

## Psycho-social factors influencing the lives of HIV positive widows

Tarun Monga\* and Archana Dassi\*\*  
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

### Abstract

In India, widowhood in itself is very stigmatizing. Widows endure social and psychological deprivation in addition to economic hardship. An HIV positive diagnosis further compounds the problems as now they get doubly marginalized by virtue of being a widow and of being HIV positive. Though literature is available regarding issues confronted by HIV positive women in general, but, there is paucity of literature related to HIV positive widows. The current study used qualitative approach to explore various psycho-social issues which determine the lives of HIV positive widow women. Purposive sampling was used to select 10 HIV positive widows from ART clinic at New Delhi. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather the relevant information from the respondents. The major domains that were focused upon were knowledge about HIV, everyday worries, feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and anxiety, relationship with family and neighbors, whether they experience any kind of stigma or discrimination due to HIV or any other reason, and financial condition. Besides these, future concerns about their children, role of natal family as emotional and financial supporter, and role of NGOs in providing support emerged as important themes. Study concluded that HIV positive widows face wide-range of psycho-social issues and troubles in day-to-day life. It is essential to understand the needs of these women to design and implement interventions. Limitations have been discussed in paper.

**Key Words – HIV, Widowhood, Stigma, Discrimination, Psycho-social challenges**

### References

- Fasoranti O.O., Aruna J.O (2007): A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Practices Relating to Widowhood and Widow-Inheritance among the Igbo and Yoruba in Nigeria. *Journal of World Anthropology: Occasional Papers*, 3 (1),53–73.
- Ramanamma A., & Chaudhari D. (2004): Widows in Maharashtra : perspectives, strategies and rehabilitation. In Reddy P. A., *Problems of Widows in India*, New Delhi.
- Sachdeva R. K., and Wanchu A. (2006): Women's Issues in HIV Infection. *JK Science*, 8 (3), 129-132.
- Sahoo D. M. (2014): An Analysis of Widowhood in India: A Global Perspective. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Current Research*, 2 (Jan-Feb).
- UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2001): Empowerment of Women Throughout the Life Cycle as a Transformative Strategy for Poverty Eradication. Report of the Expert Group Meeting, 26-29 November. New Delhi, India.