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### RESEARCH ARTICLE

#### CHALLENGES OF MANAGING RESOURCES DURING COVID - 19 PANDEMIC

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#### Abstract

The outbreak of global health pandemic COVID-19 brought a lot of changes in the lives of mankind and because of this, the country was put under complete lockdown in March 2020. The management of all human and non human resources was a great challenge during this period. A study on assessing management practices during COVID-19 was conducted online from friends and families located in villages, towns, cities and abroad constituting a sample of 107 respondents coping with this situation. The questionnaire regarding the management practices was formulated keeping in view the practices followed indoors, free time utilization and the advisories followed. It was observed that human energy consumption was increased during the lockdown period during fulfillment of family needs, the government advisories were properly followed by the people and people downloaded the AROGYA SETU app, purchased locally available goods and mostly followed the online transactions. The major recommendation is that people should be motivated /encouraged to follow the safety practices about the COVID-19.

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#### Introduction:-

Acquiring, allocating and managing the human and non human resources (such as individuals and their skills, materialistic things, money, technology, machinery and the required natural sources) is resource management. It is important to ensure effective management of both the internal and external resources (time and budget) in resource management.

Defining of resources and their availability linked with planning of resource demands and related reporting allows for effective use of limited resources. Identification of proper procedures and process also saves resources from being wasted and finances being spent on the wrong things.

The outbreak of global health pandemic COVID-19 brought a lot of changes in the lives of mankind and because of this, the country was put under complete lockdown in March 2020. The management of all human and non human resources was a great challenge during this period.

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The curfews had greatly limited the family's abilities to go out of the house to spend the money on what the families wanted. This extended home stay will and has helped people to analyze what is really NEEDED than what is WANTED.

Rather than making frequent visits to neighborhood market or store or vendor, the bulk purchasing from the stores, plaza's is in trend these days. The consumers are more attracted towards the glittering places than to the plenty of shops available in the next door.

The emergence of the rural market and market for eco-friendly products for several consumer goods is an important and recent development in India's consumerism. One-third of the national income contributed by the three fourths of India's rural population should not be avoided.

Lastly, creating value along with delivering delight to the customer is what is most important. In order to cope with the new trends in the social media, we as consumers need to permeate in the technological era. Today due to vast use of internet in India the online shopping is increasing widely [1].

Hence, the need was felt to study the management practices of families living indoors to find out

1. Management practices followed indoors
2. Free time utilization if any,
3. Types of advisories followed

#### **Problem Statement–**

During COVID 19 pandemic crisis the management of resources is a serious concern.

#### **Material and Methods:-**

A survey method that included the study area, selection of sample, formulation of a questionnaire, pre testing of tools and techniques was used and finally collection of data

#### **Locale:**

The present survey was conducted online from friends and families located in various villages, towns and cities of India and abroad coping with the COVID 19 pandemic situations. The survey was conducted during the complete lockdown of the country that is in the month of May 2020.

#### **Sample:**

The sample was selected randomly. Thus, the total sample constituted of 107 respondents for the survey.

#### **Formulation of questionnaire:**

For collection of the relevant data as per the need of the situation, a questionnaire was prepared and pre-tested on 30 respondents. The relevant changes were done and the questionnaire was resent to the respondents.

#### **Results:-**

Many aspects of human society including resources and waste management have been challenged in the pandemic times. Human energy consumption is increased during the lockdown due to the fulfillment of family needs.

**Table 1:-** Personal profile of the respondents.

<b>Personal Characteristics</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age in yrs</b>		
<30	30	28.03
30-35	17	15.88
35-40	9	8.41
40-45	24	22.42
45-50	15	14.01
50-60	12	11.21
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	18	16.82

Female	89	83.17
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
Secondary	6	5.60
Undergraduate	19	17.75
Graduate	17	15.88
Post-Graduate	54	50.46
Doctorate	11	10.28
<b>Occupation of the respondents</b>		
Homemaker	26	24.29
Teacher	31	28.97
Business	16	14.95
Government Employee	20	18.69
Self-employed	14	13.08
<b>Monthly income of the family</b>		
< 50,000	40	37.38
50,000- 1,00,000	29	27.10
1,00,000-1,50,000	9	8.41
1,50,000-2,00,000	11	10.28
> 2,00,000	18	16.82
<b>Type of family</b>		
Nuclear	72	67.28
Joint	35	32.71

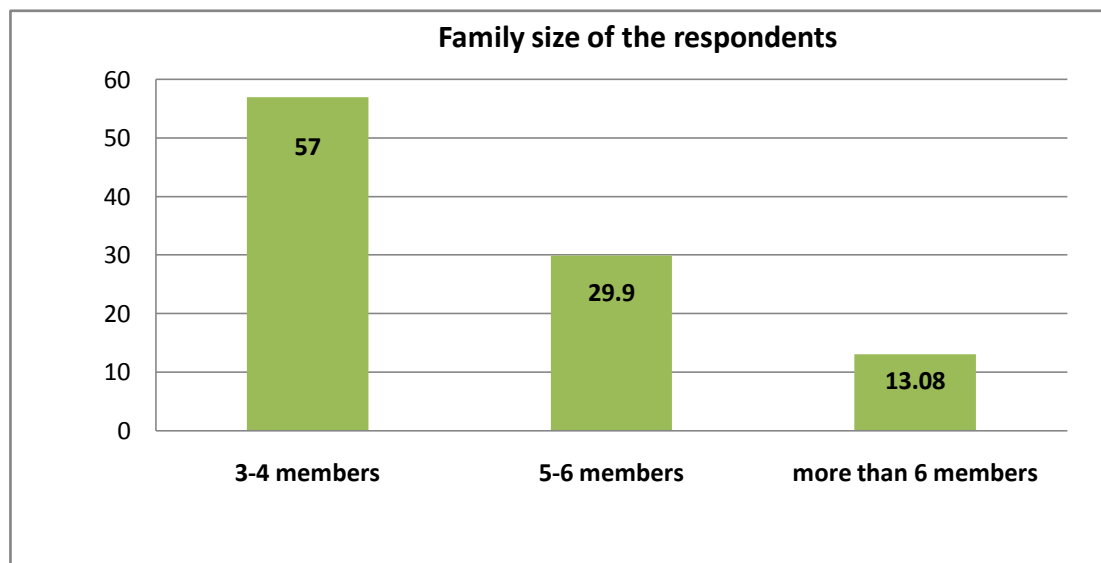
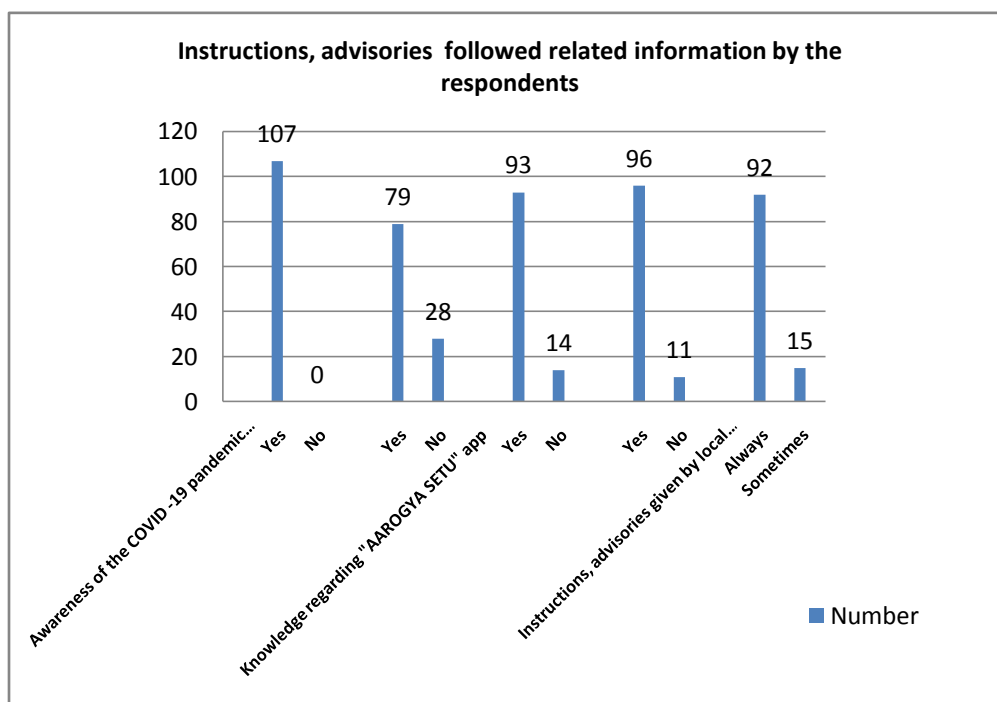


Table 1 highlights the personal profile of the respondents. It reveals that the majority of the respondents were females (83.17 %) as compared to the 16.82 percent men who filled up the questionnaire of managing resources during COVID 19 pandemic. Majority of the respondents were less than 30 years of age (28.03 %) followed by people in the age group of 40-45 years (22.42 %), 30-35 years (15.88 %) and 45-50 years (14.01 %). More than half the percent of the respondents were post graduates in contrast to the very few who were educated up to secondary level (5.60 %) only. Almost equal percentage of respondents were homemakers (24.29 %) and working as teachers (28.97 %). Few of the respondents were self employed (13.08 %). There were very little respondents falling in the one to one and a half lac monthly income category. 37.38 percent of the respondents earned less than Rs.50,000 per month while only 16.82 percent earned more than 2 lacs Rs. per month. Majority of the respondents were living in nuclear families (67.28 %) consisting of 3-4 (57 %) persons in the family as compared to the joint families (32.71) consisting of 5-6 (29.90 %) or more (13.08%) people in the family.



Cent percent of the respondents were aware about the pandemic outbreak, out of which majority (73.83 %) of them had stored the essential commodities beforehand. Majority of the respondents were aware (86.91 %) about the AAROGYA SETU App. Majority (89.71 %) of the respondents followed the guidelines issued by the Ayush Ministry as compared to 10.28 percent who did not follow them. 85.98 percent respondents always followed the instructions, advisories given by the local government and these were sometimes followed by 14.01 percent.

Table 2 highlights the market related information as responded by the respondent's. Creating value along with delivering delight to the customer is what is most important. We live in a digital age and thus need to keep up with new trends in the social media [3].

**Table 2:-** Commodities / Market related information of the respondents.

Responses	Number	Percentage
<b>Respondents making a list of items to be purchased to avoid going to the market time and again</b>		
Always	81	75.70
Sometimes	21	19.62
Never	5	04.67
<b>Respondents making trips to the market to buy commodities</b>		
Daily	-	
Once in 3 days	33	30.84
Weekly	42	39.25
Fortnightly	17	15.88
Not even once	15	14.01
<b>If precautions taken for the purchased commodities</b>		
Yes	56	52.33
No	51	47.66
<b>Respondents response regarding self sanitization before entering the house</b>		
Yes	96	89.71
No	11	10.28

This table highlights the respondent's responses of the market related information. Majority (75.70 %) of the respondents made a list of items to be purchased before going to the market in order to avoid the frequent visits where as 4.67 percent respondents were also there who never made a list and visited the market area as and when

required. No one visited the market daily but few did visit weekly (39.25%), ones in 3 days (30.84%) or fortnightly (15.88%) while 14.01 percent respondents did not make any market trip to the market for buying commodities. The material bought was taken care of by 52.33 percent respondents in terms of washing the material/ packets in soapy solution, raw material in vinegar and salt, where as 47.66 percent did not take any precautions. Majority of the respondents (89.70%) also sanitized themselves before entering their houses as compared to 10.28 percent who did not perform any such activity.

**Table 3:-** Household related information of the respondents.

Responses	Number	Percentage
<b>Do you have a kitchen garden? If No, do you opt for growing vegetables in pots, baskets or plastic bags?</b>		
Yes	59	55.14
No	41	38.31
Any other	7	06.54
<b>Responses on the tiredness feeling after working inside and outside the house</b>		
Yes	56	52.33
No	51	47.66
<b>Responses on the breaks taken in between the working hours</b>		
Always	34	31.77
Sometimes	60	56.07
Never	13	12.14
<b>Time taken for pursuing hobbies</b>		
less than half an hour	36	33.64
1-2 hrs	56	52.33
You don't pursue any hobbies	15	14.01
<b>Help from other members of the family</b>		
Yes	100	93.45
No	7	06.54
<b>Persons / Relationships -</b> husband - 36; All family members -48; Wife – 15; Son -41; Parents - 22; In laws -19; Sister in law -2		

More than fifty percent of the respondents did have a kitchen garden. 38.31 percent respondents did not have a kitchen garden while 6.54 percent of them did have pots, baskets and plastic bags for growing flowers and seasonal vegetables. There was a very few difference in the percentage of respondents who were tired (52.33%) and not tired after carrying (47.66%) the task both indoors and outdoors. Very few respondents (12.14%) did not take any break in between the working hours as compared to the 56.07 percent and 31.77 percent respondents who took breaks sometimes & always in between the working hours. Respondents who did not take any break were of the opinion that taking break between the tasks made them lethargic thereby, making them to complete the activity in a longer period of time. Out of all the respondents pursuing their hobbies 52.33 percent spent 1-2 hours followed by 33.64 percent who spent less than half an hour as were busy with some other activities.

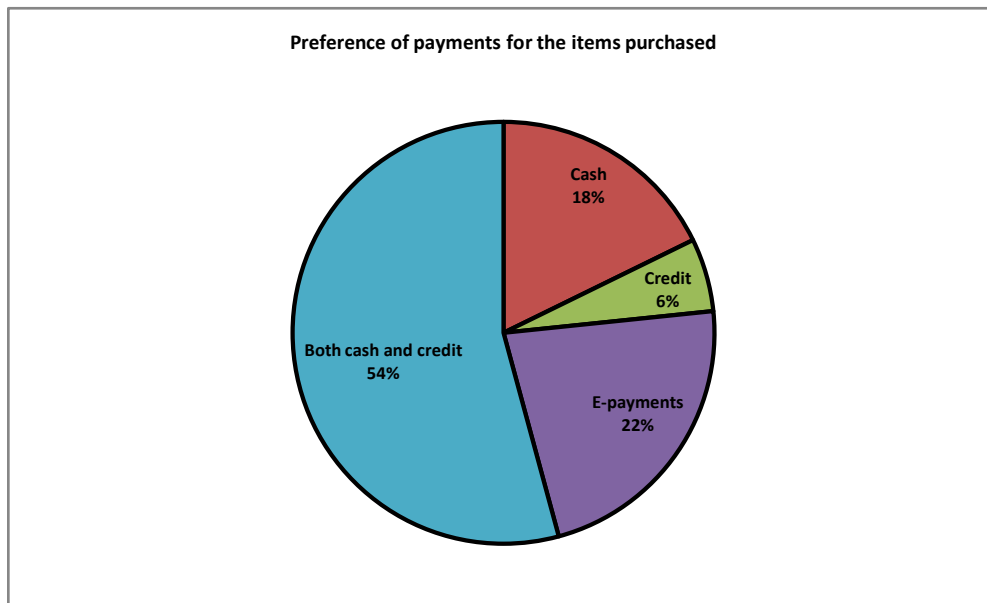
Majority of the respondents (93.45%) received household help from other members of the family ie. from the husbands, wives, kids in laws etc. as compared to be 6.54 percent who had to carry out all the household tasks all by themselves.

**Table 4:-** Money related information of the respondents.

Responses	Number	Percentage
<b>Preference of payments for the items purchased</b>		
Cash	19	17.75
Credit	6	05.60
E-payments	24	22.42
Both cash and credit	58	54.20
<b>ATM visits during the lockdown</b>		
less than 5 times	57	53.27
5-10 times	5	04.67

more than 10 times	-	
Not a single time	45	42.05
<b>Taking any precautions during transaction of money in the ATM</b>		
Yes	93	86.91
No	14	13.08
<b>Respondents preference over the mode of payment</b>		
Cash	15	14.01
E-payment	92	85.98

Both cash & credit made of payments were preferred by 54.20 percent of the respondents. Very few (5.60%) respondents preferred the credit mode and there were 22.42 percent respondents also who made e payments for the items purchased. Avoiding ATM during the lockdown was a good practice followed by 42.05 percent respondents as the buttons, door knobs and touch screen were very prone in transmitting the Corona virus to a healthy person too. The precautions of sanitizing the screen handles of door & button, wearing gloves etc were taken care of by 86.9 percent where as 13.08 person respondents were very casual in their approach. E payment was preferred over cash by 85.98 percent respondents though it was used by a small percent of respondents. Sharma Vishnoi Nidhi and Khattri Varsha [2] in their paper study of "online shopping behaviour and its impact on online deal websites" found out that market place is fast turning into e-market place. From needle to ship, everything is being sold and bought on the internet. Here authors have tried to find out the preference towards mode of payment. The most preferred mode of payment is bank transfer in case they have trust on site. The next preferred mode is credit/debit card and least preferred is cash on delivery.



**Table 5:-** Care taken by the respondents and family during the lockdown period.

Responses	Number	Percentage
<b>Respondents doing the exercises/ meditation during the Covid-19 outbreak</b>		
Always	54	50.46
Sometimes	47	43.92
Never	6	05.60
<b>Posture used most while working in the kitchen</b>		
Sitting	11	10.28
Standing	67	62.61
Both Positions	29	27.10
<b>Maintenance of a straight posture while doing household chores</b>		
Always	49	45.79
Sometimes	58	54.20

Never	10	09.34
<b>Respondents whether practicing social distancing at home</b>		
Yes	56	52.33
No	51	47.66
<b>If yes,</b>		
Always	20	18.69
Sometimes	36	33.64
Never	51	47.66

This table highlights the care taken by the respondents and their family members during the lockdown period. Fifty percent of the respondents always did exercises/meditation during the COVID Pandemic and had made it a habit as compared to the meager 5.60 percent who never did any exercises.

Majority of the respondents had standing kitchen so performed the activities in the standing posture followed by 27.10 percent. While during the household chores the straight posture was always maintained by 45.79 percent and sometimes by 54.20 percent where as 9.34 percent never maintained a straight posture while doing the household chores where as they preferred doing the work in whatever posture as they felt comfortable.

**Table 6:-** Respondents preference for going out to restaurants or having homemade food after lock-down.

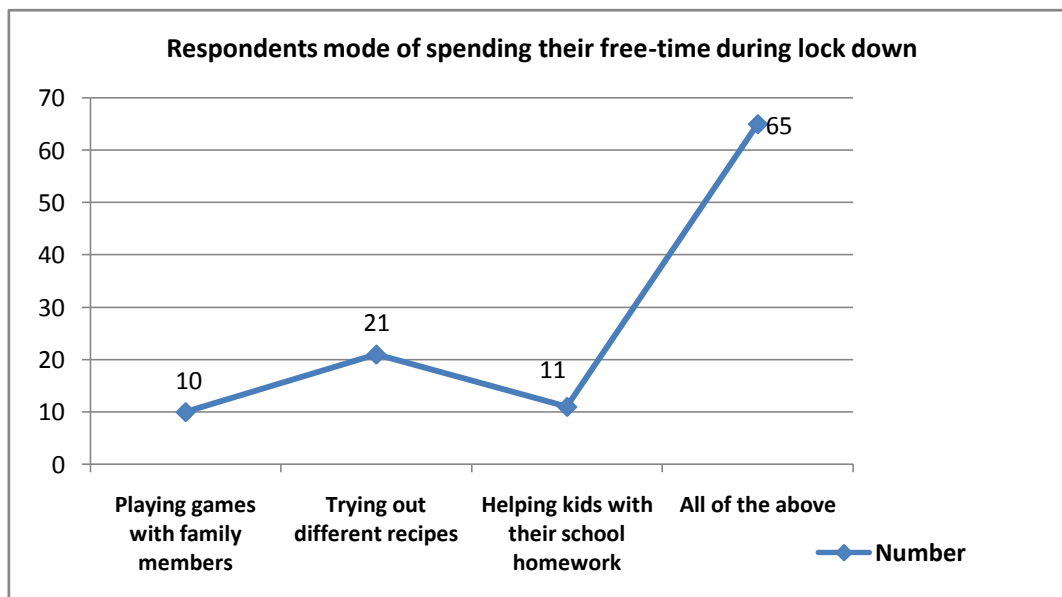
Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	18	16.82
No	39	36.44
Maybe	50	46.72

Very few respondents (16.82 %) have given an urge of having restaurant food ones the lock down is over. The latest market scenario shows that people have moved out of their houses immediately after the services have been opened up.

**Table 7:-** Respondents mode of spending their free-time during lock down.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Playing games with family members	10	09.34
Trying out different recipes	21	19.62
Helping kids with their school homework	11	10.28
Helping older members of the family	-	-
All of the above	65	60.74

This table highlights the respondent's mode of spending their free time during lockdown. Majority (60.74%) of the respondents spent their free time by playing games with family members (9.34%), trying out different recipes (19.62%) helping kids with their school home work (10.28%).



This graph highlights the respondent's mode of spending their free time during lockdown. Majority (65) of the respondents spent their free time by doing all the activities ie. playing games with family members (10) trying out different recipes (21) helping kids with their school home work (11).

### **Conclusions:-**

1. Majority of the respondents being well educated were well aware of the pandemic outbreak and also AAROGYA SETU App. and had not stored / stocked the essential commodities beforehand.
2. A list of items to be purchased was made before going to the market in order to avoid the frequent visits. The packed material bought was washed in soapy solution; raw material in vinegar and salt as this tendency was able to reduce the viruses to some extent.
3. Respondents in cities not having a kitchen garden, so they used pots, baskets and plastic bags for growing flowers and seasonal vegetables. Household help was received from other members of the family
4. The feeling of tiredness was overcome by taking small breaks in between the working hours. Respondents who did not take any break were of the opinion that taking break between the tasks made them lethargic thereby, making them to complete the activity in longer period of time. Healthy living pattern in terms of exercises/meditation was followed by majority of the families.
5. Both cash & credit mode of payments were preferred by majority of the respondents. Avoiding ATM during the lockdown was a good practice followed by 42.05 percent respondents as the buttons, door knobs and touch screen were very prone in transmitting the Corona virus to a healthy person too. The precautions of sanitizing the screen handles of door & button wearing gloves etc were taken care of by 86.9 percent. The respondents self sanitized themselves before entering their houses as a precautionary activity so as not to carry the virus inside.
6. A straight posture while doing the household chores was maintained by many while some preferred doing the work in any posture they felt as comfortable.

### **Recommendations:-**

1. To learn to cope up with bare minimum facilities.
2. Be a rational buyer and promote sensible consumerism in all situations to reduce wastage of resources
3. The masses though having the knowledge about the COVID virus should be still motivated /encouraged to follow safety practices.
4. The mode of e payment should be encouraged avoiding unnecessary touching of notes and coins for making payments.
5. The pattern of healthy living in terms of exercises/meditation needs to be followed by all.
6. Purchase of locally available goods needs to be promoted.
7. As the pandemic progresses, we need to make sure we are consuming and sharing authentic information on the virus.

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