CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION

- Review of Literature
- Significance
- Objectives
- Hypotheses
- Method of Study
INTRODUCTION

The term widow refers to a woman who has not married again after the death of her husband. Traditionally, widows could not remarry, had to renounce their sex, could not pronounce the name of another man, and had to live ascetically on fruits, roots and flowers. They had their haircut, were stripped of jewellery, slept on hard surfaces, had one meal a day, and had a twenty-four-hour fast twice a month. Their presence was unlucky and accursed; they were not allowed to join any feasts or merry making and they became the unpaid drudge.

This treatment has been greatly modified, although there still exist many widows suffering much of the above-described treatment. A widow has no place in society. “In the olden days she was a physical sati; now she is a psychological sati.” Even today in modern families she is exclude from festivities.

According to the census report 2001 the number of widows in India is about 40 million. In the female population the percentage of widows is 9 and among them almost 50% are below 50 years. A rough estimate indicates that every fourth household in India has a widow.

During the last 4 to 5 decade more and more social scientists have diverted their attention towards women studies. They have tried to focus their study on various aspects of women.
Many social scientists such as Margaret Hall, Nelly Stromquist, Ruth Paz, S. Batiwala, A. Lind, S. C. Joshi, Shakuntala Rao, Karuna Chanana Ahmad, Sangeetha Purushothaman, Snehalata Panda and others have studied about the empowerment of women.


Frank G. Balton, Kohli Shanta Chandra, Basheer, A. Dabla, D.C. Dubey, O.R. Gadgil, Mohini, Raj. Sethi, B. Srivastav,

24-Mohanty, M., Status of Farm Women in Rural Orissa, Kurukshetra, Aug, Vol, XLIII, No. 11, PP-91-93.

32-Talvar, Usha; Social Profile of Working Women, Jain Brothers, Jodhpur, 1984.

52-Dhillon, G; The Changing Role of Rural Women, Social Change. 11.21, 1981.

Morgan et. al\textsuperscript{83}, Mark.c. Elliot\textsuperscript{84}, Byles et. al\textsuperscript{85}, Van Barasen et. al \textsuperscript{86}, Parvati Athavale\textsuperscript{87}, Bina Agrawal\textsuperscript{88}, Lamb Sarah\textsuperscript{89}, Chen. Masty and Jean Dreze\textsuperscript{90}, T.N. Kichlu\textsuperscript{91}, M. Ahuja\textsuperscript{92}, R.K. Upadhyay\textsuperscript{93}, T.S. Gujral, S. Banerjee\textsuperscript{95}, Iswarchandra Vidya Sagar\textsuperscript{96}, Dr. V. Mohini Giri\textsuperscript{97} have given attention to study various aspects of widows.


\textsuperscript{84} Elliot, Mark.c’ “Manchu Widows and Ethnicity in Qing China”, Comparative Studies in Society and History, 41, 1, Jan. 1999, 33-71.


\textsuperscript{87} Athavale, Parvati, Hindu widow, S.K. Bhatia for Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi, 1928.


\textsuperscript{89} Sarah, Lamb, “Aging, Gender and Widowhood Perspectives from Rural West Bengal”. Contributions to Indian Sociology, New Series, 33,3 Sept-Dec. 1999, 541-570.


\textsuperscript{91} Kitchlu, T.N. “Widow in India”, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1993, 341P.

\textsuperscript{92} Ahuja, M, Widows, Role Adjustment and Violence, Wishwa Prakashan, New Delhi (1996).

\textsuperscript{93} Upadhyay, R.K.; Widowhood and Divorced/Separated Women-a-Socio-Economic Study. 1991.

\textsuperscript{94} Gujral, J.S., “Widowhood in India” In H.Z. Lopata (Ed), Widowhood : Other Countries, Other Places. NC Duke University Press, Durham.

\textsuperscript{95} Banerjee, S., Marginalization of Women’s Popular Culture in Nineteen Century Bengal, 1968Ed.


\textsuperscript{97} Mohini Giri, Dr.V., Living Death : Trauma of Widowhood in India Gyan Publishing Houses, Ansari Road, New Delhi, 2002.
in improving the condition of the rural women in general and widows in particular.

**Objectives**

The main objectives of this study are –

1- To find out the socio-economic background of the rural widows.

2- To find out the social status of the rural widows.

3- To find out the problems of rural widows.

4- To know the attitude of the members of their family and society towards them.

5- To know the attitude of the widows towards the members of their family and society.

6- To find out the views of rural widows towards life.

7- To find out the type of support available to them from different members of their family and society.

Taking into consideration the above objectives an attempt has been made to test some such hypotheses.

1- Young widows suffer more from emotional problems than the old widows.

2- Old widows face more economic, social, mental and physical problems than the young widows.

3- Higher caste widows suffer more from inauspiciousness than the lower caste widows.

4- Economically independent widows suffer less than the widows who are economically dependent on others.

5- The widows residing with the members of their own family suffer less than the widows residing with in-laws, parents and relatives.
Method of Study

The universe of the study is Jajpur district of Orissa state of India. In Orissa, there are 30 districts, out of which Jajpur district is known as Biraja Kshetra. The Goddess Biraja is the most prominent deity in this area. The people of Orissa generally consider that this district is comparatively ahead in terms of culture, trade, commerce, industry and agriculture etc. than other districts of Orissa, On account of which this district has been selected for the present study.

According to the census report of India 2001 the total area of Jajpur district is 2899 sq.km. The total population of this district is 16,22,868 out of which 8,22,638 are male and 8,00,230 female. In this district there are 10 blocks consisting of 1810 villages of 242 Gram Panchayats. An idea about these blocks with the total number of villages may be had from the table No. 1.1 given below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Block</th>
<th>Total No. of Villages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1- Bari</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2- Binjharpur</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3- Danagadi</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4- Sukinda</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5- Dasharajpur</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6- Rasulpur</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7- Jajpur</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8- Kurei</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9- Barchana</td>
<td>284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10- Dharmasala</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1810</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the number of villages in the two blocks – Dharmasala and Barchna are highest respectively. So these blocks have been selected for the present study. In order to make a viable sample for this study the data have been collected from 400 respondents from the villages of these two blocks. Since the number of villages in each of these two blocks do not vary much. So, 200 respondents have been selected from each of these two blocks.

In these blocks and villages no list of the number of widows is available. So, it became difficult to select the villages and the respondents with the help of any sampling technique. Therefore, an attempt has been made to find out the respondents from village to village till the earmarked number of respondents are not available. The search for the respondents have been started from the nearest village from the block office. While selecting the sample an attempt has been made to have such samples which may include the widows representing different caste, class, religion and age-group. An idea about the selected respondents may be had from the table No. 1.2.
### TABLE No. - 1.2

Showing block, village, caste, religion and tribe-wise classification of the respondent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Villages</th>
<th>No. of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Savarna caste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Backward Caste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduled tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grand Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block No-1</th>
<th>BARCHNA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Darpanigarh</td>
<td>11 06 45 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bairee Thengarh</td>
<td>13 10 35 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Batoo</td>
<td>02 05 15 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Barimula</td>
<td>09 05 19 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dagarapara</td>
<td>10 05 15 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Deulakur</td>
<td>05 05 15 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Baunshaput</td>
<td>02 03 05 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Kolasahi</td>
<td>11 16 35 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Khaira</td>
<td>- - 05 05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 9 Villages | 55 46 18 21 140 60 200 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block No. 2</th>
<th>DHARMASALA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sunduria</td>
<td>07 32 11 15 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nanpur</td>
<td>12 08 16 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Saroi</td>
<td>08 02 04 11 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Batijanga</td>
<td>- 15 05 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sribantpur</td>
<td>17 - - 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pakhar</td>
<td>07 - 03 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dakshinisasan</td>
<td>07 - - 07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Chakradharpur</td>
<td>- 05 - 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Hardeipur</td>
<td>- - 00 05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Barhampur</td>
<td>- - 03 03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Sendhapur</td>
<td>- - 01 02 03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Pratappur</td>
<td>01 01 - 02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Raghunathapursasan</td>
<td>02 - - 02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total | 13 Villages | 37 74 34 50 195 05 200 |

**Grand Total**

9 + 13 = 22

**Total Villages**

92 120 52 71 335 65 400
The above table shows that out of 400 respondents, 200 are from 9 villages of Barchana block and the rest 200 are from 13 villages of Dharmasala block.

Out of 400 respondents 92 respondents are from savarna caste, 120 from backward caste, 52 from scheduled caste, 71 from scheduled tribe and 65 from Muslim category.

The Muslim respondents are mainly from Darpanigarh, Batoo & Hardeipur village. In other villages Muslim respondents were not available.

The data for this study have been collected from the widows with the help of an interview schedule. In order to enhance the data an attempt has been made to collect some data with the help of non-participant observation and case studies.

The data thus collected have been discussed and analysed in different chapters showing the socio-economic background, social-status, problems and views etc. of the rural widows.

Since the general information about the Socio-economic background of the respondents is necessary to understand their condition, problems and views etc. So, we shall discuss about it in the next chapter.