

Impact of Some Psychological Factors on Stressful Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Stress is burning topic of modern era. Large population of world is suffering from stress and is affecting the physical and Psychological health. Psychologists have mentioned that stress is originated due to insufficient balance between person's need, capability and the environmental demands. It is also an universal fact that, facing a similar environmental/situational demands some people feels more stress and some feels less stress. The present study is aimed to see, whether the personality factor or makeup is responsible for stressful behaviour ?

The study was conducted on a sample of 40 students of M.A. semester- II of P.G. centres located at Ara headquarter town of Bhojpur district of Bihar. The sample consisted of 50% male and 50% female respondents and their age range was 21-23 years from all the three categories-high, middle & lower SES, selected through incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique. In present study stressful behaviour was dependent variable while respondent's Thpe A/B behavioural pattern & hardy personality were independent variables. Singh Personal Stress source Inventory (pssi), Type A/B Behavioural pattern (ABBP's) Hindi version by Dhar & Jain and Singh Psychological hardiness Scale (SPHS) was used as tools of the study. To analyse the obtained data, t-ratio was computed. Conclusion emerged that- Type A/B behavioural pattern and Hardy personality have significant impact upon stressful behaviour.

1. Introduction

Stress is evolved from the latin word stringere. Levi (1996) interpreted stress as outward pressure which is originated by a numbers of demands (stressors), such as an insufficient balance between person's – need, capability what the environment offers and what it demands.

Stress has been recognized as a major malady of modern society. Even though some stress is helpful for individuals in meeting new challenges, enduring high and unrelieved stress can lead to Psychological, Physical, and behavioural ailment. Physical stress is primarily concerned with one's biological responses to an event, psychological stress targets on one's cognitive and affective responses to the gauging of threat, while social stress focuses on the resultant disruption of one's social system connecting an event.

A high level of stress has been recognized as a predictor of depression and suicidal ideation in young people (Dixon, et al., 1993). Similarly, physical ill health is caused by many factors, stress has also been found to be strongly associated with the onset of illness and perceived or actual deterioration in well being (Byrne, 2000) stress has been reported to lead to the development of negative affect and a reduction in psychological well being (Beasley, et al, 2002). In terms of behavioural and social stress system, it appears that stressful experiences motivate individuals to engage in a variety of behavioural methods, many of which are considered to be negatively motivated. (Rao et al, 2000; Sharma, 2000)

Stress affects three primary areas: the systemic or physical, the psychological or emotional and the behavioural or social, Selye (1978) reported that stress could be in a

variety of physical illness. Reynolds et al (2001) reported heightened rates of somatic complaints such as headaches and stomachaches among low income urban youths. Dinan (2001) suggested that depression was a common outcome from chronic stress and can lead to cardiovascular disease, as well as a 4-5 fold increase in the risk of myocardial infarction.

Several studies have indicated that high stress was inversely related to psychological well-being. Poltavski, et al., (2003) stated that the greater a subject's stress levels, the higher the anxiety and probability of illness. Schmeelk - Cone and Zimmerman (2003) reported chronic level of stress leads to more anxiety and depression.

Depression has multi-faceted symptoms:- feeling dull, tired, empty or sad. Thus, depression is not just an emotional state, but also a physical and behavioural state. Ciarrochi, et al, (2002) reported that stress was associated with reported depression, hopelessness and suicidal ideation among people with high emotional perception.

Behavioural stress is the response or reaction of behaviour generated by the stressor. The stressful experience motivates the individual to engage in a variety of behavioural coping methods.

Schafer (1996) divided the behavioural stress symptoms into two types – direct & indirect. Direct symptoms are irritability, compulsive behaviours, not staying with one activity too long, talking faster than usual, being short-tempered, difficulty sitting still and being withdrawn. Indirect symptoms – health risk behaviour and negative social interaction.

It is fact that some people unable to cope the stress and becomes physically and mentally sick but some people

seems to thrive on stress instead of letting stress wear them down, these people have what is called the hardy personality, a term coined by Suzamec Kobasa (1979). Hardy personality people differ from ordinary people in three ways –

- Hardy people have a deep sense of commitment to their values, beliefs, sense of identity, work and family life.
- Hardy people also feel that they are in control of their lives and what happens to them.
- Hardy people tend to interpret events in primary appraisal differently than people who are not hardy. When things go wrong, they do not see a frightening problem to be avoided but instead a challenge to be met and answered.

In short we can say that hardiness is defined as a personality comprising three related general dispositions – commitment, control and challenge (3Cs) that function as a resistance resource in the encounter with stressful conditions.

On the basis of behaviour pattern Cardiologists have divided people’s personality in two type – A & B. Type A personality group possesses behaviour pattern characterized by excessively competitive, hard-driven, achievement-oriented, impatient and some time hostile behaviours. The Type A individual is described as being easily aroused, very concerned over wasting time and often angry. This type of people are often tend to coronary-disease-prone.

Type B behavioural pattern people are relaxed, easy going and do not suffer from a sense of time urgency. These people are not impatient or hostile and are able to relax without guilt (Friedman & Rosenman, 1974; Friedman et al 1994; Dhar & Jain 1988).

2. Objectives

- i) To assess the impact of Type A/B behavioural pattern on stressful behaviour.
- ii) To assess the impact of psychological hardiness on stressful behaviour.

3. Hypothesis

- H₁** - Respondents of Type A behavioural pattern would be more stressed than type B respondents.
- H₂** - Respondents having high and low hardy personality would significantly differ on stressful behaviour.

4. Variables

- 1) Dependent Variable: Stressful behaviour.
- 2) Independent Variable:
 - a) Type A & B behavioural pattern
 - b) Hardy Personality

5. Sample

Present study was conducted on a sample of 40 (20 male & 20 female) M.A. Semester - II students of P.G. centre located at ARa headquarter town of Bhojpur District of Bihar. Respondents age range was 21-23 years and the age mean was 22 years 2 months & S.D. 3.72. The respondents were

related through incidental-cum-purposive sampling technique and belonged to all the three S.E.S. categories.

6. Tool Used

- 1) Singh Personal Stress Sources Inventory (PSSI); Hindi version by Arun K. Singh & et al
- 2) Type A/B Behavioural Pattern (ABBPS) Hindi Version by Dhar & Jain.
- 3) Singh Psychological Hardiness Scale (SPHS) Hindi Version by Arun Kumar Singh.
- 4) P.D.S.

7. Procedure

In beginning researcher established a good rapport with respondents and were requested to be sincere and honest in answering the questions of the booklet. For motivating the respondents, they were told that the result of the study would finally be made known to them at the end. The result would reveal some important elements of their personality.

The researchers had provided respondents a big class room to sit comfortably then at first administered P.D.S. on them and when they returned P.D.S. they were given 15 minutes rest. After that Personal stress source Inventory (PSSI), Type A/B Behavioural pattern (ABBPS) and Psychological Hardiness Scale (SPHS) was administered upon them one by one, and were given 15 minutes rest at the end of each and every scale administration. During whole process of obtaining the data from the respondents the researchers were moving all the time in class room to ensure that respondents were taking the test seriously.

When the respondents completed all the tests/Scales they were thanked for their cooperation and were provided some refreshment.

8. Result & Discussion

Two differential hypothesis were formulated to test and the obtained results, their discussion and interpretations were presented below –

TABLE – 1
Mean, SD and t-ratio of Type A/B Behavioural Pattern on the measure of stressful Behaviour.

Behavioural Pattern	N	M	SD	t	df	p
Type A	20	83.68	7.61	4.26	38	<0.01
Type B	20	74.14	6.55			

Table 1 reveals that type A/B behavioural pattern has significant impact on stressful behaviour. Result obtained to first hypothesis that respondents of Type A behavioural pattern would exhibit more stressful behaviour than the type B respondents has been sustained. The mean difference between the group was significant (t= 4.26, df=38, P<0.01). Many researcher have reported that type A behaviour lead to more stressful behaviour. Type A behaviour is mainly characterized by a strong sense of time urgency, impatience, being completive, hostile and easily angered.

Whereas Type B patterns showed absence of those above mentioned behavioural pattern (Dhar& Jain, 1988; Friedman &Rosenman, 1974). Many researchers have reported that Type A behavioural pattern and personal

efficacy is negatively related. The difference was found to be significant beyond 0.05 and 0.01 levels.

TABLE – 2

Mean, SD and t-ratio of High and low Hardy Personality groups on the measure of stressful Behaviour.

Hardy	N	M	SD	t	df	p
High	20	65.12	5.33	4.11	38	<0.01
Low	20	73.83	7.87			

Result displayed in Table – 2 shows that Mean of high hardy group was 65.12 and Means of low hardy group was 73.83 on the measure of stressful behaviour. Since the difference was significant ($t=4.11$, $df=38$, $P= <0.01$). Thus the second hypothesis has been retained. It could be reasonably expected that high hardy respondents are low stressed as compared to low hardy respondents. Many researchers have found that hardy personality and stressful behaviour are negatively correlated (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Hardiness (Psychological), alternatively referred to as psychological hardiness, personality hardiness or cognitive hardiness in the literature, is a personality style first introduced by Kobasa (1979). Kobasa (1979) described a

pattern of personality characteristics that distinguished managers and executives who remained healthy under life stress, as compared to these who developed health problems.

9. Conclusions

Following conclusion have been emerged from the above interpretation and discussion: -

- Type A/B behavioural pattern has significant impact on stressful behaviour.
- Hardy personality has significant impact on stressful behaviour.

10. Suggestion for Future Research

Further study is warranted in the light of :-

- By taking larger sample of heterogeneous nature.
- Demographic variables like density of population, size of family, Level of education, employment/unemployment, family obligations, birth order, domestic violence, peer social relationship, social support and value system should be taken for further study.

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