

STUDY ON DAILY HASSLES AMONG AGED

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INTRODUCTION

The word 'stress' has a mind boggling origin to it. It stems from the Latin word 'stringers' which means to draw tight (other derivatives of 'stringers' include strain, to tax, strait, or afford little space or room). Stress adheres to its name and does exactly what it means. It taxes, it strains and it restricts.

Stress has been an integral part of humankind since the very beginning. Within the last few decades, it has received immense awareness and attention giving rise to multiple theories and hypothesis.

According to Hans Selye (1956), stress is the body's basic reaction to any kind of demand. He also thought that, despite the presence of different stressors (stress causal agents), the organism would respond to biological resources in essentially the same ways. Modern researchers, however, are increasingly coming to the conclusion that stress is neither a stimulus nor a response but a special stimulus response transaction in which they emphasize on the stimulus environment (stressors), the response (Physiological changes) of the individual, or the relationship between the person and the environment. Lazarus and Flokman (1984) have provided one of the most accepted definitions of stress: Psychological Stress is a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being.

Although stress is pervasive in our lives, certain situations or experiences cause more stress than others. The external sources of stress include life events,

ongoing circumstances, daily hassles, and chronic strain.

DAILY HASSLES

Stress levels are influenced by a variety of life experiences. Daily inconveniences, or the tiny issues that come up every day and are not particularly significant in and of themselves, can also lead to a great deal of stress. Numerous studies have demonstrated that the cumulative impact of minor inconveniences (such as getting stuck in traffic, misplacing money or keys, or experiencing price increases) is more important for moral and psychological well-being than a greater number of significant life events (De Longis et al. 1982; Kanner et al. 1981). In relation to troubles, a number of developmental and sociodemographic tendencies have been found. At different stages of life, different segments of the population may view different things as inconveniences (Lazarus 1984a).

It is not just major life events that influence stress levels. Stress also comes through daily hassles, which are the little problems of daily living that are not significant in themselves but can pile up to become a major source of stress. In a series of studies, it has been showcased that the accumulated effects of daily hassles (e.g. getting stuck in traffic, losing money or keys, rising prices, etc) are more significant in relation to moral and psychological well-being than more major life events (De Longis et al. 1982; Kanner et al. 1981). There are several developmental and sociodemographic patterns that have been identified with regard to hassles. Different section of the population may see different things as hassles at different times of life.

AIM

The aim of the present study was to study the effect of daily hassles on aged men and women.

RATIONALE OF PRESENT STUDY

The elderly are coming to form a large proportion of the population. In fact, population is aging. Old age is a stressful period of life because of the limited capacities of elderly individual to adjust which makes it a difficult time. The senses

become weaker with aging and lead to stress (daily hassles). To find the same, present study was undertaken.

PROBLEM OF STUDY

Is there any difference among elderly men and women with respect to daily hassles?

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the present study was to see the level of daily hassles among aged men and women living in High and Low Socio-economic status.

HYPOTHESIS

In the light of available researches and past experiences following hypotheses were formed:

- 1) The aged male perceives significantly greater hassles (stress) as compared to females.
- 2) The high-status elderly experience significantly less hassles (stress) than low status elderly.
- 3) The younger elderly experience significantly less hassles (stress) as compared to older subjects.

METHOD

Sample: To verify aforementioned hypotheses a purposive random sample from high and low socio-economic status males and females with age group of 60 to 69 years (young Elderly) and 70 years and onwards (old elderly); total 524 were selected from Nagpur City area. A summary of the selected sample with respective means ages is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Showing Summary of Sample According to Age, Sex, Status.

Young Elderly 60 to 74 years		Old Elderly 75 and onwards		Total	
Male N = 146	Female N = 153	Male N = 130	Female N = 95	Male N = 276	Female N = 248
Av. Age M = 64.9	M = 65.39	Av. Age M = 78.74	M = 79.88	Av. Age M = 81.82	M = 72.61
Status					
Low		High		Total	
Male N = 140	Female N = 141	Male N = 136	Female N = 107	Male 276	Female 248

DESIGN (2x2x2)

Present Study Yielded a 2 (two levels of Sex: male and female) x 2 (two levels of status: High status and low status) x 2 (two levels of age: Young elderly and old elderly) between subject factorial design.

TOOLS

To assess level of daily hassles Dr. S. Upadhyay (1988), 'Daily Hassles Scale' of 109 items was used.

SCORING AND TABULATION

Scoring is done manually. Obtained data were tabulated to 2x2x2, Sex, Status, Age, Analysis of Variance.

Table 2. Summary of 2x2x2, Sex, Status, Age, Analysis of Variance of daily hassles.

Source	SS	df	MS	F
A (Sex)	624.37	1	624.37	13.11**
B (Status)	2337.18	1	2337.18	49.08**
C (Age)	405.72	1	405.72	8.52**
A x B	115.00	1	115.00	2.41
A x C	119.05	1	119.05	2.5
B x C	8819.22	1	8819.22	185.20**
A x B x C	121.87	1	121.87	2.55
Within	24575.89	516	47.62	
Total	37118.3	523		

$$F_{0.95}(1,516) = 3.85$$

$$F_{99}(1,516) = 6.66$$

From table 2, it can be seen that the main effect A, Sex (Male & Female), $F = 13.11^{**}$, $P < 0.01$. Thus, it is observed that males ($M = 78.94$) are having more hassles (stress) than females ($M = 66.78$). The main effect B, i.e. Status and main effect 'C' i.e. Age too produced significant result, $F = 49.08^{**}$ (low status $M = 99.64$ and high status $M = 56.0$) and $F = 8.52^{**}$ (Older elderly $M = 86.58$ and Younger elderly $M = 69.06$) respectively. Interaction effect A x B, A x C and A x B x C failed to produce significant results. B x C interaction was found as significant, $F = 185.20^{**}$ it indicates that high status and low status do not remain same for two age group young and old elderly.

DISCUSSION

In the area of hassles, it is observed that the perceived hassles are greater in males than females. The hassles are the irritation and frustration of everyday routine. According to Richard Lazarus and his associates (1984) hassles are "experience and conditions of daily living that have been appraised as salient and harmful or threatening to the endorser's health and wellbeing". No single hassle is sufficient to produce much stress, but when added, they may be enough to tip the balance towards a strong, stress related reaction.

Males showing higher stress in the form of hassles reflect that they feel disturbed because of greater responsibility for the family and society. In Indian families the male is the head of the family. As he grows old and has no employment, a loss of income affects psychological wellbeing.

In the area of status, it has been found that low status elderly are high (more stressed) on daily hassles than high status elderly. This finding shows an impact of economic and social differences on level of stress. One of the reasons low status elderly (males and females) are high on stress is due to increased cost of life-style, it becomes difficult to cope up with daily difficulties. Which is not the case with the high status elderly. Higher levels of lifetime income increase an individual's range of choices and available options for aging.

The older aged are comparatively higher on hassles than the younger aged. The subjects (male as well as female) feel anger, tension, pressures and inconvenience through various events know as hassles. They suffer from amnesia. The older aged, as they are in the last spell of life, are worried about future and death. Ill health makes them powerless. They face ignorance and feel that nobody listens to them and hence feel discarded leading to more stress (daily hassles).

The Interaction effect status on Age produced significant result that further proves the importance of socio-economic status and relevance of age on stress levels.

CONCLUSION

From the obtained results. It is concluded that

- (i) The aged males perceived significantly greater hassles than aged females.
- (ii) The higher status elderly experience significantly less hassles than low status elderly.
- (iii) The younger elderly are significantly better on hassles than older elderly.

REFERENCES

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