

**“A STUDY TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AND COPING
PATTERN AMONG THE RETIRED PERSONS IN SELECTED
COMMUNITY AT MANGALORE.”**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Growing old is a universal biological phenomenon. After drinking the pleasures of life, man has to slow down the pace of his vital existence. He must learn to accept the fact of age with grace. Our ancestors divided human life into four stages – childhood (balyam), adulthood (brahmacharya), family and parenthood (grahastashram), and gradual withdrawal from activities (vanaprastha).¹

Material & Methods: In this study survey approach was adopted. Descriptive Research Research Design used for this study. The present study was conducted at Ashoknagar area under Ashoknagar PHC. In the present study, population consisted of retired persons aged sixty years or more., the sample comprised 100 retired persons residing at Ashoknagar, Urwa, Mangalore, who met the sampling criteria. Present research study was convenience sampling. Out of the total population defined 100 subjects who met the inclusion criteria were selected for the study.

Result: The data shows significant association between level of coping and age ($\chi^2=13.653$), marital status ($\chi^2=22.313$), religion ($\chi^2=9.784$), education ($\chi^2=23.118$), type of family ($\chi^2=6.920$), income per month ($\chi^2=19.942$), and support system ($\chi^2=26.583$).

Conclusion: Overall stress score indicated that 97% of the retired persons experienced moderate stress and 3% experienced severe stress. The analysis of coping pattern showed that 80% of the retired persons had average coping, 15% had good coping, and only 5% had poor coping.

Keyword : Assess, level of stress, coping pattern, retired persons, community

INTRODUCTION:

Growing old is a universal biological phenomenon. After drinking the pleasures of life, man has to slow down the pace of his vital existence. He must learn to accept the fact of age with grace. Our ancestors divided human life into four stages – childhood (balyam), adulthood (brahmacharya), family and parenthood (grahastashram), and gradual withdrawal from activities

(vanaprastha). The stage of vanaprastha is our concern here.¹

In the words of Seneca, “old age is an incurable disease.” One cannot heal old age, one can protect, promote, and extend it. Global measures of life satisfaction are often used in social gerontology as a means of identifying successful ageing.²

Currently in India, the population of the elderly above 60 years has gone up from

55 million in 1991 to 75 million in 2001. Therefore, one of the secret worries and concerns is that how they would meaningfully occupy themselves for the two to four decades of life after retirement.³

Retirement has been defined as the transition between productive maturity and non-productive old age. Retirement often is a crisis because it threatens the feeling of identity, integrity, and self-esteem.⁴

Oldness is said to be a second childhood as both have to depend on others for many of their personal requirements. Every progressive action of the child is appreciated whereas every action of the old is looked with contempt and disgust. This itself is an indication of a common feeling that “day in” and “day out” the old is unwanted.⁵

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the level of stress among the retired persons.
2. To assess the coping pattern among the retired persons.
3. To find the relationship between stress and coping pattern among the retired persons.
4. To find the association between the level of stress and selected demographic variables.

5. To find the association between the coping pattern and selected demographic variables.

METHODOLOGY

Research approach: In this study survey approach was adopted.

Research Design: Descriptive Research

Settings: The present study was conducted at Ashoknagar area under Ashoknagar PHC.

Population: In the present study, population consisted of retired persons aged sixty years or more.

Sample: In the present study, the sample comprised 100 retired persons residing at Ashoknagar, Urwa, Mangalore, who met the sampling criteria.

Sampling technique: Present research study was convenience sampling. Out of the total population defined 100 subjects who met the inclusion criteria were selected for the study.

Data collection instrument: Data collection instrument is a written device that the researcher uses to collect the data. In the present study, the data regarding sample characteristics was collected using a demographic proforma; the stress was assessed using the stress rating scale; and coping was assessed using a coping checklist.

Development of tool

A stress scale and coping checklist were used by the investigator for assessing the level of stress and coping pattern among retired persons. For the development of the tool, review of research and non-research literature along with the opinion and suggestions of the experts were taken to determine the areas to be included.

Description of the tool

The detail description of the tool used in the data collection procedure is as follows:

Tool I – Demographic proforma

Tool II – Stress rating scale

Tool III – Coping check list

Tool I: Demographic Proforma

The demographic proforma consists of 10 items, which were used to collect the sample characteristics. The characteristics included were age, gender, marital status, religion, education, type of family, income per month, support system, and presence of any chronic illness.

Tool II: Stress Rating Scale

A modified stress scale was used to measure the stress among retired persons. The stress scale was a 5-point scale in which there was total 14 items, which included 7 negative and 7 positive items.

There were 5 options in the scale, like, never, rarely, sometimes, very often,

and always. The negative items were scored as 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 and the positive items were scored 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The maximum score was 56 and the stress was categorized into:

Mild stress	-	0-17
Moderate stress	-	18-36
Severe stress	-	37-56

Tool III: Coping Check List

A standardized coping checklist (Dr. Kiran Rao) was used to identify the coping pattern among retired persons. It consisted of 70 items concerning coping pattern, which required Yes/No response; one mark was given for correct response and zero for wrong response. The maximum score was 70 and the coping was categorised into:

Very good coping	-	81-100%
Good coping	-	61-80%
Average coping	-	41-60%
Poor coping	-	< 40%

Blueprint

Blueprint is a design plan or same which acts as a plan or model.

A blue print was prepared for the stress scale and coping checklist. It depicted the distribution of items according to content areas.

Validity of the tool

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure.²⁴

Content validity asks whether the items or questions on a scale are comprehensive and appropriately reflect the concept that they are supposed to measure.

To determine content validity, the questionnaire along with problem statement, objectives, blue print, criteria check list was submitted to experts, from the Department of Psychiatry (Psychiatrist), from the field of nursing who had specialised in psychiatric nursing. The experts were requested to give their opinion regarding accuracy, relevancy and appropriateness of content against the criteria checklist which had columns for agree, disagree and remarks/suggestions. The suggestions of the experts were incorporated and final draft of tool was prepared.

Data collection procedure

The investigator obtained written permission from the Medical Officer of Ashoknagar PHC, Urwa, Mangalore. The data was collected between 12th November 2009 and 6th December 2009 at the residences of the respondents. The investigator explained the purpose of data collection to the subjects after self-introduction. Then the questionnaire was

given to them with clear instructions as to how to answer each question after their consent. The respondents were assured of the confidentiality of the data provided by them.

RESULT:

Table 1: Percentage distribution of stress score of retired persons

N = 100		
Stress level	Frequency	Percentage
Severe (37-56)	3	3
Moderate (18-36)	97	97
Mild (0-17)	0	0

The data in Table 1 that 97% of the respondents had moderate stress and 3% had severe stress after retirement.

Table 2: Percentage distribution of coping score of retired persons

N = 100		
Coping pattern	Frequency	Percentage
Very good coping (81-100%)	0	0
Good coping (61-80%)	15	15
Average coping (41-60%)	80	80
Poor coping (< 40%)	5	5

The data in Table 2 shows the percentage distribution of coping score of the subjects. Majority of the retired persons had average coping (80%), 15% had good coping, and only 5% had poor coping. Nobody had very good coping among the retired persons.

Table 3: Correlation between stress and coping pattern of retired persons

N = 100

Correlations	'r' value	Table value	df
Correlation between stress and coping	0.471	0.209	98

The Karl Pearson coefficient of correlation between stress and coping score was 0.471. This reveals that there was a positive correlation between the level of stress and coping pattern among retired persons.

CONCLUSION:

The following conclusions were drawn on the basis of the findings of the study:

1. Overall stress score indicated that 97% of the retired persons experienced moderate stress and 3% experienced severe stress.
2. The analysis of coping pattern showed that 80% of the retired persons had average coping, 15% had good coping, and only 5% had poor coping.
3. The findings of the present study confirmed that there was a significant association between level of stress and selected demographic variable like marital status, education, and income per month.

4. There was significant association between coping score and age, marital status, religion education, type of family, income per month, and support system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The study can be replicated on a larger sample using probability sampling techniques.
- A comparative study can be done to assess the level of stress among non-retired and retired subjects.
- An exploratory study can be done to find out the attitude towards retirement by the health professionals.
- A comparative study can be done to assess the level of stress among male and female retirees.

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