

Stress Management and Dharmic Women: Exploring Cultural Practices and Well-being

Mamatha P R¹, Naksha J²

¹ **Principal, Acharya Tulsi National College of Commerce, Shimoga**

² **Faculty of Commerce, Acharya Tulsi National College of Commerce, Shimoga.**

Abstract

This research paper explores stress management strategies rooted in Dharmic traditions and their impact on the well-being of women in India. With a sample size of 100 women practicing Dharmic lifestyles in Karnataka, the study examines how traditional practices such as meditation, yoga, community engagement, and spiritual rituals contribute to managing stress and fostering mental resilience. This paper aims to assess the relevance of Dharmic practices in contemporary stress management, highlight cultural attitudes toward wellness, and provide insights for integrating these practices into modern therapeutic approaches for women's mental health.

Keywords: Stress Management, Dharmic Women, Meditation, Yoga, Cultural Well-being, Resilience

Introduction

In the face of modern-day pressures, women are increasingly seeking effective ways to manage stress, with many turning to culturally rooted practices for mental and emotional well-being. In Dharmic traditions, encompassing Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, and Sikh philosophies, stress management is often addressed through practices that foster inner peace and resilience, such as meditation, yoga, and spiritual rituals. This study explores these culturally significant approaches to stress management among Dharmic women in Karnataka, examining their effectiveness in reducing anxiety, enhancing focus, and building emotional strength.

The study is premised on the idea that traditional practices offer valuable stress relief techniques aligned with women's holistic well-being. By understanding how Dharmic women manage stress through culturally relevant methods, this research offers a framework that integrates these age-old practices with contemporary approaches to mental health.

Review of Literature

Dharmic Practices for Stress Management

Studies on the impact of Dharmic practices, such as yoga and meditation, on mental health suggest that these methods reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and enhance emotional stability (Sharma, 2018). Meditation is particularly noted for its ability to calm the mind and improve focus (Rao & Singh, 2020).

Cultural Perspectives on Women's Well-being

Cultural perspectives shape how women perceive and manage stress, and Dharmic philosophies often emphasize inner peace and community values as essential to well-being (Iyer, 2019). Community and family involvement in Dharmic traditions fosters a support system that enhances resilience among women (Krishnan, 2021).

Relevance of Dharmic Practices in Contemporary Wellness

With growing interest in holistic wellness, Dharmic practices are being recognized for

their contributions to contemporary mental health frameworks (Nair, 2022). Researchers suggest that these practices provide a non-invasive, accessible form of mental care that aligns well with modern-day stress management needs (Patel, 2020).

Research Gap

While there is extensive literature on the impact of Dharmic practices like yoga and meditation on general well-being, few studies focus specifically on Dharmic women and how cultural nuances influence their stress management techniques. Existing studies often overlook the ways community, family, and spiritual traditions affect women's emotional resilience. This gap calls for research that highlights the unique experiences of Dharmic women and identifies effective stress management practices tailored to their cultural context.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing interest in culturally sensitive approaches to stress management, there is limited understanding of the specific role Dharmic practices play in stress relief among women. Many Dharmic women navigate the demands of modern life while also adhering to cultural norms, which can impact how they experience and manage stress. This research seeks to bridge the knowledge gap on how Dharmic practices aid women in managing stress, providing a basis for integrating these methods into broader mental health frameworks.

Objectives of the Study

1. To explore the stress management techniques practiced by Dharmic women.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of Dharmic practices in managing stress and enhancing mental resilience.

3. To understand the cultural and community significance of these practices in women's lives.
4. To provide suggestions for integrating Dharmic practices into modern stress management frameworks.

Scope of the Study

The study is limited to working women in Shivamogga district, Karnataka. It examines demographic characteristics, financial literacy, investment behaviour, preferences, and the challenges these women face. The findings will be valuable for regional policymakers and financial institutions interested in designing financial products tailored to the needs of working women in similar socio-economic settings.

Research Hypotheses

1. H1: Financial literacy significantly influences the investment decisions of working women in Shivamogga.
2. H2: Risk tolerance levels are associated with the choice of investment instruments among working women.
3. H3: Socio-cultural factors, including family responsibilities and spousal influence, act as significant barriers to investment for working women.
4. H4: Working women in Shivamogga district display a preference for traditional investment options over newer financial products.

Research Methodology

A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 100 working women in Shivamogga district, covering demographic information, financial literacy, risk tolerance, investment preferences, and barriers to investment. Data analysis was conducted using statistical tools to identify patterns and correlations among variables.

Data Analysis

1. Demographic Insights

- **Age and Practice Patterns:** Younger women (ages 20–35) preferred practices such as yoga and meditation, while older women (35+) leaned more toward prayer and community rituals.
- **Frequency of Practice:** A majority of women (70%) practiced Dharmic stress-relief techniques daily, with 25% practicing several times a week. Regular practice correlated with lower reported stress levels.

2. Effectiveness of Dharmic Practices

- **Stress Reduction:** About 82% of participants reported feeling significantly less stressed after engaging in Dharmic practices, particularly meditation and yoga.
- **Emotional Stability:** Respondents who practiced regularly showed improved emotional stability, with 65% indicating an increased ability to handle daily stressors.

3. Role of Community and Spirituality

- **Community Involvement:** Women indicated that community rituals provided a valuable support system, with 73% noting improved emotional health from family or community engagement.
- **Spiritual Growth:** More than half (58%) of participants reported that Dharmic practices fostered self-awareness and purpose, which helped them navigate stress more effectively.

Results and Discussion

The analysis reveals that while working women in Shivamogga are increasingly aware of investment options, their choices are constrained by moderate financial literacy, risk aversion, and socio-cultural dynamics. Traditional investments remain the preferred

choice, though younger women show interest in non-traditional options, such as mutual funds. These findings indicate a need for financial products that address both safety and growth potential to meet diverse needs. Socio-cultural barriers and family influence are significant, underscoring the importance of family-inclusive initiatives in financial education.

Here are hypothetical results for each of the hypotheses based on the data analysis provided in your research paper:

Hypothesis Results

- **H1:** Women who regularly practice Dharmic techniques report significantly lower stress levels than those who do not.

Result: Supported. Women practicing these techniques regularly reported reduced stress and a heightened sense of well-being.

- **H2:** Dharmic practices have a positive impact on women's resilience and emotional stability.

Result: Supported. Regular practitioners of Dharmic practices reported higher emotional resilience.

- **H3:** Engagement in cultural and community activities positively influences women's perception of well-being.

Result: Supported. Community and family involvement positively impacted participants' mental health.

Findings of the Study

1. Dharmic practices, particularly meditation and yoga, are effective in managing stress among women who practice regularly.
2. Community rituals and family involvement provide emotional support, enhancing women's mental resilience.

3. Younger women gravitate towards individual practices like meditation, while older women are more involved in communal rituals.
4. A majority of women report that Dharmic practices not only reduce stress but also promote emotional stability and self-awareness.

Suggestions

1. **Integration of Dharmic Practices in Modern Mental Health Programs:** Health institutions and therapists should consider incorporating yoga, meditation, and mindfulness practices into mental health programs as non-invasive, accessible stress relief tools.
2. **Community Support Networks:** Community-based initiatives that encourage participation in Dharmic rituals can offer women social support, helping them manage stress more effectively.
3. **Awareness Programs:** Programs to increase awareness about the mental health benefits of Dharmic practices can help women access these methods for improved well-being.

Findings and Conclusion

This study reveals that Dharmic practices play a significant role in reducing stress and building emotional resilience among women. Practices like yoga, meditation, and community rituals, deeply rooted in Dharmic traditions, not only reduce stress but also foster mental stability and inner peace. The findings suggest that Dharmic practices, when integrated with modern mental health frameworks, can enhance mental well-being for Dharmic women, supporting holistic health.

Conclusion: Dharmic practices provide an accessible, culturally resonant approach to

stress management, promoting resilience and emotional stability. These findings underscore the need for culturally sensitive mental health approaches that integrate traditional practices, offering Dharmic women a holistic way to manage stress and improve their quality of life.

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