

Patterns of Living Arrangement: A Structural Link to Social Support of Rural Widows

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ABSTRACT On widowhood an individual's living arrangement gains significance as it provides an opportunity for support and has an edge in specific areas of support due to close physical proximity. In Indian cultural setting joint arrangements are valued and demonstrate family solidarity but patterns of living arrangement and factors influencing it among rural widows is a potential area yet to be explored. The paper traces the effect of cultural aspects, economic affordability, demographic availability, and personal factors on family structure. The study is explorative and descriptive in nature and in total 616 widows were interviewed through purposive sampling technique. The findings indicate the predominance of sub-nuclear families irrespective of variations in economic status. Joint living arrangements are relatively higher among widows in wet region. Dry belt, economic position of widows and fewer options control the type of living arrangement but in higher economic region service requirements in intensive farming has a significant influence. In addition, age, educational level, household headship, dependency of children and forewarned death is closely linked to living arrangement.