

Problems Of Female-Headed Households In Jammu And Kashmir, With Special Reference To District Budgam

Tariq Bashir Dar

Research Scholar Department of Sociology Barkatullah
University Bhopal

Prof. Rama Singh

Professor at Sarojini Naidu Govt. Girls Post Graduate
College Bhopal

Abstract: With the loss of the male breadwinner in the family, the female face difficulty in meeting the basic needs of children and other family members. Along with household duties the women have to take other duties usually done by the male member. Moreover these women tend to suffer from a lack of identity associated with their husband, feeling of isolation, anxiety about future, helplessness, lack of peace of mind, feeling of insecurity etc. most of the female-headed households face the problem of lack of decision making power regarding the future of children and disciplining the children etc. It is widely suspected that with the absence of earning male member in the family gender-related economic gap brings disadvantages in female-headed households. Most of these women heads have the double burden with domestic chores and income generating activities simultaneously and spend less time with their children than partnered mothers. Even when income is controlled female-headed households are more likely to experience stressful life events than their married counterparts which may put them at high risk of depression anxiety and other mental disorders. As per the reports of census 2011 in India, there are about 27 million female-headed households which represent nearly 10.9% of all household. In Jammu and Kashmir female-headed household constitute 8.2% as per census 2011. The present article is supported by research data and observation of my research. This study is based on primary and secondary sources and the primary data was collected by using the technique of interview schedule. A sample size of 300 respondents was selected with the help of cluster sampling with the simple random selection.

Keywords: problems; female-headed households; breadwinner; Jammu and Kashmir; Budgam; stressful life

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper presents the problems of the Female-headed households in Jammu and Kashmir, with special reference to district Budgam. With the rapid increase in industrialization and urbanization on the one hand and an increase in poverty and unemployment on the other, women's lifestyle in many countries is undergoing a significant change. All over the world, in terms of family life, women are slowly and steadily shifting away from joint families to a longer duration of "singleness" (Chatterji, 1997). As a part of the change in lifestyle different from the traditional role, women are now assuming the role of the prime careers, educators, and even household income-earners. (Lehmann David, 2000). In India, a number of factors contribute to increased incidence of female headship. Due to population explosion, the

unemployment rate has gone up and the increasing trend of industrialization caused miseries especially to the lower economic groups, therefore, forcing them to give up the cultural values, family ties, and kinship bondage. Due to economic hardship widows are no longer absorbed either by in-laws or parents. Divorce, separation, and desertion are found common among low-income groups. Addiction of men to evil practices causes an inability to support the family. Migration caused many "left behind women." As per the reports of census 2011 in India, there are about 27 million female-headed households which represent nearly 10.9% of all household. In Jammu and Kashmir female-headed household constitute 8.2% as per census 2011. The financial problem and other stressful life event creates a depressed mood and affect the psychological health (Nidhi Kotwal, Bharti Prabhakar, 2009). It is widely suspected that with the absence of earning

male member in the family gender-related economic gap brings disadvantages in female-headed households. Most of these women heads have the double burden with domestic chores and income generating activities simultaneously and spend less time with their children than partnered mothers, which may affect effective parenting. Even when income is controlled female-headed households are more likely to experience stressful life events than their married counterparts which may put them at high risk of depression anxiety and other mental disorders. These female household heads are as constrained by their gender roles as mothers and women as their female counterparts in male-headed households. When the only available work is far from home, there are issues of purdah and safety to consider; many women are unable to work in outside their home in Jammu and Kashmir. A further consideration is that of the necessity of obtaining social approval, Apart from constraints on women's movements and the restrictions on what women are able to do due to their parenting role, there is the very real problem that the strictly gendered division of labor involves that there are very few paid positions for which women are hired.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

McLanahan Sara (1983) in her study on "Family Structure and Stress: A longitudinal contrast of two parent and female-headed families" identified three types of stressors: the existence of unending life strain, incidence of major life events and nonappearance of social and psychological supports and accomplished that single female heads with children occurrence more stress than their married male contest parts in all the three areas and suggests that the higher occurrence of major life events practiced by male heads is mainly a function of marital disturbance process rather than a characteristic of the state of single parenthood.

Sarah et al. (2006) study on "Divorce Leads to Poor Psychological and Physical Health in Women" discovered that divorced women have a higher vulnerability to persistent illness, particularly over a period of time compared with married women.

Cheryl A et.al (1980) in their study on "Managerial Behavior and Stress in Families Headed by Divorced Women" says that Female-headed families are susceptible to high levels of stress following divorce. A structure is proposed which theoretically links economic stressors and family administration patterns and concluded that stress can be formed or reduced by systems exterior to the family and by the family's interior decision-making behavior.

Naomi Hossain and Samiha Huda (1996) in their study on "Problems of the Women Headed Households" reveal that there are particular processes by which women become household heads. Social factor such as purdah remains an important restriction for such women and few allowances give the impression to be made due to their situation as household heads. Such constraints further restrain their probability of finding employment. Poverty is the most urgent problem. Women household heads are very probable to lose control of any land or assets they may have innate. Admittance to

employment is another harsh problem, as there are few jobs available to them and they are comparatively untrained.

Heather A. Turner (2006). In her study on "Stress, Social Resources, and Depression among Never-Married and Divorced Rural Mothers" observes the impact of a number of domains of pressure on mother's despair potential buffering effects of social resources. Findings highlight the significance of numerous forms of strain revelation, showing independent important effects of lifetime hardship, current life events, and constant stressors on present depressive symptoms.

Willcox (2003) in a study on "The Effect of Widowhood on Physical and Mental Health, Health Behavior and Health Outcome" found that women who were in recent times widowed reported considerably higher rates of miserable disposition, poorer social performance and lower mental health and physical performance than women who were widowed more than a year.

III. METHODOLOGY

Since this study tries to discover data and information by which, variables can be described and explained, so it is unexperiential regarding quality and in regards of methods, called survey method and of the kind of discoveries descriptive researches. The statistical society of this study is problems of the female-headed households in Jammu and Kashmir, with special reference to district Budgam. The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data has been collected from the government, NGO reports and by reviewing the already published papers in the relevant area. In order to collect the relevant data, 300 respondents were selected by using the cluster sampling with the help of simple random selection. The tool of interview schedule has been used while interviewing the respondents.

IV. SUMMARY

The present article problem of female-headed households in Jammu and Kashmir, with special reference to district Budgam, has been an attempt to know about the problems of female-headed households. However, households have undergone many changes during the past decades. A more recent phenomenon in this direction is the increasing numbers of women-headed households are emerging as a result of economic changes, economic downturns, and social pressures, rather than as a product of cultural patterns. Female-headed households are the hurtled group of the society and are facing many crucial problems. The problems are organized here into poverty and economic insecurity, social constraints, political powerlessness, difficulty in finding the job, difficulty in handling financial matters, sexual harassment, difficulty in seeking medical treatment, exploitation, health problems, anxiety about the future of their children, shortage of food, and other problems which female-headed households are facing. In the study area, 300 respondents were questioned about different problems which the female-headed households are facing, the whole description of their answers are as in below tables.

Do you feel you are exploited by:	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Relatives	93	31%
Friends	87	29%
Co-workers	59	19.70%
Neighbors	33	11%
In-laws	28	9.30%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.1 Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of exploitation

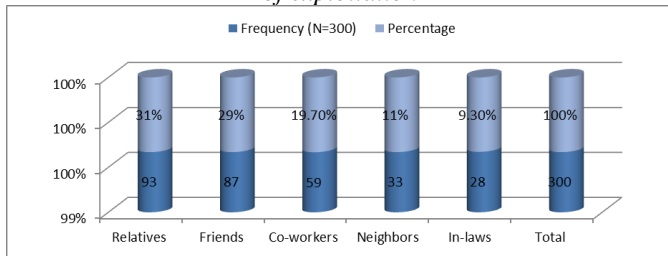


Figure 1

In the study area, respondents were questioned about exploitation, which is classified into different groups like, relatives, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and in-laws. The above table 1.1 reveals majority of respondent (31%) shows that they are exploited by their relatives, followed by (29%) friends, (19.70%) co-workers, (11%) respondent shows that they are exploited by their neighbors, and only (9.30%) respondent are of the view that they are exploited by their in-laws in different walks of life. As per the response of respondents, they are exploited in different ways like sexually exploited; forcibly taking services, and uses us for their benefit.

Did you experience sexual harassment?	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Yes	198	66%
No	102	34%
Total	300	300%

Source: primary data

Table 1.2: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of sexual harassment

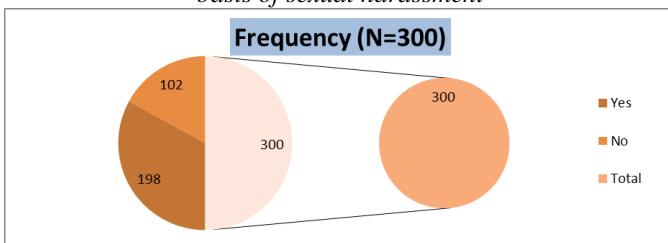


Figure 2

In the above table, 1.2 respondents were asked about sexual harassment. In the study area, 300 respondent were interviewed about their sexual harassment, the majority of the respondent (66%) shows they are harassed by the different natures of people in the society, followed by (34%) respondent shows not any sort of harassment in the society.

Feel anxiety about the future of your children in the absence of an adult male member?	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Always	117	39%
Sometimes	105	35%
Never	78	26%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.3: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of anxiety about the future of children in the absence of adult male member

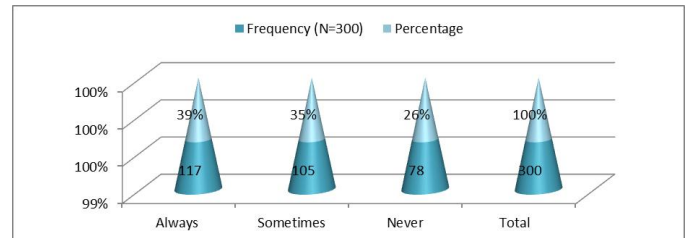


Figure 3

In the study area respondents were asked anxiety about the future of children in the absence of the male member, which is classified into different categories like; always, sometimes, and never. The data demonstrated in the above table 1.3 represented that majority of respondent (39%) shows that they are always worried about the future of their children, followed by (35%) respondent shows sometimes they are worried about the future of their children in the absence of the male member, and only (26%) respondent shows that they never worry about the future of their children in the absence of male member.

Types of sexual harassment you experienced:	Frequency (N=198)	Percentage
Physical contact and sexual advances	57	28.80%
Demand or request for sexual favors	46	23.20%
Sexually colored remarks	30	15.20%
Display of pornography	38	19.20%
Others	27	13.60%
Total	198	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.4: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of types of sexual harassment

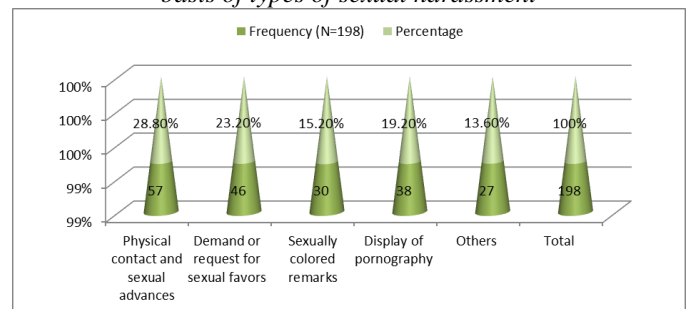


Figure 4

In the study area respondents were asked about the types of sexual harassment, which is classified in different categories like; physical contact and sexual advances, demand

or request for sexual favors, sexually colored remarks, display of pornography, and other types of sexual harassment. The data present in the above table 1.4 reveals that maximum number of respondent (28.80%) shows the type of sexual harassment physical contact and sexual advances, followed by (23.20%) demand or request for sexual favors, (19.20%) respondent shows display of pornography as the type of their sexual harassment, (15.20%) sexually colored remarks, and only (13.60%) respondent shows other types of sexual harassment which they are facing these areas threats to terminate from the work job, unsatisfactory shifts, sometimes threats of demotion and repeated sexually oriented behavior such as touching, rubbing, that is done without the permission. It has been also observed in the study area that the majority of respondents who are sexually harassed are working outside. As per respondent's response due to the sexual harassment, they are facing some psychological side effects such as insecurity, low self-esteem, fear, frustration, anger, and irritability.

Do you face any difficulties in seeking medical treatment:	Frequency (=300)	Percentage
Getting money need for treatment	90	30%
The distance to the health treatment facility	72	24%
Having to take transport	48	16%
Lack of time for treatment	69	23%
Getting moral support	21	07%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.5: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of difficulties in seeking medical treatment

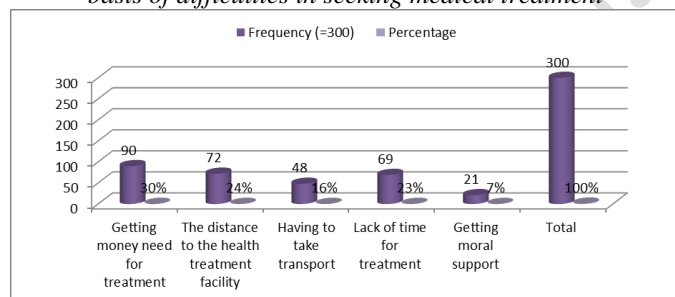


Figure 5

In the study area, respondents were asked about difficulties in seeking medical treatment which is classified in different categories like; getting money need for treatment, the distance to the health treatment facility, having to take transport, lack of time for treatment, and getting moral support. The data 1.5 demonstrated in above table reveals that majority of respondent (30%) shows getting money need for treatment as their difficulty in seeking medical treatment, followed by (24%) respondent shows the distance to the health treatment facility, (23%) lack of time for treatment, (16%) having to take transport, and only (07%) respondent shows getting moral support as difficulty in seeking medical treatment.

Are you suffering from any health problem after husband's absence?	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
A frequent headache	87	29%
High Blood pressure	39	13%
Disturbed sleep	99	33%
Asthma	03	01%
Heart diseases	45	15%
Other	27	09%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.6: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of health problem after husband's absence

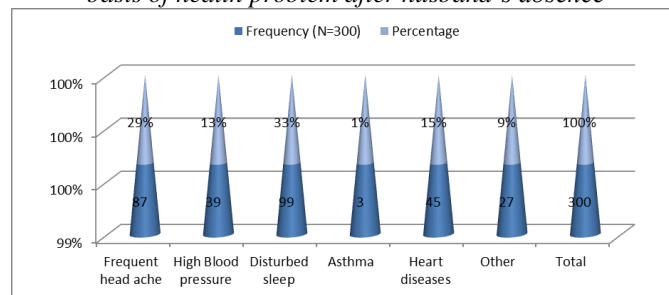


Figure 6

In the study area, respondents were asked about health problems after husband's absence, which is classified in different categories like; a frequent headache, high blood pressure, disturbed sleep, asthma, heart diseases, and other diseases. The data presented in above table 1.6 reveals that majority of respondent (33%) shows disturbed sleep as their main health problem after the absence of husband, followed by (29%) shows a frequent headache as their health problem, (15%) heart diseases, (13%) high blood pressure, (09%) respondent shows other types of health problems after absence of husband like anemia, depression, eating disorders, stress, alcoholism addictions, and only (01%) respondent shows asthma as the health problem after the absence of husband. It has been also observed that health conditions of female-headed households are worse in condition.

How often you experience in the absence of the husband in the family?	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Loss identity	27	09%
Feeling of isolated	48	16%
Feeling of insecure	39	13%
Feeling of stress	42	14%
Feeling of worthless	09	03%
Helplessness	12	04%
Exploited in the society	72	24%
Depression	18	06%
Anxiety	06	02%
Unhappiness	27	09%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.7: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of experience in the absence of the husband in the family

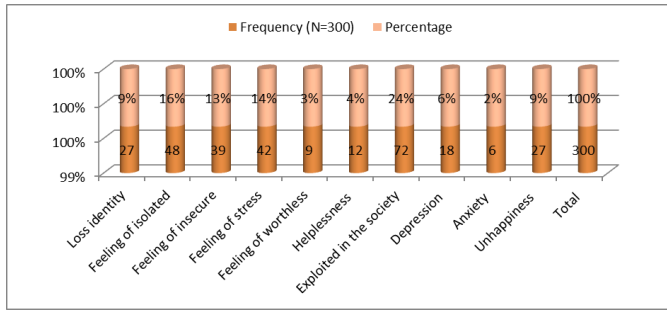


Figure 7

In the study area respondents were asked about experience in the absence of the husband in a family which is classified in different categories like; loss identity, feeling of isolated, feeling of insecure, feeling of stress, feeling of worthlessness, helplessness, exploited in the society, depression, anxiety, and unhappiness. The data demonstrated in above table 1.7 reveals that majority of respondent (24%) shows in the absence of husband in family experienced that they are exploited in the society, followed by (16%) feeling of isolated, (14%) feeling of stress, (13%) feeling of insecure, (09%) loss identity, (09%) unhappiness, (06%) depression, (04%) helplessness, (03%) feeling of worthlessness, and only (02%) respondent experienced anxiety in the absence of husband in family.

In what way father's absence has an effect on children:	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Quiet and submissive	57	19%
Violent and unmanageable	63	21%
Loss of interest in studies	72	24%
Lost confidence	78	26%
Other	30	10%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 7.18: Percentage distribution of respondents on the basis of father's absence has an effect on children

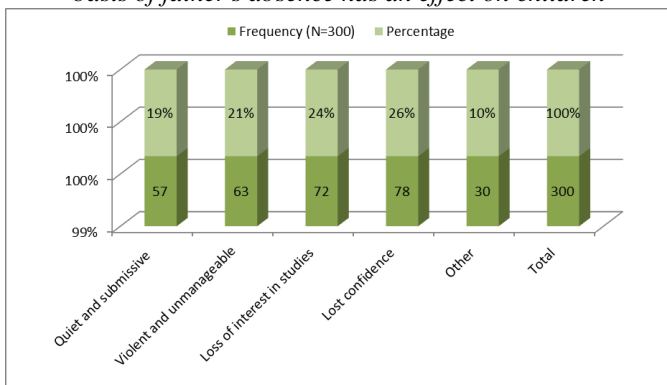


Figure 8

In the study area, respondents were asked about the father's absence has an effect on children, which is classified in different categories like; quiet and submissive, violent and unmanageable, loss of interest in studies, lost confidence, and other effects. The data presented in the above table 7.18 reveals that majority of respondent (26%) shows children lost confidence due to father's absence, followed by (24%) loss of interest in studies, (21%) violent and unmanageable, (19%) quite and submissive, and only (10%) respondent shows other

effects of father's absence on children like children becomes drug addict, children become helplessness, and rise negative emotions and distancing.

Do you feel any difficulty to lead your life as head of household?	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Yes	231	77%
No	69	23%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.8: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of difficulty to lead the life as head of household

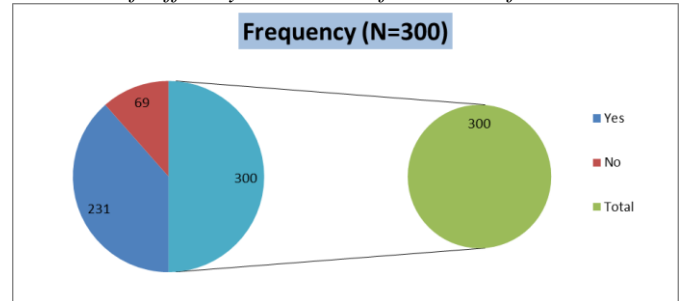


Figure 9

In the study area, respondents were questioned about their type of difficulty to lead the life as head of household. The data presented in the above table 1.8 reveals that majority of the respondent (77%) shows they face the number of difficulties to lead the life as head of household, followed by (23%) respondent shows that they do not face any difficulty to lead the life as head of household.

Type of difficulties to lead your life as head of household:	Frequency (N=231)	Percentage
Personal difficulties	22	09.50%
Child care and supervision	54	23.40%
Household duties	69	29.90%
Financial management	43	18.60%
Social relations	31	13.40%
Other	12	05.20%
Total	231	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.9: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of types of difficulties to lead the life as head of household

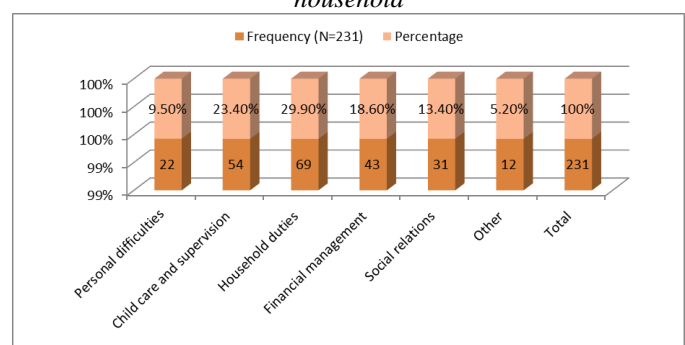


Figure 10

In the study area, respondents were asked about their difficulties to lead the life as head of household, which is classified in different categories like; personal difficulties, child care and supervision, household duties, financial

management, social relations, and other difficulties. The data demonstrated in the above table 1.9 reveals that majority of respondent (29.90%) shows household duties as their difficulty to lead life as head of household, followed by (23.40%) child care and supervision, (18.60%) financial management, (13.40%) social relations, (09.50%) personal difficulties, and only (05.20%) respondent shows other difficulties to lead life as head of household, these difficulties are as health problems of their family, the future of their children, and feeling of isolation.

Does your household face shortage of food grains:	Frequency (N=300)	Percentage
Yes	213	71%
No	87	29%
Total	300	100%

Source: primary data

Table 1.10: Percentage distributions of respondents on the basis of face shortage of food grains

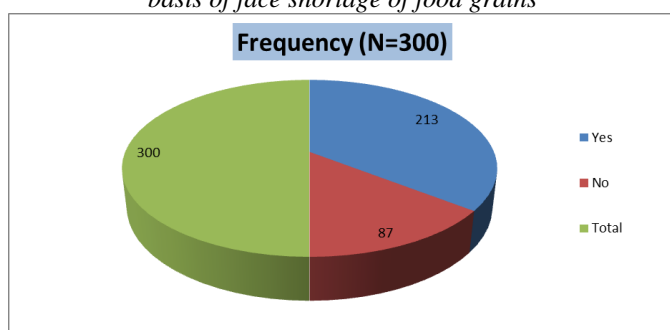


Figure 11

In the study area, respondents were asked about their shortage of food grains. The data presented in the above table 1.10 reveals that majority of the respondent (71%) shows that they are facing the problem of shortage of food grains, followed by (29%) respondent shows that they do not face any sort of problem regarding the shortage of food grains.

V. CONCLUSION AND RESULTS

The present study conducted in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir is based on both primary and secondary data. The study covered 300 female-headed household respondents out of 103363 total households of Budgam district. It was decided to collect the needful detail information pertaining to 300 respondent widows, divorced or separated and abandoned/left behind women from eight blocks of Budgam district. And further approximately 40 female-headed household respondents were selected from each sample i.e. block in order to fulfill the requirements of efficiency representativeness and reliability. The primary data was collected using the direct interview method with the help of an interview schedule. The sampling method used by the researcher was based on cluster sampling with the simple random selection. The problems are organized here into poverty and economic insecurity, social constraints, political powerlessness, difficulty in finding the job, difficulty in handling financial matters, sexual harassment, difficulty in seeking medical treatment, and other related problems which female-headed households are facing. In the study area 300 respondents were interviewed about the exploitation, it has

been seen that most of the respondent (31%) are exploited by their relatives, (29%) friends, (19.70%) co-workers, (11%) neighbors, and only (09.30%) are exploited by their in-laws in different walks of life. While examining sexual harassment of the respondents, it has been seen in the study that majority of respondent (66%) are harassed, (34%) are not harassed, the study also reveals that majority of respondent (28.80%) are sexually harassed by physical contact and sexual advances, (23.20%) demand or request for sexual favors, (19.20%) display of pornography, (15.20%) sexually colored remarks, and only (13.60%) other types of sexual harassment like; threats to terminate from the work job, unsatisfactory shifts, sometimes threats of demotion and repeated sexually oriented behavior such as touching, rubbing, that is done without the permission. Knowing about the difficulties of respondents in seeking medical treatment the study reveals that majority of respondent (30%) shows getting money need for treatment as their difficulty in seeking medical treatment, (24%) the distance to the health treatment facility, (23%) lack of time for treatment, (16%) having to take transport, and only (07%) getting moral support. While examining the health problem of respondents after husband's absence, it has been seen that health conditions of female-headed households are worse in condition, that majority of respondent (33%) disturbed sleep as their main health problem after the absence of husband, (29%) frequent headache, (15%) heart diseases, (13%) high blood pressure, (09%) other types of health problems after absence of husband like anemia, depression, eating disorders, stress, alcoholism addictions, and only (01%) asthma. Regarding the respondents experience in the absence of husband in the family, the study revealed that majority of respondent (24%) are exploited in the society, (16%) feeling of isolated, (14%) feeling of stress, (13%) feeling of insecure, (09%) loss identity, (09%) unhappiness, (06%) depression, (04%) helplessness, (03%) feeling of worthlessness, and only (02%) experienced anxiety in the absence of husband in family. Regarding anxiety of respondents about the future of children in the absence of adult male member the study revealed that majority of respondent (39%) are always worried about the future of their children, (35%) sometimes, and only (26%) never worry about the future of their children in the absence of male member. While examining father's absence has effect on children the study reveals that majority of respondent (26%) says children lost confidence due to father's absence, (24%) loss of interest in studies, (21%) violent and unmanageable, (19%) quite and submissive, and only (10%) other effects of father's absence on children like children becomes drug addict, children become helplessness, and rise negative emotions and distancing. While knowing the type of difficulty of respondents to lead the life as head of household, it has been seen in the study that majority of the respondent (77%) face number of difficulties to lead life as head of household, (23%) does not face any difficulty to lead life as head of household. It has been also observed that majority of respondent (29.90%) says household duties as their difficulty to lead life as head of household, (23.40%) child care and supervision, (18.60%) financial management, (13.40%) social relations, (09.50%) personal difficulties, and only (05.20%) other difficulties like; health problems of their family, future of their children, and feeling of isolation. While examining

shortage of food grains of respondents it has been seen in the study area that majority of the respondent (71%) are facing the problem of shortage of food grains, (29%) do not face any sort of problem regarding the shortage of food grains.

REFERENCES

- [1] Chatterji A Shoma. (1997). "Indian women Search for Identity" Vikas Publishing House Pvt.Ltd., Delhi.
- [2] Cheryl A. Buehler and M. Janice Hogan. (1980). "Managerial Behavior and Stress in Families Headed by Divorced Women" *Journal of Family Relations*, v29 n4 p525-32 October.
- [3] Dar Bashir Tariq (2018) Analysis of the Female-headed households, the situation in India with special reference to Jammu and Kashmir *International Journal of Research & Review* (www.ijrrjournal.com) Vol.5; Issue: 9; September 2018
- [4] Dar Bashir Tariq (2018) Socio-economic position of the female-headed households of Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to district Budgam. *International Journal For Technological Research In Engineering* Volume 5, Issue 11, July-2018 (www.ijtre.com) ISSN (Online): 2347 - 4718
- [5] Economic Survey 2013-14, Planning Department, J&K Government, Socio-Economic Profile of J&K
- [6] Gandotra and Thakur Jha. (2003). Female-Headed Households: A Database of North Bihar" *Journal of Social Science*. 7(4): 315-321.
- [7] Gangopadhyay, S., and Wadhwa, W (2003). "Are Indian Female-headed Households more Vulnerable to Poverty", India Development Foundation.
- [8] Gulati Leela (1993). *In the Absence of their Men: the Impact of Male Migration on Women*, New Delhi: Sage Publication limited
- [9] Hadi (1999). "Overseas migration and the well being of those left behind in rural communities of Bangladesh," *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* 14 (1): 43-58
- [10] Hetherington, E. M., Cox, M., & Cox, R (1985). "Long-term effects of divorce and remarriage on the adjustment of children: *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry*, 24, 518-530.
- [11] <https://www.censusindia.co.in/states/jammu-kashmir>
- [12] <https://www.census2011.co.in/census/state/jammu+and+kashmir.html>
- [13] Lehmann David (2000). "Female-headed households in Latin America and the Caribbean: problems of analysis and conceptualization", in Pour l'Histoire du Brésil: hommage à Katia de Queirós Mattoso, ed. François Crouzet and Denis Rolland, Paris, L' Harmattan.
- [14] McLanahan Sara.s (1983) Family Structure and Stress: A Longitudinal Comparison of Two-Parent and Female-Headed Families. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*: v45 n2 p347-57 May 1983.
- [15] Naomi Hossain and Samiha Huda. (1996). "Problems of the Women-Headed Households: "BRAC-ICDDR, B Joint Research Project Working Paper Series no12.
- [16] Nidhi Kotwal Bharti Prabhakar. (2009). "Problems Faced by Single Mothers" *Journal of Social Sciences* 21(3): 197-204.
- [17] Turner A Heather (2006). "Stress, Social Resources, and Depression among Never-Married and Divorced Rural Mothers: *Rural Sociology*, Volume.71, issue3, Pages479-504, September.
- [18] Sarah K, Spillman, Lorenz F, Wickramma (2006). Divorce leads to poor psychological and Physical Health in Women. Institute for Social and Behavior Research. Retrieved March 19, 2007 from [http:// www.searchmother.com](http://www.searchmother.com).
- [19] Willicox S (2003). "The Effect of Widowhood on Physical and Mental Health", *Health Behavior and Health Outcome*, 22(5): 513-522.