



A PSYCHO SOCIAL STUDY ON SENIOR CITIZENS LIVING IN OLD AGE HOME

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ABSTRACT

The research presents qualitative analysis of psycho social conditions of senior citizens living in old age home. The paper examined causes for joining old age home and its impact on their mind. Among such causes some of them have joined with their own interest and living happily and most of them have been admitted by their family members. The paper also discussed some major steps taken by government and NGOs in suppressing this problem and also used some social work interventions like-counseling, psycho therapy, recreational activities, ecological approach and strength based approach. It is highly advocated in this paper that the Social worker, counselors and care takers should be highly committed to solve the psychological problems of elderly persons.

Key words: Senior Citizen, Psycho-Social Conditions, Social Work Interventions.

INTRODUCTION

Aging is one of the important stages of human beings. Man will face many problems in his life cycle, but problems related to aging are unavoidable and ridden phase of life. The elder persons in the society face a number of problems due to absence of assured and sufficient income to

support themselves for their healthcare and other social securities. Problems of aging usually appear after the age of 60 years and most important among them are psycho social problems. Many social welfare agencies are trying to provide good environment with more facilities but most of them have failed to reduce the psycho social problems of aged. Here we tried to find out realities of aged people with empirical touch to understand their psycho social problems, their expectation and remedies with the help of social work approach. Most common disability among the aged persons was locomotors disability and visual disability. The trend clearly reveals that ageing will emerge as major social challenge in the future; and vast resources will be required towards the support, service, care and treatment of the elderly persons. Exploring psycho-social problems is utmost importance as this age is characterized by feeling of loneliness, fear and depression, isolation from themselves, unpleasant thoughts and negative feelings.

Meaning of Psycho-Social Conditions

Psycho Condition means a mental condition in which the qualities of a state are relatively constant even though the state itself may be dynamic.

Social condition is the situation you have in society because of your income, your occupation or your level of education. For example you are retired, homeless, a student, or a recipient of social assistance or employment insurance. Social condition is a prohibited ground of discrimination and harassment.

Meaning of Old age

Old age should be understood as a whole because it is simultaneously a biological phenomenon with psychological consequences once certain behaviors are pointed out as characteristics of the old age. As in every human situation, old age has an existential dimension that modifies people's relations with time generating changes in their relations with the world and with their own story. Thus, old age should not be understood in any other way than in its wholeness; and also as a cultural fact.

In this sense, defining old age is difficult mainly when one desires to be healthy while aging, as everyone currently wishes for themselves and for everybody else. Therefore, it should be understood in its wholeness, in its multiple dimensions once it is a moment in the biological process, but it is still a social and cultural fact. It should also be understood as a phase in the life

cycle where, as chronologic age advances, there are modifications at a bio-psycho-social level that affect the relations of individuals with their social context.

A man's life is normally divided into five stages namely: infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age. People are said to be senior citizens when they have reached sixty years of age because those are the ages at which most people retire from work.

These problems may be divided under 5 heads

1. Physiological Problems:

Old age is a period of physical decline. Even if one does not become sans eyes, sans teeth, sans everything, right away, one does begin to slow down physically. The physical condition depends partly upon hereditary constitution, the manner of living and environmental factors. Vicissitudes of living, faulty diet, malnutrition, infectious, intoxications, gluttony, inadequate rest, emotional stress, overwork, endocrine disorders and environmental conditions like heat and cold are some of the common secondary causes of physical decline.

2. Psychological Problems:

Mental disorders are very much associated with old age. Older people are susceptible to psychotic depressions. The two major psychotic disorders of older people are senile dementia (associated with cerebral atrophy and degeneration) and psychosis with cerebral arterio sclerosis (associated with either blocking or ruptures in the cerebral arteries). It has been observed that these two disorders account for approximately 80% of the psychotic disorders among older people in the civilized societies.

3. Emotional Problem:

Decline in mental ability makes them dependent. They no longer have trust in their own ability or judgements but still they want to tighten their grip over the younger ones. They want to get involved in all family matters and business issues. Due to generation gap the youngsters do not pay attention to their suggestion and advice. Instead of developing a sympathetic attitude towards the old, they start asserting their rights and power. This may create a feeling of deprivation of their dignity and importance.

Loss of spouse during old age is another hazard. Death of a spouse creates a feeling of loneliness and isolation. The negligence and indifferent attitude of the family members towards the older people creates more emotional problems.

4. Social Problems:

Older people suffer social losses greatly with age. Their social life is narrowed down by loss of work associated, death of relatives, friends and spouse and weak health which restricts their participation in social activities. The home becomes the centre of their social life which gets confined to the interpersonal relationship with the family members. Due to loss of most of the social roles they once performed, they are likely to be lonely and isolated severe chronic health problem enable them to become socially isolated which results in loneliness and depression.

5. Financial Problem:

Retirement from service usually results in loss of income and the pensions that the elderly receive are usually inadequate to meet the cost of living which is always on the rise. With the reduced income they are reversed from the state of “Chief bread winner to a mere dependent” though they spend their provident fund on marriages of children, acquiring new property, education of children and family maintenance. The diagnosis and treatment of their disease created more financial problem for old age.

Old age is a period of physical deterioration and social alienation in some cases, loss of spouse, friends, Job, property and physical appearance. In old age physical strength deteriorates, mental stability diminishes, financial power becomes bleak and eye sight suffers a setback. It is a period of disappointment, dejection, disease, repentance and loneliness.

Laws related to protect the interests of senior citizens

2011 census of India demonstrated that aged people in India have crossed over 104 million and most of the Indian parents expect their children to look after in their old age, but due to many reasons like globalization, modernization, industrialization and decline in ethical values elder persons are admitted to old age home in large number. To protect the rights and interests of senior citizens national and international agencies have passed many legislations like- “UN Principles of Ageing” was passed in 1982, to promote rights of senior citizens. Indian government has passed The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act 1956, Criminal Procedure Code 1973(section 125) under these acts parents can claim for maintenance from their children. The National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP) was announced in January 1999, The International Day for Older Persons (IDOP) is being observed on 1st October every year since 2005, The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007, The Division has been implementing a Central Sector Scheme, "Integrated Programme for Older Persons" (IPOP)

since 1992 the objective of improving the quality of life of senior citizens by providing basic amenities like shelter, food, medical care and entertainment opportunities etc. The following projects are being assisted under the IPOP Scheme:

1. Maintenance of Old Age Homes;
2. Maintenance of Respite Care Homes;
3. Running of Multi Service Canters for Older Persons;
4. Mobile Medicare Unit;
5. Day Care Centre for Care of Old Person with Dementia;
6. Multi Facility Care Centre for Older Widows;
7. Physiotherapy Clinics;
8. Regional Resource and Training Centers;
9. Help lines and Counseling for Older Persons;
10. Programme for Sensitization Schools/College Student;
11. Awareness Projects for Older Persons;
12. Volunteers Bureau for Older Persons;
13. Formation of Vridha Sanghas/Senior Citizen Associations/Self Help Groups;
14. Any other activity, which is considered suitable to meet the objective of the Scheme.

Assam government has step forward in this issue in its 2017 budget that, it set to introduce a law that would make it mandatory for government employees to take care of their parents or need to face deduction from their income to provide adequate care to elderly people.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Agewell (2011) conducted a survey in order to understand the status of human rights of 50000 older persons (29000 rural & 21000 urban) spread across 300 districts of 25 states of India. The major findings that have been indicated is that people lack awareness about human rights of older persons. This according to Agewell is one of the major reasons of ever increasing cases of violation of human rights of older persons. About 85.9% older persons (including 72% in urban areas) had never heard about human rights of older persons. The gaining popularity of nuclear or small families was the main reason of violation of human rights of older persons. There were about 75.5% of older persons reportedly living in inhuman conditions were living all by themselves and around 60.54% of older persons were found living alone or in nuclear/small families. Violation of Human Rights of older persons is found to be higher in urban areas of the

nation when compared to rural areas -65% aged persons who reside in urban areas stated that they had to go through a rough phase in their life; some of them had to live in miserable conditions due to their old age. Over 23.3% older persons were found living in inhuman conditions or facing violation of their human rights in old age. 12.9% older persons disclosed that they were not getting a decent meal to eat in old age - 3101 rural and 3343 urban elderly have problem with getting food in their old age. Approx. every third older person in the country does not have access to proper medicine or health care in old age -Only 68.8% have facilities for necessary medicines, health care and medical facilities in their vicinity. Every second older person is not being treated with the regard and respect that they deserve from their kin or society 48.6% elderly (44.5% in rural areas and 54.81% in urban areas) do not get the respect they deserve, by their family members, relatives and society. 47.4% older persons were differentiated due to their age - 52.35% in urban areas and 44.1% in rural areas were disgraced or not treated with dignity.

Helpage India (2007) consolidated of all the privileges and benefits that senior citizens are entitled to in the country. This wider dissemination of information is the first step towards empowering people. They insisted that the senior citizens should have access to this kind of information so that they are aware of their rights.

Gakidou E et al (2011) have examined the how effective is the response of the health care system in order to handle the challenge of diabetes across different settings. They have also explored the inequalities in diabetes care which can be attributed to different socio-economic factors.

Gakidou E et al (2011) have conducted a survey across seven countries some of them developing and some developed. From their findings it is evident that diabetes in most of the people is not even diagnosed and hence not treated both in developed and developing countries. The study suggests that the burden of diabetes could be reduced by periodically monitoring blood glucose levels, which could help in early diagnosis, these opportunities are missed. This also hinders the early detection and hence treatment of arterial hypertension and hypercholesterolaemia.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher proposes to adopt descriptive research design for better understanding of the problems and to find out real fact about psycho social problems of elderly persons.

Universe of the study:

To know the problems faced by elderly person the study conducted in Nagnoor Shri Shivabasaweshwar trust Chinnamma B Hiremath Old Age Home, Devaraj Urs colony, Belagavi,Karnataka.

Sampling design:

Respondents are selected on the basis of convenient sampling method for ensuring main causes for psycho social problems of senior citizens and its impact on their mind. Total 40 respondents were interviewed with standardized method.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out major causes for admitting in old age home and its impact on their mind.
2. To make interventions in reducing psycho social problems of aged.

Tools of data collection:

With the help of Primary method face to face interview, case study and observation was carried out to find out real facts about the psycho social problems of senior citizens. They were asked about educational, marital, economic, professional and psychological related questions. Secondary data was collected from books, journals government reports and internet.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE STUDY

Table 1: sex ratio of senior citizens

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	21	52
Male	19	48
Total	40	100

The result pertaining to sex of the respondents who are living in old age home is depicted in table no-1. The above table shows that 52% of respondents are female and 48% are male. Majority of respondents living in old age home are female.

Table 2: Elderly persons are admitted by

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Family members	26	65
Self	06	15
Relatives	08	20
Public	-	-
Total	40	100

Above table gives information about who have admitted elderly persons to the old age home. 65% of respondents replied that they have been admitted by their family members. 15% of them are admitted with their own will, 20% of senior citizens are admitted by their relatives. Majority of them have been admitted by their family members.

Table 3: Reasons for admitting to old age home

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Orphan	26	65
Aging	05	12
Adjust mental problem	06	15
Other reasons	03	08
Total	40	100

The table no 3 depicts information about reasons for admitting to old age home. 65% of respondents said that they are orphan, neglected and abandoned by their family members. 12% of respondents said that aging is the main cause for admission. 15% of respondents said that they were not adjusting with family members so their family members admitted them to the old age home. 8% of replied that they are having some other reasons like dumb, poverty and to live peacefully.

Table 4: Expectations of elderly persons

Variables	Respondents	Percentage
Medical aid	04	10
Pension	09	22
Their children will take them back to home	12	30
No expectations	15	38
Total	40	100

Table no 4 gives information about expectations of senior citizens. 10% of respondents are expecting medical aid because they are suffering from chronic diseases. 22% of them are expecting old age pension facility. 30% respondents are expecting their children will take them back to home and 38% of respondents do not have expectations because most of them are orphan.

Table 5: Psycho social conditions of senior citizens

Aspects	Percentage	Percentage
	yes	No
Social conditions		
Marital status(married)	76	24
Children	41	59
Joint family	16	84
Literacy	76	24
Retirement / unemployed	51	49
Property	31	69
Psychological conditions		
Happy	63	27
Lonely	38	62
Nervousness and Anxiety	25	75
Phobia	21	79
Illusion	22	78
Hallucination	24	76
Depression	18	82
Distress	46	54

Table no-5 depicts information about psycho social conditions of senior citizens living in old age home. The results indicated that among 40 respondents 76% of them are married and 24% of them are unmarried and this is the main reason for joining old age home. 59% of them don't have children so they have become orphan. 84% of them were living in nuclear family and it is also made them to join old age home. 49% of senior citizens are literates and worked in government and private organizations. 51% of them feel that they are unemployed and they have become financial burden for their family members. 69% of senior citizens said that they don't hold any kind of property.

As the study is based on empirical research information gathered about their psychological conditions. 27% of elders are not happy to stay in old age home. 38% respondents feel lonely to

stay in old age home. 25% of them are nervous and live in Anxiety. 21% of them are living in phobia. 22% of elderly persons are living in their own fantasy world. 24% of respondents are living in hallucination and they feel someone's presence in empty room and following them. 18% are highly depressed because they are neglected by their own children. 46% are distressed to lead a life as orphan when they are abandoned by their family members and close relatives.

Social work interventions

- Providing counseling service to reduce their psycho social problems.
- Conducting recreational activities to improve their social functioning.
- Working with families to facilitate their support in their parents' adjustment problems.
- By conducting research work exploring new problems, positions and status of senior citizens.
- Conducting regular health checkups.
- Assisting in developing positive behavioral reframe.
- With the help of ecological approach every organization must provide homely environment in old age home.
- Assisting them in understanding and accepting self and others.
- Assisting them on programs and amenities available to them in their community.

Conclusion

Elderly persons are the assets of family. By creating health awareness and regular health check up physical and psychological conditions of elderly persons can be improved and chronicle diseases can be prevented. It is the responsibility of every child to a role as counselor and a guide to take good care of their parents and support them in their hard times.

The study reflects that residents of old age home are from different caste and religion and even spoke different languages as well in some cases. Most of the women in old age home spent their whole lives in doing house hold works and had no income for their livelihood which forced them to depend on their family and due to this reason; the female residents were more in members in old age home as compared to their male. Probably old age is the age when a human being feels more in need of someone to interact with and someone to share his/her feelings with. Government should concern about their (old people) health and application of many helpful programmes. The problem of elder abuse cannot be solved if the essential needs of older people-

for food, shelter, security and access to health care-are not met. The nations of the world must create an environment in which ageing is accepted as a natural part of the life cycle, where anti-ageing attitudes are discouraged, where older people are given the right to live in dignity-free of abuse and exploitation-and are given opportunities to participate fully in educational, cultural and economic activities.

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