

## Impact of socio-economic status on the mental health of half widows of Kashmir valley

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### Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to highlight the economic and social problems of half widows of Kashmir. The poor economic conditions are held responsible for the ill mental health and stress of half widows of Kashmir Valley. The half widows face great social tribulations. They have lost their identity and with the result suffer from identity crisis. The main concern of the socio-economic problems of half widows of Kashmir and the paper will also reflect the mental and emotional instability of half widows of Kashmir influenced by their socio-economic status.

**Keywords:** Half widow, Disappearances, mental health, Socio-economic status, Anxiety, stress, depression

### Introduction

The Kashmir conflict as a whole and the recent waves of terror have significant ramification across the south Asian sub-continent. The disappearance of the persons is still continuing. A good number of people got disappeared in recent years by unidentified outfits. Instead providing any healing touch or economic comfort to the half widows of Kashmir the number got increased and still the incidents of disappearance continue. Majority of Kashmiri half widows are illiterate and unemployed. After the disappearance of their husbands, suddenly a situation arises where the entire liability of the family slides, almost like a ghost, on their enfeebled shoulders.

They are caught in the dual responsibility of managing and maintaining the family and in the process they neglect themselves and fall prey to various diseases, some curable some not.

The half widows feel detached economically, mentally and emotionally due to the crises they face in the society. The half widows suffer from the various psychological and emotional stresses apart from poverty and economic hazards.

Not having any policy for rehabilitation and up liftment of half widows, it is quite important to draw the attention of the

people who are at the helm of affairs towards this grave problem.

### Database and Methodology

The following methodology was adopted for the placement, classification and analysis of data obtained. The half widows selected for the present study were selected from all over valley. Out of estimated 1500 half widows, 500 half widows were selected from all the districts of valley. Door to door survey was done and to study qualitative aspects, face to face interactions were arranged with the half widows. The greater number of half widows belongs to far flung and rural areas of the valley especially North Kashmir. The socio-economic status of half widows was measured by rural-urban socio-economic status scale devised by A.G Madhosh and K.P Rariqui.

The main purpose of the researcher was to find out the impact of socio-economic status on the mental health and emotional stress of half widows. For this purpose standardized tool of mental health was administered on the selected sample and the obtained results were analyzed with the help of statistical treatment. The statistical technique adopted was ANOVA to find the exact level of significance between and within the variables.

### Analysis of Data

**Table 1:** Summary of the complete analysis of variance for seven areas of mental health

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Area I	Between Groups	9.481	1	9.481	.145
	Within Groups	6910.815	106	65.196	
	Total	6920.296	107		
Area II	Between Groups	76.676	1	76.676	11.072
	Within Groups	734.093	106	6.925	
	Total	810.769	107		
Area III	Between Groups	133.333	1	133.333	12.322
	Within Groups	1146.963	106	10.820	
	Total	1280.296	107		
Area IV	Between Groups	181.481	1	181.481	26.339
	Within Groups	730.370	106	6.890	
	Total	911.852	107		
Area V	Between Groups	161.333	1	161.333	14.137
	Within Groups	1209.667	106	11.412	

	Total	1371.000	107		
Area Vi	Between Groups	24.083	1	24.083	2.797
	Within Groups	912.685	106	8.610	
	Total	936.769	107		
Area Vii	Between Groups	21.333	1	21.333	3.410
	Within Groups	663.074	106	6.255	
	Total	684.407	107		

Table 1 reveals that F Ratio for the half widows with high socio-economic status and low socio-economic status for the area (I-security-insecurity) come out to be significant even at 0.05 level and the F Ratio for Area I comes to be 0.145 for high SES and low SES half widows. Likewise the F Ratio for the Area II (Neurotic behavior) comes insignificant with F value as 11.072 for high and low status half widows which clearly indicates there is divergence between the two groups. F ratio for the Area (III- Depression) for both the groups of half widows is significant with F ratio 12.322. hence it is interpreted that both the groups of half widows either of high or low socio-economic status are suffering from depression. But there is a speckled difference in depression level. High socio-economic status half widows have less depression as compared to low status half widows owing to differences in economic and social status.

The F Ratio of Area (IV- Anxiety) is 26.33 for high SES widows and low SES widows and both the values are significant which reveals that there is a difference in terms of Area-IV i.e. Anxiety between two groups of half widows. So far as the F ratio for the Frustration (Area V) is concerned its value comes to be 14.137 for half widows with high socio-economic status and low socio-economic status which is again significant even at 0.5 level for both the classes of half widows. So level of frustration varies from one group to another. Half widows with high socio-economic status are somehow less frustrated because they are by some means stable in terms of economic standard.

Inferiority dimension on mental health shows F Ratio for half widows of high Socio-economic status as 2.797 which is insignificant on 0.05 level. Hence it is clear that both the groups suffer from inferiority complex and socio-economic status does not play any major role as both feel same type of inferiority.

Lastly the F Ratio for Area (VII- Adjustment) for high and low status half widows is 3.410 which is significant at 0.5 level. It means that the half widows belonging to low socio-economic status have adjustment problem in the society. While as half widows of high socio-economic status are somehow accustomed. So it can be inferred that the half widows with high and low socio-economic status differ in terms of adjustment on mental health inventory scale.

## Results and Discussion

Present study was carried out in a methodological frame work and In the light of the interpretation of the results with the help of proper statistical treatment i.e. quartile deviation, ANOVA, t- test, etc. The following conclusions were drawn.

The results obtained after the administration of scoring and analysis of the data. It was found that the half widows belonging to high Socio-economic status differ considerably from the half widows with low socio-economic status. Due to good economic conditions the half widows of high socio-economic status were in a position to control over their

neurotic behavior, depression, anxiety, frustration and adjustment due to better economic status they were found to be in a sustainable position.

But so far the first (I) and sixth (VI) area of scale is concerned it was found that the observed results after analysis were found insignificant at both levels of significance. As observed from the field study by the researcher it was found that the half widows belonging to both status high as well as low are suffering from same kind of insecurity and inferiority because of the obvious reason that is disappearance of their husbands. Not only the half widows of low socio-economic status were having hope that their husbands will return some day but also the half widows of high socio-economic status are living with the same hope.

The area (VI) of the mental health inventory reveals that the inferiority level of the both the experimental groups of half widows of high SES and low SES was found insignificant. It was observed that these half widows are suffering from inferiority complex. In some cases these half widows are held responsible for disappearance of their husbands due to their bad or ill luck by the in laws and society.

## Conclusion

Comparing the enormity of tragedies and mental health of both groups it comes same to some extent and the status either high or low has not any perceptible significance for them. As both the groups are suffering from various mental health problems with varied degree of intensity. Both the sects have become the victim of depression, anxiety, inferiority and most of them are dependent on antidepressants pills. So there is an instantaneous need to look into this sect of society and to do something for their upliftment and to save this depressed section from going bad to worse. For that both governmental as well as non-governmental agencies should take step of their identification and the generation of database so that policies can be framed for this group of society so that they can also live in high spirits.

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