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## Unveiling Resilience: Navigating the Challenges within Families of Breast Cancer Patients in Uttar Pradesh

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### **Abstract:**

**Introduction:** Breast cancer stands as a formidable global health challenge, affecting millions of individuals and their families, and Uttar Pradesh, as one of India's most populous states, is not exempt from its impact. Beyond the physical toll it exacts, breast cancer is a complex and pervasive challenge that permeates the lives of patients and extends to their families, influencing various facets of daily existence.

**Objective:** To study the challenges faced by the families of the breast cancer patients in Uttar Pradesh.

**Methodology:** Case study of the 1 each of the families of the rural and urban areas from the four districts of Uttar Pradesh, namely Kasganj, Etah, Kanpur and Lucknow.

**Major findings:** The families suffered the challenges of financial strain, educational disruptions, emotional and physical toll on caregivers, social and psychological challenges, impact on family dynamics, health and emotional impact on patients etc.

**Conclusion & Recommendations:** The families need the support in the areas of financial support programs, educational support, psychosocial support services, workplace flexibility, community awareness programs, healthcare accessibility improvements, resilience-building programs etc.

**Key words:** Cancer, patients, caregiver, psychological, education, finance

## 1. Introduction

Breast cancer is a significant worldwide health concern that affects millions of people and their families, and Uttar Pradesh, which is one of the most populated states in India, is not exempt from the impact of this disease. In addition to the physical toll it takes, breast cancer is a complicated and pervasive challenge that not only affects the lives of patients but also extends to the lives of their families and has an effect on a variety of aspects of day-to-day existence. The process of adjusting one's life after receiving a diagnosis of breast cancer entails overcoming a wide variety of obstacles, including those of an emotional, economical, and social nature. The state of Uttar Pradesh, with its varied population and healthcare system, offers a one-of-a-kind setting in which the difficulties that breast cancer patients and their families experience manifest in a variety of distinct ways. The purpose of this research paper is to shed light on the intricacies inherent in the cancer journey and to inform the establishment of tailored support systems and interventions. The research paper digs into the myriad challenges that breast cancer patients and their families in Uttar Pradesh confront. This research aims to provide a contribution to a greater knowledge of the sociocultural and healthcare dynamics surrounding breast cancer in this region through an examination of the obstacles presented by these issues. Ultimately, this will lead to the development of innovative approaches to holistic treatment and support for individuals who are impacted by this prevalent disease.

## 2. Literature Review

Because breast cancer, a problem that affects the health of people all over the world, places an enormous strain on individuals and their families, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth investigation of the difficulties that can arise in a variety of cultural and healthcare settings.

The research conducted around the world highlights the many different obstacles that breast cancer patients and their families encounter. According to the findings of a study conducted by Ylmaz et al. (2019), breast cancer patients all over the world report experiencing common difficulties such as mental discomfort, financial hardship, and disruptions in their everyday lives. This is consistent with the findings of Ferlay et al. (2020), who stress the extensive influence of breast cancer on the quality of life and the psychosocial well-being of patients with the disease and their family. Furthermore, Crossley and Scott (2018) highlight the significance of recognising the cultural subtleties that are present in the experience of having breast cancer. This is due to the fact that socio-cultural influences profoundly impact the issues that are faced by patients and their families on a worldwide scale.

Shifting our attention to India, where the socio-cultural environment has a considerable impact on patients' experiences with healthcare, it is essential to do research that is particular to the difficulties presented by breast cancer. A study that was conducted in North India by Sharma et al. (2017) highlights the financial strain that is placed on families as a result of the high out-of-pocket expenses associated with breast cancer treatment. This is in line with the findings that Chatterjee et al. (2018) found, which highlighted the importance of specialised psychosocial assistance in the Indian environment. The research conducted by Pati et al. (2019) sheds additional light on the importance of family dynamics in the process of living with breast cancer. The findings of this study suggest that the support that patients receive from their families has a substantial impact on their overall health.

While research on breast cancer problems is substantial worldwide and in India, the context of Uttar Pradesh offers some new and different aspects to the discussion. Gupta et al. (2021) conducted a study that looked specifically at the difficulties that breast cancer patients in Uttar Pradesh encounter. The authors of this study noted inequities in healthcare access as well as the requirement for community-based treatments. Additionally, Singh and Singh (2018) highlight the role of cultural beliefs and traditions in the process of forming the coping mechanisms of breast cancer patients in the state.

Thus, the difficulties that breast cancer patients and their families experience are multifaceted and highly dependent on the specifics of the situation. This literature review provides a complete overview of the complex difficulties that are present in this region by integrating global views, research from India, and specific findings from Uttar Pradesh.

### **3. Objective**

The purpose of this research paper is to conduct an in-depth investigation and analysis of the difficulties that breast cancer patients and their families in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh face. The purpose of the study is to outline the multiple features of the issues by concentrating on a specific geographical location. This will allow the researchers to take into account the socio-cultural, economic, and healthcare variables that influence the breast cancer experience. The research aims to give useful insights that can inform targeted treatments and support systems that are suited to the requirements of breast cancer patients and their families in this region through an in-depth exploration of the specific obstacles that are prevalent in Uttar Pradesh. This will be accomplished by conducting an exhaustive investigation of the various issues that are prevalent in this state. The research aims to improve awareness of the complexity of breast cancer care in Uttar Pradesh by addressing these challenges in a manner that is relevant to the setting of the state.

Additionally, the research hopes to support the creation of effective methods to ease the burdens that are faced by patients and their families.

#### **4. Methodology**

A qualitative case study was used to explore breast cancer families' challenges. The study examined 8 carefully selected breast cancer-afflicted families from Kasganj, Etah, Kanpur, and Lucknow, both rural and urban. Family members of breast cancer patient from each rural and urban location in the designated areas was carefully selected to create a diverse and representative sample.

The research comprised in-depth interviews with husbands, mothers, mothers-in-law, and brothers to gain a comprehensive view of family difficulties. These interviews examined the economic effect of the illness, education disruptions, family relationships, and emotional toll on the patient and their support network etc. This extensive qualitative technique was adopted to study the complex issues faced by Uttar Pradesh breast cancer families in varied socio-cultural situations.

#### **5. Findings & Discussion**

A total of eight separate case studies were carried out by the researcher in order to explore the effects that breast cancer has on families and family members, as well as to identify the obstacles that families and family members experience while dealing with the presence of a breast cancer patient within the family. These case studies included a wide range of circumstances and were taken from a variety of districts across Uttar Pradesh, including Etah, Kasganj, Kanpur, and Lucknow. Each district gave two instances, which depicted different family and community dynamics in their respective settings. In addition, the research was conducted in both rural and urban settings so that it could reflect the diverse variety of experiences and difficulties that are faced by families impacted by breast cancer.

##### **5.1 THE FIRST FAMILY CASE STUDY (ETAH DISTRICT RURAL)**

The Jaleswar block in the Etah district is home to the village that formerly went by the name Rohit but has since had its name altered. His wife Anita, who is now 34 years old but whose name has been changed, has been battling breast cancer for the past three years. Her initial diagnosis came about a year and a half ago, when she discovered a few lumps in each of her breasts, in addition to experiencing some discomfort in each breast and a number of other concerning symptoms. They started by looking for aid from private physicians in the neighbourhood. However, after obtaining

treatment for approximately two to three months and observing no improvement, they took the decision to seek additional assistance.

After that, they sent Anita to a medical institution in Agra, where she was initially provided with some fundamental medication to treat her condition. Unfortunately, despite receiving this treatment, she did not improve, and the pain that she was in was only momentarily relieved. After that, she was referred to a specialist, and it was during this visit that the primary care physician first became concerned about the possibility of breast cancer. They went to a private cancer hospital in Agra for guidance, spending a significant amount of time and money there over the course of numerous visits.

After the expense of private care became too much for them to bear, they decided to seek treatment for their cancer at the local public hospital. Despite the fact that they have been travelling to the public hospital on a regular basis, the lengthy wait times and complicated administrative procedures have made the process extremely time-consuming. The ultimate diagnosis of breast cancer for Anita was obtained at the hospital run by the government.

Because of Anita's condition, their daily lives as a family has been disrupted to a large degree. The fact that there are now four children in the household has made it far more challenging to manage their care. Due to the excessive costs of treatment, the family was forced to pull the younger children out of their private school. As a result, the pressure has also had an effect on the children's ability to receive an appropriate education. They were instead enrolled in a school run by the local government, albeit even at that institution, their attendance has been spotty due to the ongoing health problems they have been experiencing.

Because Rohit is unable to continuously work at the tiny grocery store that serves as his family's primary source of income, the family's financial situation has been significantly worsened as a result. Because they are a nuclear family and there is no other source of financial support, the store is frequently closed for several weeks, which has the effect of disrupting both their customer base and the flow of income.

In addition, the stress of providing care for Anita has had a negative impact on the health of the members of Anita's family who do the caring for her. These days, the carers frequently struggle with exhaustion, a variety of sleep disorders, and other health issues. The children, who are also responsible for their mother's care, experience both health difficulties and interruptions in their education as a direct result of the additional responsibilities that have been placed on them.

In conclusion, Anita's fight against breast cancer has had a huge effect on their family, hurting not just their ability to make ends meet but also the educational options available to their children and the wellbeing of the carers.

## **5.2 CASE STUDY NO. 2 OF A FAMILY (ETAH DISTRICT URBAN)**

Vivek, a native of the city of Etah who is 38 years old, is also known by another name. His wife Rohini, who is now 31 years old but whose name has been changed, has been battling breast cancer for close to two years. In the beginning stages of her pregnancy, Rohini had symptoms such as breast pain, irritability, weakness, and loss of appetite. They started by going to a nearby doctor for assistance, and the doctor treated them for a while. The relief that Rohini felt was only temporary, so the doctor suggested that she look for treatment at a referral clinic that specialises in the condition she had. As a consequence of this, they proceeded to a hospital in Aligarh, where Rohini was examined, and she was found to have breast cancer. The couple expressed their grief and astonishment at hearing the news.

Vivek and Rohini are blessed with the arrival of two more children. Vivek, his two other siblings, and both of their parents all live in the same house together. However, the moment Rohini found out that she had breast cancer, she lost the support of her in-laws as well as the support of her social circle. Rohini was compelled to relocate back to the house she shared with her parents, and there, her brothers, sisters, and parents are providing her with occasional assistance.

Due to the volatility, the children's academic performance as well as their mental health, along with that of the other members of the family, has suffered. Vivek, too, has a hard time obtaining food and, as a result, is frequently late for his meals. Although he spends the majority of his time at his own residence, he does make regular trips to Rohini's parents' home to see her. The children spend time both with their mother and with Vivek as their primary carer.

Changes to Rohini's nutrition and her regular exercise routine are some of the important lifestyle modifications that need to be made by the family so that they may better support Rohini's health. In addition, the members of the family battle with existential questions and a crisis of faith as they confront the meaning of life and the character of suffering in the context of cancer.

As a result of having to make numerous trips to Aligarh to provide Rohini with medical care and to transfer her there, Vivek's employment has deteriorated as a result. The fact that his brothers-in-law also contribute to this endeavour is not enough to mitigate the effect that it has had on his professional life. The lives of Vivek's in-laws have also been profoundly altered as a result of everything that has happened.

The most heartbreaking repercussions are on the children's health and educational opportunities. The children's academic performance has dropped significantly as a direct result of the fact that they usually do not receive their meals on time. They had already started attending classes in Etah when Rohini's condition was discovered. On the other hand, the development of their academic careers has been greatly hindered by her illness. Because there is a lack of care for the children at home, the children may spend some time with their maternal grandparents. Although their maternal grandparents and maternal uncle provide care for the children, the children's academic performance suffers as a result of this situation.

In light of the diagnosis and the potential long-term effects it may have, the family has been forced to reevaluate their long-term goals and ambitions, including their financial planning and educational aspirations.

### **5.3 THE CASE STUDY OF A FAMILY - 3 (KASGANJ DISTRICT RURAL)**

Raju (name changed), who is 34 years old, is the brother of Sonam (name changed), who is 45 years old. The battle against breast cancer that Sonam has been waging for the past six years. They hail from a little community in the Patiyali block of the Kasganj district. The beginning of Sonam's journey with breast cancer was marked by symptoms such as weight loss, breast lumps, and breast pain. They began their journey by seeking medical assistance in the city of Kasganj in Agra. Despite receiving therapy, she was only provided with temporary relief from the excruciating pain. Unfortunately, the soreness returned, and additional symptoms including enlarged lymph nodes and breast rashes manifested themselves. They were referred to a more advanced medical institution by the local physician, who had a suspicion that the patient was suffering from breast cancer. When they became aware of the implications for their finances, they decided to seek treatment for her in a charitable hospital in Mumbai.

According to Raju, Sonam had her own residence when she first came to India. However, following the news that she had cancer, her in-laws were only able to offer her little assistance, and her husband revealed that he was unable to take care of her himself. As a direct consequence of this, they brought Sonam back to their own home. Although Sonam and Raju's father has passed away, Sonam's mother is still alive and cares for her at home. Raju's mother has passed away. On the other hand, the effects of this circumstance on the regular course of their lives have been significant.

The information provided by Raju's brother suggested that in addition to farming, he also operates a stock company on the side. However, because of the major downturn in the industry that he

works in, his income has decreased. Additionally, because of the changed dynamics in the family, it is difficult for him to establish a healthy environment for his family and children. Because of this circumstance, his children's academic performance has declined, which has had a detrimental effect on both their emotional and physical health. He spoke over how they need to adjust to their new lives and how exhausted they are from taking care of his sister. He also went over how they are feeling.

Because of his obligations with his job, Raju's brother-in-law is only able to pay an occasional visit. A boarding school was where their two nephews used to spend their time, but these days they live at home with their father and their maternal grandmother. Their academic achievement has suffered as a direct result of the difficult financial circumstances imposed on by Sonam's treatment, which is quite unfortunate.

The family has had to make significant changes to their way of life in order to support Sonam's health. These changes include improvements to their eating habits and their exercise routines. During her battle with illness, they have been forced to commit a significant amount of time to caring for her, which has on occasion caused their relationship to become strained. They are ecstatic, however, by Sonam's recent achievements in this regard.

#### **5.4 CASE STUDY OF A FAMILY NO. 4 (KASGANJ DISTRICT URBAN)**

Rita, who is 45 years old, resides in the city of Kasganj with her partner, Ajay (name changed), who is 52 years old. They have three boys and one daughter living with them, in addition to their mother, so there are four people total living in the house. A variety of challenges and adjustments were brought into their lives as a direct result of Rita's diagnosis of breast cancer four years ago.

The expenses associated with taking care of Rita's medical needs have been quite considerable. In order for Ajay to be able to afford the ever-increasing cost of medical care, he made the challenging decision to give up his job and instead create a small shop. This transition was brought about by his inability to maintain regular attendance, which resulted in him missing a lot of class. In addition, in order to pay for the ever-increasing costs of medical care, they were forced to sell a small piece of property.

The ramifications of Rita's health have a ripple effect on their children's academic performance as well. They initially attended private schools; but, due to the family's financial circumstances, the oldest child was required to help operate the store and accompany Rita to her appointments. As a result, they had to stop attending private schools. Because of these unfortunate circumstances, it was not possible for the oldest child to complete their high school education. Ajay's goal has



always been to provide his offspring with opportunities to participate in prestigious educational programmes. However, due to the significant quantities of money that had been set aside for Rita's medical care, the couple was only able to enrol their two younger children in schools that were run by the government. Due to the limited resources that they have available, it has been challenging for them to offer a good education for their three children who are still at home.

Despite the fact that the family has received tremendous social support from friends and certain members of the extended family, this assistance has not been sustained over time. On the bright side, Ajay mentioned that his wife's parents had graciously provided money to help cover Rita's medical expenses, which has been a significant source of relief during this tough time.

The members of Rita's family have been battling with elevated levels of stress, anxiety, and depression as they deal with the emotional toll that Rita's cancer has had on them and the uncertainty that surrounds the future of her treatment. Relationships between siblings are at risk of being strained when parents are required to devote a significant amount of their time and attention to the child who is ill.

The members of the family are experiencing a significant decline in their overall quality of life as a result of the challenges brought on by the cancer. These challenges consist of undesirable effects brought on by the drug, difficulty with regular activities, and limited access to wholesome food and clothing. In the past, people were free to choose anything they wanted to eat and wear; now, they are now required to watch how much money they spend in these categories.

### **5.5 CASE STUDY NO. 5 OF A FAMILY (KANPUR DISTRICT RURAL)**

Sony (name changed), a woman of 67 years of age, is the mother of her daughter, Shivani (name changed), who is 42 years old and hails from the Gahtumpur neighbourhood of Kanpur. They are the proud parents of three young children. When Shivani's breast cancer was diagnosed three years ago, the entire family was stunned and upset by the news. In the beginning, Shivani experienced symptoms such as a rash, itching, and breast pain.

When Shivani first learned of her condition, she was receiving some assistance from her family because she was living with her husband's parents. However, as time went on and her condition worsened, her husband and other members of the family ultimately came to the conclusion that it was best for her to move in with her parents. Because Shivani's husband had a private career that forced him to work outside of Delhi and was unable to frequently take care of her wants, it became obvious that Shivani was not receiving enough assistance from her husband's family. Because of this, Shivani began to spend more time at both her parents' and her in-laws' homes, where her

siblings and sisters took care of her and provided her with support. In the end, she settled down permanently in the home she shared with her parents.

The children also moved into the residence that belonged to their paternal grandparents. When their mother's illness made it difficult for her to care for them and the aid provided by the in-laws was insufficient, they all moved in with Shivani. Initially, they were all enrolled in a school in their father's hometown. The eldest daughter, who had previously been attending classes at a nearby college on a regular basis, decided to withdraw from the institution. But given that her mother has recently relocated to live with her parents, it is up to her to provide care for her.

The second sister is also currently enrolled in college; however, she has not been able to attend classes on a daily basis. The lone son of the family prepared for medical exams with the intention of starting a career in medicine. However, his capacity to pursue his goals and acquire high-quality instruction has been severely hampered as a result.

Sony shared that although while Shivani's spouse does make rare visits and does offer some financial assistance, the family relies mostly on their own resources and that he does not play a significant role in their daily lives. They were compelled to sell gold and various other goods in order to meet the expenses associated with Shivani's medical care. The family has received financial assistance and assistance with the costs associated with Shivani's medical care from her siblings. Additionally, the husbands of Shivani's sisters have provided monetary assistance in this endeavour. In spite of this help, the family's educational opportunities, health, and financial security have all deteriorated as a direct result of the ongoing challenges. Shivani has, thankfully, been making progress towards recovery, which has provided optimism for her family throughout this challenging time.

### **5.6 CASE STUDY NO. 6 OF A FAMILY (KANPUR DISTRICT URBAN)**

Lalit (name changed), 43, is the sister of Pratima, 43, who was diagnosed with breast cancer four years ago. Pratima's brother, Lalit (name changed), is 27. The diagnosis has had a significant effect not only on her but also on her family. Pratima is the mother of three children: a son, two daughters, and a daughter who is still an infant. Her spouse operated a clothing store so that the family could have a source of income.

When Pratima initially got married, she moved in with her husband and her husband's family. In the early stages of her illness, her mother-in-law was a tremendous help in providing care for her daughter-in-law. The tragic loss of her mother-in-law has created a significant void in the emotional and logistical resources available to the family. When Pratima first started her therapy,

two of her three sisters-in-law offered their assistance and support. Pratima accepted their offers. Unfortunately, they quickly stopped assisting since they found that taking care of Pratima was too much for them to do. At this moment, Pratima needed further care that could only be provided at her parents' residence; hence, she had to be transported there.

Her husband's clothes store, which had been previously being run out of a rented room, had a significant decrease in sales as a direct result of Pratima's illness. Because of the closures, he was unable to make the store a regular stop, and as a result, the quality of the goods in stock suffered. The family's financial condition grew exceedingly hazardous as a result of the economic hardship and the rising expense of the treatment, both of which contributed to the family's financial situation. In addition, as they were going through all of this upheaval, their children's health suffered.

After that, Pratima relocated to the house of her husband's parents, where her three brothers took turns being responsible for her care. Due to the fact that they were unable to handle the situation on their own, her brothers and brother-in-law contributed equally to the cost of her care. Both their mental and physical health deteriorated as a result of their unwavering commitment to Pratima's recovery. However, the fact that Pratima is making steady progress brings them both comfort and delight.

Sadly, during this difficult time, the children's education suffered tremendously, which was a reflection of the far-reaching impacts of Pratima's fight against breast cancer. The children, who are just innocent bystanders in this conflict, found out that big changes had taken place in their own lives as the family battled with the financial and emotional challenges brought on by the cancer.

Because of Pratima's ever-shifting care requirements and the continual juggling of responsibilities within the family, it became increasingly challenging for the children to keep up with any kind of standard academic routine. Their education, which had been a priority and a path towards a brighter future at one time, was derailed as a result of the disruption that illness frequently causes in the life of a family.

The children's living arrangements had just shifted, and as a result, their maternal grandfather became their primary carer. This represented a significant departure from the previous composition of their family. The passing of their grandfather brought about shifts in their day-to-day routines and derailed their progress towards their academic objectives, despite the fact that their grandfather undoubtedly loved and cared for them.

The youngsters, who up until this point had been dedicated students each with their own set of goals and dreams, were suddenly faced with a difficult educational road. Because they moved about so much from school to school and classroom to classroom, it was difficult for them to achieve academic achievement. Due to the instability and unpredictability that surrounded their mother's health, it was challenging for them to concentrate on their studies.

In the midst of all of this chaos, the children's hopes and ambitions were suddenly placed on wait while the more pressing issues of assisting their mother and adjusting to their new living situations took precedence. The pursuit of education was abandoned, which is a decision that is commonly made without giving it much thought.

As the narrative of the patient's family reveals, a cancer diagnosis can have a tremendous influence not just on the patient's health but also on their financial stability, the dynamics of their family, and the educational options available to their children. Despite this, Pratima continues to make progress in her rehabilitation, and her family is holding on to hope and feeling relieved.

### **5.7 FAMILY CASE STUDY NUMBER SEVEN (RURAL LUCKNOW DISTRICT)**

Rohan (name changed), 55, was obviously disturbed as he explained the sad journey that his wife Rita, who is 48 years old and has been fighting breast cancer for the past five torturous years, had been on. Rita has been battling the disease for the past five years. A chronic illness such as breast cancer can have a significant and multidimensional influence on a person's life, impact that goes far beyond the physical symptoms of the ailment. This impact can also have an effect on the person's family. The story of them illustrates this point perfectly.

The emotional suffering that their family has been put through is nothing short of something out of a nightmare. The prolonged struggle that Rita has had to wage against breast cancer has not only had a detrimental effect on her own mental and physical health, but it has also had an adverse effect on the well-being of the rest of the family. Rohan discussed the awful repercussions that this event has had on their lives and how it has changed them.

Rita's journey through the difficult landscape of breast cancer has been marked by physical pain, discomfort, and a number of symptoms that have rendered her unable to perform a variety of tasks. Every single step of this scary journey has been accompanied by symptoms such as breast pain, swelling, and enlargement of the lymph nodes, as well as a loss of weight for no apparent reason. Although these symptoms have caused Rita a great deal of distress, Rohan and the rest of their family have also been going through a period of intense anxiety and worry.

**Social Isolation and Stigma:** The social alienation and stigma that they have had to deal with throughout their trip has been one of the most upsetting aspects of that journey. Their family has been treated as though they are unreachable as a result of the stigma that is linked with breast cancer as well as the lack of knowledge that can be seen in some locations. During this difficult period, close members of the family have absented themselves, leaving Rohan and Rita with the impression that they are alone and unsupported even though they were in a position to offer solace and assistance.

The emotional and relational realms are considerably affected by the stress that is caused by breast cancer. The stress that is caused by breast cancer extends significantly into these areas. The formerly idyllic bonds that Rohan and Rita shared are now being tested by the obligations they have to their friends, family, and even their spouses. Because it is so challenging to support a loved one through such a challenging illness, these vital relationships have, on occasion, become strained as a result of the challenges involved.

**Changes in Priorities and Goals as well as Financial Strain:** Rohan discussed the significant shifts in their goals and priorities that had been forced upon their lives as a result of breast cancer. As a result of the unrelenting nature of the condition, people have been forced to put their professions on wait, their lives have been significantly altered, and their goals in life have been reevaluated. The family's ability to provide for themselves financially has taken a significant hit as a consequence of Rita's inability to work and the rising cost of medical treatment.

**The Emotional Toll on Carers** Many members of Rohan's family, in especially, have taken on the role of carer, which has been one of the most mentally and emotionally taxing aspects of this journey. No one should have to bear the weight of shouldering the responsibility of providing care for a loved one who is going through the agony and suffering that cancer brings on their own. Carers like Rohan have been exposed to a great amount of stress and emotional toll, which has put a strain on their ability to bounce back from adversity and maintain their mental fortitude.

**Family Dynamics:** Not only has breast cancer had an effect on the emotional health of the family, but it has also changed the dynamics that have existed in the family for a very long time. Roles and responsibilities within the home have shifted as a result of Rohan and the other individuals' new jobs as carers.

**Impact on Children:** Their children, who should be revelling in the joys of childhood and education, have instead been thrust into the gloomy reality of having cancer. Their daily routines

have been thrown off, they have had disruptions to their education and emotional well-being, and the obligation of providing care has been placed on their young shoulders.

In spite of these insurmountable challenges, Rita and Rohan's family continues to cling to the hope that Rita's ongoing fight against breast cancer may one day pave the way for a brighter future for all of them. Their ordeal serves as a sobering reminder of the far-reaching impact that breast cancer may have on people, including the fact that it can influence many parts of life and put a person's resilience, as well as the resilience of their family, to the test.

### **5.8 FAMILY CASE STUDY NO. 8 (URBAN LOCATION IN LUCKNOW DISTRICT)**

Dinesh (name changed), who is now 53 years old, expressed his genuine concern and shared the heartwarming story of his wife Priya, who was diagnosed with breast cancer about four years ago. Dinesh's wife Priya was given a prognosis of breast cancer approximately four years ago. Priya, Dinesh, and the rest of their family have all been profoundly touched in a number of ways by the ordeal that they went through with this traumatic event.

**Impact on Patients' Physical Health** The therapy for breast cancer can have a detrimental effect on a patient's physical health because it subjects them to a wide array of side effects and discomfort. Priya, like a great number of other people, was forced to go through the ordeal of undergoing procedures such as surgery, chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and hormone therapy. These treatments frequently cause patients to experience nausea, debilitating weariness, discomfort, loss of hair, and a change in their perception of how their bodies seem. The daily activities and routine that Priya used to follow have been significantly altered as a result of these physical challenges.

**Emotional Impact on Patients** Priya has had a difficult time coping with the emotional upheaval that comes along with obtaining a diagnosis of breast cancer. Her mental health has suffered as a result of the fear and depression that have been brought on by the unknowns around her ailment, the treatments that are accessible, and the probable results. In addition, the persistent anxiety around the possibility of a cancer recurrence has been a consistent driver of emotional distress. Priya's body image concerns and sense of loss have been compounded as a result of her surgery, which has a detrimental effect on her self-confidence and self-esteem. Priya's surgery included a mastectomy.

The journey has been stressful for Priya as a consequence of the demanding schedule of treatments, multiple doctor's appointments, and possible disruptions to normal routines. Priya's stress levels have increased as a result of managing this demanding schedule. Her fight against breast cancer has tested both her mental toughness and her ability to bounce back quickly from adversity.

Priya's life has been changed because of the social and psychological impacts that breast cancer has had on her. Priya's life has been changed because of the social and psychological consequences that breast cancer has had on her. As a result of the mental and emotional strain that her treatment causes, she has occasionally had the sensation that she is cut off from her social networks. Her relationships with family, friends, and her life partner, Dinesh, have all navigated treacherous waters in order to provide her with support throughout this challenging path. These vital connections have, on occasion, been severed as a result of the difficulties associated with providing care for a loved one who has breast cancer.

**Priorities Reconsidered:** Priya's illness prompted her to reconsider the goals and top priorities in her life. Because of it, everything from her career to her way of living to the relationships in her life has shifted. Because breast cancer has had such a profound impact on her life, she has been forced to reconsider the things that are most important to her.

The financial impact on patients and their families has been a significant source of stress in Priya and Dinesh's family. Breast cancer has caused a significant reduction in their ability to provide for their needs. Because of the high cost of medical treatments, medications, and other associated fees, their financial resources have been stretched to their limits. They have a significant concern on this matter, which has made their situation even more tough.

In spite of the impossibly large number of challenges they face, Priya and her family are unyielding in their determination to triumph over the debilitating consequences of breast cancer. Their story is a powerful illustration of the complexities of this disease as well as the strength that patients and their families muster in order to face the difficulties that come along with it.

## 6. Conclusion

The case studies painted a powerful picture of the struggles that families have to go through when a member of their family has breast cancer. The effects of breast cancer extended beyond the patients themselves and had an effect on a variety of aspects of family life, such as the patients' financial stability, their children's education, their mental well-being, and the ways in which their communities functioned. The following are some of the generalisations that can be made from the case studies:

**1. Stress on the Family's Financial Situation:** In many instances, the patients or their family members were unable to work on a constant basis, which resulted in the family's income taking a severe nosedive.

The exorbitant expenditures of breast cancer treatment, in conjunction with the loss of job, prompted families to make difficult decisions, such as selling possessions or modifying educational plans for their children.

**2. Interruptions in Children's Education:** The children in these households had interruptions in their education as a result of monetary restrictions, shifting dynamics within the family, and the requirement to take on the obligations of caregiving. Attendance at private schools frequently became unaffordable, which resulted in students enrolling in public schools, which continued to struggle with low enrollment rates.

**3. The Emotional and Physical Toll on Carers:** Members of the patient's family who took on caregiving tasks reported experiencing elevated levels of stress, exhaustion, and health difficulties as a result of the emotional and physical demands of supporting a breast cancer patient.

**4. Social and Psychological Difficulties:** Families experienced social stigma and alienation, particularly as a result of a lack of awareness regarding breast cancer. This was one of the primary causes of the problem. Relationships, both within the family and with friends, were put under stress, and some members withdrew their support, which added to the already existing emotional load.

**5. The effect on family dynamics:** Breast cancer changed the usual roles and responsibilities of a family, requiring family members to adapt to new caring roles and reevaluate their top priorities.

**6. Health and mental Impact on Patients:** Patients who were undergoing treatment for breast cancer were subjected to arduous treatment regimens, which resulted in considerable physical obstacles, mental suffering, and significant adjustments to their lifestyles.

### **Recommendations:**

**1. Financial Support Programmes:** Initiatives should be launched to provide financial assistance to families living with breast cancer, relieving the burden of treatment expenditures and income loss.

**2. Educational Support:** Educational support programmes can be of assistance to children whose lives have been impacted by breast cancer. These programmes provide the tools necessary for children to maintain a consistent schooling schedule and handle the obstacles that arise as a result of shifting family circumstances.



**3. Psychosocial Support Services:** Patients and their families should be offered comprehensive psychosocial support services in order to address emotional issues, minimise social stigma, and improve relationships. These services should also be offered with the goal of preventing social stigma.

**4. Flexibility in the Workplace:** Employers should consider creating flexible work arrangements to accommodate employees who are suffering with breast cancer. This is because of the impact that breast cancer has on their professional lives.

**5. Community Awareness Programmes:** Community-wide awareness programmes can contribute to the reduction of social stigma and the cultivation of a knowledge of breast cancer, so providing an environment that is supportive for families who have been impacted by the disease.

**6. Improvements to Healthcare Accessibility:** Efforts should be made to improve the accessibility of cancer diagnostic and treatment facilities, particularly in remote areas. This will reduce the amount of time that patients have to wait for treatment and the financial pressure that is placed on their families.

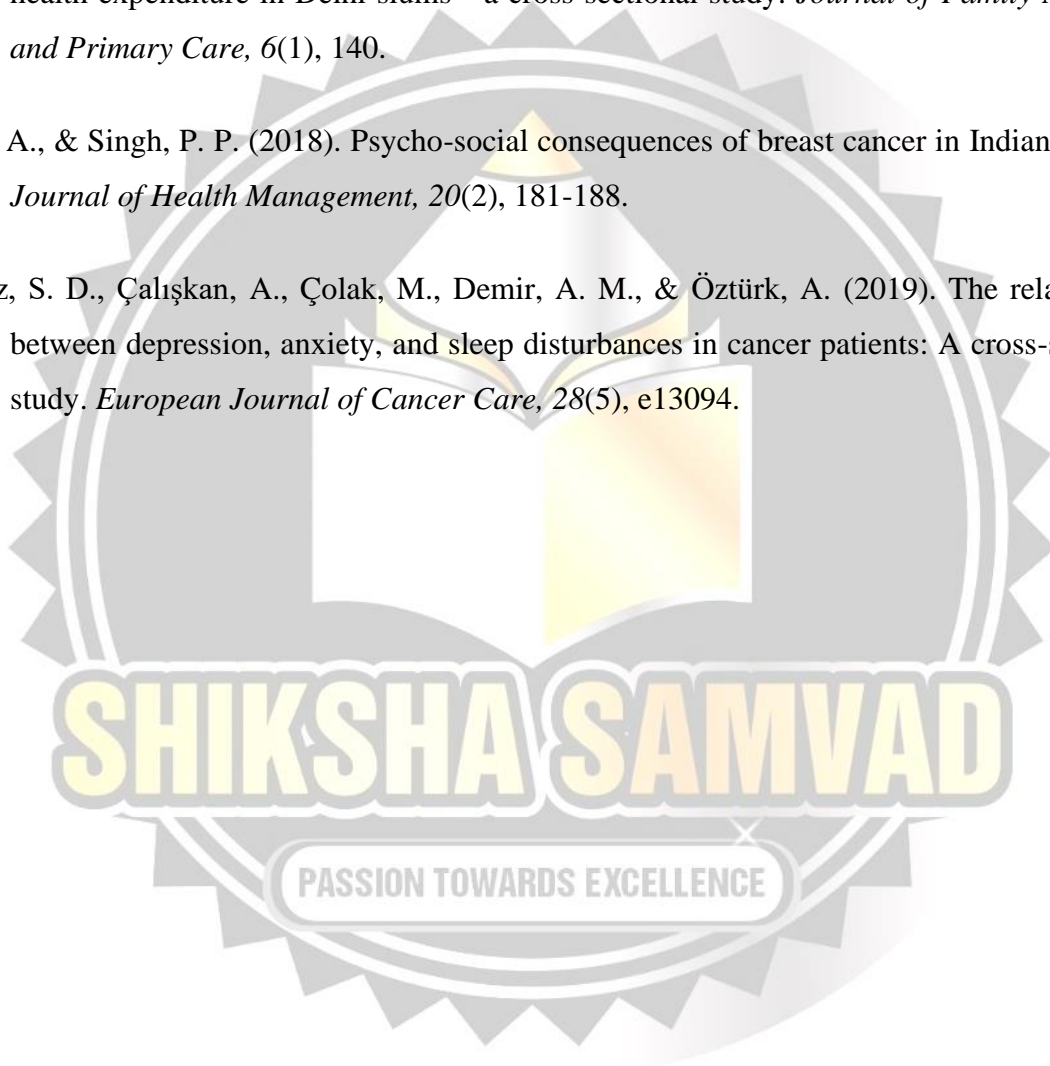
**7. Resilience-Building Programs:** Carers can benefit from resilience-building programmes, which can assist them in coping with the physical and emotional toll that comes with assisting a loved one through breast cancer treatment.

By implementing these ideas into action, there is the potential to alleviate some of the difficulties that are experienced by families living with breast cancer. This would result in the creation of an atmosphere that is more helpful and understanding for both patients and the people who care about them.

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