

**CARE FOR THE ELDERLY: A SOCIOLOGICAL
STUDY IN NADIA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL**

**SYNOPSIS OF THE
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SYNOPSIS

Title: CARE FOR THE ELDERLY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY IN NADIA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL

Introduction : Many elderly people live in the developing world. India has the second largest population of elderly people after China. However, with rapid declines in fertility mortality rates and longer life expectancies in several countries, the elderly are a growing segment of the population, and the full implications of this change have yet to be played out. The twin forces of modernization and urbanization may complicate matters further, since many of these countries are not institutionally adapted to handle the transition from traditional social support systems for the elderly to more modern ones.

In India, research on examining the socio-economic dynamics of elderly well-being is gradually gaining ground, but access to good data continues to be an obstacle. Analyses based on National Sample Survey and the Census data highlight the urgency of the problems faced by the elderly. Poor health coupled with a lack of jobs leave others economically insecure. Lack of access to adequate health care to address long term illnesses is another cause of grave concern.

The demographic pattern has remarkably changed in the entire world, where it has transformed from a state of high birth and death rates to a level characterized by low birth and death rates. The obvious implications of the change are low mortality rate and thereby increase in the number of elderly people.

The problem of ageing was initially thought to be the concern of only the developed nations, since advances in medical technology have been able to reduce fertility rate and ensure high longevity. But it is equally the concern of developing countries, where the population structure of older person is changing rapidly.

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The fragmentation or migration of family members changes the dynamics of family support as the number of elderly living alone or with a spouse rises. Within the last decade, both the Central and the State governments have made a commitment to address destitution of the

elderly by various pension and development programs. However, the programs are relatively new and the effects still need evaluation.

There is a lot of communication problem between the old and the young that interdependence between the generations is becoming an undesired, purposeful relationship. The young and the old do not conceive the idea that they belong to the same system. The intergenerational bond is missing in almost all the communities which are necessary for the continuity of life.

It is anticipated that by 2050, the number of older persons will exceed the population of children aged between 0-14 years by 2 millions, for the first time in history. Around 54% or the largest share of the world's aged persons lives in Asia while Europe has the next largest share with 24%. An even more startling feature is the increase of the number of aged people in the level of 80 years or more. In 2002, 12% of the population was aged above 60 years and by 2050, 19% of the population is expected to be in the level of 80 years or more.

Review of literature: Review of literature helps to understand the problems in its various dimensions, makes the study more detailed and suggests methods of research suitable to study the problem. Most of the works related to ageing issues have been done in the western countries. The Indian literature on ageing indicates that in India the study on ageing has already started. To understand effectively the problems of the elderly persons the researcher's first task is to review literary works that include many books and articles related to the subject. A deep understanding of these works paves the way to know much about the topic. For example, **Burgess** in 1963 and **Dubey** in 1955 have observed in their studies that the status of the old person is deplorable in modern industrialized and urbanized societies dominated by nuclear families.

While increases in life expectancy have been largely driven by better nutrition (starting in the mother's womb), better early childhood health practices (e.g., immunization), improved lifestyles for some sections of the population (e.g., less smoking), less physically exhausting and hazardous jobs and better education, it is undeniable that various medical interventions have helped, and are helping to postpone death and add disability free years to people's lives. Indeed, **Freeman et al.** (2002) argues that without better insights into the causes of improvements in health status among older population (the extent of which, as we have seen in above, is contentious), the direction of the causal arrows between expenditure and health status remains unclear. Health improvements may already have saved and may continue to save medical and long term care expenditure in the future. However, it is also possible that medical interventions and expenditures have been one of the primary driving forces behind better health outcomes, delay in the onset of morbidities and disabilities and less life limiting forms of disease and disability.

If only the adult people are considered, the older people are heavier consumers of healthcare than the younger people. In many developed countries, spending per capita on healthcare for the over sixty-fives is three to four times higher than spending on younger adults. However, the bulk of this expenditure occurs in the last year (or two) of life - a fact that is also true of

people who die younger. Therefore, as people live longer, costs are deferred rather than increased.

S.D.Gokhale, P.V.Ramamurthi, Nirmala Pandit and B.S.Pendse in their book (1999) **“Ageing in India”** in **“Services for the elderly The Formal structure of Care for the Elderly”** explains that family support is provided for the elderly who are retired or have no fixed income. It includes three forms: the elderly living with children, those living alone, and those living in day-care centers. The day-care center for the elderly is a new structure adapted to the process of family size nuclearization and to the increasing number of two-career young couples (who have no time to care for the elderly during the day). Such centers not only keep the traditional way of family support but can also solve problems for the younger generation.

Kabir, M. (2015) in his book **“The Elderly Contemporary Issues”** explores different aspects of socio-economic, cultural, health and psychological problems of the elderly. Generation gap nowadays creates problems. The youth is a visionary spirit, a source of developing issues to inspire mission and vision. They constitute the essence of energy. On the contrary the elderly are wise and lighthouses of civil society. Their manifestation is not limited to read the newspaper or to walk in the morning and evening but to judge what is wrong or what is right but to give guidance for what to do or not to do. They work as crisis managers of nascent problems judging with their wisdom and experience. A generation gap is bound between the youth and the elderly- a gap of running technological innovation and a gap of quintessential achievement, a gap of spiritual sagacity and a gap of religious norms. With the prevalence of morbidity and disability, the elderly should be provided with both financial and social security's inside and outside homes with health care services, medical facilities for better treatment, housing, food and clothing and with extended facilities of health care centers. The elderly Population has low expectations due to lifetime deprivation, and lack of understanding of any concept of well being due to their focus on day-to-day survival and meeting basic needs. The elderly women being more dependent on their families for survival than the elderly men increase their vulnerability. The poor elderly people in rural areas face very difficult situations to meet their basic needs. Many elderly persons have only homestead land but have no agricultural land. Again, many elderly persons even do not have homestead land. Because of insufficient family income, and economic dependence on children the elderly persons cannot support their elderly parents.

Objectives of study: The study has the following main objectives: 1) To find out the socio-demographic profile of the elders in Hindu Community, (2) To study about the economic profile in Hindu community, 3) To find out the health profile among the elderly, 4) To find out the level of feelings of loneliness among the elderly, 5) To identify the adjustment problem of the old with younger generation, 6) To find out spiritual issues of the elderly.

RESEARCH SETTING:

The researcher intends to limit the geographical area of his/her research in Nadia District, West Bengal. Kalyani is a famous city of Nadia district in West Bengal. It is a well-

planned town with a municipality and it is located 50 km away from Kolkata and situated on the eastern banks of the Hooghly River.

Named as “**Vasundhara old age home**” which is a haven for those who have spent most of their lives earning their living and pursuing material necessities. It is the perfect place for the elderly who feel the need to move away from the hustle bustle of the city and yet remain connected to it in some way. The elderly people have been interviewed. Those who are looking for old Age Homes far from busy city life and at pollution free areas but near to Kolkatta, should visit Vasundhara Bridhyasram also known as Smt. Gouri Roy Memorial Old Age Home of Kalyani. Vasundhara Old age home, established on 2014, is easily accessible from Kolkata by Road or train and has all amenities for the boarders.

Vasundhara Old Age home, Kalyani is for those people who are looking for an old Age home in Nadia. Both Male & Female persons can stay at Vasundhara old age Home of Kalyani (Nadia).Address of Vasundhara Old Age Home in Kalyani is **Smt. Gouri Roy Memorial old Age Home**, B6/258 Kalyani,near Central Park, Nadia,W.B.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

To conduct the above mentioned study the researcher has used both qualitative and quantitative methods. Here the researcher has conducted a survey by **Purposive Sampling**. It has a non-probability sampling design. Non-probability sampling is also known by different names such as purposive sampling. This sampling method involves purposive or deliberate selection of particular units of the universe for constituting a sample which represents the universe.

The present study is primarily based on the data relating to the (60+) aged members of the Hindu family of Nadia residing in the Nadia District wards of 8 in urban area, rural areas in Machechar, Birpara, Sarati and the inmates of an old age home named as ‘**Vasundhara Old Age Home**’ located near Central Park, W.B. Kalyani, in Nadia District. Both male and female members have been included in the study. The total number of respondents in this study is hundred.

The case study has been gathered from the entire life cycle or on a definite section of the cycle of a unit, but always with a view of ascertaining the natural history of the social unit, and its relationship to the social factors and forces involved in its environment. The present researcher has adopted this method in order to capture the views and interpretations of the respondents from their perception. Several case studies have been discussed in this research work.

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND RESULTS:

The data obtained would be subjected to descriptive and inferential statistics.The graphic technique will also be used to compare the status of the elderly on the selected scale. The result then will be elaborately interpreted and discussed, and the implications, limitations and suggestions for further research work in the field will be given by the researcher.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The scope of the present study is enormous. Ageing is now a burning issue in all over India. In the exiting economic and political climate of India; it is unrealistic to expect that the state will give priority to the needs of elderly and fulfill its promise of a welfare society in the near future. Hence more emphasis should be on self help and motivating the elderly to be organized. The elderly need to be organized to fight for their rights as well as for the improvement of their own lot.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

Chapter I- Introduction and objectives of study

Chapter II- Review of Literature and theoretical framework

Chapter III - Research Setting

Chapter IV- Research Methodology

Chapter V - Summary of findings, Conclusion and Suggestion

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