

Perceived Stress of Tribal and Non-Tribal People in Rajshahi District, Bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to explore the perceived stress of tribal (Santal) and nontribal people in the Rajshahi district. A total of 200 respondents (tribal = 100, non-tribal = 100) were selected randomly from two villages in Tanore Thana of Rajshahi District. The Bangla version (Keya, 2006) of the Perceived Stress Questionnaire was administered to measure the perceived stress of the respondents, respectively. The obtained data were analyzed by employing an independent sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance, and Pearson product-moment correlation. The result revealed that ethnicity ($t = 14.47, p < 0.01$), gender ($t = 4.74, p < 0.01$), marital status ($t = 7.98, p < 0.01$), and age ($F = 50.90, p < 0.01$) play a significant role in the perceived stress of the participants. The findings of the present research can serve for the betterment of psychological aspects of minorities and non-minorities.

Keywords: *Perceived Stress, Marital Status, Tribal, Nontribal People*

Stress is said to be the cause of mental and physical illness. Any kind of change causing physical, psychological, or emotional distress is called stress. Everyone experiences some stress (Baum, 1990). A person's well-being depends on their response to stress. The best way to deal with stress is to change the situation. Otherwise, the best strategy is to change how you respond to the situation. Stress is beneficial for creativity and success at work, but failure, humiliation, or infection are harmful (Selye, 1956).

Perceived stress is a person's thoughts and feelings on how they are stressed at a particular time or period (Phillips, 2013). For example, when a person's perception regarding a stressful phenomenon is connected with negative thinking, it may be felt as more painful than when it is connected with positive thinking (Folkman, 2013). The terms "stress" and "perceived stress" are directly related to the indistinguishable conditions underlying them, but there are differences between the two. On one hand, stress is the physiological and psychological reaction to discovering the difference between what you expect and what happens in reality. On the other hand, perceived stress is a multidimensional concept, including physical, medical, psychosocial, and psychological aspects. In social and cultural contexts, it is also related to its. (Moore & Kooper, 1996). Sometimes, the cause of stress may be present in the person inherently. Any kind of illness is a form of stress emerging

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from an individual inwardly. First, the body's ability to fight illness usually improves during childhood and gradually declines with age (Coico & Sunshine, 2009; Gouin et al., 2008).

Isolation, experiences of rejection, conflict with others, failure, competition, and feelings of contempt are the core causes of stress (Miller et al., 2009; Smith et al., 2003). The threat of being evaluated negatively or being rejected by others increases the level of blood pressure, cortisol, and also increases the other stress hormone, cortisol. These actions, like in the case of a cashier, can be highly antagonizing and are related to certain bodily symptoms, like pain in the shoulder and neck (Lundberg et al., 1999). Natural calamities like floods and earthquakes also lead to long-lasting disruption of social affinities and increase strain (Bland et al., 1997). In areas where terrorism occurs, the people in that place remain a threat as a result of stress influencing them (Levy & Sidel, 2009). Pregnant women who face discrimination are influenced by stress (Dominguez et al., 2008).

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Tribal

In 1 article of 169 numbers Convention of the International Labor Organization (ILO) describes the tribal as those whose social, cultural, and economic circumstances differentiate them from various areas of the national community and whose status is controlled entirely or partly by their traditions, conventions, or special laws or ordinances. In total, there are more than 54 of these indigenous groups, which cover approximately 2% of the population of the country.

Map of Tanore Thana:

Figure: Map of Tanore Thana; Source: Banglapedia



In the Tanore thana, there are 9,166 santal, 34 pahari, 483 Orane, and others 3,818 (BBS, 2011). Almost every union of Tanore thana, even in many villages, has Santal. Like in Debipur, Mohor, Kundaen, Kalna, Soronjai, Banial, Jugiso, Chuniapara, Dorgadanga, Krisnopur, and Munnapara. In the 9-number ward, Mohor, which is the village of Talondo Union, has about 242 santal. 350 Santal is in the Kalna, and this is the 4th ward of Talondo Union.

Non-tribal people

Non-tribals are those that aren't related to originating from or involving a tribe or tribe. In this study, non-tribal refers to Muslims, who are the majority in Bangladesh. They're native-born in Bangladesh. They're Bengali and follow the rules and regulations of Bangladesh. Non-tribals are those that aren't related to originating from or involving a tribe or tribes. In this study, non-tribal refers to Muslims, who are the majority in Bangladesh. They were born in Bangladesh. They are Bengali and follow the foundations and regulations of Bangladesh.

Rational of The Study

The percentage of tribal people in Bangladesh is about 1.2 million. If the authorities work for the tribal people then it will be helpful for our country. If they become more satisfied and less stressed in their lives, then they will be more functional, and they can contribute to the development of our country. The tribal people remain far behind than the non-tribal people, and the number of tribal people is not a few so it is not possible to improve the country by keeping them behind. Nowadays, many of the santal have become educated and associated with institutions and enjoy happiness in their lives. If they are given more focus, their lives will be more satisfactory and less stressful. The research and its detailed analysis and findings will help us to see the present scenario of tribal and non-tribal people's perceived stress. This study will be instrumental in guiding other researchers to conduct related research.

The main objective of the present research is given below:

1. To investigate stress among tribal and non-tribal people in the Rajshahi district.
2. To compare stress between male and female respondents.
3. To examine stress regarding the marital status of the participants
4. To inspect stress with respect age range of the respondents.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Beam et al. (2021) carried out a study on perceived stress, depression, and marriage. 1,612 male and female twin pairs from the University of Washington Twin Registry were the samples of this study. The result of the study indicated that marriage decreases the genetic impacts of perceived stress. The study also concluded that marriage reduces the harmful psychological effects of stress. The result of the study indicated that married people reported lower perceived stress scores than never-married people. Unmarried women had more perceived stress than married women. Sansanwal (2021), conducted an investigation on stress among older people. He concluded that there are significant differences in stress scores among retired and non-retired persons. Most retired persons turn out to be more stressed than non-retired persons. The research explored that tribal people have lower feelings, beliefs, attention, trust, and attitudes towards themselves because they are more stressed than non-tribals (Sibi et al., 2022). Maharana et al. (2022) researched stress and anxiety among undergraduate tribal students. They found that tribal students had more stress and anxiety. They required more advice and guidance to overcome stressful situations. Akhter et al. (2021) researched tribal and nontribal students. They suggested that tribal males get more social services than tribal females, and tribal females get more stressed than males. Joshi et al. (2021) carried out research on perceived stress among young adults. The result of the research suggested that females have a high score on perceived stress. There was a significant stress difference between married and unmarried people. Unmarried women become more stressed in their daily household working areas (Rai et al., 2021). Graves et al. (2021) researched gender disparities in perceived stress and adapting among college students of 448 university students. They concluded that women revealed greater degrees of stress than their male counterparts. Kumari et al. (2020) conducted a study where they found that working women who have double functions encounter more stress as they still perform almost all the household tasks and also child care and elder care that can be considered equal to their full-time professions. Their life satisfaction, adaptation, mental health, and happiness were affected due to double work pressure. Devarapalli et al (2020) studied the stress and mental health of tribes and non-tribes. Most of the tribes are attached to alcohol and other substances, which deteriorate health and increase physiological arousal, consequently making them stressed. Varma et al. (2020) conducted research on 1653 participants (mean age: 42.90 ± 13.63 years; 30.3% males) from 63 countries. The principal purpose of the research was to investigate stress, anxiety, and depression among young respondents. Findings also reported that young people are more likely to encounter stress and anxiety, and for these vulnerable people, support is needed. They also reported that loneliness is linked with stress and suggested social connections with the younger. Research on perceived stress and daily well-being was done by Jiang (2020). Older reported lower perceived stress than younger adults the study showed that. She also reported that older adults were more motivated to regulate emotions than young adults. Boys students experienced more academic stress than girls students (Sahu & Jha, 2020). Bhattacharje et al. in the 2020s directed another examination on stress among 120 tribal and nontribal post-graduate students. The result of the study revealed that the tribal students were significantly less stressed, but the non-tribal students showed significantly better coping. The study found that students' limited coping skills can improve the impact of stress and diminish

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psychological well-being. Perceived stress is higher in female respondents than male respondents (Park et al., 2023). Young adults responded to more stress in their family, spouses, job-related stress, and financial stress (Stenfanic et al., 2021). Sheleja et. al (2020) found in their study of 400 couples that stress management is positively connected with life satisfaction among couples in Kerala. They indicated that couples who have a high level of stress management have a higher level of life satisfaction. The researchers also found that the majority of women participating in the study had a low level (64%) of perceived stress. Males and females didn't differ in their perceptions of stress and life satisfaction, but coping resources in males were higher than in females. Another study was carried out on life stress in a tribal area of Pakistan. The study found that the samples reported more pessimistic signs than other communities in Pakistan. This outcome presumably echoes the extremely elevated level of social stress (Husain et al., 2018). Sing et al. (2018) carried out research on "Depression and stress among tribal Migrant Rural Women of Ranchi District in Jharkhand". The experiment was conducted on 200 samples of rural migrant laborers. Only 30% of the nontribal sample has shown a high level of stress, and 63% of the tribal sample has revealed a greater degree of stress. Shelly (2018) conducted a study on the adjustment of tribal students in school. The study stated that the tribal students have lower adjustment., worked with tribes where she recommended that they (tribes) lead a lower lifestyle and maintain a more stressful life. For discrimination, inattention, and inactive situations, they are more stressed. The research was done on tribal and nontribal people by Akhter (2018), where she showed that tribal people have more home, health, and social adjustment problems than nontribal people, and these maladjustment problems are the source of the stress that negatively affects the person.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

In this study, a total of 200 respondents were selected randomly from different villages of Tanore Thana. Among them, 100 were tribal (male = 52, female = 48), and 100 were non-tribal (male = 47, female = 53). They were 18 to 65 years old. The villages were selected through a lottery process to maintain the randomization process.

Tools

The Bangla version of the Perceived Stress Questionnaire was developed by Keya (2006), professor in the psychology department of Rajshahi University. It consists of 20 items with five alternatives ranging from never, rarely, sometimes, fairly often, and very often. The perceived stress scale is a five-point Likert scale and is most popular for assessing the stress of the respondents over the past month through a questionnaire. The factor analysis of the scale was ($F = 34.15$), and the Cronbach reliability of the scale was (.77).

Procedures

Firstly, the researcher selected the 2 villages randomly from 11 villages by using the lottery method. A systematic random sampling procedure was followed to choose 200 participants for the research. The participants were informed about the study, and their consent was received before participating in the investigation. A demographic blank sheet and the questionnaire were given. Oral instructions were delivered before getting information. They were also instructed to read the questionnaire carefully. They were also encouraged to question if they could not comprehend anything. They were guided to put a tick (✓) mark on the proper option on the questionnaire. If there were any omissions, the respondents were requested to complete the task. The data was collected from the respondents both tribal and non-tribal, through the Perceived Stress Questionnaire, and the score was given to them. To

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analyze these scores, primary data were assembled, coded, and recorded. The data were input into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) program.

Findings

To see the mean dissimilarity in perceived stress scores between non-tribal and tribal (Santal), the collected data were analyzed by *t*-test. The result is presented in table (3.1).

Table -3.1: Comparison of mean dissimilarity in perceived stress score between tribal and non-tribal peoples.

Variables	Ethnicity	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Stress	Non-tribal	100	38.12	8.71	198	14.47**	Significant
	Tribal	100	56.67	9.39			

**Significant at $\alpha = 0.01$

Table 3.1 indicates that there are significant mean differences in perceived stress scores between non-tribal and tribal whereas ($t=14.47$ with $df=198$, $p<0.01$). Table -3.1 also indicates that the mean perceived stress score of non-tribal is $M=38.12$, $SD=8.71$ and the mean Tribal stress score is $M=56.67$ with $SD=9.39$.

Table-3.2: Comparison of mean difference in stress score between Married and Unmarried.

Variables	Marital status	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig.
Perceived Stress	Married	106	41.39	11.68	198	7.98**	Significant
	Unmarried	94	54.17	10.87			

**Significant at $\alpha = 0.01$.

The mean perceived stress score of the married respondents is 41.39 and $SD=11.68$ at the same time the mean perceived stress score of the unmarried respondent is 54.17 with $SD=10.87$. The result also reports that the perceived stress of unmarried respondents is higher than married respondents which is significant at $\alpha = 0.01$ level of significance ($t=7.98$, $df=198$, $p<0.01$).

The age of tribal and nontribal is divided into three categories Young adults (18-35), Middle-aged adults (36-55), and Older adults (older than 55) to see the variation in stress.

Table 3.3: Summary of ANOVA for perceived stress and life satisfaction of the People by the categories of Age.

Variance	Source of variance	df	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Perceived Stress	Between-group	2	11397.649	5698.824	50.900**	Significant
	Within group	197	22056.146	111.960		

**Significant $\alpha=0.01$

Table-3.3 displays that perceived stress differs significantly ($F=50.90$, $\alpha = 0.01$) with the variations in age of the respondents. To examine the mean dissimilarity in perceived stress among young adults, middle-aged adults, and older adults the accumulated data were examined by *t*-test. The result for the young adult and middle-aged adults and older adults in the perceived stress is presented in table-3.4.

Table 3.4: Result of comparison among young adults, middle-aged adults, and old adults on the perceived stress scores.

Variables	Age-Type	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig.
Perceived stress	Young adult and Middle-aged adult	54	45.25	9.97	142	5.45**	Significant
		90	55.06	10.75			
	Young adults and older adults	54	45.25	9.97	108	4.06**	Significant
		56	37.16	10.86			
	Middle-aged adult and Older adult	90	55.06	10.75	144	9.73**	Significant
		56	37.16	10.86			

**Significant at $\alpha = 0.01$

Table 3.4 indicates that the mean perceived stress score of middle-aged adult respondents is $M=55.06$, $SD=9.97$. On the other hand, the mean perceived stress score of a young adult is $M=45.25$, $SD=9.97$. The result shows the perceived stress of middle-aged adults is higher than that of young adults which is significant data 0.01 level of significance ($t=5.45$, $df=142$, $p<0.01$).

The result shows a significant difference in perceived stress score ($t=4.06$, $df=108$, $p<0.01$) between Young adult ($M=45.25$) and Older adult ($M=37.16$) age type respondents. Table 9 also indicates that the mean perceived stress score of the Middle-aged adult respondents is $M=55.06$, $SD=10.75$. At the same time, the mean perceived stress score of the Older adult is $M=37.16$, $SD=10.86$. The result reports that the perceived stress of Middle-aged adults is higher than Older adults which is significant at $\alpha = 0.01$ level of significance. So, the perceived stress of Middle-aged adults is higher than both younger adult and Older adult respondents.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current research was conducted to observe the status of perceived stress and life satisfaction of tribal (Santal) and nontribal people in the Rajshahi District. The independent variables of the study were ethnicity, marital conditions, and age. The perceived stress of the respondents was the dependent variable. The perceived stress of the participants was measured by administering a Bangla version of the Keya (2006) scale. Three hypotheses were formulated to examine in this research. **The first hypothesis of the present study was that the perceived stress of tribal people would be higher than that of non-tribal people.** The result presented in Table 3.1 ($t = 14.47$, $p<0.01$) showed significant differences in the perceived stress of tribal and non-tribal participants. Tribal respondents have more perceived stress than non-tribal respondents. Thus, the obtained results confirm the first hypothesis. The result is obvious because tribal people have to struggle more to maintain their lives than non-tribal people. Most of the tribal people are poor and they also have to face discrimination. The education rate among the tribal (Santal) is lower than non-among tribal people. This finding is relatively related to the findings of Dewan (2012), Wong et al. (2014), and Sing et al. (2018). **The second hypothesis of the present research stated that the perceived stress of unmarried people would be higher than married people.** The result of perceived stress of married and unmarried people is presented in Table 3.2. The result showed that the perceived stress significantly ($t = -7.98$, $p<0.01$) varies between married and unmarried respondents. The result also indicated that unmarried respondents perceived more stress than married respondents. The result is obvious because a married person has another partner with whom he or she can share any problems or sources of stress. As a result, stress is reduced in a married person. Unmarried people have to remain single,

and they feel lonely and stressed. This finding was also supported by the other findings of Sheleja et al. (2020), and Beam et al. (2021). They found that marriage lessens the biological (genetic) and harmful psychological effects of perceived stress, so married couples have lower rates of stress. And they also indicated that single people have more stress.

The present research captured **the third hypothesis, which explained that older adults would be perceived less stress than younger adults and middle-aged adults**. The results of perceived stress of the middle-aged adults, young adults, and older adults are presented in Table 3.4. The result of ANOVA table 3.3 shows significant differences among older adults, middle-aged adults, and younger adults in their perceived stress and life satisfaction. The results of the t-test (table 3.4) also show significantly ($p < 0.01$) lower perceived stress for the older adult group as compared with the middle-aged adult and young adult groups. Thus, the result confirmed the hypothesis. The result is obvious because, in old age, the experiences increase people's so they can overcome the stressors quite easily. These obtained information or results are suitable with the findings of Hay et al. (2014), Jiang (2020), and Varma et al. (2020). They showed that older adults are less affected by stressors than younger adults and middle-aged adults because of their high adjustment skills.

Limitation

Although the current study attempts to establish the appropriate methodology and data analysis, it is not without flaws. This investigation was directed at only one district beyond the 64 districts in Bangladesh. Because the study did not include a large geographic area, it is difficult to extrapolate the findings to the entire country of Bangladesh. The total sample size was tiny once again (200). A large number of participants may not provide accurate responses.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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