

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

Family occupies a unique position in the human society. Its significance, however, varies from society to society and, within the same society among different groups and individuals occupying various positions and statuses that are placed at ' different stages of growth in their passage of life. As a social Institution, family fulfils the needs and interests of the large number of individuals as compared to any other social institution, In general, an individual is born in the family, brought up in the family, grows old in the family, and in normal course dies in the family

With the passage of life towards the old stage, an individual's mental and physical capacity, to perform certain roles gradually gets declined, and when he retires from bread-winning stage he has to experience several socio-economic and psychological problems within the family and society.

Since time immemorial, in traditional Indian society aged people enjoyed better status and authority in the family when joint family system was quite prevalent, The joint family system in India has often been used to illustrate the status of the aged in rural societies. Education of children, changes in the marriage institution, importance given to conjugal relations and emancipation of women have brought changes in the joint family system and consequently challenged the authority of the aged people.

In all industrialized societies of the West, one can find a process of the slow transpiration of multi-generation families, and small core family becoming more and more popular especially in the urban areas. This process is, at present,, slowly occurring in India in tune with the culture changes resulting in the changes in the norms and values as well as in the behavior of an individual, Very often old people are slower to change or to accept, new traditions than the young, as a result, the old are looked upon as obsolete or old fashioned.

Aging of the population also known as demographic aging, and population aging is a summary term for shifts in the age distribution (i.e., Age structure) of a population toward older ages. A direct consequence of the, ongoing global fertility transition (decline) and of.; mortality decline at older ages, population, aging is expected to be among the most prominent: In global demographic trends of the 21st century. Population aging is progressing rapidly in many industrialized countries, but those developing countries whose fertility declines began relatively

early also are experiencing rapid increases in their proportion of elderly people. This pattern is expected to continue over the next few decades, eventually affecting the entire world. Population aging has many important socioeconomic and health consequences, including the increase in the old-age dependency ratio. It presents challenges for public health as well as for economic development.

There is of course some uncertainty with any forecast, but it is important to note that previous population forecasts underestimated rather than overstated the current pace of population aging. Before the 1980s the process of population aging was considered as an exclusive consequence of fertility decline and it was predicted that the pace of population aging would decrease after stabilization of fertility rates at some low levels. Population ageing is the most significant result of the process known as demographic transition.

Rapid decline in old-age mortality observed in developed countries in the last decades of the 20th century significantly accelerated population aging. Now the old-age mortality trends are becoming the key demographic component in projecting the size and composition of the world's future elderly population. The future uncertainties about changing the mortality may produce widely divergent projections of the size of tomorrow's elderly population

AGEING SCENARIO

Population ageing, the process by which older individuals come to form a proportionately larger share of the total population, is one of the most distinctive demographic events of the contemporary world. Initially experienced in the more developed countries, the process is now rapidly approaching the developing world. Although not a global phenomena yet, various predictions indicate that population ageing is going to become a major global issue in the years to come (Chakraborti, 2004). For most of the nation, regardless of their geographic location or developmental stage, there are two notable aspects of the global ageing process: one is progressive demographic ageing of the elderly people and the other is about the feminization of ageing. The rapid growth of the older population has an identical importance in public policy.

By 2050, India will be home to one out of every six of the world's older persons, and only China will have a larger number of elderly, according to estimates released by the United Nations Population Fund (UNPF). Thirty years ago, there were no —aged economies, in which consumption by older people surpassed that of youth. In 2010, there were 23 aged economies. By 2040, there will be 89. Japan is today the only country with more than 30 per cent of its

population aged 60 or above. By 2050, there will be 64 countries where older people make up more than 30 per cent of the population. In simple terms, within a decade there will be one billion older persons worldwide. And by 2050, nearly 80 per cent of the world's older persons will live in developing countries — with China and India contribute to over one-third of that number (The Hindu, 2012).

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Old age or elderly consists of ages nearing or surpassing the average life span of human beings. As per National Policy on Older Persons, 1999, elderly or senior citizen is a person who is of age 60 years or above. The era of urbanization, nuclearisation of family, industrialization, education, dual career in families, modernization, and rise of individual philosophy have diminished the traditional values of India society that earlier had vested authority with elderly.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The aged were significant in terms of stabilizing the personalities within the family. Their experience and expertise have been doing matchless jobs for the younger generation and in turn, the members of the families could provide care for the aged significantly. The aged contribution cannot be measured qualitatively and they deliver their best whenever the families require crucial supports which are qualitative in nature. The dimension is when the age is increasing the problems are also joining with them resultantly the aged need the different kinds of support for their survival. This is a cause for the present study which has been carried out in the Mayyil Panchayath in Kannur district. The solitary reason for the researcher to select the rural area is the rural elderly are contributing their best when compared to the elderly of urban areas even though their working hours are less, since the agriculture and allied activities are in a position to provide the work to the aged.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study health and economic status of aged in Mayyil Panchayath
2. To study the problems and challenged faced by aged people in Mayyil panchayath
3. The socio-economic issues involved and the types of problems faced by the elders in the study area.
4. To study the adjustment of the aged in the families on parameters like physiocological, Economical and social

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher has used descriptive research design for this study. The study described the problems of the elderly regarding their physical, economical and social problems as well as the available social supportive systems

The researcher has used observation and interview as the methods of data collection apart from the interview schedule, as a tool for data collection

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The age factor is a matter of Universal concern. Here in this study 60 years of age has taken as beginning of becoming aged. Some of the demographers distinguish young old (60-69 Years), old (70-79 Years). Oldest old (80-89 Years) and the extreme old (90 + above years).The National Policy on Older person (NPOP) in India classifies and categories this demographic group into young old, (60-69 years) who are usually active vital and vigorous, old(between 70-75 Years) the old-old (between 76-84 Years) and oldest old(85+ above years). The last in this category is more likely to be frail and infirm and generally face difficulties in managing activities of daily living.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The major limitation of the study is time constraint; therefore, the study had to be confined to a sample size of 50.
2. Random sampling method was used for taking response from the respondents. So the limitations of this method are relevant in this study.
3. Any false /wrong disclosure from them will destroy the truthfulness of the study.
4. The study is confined to a finite period. Time and cost constraints are the important limitations of the present study.

SCHEME OF THE STUDY

The contents of the study are presented in 5 chapters.

The 1st chapter examines the relevance of the study, presents the research problem, the objectives of the study, the methodology, followed by the limitations of the study.

The 2nd chapter set apart for review of literature related to the present topic of the study.

The 3rd chapter highlights the profile of study area and theoretical aspects of problems, health status and living arrangements of aged

The 4th chapter contains the analysis of data collected from the 50 samples of aged in Mayyil Panchayath

The last chapter summarizes the major findings of the study and also advances some suggestions for improving the living condition of aged.

The first chapter of this study gives an introduction to the project topic. This chapter also deals with the statement, importance, objectives and limitations of the study.