

A study of Socio- economic and health challenges of aged women In Bangalore city

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Abstract

The population of aged people in India is increasing continually. The 2011 census reveals that out of 250 million households in India, one third of them have at least one elderly person. The aged are found across all regions, religions and economic strata of the society. According to a UN Report, the number of elders, who have attained the age of 60 will increase by 360 percent forming almost 20 percent of the total population in about five decades i.e. from 2000 to 2050. Further it is also projected that the women would far exceed the number of elderly men resulting in feminization of the elderly population in India. Generally, older women are subjected to gender based discrimination on the one hand and mental & physical stress on account of being aged itself, on the other hand.

On account of urbanization, migration and technology development, and the emergent trends towards nuclear family norms, the elders are regarded as a liability. This has resulted in higher dependency ratio bringing in more economic pressure on the work population. This attitudinal score result in mental stress and frustration on the part of the elders resulting in them either leaving homes and living in old age homes, or silently waiting for their end.

Introduction :

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Aged people the Scenario:

According to the census of the world, at present, the population of the aged is 12.3% which is above the age of 60 years. This will become 22% by the end of 2050. This statistics shows that the number of aged becomes twice or thrice of the present because they are getting more and more benefits or aids from the government.

The children and the aged number is 7.3% in world. This gives pressure on the economy of the employees. According to the National Commission Report on the census of population, the aged are 6.1% in 2001, the same figure has become 8.3% in 2011, 9.3% in 2016 and will become 10.7% by 2021 and 12.4% by the year 2016. Kerala state has more aged men and women in India. According to population census of 2011, Kerala state has 20 millions of aged and is in the first place similarly Punjab and Himachal Pradesh occupy the place of 2nd & 3rd respectively. Every year, through-out the world, 58 millions of aged are observing their 60th birth-day celebrations.

The aged were getting honor, love, Trust etc. since the ancient period. The aged men and women were honored culturally, socially, economically, politically and also at family level. But now-a day's youths think "the aged are worthless" in doing any kind of work. This is due to globalization, industrialization and private sector. The joint-family system has divided into single family due to urbanization, industrialization, modernization, western civilization etc. and the aged has been completely forgotten. This neglect of the aged does not merely belongs to any of the caste, religion, sub-caste, faction of group, but it is of omnipresent.

The aged and the feminist Perspective:

The feminist thinkers argue is favor of employment of women. Because the working women gets equality and development. But the aged women with lack of work is forced to live on the whims and fancy of members of the family. Similarly the gender rules will be framed socially but not with genetics.

Merry dove in her work "the perfect age of man's life" says that "old age" is fully ripened with experience of life and it is full of fully ripened thoughts. According to **Judith Battler** (1993) it is the change of the age of the women socially and culturally.

Eldon (2002) says that we have to consider the difference between men and women during "the old age". The males do not face physical pain while, female gets more pain from the stage of menopause disturbance and with the hormonal changes.

According to **SimandaBova** says old age is based on sex, species, and religion and the whole civilization has failed in the attempt of up-lifting the old age people.

According to feminist perspective, the abuse of females, especially in their old age results in inferiority complex.

Welfare Program of the Government:

The UNO has undertaken a number of studies through survey in 1982 to sensitize the world respect to the special needs & problems of the old age. The year 1999 is the international year of the “old age”.

The government has undertaken many steps towards the welfare of the old age people such as the senior citizens Rights, the laws to look after the old aged people, adaption laws of the Hindu's, Fostering laws of 1950, economic based Regulations of 1991 Warden's Protection, Fostering and senior citizens, protection *khayide* of 2007, etc. The Central and State governments have undertaken several programmes. The role of NGO's cannot be underestimated. The aged are suffering from two main problems. Firstly, lack of financial support and secondly the ill-health. The problem of Dementia is very important among many problems of the old aged people over 7.7 millions of old aged people are suffering from these diseases, which is more among females as compared to males.

Review of literature:

1. **Dr. C.G. Keshava Murthy**, (2011) in his books “*muppinallikaduvamasyagalu*” has traced five subjects of despair. They are:

- i. Diseases
- ii. Disabilities
- iii. Depression
- iv. Dyeing
- v. Death

The aged are more scared about disease rather than the death. Accordingly menopause results in the mental stress and physical health which affects the aged women. The women in India hesitate to take medical aid to minimize the ailment related to menopause unlike their western counter parts.

But the woman of India retreat for the treatment because they think of the future side effects of it. He has illustrated the definite administrative and management arrangements made by “Help age India” at the national and international level. The china has adopted “one child” policy to remove the overpopulation but the youths have to look after four old aged persons along with their own child.

2. **Dr. C.R. Chandrasekhar**, (2011) in his book entitled “*ArogyaAanarogyaiAikyeNimmade*” has explained more about the disease called “Alzheimer's”. The Neurologist by name Dr “Aloysius Alzheimer of Germany in the year 1906, has recorded the physical and mental changes of the old age persons. The shrinking of memory and knowledge, loosing the skills etc. will be the causes of the disease. This is found in the persons of 65 years old at about 10% of the aged. It can be seen in the persons of 80-85 years more so among women than in men. The diseases in hereditary, along with the mental stress.

3. **RemaNagarjuan** ,(2014) in her book entitled “**15 million elderly Indians live all alone**” says that in the state of Andhra Pradesh and Tamilnadu the aged live in old age homes, of which 1/3 rd are females. The aged above the age of 60 years are leading

lonely life. Most of the time, though they live in family, they lack the family support. According to the censuses of 2011, out of 250 million aged people 27% are living with the family in the rural areas whereas out of 28 lakhs aged in the urban areas only 3.7% are living under the family care & support.

4. **IrudayanRajan**, (2006) in his work titled “**population ageing and health in India**”. Says that the governments alone have the responsibility to safeguard the old people and their health. The old age people will have the fundamental rights to seek health and equality in a society. The aged population is increasing by 10% in every 10 years. The youths should utilize the healthy aged persons for the betterment of country and the family as material sources.

He says that instead of treating their parents as liabilities, they can be given the status of guardians of their children, so that the aged will feel their worthiness and also the children will get the help when they are away from home for their work. The related literature on the aged people reveals the socio-economic profile, their health conditioned their status in the family relationships. The aged are basically dependent on their children to meet their requirements. Hence they are regarded as liabilities.

The main disease faced by the aged is dementia, Alzheimer, menopause and age related disabilities. The mental stress and loneliness is a common condition faced by the aged both in the rural and urban areas, although it is more in the latter.

The scope of the study:

Hence there is a need for an in-depth study on socio-economic profile of the aged their health issues, the family relationships, inter-generational interactions and the societal attitude towards the aged women.

Bangalore city has been taken for the present study. Bangalore is the capital of Karnataka state. This is the third famous city in India. This has earned fame in the world in the area of information technology. The population of Bangalore city is 9,621,551 as per the census of 2011 and having 198 wards. The total population of the old age people in Bangalore is about 21,05,542 and Bangalore has been divided into east, west, north and south. The aged women to the tune of 20% will be selected from all the 4 divisions.

Objectives:

1. To study the social, economic and Health status of the aged women of Bangalore city.
2. To trace the differences between the Day care Centers and old age homes of the Bangalore city.
3. To analyse the life-style of the aged women living in the house-hold, and old age homes..
4. To examine whether how the privilege given by the Central and State governments, are used by the aged women in Bangalore city.
5. To study about status of aged women across different economic categories.

Hypothesis :

1. The aged women of Bangaluru city are psychologically suffering in their families.
2. The aged women of Bangaluru city spend most of their time watching the television.
3. The aged women in Bangaluru city have completely denied their rights and are working as house-maids.
4. The aged woman in Bangalore usually visits the public Parks, matta's and temples to relieve themselves of their mental stress and loneliness.
5. The aged women lack proper medical care due to indifferent attitude of their children.

Research Methods:

The present study will be based on both primary and secondary data. The study will be conducted in Bangalore city. The respondents will be drawn from the households and also the old age homes In Feminist Perspective. A cross sectional analysis will be conducted representing different groups by religion, educational level and economic status.

In view of the ever increasing old age population, especially women, the present study will help to draw policy recommendations for the enhancement of welfare of the older women, so that they can lead a healthy life with contentment.

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