

0435

Evaluation of a stress management program with the destitute women at Shisu Polli Plus, Gazipur, Bangladesh.

Aminul Hoque Chowdhury¹

¹Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, ²The University of Dhaka, Dhaka, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT TITLE: Evaluation of a stress management program with the destitute women at Shisu Polli Plus, Gazipur, Bangladesh.

ABSTRACT FOCUS: Research

SESSION TYPE: Paper (PowerPoint presentation)

CATEGORY: Adult (Psychosocial health of destitute women)

AUTHOR: Aminul Hoque Chowdhury, Intern Occupational Therapist, CRP, Dhaka.

Introduction: In Bangladesh, homeless widows or divorced women live with severe stress because of their terrible circumstances. Their independent living is hampered owing to several stressors such as poverty, unemployment, lack of shelter and abuse. These stressors contribute to higher rates of mental illness, substance abuse and health problems among them. So it is important for them to cope or adjust with persisting stress to prevent harmful impact of stress on health. Stress management is a composition of different methods designed to reduce stress and improve coping abilities. This study assesses a single stress management group comprising destitute women at the Shisu Polli Plus (SPP), Gazipur. **Objectives:** The study was to ascertain whether a stress management programme improves participants' self awareness level to cope with stress and reduce their perceived stress for better participation in their day to day living. **Methods:** A pre-test post-test design was chosen in the study to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme. Eighteen participants were selected from the SPP through purposive comprehensive sampling by the self-reporting questionnaire adopted by WHO. The programme was conducted for a period of one month. Participants attended a one-hour session every week. A pre-test and a post test were conducted before and after administering the stress management programme for the purpose of data collection. A self-rating questionnaire (SRQ) scale and Perceived stress scale (PSS) were used in data collection. Statistical analysis of related t test was used in data analysis. **Results:** The results of the study show that a structured stress management programme offers better coping strategies through raising self-awareness about stress and helps to reduce perceived stress for destitute women. It is an obvious evidence for occupational therapy working with that kind of population.

Key Words: Coping with stress, Stress management programme and Women with destitution.