5.1. CASE STUDIES

The purpose of case study according to Burns is to get anecdotal evident that illustrates more general findings. To use it as a unique, typical and an interesting case in its own right\(^1\) and according to Berger et al, reasons for employing case study method can be to get intimate and detailed information about the structure, process and complexity of the research object\(^2\).

Keeping the above factors in view case study seemed indispensable for proper investigation of the problem. Suicide is such a case regarding which the causes and problems can not be fully comprehended without resorting to case studies. The case studies provide us qualitative and first hand information/data about the suicide victims. In order to get an in depth understanding of the problem, the researcher conducted case studies of only those suicide victims who had been saved after they attempted suicide so that the researcher could herself interact with suicide victims and observe their demeanour and realize the circumstances, conditions and the situation that were operational when the victim in question took the drastic step of suicide.

The aim of case study method is to find out the factors that account for the behaviour patterns of the given unit and its relationships with the environment. The case data are always gathered with a view to tracing the natural history of the social unit, and its surrounding milieu. In sum, the social researcher tries, by means of case study method, to understand the complex of factors that are operative within a social unit as an integrated totality.

The researcher has conducted thirty five case studies of people of different age groups, of different areas, almost from all districts of Kashmir.

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\(^2\) Berger et al1989 as mentioned by Ram Ahuja in Research Methods, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, 2009
Valley. However, for the purpose the convenience and for case of drawing inferences the researcher has divided all the case studies into two groups: Males and Females which smoothly follow one another. On top of each case the background information of the victim is provided for easy reference.

(Note: - The names used in the Case Studies have been changed, for legal and ethical reasons).

Case 1

Background Information
Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34
Educational Qualification: Post-Graduate
Occupation: Idle
Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Male
Marital Status: Unmarried
District: Anantnag
Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Nuclear
Year of the Incident: 2000

Finding: Nisar, a young boy from middle class family of Anantnag District, did post-graduation and also diploma in Engineering from some Private polytechnic college. He worked very hard to get some job, but always failed till he crossed the age of thirty four years and was still struggling. Being unemployed, he was not even in position of get married. His parents were reluctant in getting him married until he got some job or start earning some handsome money. His all efforts of searching for a job went futile. After very hard work, when he failed, he used to remain isolated in his room and would seldom go outside and as such he always remained sick. Sometimes he complained of headache, sometimes fever, but his parents always ignored him and did not take any interest in him or his sickness. At last he was diagnosed as a case of depression. Doctors advised his parents to get him married but they took it in a casual way and did not show any interest. One
day his mother went to his room to wake him and she found him lying on his bed foaming and she began crying till other family members gathered and he was taken to a nearby hospital. Doctors examined him and he was diagnosed as having attempted suicide by consuming poison. He was treated and remained in the hospital for three days and was saved.

Case 2

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 35   Educational Qualification: 12th
Occupation: Government Employee   Mode of Suicide: Jumping into River
Sex: Male   Marital Status: Unmarried
District: Baramulla   Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear   Year of the Incident: 2000

Finding: Aijaz, a thirty five year old boy of Sopore town of District Baramulla, was working in some government department as a peon. His father died at an early age leaving behind two daughters Khalida and Nasreena and his wife. The family had no other source of income. When his father died, his uncles ill-treated their family and they left the place and went to live in Srinagar in a rented house. Life was too hard for him to live in Srinagar city with a mother and two sisters which were of marriageable age. Khalida was 32 and Nasreena was 29 years old then. Khalida was under Matric and the Nasreena post-graduate. Nasreena was with out job. She searched for a job but could not found and at last, weaved pashmina at her home. His old mother always remained ill because of poverty or because of depression. And she found no ray of hope of marrying her daughters. Aijaz used to get frustrated when he used to come back home and found his sisters before him and could not found any way out. He went back to his home town and raised a loan from a bank to build a house and marry off his sisters. However he could not repay his loan properly. He was declared a defaulter.
One day he jumped into the river and tried to end his life but was saved by the doctors.

Case 3

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 40  Educational Qualification: 9th
Occupation: Business  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Male  Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2003

Finding: Ahmad drew a loan of Rupees five lakh from J&K Bank to setup a poultry farm in a remote village of District Anantnag. He mortgaged his house and the land against the loan i.e. all the property he had. The said village Shalgam was connected with the rest of the valley through a single lane road on which there was a small bridge. For a few months the poultry farm showed good results and yielded satisfactory profit. Somehow the bridge was damaged and the village got disconnected with the rest of area. Ahmad was grieved but did not give up. He continued to rise up the chicken. But unfortunately he could not sell them at competitive rates. He suffered huge loss and with the result could not pay his monthly installments. The interest continued to pile up and one day he was declared defaulter. He realized that it was impossible to liquidate his debt on selling everything he had. And one day the inevitable happened. He got a notice to clear his debt otherwise his property would be put to auction. He went to his in-laws and other relatives, but nobody came forward to help. He got completely shattered and one evening he consumed some poisonous substance. He was brought to hospital where doctors saved him by gastric lavage.
Case 4

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 35
Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Business
Mode of Suicide: Hanging
Sex: Male
Marital Status: Married
District: Baramulla
Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear
Year of the Incident: 2004

Finding: Mushtaq Ahmad was an Arts Graduate. After struggling for many years for a government job, he failed to get one. After failing, he started his small business. He raised capital by taking loans from banks and some private friends. His business was running smoothly for a few years and he had been able to repay a portion of it. But life took an ugly turn for Mushtaq Ahmad, when he suffered huge losses in business. He had to repay loan besides sustaining his family. He got notices from bank to liquidate the loan amount. He had only one alternative to sell his house. However, his wife never allowed him to do so. Unable to bear the tragedy, Mushtaq tried to commit suicide by hanging himself. But as he was tying the rope with the joist, his wife saw him and stopped him. She even cried on the spot and the neighbours gathered in their courtyard. Later on the people of the locality collected money to help him. The whole amount of loan was liquidated by the help of the contribution made by people.
Case 5

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 25
Educational Qualification: 12th Standard

Occupation: Business
Mode of Suicide: Hanging

Sex: Male
Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Srinagar
Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear
Year of the Incident: 2005

Finding: Altaf was born in a lower middle class family of Srinagar city. At the age of 14 he lost his father who had a small business. He started looking after the family business for some time and simultaneously continued his studies. But the financial problems of the family worsened, he gave up his studies and devoted full time to the business. Young age and lack of experience inflicted heavy financial losses on his business. He took loan from bank and various private money lenders to rejuvenate his business but he again failed. He also had to take care of his four siblings. When many problems including his helplessness for meeting the expenditures on the education of his siblings, pressure from bank and other private money lenders to repay loan cropped up simultaneously, he got swayed away and he tried various means to save himself, but nothing would come out of anything. He was a total flop. One evening his siblings got suspicious. They opened the door of his room. He was lying on the floor groaning. He told them that he had consumed poison. They took him to hospital where he was treated and thus got saved.
Case 6

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 27  Educational Qualification: 12th

Occupation: Business  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2006

Finding: Subzar Ahmad was living in a village of Anantnag District. He was twenty seven years old at the time of suicide attempt. He belonged to a poor family and as such could not continue his studies after 12th class. One day he decided to take some loan from the bank and wanted to do some business to live with his parents happily. His father was a labourer and was only earning member of family. Rupees one lakh as loan was granted to him by the bank. He bought many walnut trees in order to take walnut to outside the state in order to earn a huge profit. He hired some labourers and other products in order to prepare the walnut for selling in other states.

But, unfortunately, prices of walnuts came down in that very year. Nobody was willing to buy the walnuts on previous rate. He sold the walnuts at low price suffered a huge loss. He could not repay his debt and the interest was mounting and no relative came to help him. He was alone and did not know what to do. He got depressed by thinking how to re-pay the loan. And he found no other way of escaping the incident and tried to kill himself by consuming poisonous substance but was rushed to hospital on time where he was saved by proper treatment. Later on they sold some land and liquidated the loan.
Case 7

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34  Educational Qualification: B.E.

Occupation: Unemployed  Mode of Suicide: Hanging

Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Srinagar  Demographic Status: Sub-Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2006

Finding: Muhammad Saleem of Srinagar district was born in a lower middle class family. His parents offered him good education. After passing 12th grade he got admission in an engineering college outside the state, after paying two lakh rupees as donation. After completing his B.E. in Civil engineering, he came back to the state as he was the lone male child of his parents. He searched for a suitable job in government or private sector but was unable to find a suitable job. Saleem got contractual job for two years but had to leave after the expiry of the contract. He tried hard to get any other job but failed. As he was now staying at home, he could not tolerate being unemployed. When he went out of the home his neighbours would ask him why he had not gone to work. It pinched him. It was hard to tell his neighbours that he had lost his job. As a result every day he would go out wearing proper dress and would wander throughout the town. Sometimes he would visit gardens and would sit there for long hours. He would return to home only at the dusk. But he could not arrange for his bus fares. He had managed a diary which the researcher had the privilege of going through. Finally, he got disillusioned with life and tried to end his life by hanging himself. But the noose was not tight enough to choke him to death. Somebody saw him and snapped the rope. However after some time he got appointed as junior engineer in Public health Engineering Department.
Case Studies

Case 8

Background Information of the Suicide Victim

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34  Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Business  Mode of Suicide:  Hanging
Sex: Male  Marital Status: Married
District: Kupwara  Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Javid was married to Haseena and had two children. He was a businessman. Without informing his first wife he had got married to another girl of 24 years of age. When Haseena came to know of this, she left his home and lived with her parents. Afterwards she filed a suit against him for maintaining her children and herself in a court of law. The court ordered him to pay Rs2800 to Haseena and his two children per month. Javid wanted her to drop the case, but she would not relent. Mean while he quarreled with his second wife over the matter of Haseena and because he had to pay a large portion of his income to Haseena he began to neglect his 2nd wife. When she gave birth to a girl child, Javid completely began to neglect her. When she could not support herself, she followed the example of Haseena and filed a suit for maintenance against Javid before a court of law. Court ordered him to pay Rs2100 to his 2nd wife and to her infant. As he had to spend a large time in the court, his business began to suffer. He could not even earn enough to pay to her two wives. Many a times he was sent to jail for default in payment. He began to remain depressed. He found it difficult to make payments to the whole sale dealers from whom he used to get the goods on credit. He began to cry during sleep. One morning he tried to hang himself, as he put noose around his neck, his younger sister saw him. She cried for help and, as soon as he got suspended by the rope in the attic, his brother came forward and held him from below. Then the rope was snapped and he was brought down.
Case 9

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 32  Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Business  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Male  Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Majeed, father of three children divorced his wife, Nigeena. Nigeena moved an application under section 488 of Cr.P.C. (Criminal Procedure Code) for maintenance. Majeed was served notices to prosecute the case. After one hearing, he left the valley and the judge passed an ex-parte judgment directed Majeed to pay rupees 3200 per month to his wife and three children. He remained hidden for more than three years. When he returned, his wife moved an application in the same court for recovery of arrears from Majeed. When Majeed came to know that he had to pay rupees 1, 26,000, he met his advocate. His advocate advised to pay the amount or to go to jail. Meanwhile his ancestral house was attached and was to be auctioned. At evening on the day of attachment of his house, he consumed some poisonous substance and tried to kill oneself but was taken to hospital and saved by treatment.

Case 10

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 21  Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Idle  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried
District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2008
**Finding:** Javid, an intelligent boy, was a well known boy in his village. His father was an officer in the Medical Department and his mother was housewife. Initially his father loved him very much. He was reading in 12th class and had very good friend circle. He had many friends who visited his home off and on. As the time passed, Javid was reading in B.Sc. 2nd year and his parents were quarrelling on trifles. His father even used to beat his wife and Javid could not bear all this and sometimes went against his father on certain matters. However, his parents continued to quarrel on minor matters. He got more depressed. But in order to safeguard his prestige among his friend circle, he concealed the matter from his friends. Besides his father wanted him to earn for himself, otherwise he would not allow his friends to come to his house. Now when his friends visited his home, his parents mistreated them. On the other hand, when Javid went to his friends’ home their parents used to get surprised on Javid’s arrival and entertained him in a good manner. By seeing this behaviour and attitude of his parents, he left his home to study further because he was not able to study in his own home. When he left, he needed money for residing in the town, but his father did not send him any money. He was not able to decide whether he would go to his home or stay in the town. He had incurred a lot of debt as he could not face people because he could not repay their debts. One day when he did not come out of his room, her land lady went up to look after him. The door was locked from inside. The police was called and the door was broken. His body lay on the bed motionless. He was taken to hospital in time where he was saved by the doctors. He had consumed poison. The land lord and his family was taken to police station but were released later on.
Case 11

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 27  Educational Qualification: M. Phil

Occupation: Idle  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried
District: Srinagar  Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding:  Showkat was born in a poor family of Srinagar city. With great difficulty his parents managed his education and he completed his post-graduation in Education and then M. Phil. But despite his good education he could not get a government job. After struggling and waiting for a few years he joined a private school as a teacher. But the salary he got was not enough to feed his parents and to take care of his younger brothers and sisters. All his friends were well adjusted in life even those who had only got elementary education were well established. Some were in business and some were doing government jobs. He became frustrated on seeing that his high qualification could not even fetch him sustainable livelihood. He often remained gloomy and could not tell anybody about his problem. One day someone came to their home and put forth a proposal for the marriage of his sister. The boy belonged to a good family and they did not want to give up this opportunity. All the responsibility was on Showkat’s shoulders, but he did not know what to do. He got frustrated and attempted suicide by consuming poison but was saved by neighbours who took him to hospital.
Case Studies

Case 12

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34  Educational Qualification:  Post Graduate

Occupation: Idle  Mode of Suicide: Jumping into River

Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: Mushtaq Ahmad was born in a poor family but he was very intelligent right from his childhood. He completed his post-graduation in psychology. After completing post-graduation Mushtaq Ahmad searched for a suitable job but he was not able to find any suitable job. He applied for every post that was advertised. He applied for KAS and also for the post of Chowkidar, but could not get succeed. He belonged to a poor family. His father worked on his own land and sometimes would work on wages and they hardly could make their ends to meet. His parents had high hopes on him but he proved to be a failure. He tried his hand in some private jobs also but the salary they paid was not even sufficient to satisfy his own needs. When he became totally desperate one day he took off his clothes and lowered himself into the river Jehlum. People thought that he wanted to take a bath and ignored him till he reached the middle of the river some body cried that he had never bathed in the river nor did he know swimming. Some young boys jumped into save him and fished him out and rescued him.
Case 13

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 30  Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Business  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Male  Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: After graduation, Shafi searched for a job but failed to get any. He decided to start his own business unit and started a food processing unit. Shafi was doing well in business for few years but after sometime his local brand was almost completely routed out by National and International brands in the market due to their high quality and low price. Shafi reacted by trying to sell improved quality of his products at low cost but was not able to continue the policy for long as in the valley cost of production is very large as compared to those of outside products. The profits dipped and he began to suffer loses. Finally, he had to close down his business. However, he could not find any other job. His children showed reluctance to go to school as they could not maintain their status. He sold his car and some land and started some new business. However, it did not work and he lost whatever he had. One day he consumed poison and tried to end his life but he was taken to hospital where he was saved by gastric lavage.
Case 14

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 33   Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Contractor   Mode of Suicide: Jumping from height
Sex: Male   Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag   Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Nuclear   Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: Sajad, a thirty three years old person, was contractor by profession. He had somehow saved three lakh rupees which were in his bank account. In June 2007, he came in contact with Lateef who told him about investment in online share trading. He opened an account with a broker at Anantnag and invested rupees 50,000 within two months, he doubled his investment amount. His interest towards the investment increased and within two months invested all the money which was in his saving account. As he earned more and more, he got more and more greedy. His wife too was greedy. They sold the jewels of his wife and put the amount so fetched into stock Market. He felt himself very lucky as well as clever. He thought he had found the real and most profitable business. In January 2008, stock market crashed. He had bought some future contracts. The crashing of stock market caused him a loss of 12 lakh rupees. All his investments were lost and he was even in debt. One morning, he was before a terminal in the trading hall of his broker. Immediately the stock market was closed as Sensex shed 2000 points. He talked to nobody and walked towards the window of the trading hall. Others were too absorbed to pay any attention to him. Soon there was a crash. All the traders walked towards window and looked down. Sajad was below in the street, blood gushing forth through his head, he was taken to hospital in time where he was saved.
Case Studies (Females)

Case 15

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 19  Educational Qualification: 12th

Occupation: Student  Mode of Suicide: Jumping into River

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Budgam  Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2001

Finding: Aisha was very intelligent girl and always got topped in the school examination. Her father had died in her childhood, and after her father’s death her mother re-married at the time Aisha was studying in the tenth class. Her step father ill-treated her but she bore it silently. After sometime Aisha’s mother gave birth to another child and now she too began to neglect Aisha and gave full attention towards her new born baby and her husband. Aisha was studying in 12th class and in the school she fell in love with Younis who too was studying in her class. After some time Aisha’s parents heard about it and beat her mercilessly, and forced her to discontinue her studies. She was totally stopped by her parents from going out. Her parents were searching for some boy to marry her off, but she resisted. One day she came out of home and went to meet Younis and tried to persuade him to marry her, but Younis had changed his mind and he declined to marry her. She broke down totally. On one side she had betrayed her parents, but she too had been betrayed by Younis. She did not dare to go home. She jumped into a nearby river, but some fisherman caught hold of her when she was unconscious. Later on her parents married her off to a tailor.
Case 16

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 26  Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the incident: 2002

Finding: Khalida was married to a government employee Muzaffar. Her parents married her off with their life-long savings. After a few months of her marriage, she was teased by her in-laws for not bringing any dowry. She did not tell it to her parents as they had two more daughters to marry. She felt helpless but bore the violence of her in-laws silently but the demand of dowry increased day by day and with it the violence. Her in-laws used foul language to annoy her and they dropped hints and she had to bear it silently. She confided in her husband, but he too seemed indifferent. To add to her problems she gave birth to a girl only which gave another reason to her in-laws to pinch her. Now her husband too joined the other family members in castigating her. He even refused to pay her for the maintenance of her child. She could not tell her parents about it as they too were not in good financial condition. She would often weep silently, but it was no solution. One of her sisters, who was an advocate, advised her to knock the doors of justice, but she was shy and coward and feared that it would worsen the problem. Now her husband started beating her and threatened to divorce her. One day Muzaffar angrily told Khalida to leave his home otherwise he would kill her baby. She got too much frustrated and did not know what to do. She got hold of some pesticide (which was in the home) and drank it. She fell down unconscious. Her in-laws took her to hospital and she was saved. Her in-laws were put behind bars but were later on released on bail. At the time of
interview the case against them was sub-judice and Khalida was living with her parents.

Case 17

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 33  Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Government Employee  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married
District: Kupwara  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2002

Finding: Mubeena was a government employee. She was married to Shahid who was also a government employee. Both were working in the same office. Their married life was going on smoothly and happily. Mubeena was giving all her salary to Shahid and they even bought a Santro car. She gave birth to a girl child which annoyed her husband and in-laws. After few years she gave birth to another girl child which further annoyed her in-laws and they began to tease her and to say dirty words to her. During the birth of second child she had to undergo a caesarean operation and some complications developed because of which her womb had to be removed. Doctors told her husband and in-laws that she could not give birth to a child again. Her in-laws and husband were shattered because they wanted a male child. Her husband divorced her and re-married another woman. Mubeena broke down. She did not bear that shock and solitude made her life miserable and she did not came out of her home for many days. After she again went to office, she saw Shahid in a playful mood. The other employees in the office started dropping hints which caused great agony to Mubeena. Shahid snatched her two girls from her which further depressed her. She was not even allowed to meet her daughters. She lost her balance of mind and one day jumped out of window of her office, but she got a minor injury and fainted for some time.
Case 18

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34  Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Government Employee  Mode of Suicide: Hanging

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Baramulla  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the incident: 2003

Finding: Masarat was born in a village of Baramulla District. She was married to a shopkeeper of another neighbouring village and two years after marriage she give birth to a boy and after another two years gave birth to a girl child. They lived happily and she had all comforts of life. Life was going smoothly for the family when Masarat’s husband died in a road accident. The burden of feeding the children came on the shoulders of Masarat who now got a job in a handicraft centre but the earnings were not sufficient to sustain her family. Her parents were also not in a position to help her. She was reduced to a beggar and often her children would go hungry. She sold her husband’s shop and the amount raised was paid by her to a person who promised her to get her a government job, but he proved to be a fraud. She was completely devastated. Unable to face the hard realities of life, one day Masarat attempted suicide by hanging herself. But her children saw her and cried for help; her neighbours came forward and saved her. Soon after this, the life insurance policy of her husband got settled and they lived a happy life thereafter. Her children were reading in good schools and she had constructed a few shops which she had rented out.
Case 19

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 34   Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Housewife   Mode of Suicide: Hanging
Sex: Female   Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag   Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Joint   Year of the Incident: 2003

Finding: Shugufta was born in a lower middle class family of Anantnag district. Somehow she managed to pass out from college. After completing her graduation she worked as a teacher for some years in a local school. After helping her father, who was a low grade employee, her parents decided to marry her. She was married to a government employee in a nearby village. After five years of marriage, she gave birth to three girl children. She conceived another child after some time. She gave birth to fourth girl child and her in-laws pressurized her husband to divorce her. Her husband refused but succumbed to persistent pressure from his parents and at last divorced her. She came back to her parents with four children. Shugufta began to saw herself as burden on her parents and began to look herself as a burden to earth. One day when her parents were working in their orchard (outside the home) Shugufta hanged herself in the attic of her house. When her parents returned from work, they could not see her. They searched for her and found her dangling by the rope in the attic. They untied the rope and she was timely taken to hospital where her life was saved.
Case 20

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 26  Educational Qualification: 12th

Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Cutting Vein

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Kupwara  Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2003

Finding: Shaheena belonged to Handwara town of Frontier District Kupwara. She was born in a lower middle class family. After passing her 12th class examination Shaheena was married by her parents to a government employee in a nearby town. Her husband loved her a lot. She was very innocent and her in-laws demanded money from her which she managed and gave them. But with the passage of time, the dowry demand of her in-laws increased and was out of bound for her parents to meet these demands. When Shaheena failed to deliver, she was mentally, emotionally and physically tortured by her in-laws in absence of her husband who used to visit home only for two days a week because he was posted in a far-flung area. She developed psychiatric disorders under depression and tried to commit suicide by cutting her arm. Her brother-in-law saw blood gushing forth her arm. He wrapped some cloth round her arm and took her to a Medical shop who bandaged her. Her husband later on took her to his place of posting.
Case 21

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 29   Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Housewife   Mode of Suicide: Jumping into River
Sex: Female   Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag   Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear   Year of the Incident: 2004

Finding: Mubeena was married to Muhammad Amin, a business man of Anantnag District. She was with her husband for almost two years. Her husband used to beat her on minor matters, her mother-in-law too was cruel on her and did not treat her well but Mubeena did not tell that to anyone at the initial stage and bore the cruelty of her in-laws silently and with patience. The secret behind the cruel behaviour of Muhammad Amin was that he had strained relations with Mubeena’s brother, Ayoub. Once the two were doing a business on partnership basis and they had suffered huge losses because of which Muhammad Amin always thought that Ayoub had deceived him. So, in order to take revenge on his brother-in-law, he inflicted cruelty on his wife. As the time passed she told her mother about her husband’s behaviour. In order to get rid from this cruelty, she went to her maternal home and refused to go to her husband’s house but her mother did not understand her pain and forced her to go back to her in-laws. She went back to her in-laws but they closed doors on her and threw her out of the courtyard. She went away weeping and reached a nearby river. She stood on the pulpit of a bridge and jumped into the river. She was tossing her hands and legs when some passers by saw her and fished her out of the water. Later on she got a divorce and lived with her parents.
Case Studies

Case 22

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 45   Educational Qualification: Primary Level
Occupation: Housewife   Mode of Suicide: Physical injury
Sex: Female   Marital Status: Married
District: Budgam   Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Nuclear   Year of the Incident: 2004

Finding: Saleema, 45 year old women, resident of Chadoora Budgam, was a widow. She had four daughters and no one to look after them. Her husband died at a young age. Her husband was labourer by profession. They were very poor and he died of heart attack. After his death there was no other source of income or support for Saleema. Her parents had already died. Her brother, who too had a big family to support, refused to support Saleema and her four daughters. Saleema was along with her four daughters, living in agony. Her daughters were too young to earn. Saleema earned her living by weaving and by doing chain stitching. She could not afford to educate her daughters. They could hardly make two ends meet. Too much work rendered Saleema ill. Her troubles increased day by day. When she consulted doctors, they told her to take rest because she was physically as well as mentally ill. She was suffering from some back problem and doctor advised her to take complete bed rest. Doctor’s advice apart, she could not stir herself. Her illness increases day by day and she lost her mental balance. She became a burden on her daughters. They too were unable to find any gainful employment. She felt disgusted with life and one day her daughters found her still in her bed. They went nearer and found that she had cut her arm and tried to end her life. They took her to hospital where she was operated upon and her life was saved.
Case 23

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 31  Educational Qualification: Nursing Graduate

Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Baramulla  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2005

Finding: Fahmeeda, a nursing-graduate, was married to a government employee Riyaz of Baramulla District and a girl had born out of their marriage. She was an ambitious young lady and wanted to be financially self-reliant. She searched for a suitable job and being a young, energetic and able lady she managed to secure many good nursing jobs but her husband did not allow her to take up the nursing job and wanted her to stay at home. She was not happy, because her husband was not able to afford all her needs. She wanted everything but her husband had financial constraints. She tended to resist the distastes of her husband but did not succeed. Finally she got a well paying job in a private nursing home and without caring for her husband, she took up the job. Her husband began to quarrel with her, saying that she was neglecting his aged parents and their only daughter. But she would not care. Riyaz would have to look after his daughter when she had night duty (which she had often) and he had to cook food himself. He got frustrated and began to beat her and one day threatened her to remarry and one day he decided to remarry and threatened his wife that he remarried and divorce Fahmeeda. Fahmeeda got dismayed and attempted suicide by consuming poison. But as she told the researcher later she wanted to pressurize her husband but her husband took her to the nursing home where she was working and was saved. Later on she quit her job.
Case 24

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 32  Educational Qualification: Under-Matric
Occupation: House Wife  Mode of Suicide: Burning
Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married
District: Pulwama  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2006

Finding: Mubeena, a graduate from lower middle class family, was married to a businessman. She had good relationship with her husband. After few months of happy married life her in-laws started to quarrel with her over one pretext or another. After sometime, her in-laws especially her mother-in-law and sister-in-law started to beat her. She complained about it to her husband but he expressed his inability to bring halt to the domestic violence inflicted upon her. She brought the matter into the notice of her parents, but they advised her to bear it. She even spent a few days with them, however, the attitude of her sister-in-law forced her to leave the parental house too and go back to her husband’s family. One day her sister-in-law pulled out her hair while her mother-in-law used foul language, when they had gone, she burned herself. She had sprinkled Kerosene Oil over her body and then put on the gas stove, ignited the gas by the sparks of a gas lighter. She was engulfed by the flames of fire but some neighbours came and doused the flame and was admitted to hospital and after a prolonged treatment she recovered.
Case 25

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 27  Educational Qualification: Post Graduate
Occupation: Idle  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Female  Marital Status: Unmarried
District: Baramulla  Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2006

Finding: Saki was 27 years old at the time of suicide. She had a brother Aijaz Ahmad and they were living in Sopore. He was working in telecom office as a peon. She had another sister Uzma. Saki was nine years old when his father died. Their mother Raja lived with her three children alone. When Raja’s husband died, her brother-in-law ill treated her and compelled her to leave that house. She lived with her three children in her maternal home at Srinagar and gave them good education. Now they were living separately in a rented house at Srinagar. Uzma studied up to Matric and Saki did her post graduation, but she did not get any job. Then she and her mother weaved pashmina to supplement their income. Her brother as well as her sister too was unmarried and Saki’s future appeared bleak to her. She applied for jobs at many places. But everywhere she was disappointed. She could not work on pashmina as her eye sight got affected. All her friends got adjusted somewhere or other but she was idle. Saki began to appear depressed and her mother often rebuked her for being absent minded and one day she consumed some poisonous substance and tried to end her life she was taken to hospital where her life was saved.
Case 26

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 29  Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Jumping through Window
Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married
District: Pulwama  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2006

Finding: Shahnaz was a science graduate. After her graduation she was married to Arshid who was a government employee. Her husband had wished to marry another girl but his parents refused and married him with Shahnaz because she belonged to a rich family and Arshid’s family expected to get a lot from Shahnaz’s family and they did get it. From the first day of her marriage, she was ill-treated by her husband. However, her parents-in-law sided with her as they were afraid of Shahnaz’s parents. They had got valuable gifts from her parents and were rich people. But this was of no effect. Her husband did not have good regard for her and often stayed out of home. After some time, he started being beating her. Shahnaz bore the torture of her husband hoping that one day she would be able to win his heart. After some time her husband threatened to divorced her, unable to bear the agony of separation with her husband, Shahnaz attempted suicide by jumping out of window and her rib was fractured she was admitted to bone and joint hospital Barzulla where she was treated for six months. Later on she applied for divorce in a court of law and at the time of interaction with her, the case had been decreed in her favour and she had been divorced.
Case 27

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 35  Educational Qualification: Under-Matric

Occupation: Government Employee  Mode of Suicide: Burning
Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married
District: Anantnag  Demographic Status: Rural
Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Shakeela was 35 year old of Anantnag District. She was four years old when her father died. She had two brothers and a mother. Her mother was a peon in Education Department. When she was 15 years old she was married and she gave birth to four children, two daughters and two sons. She along with her husband lived with her mother and she was also given share in property. Her two brothers were also married. But her husband always ill-treated her and never took any interest towards his children. Shakeela’s mother was very upset as she held herself responsible for that marriage. Her husband used to beat his children and his wife too. When Shakeela’s mother saw all this, she remained ill often. And at last she died by heart attack. Her two brothers were also living separately. Her husband often remained out of home and came back once in a month. Not only this, Shakeela heard that he had some extra-marital affairs. Shakeela could not bear that news. She attempted suicide by sprinkling kerosene oil on her body and burned herself. She was taken to hospital where she was treated for the burn injuries she suffered but her life was saved. Later her husband relented and lived happily there after.
Case 28

Background Information of the Suicide Victim:

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 29  Educational Qualification: Under-Matric

Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Pulwama  Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Nusrat was the second daughter of her father, from the beginning she was living very simple life, her family was mainly dependent on agriculture which was their lone source of livelihood. Nusrat discontinued her studies at primary level and was involved in the domestic chores to help her mother. At the age of 19 she was married to Arshid. Both were living happily in early years but later on conflict erupted between them. Her husband was government employee and he wanted to marry another girl named Yasmeena who was working in his office. Nusrat could not bear the extra-marital affairs of her husband. There was a conflict between the two about this matter and Nusrat did not go back to her parental home. She remained there (in her husband’s house) and was quarrelling everyday. One day her husband brought the girl home and Nusrat could not bear it. She consumed some poison and tried to end her life but was taken to hospital in time and was saved by the doctors. Later on she went to live with her parents.
Case 29

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 18
Educational Qualification: Matric

Occupation: Student
Mode of Suicide: Hanging

Sex: Female
Marital Status: Unmarried

District: Anantnag
Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Nuclear
Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Zamrooda was 18 years old at the time of suicide. She belonged to a middle class family. She got her primary education in her village. Besides she used to play very important role in her family by taking all the domestic responsibilities on her shoulders. After completing primary education she was admitted in government Girls High School. Zamrooda was very intelligent and was brilliant student of her school. She got 2nd position in her 8th standard examination at Zonal level. She would often be awarded 2nd/3rd position in various quiz programmes in that area. She was a good player of volleyball and kho-kho. Whenever she lost the match, she accepted the defeat with a smiling face. The parents of Zamrooda felt proud of her performance. She got 3rd position in the 9th class and after that she appeared in the 10th class examination. One day the Board announced that the result will be declared the next day. Zamrooda and her parents were waiting eagerly as they hoped that she would get position definitely. The next day was the result declaration day. Zamrooda’s brother went to market to find out the result. Zamrooda had to reappear in two subjects. When Zamrooda heard that news she failed to understand what to do. She rushed towards her room and locked it, from inside, and tried to kill herself through hanging. But as she was hanging by the rope, her parents broke open the door and caught hold of her from below and saved her. Later on it was found that she had passed the examination with first division her brother had erred in finding her result.
Case 30

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 26  Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Housewife   Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Anantnag   Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Joint  Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Rehana was married to Gulzar Ahmad of a village near Mattan in Anantnag District. Right from the day of her marriage, her mother-in-law treated her cruelly. She would call her names and would even beat her. Rehana’s husband Gulzar was a motor mechanic. Rehana’s brother Arshid was working in his Gulzar’s workshop. One day there was a general strike; Rehana’s brother came to Rehana’s in-laws home to stay there for night. At evening there was some quarrel between Rehana and her mother-in-law. Arshid wept and tears rushed down his cheeks he went out of home and was roaming outside. It was evening time when he returned, his sister had consumed poison. She was unconscious. She was taken to hospital; she was given treatment at time and was saved by treatment. Later on they filed a suit for divorce and she got divorced from her husband and married another person.
Case 31

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 23  
Educational Qualification: Diploma in Engineering

Occupation: Idle  
Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  
Marital Status: Married

District: Srinagar  
Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  
Year of the Incident: 2007

Finding: Shaista was born in a well reputed middle class family of downtown Srinagar. After passing her 10th class examination, she got admission in a polytechnic college located in Srinagar. In the same area a prestigious college was also located. In that college Bilal was studying science. They fell in love with each other. After his graduation Bilal completed his Masters’ Degree from University of Kashmir and was appointed as teacher. In the mean time as Shaista also completed her diploma, the parents of Shaista came to know about her affair with Bilal. They subjugated her and restricted her movement outside home. Shaista was hell bent upon marrying Bilal but her parents refused as Bilal belonged to a lower class family. The parents of Shaista arranged her marriage with another boy. Some days prior to her proposed marriage she consumed some poisonous substance. Her parents found her lying unconscious on the bed and blood oozing out from her mouth. They rushed her to hospital where her life was saved. Later on she was married to Bilal.
Case 32

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 28
Educational Qualification: Post-Graduate

Occupation: Housewife
Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female
Marital Status: Married

District: Anantnag
Demographic Status: Rural

Type of the Family: Joint
Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: Razia was the only girl child of her parents and she had one brother. Her father was a government employee. She was given good education by her parents and completed her post-graduation in Zoology and was married to a government teacher by her parents. A handsome amount was paid to the in-laws of Razia as dowry besides some electronic gadgets. After some months, Razia realized that her in-laws had expected much more from her. They began to demand more from Razia and she conveyed the demands to her parents who expressed their inability to meet the demands. In-laws of Razia continued to torture Razia and she left the in-laws home and went to live with her parents. However, she never felt herself at ease at her father’s home. Her husband showed callousness. She waited for him to call her back but he never turned up. Razia herself tried to placate her husband, but he did not relent. Finally she got frustrated and one day she tried to end her life by consuming poison but was taken to hospital in time where she was saved by the doctors.
Case 33

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 35  Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Housewife  Mode of Suicide: Poisoning

Sex: Female  Marital Status: Married

District: Srinagar  Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Nuclear  Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: Nighat, who was 35 years old at the time of suicide attempt, was living in Srinagar district and was only sister of her three brothers. She was brought up with utmost love and care. After completing her graduation she stayed at home for some years. She was married in a well off family in Srinagar city. Her husband was a government employee. She lived happily for some weeks but soon her life turned nightmare as her in-laws began to demand dowry form her parents. Her parents and brothers fulfilled some demands. But the list of demands of the in-laws of their daughter began to rise steeply and it was no more possible for them to fulfill their demands. The cruelties of in-laws of Nighat increased and inhuman behaviour was meted out to her and she was left with no other option but to leave her husband’s home. She felt life hard and she could not face people. As she would spend most of her time alone, she could not tolerate life. When some time passed in this way, one day she consumed some poisonous substance, fortunately, her parents saw her and took her to hospital where her life was saved by the doctors.
Case 34

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 33
Educational Qualification: Graduate

Occupation: Private job
Mode of Suicide: Hanging

Sex: Female
Marital Status: Married

District: Anantnag
Demographic Status: Urban

Type of the Family: Joint
Year of the Incident: 2008

Finding: Shugufta was born in a lower middle class family of Anantnag. She was eldest of her three sisters and had one brother. Her father was a class IV government employee. She had studied up to 12th class and after 12th class she began to teach at a private educational institute to financially support her family and completed graduation through distance mode. After some years her parents decided to marry her and she was married in a nearby village. Her in-laws began to demand dowry from her but this was out of reach for her parents who had with difficulty managed to get her married. She began to see herself as the source of pain and distress for her parents. Meanwhile she was thrown out of home by her in-laws. She began to regard herself as burden on her parents as she was now totally dependent on her parents as she had given up her private job and was unable to find new job. There were some attempts at reconciliation between her and her in-laws but all such attempts failed. Finally she came to know that her husband was planning to divorce her. She got too much frustrated. Her parents too began to neglect her. She went to the attic of her house and hanged herself but her mother saw her and stopped her. She cried for help and some neighbours came forward and brought her down from the rope.
Case Study 35

Background Information

Age (at the time of Suicide Attempt): 37
Educational Qualification: Graduate
Occupation: Housewife
Mode of Suicide: Poisoning
Sex: Female
Marital Status: Married
District: Srinagar
Demographic Status: Urban
Type of the Family: Nuclear
Year of the Incident: 2009

Finding: Shaista was born in a middle class family of downtown area of Srinagar city. She completed her graduation and after that she was appointed in social welfare Department on adhoc basis and worked there for some years and was regularized but her regularization was challenged in the court of law. Meanwhile she was married to a government employee in Baramulla town and was living happily for some years and gave birth to two male children but destiny had some other thing in store for her. The court quashed her appointment and she was thrown out from the Department. Her husband began to treat her badly and began to demand money from her and asked her to ask for money from her father. After sometime when it was sure that she would not be re-employed her husband divorced her and she went to live with her parents. She was unable to bear the shock of separation with her husband and children and attempted suicide by consuming some poisonous substance but her parents learned it and took her to hospital where she was saved by gastric lavage.
5.2. ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDIES

A cursory reading of the case studies reveals that suicides are more common among women. No doubt the case studies do not delineate the trend of numbers because case studies were prepared as per the convenience and suitability of data available but still the numbers go to show the trend. Even the other methods of research used in the study like police reports, hospital reports and general survey work also revealed the same trend i.e. in Kashmir women are more prone to suicide. Moreover as the researcher tried to include both sexes in case studies, there were more women available for case studies and men were less. This also goes to lend credence to other parts of the study which reveal that women are more prone to suicide at least in Kashmir Valley.

An in depth study of the case studies reveals that some causes behind suicide are common among males and females. Some causes for suicide are exclusively found among males and some causes exclusively among females. The difference in reasons are the peculiar circumstances surrounding the two sexes: the reasons found in both sexes are: (a) Quarrel with parents (b) Examination failure (c) Poverty (d) Suspicious about spouses Extra-marital affairs (e) Failed love affairs (f) Spouses second marriage. These are those problems which are encountered by both the sexes and as such these reasons for commission or attempt of suicide are found in both the cases.

The reasons which are found exclusively in males are: (a) Unemployment (b) Business failure (c) Debt (e) Conflict/ political situation. These problems are peculiar only to males and women do not face such problems in life. For instance both men and women want to get engaged in some gainful employment, but for men getting engaged in gainful employment is a matter of life and death however for women it is not so. Therefore, employment as reason for commission or attempt of suicide is found only among males. Same is the case with ‘business failure’ as the
reason for commission or attempt of suicide because in Kashmir it is mostly males who are engaged in business activity and women are scarcely found in this field. Consequently, the business failures would only be faced by males and females are seldom directly affected by business failure in Kashmiri society. Debt is also a problem which is peculiar to males only because it is mostly males who incur debts.

The reasons which are found exclusively in females for commission of suicide are (a) Dowry demand (b) Domestic violence (c) Widowhood (d) Quarrel with in-laws (e) Quarrel with spouse (f) divorce. These are the problems which are exclusively found in women so these are the reasons for commission of suicide among females only. For example, dowries are demanded only from females. Dowry demands are not much in vogue in Kashmir, but wherever they are made, they play havoc.

The poor people are unable to meet the dowry demands of the in-laws of their daughters and so the daughter-in-laws are castigated and so much cruelty is inflicted upon them that loss of life appears to be an easier option. Similarly there is domestic violence, quarrel with in-laws or husband. These problems make the life of a woman hell. There is no body to listen to her vows; she is powerless and the only egress for her is suicide.

In some cases a man might divorce his wife for variety of reasons. In these matters, the women find it hard to live a respectable life. She is not accorded due respect at her parental home and in our society the women are often denied their share in ancestral property. Moreover, there is general aversion to remarriage of divorced women. Such women accordingly suffer from insecurity and disrespect at every level. Under such cases women may be tempted to commit suicide.

As such, it can be inferred that in most cases the women commit suicide because they are denied the power which they deserve. The need is to empower them.
An analysis of all the case studies reveals that the people have attempted suicide because they were surrounded by such socially created circumstances that there had appeared no egress to them and as such they were driven to suicide. The circumstances which lead the attempters of suicide to this horrible act were are socially created. Even from a cursory reading of the case studies, one thing becomes apparent that when the things seem to have went out of control and one lacks courage to combat the adversity of life, the person concerned commits suicide with whatever means of committing suicide are available to him/her. So the need is to make those who have suicidal tendencies more courageous to change their mental attitudes through counseling.