

# **Stress And Life Satisfaction Among Single Parent: A Study of Coping Mechanisms**

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## **Abstract**

The mortality risk escalates with advancing age among married couples. The lifestyle of widowed mothers differs from that of non-widowed mothers. Upon the death of a spouse, an individual experiences a decrease in their social engagement and participation, resulting in the loss of various social responsibilities and tasks. Widowed mothers often experience a shift in their lifestyle because of their children. Children have the potential to impact an individual's overall sense of contentment in life. Widowhood exerts a significant influence on the physical, economical, and emotional well-being, leading to a decrease in total life contentment. Life satisfaction among widowed mothers is a crucial measure of overall happiness in life. Widowed mothers may view the death of their spouse as a traumatic event that shatters their dreams, hope, sense of safety, control, faith, the meaning of life, and purpose. The experience of widowhood is highly individualized and influenced by various factors, including the timing of this change within the life cycle and the individual's social group and culture. Widowhood is correlated with heightened levels of stress. Individuals consider the loss of a spouse as posing difficulties in their lives and imposing several responsibilities and obligations that are beyond their control. Various obstacles are encountered following the loss of a spouse in diverse manners. The successful expression of life pleasure following the physical and emotional loss experienced by a widow, as well as the lack of regular contact with family and friends, may be attributed to these factors. Widowed mothers often have lower levels of life satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Parental stress, life satisfaction, and widow mothers

## **Background of the Study**

For married couples, the likelihood of mortality increases as they grow older. Widow mothers pursue a unique lifestyle compared to non-widow mothers. Upon the death of their spouse, individuals undergo a decline in their engagement and involvement in social activities, as well as the relinquishment of various social roles. The birth of their children often brings about a significant change in the lifestyle of many bereaved women. The level of life satisfaction can be influenced by one's offspring. Research indicates that the mortality rate of spouses in married couples escalates as age advances. The state of being a widow has a profound impact on the husband who remains alive. The state of being a widow exerts a substantial adverse impact on an individual's physical, financial, and emotional well-being, as well as their overall satisfaction with life. The level of life satisfaction among bereaved mothers is a crucial measure of happiness in life. Widowed mothers may perceive

the death of their spouse as a traumatic experience that profoundly disrupts their aspirations, expectations, feelings of security, autonomy, religious beliefs, existential understanding, and sense of direction. The experience of widowhood is highly individualized and varies based on several aspects, such as the timing of this change within the life cycle, as well as the social group and cultural context of the persons involved. It is important to emphasize that widows have varying perspectives, cognitive interpretations, and evaluations of the widowhood experience. This is since widows have varying emotional responses to the loss of their spouse. As women who have lost a child, they have a range of unique and separate needs. A link exists between widowhood and stress. Upon the death of a spouse, individuals often experience a sense of their life being intricate or overwhelmed by an overwhelming number of obligations and tasks that are beyond their influence. Following the death of a partner,

numerous challenges manifest themselves in various forms. The physical and psychological hardships experienced by widows, along with their limited social connections, may contribute to their ability to find joy in life despite these losses.

Widowhood primarily entails a significant change where mothers who have lost their husbands become deeply concerned with their personal and social connections. This shift is often regarded as one of the most significant. Widowed mothers commonly experience reduced levels of satisfaction in their lives. One of the primary obstacles that grieving moms encounter is the cognitive and economic burden, in addition to the anxiety associated with being a sole career. The widow faces numerous challenges as the head of the family following the loss of her spouse, as assuming leadership in this role is inherently difficult. Widow mothers are predominantly linked to poverty and the challenges that arise from financial circumstances. Widowed moms typically experience poverty, and the health and mental challenges they encounter ultimately affect not only their own children's development but also the development of others in their vicinity. Bereaved mothers also feel parental stress. Factors such as the socio-economic status of parents, challenges in psychological adaptation, and problems related to the development or behaviour of their children can all contribute to the heightened likelihood of feeling stress commonly linked with parental stress. At elevated levels, there exists a link between diminished parental efficacy and the potential for it to be an adaptive phenomenon. Moreover, it impacts young individuals, increasing the probability that they may encounter behavioral and emotional disorders. The stress experienced by parents has been associated with a range of outcomes. Parental stress is a psychiatric condition marked by emotions of anxiety, annoyance, and self-blame. This emotion possesses the capacity to impact parental behaviors and the roles they fulfil. Whether directly or indirectly, it has the capacity to adversely affect the growth and progress of children. Young people's behaviour is directly influenced by their own actions. The research provides insights into the degrees of life satisfaction and stress encountered by widowed

women in their role as parents. The study provides valuable insights into the challenges that families encounter when adapting to the death of a spouse, the strain they endure as parents, and the strategies they adopt to manage these difficulties. Therefore, the widow's mental state is crucial to ensure that she is effectively leading, executing, and performing at her highest potential within the business. Across the globe, there exists a vast number of grieving mothers who are presently enduring dire circumstances such as severe destitution, mistreatment, lack of shelter, deteriorating health, and prejudice. These women are of diverse ages. Widowed mothers encounter various challenges, including emotions of seclusion. Following the demise of their spouse, widowed mothers experience the phases of grief, bereavement, or psychological distress, and they additionally encounter difficulties such as uncertainty, social shame, and related concerns. An arduous issue faced by grieving mothers is the need to fulfil dual responsibilities. Widow mothers who are alone responsible for parenting their children are more prone to experiencing heightened levels of parental stress and a diminished sense of overall life contentment. This is a common experience among most mothers who have lost a loved one. People are facing significant constraints in their physical, occupational, and social capabilities due to their stress.

Ibid. and Thara (2002), "Widowhood can be said to be more affected by the sin of omission." Their vulnerability, both socio-economic and psychological, now challenges many conventional assumptions about this 'invisible' group of women. With women becoming increasingly economically independent and more aware of their rights". Lee (2002), "Widowhood-associated problems are loneliness. Many widows live by themselves. They suffer from the fear of being alone and a loss of self-esteem as women, which are practical problems related to living alone. They feel the loss of personal contact and human association; therefore, they tend to withdraw and become unresponsive. Another main problem in widowhood is still emotional. The role of spouse is lost; social life changes with widowhood; and companionship has become an intrinsic part of their lives".

Avison (2007), Nelson (2014), Nomaguchi, and Milkie (2003), "Life satisfaction is a penalty for widowed mothers, commonly attributed to the higher levels of emotional and financial stress and strain that accompany long-term single parenting". Argyle (2013): "Life satisfaction emphasises a psychological situation related to the whole life rather than specific situations such as time, place, and opportunity". Oishi (2002): "Life satisfaction is influenced by the individual's experiences, day-to-day life, and future expectations". Gucciardi (2004) defines "parental stress as a condition or feeling experienced when a parent perceives that the demands associated with parenting exceed the personal and social resources available to meet those demands". Sarafino (2015): "Parental stress is a condition caused by the discrepancy between the desired situations and the state of the biological, psychological, or social system. The sources of stress that have the potential to cause stress are conflicts, life changes, and daily quarrels". Calvano and Racine (2011) say, "Parental stress damages their well-being, and it may alter the course of their children's development. It is caused by their state of mind. It threatens their ability to provide for their children; it makes them worry about their ability to keep them safe, healthy, and thriving; then it can contribute to parenting stress".

A. K. Srivastava and Jagadish (2017): "Adjustment is a lifelong process. Therefore, it calls for a maturity that accepts and understands growth and development in individuals. Mutual communication and sharing are important for adjustment in life. There is a positive correlation between communication and adjustment". Sumathi and Muralidaran (2015) say, "Adjustment is a process that leads us to a happy and contented life; maintains a balance between our needs and our capacity to meet them; and persuades us to change our way of life". Oniye (2000), "Challenges of a widow's face are related to the income variations, living conditions, perceived health, status, and presence of a confidant. They feel ignored and suffer within society; they may lack self-esteem and loneliness, and they may live in a state of fear as they lack groups to identify them". Leman (2005), "Challenges faced by widows are many, as they

must face the changed circumstances and take on both roles as them. They are dealing with loneliness and may sometimes feel burdened due to more responsibilities". Ferrell (2009), "Challenges in a widow's face, many of them. They are struggling to make ends meet while living below the poverty line, though the majority of widowed women are poor. Perhaps they do not have as much time as required, especially for their children". Dunn (2015), "Coping strategies among widow mothers to deal with their issues. Stress is also sought to identify other factors contributing to stress among widow mothers. The survivor is also coping with their insecurity. It has found that widow mothers are more exposed to overcome their stress and depression as compared to mothers who have partners, due to the responsibilities they bear alone". Thompson and Robinson (2012) & Wolf (2011), "Coping strategies in widow mothers causes of stress, and their strategy of action, and resilience on them. It is based on their family structure, and life satisfaction after the spouse's death".

### **Methodology**

The study aims to comprehensively analyse the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the participants, examine the levels of parental stress and life satisfaction among widowed mothers, explore the extent of social inclusion experienced by the participants after the loss of their spouse, assess the levels of parental stress among the participants, investigate the adjustment difficulties encountered by the participants within their families, and examine the challenges faced by the participants along with their coping strategies. The researcher employed quantitative research methodologies in this investigation. Quantitative research involves the systematic gathering and examination of numerical data. The objective of quantitative research is to acquire enhanced knowledge and comprehension of the social realm. Researchers employ quantitative methodologies to observe phenomena or occurrences that impact individuals. Techniques for observing circumstances or occurrences that impact individuals. The system generates empirical data that can be effectively conveyed using numerical values.

## **Result and Discussion**

The widow mothers have an interest in participating in social activities. 100 percent of the respondents can participate in social activities. So, widowed mothers have opportunities to participate in social activities. Of the respondents, 100 percent have not felt any kind of avoidance from society. So, widowed mothers have not felt any kind of avoidance from society. Of the respondents, 100 percent have not experienced any situation of social isolation. So, widow mothers have not experienced any situation of social isolation. The majority, 75 percent, have not kept a distance from society, and 25 percent have kept a distance from society. So, most widowed mothers have not kept a distance from society. The lowest-income mothers keep a distance from society. The majority, 94 percent, have not kept society away from social ceremonies, and 6 percent have kept society away from social ceremonies. So, the majority of widow mothers do not keep away from social ceremonies in society. The poorest widow mothers in society keep away from social ceremonies. The respondents, 100 percent, have not faced any kind of violence. So, the widowed mothers have not faced any kind of violence. The respondents, 100 percent, have not been forced to follow any socio-cultural practices relating to their widowhood. So, the widow mothers have not followed any socio-cultural practices relating to their widowhood. The majority, 87 percent, have not faced any social issues from society, and 13 percent have faced any social issues from society. So, the majority of widow mothers have not faced any social issues from society. The lowest-income widow mothers face any social issues from society. The majority, 90 percent of them, belong to BPL, and 10 percent of them belong to APL. So, the majority of widow mothers' economic status is BPL. The lowest of widow mothers' economic status is APL. It shows most of the widowed mothers are not economically well off. The widowed mothers have to face stress. The majority, 73 percent, have stress effects, and 27 percent do not. So, the majority of widowed mothers have stress effects. The lowest percentage of widow mothers have no stress effects. The majority, 73

percent, have taken measures for their stress relief, and 27 percent have not taken measures for their stress relief. So, the majority of widow mothers have taken measures for their stress relief. The lowest percentage of widow mothers have not taken measures for their stress relief. The respondents, 100 percent, have gotten support from family and children for reducing stress. So, widow mothers get support from family and children to reduce stress. The respondents, 100 percent, do not feel that parenting stress affects their family and children. So, widowed mothers have no parenting stress that affects their family and children.

The majority, 93 percent, were not employed before their spouse's death, and 7 percent were employed before their spouse's death. So, the majority of widowed mothers were not employed before their spouse's death. The lowest number of widowed mothers were employed before their spouse's death. Of the respondents, 100 percent, get widow pensions from the government regularly every month. So, widow mothers get widow pensions from the government regularly every month. The majority, 89 percent of them, belong to arranged marriages, and 11 percent of them belong to love marriages. So, the majority of widow mothers' marriage types are arranged. The lowest of widow mothers' marriage types is love. The majority, 76 percent, have faced challenges, and 24 percent have not faced challenges. So, the majority of widowed mothers face challenges. The lowest-income mothers have not faced challenges. The respondents, 100 percent, have no emotional impact on their overall well-being. So, widowed mothers have no emotional impact on their overall well-being. The majority, 90 percent, are anxious about their children's future, and 10 percent are not anxious about their children's future. So, the majority of widowed mothers are anxious about their children's future. The lowest-income mothers are not anxious about their children's future.

## **Conclusion**

The study focuses on examining the levels of stress experienced by mothers who have lost their spouses and how it affects their overall pleasure with life. Subsequent research should

demonstrate that moms who have been widowed undergo parental stress and endure changes in their overall life satisfaction following the loss of their spouses. The study primarily examined the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the participants, as well as their level of social inclusion, parental stress, adjustment difficulties within families, obstacles faced, and solutions employed to cope with these challenges. The study demonstrates that widowed mothers encounter parental stress and assess their life satisfaction following the death of their spouses. The challenges faced by single mothers who have lost their spouses persist in society. Living as other members of society requires courage. This study examines the levels of parental stress and life satisfaction experienced by women who have lost their spouses. Despite their financial instability, they are able to meet their daily necessities. The primary obstacle encountered by single mothers who have lost their spouses is achieving financial security, and they are particularly susceptible to experiencing financial toxicity. The financial situation also causes financial strain for mothers who have lost their husbands. Widowed mothers primarily require robust and efficient financial stability. The financial poison renders them financially precarious, and it also impacts their families.

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