

Expanding Challenges of Senior Citizens (Women) A Sociological Study of District-Meerut

Abstract

While reviewing studies on old age, a practical difficulty faced is the lack of gerontological literature in India. This is because the research interest in the subject has gained importance only very recently. Since last two decades, the explicit interest in human aging and in the aged has increased markedly among social scientists. But still there are not enough studies to cover all the dimensions of aging. Due to non-availability of the first hand source of information an old age many citations available in the secondary source have been used in the present review.

Keywords : Expanding Challenges, Senior Citizens, Sociological Study, District

Introduction

Old age refers to ages nearing or surpassing the life expectancy of human beings and is three the end of the human life cycle. Terms and euphemisms include old people, the elderly (worldwide usage) seniors (American usage) senior citizens (British and American usage) older adults (in the social sciences) and the elders (in many cultures)

Old people often have limited regenerative abilities and are more susceptible to disease, syndromes, injuries and sickness than younger adults. The elderly also face other social issues around retirement, loneliness and ageism.

Old age is not a definite biological stage as the chronological age denoted as "old age varies culturally and of 60-80 (the years of retirement and early old age) enjoy rich possibilities for a full life, but the condition of frailty distinguished by "bodily failure" and greater dependence becomes increasingly common after that.

In the industrialized countries, life expectancy and there, the old age population have increased consistently over the last decades. The number of old people is growing around the world chiefly because of the post world war II baby boom and increases in the provision and standards of health care. By 2050, 33% of the developed world's population and almost 20% of the less developed world's population will be over 60 years old.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the socio-economic background and the life of elderly women.
2. The find out the causes of the withdraw of the aged from the mainstream of the society.
3. To explore the problem of loneliness and emotional insecurity among the aged women.
4. To examine the patterns and extent of integration in the family.
5. To undertake execute, support and assist any programme and project with no profit motive designed
6. To promote self confidence and spirit of the reliance among old females.
7. To learn about elderly individuals rises of being mistreated and abused.
8. To develop a range of services and activities that can be assessed by elderly.

Methodology

For the present study random sampling was used for deriving the representative sample At first stage the district (Meerut) have been divided



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into two categories i.e. agriculturally developed zone and moderately developed zone. From these two categories only females were selected in the next stage four females from each ward were selected by using lottery method. All the aged women above the age of 60 years were chosen for the present study.

For the study 230 respondents have been taken from two areas of Meerut out of total respondents 185 from rural zone and 125 from urban zone were taken as a sample. Random sampling technique was used to select the sample. The study is essentially a systematized composite of interview schedule and observation method.

Techniques of Data Collection

For collecting data we have used interview schedule method. In addition to this we also took help of observation method and informed discussion with the different sections of the aged i.e. illiterate, unemployed, destitute section of the society so that the whole scenario for the present society study gets strengthened. The help of secondary data may also have been taken where ever necessary. The use of newspaper, magazine, govt office recourse has also been made.

In order to collect information interview schedule was prepared and questions were framed. The data collected was qualitative and quantitative. The questions were framed in such a way that they could be easily understood by the respondents. Besides, interview information was collected through observation method for making study comprehensive. The females above 60 years of age were interviewed as units of investigations. The questions were arranged relating to the difficulties in performing daily chores, decision making in family, contribution to household work, feeling of loneliness, participation in family ceremonies, change in the attitude of the family members, family composition and satisfaction, care taken by the family members old age pension, government policies etc. The secondary data was used regarding history of city, Census, District Gazetteers, various surveys, books, newspapers, magazines etc. were consulted for this purpose.

Data Analysis

According to the need of the study the relevant tables were constructed by using questionnaire. The graphical representations of the information received have been done to make understand the information more easily and percentage was calculated.

Conclusion and Findings

Empirical facts collected on the life of the selected aged women show that their life is not very comfortable. Although life expectancy is higher for women many are unable to enjoy their later years because they struggle to meet their basic needs. Many older women suffer significant health inequalities, enjoy fewer human rights and have less financial securities, with fewer savings and assets to support an adequate standard of living in older age.

Gender aging and poverty are interrelated. Throughout woman's lifetime, her socioeconomic status is rooted in a division of labour that assumes her primary involvement, unpaid household work and

caregiving. This perpetuates unequal power relations in the home and means that women earn less and save less for their elderly years.

The cumulative effects of this disparity across a woman's life render her particularly vulnerable to poverty, discrimination, violence and marginalisation in old age.

In case of healthy the number of older persons in need of long term care is expected to grow significantly in all countries. Studies reveals that globally, the majority of countries do not provide any long term care protection more than 48 per cent of the world's population lacks coverage by national health care legislation. Most of these people are older women, which is a particularly concerning fact given that nearly half of women over 75 years of age are living alone.

In India marginalization / isolation in old age is among the most common issues that are effecting older women constantly. Those women who are living with their family are also suffering from emotional alienation. Popularity of nuclear family system has virtually crushed strong traditional bond between grandchildren and grandmothers. Older women who live in cities are prone to social alienation in comparison to older women of villages. Older women who live in semi urban situations / industrial townships also find it difficult to cope with old age, particularly after their children have grown up and husband retires.

Due to lack of social protection, older women are forced to lead a life full of distress Ignored by their own kith and kin they don't expect any kind of social security from others.

In old women also face emotional insecurity in the family. They turn towards religious rituals and activities, pilgrimage etc. after losing their life partner or any other family member.

Conclusion

Till few decades ago, when average age of women in India was less than 60 condition of older women was never even mentioned. But now, with fast growing elderly population, increased life expectancy and higher percentage of elderly women in Indian elderly population, issues concerning elderly women cannot be ignored any longer. If ignored today this may turn into a major social development challenge.

Focus should be shifted on older women. Since they have specific needs they need special attention.

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