

# Management of Stress and Anxiety Among Institutionalized Elderly

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**Abstract** - The present study was undertaken with the aim of helping the Institutionalized elderly manage their stress and anxiety. From Jacob care center, Coimbatore, 50 Institutionalized elderly were selected by purposive sampling and assessed using Stress Inventory and Manifest Anxiety Inventory (Hemalatha & Nandhini, Revised, 2005). Then, the sample were provided with Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness Exercises individually for about 45 minutes for each subject for a period of 3 months. After intervention, the subjects were reassessed using the same questionnaires. Before intervention, 2% of the sample had 'High' Stress, 78% had Moderate stress and 20% had Low stress. After intervention, the stress levels of the sample had slightly reduced and it was found that 92% of the sample had Low stress and 8% had Moderate stress. None of the sample had High stress. With regard to Manifest Anxiety, before intervention, 82% of the sample had 'Moderate' Anxiety. 18% of the sample experienced Low manifest anxiety and none of them had 'High' or 'Very High' Anxiety. After intervention, the manifest anxiety levels of the sample became moderate in 12% and Low in 86% of the sample and Very Low in 2%. There was a significant reduction in the mean stress from 'High' (6.6) before intervention to 'Low' (2.68) after intervention and in Anxiety from 'High' (11.02) to 'Low' (5.2) after intervention, which was significant at level. After, Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation Therapy and Mindfulness exercises; there was a drastic reduction in the Stress and Anxiety of the sample.

**Index Terms** - Anxiety, Stress, Mindfulness, Institutionalized elderly.

## INTRODUCTION

### STRESS

Stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from any event or thought that makes you

feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. Stress is your body's reaction to a challenge or demand. In short bursts, stress can be positive, such as when it helps you avoid danger or meet a deadline. But when stress lasts for a long time, it may harm your health. Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain. Stress is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action. Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way you respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to your overall well-being. Sometimes, the best way to manage your stress involves changing your situation. At other times, the best strategy involves changing the way you respond to the situation. Stress is a normal feeling.

### ANXIETY

Anxiety is your body's natural response to stress. It's a feeling of fear or apprehension about what's to come. The first day of school, going to a job interview, or giving a speech may cause most people to feel fearful and nervous. But if your feelings of anxiety are extreme, last for longer than six months, and are interfering with your life, you may have an anxiety disorder.

### METHODOLOGY

#### Objectives

- To assess the Level of Stress and Anxiety in the Institutionalized elderly.
- To identify the manifested symptoms of Stress and Anxiety in sample.
- To help the sample manage their Stress and Anxiety through Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness exercises.

**Area**

Jacob care centre, Coimbatore was selected to carry out the study. The reasons for selecting this area were,

**Sample**

Fifty female Institutionalized elderly from Jacob care centre, Coimbatore were selected to serve as the sample. They were in the age range of 20 to 35 years.

**Tools**

- Case study Schedule was used to collect information on personal data and other relevant information about the Institutionalized elderly (Annexure I)
- Stress Inventory constructed by Hemalatha and Nandhini (Revised, 2005) to assess the level of Stress among the Sample (Annexure II)
- Manifest Anxiety Inventory constructed by Hemalatha and Nandhini (Revised, 2005) to assess the level of Anxiety among the Sample (Annexure III)
- Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation technique and Mindfulness exercise was used.

**Procedure**

The Case Study Schedule was used to obtain information from the sample individually. The information gathered includes personal data and other relevant information. Stress Inventory and Manifest Anxiety Inventory was administered to the sample to assess their level of stress and anxiety. Then, the samples were provided with the psychological intervention called Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation session lasting for 30 minutes and Mindfulness exercise for 15 minutes. The samples were assessed with the same tool after intervention.

**Treatment**

\*Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness.

**Reassessment**

After administrating Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness Exercises, all the subjects were reassessed using Stress Inventory and Manifest Anxiety Inventory.

**TABLE I Level of Stress in Institutionalized elderly Before Intervention**

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
Very High Stress	0	0
High Stress	1	2
Moderate Stress	39	78
Low Stress	10	20

Table I shows that level of stress in Institutionalized elderly before intervention was ‘High’ (2%), ‘Moderate’ (78%), and ‘Low’ (20%). This could be due to stressors that include in one’s own life, which lowered tolerance toward Stress. “There is high level of stress in the Institutionalized elderly” is rejected

**TABLE II Level of Anxiety in Institutionalized elderly Before Intervention**

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
Very High Anxiety	0	0
High Anxiety	0	0
Moderate Anxiety	41	82
Low Anxiety	9	18
Very Low Anxiety	0	0

Table II shows that level of Anxiety in Institutionalized elderly before intervention was ‘Moderate’ (82%), and ‘Low’ (18%). This could be due to fear of the unknown, stress, feelings of insecurity over work or money, and daily pressures add to hormonal changes during pregnancy and may make women feel overwhelmed. “There is high level of Anxiety in the Institutionalized elderly” is rejected.

**TABLE III Level of Stress in Institutionalized elderly After Intervention**

Level of Stress	Frequency	Percentage
Very High Stress	0	0
High Stress	0	0
Moderate Stress	4	8
Low Stress	46	92

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

Table III shows that level of stress in Institutionalized elderly after intervention there was a drastic reduction in level of Stress and Stress decreased considerably. None of them had ‘Very High Stress’ or ‘High Stress’, 8% had ‘Moderate Stress’, and 92% had ‘Low Stress’ after intervention. The drastic reduction of stress in the Institutionalized elderly was due to the effect of Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation Therapy and Mindfulness Exercises.

TABLE IV Level of Anxiety in Institutionalized elderly After Intervention

Level of Anxiety	Frequency	Percentage
Very High Anxiety	0	0
High Anxiety	0	0
Moderate Anxiety	6	12
Low Anxiety	43	86
Very Low Anxiety	1	2

Table IV shows that level of Anxiety in Institutionalized elderly after intervention there was a drastic reduction in level of Anxiety and Anxiety decreased considerably. None of them had ‘Very High Anxiety’ or ‘High Anxiety’, 12% had ‘Moderate Anxiety’, 86% had ‘Low Anxiety’ and 2% had ‘Very Low Anxiety’ after intervention. The drastic reduction of Anxiety in the Institutionalized elderly was due to the effect of Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation Therapy and Mindfulness Exercises.

Table VI Significance of difference in Stress Before and After Intervention

Condition	Mean	Standard deviation	t-Value	p-Value
Before Intervention	6.6	4.86	10.299	<0.00001
After Intervention	2.68	2.39		

Table V shows that mean difference in Stress before and after intervention. The mean Stress in the group was ‘Moderate’ (M = 6.6) before intervention but after intervention its reduced to ‘Low’ (M = 2.68), which was significant at p<0.05 level. Hence, hypothesis “Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation and

Mindfulness Exercises will help in the managing Stress in samples” is accepted.

Table VI Significance of difference in Anxiety Before and After Intervention

Condition	Mean	Standard deviation	t-Value	p-Value
Before Intervention	11.02	12.06	9.13	<0.00001
After Intervention	5.2	8.24		

Table VI shows that Mean difference in Anxiety before and after intervention. The mean Anxiety in the group was ‘Moderate’ (M = 11.02) before intervention but after intervention its reduced to ‘Low’ (M = 5.2), which was significant at p<0.05 level. Hence, hypothesis “Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness Exercises will help in the managing Anxiety in samples” is accepted.

Table VII Relation between Stress and Anxiety

Variable	Mean score	Standard deviation	r-Value	p-Value
Stress	6.6	4.86	0.3184	<0.024229
Anxiety	11.02	12.06		

Table VII shows that correlation between Stress and Anxiety of the sample (r=0.3184). This value is statistically significant at p<0.05 level. Hence, hypothesis “Jacobson’s Progressive Muscular Relaxation and Mindfulness Exercises will help in the managing Stress and Anxiety in samples” is accepted.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before the administration of Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation

- The mean stress was ‘6.6’.
- Most of the sample had ‘Moderate’ Stress.
- The mean Anxiety was ‘11.2’.
- Most of the sample had ‘Moderate’ Anxiety.

After the administration of Jacobson Progressive Muscular Relaxation:

- The mean stress was reduced to ‘2.68’.

- Stress reduced drastically from ‘Moderate’ to ‘Low’.
- The mean Anxiety was reduced to ‘5.2’.
- Anxiety reduced drastically from ‘Moderate’ to ‘Low’.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Psychologist can be appointed in all institutionalized to maintain the mental wellbeing of the people effectively.
- Psychologist can be appointed to help Institutionalized elderly to manage their stress and anxiety.
- Awareness programs can be conducted in the public places.
- Counselling and psychotherapies can be administered to reduce stress and anxiety.

#### REFERENCES

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