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Editorial

The basic and most important unit of the society has been the family from the beginning. For the empowerment and development of the country, first of all it is necessary to pay attention to the moral, social, economic and cultural dimensions of basic institutions like family. Balanced development of the family is very important for the development of the society. Therefore, if we want to have a complete and balanced development of the country, then we need to lay maximum emphasis on the basic institution called family. It is necessary that we should not make any discrimination between son and daughter in the family and we must explain this to our sons and get them involved in their activities. Even today, those who belong to the old belief believe that a woman cannot get any freedom, she cannot go anywhere alone, she cannot roam anywhere alone, but today's youth refuse to accept these values.

Some people also say that the importance of the walls in the house, the same importance is given to the education of the boys in the society. But how is a house made? Who are in the base of the house? The base of the house is our daughters, our girls, that means they are related to the roots. If our root becomes weak in the society, then our house or house cannot be strong at all. There is a need to understand this social context in reality.

The extent of favoritism is reached when we see discrimination in small tasks. Some people think that a girl is someone else's wealth, what job she should do. That's why some parents discriminate between boys and girls and this discrimination is visible somewhere in our behavior, in feeding and dressing. This is sheer injustice. God has given the same brain to boys and girls and today girls are proving it by bringing better results.

Girls stay at their parents' house for only a few days, so it is our duty to pay deep attention to their education, upbringing, only then we can fulfill the concept of a strong society. God has made us the trustee of our children so it is our duty to treat all members equally with full justice because both boys and girls have same power, same soul. So we should give them equal opportunities for development.

The basic objective of women empowerment is the development of women and communication of self-confidence in them. Women empowerment is important for the overall development of the society. Empowerment of women is the most important social phenomenon because they are the creators. If you empower them, make them strong, encourage them, it is better for the society. Women and men are the basis of creation and human society. Both complement each other. These are the wheels of the chariot of life by which the journey of life runs

smoothly. The role of both has been equally important for stability in family and society. The basis of change and development in a society depends on the mutual interaction of men and women, walking step by step and equal mobility of both. A chaotic situation is created in social life when any one side lags behind. The history of mankind is witness to this that where women have been neglected, the development of the society has been stunted. The role of women in creation of creation, education of children, upbringing of family is much more important than that of men, thus her position becomes central in the society. Therefore, without the progress of women, there can be no upliftment of mankind and society. As far as India is concerned "Yatra Naryastu Pujayante Ramante Tatra Devta" means where women are worshipped. The deities reside there. With this ideal any Indian woman can feel pride in comparison to the western woman. The ideal of learning in Saraswati, the ideal of wealth in Lakshmi, the ideal of valor in Durga, the ideal of purity in Ganga, even the ideal of creation in the form of Jagad Janani we find only in India.



Professor Akhilesh Shukla
Chief Editor

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Minaxi Masukhbhai Patel

Socio-Economic Conditions of Elderly Women Slum Dwellers

• Archana Mishra

Abstract- *The present paper will analyse the Socio-economic conditions of Elderly women slum dwellers in Kanpur City. Elderly women living in slum areas have different problems than elderly women in general. They suffer more marginalization and exclusion. Many of them suffer from depression because of unemployment, addiction, economic dependency, disturbed material status and lack of exercise. They also suffer frequently by domestic violence. Due to poor sanitation, lack of toilets, contaminated drinking water and open defecation, they easily succumb to many infectious diseases. Therefore this paper will analyse the condition of elderly women from socioeconomic angle.*

Keywords- *Elderly, Women, Slum, Deprivation Older, Socio-Economic*

Introduction- Gerontology is the science of study of old age. It includes three aspects of old age namely physiological, psychological and socio-economic. Gerontology has social aspect too which is related to reciprocal relationship between aged and society. As old age is subsequent stage of human life then why the need of such study arises. It is caused by globalization, industrialization and urbanization which bring drastic change in the society. These development, have both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side modern medical facilities increases the life expectancy of people on the other side it also left them in the stage of uncertainty. Uncertainty caused by the breakdown of joint family and joint income where older people get respect, affection and care. In the nuclear family system people have development individualistic approach and have no time for their immediate family members. Rapid employment of women further increases insecurity among older people as there is no one left for their care in the family. The old people think themselves as marginalised and consider themselves as burden of society.

The outbreak of COVID has further increased their problems. Due to sufferance from many ageborn diseases the old people easily become prey of corona virus and also have late recovery which further adds on their problems. So the old people are becoming the socio problem cases and needed welfare measures for their upliftment. The government has been taking many welfare measures for their upliftment but their condition remained unturned or has very little improvement. The government has passed the maintenance and

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welfare of Parents and senior citizen Act 2007, but this is not sufficient to provide them dignified life. Many welfare schemes are also run by government but it brought a very little change in their condition.

Elderly women living in slum areas have different problems than elderly women in general. They suffer from marginalisation and exclusion. So there is a urgent need to consider the status of the elderly women slum dwellers in the light of present changing scenario. The present paper will study the socio-economic condition, of elderly women slum dwellers in Kanpur city.

Objectives of study- The present paper will study the socio-economic condition of elderly women slum dwellers and suggest measures for their upliftment.

Hypothesis:-

1. The elderly women slum dwellers have low socio-economic status.
2. Most of them are jobless and therefore depend on others for the fulfilment of their needs.
3. Most of them are illiterate and malnourished.

Limitations of Study- Due to constraints of time and money the author has taken Kanpur as the area of research. The author is a woman who resides in Kanpur city and there are many slums nearby to her workplace and her residence. She has a penchant for interacting with elderly women slum dwellers. The author followed covid guidelines while contacting with the respondents. Some respondents could not be contacted due to their sickness.

Review of Literature- Desai Vandana (2020) in her study revealed that the rich slum dwellers develop complex relationship outside the slum area to gain power. They use this power on poor slum dwellers to marginalize, displace and exclude them from slum areas. The author has taken 65 respondents in Mumbai Among 65 respondents 38 was widow. The author found that widows were more at risk because due to patriarchal society they lose their bargaining power and depend on their sons for decision making.

Chaudhary S. Suresh Y, (2020) in his study found out that Covid has brought a sudden shift in the lifestyle of elderly people. They are at most risk and likely to die of COVID-19. This pandemic left them lonely and vulnerable. They started feeling lonely and confined them in their firewalls. They were allured by the misinformation of miraculous cure of COVID – 19. Hashami Sana (2018) carried out the study of 40 elderly women of Aligarh city and found that only 8 out of 40 has taken the benefit of IGNOAP scheme. The underline cause of this is unawareness, ignorance of online processes, lack of paper documents and ID proofs.

Barua, Borah, Deka, Kakati (2017) in their studies conducted in Jorhat district of Assam among 125 elderly found that majority of elderly were suffering from arthritis and visual impairment. Most of the elderly thought their diseases are age related and took no consultation with the Doctor. They did not have money therefore practiced self-medication. The advocate the need of affordable health care services to elderly slum dwellers to ensure them active ageing.

Srivastava, Bavaskar, Chaudhary, Agrawal (2017) took the research on 336 aged women in the Mumbai slum areas. They studied the mental health of elderly women by 30 point depression scale. Study revealed that 60% of elderly women slum dweller were suffering from depression. The reason of depression was unemployment, addiction, economic dependency, disturbed marital status and lack of exercise.

Kadam MA (2015) revealed in her study that the major cause of ill health of women were poor sanitation, lack of toilets, contaminated drinking water, open defecation. The study revealed that in slum area women suffer frequently gender based violence because of their secondary status and negligence. She emphasized the need for specific upliftment policy for elderly women slum dwellers.

Thimmanna (2014) carried her study on the elderly women slum dwellers of Bellari city of Karnataka. Her study revealed that elderly women are marginalized and excluded in slum areas. Due to temporary status of their houses they constantly live under the threat of demolition of their houses. Their other worries were the poverty, health and weak government policies.

Jain, Pawan, Bansal 2012 carried out the study among 400 elderly people 60 years and above in the slum areas of Surat city. The study revealed that 90% of the people have worries about health. Poverty, livelihood, loneliness, threat of demolition of their illegal houses and recreation were other concerns of elderly people. The study emphasized the need of geriatrician and specific clinic to provide the active life to elderly.

Research methodology- The Study applied descriptive cum exploratory research design. The study is descriptive because it describes the socio and economic condition of elderly women. It is exploratory in a sense because it seeks new insight about the conditions of elderly women slum dwellers.

The researcher applied both primary and secondary sources for data collection. The primary sources were collected from field visits along with interview. The secondary data was collected through books, journals, newspapers, magazines, census survey reports and other research materials available in websites.

Interview schedule was developed which have all the questions related to socio-economic conditions of elderly women slum dwellers. The schedule have both open and closed ended questions. The researcher purposely selected 120 elderly women in Sanjay Nagar and Mahadev Nagar slum areas of Kanpur. The unit related for the study was women whose age were 60 years and above.

The collected data was edited by the researcher and divided into different categories then the frequency and percentage was calculated after that tables were prepared. Interpretation and conclusions were drawn by analysing primary and secondary data.

Result and Discussion- The Study revealed that out of 120 elderly women 54% are earning. Most of them are between the age group of 60 to 75 years after that there is a slight decline of numbers. Most of the elderly women are wage labourers working in factory, construction workers and as domestic servants. Some have small shops in the slum areas. Few elderly women are

satisfied with their income. Most of them revealed that their monthly income is not enough to fulfil even their basic need. Some have taken debts from local moneylenders or depend on their children for monthly expenses. Income inadequacy left them with the inferior feeling. They regard themselves as unwanted, degraded and humiliated members of society.

Due to their low economic status the elderly women do not have access to health and nutritious food. This effect their health adversely which is further worsen by living condition of the slum areas. They drink contaminated water, live in crowed and damp houses which usually lack sanitation and sewage facilities. This weakens their immune system and they are easily prone to infections and chronic diseases. Out of 120 elderly women selected for the study 48% feel themselves healthy 45% are found sick and 7% are very sick. Healthy persons are more in lower age group. The researcher found the relationship between health and economic status. The healthy elderly women are able to work better and those who work are in a better position to maintain their health. Because they can afford three times meal per day. The respondents who have serious health problems suffer from tuber culosis, asthma, paralysis, rheumatism and blood pressure. Most of the respondents are consulting in private clinic. 75% of the respondents eared by their family members. The researcher found no positive relations between the health and marital status of elderly women.

Most of the elderly women are living with their children. 20% of the respondents are widow and 40% of the respondents are financially assisted by the children. The author has found out that 70% of the elderly women come from similar social milieu and have migrated from rural areas in search of better livelihood. 80% of the male members of their family are engaged in petty jobs and elderly women supplement income by doing domestic chores. These women worked day in and day out and wanted the well being of their family, their sons and grandsons daughter to do better but their megre incomes are spent in drugs, illicit liquor and gambling by their male members. Their condition remains deplorable as before. They remain unsung saviours of their homes.

Inspite of huge spending by government on urban slums, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ujjawala, Jan Dhan, Aayushman Yojana, the real benefit do not reach them due to their low level of awareness and they develop trust deficit in government schemes and emulate others by paying heavily for private school, hospitals and are heavily exploited by them.

The author found that out of 120 elderly women 40% of them are often subjected to domestic violence and have no energy, time and support to report to police station as they fear vicious cycle of torture and reprisal at the hand of administration.

PMSBY (Prime Minister Surksha Beema Yojana) has given them a elusion and APY (Atal Pension Yojana) has secured their future. Only few people who are aware have taken advantage of there schemes and most of the elderly women depend on DBT of government old age pension schemes and Food security is provided by free return schemes of governors most of the schemes are in the name of Mahila member and this has further given them identity.

SBA (Swachha Bharat Yojana) has provided toilet to every house and this has gone a long way in providing healthy dignified life to elderly women. The urban slums have got a face lift in recent years due to providing of financial assistance for building/ upgrading their slum dwellings and the best part of this assistance comes in the bank account of elderly women of the household.

The author has also noticed during interaction with elderly women of urban slums that they have much complaint with the system yet they have become very assertive in asking for their entitlements. To raise their voices, they have developed SHG (Self Help Groups) where they are engaged in some economic activities and also discuss burning issues and problems with each other and help each other in finding solutions. Various NGO's are also working in urban slums and they all to mitigate their problems directly or indirectly. Awareness about nutritious life style, health in also given to them and they are also assisted in taking benefits of government welfare schemes.

Conclusion- The Elderly women of urban slums are mostly independent, self-confident yet they need to be supported well when they are not able to work or sudden face certain diseases. The family set up though now derives benefit in the name of elderly women yet not support them well in their bad days of ill health and they develop a sense of isolation, deprivation, being left out. Here family values and bonding should come to rescue. Government agencies can only provide financial inclusion but they will to live meaningfully depend upon positive, psychological support and family / societal sustenance.

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