

The Aged Problems – A Sociological Analysis

(Special reference to Jeevan Sandya Old age Home Chikkamagaluru (Tq))

Mr. Lokesh Naik B

Assistant Professor, Government first grade college for women Chikkamagaluru -577101

Abstract- Ageing is an irreparable biological process and is defined as the survival of the increasing number of individuals, who have completed their adult roles. Ageing is stated as the inevitable consequence of decline in productiveness. With the advent of technology and modernization, there has been a decrease in the mortality rate, increase in awareness, nutrition, advancement in health care facilities and an increase in life expectancy. The main purpose of this research manuscript is to acquire an understanding of the problems of the aged people in India. When individuals reach old age, the various problems that they have to experience include, decline in health conditions, retirement, financial problems, loneliness and dependence upon others. The problems that have been taken into account in this research paper include, social, economic, psychological, health, crime, abuse and other miscellaneous problems. Another area that has been included is social work interventions. There are formulation of measures and policies that aim at alleviating the problems of the elderly, provide them security, protection and focus upon their well-being.

Key words: abuse, crime social, economic aged people

INTRODUCTION

Demographic Profile of the Elderly in India

India's national trends mask tremendous regional variation. Pointing to India's 16 languages, Haub and Gribble (2011) describe India as a "collection of semi-independent countries united under one democracy." Fertility rates in India's southern states of Kerala and Tamil Nadu were a low 1.7 children per woman in 2009, while the fertility rates in the northern states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were twice as high. Bloom (2011a) notes that the ratios of the working-age population to the nonworking-age population for Tamil Nadu and Bihar are widely different, comparing that difference to the gap between the ratios for Ireland and Rwanda today. These stark regional differences will mean that the impact of a shifting age structure and population aging will not unfold uniformly

throughout the country.

India, a sub-continent that carries 15 per cent of the world's population, is gradually undergoing a demographic change as a result of many factors including specific development programs. With decline in fertility and mortality rates accompanied by an improvement in child survival and increased life expectancy, a significant feature of demographic change is the progressive increase in the number of older people. In 1951, 60+ populations were around 20 million. Three decades later in 1981, it was a little over 43 million, a further decade later in 1991, this had increased to 55.30 million and for 2001 it is 76 million. These demographic facts and trends make the older people in India an increasingly important segment of the population pyramid in the coming years.

The population dynamics fuelling India's growth and changing age structure are rooted in the combined impact of increasing life expectancy and declining fertility. Life expectancy at birth in India climbed from 37 years in 1950 to 65 years in 2011, reflecting declines in infant mortality and survival at older ages in response to public health improvements (Arokiasamy et al., forthcoming; Haub and Gribble 2011). By 2050, life expectancy at birth is projected to reach 74 years. Fertility rates in India have declined to 2.6 children per women, less than one-half the early 1950s rate of 5.9 children per woman (Haub and Gribble 2011).

Characteristics of Elderly Population in India

The number of elderly in India is rising rapidly. India's elderly population is estimated at 10 crores in 2011, and is projected to reach 20 crore by 2030. The proportion of elderly persons in the total population is expected to increase from 8.3 percent in 2011 to 12.4 percent in 2026.3 In this context, a few important characteristics need to be considered. In 2010, about two-third of the elderly lived in villages and nearly half were of poor socio-economic status (Lela et al, 2009). Half of the

elderly are dependents mainly due to widowhood, divorce or separation and a large number of these are females (Rajan, 2001). On the basis of number of surveys undertaken, it can be concluded that there is a high prevalence of risky behaviour by the elderly, like use of tobacco and alcohol (Mutharayappa and Bhat, 2008). About 60 per cent of the elderly depend on others for their day-to-day maintenance while less than 20 per cent elderly women and majority of elderly males, were economically independent. Amongst the economically dependent, 85 percent of men and 70 percent of women were supported by their children. Of the economically independent elderly, more than 90 percent supported one or more dependents. Table 1 shows that nearly 40 per cent of elderly with 60 per cent being males were working and the proportion was higher in rural areas as 66 per cent of rural men were working compared to 39 per cent of urban men.

Problems of the Aged:

The aged face a number of problems in present day societies. According to the well-known sociologist Rostow, the old have basically two kinds of problems. One the kind of problem that they really have and two the kind of problem that they think they have. In general the problems faced by the aged are the following: -

- 1) Loneliness: This makes them feel helpless, especially when they have lost their spouse. In the West, it is the women who are lonelier but in India it is the men who are lonelier. Social conditions are such that in India an old woman has someone to care for her i.e. son's family, daughters, other relatives and someone to talk to.
- 2) Economic insecurity: When a person retires there is a decline in his income which determines his standard of living and quality of life. If a person does not have enough savings, it becomes difficult to manage expenses often retirement. In old age medical expenses increase making elders dependent on their children for their treatment.
- 3) Physical helplessness: In old age there is a decline in physical strength, there is poor vision and loss of hearing etc. All this makes the person helpless and dependent upon others which is humiliating for the person.
- 4) Emotional problem: In the beginning retirement gives a sense or feeling of relief and relaxation. However, after sometime it creates emotional

problems. Retirement makes the individual feel useless or worthless. Unless one has some hobby or interest to keep him occupied.

5) Making new friends: This is difficult for old and they may have only a few old friends left the aged become fixed in their beliefs and views and they find it difficult to make new friends.

6) Problems in travelling: The old find it difficult to travel particularly in public transports which are mostly crowded. Only a few can afford private cars and taxis. Even in these, they cannot travel long distances.

7) Need for adequate space and living facilities: Elders spend more time in the house rather than outdoors. If the house is big with adequate space, they are comfortable. But very few can afford this type of luxury.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Hemavathi U. & Rani. B. S , (2014), have focused on the problems faced by old age people based on age, gender and types of stay, that his institution and non-institution of Tirupati town and Mannurapalli village in Andhra Pradesh State. Through the study authors have found that, there were the majority of old age people who admitted in institution where from nuclear families. Institutionalised old age it will be facing many social problems such as I'd just mental problems compared with non-institutionalised old age people. Authors have also observed that, institutionalised old age people facing many psychological problems compared non-institutionalised were as non-institutionalised old age people were facing high financial problems

2. Ali. M. A. Z. (2014), has focused on the adjustment problems of oldest people. Author has stated that there is a need for preserving the Indian joint family system. There should be mutual cooperation and understanding between new and old generations. In the opinion of author the situation of oldest people in India calls for concerted efforts of the government, NGOs, religious institutions et cetera not only to understand but also to solve the problems resulting from a greying society so that the old age people can leave a dignified and quality of life. Through the study author has focused on the emotional adjustment, social adjustment and marital adjustment of oldest people. Author has observed that, old age people staying in old age homes feel more emotional problems than those who are staying with the families.

Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature. The study is mainly based on primary data which was collected through small questionnaire. The primary data collected from the respondents have been processed and analysed by using percentage method a sample of 50 old age people (60 years onwards) was taken by using convenience sampling method. This sample was identified in the demarcated geographical area of chikkammagaluru city of karnataka state, India.

Selection of sample

A sample of 50 respondents has been selected from

various suburbs of chikkamagaluru city. The following table indicates the suburbs wise distribution of the respondents.

Limitations of the study

1. The present study is restricted only to the selected suburbs of the city
2. The reluctance on the part of few respondents to provide accurate information is limiting factor.
3. Sampling and statistical errors are not possible to eliminate because all the respondents may not answer all the questions

RESULTS

The following table shows the age profile of the selected respondents,

Table 1, Age profile of the respondents

Age group (years)	Number of Respondents	Percentage
60 to 70	35	70%
71 - 80	10	20%
Above 80 years	05	10%
total	50	100%

As per the collected primary information, majority of the respondents were belonging to the age group of 60 years to 70 years 70% 20% respondents were belonging to the age group of 71 years to 80 years and only 10% respondents were above 80 years of age.

Table 2, Gender wise distribution of the respondents

Gender	No of respondents	Percentage
Male	15	30%
Female	35	70%
total	50	100%

As per the selected sample 70% respondents were male and 30% respondents were female.

Table 3, Major problems faced by old age people

Problems	No of respondents	Percentage
Economic problems	15	30%
Psychological problems	10	20%
Health-related problems	10	20%
Accommodation related problems	10	20%
No any problem	05	10%
Total	50	100%

The above table reveals that 30% respondents face the economic problem. The economic problem arises when old age people are not able to sustain themselves financially. Therefore, lose the financial independence because of increasing competition from young generation. It is often that majority of old age people are not having a capacity to be productive or like the opportunity as they were before. We live in person respondents face psychological related problems. As

per the growing age the mindset of human being is always change. After retirement idleness is made to believe that they are not physically productive now. It exists because of infused inactivity, lack of games/tools, and withdrawal from family responsibilities etc and this has been negative emotional effects of the old age persons. As for the collected information the person respondents face the pulsing or accommodation related problems.

According to these respondents the present accommodation is not suitable, sufficient as per the current requirements. This food is people face the problem of lack of peaceful place to be in today's changing lives styles and social values and societal is like nuclear family doctor and priorities of new generation have led to increased religions towards old age people by their family members. With this isolation comes in there for the problem of housing or accommodation exists and it leads to the Fremantle quality of life of old age people of 32% respondents faced the health-related problems. During the old age phase, metabolism process slows down, and individuals become physically and mentally weak.

They are more prone to sickness, diseases et cetera. Therefore, the clear-thinking ability is reduced and diminished eyesight and they are experiencing difficulty in recalling memories; and weakness to bone diseases. 5% respondents face the problem of the abuse or ill-treatment by the family members of majority of old age people face in the abuse in terms of religions, but the real abuse and also physical abuse. Many times, old age people are used economically, emotionally and mentally for various reasons in different ways of it is observed that the one person respondents face all the above stated problems and only 10% respondents have stated that they have no any problem.

Table 4, chronic disease found among old age people

Diseases	No of respondents	Percentage
Cough and Cold Whooping	15	30%
Joint Pain, Knee pain	10	20%
Hypertension	10	20%
Heart disease	10	20%
Diabetes	05	10%
Total	50	100%

As per the information provided by the respondents, 30% of them suffer from cough and cold, whooping. Majority of the respondents suffer from joint pain and knee pain.20% respondents were associated with Hypertension, 20% were associated with heart disease and 10% are suffering from diabetes. It shows that, the prevalence of joint pain, knee pain and diabetes are much higher in metropolitan cities. The diseases among the old age people increased burden on the family members, health care takers.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Findings

1. Through the study it is found that, now a days the old age people resided in metropolitan cities like Pune are facing mainly economic problems and health related problems. Apart from these problems many old age people are suffering from psychological problems. Very few of them (4%) are not having any socio-economic problems.
2. It is found that, majority of the old age people are staying with their married son or daughter. That is they are staying in the families and with their spouses only. Due to some reasons some of them staying alone or

with relatives. The major reason of this are negligence by family members, conflict with son and daughter in law, and being widow or widower.

3. It is found that, in many families still old age people are getting respectful or normal treatment. But it should be noted that, the people (27%) who are not getting respectful treatment by their family members is not negligible.
4. It is found that, there are several causes of problems and negative attitude of old age people towards life. The major causes are conflict due to generation gap, lack of mobility, poor health conditions and feeling of loneliness. All these factors spolded the life of old age people and created negative attitude towards life.
5. It is observed through the study that, almost all the selected old age people are suffering from various diseases like knee pain, joint pain, heart disease, diabetes etc. Due to fast life style in metropolitan cities like Pune.
6. Through the study it is found that there is wide scope for social work intervention through counselling, medical care and health care, rehabilitation centre / old age homes and financial support for old age people.

CONCLUSION

Population ageing is already taking place, though gradually, in India. funded health and pension schemes before the full consequences of population ageing make themselves apparent on the fiscal. The role of partnerships between the public and private sectors, in areas such as health, education and caring for the elderly, also needs to be carefully explored. In the case of health, measures should be taken to minimize the fiscal impact of relatively expensive modern medical techniques through telemedicine. In education, private sector involvement could provide significant benefits. Elderly population is expected to rise from about 8 per cent of the total population in 2011 to about 20 per cent by 2050. There is need to protect and strengthen the institution of the family and provide such support services as would enable the family to cope with its responsibilities of taking care of the elderly. Along with proper and effective professional welfare services that need to be evolved to provide counselling services both to the elderly and their family members, it is also important to provide financial support to low-income family groups having one or more elderly persons. The rapid population ageing will necessarily bring social change and economic transformation. In view of this, a holistic approach to population ageing taking social, economic and cultural changes into consideration is needed to effectively solve the emerging problems of the elderly. Based on the existing diversities in the ageing process, it may be stated that there is a need to pay greater attention to the increasing awareness on the ageing issues and its socio-economic effects and to promote the development of policies and programmes for dealing with an ageing society.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Efforts should be made by government and NGOs for creating awareness among old age people on various government schemes or programmes.
2. There should be effective implementation of national programme for the Health Care for Elderly (NPHCE) by the government.
3. There should be establishment of day care centres by NGOs where the old age people can meet and mingle with their peers and spend their time in a socially meaningful manner.
4. There should be proper and effective

implementation of national policy and programmes for old age people.

5. There should be proper utilization of experiences and expertise of old age people for the welfare of the society, so that their negative attitude towards life can change in to positive attitude and this will help to reduce their feeling of dependence on the family members.

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