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Relationship between stress and coping strategies of women during lockdown period due to covid-19 in India

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Abstract

The present study objective was to analyze the relationship between stress and coping strategies. The study found that approaching type of coping; logical analysis, positive appraisal, and problem solving had significant positive relation with all dimensions of psychological distress, while guidance and support showed no significant relationship with psychological distress. Avoidance type of coping strategy, showed no significant relationship with dimensions of psychological distress, Acceptance coping found to have significant relationship with positive appraisal and overall /total psychological distress. Alternative rewards had significant relationship with logical analysis, positive appraisal, overall adjustments and security dimensions of psychological distress. Emotional discharge showed negative type of correlation with logical analysis, overall adjustment and security insecurity dimension of psychological distress.

Keywords: Relationship, coping, strategies, lockdown, covid-19

Introduction

Changes or modifications to the routine are always stressful and requires adjustment and adaptation. Covid-19 brought not only virus but a novel situation where the only prevention for it was home quarantine or staying indoors. With government decision to lockdown led to closure of schools, offices, shopping, recreation and eat out. This brought new normal of online education and work from home, with all family members at home. Women being the crux of the family plays major role in family wellbeing. Women are multitaskers balancing cooking, cleaning and washing along with other works. But with no outside support due to lockdown they are subjected to stress. Experiencing too many changes within brief period of time with events which are not in control lead to stressful conditions. Coping involves adjusting to these events and stressful situations. Coping is a process of dealing with stress and have individual differences. Stressors which are perceived as changeable require problem solving strategies and stressors perceived as unchangeable require support seeking, emotional strategies.

Literature review indicates that Married women report higher level of stress than single women (APA, 2010) ^[1]. Non working married women found to have high anxiety level with poor life satisfaction (Irfan *et al.* 2012) ^[3]. Further the review shows that high distress of working mothers consistently correlated with emotional focused coping strategies (Eisengart *et al.* 2006, Raak and Waheren, 2005) ^[2,4].

Objective: The present study aim is to understand the relation between psychological distress and coping strategies adopted by women during lockdown from covid-19

Methodology:

Research Design: Survey research design in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe attitudes, opinions, behaviours or characteristics of the population. In this present study online survey research was adopted. In this procedure, survey researchers collect quantitative, numbered data using questionnaire

Sample selection: Women in age group above 30years, who have access to technology (either mobile or laptop/desktop). They should also be literate as they had to read and fill the schedule.

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Sample size: 200 Literate women who have access to technology

Tools and Techniques: Questionnaire was developed for measuring the psychological distress. The scale divided into 2 parts, first part covering psychological distress which includes emotional stability, personal growth, overall adjustments, security-insecurity and self-acceptance and second part consists of coping strategies of approaching and avoiding.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the respondents

With regard to age 34.5% were in age group of 20-30yrs, 31% in age group 40-50yrs, 24.5% were in age group 30-40yrs while only 10% were above 50 yrs. With regard to educational qualification, 31% were doctorate, 23.5% graduates, 22.5% postgraduates, 10.5% studied upto

intermediate, 8.5% secondary educated while 4% primary educated. With regard to occupational status, 36% were government employee, 27% of them were homemaker, 15% were software professionals, while 11.5% were teachers and 10.5% business. With regard to the monthly income, 24.5% had monthly income of above 2 lakh rupees while 23.5% monthly income was Rs. 1,50,000-2,00,000. While 17.5% of respondents monthly income of less than 50,000, 17.5% between 50 thousands to one lakh rupees and 17% 1 lakh to one and half lakh monthly income. With regard to type of family 68% were from nuclear families while 32% from joint family. Family size of 64% respondents was 3-4, 22% respondents family size was 5-6 members while family size of 14.5% was more than 6 members. With regard to number of children 49% had one child, 29% two children, 22.5% three children. Number of adults in the family of 67% were 2-3 adults, 32% 4-5 while 1% more than 5 adults in the family.

Table 1: Correlation between psychological distress and coping strategy

		Emotional Stability	Personal growth	Adjustments	Security	Self-acceptance	total
Logical analysis	Pearson Correlation	.342**	.466**	.339**	.428**	.387**	.496**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Positive Appraisal	Pearson Correlation	.364**	.466**	.360**	.450**	.395**	.512**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Seek Guidance& Support	Pearson Correlation	.074	.039	-.025	-.014	.025	-.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.303	.591	.725	.848	.728	.753
Problem solving	Pearson Correlation	.280**	.411**	.298**	.344**	.343**	.337**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Cognitive avoidance	Pearson Correlation	-.038	.067	.081	.050	-.042	.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.595	.349	.257	.481	.562	.536
Acceptance	Pearson Correlation	.086	.159*	.133	.108	.073	.147*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.229	.025	.063	.130	.307	.039
Alternative rewards	Pearson Correlation	.186**	.223**	.159*	.171*	.137	.102
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.002	.025	.016	.056	.151
Emotional discharge	Pearson Correlation	-.298**	-.083	-.191**	-.204**	-.089	.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.249	.007	.004	.214	.717

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$ level of significance

The table provides information on relation between psychological distress and coping strategies of the respondents. With regard to approaching type of coping, logical analysis, positive appraisal, and problem solving had significant positive relation with all dimensions of psychological distress, while guidance and support showed no significant relationship with psychological distress.

With regard to avoidance type of coping strategy, showed no significant relationship with dimensions of psychological

distress, Acceptance coping found to have significant relationship with positive appraisal and overall /total psychological distress. Alternative rewards had significant relationship with logical analysis, positive appraisal, overall adjustments and security dimensions of psychological distress. Emotional discharge showed negative type of correlation with logical analysis, overall adjustment and security insecurity dimension of psychological distress.

Table 2: Influence of approaching type of coping strategy on Psychological distress

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Logical analysis	.304	.040	.497	7.568	.000**
	Positive Appraisal	.284	.039	.463	7.200	.000**
	Seek Guidance& Support	.080	.044	.113	1.795	.074
	Problem solving	.118	.040	.199	2.985	.003*

a. Dependent Variable: psychological distress

** $p < 0.01$ level of significance.

The regression table provides information regarding the influence of approaching coping strategy on psychological distress, the analysis revealed that logical analysis, positive appraisal and problem solving coping strategies, had a

significant relationship with psychological distress while guidance and support showed no significant influence on psychological distress.

Table 3: Influence of avoidance type of coping strategy on Psychological distress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Cognitive avoidance	.045	.047	.069	.947	.345
Acceptance	.117	.061	.140	1.936	.054
Alternative rewards	.065	.051	.091	1.278	.203
Emotional discharge	.006	.054	.007	.104	.917
a. Dependent Variable: psychological distress					

The table provides for impact of avoidance coping strategy on psychological distress and regression analysis revealed that all dimension which include cognitive avoidance, acceptance, alternative rewards and emotional discharge showed no significant impact on psychological distress.

Conclusion

The study concludes that psychological distress is high among women specifically during this covid-19. It is interesting to note that the women who are using approaching type of coping strategies, like the logical analysis, positive appraisal and problem solving were able to deal with distress but the women with avoidance coping strategy like cognitive avoidance, alternative rewards and emotional discharge were not able to deal with distress effectively.

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