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Prevalence of stress and anxiety among middle aged couples in new normal scenario

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Abstract

Middle adulthood is sometimes referred to as the "sandwich generation" since it is the time when people are juggling caring for both their parents and their children. The purpose of the current study was to determine the level of stress and anxiety among middle-aged couples in the new normal situation. Where people acclimated to the COVID-19 infectious sickness and the new way of life. For the study exploratory design was chosen, and a sample of 120 respondents from Udaipur City, Rajasthan, were obtained using the snowball sampling method. The findings showed that the participants experienced moderate levels of stress and low levels of anxiety, with no discernible differences between husbands and wives.

Keywords: Stress, anxiety, middle aged, new normal

1. Introduction

The period of life between early adulthood and old age is referred to as middle age, sometimes known as middle adulthood. Among the many changes that occur during middle adulthood are physical, cognitive, and social distinctions. These changes result in tremendous stress, thus it is important to grasp and appreciate coping mechanisms for managing stress and anxiety. Middle adulthood is frequently viewed negatively, which contributes to the idea of a midlife crisis. 92% of middle adults believe there is a midlife crisis and 71% of middle adults know someone who has experienced a midlife crisis (Freund & Ritter, 2009) ^[2]. Our bodies' response to a demand or challenge is stress. When it lasts for a long time, stress may be harmful to our health. For example, short-term stress might be beneficial when it helps us avoid danger or achieve a deadline. (Berger, 2014) ^[1]. People adjusted to a new normal during or after the pandemic and become accustomed to the lifestyle modifications necessary to protect both themselves and the society from infectious diseases. The changes have occurred in the field of education, health sector, economic system and the lifestyle of the people. The various aspects that are adapted by people during the new normal scenario are new normal in the field of education, new normal in the field of health system, travelling in new normal situation, life-style modifications in post-COVID-19 (Rohisha & Jibin, 2021) ^[4]. Anxiety is a typical emotion that is our brain's response to stress and serves as an early warning system for impending danger. According to the most recent official wellness statistics, middle-aged persons are the least content, have the least life satisfaction, and experience the highest levels of anxiety. People may be suffering from the multiple responsibilities that come with middle life, since many are responsible for both their young children and their ageing parents (Gayle, 2016) ^[3].

2. Objective: To assess and compare the level of stress and anxiety among middle aged couples in new normal scenario

3. Methodology: For conducting the research study explorative method was used, a total of 120 middle aged couples were selected including 60 husbands and 60 wives from Udaipur City, Rajasthan. Snowball sampling method was used to collect the sample. Questionnaire was developed to assess stress and anxiety were, the scale comprised of 68 items and it was sub divided into physical stress, financial stress and socio-emotional stress. Five point scoring scale was used for scoring which were 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for neutral, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. Similarly anxiety questionnaire was comprised of 25 items

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divided into s health anxiety and socio- emotional anxiety, four point scoring scale was used for scoring which were, 1 for never, 2 for often, 3 for sometimes and 4 for always. Frequency and percentage was measured to interpret the level of stress among middle aged couples, t-test was used for comparison among husbands and wives.

4. Results

4.1 Age: From the results it was found that 51.6% husbands and 91.6% wives belong to age group of 45-50 years, while 48.3% husbands and 8.3% wives belongs to age group of 51-55 years.

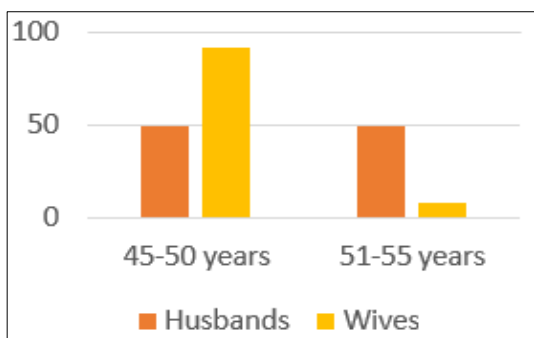


Fig 1: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of age group

4.2 Educational Qualification: It was found that 81.6% husbands and 61.6% wives were qualified for graduation and above, 25% husbands and 15% wives had passed senior secondary, while 11.6% husbands and 13.3% wives were illiterate.

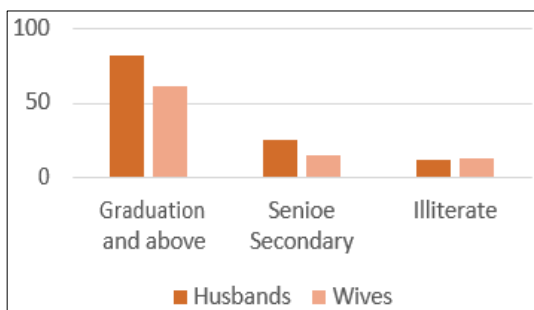


Fig 2: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of Educational Qualification

4.3 Type of Institution Working: Majority of the respondents worked in private sector that is 83.3% husbands and 33.3% wives, while 18.3% husbands and 16.6% wives worked in government sector.

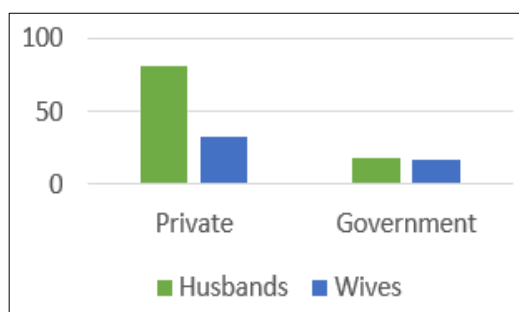


Fig 3: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of type of institution working

4.4 Type of family: More than half of the respondents belongs to nuclear family that is 83.3% while 16.6% were from joint family.

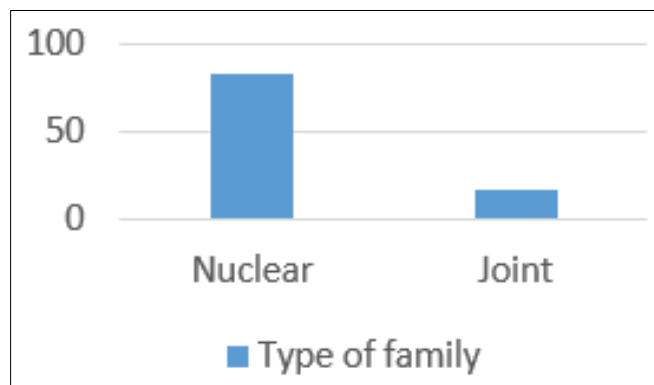


Fig 4: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of type of family

4.5 Annual income: It was found that more than half of the husbands 73.3% and 40% of wives had income below 5 lakh, while 11.6% husbands and 1.6% wives had income of 6-12 lakhs annually.

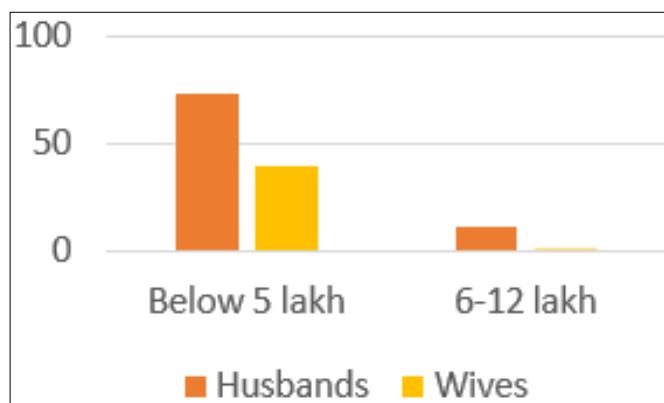


Fig 5: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of type of family

4.6 Level of stress and anxiety among middle aged couples Majority of respondents had moderate level of stress. Among 120 middle aged couples, 90% husbands and 91.7% wives experienced moderate level of stress, followed by 10% of husbands and 8.3% wives had experienced low level of stress. None of the respondents had high level of stress. Whereas 76.7% husbands and 80% women were in a good state and they had low level of anxiety, on the other hand some of the respondents 21.7% husbands and 20% wives had moderate level of anxiety, only 1.7% husbands experienced high level of anxiety.

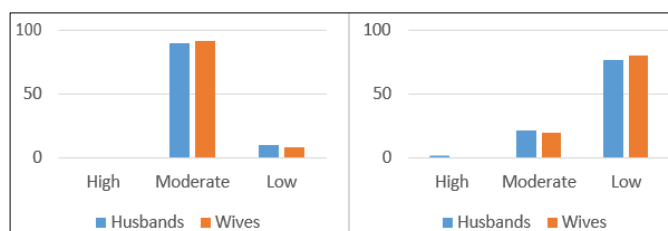


Fig 6: Percentage distribution of husbands and wives for stress and anxiety

Table 1: Comparison among husbands and wives for stress and anxiety

S. No	Category	Mean \pm SD	t-value
Overall Stress	Husbands	194.20 \pm 28.97	0.16 NS
	Wives	195.10 \pm 23.44	
Overall Anxiety	Husbands	42.28 \pm 10.38	0.05 NS
	Wives	44.03 \pm 7.44	

NS: Non-Significant

Table 1 indicated the mean value, standard deviation and t-value, which determine whether there is any significant difference among husbands and wives in terms of stress and anxiety. The data clearly revealed that there is very slight difference in the mean scores between husbands and wives as majority of them had moderate stress level while more than half of the respondents had low level of anxiety. The table also highlighted that there is no significant difference among husbands and wives as both of them had come across same type of challenges and stressful situations at the time of pandemic. Moreover, they had adopted suitable coping strategies to overcome the stress and anxiety they had experienced and adjusted to the new normal situation.

5. Conclusion

According to the results of the current survey, the majority of middle-aged couples were between the ages of 45 and 50, most had a bachelor's degree or above, were employed in the private sector, and earned less than 5 lakhs per year. Great numbers of the respondents had moderate levels of stress and low anxiety, according to the study, which evaluated the prevalence of stress and anxiety in the new normal scenario, or more specifically, the situation after COVID-19, the pandemic that had a negative impact on half of the world's population. The outcome also revealed non-significant difference among husbands and wives. This may be because majority of the respondents come from middle-class families and are resilient enough to recover from any kind of challenging situation.

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