

A STUDY OF STRESS MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES USED BY WORKING WOMEN IN HAJIPUR TOWN (VAISHALI DISTRICT)

PRIYANKA KUMARI*

ABSTRACT

Families today are seeing rapid changes due to the increased pace of growth and modernization. Hajipur women belonging to all classes have entered into various professions which causes stress in their personal and professional life. Women's exposure to educational opportunities is significantly higher than it was some years ago, especially in the cities. Our study have identified socio-economic stressors, psychological and family and relationship stressors causing stress among working women and strategies to cope up with it, though study was conducted among working women in different sectors in Bangalore city. The findings of the study reveal that under socio-economic stressors unexpected guests, followed by absence of domestic help causes major stress among working women. Similarly being perfectionist with unnecessary worries which cause psychological set back among working women. Moreover anxiety about children future and husbands job insecurity play a major role in causing stress under family and relationship. Thus the working women need to have work life balance and imbibe stress management strategies like meditation, balanced diet filled with entertainment and fun to lead a stress free life. Over 70 labourers from Hajipur, including pregnant women and children as young as 12, have narrated a similar story of bondage for almost a year at a brick kiln in Haryana, where they were unpaid, poorly fed, beaten and forced to slave long hours. Unlike biblical times, bonded labour is a criminal offence in India. Yet the Kurukshetra district administration has not issued any of the freed labourers with a release certificate under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976. Without the certificate, the labourers cannot claim compensation under the Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourer, 2016, which is Rs 1 lakh for adult males and Rs 2 lakh for women and children in addition to the unpaid wages. Nor can they claim any benefits under the welfare schemes meant for rescued bonded labourers.

Keywords: Hajipur, Socio-Economic Stressors, Psychological Stressors, Family and Relationship Stressors, Stress Management Strategies.

* RESEARCH SCHOLAR UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF HOME SCIENCE BRA BIHAR UNIVERSITY MUZAFFARPUR

INTRODUCTION

Hajipur the largest city and headquarters of Vaishali district of Tirhut Division in the Indian state of Bihar. Hajipur is popularly known as "Haripur". Hajipur is the 10th leading city and 17th most populous city of Bihar, making it the second-fastest developing city, next to Patna. It had a total population of 1.47 lakh as per census 2011. Vaishali district is ranked 8th on a list of 38 districts in Bihar in terms of growth. The city is known for cultivating bananas. Patna, the capital of Bihar is only 10 km (6.2 mi) from Hajipur. The metropolis of Patna comprises PRDA area, includes Hajipur. Mahatma Gandhi Setu, one of the longest bridges in the world at 5.75 kilometres (3.57 mi), links it to Patna. After Patna, it is the fastest-developing city in Bihar, primarily because of its close proximity to Patna (just 10 km). There have been plans to expand Patna to Greater Patna, by absorbing Hajipur and other surrounding towns into it. The area of Hajipur city is spread across 19.64 km² (7.58 sq mi). The city has been divided into 39 wards. In 1979, a museum was established in Hajipur, by the Directorate of Archaeology and museum, Bihar. Hajipur is the headquarters of Vaishali after its separation from Muzaffarpur district on 12 October 1972. It is located at 25.68°N 85.22°E. It has an average elevation of 46 metres (150 ft). Support women entrepreneurs for setting up/ expanding/ scaling the business activities and provide employment opportunities to women. Support in the areas of financial linkages, market linkages, entrepreneurship development and business start-up. Create an enabling environment for promotion of suitable economic opportunities and sustainable livelihoods for women in urban, sub-urban and rural areas in Bihar. The three year project will cover all 38 districts of Bihar with special focus on Patna district in the beginning.

WOMEN AND STRESS IN HAJIPUR

There are many symptoms of stress. Each woman reacts to stress in unique ways. Common symptoms of stress in women include:

- **Physical.** Headaches, difficulty sleeping, tiredness, pain (most commonly in the back and neck), overeating/under eating, skin problems, drug and alcohol misuse, lack of energy, upset stomach, less interest in sex/other things you used to enjoy.
- **Emotional.** Anxiety, depression, anger, unhappiness, irritability, feelings of being out of control, mood swings, frustration.
- **Mental.** Forgetfulness, worry, can't make decisions, negative thinking, lack of focus, boredom.

- **Occupational.** Work overload, long hours, tense relations, poor concentration, unfulfilling job.
- **Social.** Less intimacy, isolation, family problems, loneliness.
- **Spiritual.** Apathy, loss of meaning, emptiness, unforgiving, doubt, guilt, despair.

HAJIPUR CITY POPULATION 2011

| | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Description | | | |
| City | Hajipur | | |
| Government | Nagar Parishad | | |
| Urban Agglomeration | Only City | | |
| State | Bihar | | |
| Hajipur City | Total | Male | Female |
| City Population | 147,688 | 78,047 | 69,641 |
| Literates | 97,372 | 55,206 | 42,166 |
| Children (0-6) | 20,899 | 11,090 | 9,809 |
| Average Literacy (%) | 76.80 % | 82.45 % | 70.47 % |
| Sexratio | 892 | | |
| Child Sexratio | 884 | | |

HAJIPUR BLOCK DATA

As per the Population Census 2011 data, following are some quick facts about Hajipur Block.

| | Total | Male | Female |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Children (Age 0-6) | 69,789 | 37,004 | 32,785 |
| Literacy | 72.27% | 67.5% | 53.47% |
| Scheduled Caste | 93,719 | 49,423 | 44,296 |
| Scheduled Tribe | 259 | 147 | 112 |
| Illiterate | 173,567 | 76,518 | 97,049 |

CASTE-WISE POPULATION - HAJIPUR BLOCK

Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 21.1% while Schedule Tribe (ST) were 0.1% of total population in Hajipur Block of .

| | Total | Male | Female |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Schedule Caste | 93,719 | 49,423 | 44,296 |
| Schedule Tribe | 259 | 147 | 112 |

RELIGION-WISE POPULATION - HAJIPUR BLOCK

| Religion | Total | | Male | Female |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|---------|---------|
| Hindu | 408,798 | (92.08%) | 217,432 | 191,366 |
| Muslim | 34,314 | (7.73%) | 17,544 | 16,770 |
| Christian | 344 | (0.08%) | 172 | 172 |
| Sikh | 44 | (0.01%) | 21 | 23 |
| Buddhist | 68 | (0.02%) | 29 | 39 |
| Jain | 25 | (0.01%) | 10 | 15 |
| Other Religion | 2 | (0%) | 2 | 0 |
| No Religion Specified | 381 | (0.09%) | 215 | 166 |

LITERACY RATE - HAJIPUR BLOCK

Average literacy rate of Hajipur Block in 2011 were 72.27% in which, male and female literacy were 80.09% and 63.44% respectively. Total literate in Hajipur Block were 270,409 of which male and female were 158,907 and 111,502 respectively.

SEX RATIO - HAJIPUR BLOCK

The Sex Ratio of Hajipur Block is 886 . Thus for every 1000 men there were 886 females in Hajipur Block. Also as per Census 2011, the Child Sex Ration was 886 which is greater than Average Sex Ratio (886) of Hajipur Block.

CHILD POPULATION - HAJIPUR BLOCK

According to Census 2011, there were 69,789 children between age 0 to 6 years in Hajipur Block. Out of which 69,789 were male while 69,789 were female.

URBAN/RURAL POPULATION - HAJIPUR BLOCK

As per Census 2011, there are total 24,033 families under Hajipur Block living in urban areas while 24,033 families are living within Rural areas. Thus around 33.3% of total population of Hajipur Block lives in Urban areas while 66.7% lives under Rural areas. Population of children (0 - 6 years) in urban region is 20,899 while that in rural region is 48,890.

| | Total | Urban | Rural |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Population | 443,976 | 147,688 | 296,288 |
| Children (0 - 6 years) | 69,789 | 20,899 | 48,890 |
| Schedule Caste | 93,719 | 24,908 | 68,811 |
| Schedule Tribe | 259 | 97 | 162 |
| Literacy | 72.27% | 76.8% | 69.94% |
| Sex Ratio | 886 | 892 | 883 |

WORKING POPULATION - HAJIPUR BLOCK

In Hajipur Block out of total population, 121,942 were engaged in work activities. 78.1% of workers describe their work as Main Work (Employment or Earning more than 6 Months) while 21.9% were involved in Marginal activity providing livelihood for less than 6 months. Of 121,942 workers engaged in Main Work, 16,818 were cultivators (owner or co-owner) while 26,611 were Agricultural labourer.

| | Total | Male | Female |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Main Workers | 95,180 | 86,480 | 8,700 |
| Cultivators | 16,818 | 15,807 | 1,011 |
| Agriculture Labourer | 26,611 | 24,362 | 2,249 |
| Household Industries | 3,304 | 2,621 | 683 |
| Other Workers | 48,447 | 43,690 | 4,757 |
| Marginal Workers | 26,762 | 19,672 | 7,090 |
| Non Working | 322,034 | 129,273 | 192,761 |

HAIJIPURWOMEN BETTER MANAGE STRESS

Negative stress signs in each of these six life areas: physical, emotional, mental, occupational, social, and spiritual. What would you like to be different in your life? What do you need to do to achieve more balance or potential? Here are some suggestions.

- **Physical.** **Exercise**, practice relaxation techniques (yoga, meditation, listen to relaxing music), eat healthy (for example, follow the **Mediterranean diet**), schedule leisure time, get enough sleep (7 to 9 hours/night).
- **Emotional.** Express your emotions, repeat positive emotions, work toward a healthy self-esteem.
- **Mental.** Have a positive outlook, realistic thinking, resilient attitude, be creative.
- **Occupational.** Establish doable goals, identify home-work balance, set limits.
- **Social.** Strive to maintain loving relationships, establish healthy boundaries, stay connected with friends.
- **Spiritual.** Find your meaning/purpose, focus on gratitude, stay in the present moment.

STRESS LOADS ARE HIGH FOR WORKING MOTHERS

Recent survey in a health magazine reported that managing the dual roles of mother and worker is extremely hard. Findings include:

1. Over 60 per cent of working mothers feel they take out their stress on their families.
2. Close to half of all working mothers would prefer to be full-time mothers, while around one fifth would like to work from home.
3. Just four per cent of working mothers would elect to work full-time if they had the choice.

AT PERSONAL LEVEL HAJIPUR

This brings up some important issues regarding women and stress, that women need to be aware of:

UNDERSTAND GENDER DIFFERENCES IN STRESS

If as a woman is feeling more stressed than their male counterparts, then they shouldn't take it as a sign that they are not handling stress as well; it might be because they are experiencing more stress. They should uplift themselves for handling what they already are, and should move confidently to next step.

PRIORITIZE & ELIMINATE WHAT YOU CAN

Women are associated with organising events in home and office. They may fall in situations where saying 'no' becomes difficult for them especially when the work may seem to be easy and happy mood persists around the environment. They need to encourage themselves to be politely responding negatively to reduce the already existing stress. They must prioritize what's necessary and what can be avoided.

ALTER OR CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE

Much of the experience with stress can be eliminated with a change in the way we look at things. This may sound too good to be true, but it isn't! Altering the way to conceptualize the events like finding or viewing them as a "challenge" instead of a "threat," or an "opportunity" instead of a "crisis,". The point is to make them feel less threatening and stressful. When people don't perceive a situation as a threat, then the body's stress response is deactivated more quickly (or doesn't get triggered in the first place), and individual's may be more capable of avoiding the effects of chronic stress.

HAVE SOME QUICK STRESS RELIEVERS

Fast stress relievers may be adopted by working women to avoid the monotony of stress . Such may include reading a book of jokes, listening to songs or discussion on general topics with colleagues.

MAINTAIN REGULAR STRESS-RELIEVING HABITS

One can avoid stress from occurring in the first place by maintaining or practicing regular stress relieving activities. It may include Exercises ,Yoga, meditation etc. This can be inducted in either morning or evening schedule for regular days.It can be stretched further during holidays or weekends.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

✓34260 Self Help Groups have been formed and nurtured in 27 Districts under which 4.30 lakh women of poor family are being benefitted. Total 165 Blocks, 1520 Panchayats and 5905 villages have been covered under this Program.

✓Total Rs 389.67 lakh has been deposited by the SHG members through small savings

✓Initial Capitalization Fund has been designed for direct approaches towards financial and technical resources. Till date 5017 SHGs linked with 60 federations get Rs.575.29 lakhs. SHGs are using this corpus for food security, livelihood and skill development, improved equipments, opportunity for better jobs and awareness to social services relating to health and education.

✓Capacity Building on the aspect of service sector is in progress at all 9 commissionerary Headquarters and Nalanda&Vaishali districts. Professional agencies having expertise on Computer, Beautician, House Keeping and Sales Management hired and assigned to conduct training programme for total 2246 women & adolescent girls of poor family.

✓2597 farmers on System of Rice intensification [SRI] & 72 farmers were benefitted through True potato seed technique for which services were provided by the federation, out of which the Federations have earned revenue of Rs. 14729. Under dairy intervention, benefit of artificial insemination process has been extended to 534 beneficiaries and 354 SHG members have been registered under Community based retail enterprises[CBRE]

- ✓ With the revival of Handloom/Handicraft trade in the Biharsharif block of Nalanda District, local weaver's community has been motivated for sustainable livelihood. The "BawanButti" art of handicraft has been revived.
- ✓ Women of Phulwarisharif in Patna district are successfully running the Sanitary Napkin production units under the brand name "Bharti".
- ✓ Mahadalit women of Maner block in Patna District have started a Spice unit as a business enterprise. In its initial stage this enterprise tapped the local market & made its identity.
- ✓ For the purpose of mobilize the Primitive community 'Tharu' in the mainstream of development process, 300 SHGs are in process of formation and nurture in East Cmaparan district.
- ✓ With the collaboration of Pathfinder International, an intensive capacity building programme has been initiated at 6 blocks of Jehanabad, Gaya and Nalanda. More than 353 Community Resource Person have been capacitated and trained as Reproductive Health Cadre and facilitating community especially SHGs member on RCH.

CONCLUSION

The report said that despite several supply and demand- level interventions of Bihar government to facilitate women's economic engagement and empowerment, women's access to opportunities was still constrained. The report elaborated that 'access' is a gendered phenomenon which denotes the ability to reach and use various resources including access to information, rights, land, money, education, skills, political participation and voice. The report further stated that limits on mobility in the public domain reduce women's opportunities to access decent work. Poor infrastructure and lack of safe and affordable public transport limits women, and above all, low-income women, only to jobs near their home. The daily mobility of women, their ability to travel for work were determined by several factors including prevalent social norms, transport infrastructure, city planning, governance and access to information and communication technologies (ICTs). In order to remove barriers of an unsafe environment vital to women's ability to fulfill their potential at work, Bihar government showed policy commitment for ensuring freedom from violence, harassment and discrimination to the female folk of the society. The report suggested for identifying evidence-based strategies for overcoming constraints to women's safety and mobility in the state, and advocate for investments in tackling these issues to foster decent work, entrepreneurship, equal access to resources, services, education, information, communications technology, energy, infrastructure, and productive assets.

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