Abolition of Caste System and Alienation of the Elderly

Vilas Padhye
Asso. Prof. of Psychology Elphinstone College Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

The impermeable caste system was a huge hindrance to free will in Indian society for centuries. People could not choose professions of their choice and were restricted to family occupations. After independence from British rule, democracy was instituted and a constitution that abolished the caste system was accepted. Since then we witness the doors of education have been opened to all and people from all castes groups are taking up professions of their choice. However, it is a law of nature that whenever change occurs, there are bound to be some unintentional fallouts. It is the collective responsibility of society to address these fallouts and minimize their impact. One social group whose problems need to be addressed are the elderly in families. With the loss of traditional occupations, they are left vulnerable to the feeling of alienation. This paper explores the effect of changes in professions in families in different caste groups and the feeling of alienation among the elderly.

Introduction

Alienation comes in many forms and has been described with different references by many. It includes religious and philosophical interpretations to social and economic perspectives. Richard Schacht *et al.* (1971) have analysed the term alienation in detail in his seminal work by the same name and has presented diverse views of Hagel, Marx, the psychoanalytic theory, sociology and existentialism. For Hagel, alienation had a twofold meaning wherein the first dealt with separation between the individual and society, with which the individual was earlier closely associated. At a certain stage in life, the individual realizes his particularity and thus separates from society. In the second sense of the term, Hagel delves upon the need of the individual to surrender is particularity to reconnect with society. Marx was critical of capitalism and saw alienation as a separation between a person and what they produce. While people are naturally productive, it is the capitalist labour that dissociates a person from their product, inducing a feeling of alienation (Brenkert, 1973). Erich Fromm was inspired by Marx's approach and used the term alienation to describe separation from anything that the person disapproved. Karen Horney attempted to describe alienation as obliviousness of one's true feelings and desires, and the absence of spontaneous expression of such qualities.

Sociologists too have borrowed heavily from Marx and describe alienation from a broader societal perspective that involves delineation form social norms, traditions, values, compounded by a pop culture and leading to a sense of powerlessness and lack of solidarity. In psychological terms, alienation is identified with some deficient behaviour that needs support and counselling. Alienation is said to occur when a person withdraws from social or family interactions and feels isolated. There is a feeling of estrangement and dejection as the person feels left out of conversations, events, and decision making. This can happen across all age groups and the very feeling of being disconnected is the first step towards alienation. While the causes of

alienation range from personal to cultural, and economic to biological, this paper focuses on alienation among elderly caused by the friction arising out of abolishing the occupation-based caste system.

Indian society was divided into four impermeable castes for centuries, arranged in a hierarchical order. Although the constitution has now abolished the caste system, it still remains the mainstay of social interaction. While most of the focus has been on reforms and upliftment of the lower castes, little attention is paid to problems created by upward mobility within each caste group. While there is not an iota of doubt that the caste system needs to be abolished, the contention of this paper is to also focus on the alleviation of problems within caste groups, focussing on the elderly.

While there are many views and theories about the origin of the caste system, one prominent occurrence was the Balutedari system, especially in Maharashtra. In his book "A History of Village Community in Western India" A. S. Altekar (Cadell, 1928) refutes the influence of either the Aryan or Dravidian cultures as contended by many scholars, and proposes that the system was prevalent all over the country even before the Christian era. Commenting on the origin of the caste system, Trautmann (1982), says that the 'central conundrum of Indian social ideology' lay in the fact that in the Vedic times, the brahmin had to be dependent on the king for livelihood, and this made him accept physical gifts from the king. However, the gifts embodied the sins of the king and his kingdom which got involuntarily transferred to the brahmin. This situation was overcome by converting the gifts into a mere 'fee' for ritual services, whereby the donor (king) would interiorize the sins and would cleanse them with the help of rituals. The brahmin supposedly relieved the king of his sins, albeit for a fee, and was no longer burdened with them. Later, it was only natural for all people to follow the king and accept the brahmin's ascendance in spiritual matters.

Kolff and Van Der Hoek (1992) have quoted Heesterman who attributes the genesis of the caste system in India to the segregation of ritual power from the king to the brahmin in post-Vedic period. Heesterman supports Trautmann's theory and calls the transition of ritual power from king to brahmin the 'axial-breakthrough' that led to the formation of the caste system. Dumont (1966), whose seminal work on the caste system in India is widely appreciated, has termed the hierarchical structure of the caste system as the 'essential principle' in Indian society. This principle is pervasive and encompasses all the castes. He has also proposed the concept of 'replication' of the dominant social order by those within the excluded communities at the bottom of the hierarchy as an attempt to gain consensus and acceptability in society.

Parkin (2009) agrees with Dumont on the attributional approach to the caste system. Dumont says that the caste system is a system of ideas and values which is a formal comprehensible rational system. His analysis is based on a single principle of the opposition of pure and impure. This opposition underlies hierarchy which implies superiority of the pure and inferiority of impure. This principle also underlies separation, which means pure and impure must be kept separate.

Krishnan (2001) explains that the traditional Indian (Hindu) concept of *varna*, initially placed in a religious-spiritual context, was presumably meant to highlight the division of labour within society. Krishnan quotes from several ancient texts that *varna* is also mentioned as a criterion of deservingness in the distribution of ancestral property. In this context, Chousalkar (1986) says that soon the *varna* concept got extended into political and social philosophy in the form of a caste hierarchy. This led to the

stratification of society along dominant-subordinate societal dimensions, legitimizing the exploitative attitude of the so-called upper castes towards the so-called lower castes.

Whatever the nature and origins of the caste system in India, that it was discriminatory and suppressive is beyond doubt. A host of social reformers worked hard to demolish the caste system, notable among them being Mahatma Gandhi, Dr.Babasaheb Ambedkar, and Jyotirao Phule. After India gained independence from British rule, the country adopted a new constitution that provided equal rights to all citizens. The doors of education were now open to all, and reservations in jobs were introduced to create a level playing field for the underprivileged. All this brought new aspirations within the lower castes and they embarked on an untrodden road to upward mobility. Children were attending school and getting into higher education. Many were moving towards cities and getting jobs in government and private sectors. New houses and vehicles were being purchased and most parameters ranging from health to income were rising. Overall, there was much to celebrate for the lower castes who wanted to leave behind the scars of oppression and move along the path of progress.

While personal and social life was changing, so were dynamics within the family. With education and jobs on their side, most youth were giving up on traditional family business and moving to newer pastures that required new skill sets. Not only were the new jobs offering more money and security, they were bereft of the stigma associated with traditional occupations. This drove the youth away from the work of their forefathers, and in many cases made them abhor it.

Whenever change occurs, it is not without consequences. Change involves movement, movement brings about friction, and friction creates noise and heat. Although laws of physics may not be applicable in toto to social settings, there is hardly any dispute that change needs to be managed carefully, as it could also have unforeseen and avoidable consequences. One such fallout has been the impact of social change on the generation caught between traditional occupations and the new jobs of their children. This generation finds itself alienated as its own skills are redundant and new skills are difficult to accrue. Traditional knowledge is replaced by new technology which is incomprehensible. Hence, it would be worthwhile to study the impact of this social change on the elderly. The present study aims to investigate the fallout of this social and occupational change on the elderly with a focus on four major caste groups – viz. the brahmins, vaishyas, other backward castes, and scheduled castes.

Method

A 10 item questionnaire was prepared for measuring alienation that covered topics relevant to matters in family settings and social outlook. The questions were framed in the local language Marathi, although an English translation is presented here for the sake of academic purposes.

The survey was conducted in Amravati city in Maharashtra among families belonging to four major groups of castes as mentioned in the table. Respondents were males above sixty years of age living with their son/s whowere graduates with a minimum annual income of 5 lakh rupees. A purposive sample of 40 respondents was generated. Given the specific nature of the study, randomization was not possible. After forming rapport, a 10 item questionnaire was read out in Marathi language and additional explanation was provided wherever needed. This was deemed necessary as

the respondents were mostly illiterate and would be more comfortable expressing themselves informally than in a lengthy structured questionnaire. The responses were noted down and are presented in Table 1.1 below.

Results

The responses were noted and are compiled in Table 1.1. One mark is assigned to every item that shows acceptance (Yes), while no score is given if there is a rejection (No). It may be noted that item numbers 9 and 10 are scored in reverse order where a score is assigned to a response of 'No'.

Table 1.1   Responses of elderly males from four castes/categories on alienation

Sr. No.	Question	Scores			
		Brahmin	Vaishya	OBC	SC
1	Do you think your son has prospered better through education and job than the traditional family profession?	10	8	10	10
2	Do your children share their office/work related problems with you?	5	10	1	2
3	Do your children seek your help in financial matters?	7	10	3	4
4	Were you consulted before buying a house/property?	6	10	2	3
5	Do you feel social norms and traditions have changed drastically in your family?	8	8	4	3
6	Do you have enough friends and acquaintances visiting you?	4	7	1	2
7	Do your grandchildren listen to stories from you?	8	7	3	3
8	Has your children's education/job enhanced your image in the community?	10	10	10	10
9	*Do you feel less important in the family than your father felt in his old age?	6	8	1	3
10	*Do you think your children would have listened to you more keenly than now if they had continued your	5	10	2	2

	profession?				

* scoring is reversed for item number 9 and 10

Table 1.2   Mean and SD for different castes/categories for alienation

Category	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brahmins	6.90	1.37
Vaishyas	8.80	0.79
OBC	3.70	1.06
SC	4.20	1.32
Total	5.90	2.37

Table 1.3   One-way ANOVA for differences between castes/categories for alienation

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Category	171.40	3.00	57.13	42.67	0.00

Table 1.4   Post-hoc comparisons for differences between castes/categories for alienation

Multiple Comparisons						
Score Tukey HSD						
(I) Category	(J) Category	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
A	B	-1.90	0.52	0.00	-3.29	-0.51
	C	3.20	0.52	0.00	1.81	4.59
	D	2.70	0.52	0.00	1.31	4.09
B	A	1.90	0.52	0.00	0.51	3.29
	C	5.10	0.52	0.00	3.71	6.49
	D	4.60	0.52	0.00	3.21	5.99
C	A	-3.20	0.52	0.00	-4.59	-1.81
	B	-5.10	0.52	0.00	-6.49	-3.71
	D	-0.50	0.52	0.77	-1.89	0.89
D	A	-2.70	0.52	0.00	-4.09	-1.31
	B	-4.60	0.52	0.00	-5.99	-3.21
	C	0.50	0.52	0.77	-0.89	1.89

It can be seen that there is a significant difference in the alienation among the four caste groups $F(3, 36)= 42.67$, $p<0.01$, with the vaishyas (M=8.8, SD=0.79) having the least alienation, followed by brahmins (M=6.9, SD=1.37). Alienation is quite high among the SCs(M=4.2, SD=1.32), and highest among the OBCs(M=3.7, SD=1.06). Post-hoc analysis using Tukey's test shows a significant difference between the alienation among brahmins and vaishyaas with all other caste groups. However, the alienation between OBCs and SCs is not found to be significant.

Discussion

It is interesting to note that the elderly among the vaishyashave the least alienation among the four caste groups followed by thebrahmins. Elderly among the scheduled castes (SC) have higher alienation, with elderly among the other backward castes (OBC) having the highest alienation. The reason could be found in the traditional socioeconomic structure and activities of these castes. The findings are consistent with other findings where old citizens from lower socioeconomic strata and lower education were found to have higher feelings of alienation (Durant & Christian,1990; Kent,1996; Lawson, 1978).

The vaishyas are traditional business communities that have family-run businesses. Of all the four caste groups, these communities are still holding on to traditional businesses to a large extent. It is seen that the patriarch in the family has a hold on property and business. It could be for this reason that the elderly still hold control over their family and command respect. For this reason, their alienation could be minimum.

The brahmins moved out family occupation of religious rituals quite early. They were among the first to take up salaried jobs under British rule and have continued to do so for decades. Hence the elderly in these families may have well adapted or reconciled to the fact that they have to adjust with their children and their professions in years to come. The present elderly generation was occupied in jobs that their fathers were not into, and hence had an idea that they would have to move on and allow their children to do what they wanted to do. This might have prepared them to make adjustments.

The friction seems to be the most in the lower strata of society. This is because they were most affected by the change in socioeconomic structures. Although the changes were positive, it would not be prudent to suggest that there would be no stresses involved. While the children went to school and got jobs, they saw themselves as equal to the rest of the society despite rifts in social strata. The elderly in these caste groups were mostly uneducated and confined to traditional occupations. Moving to cities with their children posed their own challenges. Adaptation is always demanding. There was an added stressor within the family and that was in the secondary role that the elderly now had to play, something they were not quite prepared for.

Looking at the responses to the individual questions, one can see that while the elderly from the lower castes supported education and are happy that their children had access to it, they score poorly on personal-financial matters.Most of the elderly feel left out in the family when it comes to financial matters like buying a new house or a television set. The reason could well be that the children realize that their parents (fathers) do not possess the technical or market knowhow in such matters and hence are not properly consulted. But that is leading to alienation among the elderly. The

difference in financial matters is very stark in the subgroups. The business class is seen to be consulted by their children as the elderly mostly hold control over financial matters. Among the brahmins, it could be that higher levels of education persisted and hence the elderly generation had some insights into the day-to-day financial matters. It seems evident that control over money-matters, or the lack of it, influence the feeling of alienation. Alienation incidentally has also been defined in legal terms as the transfer of the ownership of property rights. Although the legal meaning is not inferred here, somewhere there transfer of ownership rights have taken place. This leads to a feeling of powerlessness especially among elderly males, as they see no control over the outcomes of money matters, which until now were under their command.

What compounds to the problem is the feeling that these very people were once recognized and appreciated for their skills in the villages. Hence the fall from glory to worthlessness hurts even more. While the elderly generation is happy to see their children get education and jobs, there is a nagging feeling that their fathers had a comparatively better life.These issues have been neglected socially and there is little effort being put in to address them. Mechanization, new goods and services, the overpowering role of e-commerce and technology have all added to the decline of traditional occupations. This is not to suggest that changes should be reversed, but rather that traditional knowledge needs to be incorporated in new business models wherever possible. Year of wisdom is suddenly made irrelevant. This is a huge blow to self-esteem.

Alienation form grandchildren is another important factor that was observed in the study. Most elderly regretted the emotional gap between the generations and longed for more interaction and association. During interviews, many felt that they could not help their grandchildren with studies and homework and regretted it. Others blamed television and smartphones as a reason why their grandchildren had distanced themselves from grandparents. It should be noted that in traditional culture a huge premium is placed on grandchildren, and the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is considered crucial in the transmission of culture. An emotional-social distance from grandchildren is not just about lack of love and empathy, it has a direct bearing on culture and values of the subgroup. It should be noted that every caste or sub-caste in India has its own traditions and cultures including community saints, idols, and avatars. These sub-cultures and traditions are passed from one generation to the other through songs and stories. With urbanization, these cultures have almost vanished and those who have seen them in their heydays feel guilty of not being able to preserve. Cultural estrangement is caused by alienation from established values. It is a feeling that many expressed with strong words of self-criticism.

A certain communication gap with children on work-related matters is observed most among lower caste groups than business groups. This is because business communities have had a steady transformation from money-lending system to banking for instance, and Internet banking now. It has not affected the family structure or the role of the family patriarch. But domain knowledge has changed drastically for the other groups. Elders lamented that their sons almost shut them up by saying 'you won't understand this' even in times of crises. They were never used to seeing this happen with earlier generations. In fact, the father figures were the most sought after for advice in times of crises given the wisdom that they had accumulated from years of experience.

Normlessness is another category of alienation where people feel disconnected from societal norms or conventions. When asked about changes in traditions in the family, the lower strata seems to be most affected. It should be noted that most of the traditions and norms in society developed as a direct consequence of occupations and trade. Most of the festivals can be seen associated with customs that are related to the *balutedari* system. With a change in the occupation of the earning member of the family, these customs are difficult to follow. Women too had their own customs in villages based on locally available resources like flowers, fruits, berries, water sources, agricultural equipment, occupational tools etc. Not only have these customs been left behind, new customs have replaced them. One elderly person complained of the lack of storage of food grains in the house, which should be a primary concern. The family now bought ration on a monthly basis, which is a both a compulsion due to limited space and convenience due to easy access to stores nearby. A simple change in norms can become a cause of discomfort and normlessness.

Isolation is caused by loneliness or exclusion from social groups including family. The schedule of employees is bound by their work hours and the children by school timings. Earlier, the place of work and home would be the same or nearby. But now the family members set off in the morning only to return late in the evening. Additionally, each member has his or her own social group that is mostly disconnected from each other. This leads to isolation of the elderly due to a lack of interaction or inclusiveness. Matters are further compounded as they find it difficult to make as close friends in the locality as they had back in their villages. It is seen that such isolation is minimum in the business community as compared to the lower strata. One reason is that most of the relations in business communities serve a dual purpose – they are both family relations as well as business associates. Hence there is minimum isolation.

In personal interviews, many elderly expressed unhappiness over their children and grandchildren being ashamed of them being illiterate. They felt children avoided taking them to social functions or introducing them to acquaintances who visited their homes. They also felt that their children also expressed frustration of their lack of understanding of 'modern' customs, while the elderly were in sharp criticism of modernization as they believed it alienated family members from each other. 'The family is no longer together for dinner' was one of their prime grievances. Food and kitchen for them were binding factors for both the family and the culture. While some of these issues are not directly related to the changes in family occupations, or a direct fallout of it, these smaller issues nevertheless cause nostalgia that their earlier life was perhaps better than what it is now.

It is important not to see alienation as an isolated feeling as it is associatedwith a host of disorders. Research has shown that alienation leads to loneliness, and one important fallout of loneliness and alienation is depression. It also increases the risk of personality disorders and Alzheimer's disease. What is worthy of nothing is that effective life skills that help deal with many negative feelings like alienation are not as helpful for those over the age of 70 (Mushtaq*et al.*, 2014).Loneliness was found to be associated with depression in the elderly age group in many studies (Nolen-Hoeksema& Ahrens, 2002; Singh &Misra, 2009). Social disengagement caused by leaving the occupation or neighbourhood were seen as contributing factors to loneliness in older people (Heikkinen *et al*., 1995). A study by Max *et al*. (2005) found that even perceived loneliness was a significant factor to the effect of

depression on mortality. Social support is found to lower morbidity rates among the elderly as it improves self-esteem and a sense of belongingness, while also provides a purpose to life (Banjare*et al.*, 2015), all adversely affected by alienation.

In India, elderly persons (60 years and above) constitute 8.6% of the total population (India Census 2011), which is projected to reach 19% by 2050. In a study covering 51 studies from 16 states in India, the prevalence of depression among the elderly was found to be at a staggering 34.4%(Agarwal *et al.*, 2016). With better medical facilities and care, the life expectance among humans is increasing, but equal attention needs to be paid to the quality of life. Taking into account the alienating factors in the lives of the elderly, the role of family and community cannot be ignored when we talk about quality of life. Not only under normal living conditions, but treatments for depression that combine traditional therapeutic approaches with community resources are seen to be more effective (Arean*et al.*, 2005).As more and more people enter the old age bracket in our country, depression among the elderly could be a major disease burden in the coming decades.

Among the major risk factors for depression among the elderly, Fiske *et al.* (2009) found isolation, and loss of income as two important risk factors. Further, the factors are interrelated as loss of income precipitates isolation further. Both these factors are seen to affect the elderly in the lower caste groups the most in the present sample. The government is not entirely unaware of this problem, and it has introduced various schemes under the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) including the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme. Various schemes have been launched for health insurance, life insurance, and pension too. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 was brought in under which a senior citizen (above 60 years) can approach the courts for maintenance from his adult children or legal heirs if neglected. The definition of "children" has now been expanded in an amendment to the act (2018) to include the daughter-in-law and son-in-law also. While this does act as a scaffolding to thefinancial security of the elderly, no law can remove the feeling of alienation. This can be removed only through a broader understanding of the issue through education.

One interesting development over the years is the influence of Self-Help Groups (SHG) on the socioeconomic landscape. SHGs and microfinance initiatives have ushered in many positive changes among the disadvantaged and underprivileged. There are SHGs that are dedicated for elderly people which provide a very good platform for engagement and showcasing skills. They offer monitory benefits and engage people for a common cause that lessons the feeling of alienation. The feeling of being relevant, useful, and productive itself is a huge boost to self-esteem. Recognizing the huge hidden asset among the elderly and the need to engage them, the government has proposed to roll out the National Action Plan for Senior Citizens (NAPSrC) from April 2020 with 'Action Groups Aimed at Social Reconstruction' (AGRASR). The plan is supposed to function as a self-help group across the country in both rural and urban areas with as many as 15,000 groups for engaging three lakh elders between the ages of 60 to 69 years. The initiative is to engage the elderly in activities like tutoring children, government school students, running creches for children, helping patients in nearby hospitals and adopting any social asset for maintenance with the local body'sapproval. The AGRASR groups will actively work on the project for at least four days a week and will receive an honorarium of Rs

50,000 each group in two instalments every year (Pandit, 2020). Such initiatives are aimed at inclusiveness and recognizing elderly as having experience and potential to perform rather than as burnt-outs. While these initiatives are welcome, some effort also needs to be put in education and counselling on the domestic front. With positive engagement both within and outside the family, we can look for reduced alienation, and consequent mental problems like depression among the elderly.

In conclusion, while we bring about positive changes in society, it must be remembered that every change has some unavoidable fallout. Society has to anticipate these fallouts and plan to cushion the disadvantaged. Social scientists have a special role to play in this, and psychologists within the group could be of greater help. Family and community counselling is holding ground in India, and it needs to address these issues. There is a certain block we encounter when dealing with sensitive issues, which may be due to fear of social backlash. But with mental hygiene and the larger social good being our priorities, we need to raise these issues and seek academic solutions.

Limitations and Scope: The present study is based on a small sample and it would be interesting to study the findings across a larger cross section of social groups. The survey sheet had only ten items and a more comprehensive data could be gathered. Other parameters like health and family size can also be taken into account. Elderly women need special attention as they have different issues that need separate consideration.Prior research points out to this difference where elderly women are seen to have higher alienation than men (Balachandran *et al*., 2007). Education and income levels of the younger generations also need to be considered.

References:

Agarwal, A., Lubet, A., Mitgang, E., Mohanty, S., &Bloom, D (2016). Population aging in India: facts, issues, and options.Bonn (Discussion Papers). Report No.: 10162. Available on: https://ideas.repec.org/p/gdm/wpaper/13216.html

Arean, P., Gum, A., McCulloch, C., Bostrom, A., Gallagher-Thompson, D., &Thompson, L. (2005).Treatment of depression in low-income older adults. *Psychol. Aging*, 5 (20):601–9.

Balachandran, M., Raakhee, A. S., & Sam Sananda Raj. H. (2007). Life Satisfaction and Alienation of Elderly Males and Females. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, 33(2), 157-160.

Banjare, P., Dwivedi, R., & Pradhan, J. (2015). Factors associated with the life satisfaction amongst the rural elderly in Odisha, India. *Health and quality of life outcomes*, *13*, 201. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12955-015-0398-y

Brenkert, G. (1973). Schacht on Marx's Concept of Alienation. Studies in Soviet Thought, 13(3/4), 311-320. Retrieved February 20, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/20098576

Cadell, P. (1928). *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,* (3), 682-687. Retrieved February 8, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/25221401

Chousalkar, A. S. (1986). *Social and political implications of the concepts of justice and dharma*. Delhi: Mittal Publications.

Dumont, L. (1966). Homo Hierarchicuc: Essai sur le Systeme des castes. English (1970) translation by George Weidenfield& Nicholson Ltd., London.

Durant, T., & Christian, O. (1990). Socio-Economic Predictors of Alienation among the Elderly. *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 31(3), 205–217. https://doi.org/10.2190/L0TV-DXXC-Y32W-H0HC

Fiske, A., Wetherell, J., &Gatz, M. (2009). Depression in older adults. *Annu Rev ClinPsychol*;5:363–89.

Heikkinen, R., Berg, S., &Avland, K. (1995). Depressive symptoms in late life. *Journal of Cross Cultural Gerontology*; 10:315–330.

Kent, D. (1966). Social and Cultural Factors in Influencing the Mental Health of the Aged. *American Journal of Orthopsychology*, 36, pp. 680–685.

Kolff, D. H. A., & Van Der Hoek, A. W. (1992). *Ritual, state, and history in south Asia: Essays in honour of J.C. Heesterman*. Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden.

Krishnan, L. (2001). Justice perception and allocation rule preferences: Does social disadvantage matter? *Psychology & Developing Societies, 13 (2)*, 193-219.

Lawson, R. (1978). Thirty Years of Research on the Subjective Well-Being of Older Americans. *Journal of Gerontology*, 33, pp. 109–125.

Max, L., David, J.,Jacobijn, G., Aartjan, T., Ross van der Mast,& Rudi, G (2005). Is depression in old age fatal only when people feel lonely? *American Journal Psychiatry*;162:178–180.

Mushtaq, R., Shoib, S., Shah, T., &Mushtaq, S. (2014). Relationship between loneliness, psychiatric disorders and physical health ? A review on the psychological aspects of loneliness. *Journal of clinical and diagnostic research :JCDR*, *8*(9), WE01–WE4. https://doi.org/10.7860/JCDR/2014/10077.4828

Nolen-Hoeksema, S., &Ahrens, C. (2002). Age differences and similarities in the correlates of depressive symptoms. *Psychol. Aging*;17:116–24.

Pandit, A. (2020, Feb 17). Government mulls army of elderly to tutor kids, take care of sick. *The Times of India*, https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/govt-mulls-army-of-elderly-to-tutor-kids-take-care-of-sick/articleshow/74166561.cms

Parkin, R. (2009). *Louis Dumont and hierarchical opposition*., New York: Bergham Books.

Pilania, M., Yadav, V., Bairwa, M. *et al.* (2019). Prevalence of depression among the elderly (60 years and above) population in India, 1997–2016: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Public Health* 19, 832 .https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-019-7136-z

Schacht, Richard &Kaufmann,Walter (1971). *Alienation*. Lon: Allen & Unwin

Singh, A., &Misra, N. (2009). Loneliness, depression and sociability in old age. *Industrial psychiatry journal*, *18*(1), 51–55. https://doi.org/10.4103/0972-6748.57861

Trautmann, T. R. (1982). *Dravidian Kinship*. London: Cambridge University Press.