

A STUDY ON HEALTH PROFILE OF RESIDENTS OF OLD AGE HOME IN MADURAI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Aging is a normal process. The modernization plays a vital role in the aging process of an individual. The aged feel a sense of social isolation because of disjunction from various bonds viz work relationships, and diminish of relatives and friends, the mobility of children to far off places for jobs. The situation of the elderly still worsens when there is the presence of chronic diseases, physical incapacity, and financial stringency. The main objectives of the study are: i) to analyze the nature of socio-economic conditions of the elderly people who stay in Old Age Homes in the study area, ii) to study the facilities being provided by the Old Age Homes in the study area and iii) to analyze the health problems faced by the Age Homes in the study area. The study based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data related to this study have been collected from journals, books, and websites. The primary data were collected from old age homes in Madurai District. A total of 156 inmates were selected from old age homes in Madurai District. Systematic random sampling technique was adopted to selecting the sample. The tool used is a simple percentage analysis. The study concluded that a majority of the sample respondents are above 60 years of age, female, belongs to the backward community, Hindus, came from semi – urban areas, illiterate, widows/widowers and from the joint family.

KEYWORDS: Inmates, Geriatric Home, Health Problem, Psychological Problem, etc

INTRODUCTION

“Live your life and forget your age” – Norman Vincent Peale

Rapid growing of industry, modernization in India, it has also affected the people in many ways. The tradition of joint family in the culture of Indian society is disappearing slowly, which was based on the love, affection, and tradition. It has also transformed the life of the family. People have started believing “Nuclear family” rather than combined or joint. It has made people live with his own family which includes husband, wife and their children. This culture has also affected the emotion of each individual person. In today’s time parents afraid from their children, that’s why they have started refusing to live them (children). In India, the population is continuously growing. In 1901 it was 12.1 million, but it has been recorded in 2011 is 103.2 million. The population of elderly in India (over 60 years) ranks second in the World. The main reason for this is the development of Science and Technology in the field of Medicine, World class treatment,

social protection, and living standard and so on. If we move on the deeper side, it will observe that the number of old people would be more than the newborn children. Due to industrialization and educational attainment of the people, humanitarian characters among young blood get reduced. The young blood are moving towards money and forget about love and affection. This is what the reason behind the growing number of old age homes in India. Even the well-off sons are not ready to look after their parents and simply they send them home.

Old age home may be defined as “A retirement home is a multi-residence housing facility intended for senior citizens”. It is sometimes called an old men’s home or retirement home. Old age home is the aged men’s unfortunate and unexpected destination despite delivering all fortunes and expectation of their beloved son or daughter. Old age Home is the very good success formula of today’s nuclear family believer and killer results of old aged sentiments. The young generation frankly decides for the exclusion of old aged methodology of joint family and advocates of old age home. Young generation feels old age people a burden. It is because of the traditional values and sociability has been changed drastically in today’s time. The old age group is now feeling this embarrassing blow. The aged people are spending their twilight years in isolation, pain, and misery.

The World’s population is expected to increase to 9.4 billion by 2050 from the current 7.3 billion. During the same period, the proportion of the elderly population is expected to increase from 10.4 per cent to 21.7 per cent. Among the elderly, it is the oldest among the old whose numbers will increase most rapidly over time or about 320 million by 2050.

There are both pros and cons of old age homes. The people leave the country in pursuit of higher education and settle there after job and marriage. In the process, they not only forget their parents, who sacrificed everything to provide them higher education in foreign countries, but also their motherland. This has resulted in a pathetic situation in which parents are forced to live in old-age homes. Old age homes are a need of today as the lifestyles are changing fast and diminishing acceptance of family responsibilities towards one’s elders. It has been observed that the old age people are suffering from various socioeconomic problems and the present study focuses on that in the target area of Madurai District of Tamil Nadu.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Yadav Lalan., (2014) has made a study on “A Sociological Study of Old Persons Residing in an Old age Home of Delhi, India”. Parul Tripathi (2014) has conducted a study on “Elderly: Care and Crisis in Old Age Home”. Sreedevi. M.et al., (2013) have made a study on “A Comparative Study on the Living Conditions and Nutritional Status of Elderly in Paid and Unpaid Homes of Chennai, India”. Doshi Dhara. R., et al., (2013) have made a study on “Depression and Psychological Well-being in Old Age”. Balamurugan.J., et al., (2012) have made a study on “Health Problems of Aged People”. Rana. A., et al., (2012) have made a study on “A Study on depression in elderly inmates living in old age homes in Gujarat”. Md Asadullah et al., (2012) have conducted a study on the topic “A Study on Morbidity Profile and Quality of Life of Inmates in Old Age Homes in Udupi District, Karnataka, India”. Banker Kavita et al., (2012) have made a study entitled “A Study to Assess the Availability of Basic Facilities for Inmates in Geriatric Home, Ahmadabad, and Gujarat, India”. Kavita Banker et al., (2011) have conducted a study on “Study of Health Profile of Residents of Geriatric Home in Ahmadabad District”. Aruna Dubey et al., (2011) have made a study on “A Study of Elderly Living in Old Age Home and within Family Set-up in Jammu”.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The elderly population in India is continuously increasing and also the problems faced by these people are increasing simultaneously. The number of people in old age homes is constantly increasing and also most of the parents are now deciding to live in old age homes rather than living with their children. Now - a - days these people are facing problems like lack of care, emotional support and economic support from the family *etc.* Gradual nuclearisation of the joint family, erosion of morality in the economy, changes in the value system, migration of youth to urban areas for jobs and increasing participation of women in the workforce are important factors responsible for the marginalization of older people in rural India. The rural poor, who mostly work in the informal or unorganized sector face insecure employment, insufficient income, housing crises, diminished savings, and lack access to any form of social security and good quality and affordable health care. Inadequate income is a major problem for the elderly in India. Today in a changing social system the traditional joint family system has given to the modern nuclear family. The modern socio economic system makes old age is a serious social problem. Those aged who are suffering from illness need special services in their old age homes. But unfortunately today we can see many old people coming from the good background and who have their own children, living in these old age homes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are

- To analyze the nature of socio-economic conditions of the elderly people who stay in Old Age Homes in the study area.
- To study the facilities being provided by the Old Age Homes in the study area.
- To analyze the health problems faced by the Age Homes in the study area.

METHODOLOGY

The study based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data related to this study have been collected from journals, books, and websites. The primary data were collected from old age homes in Madurai District. A total of 156 inmates were selected from old age homes in Madurai District. Systematic random sampling technique was adopted to selecting the sample. The tool used is a simple percentage analysis.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Table 1 clearly illustrates the general information like age, sex, caste, religion, place of birth, educational qualification, marital status and type of family of the respondents residing in old age homes in the study area.

Table 1: General Information of the Sample Respondents

S. No.	Classification / Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age			
1	Below 60	02	01.28
2	60 – 70	45	28.85
3	70 – 80	73	46.79
4	80 & Above	36	23.08
Sex			
1	Male	29	18.59
2	Female	127	81.41
Caste			
1	MBC	13	08.33
2	BC	104	66.67
3	SC / ST	39	25.00
Religion			
1	Hindu	101	64.74
2	Christian	50	32.05
3	Muslim	05	03.21
Place of Birth			
1	Rural	53	33.97
2	Urban	17	10.90
3	Semi – Urban	86	55.13
Educational Qualification			
1	Illiterate	78	50.00
2	Primary Education	45	28.85
3	Secondary Education	18	11.54
4	Higher Secondary Education	11	07.05
5	UG	04	02.56
Marital Status			
1	Married	14	08.97
2	Unmarried	07	04.49
3	Divorced	08	05.13
4	Widows / Widowers	127	81.41
Type of Family			
1	Joint Family	91	58.33
2	Nuclear Family	65	41.67
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

It is evident from Table 1 that, out of 156 respondents, 73 (46.79 per cent) respondents belong to the age group of 70 to 80 years. The remaining 45 (28.85 per cent), 36 (23.08 per cent) and two (01.28 per cent) respondents are in the age group of 60 to 70 years, 80 and above and below 60 years respectively. Sex-wise classification of the sample respondents inferred that out 156 respondents, 127 (81.41 per cent) respondents are female and the remaining 29 (18.59 per cent) are male. A majority of the sample respondents belong to backward community *i.e.*, out 156, 104 (66.67 per cent) respondents belong to BC and the remaining 39 (25.00 per cent) and 13 (08.33 per cent) respondents are MBC and SC / ST respectively. Further, considering religious factors, 101 (64.74 per cent) respondents are Hindus and the remaining 50 (32.05 per cent) and five (03.21 per cent) respondents are Christians and Muslims respectively. Most of the sample respondents came from semi - urban areas *i.e.*, out of 156, 86 (55.13 per cent) respondents came from semi-urban, the remaining 53 (33.97 per cent) and 17 (10.90 per cent) respondents belong to rural and urban areas respectively.

Regarding educational qualifications, out of 156 respondents, 78 (50.00 per cent) respondents are illiterate. Forty-five (28.85 per cent) respondents have completed only primary education. The remaining 18 (11.54 per cent), 11 (07.05 per cent) and four (02.56 per cent) respondents have completed secondary education, higher secondary education and UG (Under Graduation) respectively. It is evident that the educational attainment of the old age people in the sample district is very poor. Regarding marital status, out of 156 respondents, 127 (81.41 per cent) respondents are widows/widowers and the remaining 14 (08.97 per cent), eight (05.13 per cent) and seven (04.49 per cent) respondents are married, divorced and unmarried. Out of 156 respondents, 91(58.33 per cent) respondents are in the joint family system and the remaining 65 (41.67 per cent) respondents are in the nuclear family system. It is noted that among the sample respondents, most of them are female and that to widows. Further, it is evident that nearly 60 per cent of the respondents came from joint family. The joint family system is one of the old and gold systems followed by our forefathers but now it gets ruined and it will cause the mushroom growth of old age homes not only in urban areas but also in rural areas.

It is concluded that a majority of the sample respondents are above 60 years of age, female belongs to the backward community, Hindus, came from semi-urban areas, illiterate, widows / widowers and from the joint family.

FAMILY STATUS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The researcher wanted to identify the family status of the sample respondents in the study area. Accordingly, the researcher collected information and the same is depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Family Status of the Sample Respondents

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Only Sons	27	17.31
2	Only Daughters	33	21.15
3	Both Sons and Daughters	58	37.18
4	No Children	38	24.36
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

It is understood from Table 2 that out of 156 respondents, 58 (37.18 per cent) respondents have both sons and daughters, 38 (24.36 per cent) respondents have no children. The remaining 33 (21.15 per cent) and 27 (17.31 per cent) respondents have only daughters and only sons respectively. If old men or women who have no children to take care in their old age and come for old age homes means to some extent one can accept. But having one or more children to take care but unfortunately, no one can take care and admit them in the homes is not admirable and acceptable. In the study area, only 25 per cent of the sample respondents have no children. The remaining 75 per cent of the respondents have children but no care.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS BEFORE COMING TO THE HOMES

Table 3 picturizes the employment status of the sample respondents before joining in old age homes.

Table 3: Employment Status of the Sample Respondents before Coming to the Homes

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Private Employees	31	19.87
2	Government Employees	04	02.56
3	Business	05	03.21
4	Agriculturists	06	03.85
5	Coolies	70	44.87
6	Home Makers	40	25.64
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

It is understood from Table 3 that out of 156 respondents, 70 (44.87 per cent) respondents are coolies. Another 40 (25.64 per cent), 31 (19.87 per cent) respondents are homemakers and private employees respectively. The remaining six (03.85 per cent), five (03.21 per cent) and four (02.56 per cent) respondents are agriculturists, business and Government employees respectively.

RESPONDENTS' MONTHLY INCOME BEFORE COMING TO THE OLD AGE HOMES

Most of the old age persons with are economically dependent upon others, which is a problem for the old age persons. In this regard, the researcher wanted to know the income of the sample respondents before coming to old age homes. Accordingly, the researcher has collected information and the same is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Respondents' Monthly Income before Coming to the Old Age Homes

S. No.	Monthly Income (in `)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 5000	56	35.90
2	5000 - 10000	52	33.33
3	10000 - 15000	08	05.13
4	None	40	25.64
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

Table 4 depicts the income earning capacity of the sample respondents before coming to the old age homes. Out of 156 respondents, 56 (35.90 per cent) respondents have earned a monthly income below `5000. Another 52 (33.33 per cent) respondents have earned income ranging from `5000 to `10000 per month. Eight (05.13 per cent) respondents have earned income between `10000 and `15000 per month. The remaining 40 respondents have earned no income because they are women respondents and homemakers.

FACILITIES PROVIDED BY THE OLD AGE HOMES

Old age home is not a place for simply staying, it is a place for enjoyment, forget their worries and other problems. During old age, it is very difficult to pass time by the people. If they are in their homes with their family members, they themselves engaged in some activities and spend their time in a useful way. But in the old age homes, they live alone and feel loneliness. It will aggravate their feelings. To avoid this, the old age home authorities provide some facilities to the inmates. Table 5 clearly depicts the facilities available in the old age homes to forget their sorrows and make them to enjoy the remaining days without any worries.

Table 5: Facilities Provided By the Old Age Homes

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Library Facilities	04	02.56
2	TV	85	54.49
3	Meditation Class	28	17.95
4	Medical Checkup	39	25.00
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

It is understood from Table 5 that out of 156 respondents, 85 (54.49 per cent) respondents informed that the homes are provided with Television. Another 39 (25.00 per cent) respondents familiarize that the homes are facilitated with a medical checkup. The remaining 28 (17.95 per cent) and four (02.56 per cent) respondents illuminate that homes are equipped with meditation rooms and conduct regular meditation class to relax and library facilities respectively. It is concluded that nearly 55 per cent of the homes is provided with TVs, but library facilities and meditation class are not adequately provided in the study area. It should be taken care of the authorities of old age homes.

HEALTH PROBLEMS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The analysis of National Sample Survey data reveals that a majority of the elderly people are chronically ill. A cough and problem of joints are the most common health problems of aged people. The health decline in ageing refers to the physical changes an individual experience because of the decline in the normal functioning of the body resulting in poor morbidity, vision, hearing, inability to eat and digest food properly and various chronic conditions. In this regard, the researcher wanted to know the health problems faced by the sample respondents in the study area. Accordingly, the researcher has collected, classified and shown the information in Table 6.

Table 6: Health Problems of the Sample Respondents

S. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Eye Sight Problem	61	39.10
2	Ear Problem	16	10.26
3	Joint Pain	46	29.49
4	Sugar Complains	24	15.38
5	Heart Problem	06	03.85
6	Cancer	03	01.92
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

From Table 6, it is evident that out of 156 respondents, 61 (39.10 per cent) respondents are having eyesight problem. Forty-six (29.49 per cent) and 24 (15.38 per cent) respondents have joint pain and sugar complaints. Another 16 (10.26 per cent) respondents have a hearing problem. The remaining six (03.85 per cent) and three (01.92 per cent) respondents live with a heart problem and cancer problem in the study area.

PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

With growing age, an aged person experiences various physiological changes. Old age persons suffer from unhappiness caused by their feeling of loneliness, economic insecurity *etc.* Old age is the closing period of lifespan. Some spend later part of life happily, whereas others face untold hardship and denied even the minimal comforts of life. Generally, the aged people feel insecure, loneliness, stress, a decline in memory, and the inability to control certain

physiological functions and behave like a childish. In this sense, the researcher wanted to know the major psychological problem faced by the sample respondents. Accordingly, the researcher collected information and the same is depicted in Table 7.

Table 7: Psychological Problems of the Sample Respondents

S. No.	Type of Problem	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Feeling Loneliness	70	44.87
2	Feeling Burden	38	24.36
3	Mental Stress	15	09.62
4	Feel Neglected by Family Members	33	21.15
Total		156	100.00

Source: Calculated on the basis of Survey Data

It is understood from Table 7 that out of 156 respondents, 70 (44.87 per cent) respondents felt loneliness is the major psychological problem faced by them. Another 38 (24.36 per cent) respondents informed that, they themselves feel a burden to the society and they said during the interview we are counting our days. The remaining 33 (21.15 per cent) and 15 (09.62 per cent) respondents are of the opinion that, the major psychological problem is mental stress and neglected by the family members respectively.

SUGGESTIONS

The study found that most of the inmates of the old age homes are economically dependent and less educated. Further, the health condition of the inmates is not satisfactory. Following suggestions are made to improve the status of the inmates of Old Age Homes;

- Recreational facilities should be made available in the old age homes apart from providing a TV. The elderly should be encouraged to become the members of social organizations to actively participate in civic and political engagements. There is also a need to introduce income-generating activities for the elderly who are fit to work in old age homes.
- The grant to the government aided old age should be increased. Besides government can make arrangements to provide medical treatment and major surgeries free of cost for those staying in old age homes.
- At present health care is becoming expensive and is not affordable by the majority especially those who are economically weak. Provision for some kind of health insurance coverage with low premium will increase access to good health care facilities. There is a need to create an awareness relating to health insurance policies.
- Further conducting free periodical health checkups need to be organized. For emergency, health care facilities vehicles, doctors, etc., should be made available. Voluntary services of medical professionals should be promoted and encouraged.
- Health care system in India has already been designed for taking special care for vulnerable groups like women and children. Similar arrangements for the elderly need to be organized in general hospitals, Public Health Centre's etc. to deal with the multiple health problems of aged people.
- A government can arrange the visit of nearby government hospital doctors, nurses and paramedical staff to old age homes for a periodic general checkup of the inmates.

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