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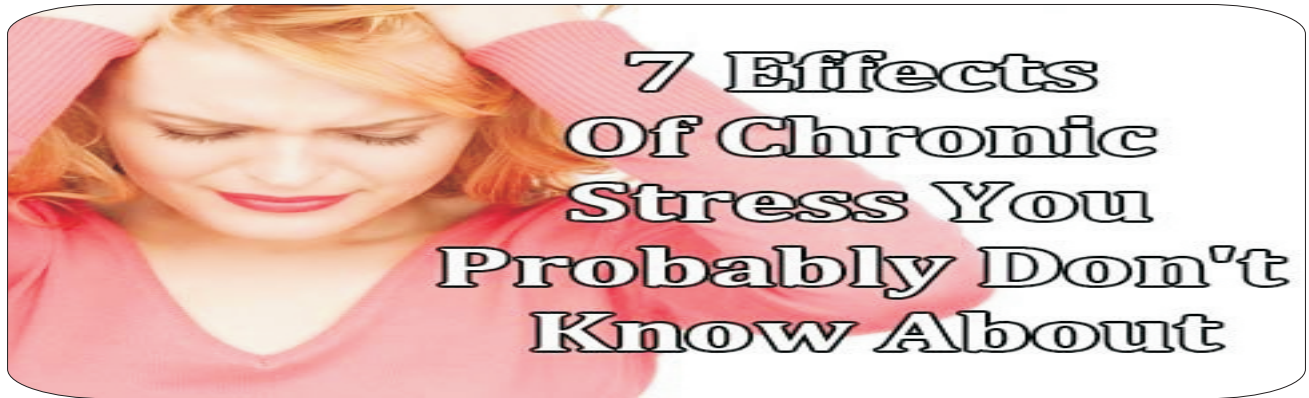
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## EFFECT OF STRESS ON MENTAL HEALTH OF CHRONIC PATIENTS



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### ABSTRACT

The burden of non-communicable disease has increased in recent years and it is estimated that over 40% of all deaths are due to non-communicable disease. According to the World Health Organization every second person in India dies from non-communicable diseases.

The main purpose of the present study was to examine the effect of stress on mental health of chronic patients. The objectives of the present study were 1) to assess the influence of stress on the mental health of chronic patients, 2) to examine the significant difference in mental health between male and female sample. The sample consisted of 360 (different types of chronic patients) was selected from Gulbarga District, Karnataka State. The sample was administered with Stress scale, and Mental Health Inventory and data were subjected t-test the results revealed that there is a significant difference in the mental health between two groups of stress: Higher stress lowered mental health of sample and there are significant gender (sex) differences in mental health.

**KEYWORDS** :non-communicable disease ,stress on mental health , chronic patients.

### INTRODUCTION

According to WHO (1974), "Health is not merely the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual and social well being. This definition seems to equate health with all round well being. It highlights health as a positive goal rather than just a neutral state of 'no disease' and indicates that this is to be achieved by personal and social change as well as by medical advance. As a

definition, it contains almost as many new problems as it tries to solve. Its idealistic, even utopian nature has been commented upon by critics (Seedhouse, 1986). In a similar way to the absence of disease' approach, the apparent simplicity of the WHO definition conceals a range of assumptions about what health should be. Freedom from disease is not health; real health is viewed as the transformation of 'no disease type health into all round well being. Health becomes a personal struggle and a goal to be worked towards on a community national and global level. These sense of health as action and adoption is captured in the WHO Working Group Report (1984) on health promotion, which conceptualized health as the extent to which an individual or group is able on the one hand, to realize aspirations and satisfy needs and on the other hand, to change or cope with the environment. Health is therefore seen as a resource for everyday life not the objective of living; it is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources as well as physical capabilities WHO (1984).

A healthy individual is not only physically healthy but also mentally healthy. The modern concept of health extends beyond the proper functioning of the body. It includes a sound, efficient mind and controlled emotions. It means that body and mind are working efficiently and harmoniously.

The modern world, which is said to be a world of achievements, is also a world of stress. One finds stress everywhere, whether it be within the family, business organization/enterprise or any other social or economic activity. Right from the time of birth till the last breath drawn, an individual is invariably exposed to various stressful situations.

The concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Selye in 1956. It is a concept borrowed from the natural sciences. Derived from the Latin word 'Stringere', stress was popularly used in the seventeenth century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. It was used in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to denote force, pressure, strain or strong effort with reference to an object or person. In psycho-physiology, stress refers to some stimulus resulting in a detectable strain that cannot be accommodated by the organism and which ultimately results in impaired health or behavior.

The word 'stress' is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as "a state of affair involving demand on physical or mental energy". A condition or circumstance (not always adverse), which can disturb the normal physical and mental health of an individual. In medical parlance 'stress' is defined as a perturbation of the body's homeostasis. This demand on mind-body occurs when it tries to cope with incessant changes in life. A 'stress' condition seems 'relative' in nature. Extreme stress conditions, psychologists say, are detrimental to human health but in moderation stress is normal and, in many cases, proves useful. Stress, nonetheless, is synonymous with negative conditions. Today, with the rapid diversification of human activity, we come face to face with numerous causes of stress and the symptoms of stress and depressions.

According to Selye (1956), "any external event or any internal drive which threatens to upset the organism equilibrium is stress". Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define stress as "a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his/her resources and endangering his/her well-being".

"Mental health is the balance between all aspects of life social, physical and spiritual and emotional". It impacts on how we manage our surrounding and make choice in our lives clearly it is an integral part of overall health.

It is a state of emotional and psychological well being in which an individual is able to use his or her cognitive and emotional capabilities. Functioning in society and meet the ordinary demands of everyday life. Mental health refers to "A person's overall emotional and psychological conditions."

Mental health is for more than the obscene of mental illness and has to do with many aspects of

our lives inducing.

- 1.How we feel about ourselves.
- 2.How we feel about others.
- 3.How we are able to meet the demands of life.

The importance of mental health has been known to range from the care of the ill to the promotion of mental health. The field of mental health includes three sets of objective's one of these has to do with mentally ill persons. For them the objective is the restoration of health. A second has to do with those people who are mentally healthy but who may become ill if they are not protected from conditions that are conducive to mental illness, which however, not the same of every individual. The objective for those persons is prevention. The third objective has to do with the upgrading of mental health of normal persons. Quite apart from any question of disease or infirmity. This is positive mental health. It consists in the protection and development at all levels, of human society of secure, affectionate and satisfying human relationships and in the reduction of hostile tensions in persons and groups (Govindaswamy, 1970).

### **PROBLEM:**

Effect of Stress on Mental Health of Chronic Patients.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

The following are the major objectives of the study:

- 1.To assess the influence of stress on the mental health of chronic patients.
- 2.To examine the significant difference in mental health between male and female sample.

### **HYPOTHESES:**

The following hypotheses are framed for the study:

- 1.There would be a significant influence of stress on mental health of the chronic sample.
- 2.There would be a significant difference in mental health between male and female sample.

### **THE SAMPLE:**

An appropriate sample design is adopted, keeping in view the objectives of the study. The sample of present study consists of 360 (different types of chronic patients) will selected from Gulbarga District, Karnataka State. The sample will be administered with Stress scale, and Mental Health Inventory and the statistical technique like t-test will be used to interpret the data.

### **TOOLS:**

The following suitable standardized scales were used in the present study. They are:

**1. Singh Personal Stress Source Inventory:** This scale is constructed standardized by Arun Singh and Singh (2004). The scale consists of 32 statements. For each statement, response is given in the form i.e., Seldom, Sometimes and Frequently.

**Scoring:** The scoring of SPSSI is very simple. Every item marked as 'Sometimes' is given a score of 2 and marked as 'Frequently' a score of 3. Subsequently, scores earned by the tests on every marked item are added together to yield a total score. Higher the score, the higher is the magnitude of personal stress. Likewise, lower the score, lower is the magnitude of personal stress. The maximum score on SPSSI is

105.

Range of score	Qualitative description
80 or higher	High level of stress
31- 79	Moderate level of stress
0-30	Low level of stress

## 2. Mental Health Inventory:

This inventory is developed by Jagdish and Srivastava (1988) which is consisting of 56 items distributed along 6 dimensions of mental health, they are positive self evaluation, perception of reality, integration of personality, autonomy, group oriented attitudes, environmental mastery. There are 24 positive and 32 negative items and the scoring is of Likert type. The inventory has four response categories namely always, often, rarely and never. A score of 4, 3, 2 and 1 is assigned to response category of positive statement and for negative item the scoring is reversed. Thus, one is considered as having higher mental health status if he scores higher on dimensions as well as total. The reliability of the inventory has been found to be 0.73 and the validity is quite satisfactory (0.54).

## STATISTICAL ANALYSES

The following statistical methods were used in the study:

1. t-test to compare the sample groups for significant differences.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

The major objective of the study has been to assess the effect of factor like stress on mental health of respondents studying in different type of chronic patients. It is believed that health status is greatly influenced by several factors like different type of chronic diseases, domicile factors, gender, and so on. The sample of the study has been classified into two equal groups on stress.

**Table-1: Mean, SD and t-value of mental health of chronic patients in two levels of stress (N = 360)**

Stress		PSE	POR	IOP	AUT	GOA	EM	TMH
High Stress	Mean	21.29	26.23	21.32	22.79	26.27	24.99	107.55
	SD	13.56	0.07	6.39	10.85	7.08	6.33	64.07
	N	196	196	196	196	196	196	196
Low Stress	Mean	36.82	36.65	34.13	31.29	39.59	30.57	189.87
	SD	12.79	3.77	7.61	7.05	8.35	5.11	63.41
	N	164	164	164	164	164	164	164
t-value		7.97**	14.57**	12.32**	6.49**	11.65**	12.3**	8.68**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

Table – 1 presents mean, SD and t-values of mental health of respondents in two levels of stress. The sample of students was divided into two equal groups of stress based on 'Stress Criterion' – high and low stress. The mean score of high stress group is 107.55 and that of low stress has a mean of 189.87 on total mental health. This shows that low stress sample has higher total mental health than



high stress. The t-value of 8.68 is significant at 0.01 level to suggest profound differences in mental health between two groups of stress. Thus, high stress sample has relatively significantly lower mental health than low stress. It is true that stress always affects mental health of people. Mental health includes health awareness and practices, healthy attitudes and life styles, positive development and integration of sound personality. Therefore, higher stress hinders the state of overall well being and mental health.

**Table – 2: Mean, SDs and t-values of mental health of male and female sample (N = 360)**

Sex		PSE	POR	IOP	AUT	GOA	EM	TMH
Male	Mean	31.25	25.23	34.93	26.59	31.18	29.25	170.09
	SD	5.52	4.46	6.63	10.82	5.79	5.53	29.69
	N	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Female	Mean	16.39	27.61	30.28	17.63	24.41	31.17	99.89
	SD	14.93	5.51	6.79	4.12	8.13	5.95	51.47
	N	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
t-value		12.59**	4.61**	6.59**	12.08**	12.31**	3.07**	12.19**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

Table – 2 shows mean, SD and t-value of mental health of male and female sample. In the overall mental health the mean score of male sample is higher (170.09) than the female sample (99.89). This reveals that mental health of male chronic sample is better than the female sample. There is a significant difference ( $t = 12.19$ ) between male and female in overall mental health. This is because, socialization of female child has always remained distinctly different from that of men, oriented toward passivity, submission and a life of self denial. It is no wonder that studies of Indian women see them as harboring traits connected with low self esteem, namely depressive moodiness, over touchiness and morbid sensitivity (Kakar, 1988). Thus, there is a significant difference between male and female students in their mental health status.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

1. There is a significant difference in the mental health between two groups of stress: Higher stress lowered mental health of sample.
2. There is a significant gender difference in mental health of chronic sample.

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