behaviour and Emotional matters.

Covid-19 Pandemic had affected the physical, mental and psychological behaviour of human. During Covid-19 Pandemic, there was curfew in the country, because of which many people lost their jobs and shops were also closed. Hence, income source of people was greatly reduced. Due to virus, many people lost their life. People are in stress and are always worried about health of family members. The poor people can't even afford daily meal, how can they bear the cost of medical expenditure. Everywhere, TV and Social Media published the news about increasing number of Covid-19 Patients, Death Rate and Patients admitted in hospitals. But the availability of doctors, hospitals, beds, oxygen cylinders and medicines are not sufficient. Because of this critical situation people started to live in fear and stress.

In such a fearful and horrible situation, no one even dared to come out of their home. But still some working women carried out their duties during lockdown by going outside the home and some are working from home. So, the

researcher undertakes the study of working women's stress, the impact of stress on her health and precautions taken to overcome the stress. Women are always integral part of society. The researcher specifically selected this topic because working women has to balance her personal life and official duties. So her stress increases due to management of all the work during pandemic. Her role is most important during covid 19 to handle the family responsibilities and also support the family financially to stay stable during pandemic. Stress management consists of making changes to your life. If, you are in a constant stressful situation, prevent stress by practicing self-care, relaxation and managing your response to stressful situations when they do occur.

Objectives:

- 1) To study reasons of stress among working women.
- 2) To study impact of Covid-19 on working women.
- 3) To understand stress management techniques use by working women during Covid-19 Pandemic.
- 4) To suggest useful measures to control the stress among working women.

Research Methodology: This paper is based on primary data and secondary data. The primary data is collected through questionnaire method. The secondary data is collected through publications in journals, books, magazines, data available on internet and social media. The data analysis is done with the help of tables, charts and percentage. The researcher had used observation method to analyses the respondents. The questionnaire is sent through Google Forms to 500 working women out of whom 50 responses is received. The researcher distributes the questionnaire through social media like email and WhatsApp. The respondents are from Mumbai, Pune, Nashik and Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra. The respondents are majority working in organized sector. This is an explorative research work.

Hypothesis:

- 1) Null Hypothesis - Covid-19 Pandemic has no significant relationship with stress.
Alternate Hypothesis - Covid-19 Pandemic has significant relationship with stress.
- 2) Null Hypothesis - Stress management techniques has no control on stress.
Alternate Hypothesis - Stress management techniques control the stress.

Literature Review: Bhargave D. and Trivedi H. (2018) - The researcher studied the symptoms of stress among youth. The study includes measurement of different level of a stress among the youth. It suggests strategy to cope with stressor by the youth. This study is based on primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected through questionnaire. The study finds that stress among the youth is due to relationship, financial and psychological issue. It suggest positive thinking, good nutritional food, exercise, time management, share opinion with someone are measures to reduce the stress.

P.Sumathi, R. Rohini, A. Ashokkumar (2022) – It explains the concept of stress, common stress factors, time and career plateauing, crisis management, work place humour and self-development. It states the different types of stressors like work, social, environmental, family and relationship, etc.

Johny Kutty Josph (2019) – The study concluded that there was significant difference between the levels of stress among working and non-working women. The study revealed that working women need to have guidance on effective stress management measures. The data analysis is done through descriptive and inferential statistics.

Dr. Shinde Shivaji Naranyanrao (2014) – The author explained that stress management is the balance between the physical and mental emotions through controlling factors responsible to create stress.

Analysis and Interpretation: The researcher collected the data through questionnaire. The questionnaire includes 15 questions relating to reasons of stress, impact of stress and stress management techniques. 50 respondents give the information about stress and stress management. Mostly respondents are from organized sector. 41 respondents are in Ahmednagar District, 3 are in Pune District, 5 in Nashik and 1 in Mumbai in Maharashtra. 15 women are in 20-29 age group, 14 in 30-39 age group, 12 are in 40-49 age and 9 women in 50-59 age group. It is observed that 20 to 40 age group working women are more stressful.

Testing of hypothesis:

- 1) Null Hypothesis - Covid-19 Pandemic has no significant relationship with stress.
 Alternate Hypothesis - Covid-19 Pandemic has significant relationship with stress.

The following table 1.1 gives detail information about number of working women having Covid-19 positive, their family members having Covid-19 positive, number of death of family members due to Covid-19 which is mostly responsible to create stress among them.

Table 1.1 Covid 19 Positive Women, Family members, death and Stress

Working Woman Covid-19 positive	Family Members Covid 19 Positive	No of Death	No. of women in Stress	No. of women in no stress
16	41	12	42	8
32%	82%	24%	84%	16%

Total Working Women in study is 50

- Table 1.1 shows that 16 (32%) working women are Covid-19 positive.
- Above table shows that 41 (82%) working women's family members are corona positive.
- 12 (24%) working women's family members are died due to Corono Virus.
- Out of 50 working women 42 (84%) women are in stress due to herself corona positive, family members are corona positive and also death of family members.
- Only 8 (16%) working women do not have any type of stress during covid 19. They are stable. Because of all these and their family members are tested negative of Covid-19.
- 42 are in stress due to stressors created by Covid-19.

Followings are Stressors among working women during Covid-19 Pandemic -

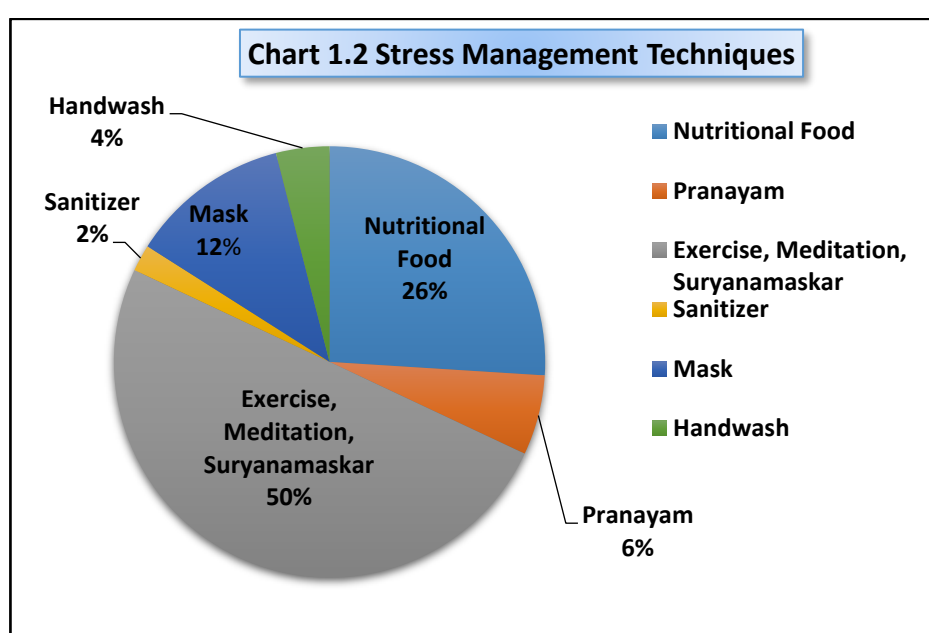
- Financial Stress - No money in hand due to loss of job and business also stop during lockdown. Inflation is in market during pandemic. But the monthly expenditure like food, EMI of loan, medical expenditure creates stress among working women.
- Illness and health issue - 42 women are corona positive. After recovery from it, they have so many issues regarding their health like headache, muscle pain, breathing problems, weight loss and other diseases. Mental issues like isolation and depression, negative thinking, poor decision making power, etc. are started.
- Fear about Corono Positive - As 82% working women have Covid-19 positive family members which creates fear in their mind. They are more worried about family members.

According to above analysis it is stated that Covid-19 has created stress among the working women. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted that Covid-19 has significant relationship with stress.

- 2) Null Hypothesis - Stress management techniques has no control on stress.
 Alternate Hypothesis - Stress management techniques control the stress.

Table 1.2 Stress Management Techniques

Nutritional Food	Pranayam	Exercise, Meditation, Suryanamaskar	Sanitizer	Mask	Hand-wash
13	3	25	1	6	2
26%	6%	50%	2%	12%	4%



- Chart 1.2 Stress Management Techniques shows that 50% working women doing exercise, meditations and suryanamaskar as strategy to reduce stress.
- The above chart shows that 26% working women gives preference to nutritional food to increase the immunity power during pandemic.
- 12% women states that mask are beneficial to them to reduce the stress during pandemic.
- 6% working women are doing pranayam to boost their energy and remain stable during the pandemic.
- Only 4% working women are states that hand-wash helps to reduce stress while 2% states that they are using sanitizer to manage the stress.

According to the above analysis, it can be stated that stress management techniques like exercise, meditations and suryanamaskar are highest beneficial to reduce the stress. The second highest is nutritional food to reduce stress. Third preference is to mask and fourth preference is to pranayama to manage the stressful situation. Fifth preference is to hand-wash and lowest preference to sanitizer. All these techniques of stress management reduce the stress among working women to remain stable and face the pandemic situation. **Hence, null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted that is 'Stress management techniques control the stress.'**

Findings:

- Fear, worry, illness of self and family members is the reason for stress during pandemic.

- Working women those are corona positive have to face number of psychological problems like anxiety, nervousness, negativity and depression.
- Those women who have lost their husband are still in stress.
- Stress affect the decision making skill and thinking process of working women.
- Pranayam, Yoga, Suryanamaskar, Exercise, Healthy Diet, Hand Wash etc. will helps to reduce the stress to great extent.
- Working women does not receive any type of help from their institution or organization where they do job during pandemic.
- Only 4% working women have received financial help from state government during pandemic.
- Majority of working women have financial stress during pandemic.

Conclusions:

It is concluded that stress is natural phenomena. To some extent it is beneficial in life to achieve our goals. But continuous stress in life had harmful effects on the body and mind of the human. Stress is psychological process which is created by us on the happening of any event. It includes fear, negative thinking, depression, loss of sense, anxiety and worry etc. The reasons behind it are illness, death of family members, money shortage, loss of jobs, shut down of shops and business, burden of expenditure and social problems. To reduce stress, working women should always keep regular habit of exercise, yoga, pranayama, suryanamaskar, meditations, nutritional food and live in hygienic and clean environment. Stress is created by our thoughts if we change our thoughts stress will automatically reduce. Life is so beautiful hence live it to the fullest without fear and stress.

Suggestions:

- Busy yourself maximum in the hobbies and it helps to increase creativity.
- Think wisely and act cheerfully.
- **Use SAVERS strategy:** It helps to reduce stress to larger extent.
- **S - Silence** – Meditation and Yoga helps to keep calm in any crisis. It keeps mind in control. It also increases immunity power.
- **A – Affirmation:** Positive thinking process gives energy to fight with many obstacles in life.
- **V – Visualization:** Imagination power boosts the inner and outer strength to change the life situation.
- **E – Exercise:** Exercise in early morning helps to change mood, more stamina and energy for work. It also helps to have more awareness and clarity.
- **R – Reading:** Self-help is done with reading motivational and inspirational books which increases our knowledge and change our attitude towards every problem in our life. Books are best friend.
- **S - Scribing notes:** Writing our goals in note books gives direction at every stage of life. So always keep a pen and notebook with you. Write each and every thought in it and make analysis of it. Remove negative thoughts by working on it. Find out reason of negative thought and take action accordingly.

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