

“CAUSES AND PROBLEMS OF NEGLECTED OLD AGE PEOPLE TO TAKE SHELTER IN VRIDHA ASHRAM IN INDIA”

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ABSTRACT

Ageing is everybody's problem as everyone is bound to age and experience. Ageing is a fact of life which does not take place all of a sudden. The elderly are like the setting sun that retreats into the night after life giving, light during the day. Aging is normal and natural. It is a stage ridden with physical and mental problems. Very few people reach old age completely free of diseases. Senior citizens across the globe are not getting the proper health care they need because governments and the society are not aware of their problem.

KEYWORDS: Causes, Problems, Shelter

INTRODUCTION

Indian society provides a congenial set of conditions for a physically comfortable and emotionally satisfying old age. It is a social expectation in India that the adult sons will take care of their aged parents and the daughters take care of the parents in case the parents do not have sons. But all this is changing. There has been a marked change in the treatment of the elderly compared to earlier periods. Many of the recent studies emphasized the transition in the rate and status of the elderly Indians from pre-industrial society to the existing industrial social order. In this kind social situation, conflict and problems of adjustment has become a normal feature of the Indian families. Many of the elderly parents are compelled to leave their children and stay in old age homes.

Problems of the Elderly

Though ageing is the natural stage of human life, it brings with it innumerable problems for the people who have grown old such as:

- **Economic Problems:** As far as economic problems are concerned, they are very basic to all the other problems faced by the aged. With superannuation, a person has to retire from the service, which not only results in loss of employment and social status but also a substantial reduction in his income level. Majority of the elderly face acute financial problems, which makes older persons economically insecure.
- **Physiological Problems:** With growing age, older persons experience various anatomical and physiological changes. These changes bring many psychological, behavioral and attitudinal changes in them. Consequently, they have to suffer varied sorts of physiological problems such as loss of physical strength and stamina, which become more acute as a person grows older.
- **Housing Related Problems:** Housing for the aged should be suitable not only to the living pattern which they

have established in optimum health, but also to conditions of falling health and illness, commonly associated with later years of life such as, failing eye sight of bearing, slowing and unsureness of step, diminishing energy and more acute disabilities, such as blindness, forgetfulness etc. On this pattern, the housing available to a majority of the senior citizens may be found inappropriate and unsuitable to their requirement. The sizeable populations of older widows as well as the older males have been facing the problem of “where to live peacefully”.

- **Problem of Elder Abuse:** Elder abuse is usually defined as any ill treatment to an older person. It refers to “infliction of physical, emotional or psychological harm on an older adult”. Around 81 per cent of the elderly persons face the problem of verbal abuse, while 53 per cent of them face neglect followed by material abuse (37 %) and physical abuse (23 %).

Need for Old Home

Our culture has it that it is duty of the child to look after his parents. On the contrary, the Indian society seems to be changing very fast and so are its moral values. Everyone is in a mad race of earning money, buying cars and going on foreign trips, and in the process do not take time off to look after their parents. Combined families are getting disintegrated into nuclear families. For the benefit of their children, the ageing parents thus choose to stay by themselves or join old age homes.

Advantage of Old Age Homes in India

- Main benefits of these homes are their staff’s good behaviour, palatable and wholesome food as well as good services.
- Senior citizens are also provided with yoga classes in these homes along with medical amenities, shelter and food. For mode of communication they are given telephones that give them access to their families.
- These play roles of safe haven for senior citizens who have nobody to take care of them or who have not got a place to stay. Residents here get an ambience of complete family. They are given unique sense of friendship as well as security here. It becomes a place for them to share their sorrows as well as joys.
- Here in these homes, no body imposes its residents with sense of duties or responsibilities. Nobody hands them out any work to live out a livelihood.
- In that peaceful atmosphere, residents can pursue their hobbies in full flow.
- Full freedom to participate in one’s religious activities is given here.
- Life of senior citizens is slow as well as peaceful here. “Old age home” gives a healthy as well as peaceful life to its citizens.
- Companionships, solace as well as comfort are given to senior citizens. All age-mates get freedom here to give a chance to their favorite hobbies without any restraints.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Uttar Pradesh, India. Uttar Pradesh is a major state of the country. Two districts of

U.P. Kanpur and Luck now were selected because of the oldest shelter homes are situated in these districts. Luck now is a capital of Uttar Pradesh and Kanpur is Industrial area. Total eight old age homes were selected in both districts.

List of Selected Old Age Home

- Swaraj Vridh Ashram (Behind Panki Power House)
- Pit amah Sadan
- Sri Kanchan Lal Sagun Sewa Sansthan
- Sana than Dharam Old Shelter home
- Vridha Mahila Asharam
- Samar pan Senior Citizen Home
- Aastha Old Age Hospital, hospice and Old Age Home
- Ox fame India – Care of Geretoric.

Total sample size (Old Age People) of 200 from both districts. Study was survey method by personally interview. Dependent and independent variables such as age, education, caste, occupation, causes, chronological age, biological age, shelter psychological abuse were used. The statistical tools such as rank, chi-square test, etc. were used.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Biderman et al. (2002) investigated that depression and falls are two common conditions that impair the health of older people. Both are relatively under diagnosed and undertreated problems in primary care.

Rajan et al. (2004) conducted a survey of elders in old age homes in Pondicherry to find out problem of the aged reveals that a sizeable majority of the aged suffer from loss of memory and no sleep. Psychologically maximum number of the aged feels isolated, frustrated and depressed.

RESULTS

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Sl. No.	Age Group	Male		Female		Total	Per Cent
		Frequency	Per Cent	Frequency	Per Cent		
1.	60 – 70	15	7.5	23	11.5	38	19.0
2.	71 – 80	35	17.5	28	14.0	63	31.5
3.	81 – 90	23	11.5	65	32.5	88	44.0
4.	90 & above	4	2.0	7	3.5	11	5.5
	Total	77	38.5	123	61.5	200	100.0
	χ^2	13.26**		P < 0.01			

The elderly people was classified the age into four groups, i.e. 60-70 years, 71-80 years, 81-90 years and 90 & above years. The analysis of data pertaining to age, sex, education marital status, caste and financial status of the elderly people are giving these tables. It was found that in old age homes first the age of the elderly people range between 60 – 90 & above years.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Education

Sl. No.	Education	Male		Female		Total	Per Cent
		Frequency	Per Cent	Frequency	Per Cent		
1.	Illiterate	5	2.5	65	32.5	70	35.0
2.	High School	24	12.0	22	11.0	46	23.0
3.	Intermediate	17	8.5	5	2.5	22	11.0
4.	Graduation	17	8.5	21	10.5	38	19.0
5.	Post-graduation	14	7.0	10	5.0	24	12.0
	Total	77	38.5	123	61.5	200	100.0
	χ^2	51.281**				P < 0.01	

It is pertinent to mention here that majority of the elderly people were observed to be literate, though the proportion of elderly people by level of education varied, illiterate, high school, intermediate, graduation and post graduation.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents According to Causes of Neglecting Elders

Sl. No.	Causes	Male		Female		Total	Per Cent
		Frequency	Per Cent	Frequency	Per Cent		
1.	Braking up joint family	5	2.5	10	5.0	15	7.5
2.	No economic support	15	7.5	22	11.0	37	18.5
3.	Generation gap	7	3.5	11	5.5	18	9.0
4.	Family members shifted in foreign	7	3.5	11	5.5	18	9.0
5.	Dependent on children	12	6.0	12	6.0	24	12.0
6.	Isolated by family	10	5.0	10	5.0	20	10.0
7.	Children loss their morality	6	3.0	11	5.5	17	8.5
8.	Bachelor	3	1.5	7	3.5	10	5.0
9.	Westernization	12	6.0	29	14.5	41	20.5
	Total	77	38.5	123	61.5	200	100.0
	χ^2	4.126				P > 0.05	

A combination of background and current factors, such as recent conflicts and a family history of “solving” problems through violence influence the relationship. Abusers use a pattern of coercive tactics to gain and maintain power and control in a relationship. Many factors in elder abuse arise through individual, relationship, community and societal influences. Elder abuse can be attributed to both the victim’s and the abuser’s social and biomedical characteristics, the nature of their relationship, and power dynamics, within their shared environment of family and friends.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents according to Problems of Elderly Abuse

Sl. No.	Problems	Male		Female		Total	Per cent
		Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent		
1.	Physical abuse	7	3.5	8	4.0	15	7.5
2.	Psychological abuse	23	11.5	20	10.0	43	21.5
3.	Financial Exploitation	28	14.0	38	19.0	66	33.0
4.	Sexual abuse	2	1.0	11	5.5	13	6.5

5.	Sociological and social abuse	9	4.5	19	9.5	28	14.0
6.	Caregiver stress	8	4.0	27	13.5	35	17.5
	Total	77	38.5	123	61.5	200	100.0
	χ^2	4.126			P > 0.05		

Elder abuse is an extremely complex problem. Simply a listing of some of the possible contributory factors related to elder abuse. It is important to also remember that these factors usually do not operate in isolation but rather interact in unique ways depending on the victim and perpetrator’s situation.

CONCLUSIONS

The problem of neglected old people is a rising issue in India and it needs people attention. India is the country known for paying attention and respect to our elders and aged, but now days our social culture is being broken by the changing lifestyle. Desire for a small family, mobilization, and materialism are the reason behind lack of attention towards the aged people. This study is an attempt to gain people attention towards neglected old people. The old aged who is neglected is suffered from several physical, social, emotional, psychological and other form of abuse.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Treat older people with respect.
- To promote research and training facilities to train geriatric care givers and organizers of services for the elderly and
- To create awareness regarding elderly persons to help them lead productive and independent life.

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