

**IMPACT OF WIDOWHOOD AMONG YOUNG WIDOWS AND THEIR
SATISFACTION WITH THEIR LIVES**



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Declaration

I, Maryum Hafeez, Student No: 13003141010, student of BS in the subject of Psychology, session of 2013-2017, hereby declare that the material printed in this thesis titled “Impact of Widowhood among Young Widows and their Satisfaction with their Lives” is an original work and has not been printed, published or submitted as research work, thesis or publication in any form in any university or research institution in Pakistan or abroad.

Dated: _____

Signature of Declarer

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Abstract

The current study was aimed to explore the impacts of widowhood among young widows and their satisfaction with their lives. In this study, there were 3 widowed participants who were mothers between the ages of 25-30 at the time of their husband's death. Snowball sampling technique was used to locate the participants. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain full and rich descriptions of widows' traumatic experiences. The data was analyzed by using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The analysis of the data revealed significant themes and from the analysis of data five major themes were emerged. These themes are losses, who am I, making connection through memories, living through the firsts and support systems. The findings further highlighted the need to address a multi-disciplinary team to assist widows in embracing psycho-emotional as well as socio-economic challenges.

Keywords: young widows, depression, impacts on health, social impact, psychological impact, loneliness

Introduction

The loss of a spouse especially through death is widely considered as a traumatic change in life circumstances. This change is likely to have long-term consequences due to the loss of beloved ones. Moreover, widowed, divorced and never- married women share some of the problems that living alone brings (Crammer, 1993). But, the widowed women have some other aspects in their lives from divorced and never married women. So their challenges and sufferings are different from divorced and never- married women.

According to Stroebe (1987), young widows have more difficulty with the initial adjustment to their loss and may experience a greater degree of emotional suffering than those women who are widowed later in life. Young widows have been identified as experiencing depression (Blanchard & Becker, 1976; Zisook & Schuchter, 1991), more severe grief reactions (Ball, 1977), and lower morale as compared to older widows (Morgan, 1976).

Moreover, the experience of widowhood at a very younger age than the expected age is a very traumatic and life challenging event (Elder, Johnson & Crosnoe, 2003). According to Moose and Shaeffer (1984) several factors like age, gender, socioeconomic status, self-confidence and as well as mental maturity are that predictors which describes a person's sooner recovery from the traumatic event.

1.1 Bereavement, Grief and Mourning