

A Scenario of Destitute Widows in Mayiladuthurai District, Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

Widow is a person who lost her husband permanently with all evidences (death) after the marriage has taken place. Destitute means an individual who doesn't have any social, economic, psychological and physical support legally from any bodies. But the defined 'a person who hasn't had any support from is defined as bread winner other than herself after the death of her husband'. Her legalized loss of one's spouse by all the evidences is called as widowhood. This has been used invariably for any sexes. The treatments towards them destitute widows are reluctant and negligence in all spares of life i.e auspicious occasions. They are much serious about feeling of self, stigma, rights, future of their children etc., which are not considered empathetically even as human being. This kind of emergence challenged them to face the insecurity in psychologically, socially, economically and politically with the absence of support at their everyday life. At this context, the researcher conducted a qualitative study among 100 widows in the study area i.e Sirkazhi taluk of Mayiladuthurai district by using semi-structured interview schedule to analyse their psychological perception towards themselves and other human being at their life span who were in social system as relatives or neighbours and civil society. In India there were more than 42.4 million widows among which constitutes 17.3% of world's widows' population i.e 245 million by 2010. In India nearly 20% were made as eligible pensioners, less than 11% only able to avail the government benefits for the destitute widows; but the reality is questionable. On that context and knowing of the real scenario of prevailing situation among the destitute widows and draw an alternative livelihood mechanism, this research was conduct and the results have been placed hereunder in the full paper.

1. Conceptual Framework

Well-being can be measured according to Dr.B.R.Ambedkar that 'I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved'. They are much important for national building but, the situation is negative in patriarchal system that to in Republic state of India when they become widows. According to 2011 data there were 33 million widows were being exceeded in India, among them a large number were affected, but little is expressed about their living and working conditions, psychological feelings, and vulnerabilities. They are deserved to avail special policies for the well-being of this marginalized in the development process of democratic India. It is very important but neglected in all spheres of their life such as social, psychological, medical, economic and political rights. There were researchers pointed out that the lives of destitute who became wife to widow focusing on the causes of their husbands' mortality and the ensuing consequences, identify their opportunities and challenges faced in all forms either negligence or exclusion or anyother forms and kill their remaining life span only for their children and social status per se.

In spite of rapid advancements in resource utilization in the contemporary society, the destitute widows are still struggling to avail even in common resource utilization. They were being hand in hand with poor economic condition and inhuman and unjustifiable customary practices forced them to be in out stretch of the human society and treated as unseen/sin as 'Destitute Widows'. The social norms, values and customary practices stamped them as inauspicious, ineligible person to visit any holy places and to be treated on bar with other women of any religion in general and Hinduism in particular. The pathetic situation is, even as a mother she cannot see the marriage performance of her own sons' and daughters' marriages while toeing 'Maankalyam' in tamil 'Thali'. She has to be in outside of marriage hall being stamped as inauspicious mother during the auspicious occasion, cannot come out of the

home and walk along the streets at early morning and evening (so called auspicious hours) due to the general intension of the public that don't want to see their plain face (without kumkum) and feel as inauspicious situation and no positive activity will be happened the day full. At the same time knowing them as destitute widow, their family background, economic poorness, struggle towards to fulfill their responsibilities towards their children's necessities (education, employment, marriage etc), vested interested people may added an advantage to misbehave, misuse, ill-treat and vulnerability to the core. The national reports rarely mentioned the multitude of destitute widows' pains in the form of poverty eradication, health or human rights alone. But, their psycho-sociological well-being, vulnerability being faced, new challenges in the form of conventional views and quality of life they lead as women in difficult circumstances with the trade of destitute widows.

Though, there were several development programmes implemented for the women in general and specific to the widows lead to their living and working conditions in better way, still remains deplorable in Indian society. It is worst and ashamed to the democratic countries like India though having of unique socio-cultural and economic milieu, and uncared attitude towards the basic human rights of this vulnerable sections in the contemporary society. Due to this every possibilities of existence of gap in life expectancies of men and women in both developing and developed countries coupled with cruel attitude like cheating sexual misuse of the widows rather than belongingness. It happens even among educated and economically independent individuals. In spite of their awareness on human rights some extent their psychological ramifications in the form of misunderstanding others with suspicious looks towards men in general is common in nature due to their previous precipitated events. Later, it happens to be complexed, non-adjustments, psychological stress, psychiatric illness like depression, anxiety, substance dependency, aloofness, and suicidal tendency etc., caused to be poor intake and poor physic and wavering mindset, development of native attitudes towards everyone. By rendering of all indifferent treatments faced so far are the precedence for their current intolerable psychiatric attitudes in everyday life. This is the most difficult time for new widows after the funeral of their husbands such as emotional, insecurity, no peer group, aloofness, inauspicious treatment and less preparedness to cope up with the current situation caused with financial burden, fault finding attitude of their in-laws and relatives who have been teasing and maltreatment as sin and avoid in all auspicious functions/ceremonies which found to be greater adverse impact on the psychological well-being of women and forced few of them think to attempt suicide. Such emotional problems are the sparks for every problem. Though the marriage was well arranged, the survivor feels the loss the role of spouse is also lost, the life style of the widows may also orient to be associated with other single people; and they no longer have the day-in, day-out companionship of the other spouse but become an intrinsic part of their lives.

2. Statement of the Problem

Many times, a widow faces difficulty in adjusting to her new status because the social norms and taboos place her in most disadvantaged position and restrict her social interactions. A widow has to perform many rituals. She has to follow lot many restrictions leading to social isolation and social inferiority, resulting in a feeling of dejection and depression. Widows in all communities suffer from limited freedom to participate in religious and social functions. They carry the stigma of inauspicious and hence have to keep away from functions. For instance, they are not allowed to touch objects used during marriage or religious ceremonies. In fact, a widow is not even entitled to perform the ritual to welcome her own daughter-in-law (**Sarkar and Banerjee, 1998**). In a number of demographic studies, marital union and determinants of age at marriage have been given more attention as they have implication on fertility. But, not enough attention has been given to study the marital dissolution, and further the status and problems of widowed and psycho-sociological aspects perceived.

There were research studies conducted by different personalities like **Haddad and Kanbu: 1990, Chen:2001, Mannan:2002, Eboh: 2005, Moon et.al: 2012, UN Women: 2012 etc.**, pointed out that the tendency of exclusion is as routine as in countries like India is ever form traditional society; the

cultural norms are highly associated with widowhood, deprived of socio-economic, psychological and political deprivation, outside the economic and social activities of the family, prohibited for remarriages, restriction in social participation, face the health vulnerabilities, heterogeneity of considerable experiences pitter experiences, rather cultural sanctions against widows, and as total poor quality of life. Further, the researcher synthesized the findings with theoretical understandings of vulnerability and Amartya Sen's entitlements theory and other social and psychological theories like structural functions, dysfunctions, role theory, anxiety, exclusion and suicidal to develop a conceptual framework. Most of the widows in rural India are subject to economic hardships, social isolation and related deprivation. They face restrictions on mobility, social participation, inheritance, employment and the kind of social support they receive from relatives and community. But no one has concentrated about their psycho-sociological problems faced by the destitute widows in in-depth manner. From the above published research articles, experiences and exposures of the researcher found a research gap of absence of psycho-sociological in-depth studies. The researcher conducted a study with the following objectives such as i) to describe the socio-demographic characteristics of the childless destitute widows; ii) to know about the living arrangement and socio-economic status of the respondents; iii) to analyze the social support and coping mechanism of the study population; and iv) to understand the socio-psychological feelings of the respondents and elicit suitable suggestions to mainstream in the society.

3. Methodology

Operational Definition

Widows: Widows are those whose husband have died, irrespective of their age of widowhood and have not married again.

Social Care: Providing the destitute widows with social care in terms of maintaining their respect and dignity within the family and also the society at large.

Economic Support / Care: Providing the destitute widows financial care i.e., covering their basic needs, when they become unproductive or when they are not able to work this may differ across individuals.

Psychological Care: Making destitute widows people happy emotionally through constant personal interactions and talking.

Health Care: Helping the destitute widows during medical emergencies or during health problems.

Since, this is a pioneer research in the field of psycho-sociological perspectives and coping mechanism of destitute widows. The researcher adopted an exploratory research design to study this problem so as to fulfill the research gap and suggest for suitable solutions. The present study was conducted based on the primary data collected through field survey with the semi-structured interview schedule to collect the primary data with the application of purposive sampling techniques in Sirkazhi Taluk, Mayiladuthurai District of Tamil Nadu. The primary data was collected between the periods of May to August 2024 and analyzed with the help of using SPSS package to draw suitable statistical analysis which as follows.

The primary information had been collected from the key informants in order to again an understanding of local constructions of 'widowhood' their psycho-social perspectives, loving and working conditions, welfare and social opportunities for the destitute widows in the study jurisdiction. After that the collected data were analysed for thematic content and emerging patterns. This research article is also based on the analytical research study conducted among the rural destitute widows with the application of purposive sampling procedure and used semi-structured interview schedule applied among 100 widows of all age groups from rural parts of the Sirkazhi taluk of Mayiladuthurai district. An attempt was made to understand the demographic profile, living and working conditions and psychological feeling of the rural widows, by focusing attention on widowhood as a psycho-

sociological problem.

This study explores the dominant ideological construction of widowhood in the context of patriarchy, religion, and customary practices caused to depression, anxiety, phobia, negligence and exclusion. Nearly 64% widows were able to attain up to higher secondary level, 67% had economically poor and 86% faced discrimination due to caste and regional belongingness. Elderly widows constituted 47% of the sample, age had placed them in a difficult position to discrimination, dependence, oppression, and health problems, the elderly widows had higher degree of psychological feelings/problems like negligence and isolation. This research has been focusing of key issues of social, economic policy, and action in support of widows' property rights, social security, employment, social identity, and participation in society in addition to psychological problems. This study found that there were high levels of deprivation such as limited freedom to remarry insecure/unprotected in property rights, poor and unconsciously placing the aged widows, social stigma, restricted employment opportunities, with vested interest with their control of all kinds and make use for their sexual needs and lack of social support. This study extensively deals with social work intervention aspects in helping the widows and discusses social, psychological, health, economic, and policy implications towards destitute widows which are presented hereunder.

Table: 1. Percentage of Widow Population to Total Population of the District

S. No	Name of the States	Percentage of Widow population to total population of the District		
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1.	Karur	8.1	2.7	13.3
2	Erode	7.6	2.7	12.5
3.	Namakkal	7.5	2.5	12.5
4.	Theni	7.3	2.2	12.4
5.	Tiruchirappalli	7.1	2.3	11.9
6.	Ariyalur	7.1	2.5	11.6
7.	Thanjavur	7.0	2.3	11.5
8.	Dindigul	6.9	2.6	11.2
9.	Perambalur	6.9	2.5	11.2
10.	Tiruvannamalai	6.8	2.1	11.4
11.	The Nilgiris	6.8	1.7	11.7
12.	Nagapattinam	6.8	2.2	11.3
13.	Thiruvarur	6.8	2.3	11.2
14.	Vellore	6.7	1.8	11.5
15.	Thoothukkudi	6.6	2.2	10.9
16.	Tirunelveli	6.6	2.2	11.0
17.	Salem	6.5	2.2	11.0
18.	Virudhunagar	6.5	2.2	10.8
19.	Coimbatore	6.4	2.2	10.7
20.	Cuddalore	6.3	2.1	10.6
21.	Madurai	6.3	2.1	10.5
22.	Tirupur	6.3	2.2	10.3

S. No	Name of the States	Percentage of Widow population to total population of the District		
		Total	Male	Female
23.	Sivaganga	6.2	2.3	10.1
24.	Vilupuram	6.1	2.1	10.3
25.	Pudukkottai	6.1	2.1	10.1
26.	Dharmapuri	5.9	1.8	10.2
27.	Kanniyakumari	5.8	2.0	9.6
28.	Thiruvallur	5.7	1.7	9.8
29.	Kancheepuram	5.7	1.8	9.6
30.	Krishnagiri	5.5	1.7	9.4
31.	Ramanathapuram	5.4	2.0	8.9
32.	Chennai	5.3	1.7	8.9
33.	TamilNadu	6.4	2.1	10.7
Source: Computed from data on Marital Status, 2011, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.				

It is observed from the above table is that Karur district has the highest widow population (8.1%) and higher Tamil Nadu has higher widow population state (6.4);

Table: 2. District wise details of widow population by residence in Tamil Nadu, 2011

S. No	Name of the District	Percentage of Widow population to total population of the District		
		Rural	Urban	Total
1.	Karur	8.7	7.1	8.1
2.	Erode	8.0	7.2	7.6
3.	Namakkal	7.8	7.0	7.5
4.	Theni	7.2	7.4	7.3
5.	Tiruchirappalli	7.8	6.4	7.1
6.	Ariyalur	7.2	6.4	7.1
7.	Thanjavur	7.3	6.5	7.0
8.	Dindigul	7.1	6.6	6.9
9.	Perambalur	7.0	6.3	6.9
10.	Tiruvannamalai	6.9	6.3	6.8
11.	The Nilgiris	7.5	6.3	6.8
12.	Nagapattinam	6.9	6.7	6.8
13.	Thiruvarur	6.9	6.5	6.8
14.	Vellore	7.0	6.3	6.7
15.	Thoothukkudi	7.5	5.8	6.6
16.	Tirunelveli	6.8	6.4	6.6

S. No	Name of the District	Percentage of Widow population to total population of the District		
		Rural	Urban	Total
17.	Salem	6.6	6.4	6.5
18.	Virudhunagar	6.8	6.3	6.5
19.	Coimbatore	7.7	6.0	6.4
20.	Cuddalore	6.5	5.9	6.3
21.	Madurai	7.1	5.7	6.3
22.	Tirupur	7.7	5.3	6.3
23.	Sivaganga	6.6	5.5	6.2
24.	Vilupuram	6.2	6.0	6.1
25.	Pudukkottai	6.2	5.7	6.1
26.	Dharmapuri	5.9	6.1	5.9
27.	Kanniyakumari	5.8	5.8	5.8
28.	Thiruvallur	7.0	5.0	5.7
29.	Kancheepuram	6.4	5.3	5.7
30.	Krishnagiri	5.8	4.6	5.5
31.	Ramanathapuram	5.7	4.9	5.4
32.	Chennai	0	5.3	5.3
33.	Tamil Nadu	6.9	5.9	6.4
Source: Computed from data on Marital Status, 2011, Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.				

The above table reveals that the district wise details of widow population by residence in Karur district is (8.7%) higher rural widow population and Theni district has higher urban widow population (7.4%).

Table: 3. Distribution of the Respondents by their Age, Religion and Caste

S. No	Age	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	18-28	07	07
2.	29-33	51	51
3.	34-38	23	23
4.	39-43	12	12
5.	Above 44	07	07
	Total	100	100
S. No	Religion	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Hindu	57	57
2.	Muslim	11	11
3.	Christian	32	32
	Total	100	100

S. No	Caste	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Backward Castes	45	45
2.	Most backward Castes	17	17
3.	Scheduled Castes	27	27
4.	Scheduled Tribes	06	06
5.	Other castes	05	05
	Total	100	100

*Source: Computed from Primary data

Age: Age plays a pivotal role to determine one's status and role in the society. It is seen from the above table and shows that out of the total 100 respondents, more than half 51 (51%) of them were belonging to the age group of 29-33 years; followed by that less than one fourth 23 (23%), less than one fifth 12 (12%), less than one tenth 07 (07%) and little 07 (07%) of them were belonging to the age group of 39-43 years, 34-38 years, 18-28 years and 44 years and above respectively.

Religion: It is obvious from the study of the data given in the above table that out of the total 100 respondents, nearly half 57 (57%) of the respondents followed the Hinduism religion; followed by that more than one fourth 32 (32%), less than one third 11 (11%) respectively.

Caste: It is clear from the study of the data given in the above table reveals that the less than half 45 (45%) of the respondents were belong to Backward castes; followed by that less than one third 27 (27%), less than one third 17 (17%) few 06 (06%) and very few 05 (05%) of them were belongs to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Most Backward castes and other castes respectively.

Table: 4. Distribution of the Respondents by their Educational Status

S. No	Educational Status	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Primary School Education	36	36
2.	Middle School Education	24	24
3.	High School Education	11	11
4.	Higher Secondary School	9	9
5.	Under Graduate	7	7
6.	Post Graduate Degree	3	3
7.	Teacher Training /Technical Degree	6	9
8.	Illiterate	4	4
	Total	100	100

*Source: Computed from Primary data

Educational Status

The above table reflects that the educational status of the respondents. Out of 100 respondents less than one third 36 (36%) of them were studied Primary School Level Education; followed by that less than one third 24 (24%), 11 (11%), 9 (9%), 7 (7%), 6 (6%) few (4 (4%)), and very few 3 (3%) of them were studied Under Graduate such as B.A., B.SC., and B.Com etc; Post Graduate Degree such as M.A., M.SC., and M.Com etc; Technical Degree such as Teacher Trainee, higher secondary school, High School Education; Middle School Education; Primary School Education; Illiterate etc, respectively.

It is inferred that more than half 56 (56%) of the respondents were more importance attached and attach importance to education; followed by that less than one third 31 (31%) and little 13 (13%) of them were less importance attached and No importance to education due to financial problems, family restrictions etc., respectively.

Table: 5. Distribution of the Respondents by their Occupation and Husband's Occupation

S. No	Occupation	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Teacher	3	3
2.	Typing / Stationary / Xerox	12	12
3.	Petty Shop	3	3
4.	Garments Worker	6	6
5.	Construction Worker	24	24
6.	Agricultural labour	52	52
	Total	100	100

*Source: Computed from Primary data

Nature of Occupation

The above table reveals that less than one third 52 (52%) of the respondents were working as Agricultural Labour; followed by that 24 (24%), 11 (11%), 6 (6%), few 3 (3%), 3 (3%), of them were working as, Typing, Stationary, Xerox, petty shop, Garments worker , Construction Worker, Agricultural Labour, Teachers in government and private High and higher secondary schools and Unemployed depend on others respectively.

Table: 6. Distribution of the Respondents by their Husbands' Occupation

S. No	Husband's Occupation	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Daily wage /Earner / agricultural coolie	41	41
2.	Carpenter	3	3
3.	Business Man	5	5
4.	Technical	21	21
5.	Cattle rearing	2	2
6.	Supervisor	11	11
7.	Tailor	10	10
8.	Manager	7	7
	Total	100	100

*Source: Computed from Primary data

Husbands' Occupation

The above table shows that less than half 41(41%) of the respondents were working as Daily wages; followed by that less than one third 21 (21%), few 11 (11%), 7 (7%), 5 (5%), 3 (3%) and very few 2 (2%) of them were working as Supervisors in Garments, Textiles shops and Industries; Tailoring works in garments, tailoring shops and own tailoring shops; Managers in Private Bank, Garments and Textiles

shops; two wheeler and four wheeler Mechanic working in car and bike service center and own mechanic shops; Business Men such as Textiles, electrical and electronic parts, Boutique, Hotels, Owning a bakeries, Selling Handcrafted Items; Carpenter and Cattle rearing and Catering Food respectively.

Table: 7. Distribution of the Respondents by their Monthly Income

S. No	Monthly Income	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Rs.5000-8,000	13	13
2.	Rs. 9000-13,000	54	54
3.	Rs. 14,000-18,000	18	18
4.	Above Rs.19,000	15	15

*Source: computed from primary data

Monthly Income

It is evident from the above table that less than half 54 (54%) of the respondents' monthly income between Rs.5000-8,000/-; followed by that more than one third 18 (18%), few 15 (15%) and 13 (13%) of them were Rs. 9000-13,000, Rs. 14,000-18,000 and above Rs.19,000 respectively. From the above discussion it reflects that the varying economic situation of the respondents and cannot have their days meals without work.

Table: 8. Distribution of the Respondents by their Housing Particulars

S. No	Type of House	No. of Respondents (N*=114)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Hut	29	29
2.	Tiled	42	42
3.	Pucca	18	18
4.	Destitute Homes	11	11
	Nature of House	No. of Respondents (N*=114)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Own	61	61
2.	Rented	30	30
3.	Leased	9	9

*Source: computed from primary data

Housing Particulars

As far as their types of house is concerned that the majority 42 (42%) of the respondents were living in Tiled house; followed by that more than one fourth 29 (29%), less than one third 18 (18%) and 11 (11%) of them were living in Hut, Pucca and Destitute homes respectively.

Out of 100 respondents majority 61 (61%) of the respondents were living at their own houses and the remaining more than one fourth 30 (30%) and few 9 (9%) of them were living in rental and leased houses respectively.

Table: 9. Distribution of the Respondents by their social support and coping mechanism

S. No	Social support and coping mechanism	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Relation with Parents		
	Very Intimate	21	21
	Intimate	57	57
	Somewhat good	19	19
	Slightly strained	03	03
	Total	100	100
2.	Relation with In-laws		
	Very Intimate	9	9
	Intimate	13	31
	Somewhat good	31	47
	Slightly strained	47	13
	Total	100	100
3.	Relation with Siblings		
	Very Intimate	3	3
	Intimate	21	21
	Somewhat good	42	42
	Slightly strained	34	34
	Total	100	100
4.	Relation with Relatives		
	Very Intimate	6	6
	Intimate	27	27
	Somewhat good	6	49
	Slightly strained	49	6
	Very strained	12	12
	Total	100	100
5.	Relation with friends		
	Very Intimate	16	16
	Intimate	63	63
	Somewhat good	21	21
	Total	100	100
6.	Relation with Neighbours		
	Intimate	23	23
	Somewhat good	76	76
	Very strained	01	01
	Total	100	100

*Source: computed from primary data

Relation with parents

The above table reflects that more than half 57 (57%) of the respondents were very intimate relation with parents; followed by that less than one fourth 21 (21%), less than one third 19 (19%) and very few 3 (3%) of them were very intimate, somewhat good and slightly strained relation with their parents respectively.

Relation with In-laws

Out of 100 respondents, less than half 47 (47%) of the respondents were Slightly Strained relation with In-laws; followed by that less than one third 31 (31%), 13 (13%) and few 9 (9%) of them, Somewhat Good and very intimate relation with their In-laws respectively.

Relation with siblings

The above table depicts that less than half 42 (42%) of the respondents were somewhat good relation with siblings; followed by that less than one third 34 (34%), less than one fourth 21 (21%) and very few 3 (3%) of them were slightly strained, intimate and very intimate relation with their siblings respectively.

Relation with relatives

Out of 100 respondents, nearly half 49 (49%) of the respondents were slightly Strained relation with relatives; followed by that more than one fourth 27 (27%), less than one third 12 (12%), few 6 (6%) and 6 (6%) of them were intimate, very intimate, somewhat Good and very Strained with their relatives respectively.

Relation with Friends

The above table indicates that more than half 63 (63%) of the respondents were intimate relation with their friends; followed by that less than one fourth 21 (21%) and less than one third 16 (16%) of them were somewhat good and very intimate relation with their friends respectively.

Relation with Neighbours

Out of 100 respondents, significance 97 (97%) of the respondents were familiar with ladies only; and the remaining 3 (3%) of them were familiar with both gents and ladies for friendly in the study area.

Out of 100 respondents, more than three fourth 76 (76%) of the respondents were somewhat relation with neighbours; followed by that less than one fourth 23 (23%) and very few 1 (1%) of them were intimate and very strained relation with their neighbours respectively.

Non-availability of socio-psychological support, employment opportunities minimum education and freedom of resource utilization both at her in-laws and parents homes are the barriers to come up/cope up with their present situation. Of course, they could get some support from their friends then and there for very urgent situations rarely. The differences were also identified with their relationships that the destitute widows (89%) were highly depended upon their everyday work to meet out their immediate basic needs every day; nearby 53% of them were having of extract marital contact either with their father-in-laws, brother-in-laws, relatives, employers, friends, husbands, schoolmates, college mates, fellow villagers, shop owners, mastery (construction site supervisor), fellow co-worker etc., to have as security as well to fulfill their sex need also. It has been concluded that the men are having male friends for sociability. But, the women are rigid towards sociability even with women due to social, values, norms and customary practices. Because of the women's limited chance for social interaction with others come out of their family, relatives or their villagers are disadvantaged to have flexible interactions. The free move with others are much more effect of the destitute widows at the later stage of their husbands' death like 'role loss' 'role exit' and shifting over them 'Role less to Role play' as responsible head of the family with the identity of widows and as destitute widows.

Table: 10. Distribution of the Respondents by their social adjustment inventory

S. No	Social adjustment inventory	No. of Respondents (N*=100)	Percentage (100%)
1.	Friends easily	67	67
2.	Disliking	81	81
3.	Unpleasant arguments and disagreements	73	73
4.	Bored with people quickly	61	61
5.	Preferred to be alone	65	65
6.	Hesitated to speak out	87	87
7.	Organize social gathering and functions	69	69
8.	Difficulty in conversation with a person	86	86
9.	Find difficult to ask others from help	91	91
10.	Felt that others Carry Grudges against	63	63
11.	Become angry / aggressive	61	61
12.	Few close friends	81	81
13.	Generally unsympathetic	63	63
14.	Felt that not understand them	96	96
15.	Entertainment	55	55

*Source: computed from primary data

** Multiple Responses

The above table reflects that Less than three fourth 67 (67%) of the respondents were not make friends easily; followed by that nearly three fourth 81 (781%), vast majority 73 (873%), nearly three fourth 61 (61%), more than half 65 (65%), vast majority 87 (87%), significance 69 (69%), nearly three fourth 86 (86%), vast majority 91 (91%), nearly three fourth 63 (63%), more than half 61 (61%), nearly three fourth 81 (81%), more than half 63 (63%), nearly three fourth 96 (96%) and more than three fourth 55 (55%) of them had no more people disliking them than liking them; had unpleasant arguments and disagreements with friends and neighbours fairly often; got bored with people quickly; had preferred to be alone rather in the company of people; often hesitated to speak out in front of others; had not often organize social gathering and functions; difficulty in conversation with a person to whom they had just been introduced; were not find it easy to ask others from help; felt that others carry grudges against them; become angry when their friends did not agree with them; found that they had few close friends rather than many casual acquaintances; thought that people were generally unsympathetic towards them; felt that many of their friends did not understand them; were not go out with their friends for any entertainment such as Park, cinema, drama, shopping etc respectively.

Table: 11. Distribution of the Respondents by their Psychological Problems Faced

S. No	Psychological Problems	No. of Respondents (N=100)	Percentage
1	Trauma	87	87
2	Sad	91	91
3	Depression	93	93
4	Emotional	84	84
5	Anxiety	76	76

S. No	Psychological Problems	No. of Respondents (N=100)	Percentage
6	Phobia	100	100
7	Self-unworthy	85	85
8	Murmuring	54	54
9	Insecurity	73	73
10	Aloofness	66	66
11	Mental Agony	57	57
12	Aggressive	62	62
13	Antagonizing	52	52
14	Strain and Stress	61	61
15	Indifferent attitude	76	76
16	Suspicious Attitude	82	82
17	Non-acceptance	73	73
18	Childish attitude	56	56
19	Non-accommodative	67	67
20	Unwanted feel	71	71
21	Scolding others (mad)	55	55
22	Low self-esteem	86	86
23	Not care others	52	52
24	Improper dressing	56	56
25	Negative attitude	81	81
26	Reluctant	90	90
27	Suicidal Tendency	54	54
28	More than Five Problems	83	83
29	More than Ten Problems	76	76
30	More than Fifteen Problems	67	67
31	More than Twenty Problems	62	62

Source: Computed from primary data

The above table reflects about the psychological problems faced by the destitute widows (selected respondents) had been facing at their everyday life. Accordingly, from the total respondents all of them were facing the problem of phobia towards their life, their children's life, property rights, daughters' marriage, sons' education and employment opportunities, relatives treatments, neighbours attitudes, expected to face the general thought of public, etc., followed by that the vast majority (83% and 76%) and the majority 67% and 62% of them had been facing more than five and ten problems, more than fifteen and twenty problems respectively; among them, they were facing the problem of depression (93%), feeling of sadness (91%), Reluctant attitude (90%), Trauma (87%), Low self-esteem (86%), Self-unworthy (85%), Emotional (84%), Suspicious Attitude (82%), Negative attitude (81%), Indifferent attitude and Anxiety (76 %), Insecurity and Non-acceptance (73%), Unwanted feel (71%), Non-accommodative (67%), Aloofness (66%), Aggressive (62%), Strain and Stress (61%), Mental Agony (57%), Childish attitude (56%), Improper dressing and Scolding others like mad (55%),

Suicidal Tendency and Murmuring (54%) and Antagonizing and Not care others (52%) and difficult in nature while facing everyday life.

It is inferred that all the respondents were facing the problem of phobia towards their life, their children's life, property rights, daughters' marriage, sons' education and employment opportunities, relatives treatments, neighbours attitudes, expected to face the general thought of public, etc., the vast majority (83% and 76%) and the majority 67% and 62% of them had been facing more than five and ten problems, more than fifteen and twenty problems respectively; among them, they were facing the problem of depression (93%), feel sad (91%), reluctant attitude (90%), trauma (87%), low self-esteem (86%), self-unworthy (85%), emotional (84%), Suspicious attitude (82%), negative attitude (81%), indifferent attitude and anxiety (76 %), insecurity and non-acceptance (73%), unwanted feel (71%), non-accommodative (67%), aloofness (66%), aggressive (62%), strain and Stress (61%), mental Agony (57%), childish attitude (56%), improper dressing and scolding others like mad (55%), suicidal tendency and murmuring (54%) and antagonizing and not care others (52%) at their everyday life.

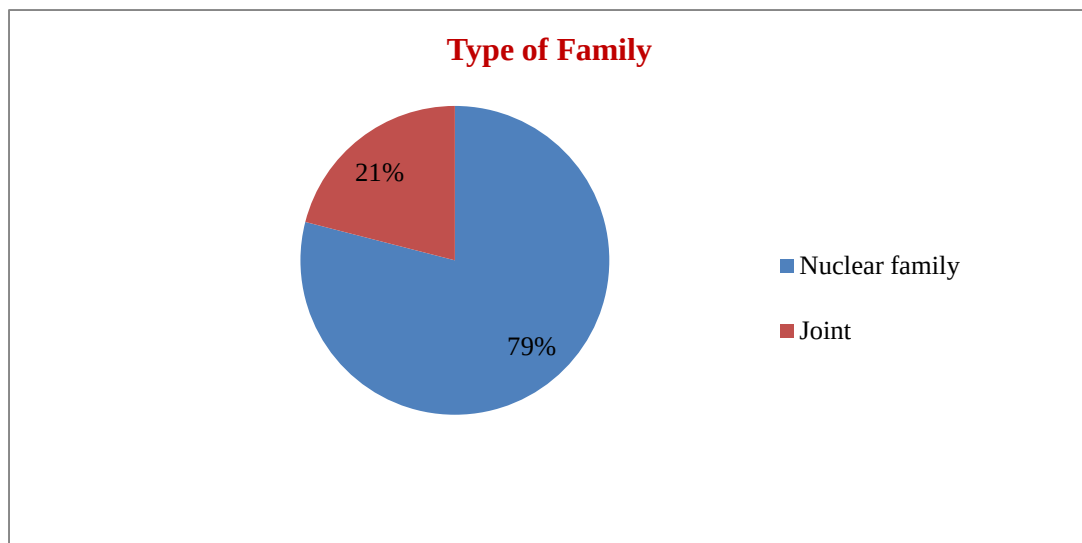


Diagram: 1

* Source: Computed from Primary data

From the chart the researcher explains while analyzing the more than three fourth 79 (79%) of the respondents were living for nuclear families and the remaining less than one fourth 21 (21%) of them were living for joint families in the study area.

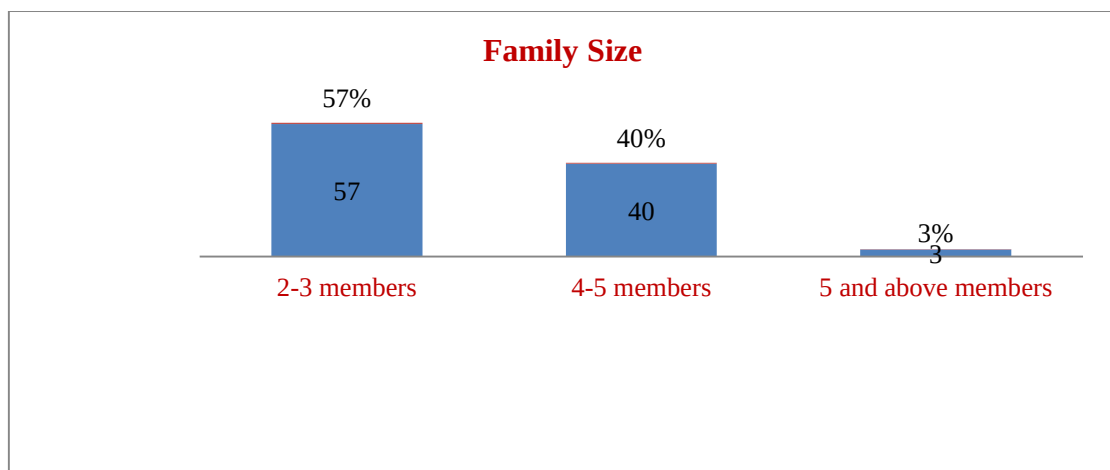


Diagram: 2

* Source: Computed from Primary data

The above diagram expressed about the Family size of the respondents. More than half 57 (57%) of the respondents' family members were 2-3 members; followed by that more than one third 40 (40%) and very few 3 (3%) of them family members were 4-5 members; 5 and above members respectively.

The above diagram expressed about the locality of the respondents most of them were coming from all the three localities such as urban, semi-urban and rural in the study area. There were three types of localities from where the students are coming to school. The majority 67 (67%) of the respondents were living in Rural areas; followed by that nearly one fourth 24 (24%) and few 9 (9%) of them were from urban and semi-urban areas respectively. Most of them rural areas destitute widows were faced the social life, remarriage and financial problems compared to urban and semi-urban areas destitute widows in the study area respectively.

4. Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

Socio-Demographic characteristics

- The age plays a pivotal role to determine one's status and role in the society. Out of the total 100 respondents, more than one third 51 (51%) of them were belonging to the age group of 29-33 years; nearly half 57(57%) of the respondents followed the Hinduism religion; less than half 45 (45%) of the respondents were belong to Backward castes.
- Out of 100 respondents less than one third 9 (9%) of them were studied Higher Secondary Level Education; More than half 96 (96%) of the respondents were given for education; more than half 52 (52%)of them were working as agriculture labourers; their husbands 41(41%) were daily wage earner, wood cutters, helpers etc.

Living arrangements and Socio-Economic status

- Less than half 41 (41%) of the respondents were working as Daily wages; less than half 54 (54%) of the respondents' monthly income was between Rs.9000- 13000/-; from their predominant works like agriculture and construction workers. From the above discussion, it reflects that the varying economic situation of the respondents and cannot have their days meals without work.
- More than half 54 (54%) of the respondents' income enough to meet their day to day requirements in the life; less than half 41 (41%) of the respondents' economic conditions were average; majority 63 (63%) of the respondents were some accumulation wealth for the future; more than half 66 (66%) of the respondents were not taken loans and borrowed from bank and others.
- The majority 67 (67%) of the respondents were living in Rural areas; more than three fourth 79 (79%) of the respondents were living for nuclear families; more than half 57 (57%) of the respondents' family members were 2-3 members.
- More than half 56 (56%) of the respondents were living for individual; majority 67 (67%) of the respondents had one brother; more than one third 39 (39%) of the respondents had two sisters; As far as their types of house is concerned that the majority 42 (42%) of the respondents were living in Tiled house; the majority 61 (61%) of the respondents were living at their own houses; more than half 67 (67%) of the respondents were one water tap facility at their home.
- Significance 98 (98%) of the respondents had kept television; less than half 41 (41%) of the respondents had kept refrigerator; less than one third 32 (32%) of the respondents had kept washing machine; few 9 (9%) of the respondents had kept air-conditioned at their houses; more than one third 37 (37%) of the respondents were land.
- More than half 61 (61%) of the respondents were not financially depend on anybody; more than half 56 (56%) of the respondents were meet their economic needs from self earnings such as working in government and private, interest of savings from bank and rental from house; significance 96 (96%) of the respondents were savings account in the private and government bank;

less than half 43 (43%) of the respondents were savings account in the post office.

- Significance 98 (98%) of the respondents was not financially depending on others because they were earning income work; more than one third 36 (36%) of them were getting various level of pension such as Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme and Destitute Widow Pension Scheme.

Married life

- Less than half 47 (47%) of the respondents had got married within same caste; less than half 47 (47%) of the respondents had got married between the age group of 18-23 years; more than one third 40 (40%) of the respondents had enjoyed their married life for ten years; more than half 51 (51%) of the respondents were age at the time of widowhood 24-28 years.
- Less than half 44 (44%) of the respondents were the time of their marriage paid dowry for cash; less than one third 31 (31%) of the respondents were cause of their husband's death excessive drinking; less than one third 31 (31%) of the respondents were living for individual after widowhood.
- Majority 67 (67%) of the respondents were the source of their income wholly depend on husband's income before widowhood; majority 70 (70%) of the respondents income source were employed after widowhood; majority 61 (61%) of the respondents were source of their help from parents immediately after the death of their husband; majority 60 (60%) of the respondents were travelling by bus to work place in the study area.

Social Support and Coping Mechanism

- More than half 57 (57%) of the respondents were very intimate relation with parents; significance 96 (96%) of the respondents were sharing their feelings with parents; more than three fourth 80 (80%) of the respondents were spend time with their parents for 6-8 hours weekly once in their house; vast majority 86 (86%) of the respondents were go out to meet their parents sometimes; and vast majority 84 (84%) of the respondents' parents visit house sometimes.
- Less than half 47 (47%) of the respondents were somewhat good relation with In-laws; significance 93 (93%) of the respondents were not sharing their feelings with in-laws; more than three fourth 82 (82%) of the respondents were not spend time with their in-laws; vast majority 88 (88%) of the respondents were not go out to meet their in-laws; and vast majority 81 (81%) of the respondents' in-laws not visit house.
- Less than half 42 (42%) of the respondents were somewhat good relation with siblings; more than half 57 (57%) of the respondents were sharing their feelings through mobile with siblings; more than three fourth 83 (83%) of the respondents were spend time with their siblings for 2-4 hours occasionally in their house; vast majority 83 (83%) of the respondents were go out to meet their siblings occasionally; and vast majority 80 (80%) of the respondents' siblings visit house occasionally.
- Nearly half 49 (49%) of the respondents were somewhat good relation with relatives; significance 98 (98%) of the respondents were not sharing their feelings with relatives; vast majority 88 (88%) of the respondents were not spend time with their relatives; vast majority 89 (89%) of the respondents were not go out to meet their relatives; and vast majority 85 (85%) of the respondents' relatives not visit house.
- More than half 63 (63%) of the respondents were intimate relation with their friends; significance 91 (91%) of the respondents were sharing their feelings with friends; more than three fourth 76 (76%) of the respondents were spend time with friends for 3-5 hours a day at working place; vast majority 82 (82%) of the respondents were go out to meet their friends sometimes; and vast majority

80 (80%) of the respondents' friends visit house sometimes.

- Significance 97 (97%) of the respondents were familiar with ladies only; and more than three fourth 76 (76%) of the respondents were somewhat relation with neighbours.
- Vast majority 82 (82%) of the respondents were not participated in any wedding, functions and celebration festivals due to widow; more than half 56 (56%) of the respondents were participated in family get together; more than three fourth 78 (78%) of the respondents were participated in death and funerals; more than half 59 (59%) of the respondents said that parents and friends hesitate invite to any wedding, engagement, religious functions like pooja, religious places, birth of a child and ceremony etc., due to widow.
- Out of 100 respondents, significance 98 (98%) of the respondents expressed their feelings nobody invited for the wedding, engagement, religious functions like pooja, religious places, birth of a child and ceremony; more than three fourth 77 (77%) of the respondents were always attend the religious activities before becoming widow; vast majority 89 (89%) of the respondents were sometimes attend the religious activities before becoming widow; more than half 69 (69%) of the respondents were believe in God; vast majority 83 (83%) of the respondents were occasionally visit religious places.
- Vast majority 86 (86%) of the respondents said that family and relatives were treated with respect before the death of husband and looked well; more than half 51 (51%) of the respondents said that family and relatives were not treated with respect after the death of husband and looked bad; vast majority 90 (90%) of the respondents said that parents loved, cared and financial supported after death the death of husband.

Social Adjustment Inventory

The above table reflects that Less than three fourth 72 (72%) of the respondents were not make friends easily; followed by that nearly three fourth 74 (74%), vast majority 86 (86%), nearly three fourth 74 (74%), more than half 61 (61%), vast majority 86 (86%), significance 96 (96%), nearly three fourth 74 (74%), vast majority 86 (86%), nearly three fourth 74 (74%), more than half 61 (61%), nearly three fourth 74 (74%), more than half 67 (67%), nearly three fourth 74 (74%) and more than three fourth 76 (76%) of them had no more people disliking them than liking them; had unpleasant arguments and disagreements with friends and neighbours fairly often; got bored with people quickly; had preferred to be alone rather in the company of people; often hesitated to speak out in front of others; had not often organize social gathering and functions; difficulty in conversation with a person to whom they had just been introduced; were not find it easy to ask others from help; felt that others carry grudges against them; become angry when their friends did not agree with them; found that they had few close friends rather than many casual acquaintances; thought that people were generally unsympathetic towards them; felt that many of their friends did not understand them; were not go out with their friends for any entertainment such as Park, cinema, drama, shopping etc., respectively.

Socio-psychological feelings

Out of total respondents, all the respondents were facing the problem of phobia towards their life, their children's life, property rights, daughters' marriage, sons' education and employment opportunities, relatives treatments, neighbours attitudes, expected to face the general thought of public, etc., the vast majority (83% and 76%) and the majority 67% and 62% of them had been facing more than five and ten problems, more than fifteen and twenty problems respectively; among them, they were facing the problem of depression (93%), feel sad (91%), reluctant attitude (90%), trauma (87%), low self-esteem (86%), self-unworthy (85%), emotional (84%), Suspicious attitude (82%), negative attitude (81%), indifferent attitude and anxiety (76 %), insecurity and non-acceptance (73%), unwanted feel (71%), non-accommodative (67%), aloofness (66%), aggressive (62%), strain and Stress (61%), mental Agony (57%), childish attitude (56%), improper dressing and scolding others like mad (55%), suicidal

tendency and murmuring (54%) and antagonizing and not care others (52%) at their everyday life.

Suggestions

- There should be an empathetic attitude must be developed between every one especially family members.
- Joint family system has to be appreciated so as to be adjusted by the young women so as to get support them in any of the different circumstance.
- Religious practices should be meaningful which dependence upon the practicability.
- Intercaste marriage should be appreciated so as to have widow remarriages.
- Widow remarriage should be encouraged to enable young and childless destitute widows and provide them with financial and emotional support in their life.
- All destitute widows should strive to change the society and its outlook through education and social awakening and action in order to raise their status.
- Educational institutions through their extension services should come forward to educate the masses and mould their socio-religious attitude towards widows. The right type of education to help widows to face the problems of life and build up the right attitude towards life is essential.
- Government and non-government bodies like voluntary agencies and NGOs must take realistic measures to formulate and implement socio-economic security schemes for upliftment and rehabilitation of the widows.
- Government and non-governmental organisation should provide vocational training in various trades and vocational studies to widows. It must be imparted to make the widows economically independent.
- Mass media, educational institutions, voluntary agencies and political parties should formulate for protection of widows and create a favourable environment for these widows to remarry and settle down.
- GOs and NGOs should be created awareness among the widows regarding their legal rights in the ancestral and acquired property of the deceased husband. Free legal aid should be made available and every widow should be made aware of this facility by publicity.
- Voluntary organisations should take up education and opinion building programmes in favour of widow rehabilitation programme and establish secular homes for widows.
- Mass media like radio, television, newspaper and films should be utilised to elevate the status of widows. People should be educated about new values and efforts should be made to put an end to the archaic ideas about widows in the modern society.

Conclusion

It is evident from the analysis of primary data that it has been concluded that apart from the religious customs and traditions, destitute widows in modern society continue to be regarded as a bad omen at auspicious occasions and so are left out of the rites and rituals. The youngest ones are simply left at home may not participate. Again, it is primarily the General Category widows who are excluded from auspicious occasions. Employment and education have very little relation with this as it was found that even employed and educated respondents were excluded from participation in auspicious ceremonies. Such social exclusion and deprivation also leads to violence against widows. They continue to be subjected to numerous forms of violence at the hands of their own family members, be they marital or natal family members. Behavioural changes are often observed among destitute widows after the death of bereavement which are often overlooked and assumed to be normal women. None of these

provisions will have any effect until there is a change in mindset. The cultural tenets need to be changed. Societal mindset needs to be altered. A widow, as a human being, has human rights and these should not be denied in the name of culture and tradition. Gender Sensitization Programmes should be made a part and parcel of every scheme of the Government, particularly schemes aimed at welfare of widows. It must be asserted that inhumane treatment of human beings will not be tolerated.

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