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To Study The Level Of Depression Among Parents Of Disappeared Children, A Quest Of Some Psycho-Social Adjustment

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Abstract:

The present research titled "To study the level of depression among Parents of Disappeared Children, a quest of some Psycho-Social adjustment" was carried out with the objectives of study the depression level among parents of the disappeared children. The study was conducted on a sample of 120 respondents, 60 male and 60 female whose children had disappeared during last 20 years of turmoil in Kashmir. Majority of them were those whose children got disappeared in custody of Army and Police. Data for research was collected through the standardized scale by Aaron.T.Beck called Beck depression inventory. For achieving the objectives, the data collected was analyzed by using various statistical techniques viz, central tendency (mean, median, standard deviation) and T-test. After analyzing the data it was found that disappearance of children's due to armed conflict has a very bad impact on the physiological, psychological and mental health of the mothers and usually prominent in illiterate class mothers.

Objectives of the Research

- To study the depression level among parents of the disappeared children's.
- To study the depression level among both males and females.
- To study depression level both in literate and illiterate.
- To study the effect of depression among the age group of the parents (40-60) of disappeared children's.
- To study the effect of depression on the mental health on the parents of the disappeared children's due to poor economic conditions.

Keywords: depression, parents, disappeared children, psycho-social adjustment.

1.Introduction

Disappearances occur when people rare taken into the custody and authorities then deny all responsibility or knowledge of their fate or where about. There are so many disappearances in Kashmir. Since the beginning of the insurgency, thousand of Kashmir's have gone missing of course, not all people who go missing in Kashmir are victims of "enforced disappearance" by the security forces. Some have left without telling their family or friends, to join the militants, or simply to find jobs. However the problem of "enforced disappearance" in Kashmir is so widespread that human rights watch learned of certain person listed as "disappeared" who had actually gone away voluntary to find jobs in other cities, but whose relatives immediately assumed they were victims of enforced "disappearances". Consequently, with such instances of erroneous reporting, substantial controversy remains about the problem's exact prevalence. But as human rights watch has reported in the past, "enforced disappearance" by troops has been widespread since the early years of the conflict.

1.1.Depression

We all go through ups and downs in our mood. Sadness is a normal reaction to life's struggles, setbacks, and disappointments. Many people use the word "depression" to explain these kinds of feelings, but depression is much more than just sadness. Some people describe depression as "living in a black hole" or having a feeling of impending doom. However, some depressed people don't feel sad at all- they may feel lifeless, empty, and apathetic, or men in particular may even feel angry, aggressive, and restless.

1.1.1. Signs And Symptoms Of Depression

Depression varies from person to person, but there are some common signs and symptoms. It's important to remember that these symptoms can be part of life's normal lows. But the more symptoms you have, the stronger they are, and the longer they've lasted the more likely it is that you're dealing with depression. When these symptoms are overwhelming and disabling, that's when it's time to seek help.

1.1.2. Common Signs And Symptoms Of Depression

Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness.

- Loss of interest in daily activities.
- Appetite or weight changes.
- Sleep changes.
- Anger or irritability.
- Loss of energy
- Self-loathing.
- Reckless behavior.
- Concentration problems.
- Unexplained aches and pains.

1.1.3. Types Of Depression

Depression comes in many shapes and forms. The different types of depression have unique symptoms, causes, and effects.

- Major depression
- Dysthymia
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- Bipolar disorder
- Cyclothymiacs
- Mood disorder
- Substance-Induced Mood Disorder
- Postpartum Depression
- Premenstrual Dysphonic Disorder

2. Review Of Literature

2.1. 'Disappeared' In Kashmir:

From the Newspaper |A.G. Noorani |27th October, 2012:

It is not surprising at all that the chief minister of Indian Kashmir, Omar Abdullah's written statement on the disappeared persons, in the assembly on October 8 should have been received with complete disbelief.

He said, "Till ending July 2012, 2,305 people have been declared missing. FIRs were lodged only in 182 cases. In the rest of the cases missing reports and complaints have not been lodged"

Sana Altaf of the Srinagar daily Greater Kashmir noted: "even after 23 years of armed conflict, no authentic official data exists on the number of disappeared persons in Kashmir valley while successive governments continue to come up with contradictory figures."

According to the National Conference government headed by Farooq Abdullah the official figure of disappeared persons stood at 3,184. The then People's Democratic Party government headed by Mufti Sayeed informed the assembly in February 2003 that 3,744 persons went missing between 2000 and 2002.

According to the Srinagar-based Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) which has rendered yeoman service all these years, at least 8,000 persons have disappeared since the militancy began in 1989. Punjab witnessed a similar pattern of abuse and cover-up during the counter-insurgency operations from 1984 to 1995.

An inquiry by the police investigation team of the Jammu and Kashmir State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has found 2,730 bodies dumped into unmarked graves in four districts.

The Inquiry Report of Unmarked Graves in north Kashmir, submitted by the investigating police team to the SHRC on July 2, 2012, said that the unidentified bodies had been buried in 38 sites in the Baramulla, Bandipora, Handwara and Kupwara districts. At least 574 were identified as the bodies of local Kashmir's. The government had previously said that the graves held unidentified militants.

Meenakshi Gangly, South Asia director of Human Rights Watch, said: "For years, Kashmir's have been lamenting their lost loved ones, their pleas ignored or dismissed as the government and army claimed that they had gone to Pakistan to become militants. But these graves suggest the possibility of mass murder. The authorities should immediately investigate each and every death."

The Inquiry Report recommended that the SHRC call for immediate DNA sampling and other forensic tests to try to identify the bodies by matching them with the next of kin of the people who have disappeared. Seventeen of the bodies found in the four districts have already been reburied by relatives in family graveyards. The investigation found that 18 of the graves contained more than one body. But the Kashmir government has refused to conduct DNA tests to identify the bodies.

New terms have come into vogue. The wife of a 'disappeared man is called 'half-widow'. International law, especially international humanitarian law, has begun to grapple with the problem. For long the chairperson of the Working Group on Enforced or

Involuntary Disappearances studied the record in some countries and reported to the then UN Human Rights Commission at Geneva now replaced by the Human Rights Council.

The International Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances defines enforced disappearances as: "the arrest, detention, abduction or any other form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the state or by persons or groups of persons acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or by concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the disappeared person, which place such a person outside the protection of the law."

The convention grants all persons directly harmed by an enforced disappearance, such as family members of the disappeared, a "right to know the truth regarding the circumstances of the enforced disappearance, the progress and results of the investigation and the fate of the disappeared person." India signed the convention in 2007 but has not ratified it.

The convention prohibits states from claiming a lack of resources to justify refusing to investigate a possible enforced disappearance by placing a duty on states to guarantee those resources. 'Security' cannot justify refusal to release information related to enforced disappearances. No "exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification for enforced disappearance."

Mr. Ravi Nair, executive director of the South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre in New Delhi, to whom this writer is much indebted for his assistance, rightly holds that the law is violated if governments impose on the families of the victims the burden to provide information before attempting to identify whether any of the bodies belong to disappeared persons.

The UN Human Rights Committee places the burden of implementing the 'right to the truth' on the state, not the victim's family: "In cases where allegations are corroborated by credible evidence... and where further clarification depends on information exclusively in the hands of the state party, the committee may consider... allegations substantiated in the absence of satisfactory evidence or explanations to the contrary presented by the state".

Disappearances blight the lives of whole families. In Kashmir they spread what the economist aptly called "a war-borne epidemic of mental illness".

Enforced disappearance is one of the most harrowing consequences of the armed conflict in Kashmir. During the last 18 years of conflict, the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), an organization of the relatives of people who have disappeared after custody, claims more than 10000 people have been subjected to enforced disappearance by state agencies and were mostly picked up by the troops. Of the disappeared persons, between 2000-2005 a majority were married males. Although men have been subject to disappearance largely, but women have been adversely affected because of being related to them as daughters, mothers, sisters and wives. In the absence of any information about the whereabouts of the disappeared men, their wives have acquired the title of 'half-widows'. These half-widows apart from other relatives of disappeared persons are left without any entitlement to land, homes, inheritance, social assistance and pensions. Most of these women also suffer from harassment by the troops. The Indian government does not provide any relief to half-widows before the expiry of seven years from the date of disappearance. And even after the completion of seven years from the date of disappearance, they get either a one-time grant ranging from US\$1000 and US\$2000 or a monthly pension of US\$10. Further, a half-widow cannot remarry until the expiration of seven years from the date of disappearance of her husband whose whereabouts must not be known in these seven years. In the meantime the right to her husband's property are often threatened. Some widows who intend to remarry largely do not find men who are willing to marry them. A study titled, 'Women and Children Under the Armed Conflict in Kashmir' done by Prof. A. G. Madhosh, a Kashmiri educationist and activist, reveals that the migration of widows with their children resulted in a sudden break in normal family life. Women had to assume the roles of breadwinners for their families and the future of their children became insecure. Every month the members of APDP gather for a sit-in-protest at Central Park in Srinagar. Their continuous protest should have served as a resonating alarm for the authorities, but they seem to have turned a deaf ear to the woes of these people.

In past few years, murders, rapes, tortures, custodial deaths and enforced disappearances have witnessed an upsurge, but the response of the state in addressing these atrocities does not promise hope for justice. The official figures of these atrocities are far too less than the reported ones. The factual human rights situation in Kashmir has always been rendered invisible by the national security concerns of the government and the state centric approach of the Indian media. Living in this environment of hopelessness, there are people like Parveena who are still willing to give a tough fight to powers-that-be.

Parveena says, "I am determined to fight till my last breath, with or without anyone's support". People like Parveena need to be lauded for their determination.

It is being constantly projected in the main stream media that the situation in Kashmir has improved, but the ever increasing rate of human rights violation in the valley tell us a different story. People continue to suffer while the much-hyped slogan of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh proclaiming 'Zero Tolerance' towards human rights abuse stares him hard in the face!

2.2. Half-Widows Of The Valley

Enforced disappearance is one of the most harrowing consequences of the armed conflict in Kashmir. During the last 18 years of conflict, the Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP), an organization of the relatives of people who have disappeared after custody, claims more than 10000 people have been subjected to enforced disappearance by state agencies and were mostly picked up by the troops. Of the disappeared persons, between 2000-2005 a majority were married males. Although men have been subject to disappearance largely, but women have been adversely affected because of being related to them as daughters, mothers, sisters and wives. In the absence of any information about the whereabouts of the disappeared men, their wives have acquired the title of 'half-widows'. These half-widows apart from other relatives of disappeared persons are left without any entitlement to land, homes, inheritance, social assistance and pensions. Most of these women also suffer from harassment by the troops. Fehmeeda Banoo, 37, lives in a remote Kashmir village of Kupwara and 14 years back the Indian Army picked up her husband. She has gone from pillar to post searching for him but to no avail. She said, "If my husband is alive I want to see him. I want authorities to tell me where he is. If he has been killed let them hand over his body to me...".

2.3. According To Current Article In Greater Kashmir (2012, Nov., 27).

Majority Of Disappeared Persons Are Innocent:

A latest study has revealed that majority of the victims subjected to enforced disappearance in Kashmir during last 23 years of turmoil were "innocent civilians". The majority of disappeared persons (72.72%) were innocent civilians, only 22.42% had militant link. The study titled "Disappeared persons and their families in Kashmir" conducted by valley's renowned sociologist, Prof. Bashir Ahmad Dabla. The study has

been conducted with the support of J&K chapter of Action Aid International. The study has revealed that more than 80% disappeared persons were in the age group of 21-35 while as 37.14% married. The families live a subhuman life. In majority of cases the disappeared person was the sole bread earner of the family. Their losses also lead to the dropout of children from school. Relatives and friends supported them initially, later they also neglected them. Their children become delinquent and delineate. It ultimately led to their involvement in drug addiction and burglaries, he says, about the sociological implications of such families after neglect by the society. According to Prof. Dabla, the families suffering many psychological problems like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTST), hyper vigilance, fall back, sleeplessness, nightmares and other emotional complications. The majority of them are suffering from various ailments due to the disturbance of life style "there is an unprecedented increase in cancer and neurological disease besides diabetes, vision impairment and hearing impairment including arthritis and renal and gastric problems" the study reveals.

3. Methodology

A sample of 120 persons 60 male, 60 female whose children had disappeared during last 20 years of turmoil in Kashmir. Majority of them were those whose children got disappeared in custody of Army and Police.

- Tools used: In order to check the level of depression among the parents of disappeared children's Kashmir valley. We used standardized scale constructed and standardized by Aaron.T.Beck called Beck depression inventory. The scale has 21 questions. The scale has called beck depression inventory scale. In it there are 21 questions with 4 options.
- Variable: Depression
 - Illiterate
 - o Literate
 - Age group
- Statistical techniques employed: For achieving the objectives, the data collected was analyzed by using various statistical techniques viz, central tendency (mean, median, standard deviation) and t-test.
- Hypothesis Statements

- Ho1: There is no significant difference between males and females in relation to depression among the parents of disappeared children's.
- Ho2: There is significant difference in relation to depression among the parents of disappeared children's including males and females.
- Ho3: There is significant difference between literate and illiterates in relation to level of depression.
- Ho4: There is significant difference between due the age group of parents of disappeared children's.
- Ho5: There is significant difference in relation to depression among parents of disappeared children's due to poor economic conditions.

4. Result

Comparison of the mean score of depression among the parents of disappeared children's as far as gender is concerned:

	No	Mean	S.D	t-test
Males	60	32.96	11.67	171.76
Females	60	31.46	11.74	

Table 1: (facet of depression inventory)

The above table shows that calculated value is 171.76. When it is compared to the table value it is 118. at 0.05 level it is 1.658 then it is less than table value. It shows that our result is insignificant therefore our null hypothesis is accepted.

Comparison of the mean score of depression among the parents of disappeared children's as far as mean age group is concerned:

	No	Mean	S.D	t-test
Males	60	49.15	6.23	4.46
Females	60	47.03	7.48	

Table 2: (facet of depression inventory)

The above table shows that calculated value is 4.46. When we compared it with the table value it is 118. at 0.05 level it is 2.132. Which shows that it is less than table value which shows that result is in significant.

Comparison of the mean score among the parents of disappeared children's as far as sadness is concerned:

	No	Mean	S.D	t-test
Males	60	1.2	0.97	1.17
Females	60	1.4	0.98	

Table 5: facet of depression inventory

The above table shows that calculated value is 1.17. When we compared it with the table value it is 118 at 0.05 level it is 6.314. Which shows that it is greater than table value. So our result is significant.

Comparison of the mean score among the parents of disappeared children's as far as suicidal thoughts is concerned:

	No	Mean	S.D	t-test
Males	60	1.28	1.01	1.47
Females	60	1.53	1.04	

Table 6: (facet of depression inventory)

The above table shows that the calculated value is 1.47. When we compared it with the table value it is 118. at 0.05 level it is 6.314. So our result is significant. Ho is rejected.

Comparison of the mean score of depression among the parents of disappeared children's as far as literate and illiterate is concerned:

	No	Mean	S.D	t-test
Males	60	1.41	0.98	0.31
Females	60	1.46	0.75	

Table 7: facet of depression inventory

The above table shows that the calculated value is 0.31. When we compared it with the table value it is 118. at 0.05 level it is 6.314. Which shows that it is greater than table value. So our result is significant. Null hypothesis is rejected.

5. Conclusion

Disappearance of children's due to armed conflict has a very bad Impact on the physiological, psychological and mental health of the mothers and usually prominent in illiterate class mothers.

It has been seen from our study that the mothers of disappeared children's has severe level of depression with more suicidal and sadness thoughts.

Depression is highly prevalent in general population of parents but treatment seeking is not same and measures should be taken to educate parents of disappeared children as well as health care provided to identify it at the earliest to avoid the crippling consequences and improving the quality life of the parents of disappeared children.

Name:
Age:
Sex:
Education: (Illiterate/ Literate)
Occupation:
Monthly Income:
Family Status: (Nuclear/Joint)
Address:
Rural / Urban:
1. Sadness
O. I do not feel sad
1. I feel sad much of the time.
2. I am sad all the time.
3. I am so sad or unhappy that I can't
stand it
2. Pessimism
O. I am not discouraged about my future.
1. I feel more discouraged about my
future than I used to be.

2. I do not expect things to work out for

3. I feel my future is hopeless and will

me.

only get worse.

June, 2013

3. Past failure

- O. I do not feel like a failure.
- 1. I have failed more than I should have.
- 2. As I look back, I see a lot of failures.
- 3. I feel I am a total failure as a person.

4. Loss of Pleasure

O. I get as much pleasure as I ever did

ITomthe things I enjoy.

1. I don't enjoy things as much as I used

to.

2. I get very little pleasure from the things I used to enjoy.

3. I can't get any pleasure ITom the things I used to enjoy.

5. Guilty feelings

- O. I don't feel particularly guilty.
- 1. I feel guilty over many things I have done or should have done.
- 2. I feel guilty most of the time.
- 3. I feel guilty all over the time.

6. Punishment Feelings

- O.I don't feel I am being punished.
- 1. I feel I may be punished.
- 2. I expect to be punished.
- 3. I feel I am being punished.

7. Self-Dislike

- O.I feel same about myself as ever.
- 1. I have lost confidence in myself
- 2. I am disappointed in myself.
- 3. I dislike myself.

8.Self Criticalness

- O. I don't criticize or blame myself more than usual.
- 1. I am more critical of myself than I used to be.
- 2.I criticize myself of all my faults.
- 3. I blame myself for everything bad that happens.

9. Suicidal Thoughts Or Wishes

- O.I don't have any thoughts of killing myself.
- 1. I have thoughts of killing myself, but I

would

not carry them out.

- 2. I would like to kill myself
- 3. I would kill myself if I had the chance.

10. Crying

- O.I don't cry anymore.
- 1. I cry more than I used to.
- 2. I cry over every little thing.
- 3. I feel like crying but I can't.

11. Agitation

- O.I am no more restless or wound up than
- usual.
- 1. I feel more restless or wound up than

usual.

- 2. I am so restless or agitated that it's hard to stay still.
- 3. I am so restless or agitated that I have

to keep

moving or doing something.

12. Loss Of Interest.

O.I have not lost interest in other people or *i* activities..

I

1. I am less interested in other people or

things . I

than before. I

- 2. I have lost most of my interest in other I people i or things.
- 3. it is hard to get interested in anything.

13. Indecisiveness

- O.I make decision as well as ever.
- 1. I fmd it more difficult to make decisions than usual.
- 2. I have much greater difficulty ill making decisions than I used to.
- 3. I have trouble making any decision.

14. Worthlessness

- O.I do not feel I am worthless.
- 1.I don't consider myself as worthwhile and useful as I used to.
- 2. I feel more worthless', as. Compared to other people.
- 3. I feel utterly worthless.

15. Loss Of Energy

- O.I have as much energy as ever.
- 1. I have less energy than I used to have.
- 2. I have not enough energy to do very much.
- 3. I don't have enough energy to do anything.

16. Changes in sleeping pattern

- O.I have not experienced any change in any Sleeping pattern.
- 1a. I sleep somewhat more than usual.
- 1b. I sleep somewhat less than usual.
- 2a. I sleep a lot more than usual.
- 2b. I sleep a lot less than usual.
- 3a. I sleep most of the day.
- 3b. I wake up 1-2 hours early & can't get back to sleep.

17. Irritability

- O.I am no more irritable than usual.
- 1. I am more irritable than usual.
- 2. I am much more irritable than usual.
- 3; I-am irritable all the time.

18. Changes In Appetite

- O.I have not experienced any change in appetite.
- . la. Myappetiteis somewhatlessthan usual.
- lb. My appetite is somewhat greater than usual.
- 2a. My appetite is less than before.
- 2b. my appetite is much greater than usual.
- 3a. I have no appetite at all.
- 3b. I crave for food all the time.

19. Concentration Difficulty

- O.I can concentrate as well as ever.
- 1. I can't concentrate as well as usual.
- 2 it's hard to keep my mind on anything for very long.
- 3. I find I can't concentrate on anything.

20. Tiredness Or Fatigue

- O.I am no more tired or fatigued than usual.
- 1. I get more tired or fatigued more easily usual.
- 2. I am too tired or fatigued to do a lot of: the things I used to do
- 3. I am too tired or fatigued to do most of the things I used to do.

21. Loss Of Interest In Sex

- O.I have not noticed any recent change in my Interest in sex.
- 1. I am less interested in sex than I used to be.
- 2. I am much less interested in sex now.
- 3. I have lost interest in SEX completely.

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