

Home within Home !

A Multidimensional Analysis of Social Exclusion of Elderly People in Mysore City of India

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Abstract

In any society aged or elderly people will be respected and treasured. In majority cases aged people will be in the twilight of their life. Family and society is supposed to honor them. However in this materialistic world where our youngster is socializing in a very different manner elderly people have become a kind of burden to their family. Recent data to data on the age of India's population, in Census 2001, there are not less than 76.6 million people above 60 years, constituting 7.2 per cent of the population. The aim of this paper is to find out how aged people are being excluded in their family by the other member. Studies have found that aged people are being excluded in much way by their family members itself. In rural areas situation of the aged is quite pathetic. They are being treated as an unproductive asset. They are not being respected by the young siblings. Family members are not showing much interest about the aged members of the family. This paper concludes that strong social policy for the social protection and inclusion of the aged is need of the hour. Also instead of sympathy, family members should extend support, love and affection to the aged to spend their remaining life smoothly.

Key Words

Elderly People, Social Exclusion, Mysore.

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INTRODUCTION

India has a more rapidly growing elderly population due to rapid increase in medical advancement and life expectancy. Recent study projected that by 2020 the total population of elderly people would increase 16% more. The size of the elderly population has risen from 12.1 million in 1901 to approximately 77million in Census 2001. According to official population projections, the number of elderly persons will go up to just about 140 million by 2021. Due to discovery of new medicines and declining mortality rate, rapid growth rate among people aged 75 years and above. Social scientists have warned an implication on social & economic sphere of the country. Aging population has become a growing problem for the society on one hand it affects on young population and on another hand it affects on resource allocation. Government has to spend a lot of money on health care and pension expenditure of these elderly people.

However elderly people can contribute significantly to the community property through their knowledge, skill and experience. Social exclusion is a phenomenon in which people cannot completely participate in the development process due to variety reasons. However we found that social exclusion of the elderly has different dimension including familial, socio-cultural, economical, political and societal. This is a growing concern on marginalized social groups, apart from unemployed elderly people are the latest into the list of socially excluded. Lack of family care, age factors, sickness, losing bonds are some of the reasons why aged population have been pushed back to the last regiment of the society/family (Barnes, 2006).

Experts felt there is a need to comprehend whether or not separate old-age precise indicators are obligatory to compute social exclusion and poverty in old age sufficiently, which would be prerequisite for measuring the impact of social inclusion interventions (Andreas Hoff, 2008). It is found that poverty and inequality are the important elements of the social exclusion factors which promote social exclusion of the elderly people. However researchers have been largely neglected these two vital issues. Experts felt that social exclusion of the elderly people should be give from the prospective of (1) Participation and integration (2) Spatial segregation (3) Institutional disengagement.

India faces a great diversity in the composition of the older people. The life experiences, background head the heads, family care, live style etc. Government need to have a cultural class geographical specific inclusive policy for the aged population. It is required to spend more one health and rehabilitation of the aged population, in the height of increasing numbers of elderly in India and mounting concerns of the socially excluded. The study will identify the different dimension of the social inclusion of elderly people and suggest ways to develop suitable policies.

Table 1: Age-Specific Death Rate (per 1000) of Elderly Population in India, 2008

Age group	Total	Male	Female	Rural	Urban
60-64	22.5	26.5	18.4	23.9	18.7
65-69	33.5	39.3	27.9	34.9	29.5
70-74	54.3	61.5	47.6	57.1	46.3
75-79	79.4	86.6	72.4	83.7	68.1
80-84	116.9	125.5	109.3	119.7	109.0
85+	197.4	201.2	194.2	201.5	186.2

Source: Sample Registration System (SRS); Office of the Registrar General, India

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives

1. To document the socio-economic, demographic, institutional and occupational patterns of the elderly population
2. To find out the various dimensions of discriminations facing by elderly population in family and society

Coverage of the Study

A total of 100 aged people (46 male and 54 female) in different age groups (50-85) from the three Main residential layouts in Mysore city (Karnataka- India) were selected for the current study. An intensive field work was carried out in July 2012.

Research Components

The research study consists of (1) Survey (2) Case Studies

Tools for data collection

The data collection consists of (1) Interview (2) Focus Group Discussion

Collection of Data

Primary data has been collected at different levels using different questionnaires.

- (1) At the individual level (aged)
- (2) Data also collected from 5 NGOs to get their perspective

Data Analysis

The qualitative data generated from survey, interviews and focus groups has been thematically coded in the *NUD*IST* database software and has been indexed to identify dominant themes and to link those themes with specific research questions. The quantitative data has been analyzed using SPSS software. The thematically indexed discourse from various interviews, case studies and focus groups has been converted into an extended set of dummy variables and entered into the *SPSS* database for analysis.

RESULT

Main Source of Income of Respondents	Frequency	%
Employment	33	33.0
Self-employment	18	18.0
State pension	23	23.0
Benefits or Assets	12	12.0
Unemployment	11	11.0
Others	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=41.316$; $P < .000$		

Sex of the Respondent		Male	Female	Total
Age of Respondent	COUNT	12	32	44
	%	26.09	59.26	44.00
55-60	COUNT	18	13	31
	%	39.13	24.07	31.00
60-70	COUNT	11	5	16
	%	23.91	9.26	16.00
Above 70	COUNT	5	4	9
	%	10.87	7.41	9.00
Total	Count	46	54	100

Educational Qualifications (Level) of the Respondents	Frequency	%
Primary education	31	31.0
College	14	14.0
Higher education	13	13.0
Professional Education	11	11.0
Illiterates	20	20.0
Others	11	11.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=43.56$; $P < .000$		

Opinion about socio-psychological risks of social exclusion	Frequency	%
Lack of emotional attachment	27	27.0
Lack of support for family care	22	22.0
Sick/disabled/Age factors	15	15.0
Partner not alive inter-generational gap	12	12.0
Societal behavior	20	20.0
Other	4	4.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=31.43$; $P < .000$		

Opinion on General factors increasing the risk of social exclusion	Frequency	%
Inadequate social networks	29	29.0
Early exit from labour market	37	37.0
Financial Crunches	17	17.0
Lack of policies for aged	12	12.0
Other	2	2.0
Unpredicted	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=33.56$; $P < .000$		

Opinion about Dimensions of Social Exclusion	Frequency	%
Neglect and underestimation	24	24.0
Don't care nature by the siblings	17	17.0
Not ready to spend for aged	13	13.0
Domination and emotional blackmail	12	12.0
Treats as an unproductive asset	14	14.0
No time/busy in their engagement	10	10.0
Lack of Love and affection	10	10.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=56.226$; $P < .000$		

How do you Feel you are being Excluded	Frequency	%
Separate dinning sets/room	14	14.0
Low quality food	17	17.0
Don't shares any thing	13	13.0
Treats us like take it for granted	12	12.0
No value for our feelings	10	10.0
No care if we feel sick/injured etc	16	16.0
Scolding/beatings	16	16.0
Others	2	2.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=31.006$; $P < .000$		

Successful Social inclusion Strategy must be:	Frequency	%
Increase worth and self-esteem	27	27.0
overcome cultural barrier	17	17.0
remove locational disadvantage;	13	13.0
enhance skills, confidence	12	12.0
Increase old age pension	15	15.0
Rehabilitation	13	13.0
Other	3	3.0
Total	100	100.0
$\chi^2=53.156$; $P < .000$		

DISCUSSION

It is quite miserable to say that elders are facing exclusion mainly within their home itself. Our study shows that majority of the respondents were the employees of the state or in the private companies and they are at the edge of their retirement stage. Next 23% of the respondents are getting state pension. These pensioners are not facing severe exclusion from their family persons because they are getting regular income and they are being esteemed by their family members. Next, 12% of the respondents are getting some benefits out of their earned assets in the form of bank interest etc. Since their assets legally belong to the respondents other family members are showing interest in respecting their likes and dislikes. Even though 33% of them are still employees they are at the edge of the retirement. They say gradually they are facing the heat of '*left out*' from their family members. Our study found that elderly in the age group of 55 to 60 are facing discrimination in their family heavily. This study shows that 11% of the aged people who are professionals like Doctors are also facing the heat of not being loved by their family members.

The situation is still pathetic who are illiterates and don't have any regular income. They are being severely discriminated by their respective family members. Because they are not earning and have to depend on the siblings only. In case of socio-psychological risk factors, lack of emotional attachments of the siblings place the highest. This study shows that off-springs are not showing much attachment towards their grandparents. On the other hand aged people are not getting enough and appropriate family support on time. Sickness and age factors also play a vital role in being excluded by the family itself. Sickness and age factors have made the elders more disabled and excluded. Always somebody must be with them. As age increases risk of being excluded also increases. Death of an either partner will push them more vulnerable in many cases. It makes a kind of loneliness in their life. It may lead to have various types of psychological disorders among the aged. More than that the inter-generational gap is also creating a big space between the off springs & the aged in some family. Moreover now a days socialization of the children are being done in a watertight compartments where family attachments are least bothered. And children are growing in the fast moving society to which aged can't cope up with the cognitive and emotional development.

Also some of the respondents felt society is neglecting the aged people in a more organized manner. Society behavior also causes a big psychological impact on the aged people. In case of more general factors for social exclusion, early exit from labour market place the first. It makes people a kind of unemployed in the society. Hence they

will not be considered seriously by the fellowmen. An inadequate social network also causes a vital reason for being excluded. Respondents felt financial problems at the old age is a major one why aged people depends on their children only. It makes more irritates to both of them. In majority of the families aged people are unemployed and on other hand their children are also not earning any decent amount which makes the problem more severe in that family. In such cases aged people have to work somewhere for livelihood. Certain respondents felt lack of social policies by the Governments for the aged, also a big hurdle. The Government has not framed any suitable social policies for the aged.

Further our study shows that 24% of respondents are facing neglect and under estimation by their families in different ways. Young Children are not taking them seriously. In some families children are not ready to spend for the aged for health other causes. Next, 14% of them felt they are being treated as an unproductive asset by their children. Some of them felt bad because their children are busy in their respective work/job which lacks love, time & affection towards aged people in that family. Some of them felt they are being blackmailed emotionally by the offspring's for the variety of reasons. Further, we found that elders have to use separate rooms and dining sets in some families. Even they don't allow to dining with the rest of the family members. Some of the respondent felt they are being served low quality food. Sometime they have to depend on leftover food only which causes more health problems for the aged Children are not sharing any feelings with the aged in the family. In some cases children hardly talk to the aged in families. In majority cases respondents felt children will not take care during sick. Even they don't like to touch them. Scolding and beating are common by their children in many cases. Aged felt Govt. should bring solid social policy to protect them. Recently Govt. has brought a new act called Elderly Protection Act. But IT has its own lacunas. Aged felt new policy should contain a scope for increasing pension for the aged and good rehabilitation scheme. They need some more strict laws which give more security in the society/family. They need more roles to be played in the social governance also. There are many NGOs working for the welfare of the aged and they felt the mindset of the young once should change towards the aged

CONCLUSION

In India, the population of the elderly is rising speedily and is budding as a severe area of concern for the civil society and the policy planners. Among the elderly, the single, widows, and disabled composed those who are more underprivileged in the society. These people need more emotional security. Policy requires keeping them engaged in

more productive way. Also it is found that healthcare need of the elderly is a main worry for the family as ageing is regularly accompanied by multiple illnesses and disorders. It should be the duty of the every family to take care of the aged member in their family. Young siblings should be educated in that proper way by their parents to respect their grandparents. Family care, love and protection are very vital to the aged to spend their remaining life. Awareness programme about need and problems of the aged section should be done by the civil society and other organization.

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