

**PSYCHOLOGICAL DEPRIVATION AMONG WIDOWS AND ITS EFFECTS ON
THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE IN MALAKAND DIVISION**

Ibrar Ahmad

M. Phil Scholar, Department of Rural Sociology,
Agriculture Peshawar-Pakistan

Dr. Intikhab Alam

Lecturer in Rural Sociology
Agriculture University, Peshawar

Aziz ul Hakim

PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology
University of Peshawar

Faiza Yousaf Student

(BS English) University of Malakand

ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to analyze various dimensions of psychological and emotional problems faced by widows and its immediate effects on their quality of life. The present study was conducted in District Lower Dir Malakand Division. The total number of union councils in Dir lower is 198, from which three were selected purposively. The data was collected from the primary respondents; widows. A sample size selection criterion was based upon pilot survey of three union councils, where the total number of widows was 356. Methods of percentage and frequency were used in uni-variate analysis and similarly Chi-Square test was conducted through Bi-Variate analysis. At Uni-Variate analysis, majority of the respondents viewed that they are facing psychological problems in the form of tension, anxiety, depression, extortion, sexual assault and harassment. Moreover, at Bi-Variate analysis significant association was found between widows quality of life and their psychological problems, $P = (.001)$ in the form of feelings of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced/widow women. Similarly, $P = (0.001)$ widows are often unwelcome at social events and religious festivals and avoided by others because they are considered source of bad luck. In addition, $P = (0.000)$ Widows faces harassment, $P = (0.000)$ Widow faces extortion. It has been summarized that, psychologically, widows are victims of more depression, more anxiety and stress as compared to married women. It has also been recommended that Widows should be made emotionally and psychologically secure through remarriage, social acceptance, psychotherapy and counseling.

Keywords: Widowhood, Tension, Anxiety, Depression, Feelings of Isolation

INTRODUCTION

Widowhood, the most anxious incident in life has its social and psychological impacts. Widowhood among married partners means when one of the partners of marriage dies. Widow is a female whose partner has demised, and widower is a male whose partner is demised. It is positive to differentiate between mourning and widowhood. Mourning is a short term experience of grief and sorrow over the death of life partner. The research into mourning mostly examines the actions subservient to demise up to two years. On the other hand widowhood is a long term experience of sorrow on the demise of spouse, which has social, psychological and economic implications. Mostly, in United States and others European societies, the rate of widowhood is higher in women than men because the younger women are marrying to elder men. It has been elaborated more that in United States in 2005, 18 percent of men and 52 percent of women and their ages range were 75-84 were widowed, and 32 percent of men and 75 percent of women ages 80 were widowed (U.S, Census Bureaue, 2006).

Likewise, according to the 2003 and 2004, official national statistics report of the United Kingdom, there are 16 to 27 percent of men and 45, 63 percent of women ages 65 and 75 years respectively were widowed (ONS, 2005-2006). The main difference between widowhood and wedded women are that widowed are deprived from her spouse love and affection, while the wedded women are in association with her spouse regarding love. Majority of the research shows that widow women are facing enormous psychological problems in the form of stress, depression and anxiety. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) elaborated through his own research the different psychological problems with which widows are confronting like grief sorrows and differentiate between the terms stress and melancholy (Erich Lindemann, 1944).

Further, in Pakistan widows experience more emotional difficulties as compared to the countries because they are generally illiterate and are unable able to earn for her offspring. The major personality traits of widows' women are that they are more belligerent, bellicose and use abuse language as compared to wedded and married women (Ainsworth, 2007). In addition the widows are more unhappy and feeling stress and anxiety as compared

to married women. Furthermore, feelings of being dismal and loneliness are found more among widow women. Mostly, the research has proved that widows women are facing acute form of anger, loneliness, stress, anxiety, being dismal and depression as compared to wedded women (Allison, & Furstenberg, 2009; Amato, 2001; Arditti, 2002).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In underdeveloped countries like Pakistan, women especially widows are often poor. Despite poverty, they are also confronting severe psychological and emotional restraints. In most of the cases there issues are psychological including depression, mental health issues, tension and anxiety. The present research aims to measure the level of emotional difficulties like social interaction, stress and psychological problems like loneliness, anxiety, and rage among widowed women.

MATERIALS METHOD

The purpose of this part is to describe the methodology that will be used for the conducting of this study namely problem of widowhood in Malakand Division. This section includes universe of the study, sample size selection criteria, data collection, and data analysis. The details are given below.

Universe of study: This study was conducted in District Dir Lower of Malakand Division. As it was difficult to conduct the study in the entire district, thus three union councils i.e. Badwan, Khadzai, and Chakdara were purposively selected for the study. All the respondents were widow women.

Sample Selection Criteria: Through pilot survey of three union councils the total number of widows is 356. As the research involves multiple variables, to determine sample size Sekaran (2003) procedure will be adopted. According to which a sample size of 182 was suffice for the target population of 356. The sample was divided into three union councils on the proportionate sampling procedure by using formula given below $n_i = (N_i/N)n$, where n = total population of each union council in study area while N =total target population in study area, N_i = total sample size required for researcher and n_i = sample size required from each village. Table-1

Sample Size: Out of the total 356 widow women 182 were selected for the study. The study sample included 70 widow were selected from union council Badwan, 60 were selected from Khadzgai, while 50 were selected from Chakdara. For collecting primary data a well furnished interview schedule was designed which included questions related to all the variables. The interview schedule was pre-tested for its relevance to objectives of study and changed, edited and modified accordingly. As the data was collected from the female respondents so a prior consent form was signed both from the respondents as well as male head of the family. The data was collected by the researcher himself.

Sample Size

Name of union council	Total widows population	Sample size
Khadzo	154	70
Badwan	90	60
Chakdara	112	50
Total	356	182

Source: Pilot survey

Data analysis: The data was collected for the present study was analyzed with the help of (SPSS). For the simplicity the data was be presented in percentage and frequencies. To see the association between independent variable and dependent variables chi-square statistics was used.

Chi- square test:

Chi-square test (χ^2) test was be used to test the association between dependent and Independent variables .Following procedure was adopted to calculate chi-square as was outlined by Tai(1978:358).

$$(\chi^2) = \sum_{j=1}^j \sum_{j=1}^k \frac{(o_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Uni-Variate Analysis

Frequency and Percentage of Psychological Effects on Widow

S. No	Statements	Agree	Disagree	Don't know	Total
1	Widows are more depressed, report more anxiety and stress as compared to married women	163(89.6)	8(4.4)	11(6)	182 (100)
2	feelings of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced/widow women	165(90.7)	15(8.2)	2(1.1)	182 (100)
3	widows are often unwelcome at social events and religious festivals and avoided by others because they are considered bad luck	153(84.1)	25(13.7)	4(2.2)	182(100)
4	Extreme deprivation faced by widows	175(96.2)	4(2.2)	3(1.6)	182(100)
5	A widow faces segregation, on a large scale.	142(78)	40(22)		182(100)
6	Effects of the stigma of their social position as women without husbands and facilitates all the other indignities they face	109(59.9)	65(35.7)	8(4.4)	182(100)
7	Widows faces harassment	181(99.5)	1(.5)		182(100)
8	Widow faces extortion	147(80.8)	15(8.2)	20(11)	182(100)
9	Widow faces sexual assault	174(95.6)	7(3.8)	1(5)	182(100)
10	Restrictions on residence, dress, diet and social intercourse force a widow to a life in the shadows affecting both her physical and mental health	158(86.8)	14(7.7)	10(5.5)	182(100)
11	Widows, through poor nutrition, inadequate shelter, a lack of access to health care and a vulnerability to violence, are very likely to suffer not only physical ill health but stress and chronic depression as well.	157(86.3)	21(11.5)	4(2.2)	182(100)

Majority 99.5% of the respondents reported that Widows faces harassment. Moreover 96.2% respondents mentioned that extreme deprivation faced by widows. Furthermore 95.6% of the respondents described that feelings of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced/widow women. The main difference between widowhood and wedded women are that widowed are deprived from her spouse love and affection, while the wedded women are in association with her spouse regarding love.

Majority of the research shows that they are facing enormous psychological problems in the form of stress, depression and anxiety. Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) elaborated through his own research the different psychological problems with which widows are confronting like grief sorrows and differentiate between the terms stress and melancholy. Moreover 86.8% respondents mentioned that Restrictions on residence, dress, diet and social intercourse force a widow to a life in the shadows affecting both her physical and mental health.

Furthermore 86.3% respondents describe that Widows, through poor nutrition, inadequate shelter, a lack of access to health care and a vulnerability to violence, are very likely to suffer not only physical ill health but stress and chronic depression as well. In addition 84.1% of the respondents told that widows are often unwelcome at social events and religious festivals and avoided by others because they are considered bad luck.

Mostly unwelcomed on the occasion of social events, religious anniversaries and are considered women with bad luck (Sen, 1999). More over 80.8% respondents mentioned that Widow faces extortion. Furthermore 59.9% of the respondents described that effects of the stigma of their social position as women without husbands and facilitates all the other dignities they face.

Bi-Variate Analysis

Association Between Barriers to Widows Quality of Life and Psychological Effects on widow

S. No	Statements		DV(BWQL)			Total	Chi-square
			Agree	Disagree	Don't know		
1	Widows are more depressed, report more anxiety and stress as compared to married women	Agree	114	44	5	163	$\chi^2=7.816$ P(.099)
		Disagree	8	0	0	8	
		Don't know	11	0	0	11	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
2	feelings of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced/widow women	Agree	122	39	4	165	$\chi^2=18.818$ P(.001)
		Disagree	11	4	0	15	
		Don't know	0	1	1	2	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
3	widows are often unwelcome at social events and religious festivals and avoided by others because they are considered bad luck	Agree	121	28	4	153	$\chi^2=19.640$ P(.001)
		Disagree	11	13	1	25	
		Don't know	1	3	0	4	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
4	extreme deprivation faced by widows	Agree	131	40	4	175	$\chi^2=14.948$ P(.005)
		Disagree	0	3	1	4	
		Don't know	2	1	0	3	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
5	A widow faces segregation, on a large scale.	Agree	110	28	4	142	$\chi^2=7.024$ P(.030)
		Disagree	23	16	1	40	
		Don't know	0	0	0	0	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
6	effects of the stigma of their social position as women without husbands and all the other indignities they face	Agree	87	19	3	109	$\chi^2=7.088$ P(.131)
		Disagree	41	22	2	65	
		Don't know	5	3	0	8	

		Total	133	44	5	182	
7	Widows faces harassment	Agree	133	44	4	181	$\chi^2=35.596$ P(.000)
		Disagree	0	0	1	1	
		Don't know	0	0	0	0	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
8	Widow faces extortion	Agree	121	25	1	147	$\chi^2=37.971$ P(.000)
		Disagree	4	9	2	15	
		Don't know	8	10	2	20	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
9	Widow faces sexual assault	Agree	125	44	5	174	$\chi^2=3.083$ P(.544)
		Disagree	7	0	0	7	
		Don't know	1	0	0	1	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
10	Restrictions on residence, dress, diet and social intercourse force a widow to a life in the shadows affecting both her physical and mental health	Agree	125	44	5	174	$\chi^2=3.083$ P(.544)
		Disagree	7	0	0	7	
		Don't know	1	0	0	1	
		Total	133	44	5	182	
11	Widows, through a poor nutrition, inadequate shelter, a lack of access to health care and a vulnerability to violence, are very likely to suffer not only physical ill health but stress and chronic depression as well.	Agree	119	34	4	157	$\chi^2=7.640$ P(.106)
		Disagree	13	7	1	21	
		Don't know	1	3	0	4	
		Total	133	44	5	182	

The highly significant ($p=.000$) was found between Widows faces harassment with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. Moreover, a highly significant ($p=.000$) was found between widow face extortion with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. Furthermore a significant ($p=.001$) was observe between feelings of loneliness and rejection are reported more in divorced/widow women extortion with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. Moreover a significant ($p=.001$) relation was observed between widows are often unwelcome at social

events and religious festivals and avoided by others because they are considered bad luck with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. In addition a significant ($p=.005$) was observe between extreme deprivation faced by widows with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. However, a non significant ($p=.099$) was observe between Widows are more depressed, report more anxiety and stress as compared to married women with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. Moreover a non significant ($p=.030$) relation was observed between widow faces segregation, on a large scale with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. In addition a non significant ($p=.131$) was found between effects of the stigma of their social position as women without husbands and facilitates all the other indignities they face with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. Furthermore a non significant ($p=.544$) was observe between Widow Faces sexual assault with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. . Moreover a non significant ($p=.544$) relation was observed between Restrictions on residence, dress, diet and social intercourse force a widow to a life in the shadows affecting both her physical and mental health with barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow. In addition a non significant ($p=.106$) was found between widows, through a poor nutrition, inadequate shelter, a lack of access to health care and a vulnerability to violence, are very likely to suffer not only physical ill health but stress and chronic depression as well barriers to widows quality of life and psychological effects on widow.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In a nut shell, psychologically, widows are victims of more depression, more anxiety and stress as compared to married women. Similarly, the widows have been rejected from social events and religious festivals because they are considered as bad luck due to prevalence of superstitious beliefs. In addition, widows are subject of harassment, sexual assaults due to their vulnerability caused by lack of psychological support from spouse. Moreover, widows were vulnerable to severe form of extortion resulting into psychological restraints due to rigid cultural norms based upon patriarchy. Rigid patriarchal and culture is also main cause of deprivation of widows from residence, dress and diet and thus polluting their psychological life. Widow should get emotional and psychological security through remarriage, social acceptance and counseling. The loneliness of the widows should dispel by

providing emotional and psychological support through social inclusion. The widows should not give the sense of grief and sorrows for prolong time through social engagement.

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