

COVID-19: IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SPOUSES OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Covid -19 pandemic from the past year has created a huge mess in the lives of people and it has affected every single life in the whole world. Covid-19 affected people or individuals physically, mentally, and economically. Covid-19 is also an outbreak to create many widows. Widows are part of society and they struggle the most and they try to cope up with life with fewer sources. During this pandemic, widows have faced many problems in comparison to a widower. Widows are not given due attention by society and to their problems in normal life and they are discriminated against in day to day life and also they are not much supported more by family and relatives. This pandemic added more problems to the lives of widows. The main reason for publishing this paper is to describe the difficulties in the life of the widow which they faced during the covid-19 pandemic and will face throughout their life. The problems faced by widows during a pandemic are loneliness, hunger, no work, children's education, mental problems, and many more. This paper presents the problems faced by widows during a covid-19 pandemic.

Keywords: *Widow, Widower, Covid-19 Pandemic, Problems.*

Introduction

A novel coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2 has resulted in the outbreak of a respiratory illness known as COVID-19 had a tremendous impact on people's lives. Covid-19 known as an infected disease due to which the lockdown was imposed on half of the world including India. Covid-19 and lockdown affected the lives of human beings and the most affected section was women in the whole world, as already in many fields women are facing several problems regarding mental illness, loneliness, discrimination. A widow is a woman whose spouse dies, the loss of a spouse is more painful for a woman and to live life without a spouse is more painful. There are approximately 40 million widows in India and this pandemic has increased the number of widows. In India, many people's life has been affected by covid-19 many families have been disturbed as some lost their son, daughter, and their spouse. Men lost their wives and became widower but they were less affected as many had their earning source and other family members to support them. The impacts of the pandemic have been worse for women and girls, across all spheres, from health to the economy, to security and social protection. Women have witnessed the pandemic from a miserably close angle. They have been left behind with family responsibilities, financial burdens, worries about their children's trauma, and their own crushing loss and guilt.

Widows Problems in Pandemic Covid-19

In India, there are 40 million widows who are already facing several problems in their day-to-day life. This pandemic has added more problems in the lives of women and many women became widows due to this pandemic and started the phase of widowhood. Women who lost their spouses in this pandemic and became widows are facing different problems in their life.

Loneliness

This pandemic has substantially increased loneliness and impaired mental health among all age groups but the most affected group is women who lost their husband in this pandemic and become widows. Loneliness is an unpleasant experience with a deficiency in a person's social relations. Social loneliness originates from the absence of a broader group of contacts or an engaging social network. Emotional loneliness originates from the absence of an intimate figure or a close emotional attachment.

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Mental health problems include being anxious, depressed, and down, and not being peaceful and happy. We take the absence of social and emotional loneliness and unimpaired mental health together as well-being. A woman losing her spouse affects her mentally and she is disturbed due to her husband's death. The memories flash into her eyes which make her feel lonely and in grief, she thinks of her husband. She has less support of her family and if family supports her then also the space of her husband in a woman's life cannot be filled by other persons.

Work

In India, many women are working but due to this covid-19 pandemic, many of them lost their jobs, and their source of income stopped due to lockdown. The savings of the family decreased by sudden lockdown as many of them lost their jobs due to no work and the financial condition of the family became worse. Widows working as migrants, day laborers, temporary workers, and overseas domestic workers suffered added risks as they were forced into immediate migration to return home from places of work, plunging them into physical vulnerability in addition to fiscal vulnerability. In India, millions of day laborers were left stranded after immediate work and train stoppages, forced widows to walk hundreds of kilometers, and forage for food on their returns to villages.

Hunger

Women who became a widow in this pandemic and was housewife has to handle the responsibility of family and children. No source of income for the widow and the saving of the family also decreased by the expenses in lockdown, the widow does not have right in inherited land of in-laws and no saving of her own this makes her and her family starving for hunger. Food insecurity was a problem for widows before COVID-19, now starvation is their reality. As mothers of young children, they bear the added burden of feeding their young.

Education

After losing a spouse all responsibility of family and children comes on the shoulder of the widow, every mother wants her child to be educated. Less source of income or no source of income made widows' situations vulnerable and due to it widows are unable to send their children to school. During lockdown and in this pandemic online schools are being conducted but the financial condition of the family of a widow is not good due to which they do not have smartphones by which they can study and continue their education, this condition of children makes widow feel sad for her child.

Conclusion

The loss of loved ones is one of the most miserable experiences. It is being seen that due to sudden loss of loved ones or a spouse gives mental shock and also an adverse effect on health and other things. This paper presents the situation of being a widow due to pandemics and other reasons and the effects of a pandemic on the life of a widow. It is being seen that the effect of a pandemic on a women's life is more, the reason is that they have less support from family and relatives especially housewife and dependent women on family face problems, mainly they face a financial problem as they do not have inherent rights on land of in-laws and no other way of income. The government provides a pension scheme for widows in India but due to illiteracy, fewer widows take advantage of the scheme. Though pension is given by the government, it is not much to fulfill their needs.

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