

GE Paper 2 Chapter 7

**Ageing in Some Social Challenges to Elderly Care**

ELDERLY PEOPLE NEED

- PROPER MEDICAL TREATMENT,
- CARE, LOVE AND SUPPORT,
- MONEY,
- LEISURE, SOCIALISATION

CARE, LOVE SUPPORT- less in nuclear families. The young people move away in search of better education and career leaving the elderly lonely.

MEDICAL TREATMENT: facilities remain inadequate.

MONEY: Unable to work because they are old. Only a few people receive pension etc. Insurance policies are also not very friendly towards elderly people. Most of elderly people are dependent on others for money

LEISURE, SOCIALISATION: Because of many illnesses, many are unable to travel alone. Their mobility is restricted. So they are forced to remain in their houses where they end up feeling lonely. They are unable to socialise.

## Ageing in Some Social Challenges to Elderly Care- Abhay B. Mane

"Ageing in India: Some Social Challenges to Elderly Care" is an article published in 2016. In the article, Abhay B Mane, a Professor in Community Medicine, talks about the social challenges in the elderly care sector in the twenty-first century.

- An ageing population puts an increased burden on the resources of a country because they require more care at various levels.
- The ageing population is both a medical and sociological concern.
- The elderly population suffers high rates of morbidity and mortality due to infectious diseases.
- The issues related to old people may differ according to the socio-economic development, culture, and political situations of various places
- Elderly care should consider the psychological and social issues of old people along with their medical problems.
- Hence **it will be a herculean task** ( it will be difficult) for policy makers to address geriatric care that will take into account all these factors

### **MAJOR CONCERNS IN GERIATRIC CARE**

**1.Lack of infrastructure:** The importance given to elderly care in our country remains limited. **There is a lack of adequate infrastructure, man power and care** in the public sector. The elderly people need special care for chronic diseases, but there aren't many facilities that work specially for elderly people. **The available facilities are usually crowded.** Many people also face issues like poverty, lack of mobility etc which affect the access to healthcare.

**2.Changing family structure:** **The traditional joint family** system gives more importance to elderly care in comparison to **the modern nuclear family system.** Family **values are also changing.** The care given to older people is decreasing in many modern families.

**3.Lack of social support :** The support system given to elderly people is inadequate. The amount spent by governments on elderly care is low. **Pension and social security is given to only a limited population.** Elderly people feel **lonely and insecure.** Very often they **remain dependent** on others for money and mobility. Insurance policies are also not very useful for the elderly.

**4.Social inequality:** Social differences also affect the quality of life of the elderly. So the issues of elderly people may be different in relation to their age, gender, place, social status, health conditions, financial status etc. It is noted that the elderly people in rural areas get more emotional support from families because of the joint family system.If we consider gender differences it is noted that women are more vulnerable and insecure because of their lack of education, lack of financial dependence etc.Their healthcare is very often neglected.

#### **5.Availability, accessibility and affordability of health care:**

a.Availability: The facilities available for elderly(geriatric) care are not adequate. Some facilities like old age homes, nursing assistance at home etc are available in urban areas, but these facilities don't meet the needs of the current elderly population.

b.Accessibility: The elderly people usually suffer from many illnesses. This reduces their mobility. They are unable to access the health care facilities without the help of others. The migration of young members in search of education, job etc also leave the elderly people alone and this also contributes to the lack of accessibility to healthcare.

c.Affordability: Only a small percentage of elderly population receives social support services like pension. The others are financially dependent on others.Many old people are no longer able to earn money by working. Thus poverty becomes the greatest challenge to elderly healthcare. Insurance policies are also not friendly towards the elderly.

**6.Economic dependency:** Only a small percentage of elderly population receives social support services like pension. The others are financially dependent on others.Many old people are no longer able to earn money by working. Thus poverty becomes the greatest challenge to elderly healthcare. In comparison older women are more vulnerable in this respect. The older people, because they do not have money, are often forced to neglect their healthcare are are abused physically and emotionally in many families.

### 1. What is the herculean task for policy makers regarding elderly care in India?

Elderly care is both a medical and sociological concern. The policy makers must consider **different factors like rates of morbidity, mortality, socio economic status, cultural practices and politics** while making decisions. This makes it very difficult.

### 2. Why are the elderly in India vulnerable?

The elderly in India are much more vulnerable because of low government spending on a social security system. They feel lonely and insecure **because of lack of proper support systems.**

### 3. Why are elderly people less vulnerable in rural areas rather than urban areas?

In many rural areas, **the traditional joint family system is still followed.** This provides a support system to the elderly people.

### 4. What are the key challenges to access and affordability of healthcare for the elderly?

A large number of elderly people cannot travel without other's help ( **reduced mobility**). They are not financially independent (**wage loss**). They are not able to mingle in the society because of reduced mobility (**declining social engagement.**) All these are challenges to healthcare.

### 5. What is the single most pressing challenge to the welfare of an older person in our country?

**Poverty** is the single most pressing challenge to the welfare of an older person in our country. The elderly neglect their own healthcare because they have to depend on others for the expenses.

1 How does the lack of infrastructure affect old age care India? [Section 1](#)

2. What are the differences in treatment of elderly people in the traditional family structure and the emerging nuclear family structure? [Section 2](#)

3. How does the lack of social support affect old age care in India? [Section 3](#)

4 How does the field of medicine and insurance treat the concept of geriatric care? [Section 5 a&c](#)

5. How does economic dependency affect geriatric care in India? [Section 6](#)