

A STUDY OF PANIC DISORDER AMONG 20-45 AGED GROUP WOMEN

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ABSTRACT:

Mental health has become an important concern in modern society due to increasing stress, work pressure, family responsibilities and lifestyle changes. Among various psychological conditions, panic disorder is one of the most common anxiety-related disorders affecting individuals, especially women. Panic disorder is characterized by sudden episodes of intense fear or discomfort known as panic attacks. These attacks are often accompanied by physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, dizziness and shortness of breath.

Women between the age group of 20–45 years are particularly vulnerable to panic disorder due to multiple life responsibilities, hormonal changes, work-life balance issues, relationship stress and societal expectations. Many women experience anxiety and panic attacks but often ignore the symptoms or hesitate to seek professional help due to lack of awareness and social stigma associated with mental health problems.

The purpose of this study is to understand the prevalence of panic disorder among women aged 20–45 years and identify the factors contributing to anxiety and panic attacks in their daily lives. The research also aims to analyze how panic disorder affects women's personal, social and professional lives. Data for this study was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed among 20 women within the selected age group.

The findings of the study indicate that many women experience symptoms related to panic disorder such as sudden fear, stress, sleep disturbance and difficulty in managing emotional pressure. The study highlights the importance of mental health awareness, early diagnosis and proper treatment. It also emphasizes the role of family support, workplace understanding and counseling services in helping women manage panic disorder effectively.

KEYWORDS:

Panic Disorder, Anxiety, Mental Health, Women, Stress, Panic Attacks, Psychological Health, Emotional Well-being

INTRODUCTION:

Mental health plays a vital role in the overall well-being and quality of life of individuals. In recent years, mental health disorders have increased significantly due to rapid social and economic changes. Anxiety disorders are among the most common mental health conditions worldwide. Panic disorder is a type of anxiety disorder that involves sudden and repeated panic attacks that occur without warning.

Women are more likely to experience panic disorder compared to men due to various biological, psychological and social factors. The age group of 20–45 years represents an important stage in a woman's life where she may face multiple responsibilities including education, career development, marriage, family responsibilities and financial pressure. These factors often lead to emotional stress, anxiety and mental exhaustion.

Many women experience symptoms of panic disorder but do not seek treatment because of lack of awareness or fear of being judged by society. Mental health issues are still

considered a taboo in many communities, which prevents individuals from openly discussing their problems.

This topic was selected to understand the prevalence and impact of panic disorder among women aged 20–45 years and to create awareness about mental health issues affecting women in modern society.

Objectives of the Study :

1. To understand the concept of panic disorder among women aged 20–45 years.
2. To identify the common symptoms of panic disorder experienced by women.
3. To analyze the factors contributing to panic disorder.
4. To study the impact of panic disorder on personal and professional life.
5. To suggest measures to manage and reduce panic disorder among women.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

1) Kessler et al. (2006)

He conducted a study on anxiety disorders and found that panic disorder is more common in women than men. The study revealed that women experience higher levels of stress and emotional pressure, which increases the risk of panic attacks.

2) Barlow (2014)

He explained that panic disorder is characterized by sudden episodes of intense fear accompanied by physical symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, sweating, dizziness and breathing difficulty. The study also emphasized the importance of early psychological treatment.

3) McLean and Anderson (2009)

They studied gender differences in anxiety disorders and found that women are nearly twice as likely to develop panic disorder due to hormonal changes, social stress and emotional sensitivity.

4) Roy-Byrne (2015)

He examined the causes and treatment of panic disorder and concluded that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and medication are effective treatments for managing panic attacks and anxiety disorders.

5) Craske and Stein (2016)

They stated that panic disorder can significantly affect an individual's daily functioning, including work performance, social relationships and overall quality of life.

6) World Health Organization (WHO) (2017)

It reported that anxiety disorders are among the most common mental health problems worldwide and women are more vulnerable due to biological and social factors.

7) American Psychological Association (APA) (2018)

It defined panic disorder as a condition involving recurrent panic attacks along with persistent fear of future attacks. The organization also emphasized the need for mental health awareness and counseling.

8) Bandelow and Michaelis (2015)

They found that lifestyle stress, work pressure and relationship problems are major contributors to anxiety and panic disorders in adults.

9) Goodwin and Gotlib (2004)

They highlighted that lack of social support and emotional stress increases the chances of developing panic disorder, particularly among women in their early adulthood.

2. SAMPLE SIZE AND QUESTIONNAIRE:

For this research study, data was collected from 20 women aged between 20–45 years. The respondents included students, working professionals and homemakers.

A structured questionnaire consisting of 12 questions was used to gather information regarding symptoms, stress levels, lifestyle factors and awareness related to panic disorder.

Questionnaire

Q1. Have you heard about Panic Disorder?

Q2. Have you ever experienced sudden intense fear or anxiety without clear reason?

Q3. How often do you experience such episodes?

Q4. During such episodes, have you experienced any of the following?

Q5. How long does a typical panic episode last?

Q6. What do you think triggers your panic episodes?

Q7. Do hormonal changes affect your anxiety levels?

Q8. Have you ever consulted a doctor or mental health professional?

Q9. If yes, what treatment did you receive?

Q10. How do you manage panic or anxiety?

Q11. Do you think there is enough awareness about mental health among women?

Q12. Do you believe women aged 20-45 are more prone to panic disorder due to multiple responsibilities?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research methodology used in this study is descriptive research design. The main aim of this research was to understand the prevalence of panic disorder symptoms among women aged 20–45 years.

Primary Data Collection :

I have made survey form and collected direct responses from the respondents. It is fresh and specific to the problem under study.

For this study, a structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire was designed using Google Forms, making it easy for respondents to access and complete the survey online. It consisted of close-ended, multiple-choice questions to collect quantitative data related to panic disorder among 20-45 years aged women.

The questions were framed to understand respondents' age profile, marital status, occupation, experiences, triggers, hormonal changes, awareness and management of the disorder.

Secondary Data Collection:

Secondary data was collected from:

- Research articles
- Books related to psychology
- Online journals
- Health websites

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic Profile of Respondents:

The study involved 20 respondents. The majority of participants were aged 20–25 years (50%), followed by 41–45 years (30%), 26–30 years (15%), and 36–40 years (5%). Most respondents were single (70%), with 25% married and 5% widowed. Regarding occupation, half of the respondents were students (50%), 30% were working professionals, and 20% were homemakers.

Awareness and Experience of Panic Disorder:

Half of the respondents (50%) reported knowing about panic disorder. Slightly more than half (55%) indicated they had experienced sudden episodes of intense fear or anxiety without a clear reason. Of those who experienced such episodes, 60% reported them rarely, while 40% experienced them sometimes.

Symptoms and Duration of Panic Episodes:

The most commonly reported symptom was rapid heartbeat (65%), followed by dizziness (15%), with smaller percentages reporting sweating (5%), fear of losing control (5%), or none of the listed symptoms (10%). The duration of panic episodes was typically short, with 65% lasting less than five minutes, 25% lasting 5–20 minutes, 5% lasting 20–60 minutes, and 5% lasting more than one hour.

Triggers and Contributing Factors:

The main triggers identified were work or study pressure (50%), followed by health concerns (20%), and family responsibilities, financial stress, and social situations (each 10%). Hormonal changes were reported to affect anxiety levels by 45% of respondents, while 40% were unsure and 15% reported no effect.

Seeking Help and Treatment:

A majority of respondents (75%) had not consulted a doctor or mental health professional regarding panic or anxiety. Correspondingly, 70% had received no treatment, 20% had taken medication, 5% had received therapy or counseling, and another 5% had both medication and therapy.

Coping Strategies:

The most common coping mechanism was talking to family or friends (40%), followed by prayer or spiritual activities (20%) and meditation or yoga (20%). Other strategies included self-talk (10%), medication (5%), and walking or listening to music (5%).

Awareness of Mental Health among Women:

Respondents indicated limited awareness of mental health issues among women, with 60% responding “No,” and 20% each responding “Yes” or “Maybe.”

Attitudes Toward Panic Disorder:

Regarding agreement with statements about panic disorder or related mental health issues, 40% agreed, 35% strongly agreed, and 25% were neutral.

3. CONCLUSION

The study on panic disorder among women aged 20–45 years highlights the growing importance of mental health awareness in modern society. Women in this age group often face multiple responsibilities related to career, family, relationships and social expectations. These pressures can significantly affect their emotional and psychological well-being.

The findings of the study suggest that many women experience symptoms related to panic disorder such as sudden fear, anxiety, stress and physical discomfort. However, a significant number of women are still unaware of panic disorder and its effects. This lack of awareness often prevents individuals from seeking professional help.

The study also reveals that factors such as work pressure, family responsibilities, lack of emotional support and lifestyle stress contribute to panic disorder among women. Mental health issues should be treated with the same seriousness as physical health problems.

Creating awareness about panic disorder is essential in order to reduce stigma and encourage individuals to seek help. Counseling, therapy, stress management techniques and emotional support from family and society can play an important role in managing panic disorder.

In conclusion, promoting mental health education, encouraging open discussions about emotional well-being and providing accessible mental health services can help women lead healthier and more balanced lives.

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