International Journal of Social Sciences
Citation: IJSS: **11**(03): 189-195, September 2022
DOI: 10.46852/2249-6637.03.2022.7

Analysis of the Level of Stress Among Rural Youth in Yavatmal and Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra

Manish Parmar, Premlata Singh and Praveen Kumar*

Department of Agricultural Extension, ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, India

*Corresponding author: prvnkumr01@gmail.com (**ORCID ID:** 0000-0003-1617-1149)

Received: 07-06-2022 **Revised:** 24-08-2022 **Accepted:** 03-09-2022

ABSTRACT

Youth are the future of a nation and the overall development of any nation depends on the regimented, active and competent strength of youth. An exploratory study with *ex post facto* design conducted with randomly selected 160 sample rural youth from two districts Yavatmal and Ahmadnagar of Maharastra recorded various responses on determining the level of stress caused by different stressors using appropriate statistical tool i.e. Rural Youth Stress Scale. Respondents distribution based on their overall stress level has resulted in 46 per cent of the rural youth have medium level stress (45.62 %) and around 27% of the respondent had high as well as low stress. District wise distribution of the respondents revealed that mean stress score of the Yavatmal district (102.16) was slightly higher than Ahmednagar (99.71) but not significantly different. 48.75% respondents from Yavatmal had medium stress score i.e. (95-109) with 26.25% respondents scored high level of stress and 25 % had scored low levels while Around 44 % of respondents in Ahmednagar had medium level of stress and 37.5 % and 18.75 % low and high levels of stress respectively. Around 39.62 % of the female youth had medium stress level as compared to males (45.79%). T value calculated from Independent samples test when compared to tabulated value, it shows no significance at 0.732 and 0.649 level of significance results in no significant difference between the mean stress level of male and female respondents. Results from Pearson correlation coefficient revealed that there was significant and negative correlation between the stress level and land holding, annual family income, and mass media utilization at 1 percent level of significance while strongly negative and significance correlation was found. So this study has resulted in overall understanding of levels of stress among rural youth in yavatmal and Ahmednagar districts of Maharashtra.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 46 per cent of the rural youth were having stress at medium level whereas, approximately equal number of respondents (27%) of the respondent were having stress at high and low level.
- Around two fifth (39.62%) of the female rural youth perceived medium stress level but this number was higher in male respondents (45.79%) whereas, when we talk about highly stressed rural youth then the number of female respondents (33.96%) was slightly higher than the number of male rural youth (26.16%).
- The overall aspirations of the rural youth was also found significantly positively correlated at 5 percent level of significance but there was not strong correlation between the perceived stress level and overall aspirations of the rural youth

Keywords: Stress, Aspiration, Youth, Employment

How to cite this article: Parmar, M., Singh, P. and Kumar, P. (2022). Analysis of the Level of Stress Among Rural Youth in Yavatmal and Ahmednagar District of Maharashtra. *Int. J. Soc. Sci.*, **11**(03): 189-195.

Source of Support: None; **Conflict of Interest:** None

Youth are the future of a nation and the overall development of any nation depends on the regimented, active and competent strength of youth. According to the official figures for the 2011 census, there are about 460 million young people in the country and this number is predicted to increase up to 464 million by 2021. Out of this population, about 70.00 percent are rural youth and the remaining 30.00 per cent are urban youth (Census, 2011). National Youth Policy (2014) modified it and defined youth as persons in the age group of 15-29 years. With their enthusiasm, energy, capacity to do hard work and willingness to serve others, rural youth have a vital role to play in improving the welfare of the community and in agricultural development. Rural youth are the precious human assets which can play a crucial role in the activities of development, agriculture and other related activities. The Indian constitution provides for the human rights and freedoms but the system is not capable of fulfilling all the rights and thus, in a democratic environment they are turned into aspirations. When these aspirations are not fulfilled they results into stress.

French (1963) stated that stress can be viewed as individual's reactions to the characteristics of work environment which appear threatening. It points to a poor fit between individual capabilities and their work environment in which excessive demands are made upon the individuals or the individuals are not fully equipped to handle a particular work situation. Oltmanns and Emery (1995), while quoting the earlier definition of *stress* by Lazarus (as the combination of a difficult event and an adverse appraisal of it) have termed the phenomenon as *distress*. According to them, subjective distress is the individual's unique cognitive appraisal of stressor as being stressful. According to Morgan *et al.* (1986) beyond some point, *stress* becomes *distress* and what acts to produce distress varies greatly from person to person, but chief among them are annoying or dangerous events in our environments; major changes, or transitions, in life which force us to cope in new ways; and anticipated or actual threats to our self-esteem. There are three approaches to stress namely, stimulus oriented approach, response oriented approach and psychodynamic approach; but the present investigation was viewed from the point of view of psychodynamic approach. This approach views stress and distress as an entire phenomenon of stimulus, response and intervening variables.

In this context, in the present investigation, stress is operationalised as the perceived intensity of discomfort, experienced by the rural youth as a result of different unexpected events and undesirable situations in their life. Occurrence of stress particularly associated with its environments and several other factors. According to Morgan *et al.* (1986) almost any change in the environment – even a pleasant change, such as vacation – demands some coping; and a little stress is useful in helping us to adapt. But beyond some point, stress becomes distress. What acts to produce distress varies greatly from person to person but chief among them are annoying or dangerous events in our environments; major changes, or transitions, in life which force us to cope in new ways; and anticipated or actual threats to our self-esteem. Many studies have been conducted by different researchers in different scenario and time period but these studies are lacking in determining the level of stress in their sample respondents.

This stress can be easily cope up with different strategies as Sinha (2013) noted that adolescent can easily cope with their academic stress by using stress relief techniques, managing work, taking help from friends and specific counselors. Parents can also help their adolescents in overcoming academic stress by being supportive, paying attention to their wants, needs, having realistic expectations and teaching children to overcome obstacles and so on but at first the understanding about the level and magnitude of stress among the respondents is necessary to know. In this aspect of research there are some studies are available in the field of determination of level of stress among rural youth but still there is no integrated study available which studied level of stress among the rural youth. So there are many gaps in study of level of stress. Therefore a multidimensional study on level of stress among rural youth was conducted which will help in gaining more insights into the different levels of stress among rural youth fulfilling the gaps.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An exploratory study was carried out in purposively selected Yavatmal and Ahmadnagar districts of Maharastra. *Ex post facto* research design was adopted for this study, since the phenomenon has already taken place. In this research rural youth of the above mentioned districts were taken as sample of the study. The total sample size was 160. Respondents were selected through proportionate random sampling and data were collected through personal interview technique with the help of well-structured and pre tested interview schedule.

To measure the perceived degree of stress or discomfort by the rural youth a Rural Youth Stress Scale (RYSS), a summated rating scale was developed. Initially 46 items were prepared and circulated among 40 judges who are the professionals in extension, for evaluation of the relevancy of the statements on a 3 point continuum. Out of these, 18 judges returned the draft with relevant suggestions. Based on the judges rating, evaluations and suggestions, 9 statements were discarded on the basis relevancy weightage less than 0.75 then the remaining 36 items/statements were subjected to item analysis to represented non-sampling area to the 60 rural youth and 8 statements on the basis of t-value less than 1.75 were discarded and the reliability and validity were calculated. The final stress scale consisting of 28 statements was developed and used for final data collection. Rural youth's rating of the scale items was done on a five-point scale of 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The obtainable score for each respondent ranged from 28 to 140. Later during analysis of the scale items the respondents were categorized into three categories named as low level of stress, medium and high level of stress with the help of cumulative square root frequency method. Relationship between independent variables like Age, Education, Father's education, Mother's education, Family size, Land holding, Annual income, Mass media exposure, Extension contact, Social participation, Achievement motivation, Economic motivation with the extent of overall aspiration of rural youth was analysed using Pearson correlation coefficient. Empirical data were tabulated and analysed using Statistical Package for social sciences and R studio software for computing frequency, percentage, correlation analysis were used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Stress is conceived as the intensity of discomfort experienced by the rural youth as a result of unexpected events like death of a family member or heavy losses in farming or unexpected and undesired academic results due to various factors. This psychological stressful situation may lead the people to take the extreme steps in their life. They may take away their life whenever they experience these types of undesired and unexpected situations and feel that all the doors of hope are closed. In the present study the stress among rural youth was operationalized as the perceived intensity of discomfort experienced by the rural youth as a result of different unexpected events and undesirable situations in their life. To measure the perceived degree of stress by the rural youth a Rural Youth Stress Scale (RYS), a Likert scale was developed and after relevancy measurement and item analysis, 28 statements (related to various unexpected events and undesirable situations were finalized for measurement of level of perceived stress among rural youth. The respondents were categorized on the basis of their total stress score into low, medium and highly stressed categories through cumulative square root frequency classification. The frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents are given in the table 1. In the same table the respondents are divided into same three categories on the basis of, "Mean + 1SD" way of classification just to compare between these two methods of classification and which shows the superiority of cumulative square root frequency method over the later one in which most of the respondents fall into the medium categories while the former one provides a good representation of respondents into all classes.

28 statements of the Rural youth stress scale are mentioned here

1. I feel very much tensed due to the fear of unemployment and job security.

2. I feel worried and tensed due to not being able to balance between time at work and time at home.
3. I feel upset due to illness of my family members/ friends.
4. I worry very much about the rising cost of cultivation of farming day by day.
5. I face so many difficulties to get credit from the banks or any other credit institutions which make me feel helpless.
6. Doing farming is going to be difficult and risk full job now which worries me a lot to find another source of livelihood.
7. I often feel stressed due to the burden of indebtedness/repayment of loans on me or my family.
8. I feel disappointed due to not getting the exam results as desired.
9. I get angry at my ill health which restricts me to do the things with greater efficiency.
10. I become a little anxious by thinking here how I will be able to take the responsibilities of brother / sister, spouse, mother / father, friend in my life.
11. Not able to take the decisions about my future haunts me a lot.
12. I cannot sleep well due to feeling worried about the family problems.
13. I feel depressed and down due to the sudden and unexpected death of my family member
14. Not getting engaged or married with my growing age worries my family members which eventually affect me.
15. The regret of not getting higher education due to lack of money always bothers me.
16. I feel worried by thinking how my father will arrange dowry for my marriage(girl) or how I will arrange dowry for my sister's marriage (boy).
17. Clashes between my father and uncles or between me and my brothers related to land fragmentation make me stressed.
18. Marketing of farm produce is a very difficult job which puts someone in a helpless situation.
19. The prices of the farm produce are not remunerative which make farmers situation more worsen.
20. Lack of resources in farming leads to poor yield which make my situation worsen.
21. Climate change is creating difficulties and loss in farming which worries me.
22. Farming is a vicious cycle of uncertainties and loss which haunts me a lot.
23. I feel upset because of unexpected death of a farm animal at my home.
24. I do not get social support from the society.
25. I do not get financial support from the govt. or any other financial institutions during the time of farm crisis.
26. Due to lack of money poor standards of living dishearts me.
27. I find it difficult to avail the benefits of government schemes.
28. I feel tensed and disturbed due to interpersonal conflicts.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on their level of stress

Categories	f	%
Low stressed(<93.94)	44	27.5
Medium stressed (93.94-107.14)	73	45.625
Highly stressed (>107.14)	43	26.875
Total	**160**	**100**
Mean	100.93	
Standard Deviation	10.77	
Range	67-123	
Low stressed (<Mean-1SD)	25	
Medium stressed (Mean+1SD)	106	
Highly stressed (>Mean+1SD)	29	
Total	**160**	

It can be seen from the table 1 that the mean stress level score of the rural youth was 100.93 with standard deviation of 10.77. The stress level score ranged from 67 to 123. It indicates wide variance of stress among rural youth. When looking at the frequency distribution of rural youth on their total stress score, is was found that around 46 per cent of the rural youth were having stress

at medium level whereas, approximately equal number of respondents (27%) of the respondent were having stress at high and low level. The overall stress level of respondents from both the districts as well as from both the gender was also measured separately and the results are presented in the table 1 and 2 respectively.

The data from the table 2 reveals that the mean stress score of Yavatmal (102.16) was slightly higher than the mean stress score of Ahmednagar (99.71) but not significantly different. Near about half of the respondents (48.75%) from Yavatmal district had medium level of stress score between 95 to 109, followed by 26.25 percent with high level of stress and 25 per cent of the rural youth had low level of stress. Whereas, in Ahmednagar district, around 44 per cent of the respondents perceived medium level of stress followed by 37.5 per cent respondents perceived low level of stress and only 18.75 per cent of the rural youth were highly stressed.

The table 3 shows that, around two fifth (39.62%) of the female rural youth perceived medium stress level but this number was higher in male respondents (45.79%) whereas, when we talk about highly stressed rural youth then the number of female respondents (33.96%) was slightly higher than the number of male rural youth (26.16%). The mean stress score of female youth was 101.49 with standard deviation 10.99 whereas, the mean stress score of male respondents was 100.66 with standard deviation 10.71.

Table 2: District wise distribution of respondents based on their overall stress level

Categories	Yavatmal		Categories	Ahmednagar	
	f	%		f	%
Low Stressed (<95.95)	20	25	Low Stressed (<92.90)	30	37.5
Medium Stressed (95.95-109.19)	39	48.75	Medium Stressed (92.92-104.88)	35	43.75
Highly Stressed (>109.19)	21	26.25	Highly Stressed (>104.88)	15	18.75
Total	80	100	Total	80	100
Mean	102.16		Mean	99.71	
Standard Deviation	10.11		Standard Deviation	11.33	

Table 3: Gender wise distribution of respondents based on their overall stress level

Categories	Yavatmal		Categories	Ahmednagar	
	f	%		f	%
Low Stressed (<94.17)	14	26.41	Low Stressed (<94.58)	30	28.03
Medium Stressed (94.17-106.77)	21	39.62	Medium Stressed (94.58-106.92)	49	45.79
Highly Stressed (>106.77)	18	33.96	Highly Stressed (>106.92)	28	26.16
Total	53	100	Total	107	100
Mean	101.49		Mean	100.66	
Standard Deviation	10.99		Standard Deviation	10.71	

To determine any significant difference between the mean stress level among male and female respondents, an independent t-test was performed and the results are presented in the table 4 and 5.

Table 4: Gender wise t statistics for difference between mean stress level

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Female	53	101.49	10.998	1.511
Male	107	100.66	10.711	1.036

Table 4 shows the mean score, standard deviation and standard error mean of both female and male respondents. Assuming the null hypothesis that "there is no significance difference between the mean stress score of female and male respondents' an independent t-test was performed and the table 5 reveals that both f-value and t-value were insignificant at 0.732 and 0.649 level of significance. Hence, alternate hypothesis has been rejected and null hypothesis has been accepted that, there is no significant difference between the mean stress level of female and male respondents.

Relationship between independent variables and level of stress among rural youth

To find out the relationship between the selected independent variables of rural youth, and their overall stress level, Pearson correlation coefficient was computed and the results obtained by the correlation analysis are presented in table 6.

The result from the table 6 reveals that there is a positive and significant correlation between perceived stress level and size of the family and risk orientation at 1 per cent level of significance. The overall aspirations of the rural youth was also found significantly positively correlated at 5 percent level of significance but there was not strong correlation between the perceived stress level and overall aspirations of the rural youth. Significant

Table 5: Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances	118	732	456	158	649	827	1.815

Table 6: Correlation analysis between independent variables and overall stress level of the rural youth

Sl. No.	Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient
1	Age	
2	Education	-0.159
3	Father's Education	-0.186
4	Mother's Education	-0.08
5	Family Size	0.49**
6	Land Holding	-0.28*
7	Annual Income	-0.521**
8	Mass Media utilization	-0.458**
9	Extension contact	-0.192
10	Social participation	-0.72*
11	Achievement motivation	-0.176
12	Economic motivation	-0.156
13	Risk orientation	0.556**
14	Overall aspirations	0.195*

*** Significant at 0.01 levels; *Significant at 0.05 levels.*

and negative correlation was found between the stress level and land holding, annual family income and mass media utilization at 1 per cent level of significance, while strongly negative and significant correlation was found between stress level and social participation at 5 percent level of significance. Thus it shows that those respondents who had high risk orientation and large family size perceived more intensity of stress than others. The rural youth who had high social participation, large size of land holding, high annual family income and more mass media utilization were less prone to stress than others.

CONCLUSION

This particular study has focussed on determining the level of stress among rural youth of Yavatmal and Ahmednagar districts of Maharashtra. Results from the study has revealed that most respondents are having medium level of stress and there is no significant difference between male and female respondents. So, detailed studies on various coping strategies are needed for finding more effective strategies to reduce the hassles of stress among rural youth in present day So that their talent and capabilities are harnessed for betterment of the society.

REFERENCES

Bataineh, M.Z. 2013. Academic stress among undergraduate students: the case of education faculty at King Saud University. *Int. Interdisci. J. Edu.*, **1**(1033): 1-7.

Bhargava, D. and Trivedi, H. 2018. A study of causes of stress and stress management among youth. *IRA-Int. J. Manage. & Soc. Sci.*, **11**(03): 108-117.

Burchfield, S.R. 1979. The stress response: a new perspective. *Psychosomatic Medicine*.

Deb, S., Strodl, E. and Sun, J. 2014. Academic-related stress among private secondary school students in India. *Asian Education and Development Studies*.

Jamal, M. 1985. Relationship of job stress to job performance: A study of managers and blue-collar workers. *Human Relations*, **38**(5): 409-424.

Hussain, A., Kumar, A. and Husain, A. 2008. Academic stress and adjustment among high school students. *J. Indian Academy of Appl. Psychology*, **34**(9): 70-73.

Sanjeev, K. 2013. Stress level and coping strategies of college students. *J. Physical Education and Sport Manage.*, **4**(1): 5-11.

Landstedt, E. and Gådin, K.G. 2012. Seventeen and stressed–Do gender and class matter?. *Health Sociology Rev.*, **21**(1): 82-98.

Morgan, Clifford, T., King Richard, A., Weisz, J.R. and Schopler, J. 1986. Emotions and stress. *Introduction to Psychology; seventh edition* 321; Tata McGraw-Hill.

National Youth Policy, 2014. Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India.

Oltmanns, Thomas F. and Emery, Robert E. 1995. Maladaptive responses to stress. *Abnormal Psychology*, pp235-271; Prentice Hall Publications, New Jersey 07458.

Selye, H. 1956. The stress of life. New York, Mc Gran-hill book company.

Sinha, C. 2013. Adolescents' Academic Stress. *J. Int. Academic Research for Multidisciplinary*, **1**(11): 529-535.

Suldo, S.M., Shaunessy, E. and Hardesty, R. 2008. Relationships among stress, coping, and mental health in high-achieving high school students. *Psychology in the Schools*, **45**(4): 273-290.