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Problems of the Aged People in India

Dr. Radhika Kapur

Abstract

Ageing is an irreparable biological process and is defined as the survival of the increasing number of individuals, who have completed their adult roles. Ageing is stated as the inevitable consequence of decline in productiveness. With the advent of technology and modernization, there has been a decrease in the mortality rate, increase in awareness, nutrition, advancement in health care facilities and an increase in life expectancy. The main purpose of this research manuscript is to acquire an understanding of the problems of the aged people in India. When individuals reach old age, the various problems that they have to experience include, decline in health conditions, retirement, financial problems, loneliness and dependence upon others. The problems that have been taken into account in this research paper include, social, economic, psychological, health, crime, abuse and other miscellaneous problems. Another area that has been included is social work interventions. There are formulation of measures and policies that aim at alleviating the problems of the elderly, provide them security, protection and focus upon their well-being.

Keywords: Aged People, Abuse, Crime, Economic, Health, Psychological, Social Work

Introduction

With the advent of industrialization, globalization and economic liberalization, the individuals are getting familiar with innovative and modern techniques and methods. The youth is occupied with enhancing their career opportunities, middle aged people are engaged in jobs and earning their livelihoods and the aged individuals are leading retired lives. They either get occupied in some kind of honorary work, or manage the household chores through obtaining assistance from the caregivers or they follow their daily routine. The individuals are gaining more mobility and joint family system is being disintegrated into the emergence of nuclear family system. The aged people are experiencing changes in their social lives. In India, there has been an increase in the number of older persons. The aged people within the country are being provided various facilities and senior citizen benefits. These are beneficial and render a significant contribution in providing them support, especially when they are living by themselves.

In the present world, individuals, belonging to marginalized, deprived and socio-economically backward sections of the society aspire to earn better career opportunities and sustain their living conditions. The individuals migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search for better livelihoods opportunities, leaving their elderly parents. When individuals live separately from their elderly parents, they may communicate with them and make regular visits. On the other hand, there are cases of individuals, who do not look after their parents and mainly focus upon enhancing their own livelihoods opportunities. The levels of savings and investments are the determinants of growth of the modern sector and, hence, the generation of employment as well as the process of urbanization. The development of industrialization has led to migration of individuals to other places, primarily in search for employment opportunities (Chapter VI, n.d.). The aged people in India, experience various types of problems. These are social, economic, psychological, health, crime and violence, abuse and other miscellaneous problems.

Social Problems

The position and status of the aged individuals have been undermined by transformations in the cultures, values and overall living conditions of the individuals. In the present existence, technology has gained grounds and individuals belonging to all age groups, categories and backgrounds are making use of technology in carrying out their tasks and functions. The elderly individuals are not usually aware of usage of technology, they may just speak on the phone, watch television or listen to music and religious beliefs on radio or on their mobile phones. This indicates that they are usually unaware of how to perform various tasks and functions through the usage of technology. When aged people are unaware of usage of technology, they may encounter problems in communicating with people at distant places by sending messages, pictures and videos. Unawareness in terms of technology is one of the factors that impedes socialization of the aged people.

When individuals belonging to rural communities, migrate to urban areas in search of better employment opportunities, they usually leave their parents. There are number of reasons for this, the living accommodation in urban areas is expensive, and the rent is unaffordable for them. When individuals get engaged in full time jobs, then taking care of the needs and requirements of the elderly usually becomes a problem for them. The aged people may experience problems in adjusting to social life of the cities. They usually feel apprehensive in going to nearby marketplaces and obtain assistance from their family

members. The complexities of modern life and living conditions undermine the traditional values and beliefs of the aged people. They have their own traditional beliefs and viewpoints, which normally are not believed by the youth and the middle aged people, as they are accustomed to modern values and beliefs. Hence, in this manner, the knowledge and beliefs of the aged people gets devalued (Chapter VI, n.d.).

Research has indicated that when individuals reach the age of 60 years, they are unable to realize that they have now reached old age. This means that individuals are not completely prepared for old age (Singh, 2015). When they have their family members around, relatives and a good social circle of friends, then it is likely that they may feel secure and supportive. On the other hand, there are aged people, who are above 80 years of age and live alone. They do not have family members around and are primarily dependent upon their caregivers. In these cases, aged people experience social problems. They do not take pleasure in going out into the social circle. In case, celebrations or ceremonies are organized among their relatives, friends or neighbours, they do not enjoy going. Hence, when aged people get accustomed to isolation, they experience social problems. In order to alleviate social problems, it is vital for the individuals to form a good circle of friends and interact with relatives, friends, caregivers and neighbours.

Economic Problems

Economic problems are experienced by the aged people, belonging to deprived, marginalized and socio-economically backward sections of the society. When the individuals are engaged in minority jobs, when their income is meagre and is not enough to meet their needs and requirements, then the individuals experience economic problems. Social security and financial security of the aged people is of utmost significance (Chapter VI, n.d.). In India, majority of the aged people experience financial problems as they are not in a position to earn their livelihoods. When their savings are not enough to meet the medical expenses and other household responsibilities, then they experience financial problems. When they possess finances and wealth, then usually they are exploited by their family members. In India, more than 65 percent of the aged people are dependent upon others for their daily life activities and responsibilities. The aged women, who are independent accounted for less than 20 percent, whereas men were independent to a major extent (Financial Status of Older People in India, 2011).

The financial status of the aged people is directly connected with their financial independence. With the disintegration of the joint family system and the emergence of nuclear family system, the aged people prefer to live by themselves and manage all their finances. The younger individuals are having increasing academic and professional pursuits and due to this, the elderly are connected with them to a lesser extent. The individuals, who have accumulated wealth with their hard work have acquired net-worth, and value in terms of the money matters. The economic problems among the aged people have taken place due to fast changing socio-economic conditions, ongoing open market policies, and liberalization of economy (Financial Status of Older People in India, 2011). When individuals have been engaged in well paid jobs and professions, then they do not experience financial problems. On the other hand, financial problems of the individuals have been severe, when they have been unable to make savings for old age.

The major economic problem that aged people have experienced is that of exploitation. There have been cases of family members and relatives, who keep a watch on the finances that they possess. In a direct as well as in an indirect manner, they make an attempt to take money from them. When individuals are unable to find good employment opportunities or aspire to seek admission in a reputed educational institution for the pursuance of higher studies, they exploit the elderly family members and take money from them for their own benefit. The other problems that aged people experience in terms of finances is robbery and theft. When outside the home, individuals feel, a person is living alone and possesses sufficient wealth, they even get subjected to violent and criminal acts. Various areas that cause economic problems for the aged people have been stated as follows:

Medical and Health Care – With aging, individuals experience health problems and illnesses. They need regular medical check-ups, they are required to take their medicines and in case of other health problems are even required to undergo medical treatment. Medical and health care are regarded as areas that need finances. In some cases, medical treatment is quite expensive and individuals need to spend money. When they are wealthy, they do not face any problems, on the other hand, when they are not financially strong, then they experience problems.

Court Cases – Court cases are regarded as aspects that require spending of money to a large extent. When individuals are involved in certain disputes or court cases, they feel

stressed and economic problems. Research has indicated that aged people usually feel disturbed mainly due to legal matters and the cases pending in various courts.

Education of Children – There are aged people, who have to take care of the needs and requirements of their grandchildren, especially when their parents are not around. Education of children is regarded as a crucial area. Every parent or grandparent wants his child to acquire good education and aspires to get him enrolled in good educational institutions. Reputed educational institutions are expensive. When individuals are not financially strong, then they experience problems in making provision of good quality education for their children or grandchildren. When good educational institutions are not available in the region, where they are residing, then economic problems prove to be impediments within the course of sending them to other cities to acquire education.

Management of Household – The management of the household is a difficult task. There are numerous areas that need to be taken into consideration, these include, cleaning, washing, preparation of meals, gardening, taking care of electricity, water and other civic amenities and so forth. These tasks demands manual labour as well as finances. The elderly individuals are usually unable to carry out the household chores on their own and need to hire helpers and caregivers. When they are financially strong, they will be able to pay their salaries. On the other hand, when they experience economic problems, they will be unable to hire helpers and need to formulate measures to manage the household chores on their own.

Social Causes – When the aged people are living alone, then usually they get engaged in some social work. Social work keeps them occupied and eliminate the feelings of loneliness. The social work is carried out by the individuals on the basis of the fields and professions that they have been engaged in. For instance, if they have done teaching, they may provide coaching classes to the children, belonging to deprived and economically weaker sections of the society. The feelings of kindness and generosity enables the individuals to help others. In helping others, in giving others something, it is vital to be financially strong. When aged people are economically secure, they may make donations to the underprivileged children in the form of books, stationary items, bags, clothes, food items etc. On the other hand, economic problems prove to be impediments within the course of implementation of certain social causes.

Other Causes – Aged people usually possess strong religious beliefs and take pleasure in making visits to religious places. When they do not experience any economic problems

and feel financially secure, they may plan their visits to religious places, even to other cities. On the other hand, when they experience economic problems, they are unable to plan visits to other places. In such cases, they usually visit temples that are located nearby their homes. Means of transportation, diet and nutrition, equipment, tools and other materials that they need to use can be purchased, only when a person is financially secure. On the other hand, economic problems prove to be the major impediments within the course of sustenance of living conditions.

Financial security of the aged people is proposed by tax benefits and higher rates of interest on the deposits for the senior citizens. Other measures that have been formulated include, promotion of long term savings in rural and urban areas, increased coverage and revision of old age pension schemes for the aged people, who are residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness. Pension, provident fund, gratuity and other retirement benefits are various sources that make provision of financial security to the elderly individuals. The services of the social workers are utilized in making provision of employment opportunities for the elderly individuals. They have to ensure that the employment opportunities should be such that can be appropriately carried out by these individuals. The main objective of getting engaged in employment opportunities for the elderly is to alleviate the feeling of loneliness, helping them in remaining occupied and generating a source of income, so that they are able to easily meet their needs and requirements (Chapter 7, n.d.).

Psychological Problems

An individual lives in a society. Within the society, he has certain roles and functions to perform. The performance of roles and functions are primarily based upon his occupation. For instance, if he is a teacher, he will teach individuals and contribute towards their effective growth and development. If he is a medical doctor, he would get involved in making provision of medical treatment to the individuals and so forth. With aging, the individuals generates awareness in terms of values, norms and principles, which they impart to their family as well as the community members. The aged people have the major task of adequately guiding the individuals towards the right direction. Hence, they have an important role to perform towards the progression of their family and society. The psychological problems among the aged people emerge from loneliness, isolation, powerlessness and meaninglessness. When they live in isolation, when they are not acknowledged by the other individuals, and when their contributions or functions have not proved to be meaningful and

beneficial to the individuals, then they experience psychological problems. The different types of psychological problems have been stated as follows: (Kourkouta, Iliadis, & Monois, 2015).

Dementia – Dementia is referred to more than a mere memory impairment. The five percent of the population, who is above 65 years of age experience this problem. The individuals experience this problem, depict the symptoms of short term memory loss, word finding difficulty, capability problems, difficulty in handling complex daily routine tasks, apathy, irritability, apraxia, loss of speech intelligibility, loss of ability to walk and physical irritability. The main problems are identified in the consciousness, orientation, memory, thinking, attention and behaviour. When a person reaches the age of 70 years, he usually experiences a decline in vocabulary and usage of words. He experiences problems in getting engaged into lengthy conversations with others. In some cases, this problem imposes detrimental effects upon the individuals. Whereas, there have been cases, when elderly individuals have not experienced any major disadvantages. This is primarily due to, when they have support and assistance available from others.

Depression – The elderly individuals do feel despondent and downhearted at times. But when these feelings remain within them for a long period, then it is referred to as depression. Among the aged people, depression is more prevalent as compared to the youth and the middle aged people. When the elderly people feel depressed, they normally develop a pessimistic outlook towards life. They prefer to remain in isolation and do not take pleasure in communicating with the other individuals. They normally keep to themselves and lose interest in the performance of other activities and functions. These include, physical activities, watching television, going out into the social circle and so forth. The living environmental conditions and the biological functions are the major causes of depression. Individuals do put into practice the measures that are needed to curb depression. Family members, caregivers, and other community members help these individuals in alleviating the feelings of depression and lead an efficient life.

Social Exclusion – Social exclusion is referred to the problem that the aged people experience as a result of loss of job opportunities, absence of family members, relatives, and friends. In other words, when they do not have anyone to interact with, they experience social exclusion. Social exclusion gives rise to psychological as well as health problems. It is vital to implement the measures that are needed to eliminate social exclusion. Hence, for this

purpose, aged people get enrolled into educational institutions, training centres, and seek certain benefits due to their aging. In the present existence, within the country, there have been establishment of adult education centres, health care centres, medical facilities, social security, pension, and micro-finance for the aged people. The aged people, when feel that due to their illness, health problems, inability to communicate and so forth, would not be able to interact with others or get involved in a social gathering, then they form the feelings of social exclusion.

Anxiety and Phobias – Anxiety and phobia due to some factors also adds to psychological problems among the aged people. Stress is one of the factors that shows both psychological and physical signs and symptoms. When individuals feel stressed regarding something, then it is likely that they feel anxious and apprehensive. These may arise due to number of factors. For instance, when they are experiencing health problems and illnesses, they may feel anxious in making a visit to the medical and health care centre and may require assistance. When they have to visit a temple or a religious place, then they may need company from others, as crowded places may make them feel apprehensive. Other tasks and functions that make elderly people anxious include, making visits to market places, carrying out banking transactions and so forth. These may take place, especially when they are not familiar with the region.

Loneliness – Loneliness is referred to the chronic and distressful state that impedes the mind-sets of the individuals. It imposes detrimental effects for the physical as well as psychological health of the individuals. The aged people look for ways to eliminate the feelings of loneliness. When they have family members around, they try to establish close relationships with their children and grandchildren, so that they provide them support and assistance. When family members are living at a distance, then they want them to make regular visits to them. On the other hand, when they do not have family members, they establish good terms and relationships with their caregivers and create a social circle. One may be introvert or less interactive in nature, but loneliness is regarded as a severe problem, which needs to get alleviated in every possible manner.

Role of the Family – The role of the family is regarded as imperative in taking care of the needs and requirements of their aged family members. They provide all kinds of support and assistance, which can help the aged people in alleviating their problems. When the family members are compassionate, caring and thoughtful, they not only provide aged people moral

and emotional support, but also take care of their financial requirements, health care, security and listen to their problems and grievances and provide effectual solutions to them. When they experience illnesses or health problems, which are common as the person ages, then support of family members is vital. With caring family members, the elderly people not only feel contented and pleased, but remain free from all kinds of problems to a major extent. They take pleasure, when their grandchildren communicate to them regarding their school experiences, planning a visit to a religious place gives them pleasure along with family and so forth.

Health Problems

As the individual ages, health problems among them are common. There are various kinds of health problems experienced by the aged people. These include, visual impairments, hearing impairments, speech impairments, decline in word usage and vocabulary, pain in the joints, high or low blood pressure, and other illnesses. Older individuals may live longer but they may get prone to illnesses and diseases. World Health Organization defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is not merely absence of a disease. Health is considered more important for the aged people, as they are the ones, who primarily experience a decline in the health conditions in old age. The Constitution of India envisages the establishment of a new social order based on equality, freedom, justice and dignity of the individual. It aims at the elimination of poverty, ignorance and ill-health and directs the State to increase education, nutrition levels and standards of living among individuals. Bringing about improvements in the health care is regarded as one of the primary duties. The maintenance of the health and strength of the workers, men, women, children and the aged people is implemented, when they are provided with opportunities and facilities to enhance their living conditions in a well-organized manner (Chapter VI, n.d.).

The health of the aged people gets affected by primarily two factors. These are due to the environmental conditions and biological conditions. When environmental conditions are taken into consideration, both home as well as outside the home influence their health. Within the home, when any kinds of conflicts and disputes takes place between individuals, then aged people in some cases feel stressful and they have an effect upon their health. These conditions usually affects the mind-sets of the individuals. As a result, they may not consume their proper diet and nutrition, may not obtain adequate sleep and as a result, they experience a decline in their health conditions. The biological conditions that have an impact upon the

health of the individuals include, visual impairments, hearing impairments, pain in the joints, nervous disorders, weakness, heart complaints, asthma, tuberculosis, skin diseases, and so forth. Women usually report more health problems as compared to men (Balamurugan, & Ramathirtham, 2012).

Not only in India, but in other countries of the world as well, aging of the population is on the rise. Progression in the health care and medical facilities, improvement in the living conditions and the general quality of life and operative measures of birth control could be attributed to the emerging global phenomenon. The population is stated to be aging, in which the proportion of the aged people is said to increase. India is passing through technological, social, cultural and demographic transition. The individuals began to realize that health is important and they need to implement appropriate measures to take care of their health care requirements. With the improvement in health care facilities, the individuals are able to meet their health care requirements appropriately. Eventually, there has been a decline in the mortality rate due to an increase in life expectancy, which ultimately leads to an increase in the population of the aged people (Balamurugan, & Ramathirtham, 2012).

The aged people, who are above the age of 60 years and are living below the poverty line, account for seven to eight percent of the population. The aged people in the unorganized sector like the agricultural labourers, casual workers or landless labourers have to look after their family and household responsibilities and financial problems are the major causes of barriers within the course of achievement of their desired objectives. Aged people need assistance and support from their family members and caregivers in taking care of their health conditions. When they receive support and assistance, they are able to maintain good health and live longer. On the other hand, when they are lonely and lack the support and assistance, then they are unable to meet their health care requirements in an appropriate manner (Balamurugan, & Ramathirtham, 2012).

The main factors that lead to health problems among the aged people have been stated as follows:

Neglect – When aged people are not acknowledged, when they are not communicated in an appropriate manner by the other family members, when their caregivers regard them as a burden and do not take proper care of them, then they feel neglected. Neglect by others, especially family members causes despondency and depression among the individuals and as a result, it has an impact upon their health. In order to maintain good health, it is vital to form

a social circle, comprising of relatives and friends. It is vital for the aged people to get engaged into effective communication with others in order to lead a healthy life.

Financial Problems – Aged people are required to take medicines and obtain regular medical check-ups. When they are financially strong, they do not experience any problems and are able to meet their expenses appropriately. On the other hand, financial problems experienced by the individuals, leads to deprived health conditions. The reason being, in case of illnesses and diseases, they are unable to obtain medical treatment or even medicines. Hence, to maintain good health, these individuals either prefer to obtain free medical check-ups or if they are engaged in jobs, then medical assistance and other benefits is provided to them by their employers. There have been establishment of organizations that provide health care and medical facilities to individuals belonging to deprived and economically backward sections of the society.

Inappropriate Dietary Intake – For the aged people, it is vital to consume adequate diet. Healthy and a nutritious diet should comprise of carbohydrates, minerals, proteins, vitamins, and fats. It is essential for the individuals to consume minerals such as, iron, potassium, calcium etc. It is essential to obtain the required nutrition in order to prevent any kinds of deficiencies. Inappropriate dietary intake is regarded as one of the apparent causes of health problems and illnesses among the aged. When they will not obtain the proper nutritional requirements, then it is likely that they will not be able to meet their health care requirements in an appropriate manner. A proper diet should comprise of milk, fruits, vegetables, cereals and bread.

Accidents – Accidents are regarded as aspects that affects the health of the individuals. Accidents may be major or minor. They may affect the health of the individuals either permanently or temporarily. For instance, if a person has been prone to an accident and experiences difficulty in walking, then his problem may be temporary or permanent. Minor accidents may affect the health of the individuals usually on a temporary basis. When aged people get adapted to some kinds of accidents, it usually has an impact upon their mind-sets. Hence, it is vital for them to take precautions, when going out of their homes. Use of walking sticks, spectacles and other devices, such as hearing aids are essential, especially when individuals experience hearing impairments. Lack of these devices may cause accidents.

Physical Activities – It has been found out that aged men and women usually go to parks every morning to get engaged in physical activities and meet their friends. They

perform activities, such as yoga and meditation, walk, and socialize with individuals. Physical activities and meeting friends in the morning is regarded as an important aspect in the maintenance of good health of the aged people. When aged people are not ambulatory and use wheel chairs, then they make visits to parks and other places along with their family members or caregivers. On the other hand, when the individuals do not go for morning walks, or get engaged in any kinds of physical activities and stays at home, then they usually experiences depression and it has a negative impact upon their health conditions.

Other Problems – For the aged people, it is vital that they should perform the activities of daily living in an appropriate manner. They need to wear proper attire in accordance to the weather conditions. Particularly, in the winter season, they need to keep themselves covered with woollen clothes. Especially when they are going out of the house, it is vital that they should put on proper woollen garments in order to prevent themselves from cold. Stress and tension are regarded as aspects that affect the health conditions of the individuals. High blood pressure is a major problem that takes place due to stress. On the other hand, when elderly individuals get subjected to crime and violence, then it has a severe impact upon their health conditions. They may even get hospitalized and need medical treatment.

Crime against the Aged People

Crime and fear of crime is regarded as one of the major concerns that primarily cause worry among the aged people. The influence of crime is severe among them. The reason being, they are old, frail and are not able to defend themselves. The limited budgets that are possessed by the aged people and they often live in frequented neighbourhoods are the other reasons that they get subjected to crime and violence. The aged people, who are above 80 years of age, usually experience health problems. These individuals are the ones, who get subjected to crime and violence to a major extent. The crimes that are most frequently committed against them are, theft, robbery, burglary, cheating, verbal abuse, physical abuse, physical assault, rape and murder (Chapter VI, n.d.). The doers of these crimes, usually have two aims. These are, either they aim to obtain money and wealth or they impose harm upon the individuals with the feelings of hostility or antagonism.

Without being subjected to any kinds of criminal and violent acts, the aged people live in the fear that they would be harmed by anybody. The fear and apprehensiveness develop within them, especially when they live alone. When they live alone and do not have

any means of support, then they feel fearful that they would be harmed by other individuals. The cases of aged people and other individuals, who have been subjected to crime and violence are found in newspapers, magazines and on the internet. When individuals generate awareness regarding the prevalence of criminal acts, they develop fear and apprehensiveness. Protection is regarded as one of the remedies that enable the individuals to alleviate their fear and apprehensiveness. With the impact of globalization, there has been an increase in the number of aged people within the cities. Retired men and women quite often become the targets of burglars and housebreakers.

As it has been stated above, there are various types of crime committed against the aged people. In the present existence, there have been formulation of measures by the Government to ensure that they receive complete care and protection. The aged people usually experience emotional and economic security, when they receive care and protection from their family members and caregivers. There have been changes and transformations brought about in the social structure. There are family members and caregivers, who regard them as a burden and mistreat them. In 2013, the main causes that were analysed for crime against the aged people are lack of adjustment, economic dependence of the abused and increased longevity. In 2015, the reasons that were found were, financial matters, and property disputes. Within the society, attitudinal and relationship issues are stated as aspects that also led to prevalence of crime against the aged people (Govil, & Gupta, 2016). The main causes have been stated as follows:

Financial Matters – When the aged people are financially strong, when they have wealth and savings, then they get subjected to criminal acts. Theft and robbery are the criminal acts that take place, when the doers generate awareness that these individuals possess enough wealth and money. There have been cases of aged people, who have been exploited by their family members. Research has indicated that there are individuals, who are not well educated, and do not get engaged in any employment opportunity. They mainly use the wealth and money, belonging to their parents, for their own benefits and to sustain their living conditions. Hence, financial matters are the main aspects that cause crime and violence.

Emotional Dependence of the Aged People – Even when the aged people are financially strong, they are emotionally dependent upon others. Isolation and loneliness are stated as distressful conditions that impede the psychological approach of the individuals. Not

only the aged individuals, but individuals belonging to all age groups and backgrounds, need support and assistance from others. Individuals are emotionally dependent upon others to share their joys and sorrows. The emotional dependence of the aged people upon others, usually subject them to crime and violence. The individuals are occupied in their own lives, they do not have time to listen to the concerns of the aged members of the household. When they get engaged into conversations with them, they may get frustrated and mistreat them.

Changes in the Lifestyles – The individuals attempt to bring about changes in their lifestyles on a daily basis. They get familiarised with modern and innovative methods and techniques, focus upon enhancing their career opportunities and so forth. The changes that individuals are initiating within their lives are stated as ways that lead to crime against the aged people. When aged people ask the other family members to explain them the techniques of usage of technology, they get angry and frustrated. The individuals are unable to realize that when they were young, their parents and grandparents taught them, academic concepts and other norms and values. They rendered a significant contribution in making their lives productive. Now, when they have to teach them how to make use of technology, and in their slow understanding, decline in vocabulary and word usage, they subject them to abuse and mistreatment.

Increasing Longevity and Need for Care for the Aged People – When the individuals need to look after the needs and requirements of the aged people, they may regard them to be a burden. When they are not ambulatory and are dependent upon others in order to take care of their activities of daily living, such as eating, bathing, dressing, toileting and transferring, then they may get subjected to criminal and violent acts. Providing help and assistance to the individuals in meeting the daily requirements is sometimes cumbersome and tedious for the family members and caregivers. The caregivers, who do it as part of their job, also in some cases feel frustrated and get engaged in criminal activities. The main cause is weakness and vulnerability among the aged people that subject them to criminal and violent acts. Robbery, theft, verbal and physical abuse are the criminal acts that are mostly prevalent among the aged people, who are not ambulatory.

Lack of Effective Legal Deterrents – The individuals, when they are living separately from their aged parents are required to make provision of assistance and social security. They need to convey to their parents that they should keep the doors and the windows locked from inside. The hiring of helpers and caregivers should be done with complete verification and

enquiry. When the aged people are unaware, it is the responsibility of their family members and friends to make them aware and informative. The lack of effective legal deterrents is stated as one of the major factors that enable them to get accustomed to crime and violence. Within the household, it is essential to impose certain limitations that may help the aged people to look after their security.

Abuse of Aged People

The abuse experienced by the aged people in the present existence is becoming common. The various forms of abuse have been stated as follows:

Verbal Abuse – Verbal abuse is the most common form of abuse. It involves making use of obscene language and words. When a person makes use of harsh words and rude language, then it is termed as verbal abuse. This form of abuse does not impose any bodily harm or injury, but is stated to hamper the mind-sets of the individuals. Harsh words leave a scar upon the mind-sets of the individuals and when they recall those words, they feel depressed and frustrated. Aged people experience verbal abuse to a major extent. The main reason that they get abused verbally is, when individuals generate the viewpoint against them that they are not capable of doing anything, are worthless and regard them to be a burden. Taking care of their needs and requirements is a cumbersome task, in some cases, especially when they are not ambulatory. They are slow in the performance of tasks and functions and due to their weaknesses, they mainly get subjected to verbal abuse.

Physical Abuse – Physical abuse refers to single acts that may be repetitive or enduring acts. Enduring acts are lasting or continuing acts that causes pain or bodily harm. These include, beating, shaking, grabbing, hurting with objects, imposing bodily harm or injury upon the individuals, imposing inappropriate restraints, harassment and confinement. Confinement is when the aged people are prevented from going out of the house. The effects of physical abuse upon them are unfavourable. They normally depict diminished mobility, i.e. their capacity to be mobile or even walk within the house declines, confusion, develops among them, when they have to perform certain tasks and functions and they experience a decline in their health conditions. They are unable to perform the tasks in a systematic and methodical manner and depicts changes in the behaviour. In some cases, they may become angry and frustrated, whereas in others, they remain silent and keep to themselves, or they develop fear and vulnerability within them and do not communicate much with others.

Psychological Abuse – Psychological abuse is referred to the abuse that impedes the mind-sets and mental capacity of the individuals. This type of abuse causes a decline in the identity, self-worth and dignity of the individuals. This abuse is characterized by lack of respect for other people's belongings and privacy, lack of consideration for his or her aspirations, denial of access to significant persons and being unable to meet the person's health and social needs. For instance, when one tells another that he is not capable of accomplishing anything or is worthless, then it is a psychological abuse. The feelings of fear, apprehensiveness, depression, stress, pressure, anxiety, anger and frustration are the factors that lead to psychological abuse. Aged people usually experience psychological abuse from their family members or caregivers.

Financial Exploitation – When any individual is making an attempt to use the finances of the aged person, without his consent, then it is termed as financial exploitation. For the sake of obtaining one's wealth and money, aged people have been harmed by individuals within the household as well as outside the household. Financial exploitation include, illegal or improper use or misappropriation of aged person's property or finances. Forced changes to his or her will or other legal documents. Denial of right to access to and control over personal funds and financial scams and fraudulent schemes. The aged people are usually financially exploited by fraudulent acts, lying and cheating. In some cases, individuals make up false stories, in order to obtain money from them. Hence, it is essential for them to take care of their finances and property.

Neglect – Neglect is referred to the lack of action to meet the needs and requirements of the aged people. Inability or failing to provide them, food, medicines, assistive devices, clothes, a good comfortable environment, health care and personal hygiene is termed as neglecting the person. Forming social contacts is imperative for all the individuals. He needs to communicate with others to share his concerns or other matters. When aged people are left alone, when they are not communicated with by others, then it is termed as neglecting them. Self-neglect is identified as the set of behaviours that threaten the health or safety of the aged person. Any kind of impairment or illnesses that they experience lead to limited capacity for self-care and health seeking activities. Depression is one of the aspects that is due to self-neglect. Self-neglect is referred to the form of abuse on the part of the aged people, who due to diminished capacity or mental impairment neglects to meet their own basic needs and often refuses the assistance offered by others (Neglect, Abuse and Violence against Older Women, 2013).

Sexual Abuse – Sexual abuse is a form of physical abuse that ranges from rape to assault and sexual harassment by the caregivers. Sexual abuse is regarded as one of the abuses that imposes detrimental effects upon the individuals. This especially happens, if they cannot communicate well. When the aged people are unable to protect themselves from any types of abuses and mistreatments, then it is termed as sexual abuse. It can include, offensive sexual behaviours as well as physical contact of a sexual nature (Neglect, Abuse and Violence against Older Women, 2013).

Spousal Abuse – When individuals experience any form of abuse or mistreatment from their spouses, then it is termed as spousal abuse. Research has indicated that mostly women have been victims of spousal abuse within their marital homes. Dowry, illiteracy, inability to perform the household chores, inability to meet the needs and requirements of family members, desire for the male child and lack of awareness are some of the factors that have led to prevalence of marital disputes and spousal abuse. Research has indicated that individuals, particularly women have suffered from various forms of abuse within their marital homes. These include, verbal, physical, psychological, financial exploitation and neglect. Spousal abuse usually does not apply much in the case of aged people. As majority of them, who are above 80 years of age are widowed. The other aged people, who are above 60 years of age do in some cases experience abuse from their spouses.

Medication Abuse – Medication abuse is referred to the misuse of medications or prescriptions. It may be done deliberately or accidentally, by not providing the needed medication or by administering the medication in dosages that cause bodily harm to the aged people. For the aged people, it is necessary to acquire medications in proper dosages. This is an essential requirement in order to keep good health. When they themselves are unable to obtain medication or the caregivers too are unable to provide, then it is termed as medication abuse. In order to prevent medication abuse, it is vital for the aged people to possess the knowledge in terms of what medicines, they need to consume at what time intervals. If they are provided medicines by the caregivers, then they should possess adequate knowledge. When these individuals are making visits to the medical and health care centres, it is vital that they should be accompanied by their caregivers. In this way, the caregivers too are able to obtain adequate knowledge.

Abandonment or Desertion – The aged people normally are unable to take care of their requirements and need assistance. This assistance may be obtained from the family

members or other caregivers. When the family members and caregivers are unable to attend to the needs and requirements of the aged people and consider their tasks more important than they tend to abandon them. When these individuals abandon them, then it is a form of abuse. This may be done in a polite manner, but abandonment and desertion are disadvantageous to the aged people. The abandonment may be due to migration to another region, or when they get occupied in their own lives, then they may fail to meet their needs and requirements, or regard them to be a burden and so forth. The causes of abandonment or desertion may be positive or negative.

Loss of Respect – Loss of respect for the aged people is regarded as a form of abuse. The most significant form of respect is given to them is in the form of effective communication. When individuals do not communicate with them in an appropriate manner, then it is stated as loss of respect. As it has been stated that in old age, a person experiences health problems, problems in communicating and is unable to take care of his needs and requirements. On the whole, they are slow in the performance of tasks and functions. When their caregivers and family members do not take pleasure in communicating with them, get irritated on a frequent basis, when they feel frustrated in taking care of their needs and requirements, insult them and dishonour them, these aspects show that they do not have any respect for them.

Systemic Abuse – Systemic abuse refers to the form of abuse that is characterized by marginalization of the aged persons in the institutions. When they are not been given equal rights and opportunities due to their old age, then it is termed as systemic abuse. When social and economic policies are geared towards inequitable allocation of resources and discrimination in the provision of services and delivery, then it is stated as systemic abuse. In India, there have been formulation of measures that focus upon the needs and requirements of the aged people and put emphasis upon leading to their welfare. But when they are not provided the needed facilities, due to some or the other problems or issues, then it is termed as systemic abuse.

Scapegoating – In scapegoating, descriptions have been provided of instances, when aged people, particularly women are identified and blamed for the misfortunes and problems that have affected the lives of the individuals. These include, natural calamities and disasters, such as, earthquakes, drought, flood or epidemics. There have been reporting of instances, where women have been ostracized, tortured, harassed, abused and even killed. The reason

being, they are blamed for the problems that have proven to be detrimental towards the existence of the community. They usually leave the community, when they experience this kind of mistreatment. Upon their leaving, they lose their assets, wealth and property. This is a rare form of abuse and occurs when individuals possess traditional viewpoints and perspectives. But when it occurs, it proves to be unfavourable upon the existence of the individuals to a major extent, particularly the women, who are blamed.

Domestic Violence – Domestic violence is the violence that takes place among the households. Within the households, conflicting situations and violence can take place among family members or between helpers and employers. Sometimes, the aged people also get angry and frustrated over some issues. For instance, if they are not given their meals on time or medicines, they may get angry. Anger may be in a minor form or major form. When anger takes a major form, it may be regarded as violence. In the case of occurrence of domestic violence, individuals may experience various forms of abuse. These include, verbal abuse, physical abuse, psychological abuse, financial exploitation and neglect. As a result of domestic violence, major problems that are experienced by the aged people include, stress, anxiety, tension, illnesses and other health problems.

Community Violence – Community violence affects the aged people through the general feelings of anxiety and fear, which leads to an increase in the overall sense of insecurity, as well as through direct violence. Criminal violence is stated as a part of community violence. Physical assault, theft, robbery, rape, murder, vandalism, delinquency, drug-related violence and gang warfare are the criminal and violent acts that can influence households and the community in a negative manner. Through the prevalence of this violence, the aged people within the households and the communities are denied access to basic services, health care and socialization. Lack of access to these services as a result of community violence is detrimental upon the existence of the individuals.

Political Violence and Armed Conflict – The prevalence of political violence and armed conflict affects the aged persons directly or through forced displacement. The occurrence of political violence and armed conflict usually causes destruction to a large extent. The individuals even lose their homes, property and other services and facilities. When the aged people are experiencing illnesses, health problems or are not ambulatory, then they are provided with the humanitarian relief plans on an infrequent basis. Aged persons may be marginalized in the distribution of food and health care. The scarcity of proper

nutrition, medical and health care facilities are imposing detrimental effects upon the lives of the individuals. The occurrence of political violence and armed conflict even cause destruction of food and other organizations and institutions that work for the welfare of the community.

HIV/AIDS Related Violence – HIV/AIDS related violence can occur in areas affected by epidemics and natural calamities and disasters. In such cases, older women are vested with the responsibilities to take care of the needs and requirements of their family members. When they are healthy, they may take care of their needs and requirements. On the other hand, when they have to take care of their needs themselves, then they usually experience severe problems in taking care of their family members. Managing the household, child development, implementation of household chores and taking care of the needs and requirements of the family members is not an easy task. Especially, when aged people do not have any support and assistance, they find it difficult to manage themselves, their family members and overall household responsibilities.

Measures to Deal with Crime and Abuse

The measures to deal with crime and abuse have been stated as follows: (Lafferty, Treacy, Fealy, Drennan, & Lyons, 2012).

Resilience – The aged people, who have experienced abuse and mistreatment throughout their lives often develop the methods and strategies that help them survive. Some of the ways of survival is simply coping with the abusive situation. On the other hand, some individuals develop power for tolerance and strong religious beliefs that help them to experience abuse and mistreatment. The development of inner strength, capabilities and tolerance are regarded as factors that help the individuals to face abusive treatment.

Drugs and Social Support – In some cases, aged people make excessive use of alcohol and smoking in order to alleviate the stress that they have experienced from abuse and mistreatment. Social support is obtained from the family members, relatives, friends and caregivers and it helps them to cope up with abusive treatment. When these individuals get engaged into effective communication with the aged people, they are able to alleviate stress and anxiety.

The Role of Religion – Aged people usually possess strong religious beliefs. Normally, they make visits to religious places on a daily basis. They take pleasure in listening

to religious hymns and watch religious programs on television. They possess the viewpoint that strong religious beliefs would alleviate their stress and anxiety. When the home environmental conditions are not amiable, when individuals are abusive, then it is likely that they make visits to religious places, listen to beliefs and even form a social circle. Religion is regarded as a support that helps them in alleviating the stress that occurs due to abusive treatment. Social support, spiritual encouragement and practical assistance is provided through religion to the aged people, who have been victims of abuse and crime.

Counselling – Counselling is regarded as a form of discussion between the individuals, with regards to various kinds of problems that they are experiencing. In this case, suggestions and ideas are communicated by experts and professionals to the individuals, in terms of the problems that they are experiencing. There are various kinds of counselling, career, depression, stress and so forth. When aged people do not get along well with their family members and experience abuse and mistreatment, they seek counselling from experts. Counselling and guidance services of the experts are regarded as factors that help the aged people in dealing with abusive treatment.

Place of Safety – When the home environmental conditions are not favourable, then aged people tend to move to other places, where they are safe. Quite often when they are abused and mistreated, they feel insecure that they might get harmed or injured. There have been cases, where these people have been murdered within their own houses. Hence, they either hire a security personnel to remain secure or they move to other places, where they feel safe and secure. In order to live one's life free from any kinds of stress or mistreatment and in a peaceful manner, the aged people look out for ways, where and how they can create a peaceful atmosphere.

Generation of Awareness – In the present existence, there have been establishment of laws and policies that aim at the protection of senior citizens. When they have any kinds of problems from their own children, they can approach the court of law to seek assistance. They have the right to evict their own children out of the house or move away themselves, if they experience any types of abuses and mistreatment. It is vital for the aged people to generate awareness in terms of what kinds of laws and policies have been formulated, what are the organizations that provide help and support to senior citizens from abusive treatment and so forth.

Miscellaneous Problems

Apart from social, economic, psychological, health, crime and abuse, there are other miscellaneous problems that are experienced by the aged people. The occurrence of miscellaneous problems is due to the changing environmental conditions. With the impact of industrialization, globalization, the advent of technology and other innovative techniques and methods, individuals are bringing about changes and transformations within their lives. With changes that are taking place, the youth and the middle aged people are getting adapted to advance, modern and innovative methods. On the other hand, when aged people are unaware and informative, they experience problems. With modernization and advancements, the changes are not only brought about within the lifestyles of the individuals, but also their attitudes and behavioural traits. The main problems that are experienced by the aged people are that they are still implementing traditional strategies and methods within their daily lives. Hence, lack of awareness is regarded as a major impediment within the course of leading an efficient life.

In rural areas, individuals are primarily engaged in agriculture and farming practices. The individuals have formed the main objective of enhancing their livelihoods, hence, they move to urban areas. They possess the viewpoint that in urban areas, they would be able to enhance their career opportunities and obtain better education for their children. Hence, they migrate to urban areas with their families, leaving their elderly parents. The disintegration of the joint family system into the nuclear family system is one of the main factors that have imposed problems among the individuals. The aged people feel contented when their children are doing well. On the other hand, when they feel they do not have any means of support, they experience problems.

The possession of traditional viewpoints and perspectives are regarded as major factors that imposes problems for the aged people. For instance, in the present existence, when a woman is a widow, she still wears ornaments, coloured clothing and gets engaged in various activities and functions. This is primarily common in urban areas. In some of the regions of India, women still possess this viewpoint that widows need to implement various restraints in terms of diet, clothing and other aspects. For instance, they are not meant to wear coloured clothing and should be dressed only in white, they are not supposed to consume certain food items, such as fried foods or sweets, are not allowed to participate in any celebrations or occasions and are supposed to practice religious norms and values. The individuals, who possess modern viewpoints and perspectives usually disagree with the

traditions and practices of the aged people. Hence, differences in the viewpoints and perspectives impose problems for the aged people.

The occurrence of conflicts and disputes among the individuals belonging to different generations is termed as intergenerational conflict. This is a fact that there are differences in the needs and requirements of different generations. What is preferred by the older people, may not be preferred by the younger people and so forth. Every individual aspires to meet his or her requirements in accordance to their own ways. The younger generation in the present existence base their lives on the modern and innovative techniques and methods. They make use of technology to a major extent in the performance of various tasks and functions. These aspects are usually not preferred to a major extent by the aged people. They may make use of technology, but not to a major extent as compared to the younger generation.

The aged people mainly guide the other members of their family. The norms, values, principles and standards are imparted to them by the older members of the family. Showing respect and courtesy to others is an important norm that are imparted by the elderly members of the family. When these individuals communicate to others in terms of certain norms and values, then they would like them to implement these in an appropriate manner. When the younger generation does not implement these and follow their own ways, then in some cases, aged people feel disappointed. Disappointment occurs, when individuals do not listen and implement those norms, and values.

Boredom is the result of being motivated in a deprived way to being efficient and productive. This occurs, when an individual is unable to make effectual use of his or her time. The problem occurs due to forced inactivity, withdrawal from responsibilities and lack of personal goals. When a person is not occupied with something productive, he tends to weaken both physically and mentally. When an individual reaches the age of 60 and above, would have led productive lives, they make use of their skills and abilities in order to enhance their living. Motivating them and enabling the aged people in making use of the skills and abilities involves determination and consistent efforts. When these individuals are not ambulatory, when they are unable to make use of their skills, and abilities, then boredom is a major problem for them. On the other hand, when they get occupied with something productive, such as providing free tuitions to children, belonging to economically weaker sections of the society, then they feel occupied (Help Age India, 2011).

The health problems, loss of abilities and other problems that are related to aging affects the individuals, physically and psychologically. Self-esteem is referred to how an individual views himself. He may view himself in a positive or in a negative manner. When the aged people experience health problems, illnesses, when they are not ambulatory, when they experience decline in capabilities, when they feel that they are no longer capable of doing anything and are primarily dependent upon others, then they develop low self-esteem. Self-esteem is regarded as an overall attitude that one develops towards oneself. When the individual develops low self-esteem, he normally possesses the viewpoint that is needy, dependent and worthless (Ahmad, Altaf, & Jan, 2016).

Control is regarded as a pervasive concept in popular culture. In one's daily life, one has the opportunities to exercise control in the multitude of life domains (Lafferty, Treacy, Fealy, Drennan, & Lyons, 2012). The aged people usually feel that they are not able to exercise control and authority upon others. In their lives, they are required to follow the instructions of others and live according to them. For instance, in old age, when a person longs for something, i.e. a food item and it is not good for his health, then he has to consume the food that is given to him by his family members or caregivers. The aged people are not capable enough to make decisions and are often required to seek ideas and suggestions from others. This is especially, when they are unaware. In some cases, they are dependent upon others to carry out even the activities of daily living. These are, eating, bathing, dressing, toileting and transferring. Hence, when they are dependent upon others for all their tasks and functions, they have to listen to others and do not have any control.

Lack of literacy skills, knowledge and awareness are some of the important factors that enable the individuals to remain in a backward condition. These are impediments within the course of progression. When aged people are not educated, they do not possess the basic literacy skills or are unaware, then they encounter problems within the course of carrying out various tasks and activities. For instance, they may experience problems in purchasing of groceries and other items from the market, they are unable to carry out banking transactions, unable to manage their finances adequately, unable to pay the utility bills and manage the entire household. Lack of literacy skills also enables the individuals to get cheated or duped easily. Hence, it is vital for the aged people to possess the basic literacy skills, so they are able to operatively carry out various tasks and functions. In the present existence, there have been establishment of centres and institutions that promote development of literacy skills among the aged people.

When a person is well educated, has been engaged in full time job and had a good career throughout his life, then when he reaches retirement age, he is unable to get adapted to the life that is lived by aged people. In other words, when the individuals retire from employment, then when they have to sit at home, they usually feel depressed. As they have not been familiar with the home life for numerous years, due to their employment. Lack of preparedness for old age is one of the miscellaneous problems that is experienced by the aged people. When individuals have been engaged in good employment, then when they have to sit at home in old age, then they are unable to form their mind-sets and feel that something is lost. Support from family members, and caregivers and getting engaged in other activities help them in alleviating hopelessness and unhappiness.

Social Work Interventions

Social work is stated as the process-oriented method, while working with the aged people. In the entire process of working with these people, it is necessary to take care of their socio-economic, health care and welfare requirements. The most appropriate place through which they can operate is through their workplace. These may include hospitals, health care centres and associations and organizations. The social worker has a major part to play in the socio-economic life of the individuals. They make provision of assistance to them to manage their household responsibilities, family life, health care and formulate welfare measures (Chapter 7, n.d.). The social work interventions have been stated as follows: (Chapter 7, n.d.).

The individuals need to possess awareness in terms of how to adequately cater to the needs and requirements of the aged people. It is essential that the ones, who have not been enrolled in educational institutions, in other words are not literate or possess low literacy skills need to be adequately guided. These individuals need proper guidance in terms of financial management, management of household responsibilities, communication, employment opportunities, child development and health care requirements. The social workers provide guidance that they should spend their money only upon the areas that are necessary. One should not spend money on unnecessary things that are not required. With experience, one gains knowledge regarding child development, management of the household responsibilities, and health care. But it is the job duty of the social workers to guide them towards the right direction in case, they experience any problems.

Stress is regarded as an important area that affects the health conditions as well as the mind-sets of the individuals. When individuals feel stress, they need assistance and support

from others. It is the responsibility of the social workers to make provision of appropriate guidance to them, in order to alleviate their feelings of stress. The areas that contribute in the alleviation of stress includes, yoga, meditation, physical activities and positive thinking. When a person is worried or is feeling anxiety or pressure, then it is vital that they seek proper solutions to their problems. On the other hand, it is necessary to acquire understanding of the situations and other individuals from a positive perspective.

The urban community is often characterized by impersonality, which act as a major aspect in making the aged people feel neglected. When their family members are busy in their own lives, in acquisition of education and employment, then it happens normally that they do not pay attention to the needs and requirements of aged family members. It is the job duty of the social workers to get these individuals engaged in community events and functions, so that they are able to alleviate their worries and concerns. The organization of functions and events relating to festivals would help the aged people in utilizing their time and also in making provision of ideas and suggestions. Since, the aged people are experienced and knowledgeable, so they are able to make adequate ideas and suggestions to others in terms of various issues.

The individuals usually belong to various castes, genders, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds. They have their viewpoints and perspectives of life. When the aged people feel prejudiced, then it is the job of the social workers to communicate to them that they should have respect for all religions and backgrounds. India is a secular country and all citizens of the country have the right to practice the religion of his or her own choice. There should treat all the individuals equally and there should not be any discrimination between anybody on the basis of any factors. Equal rights and opportunities should be available to all the individuals within the country, irrespective of their caste, creed, race, ethnicity, religion, occupation, gender and socio-economic background.

Technology in the present existence is regarded as imperative and individuals belonging to all age groups need to possess awareness regarding the usage of technology. The social workers help the aged people in realizing the significance of technology. In the present existence, it has become one of the imperative means of survival of individuals. Through utilization of technology, individuals are able to communicate with each other, look up information and knowledge with regards to all subjects and fields, generate awareness and perform other tasks and functions. It has also served as means of recreation and leisure. The

social workers provide training to the aged people in terms of usage of technology. It helps one in remaining occupied and one does not feel lonely and despondent.

Social workers provide proper guidance to the aged people in terms of participation in social or religious activities. When they just sit around the house, and do not participate in any social or religious activities, then they do experience loneliness and seclusion. These may impose unfavourable effects upon the individuals. Research has indicated that loneliness and seclusion can also shorten the life span of the individuals. There are number of aged people, who live alone and do not have family members around, in such cases, support and assistance from helpers and caregivers prove to be advantageous to them. In such cases, social workers guide them and it is vital to get engaged in any kinds of social and religious activities. In case they experience any problems, they are asked to consult them on a regular basis.

Health is of utmost significance for the aged people and they do take guidance and assistance from social workers regarding maintenance of good health. In their old age, health is regarded as an aspect that is of utmost significance. When a person is healthy, then he would be able to take care of his needs and requirements adequately. He would be able to recognize all his responsibilities and functions. The social workers guide them that to maintain good health, it is vital that they should consume a healthy and a nutritious diet, obtain regular medical check-ups, as it may help in early detection of the disease, think positive and alleviate the feelings of stress, pressure and anxiety. As a person ages, health problems do arise, but one needs to generate awareness regarding taking care of those problems.

The social workers also provided help to the aged people by providing health check-ups and ambulances at their door step. This is an important job duty of the social workers and primarily proved to be beneficial to the aged people, particularly, who are not ambulatory or experience problems in travelling to distant places. The elderly women need to possess adequate knowledge, especially in terms of nutrition and health related issues. The elderly women, who are not educated and unaware, need to consult either physicians, social workers, family or community members in terms of how to take care of the health care and nutritional needs and requirements of themselves as well as the other members of the family. It is vital for the individuals to possess adequate knowledge in terms of preparation of meals. The elderly women are ones, who are vested with the major responsibility to take care of their

grandchildren as well as the household responsibilities, particularly, when their children are not around.

In rural areas, when individuals are engaged in full time jobs primarily in the agricultural sector, then the aged members of the family are required to look after their grandchildren. Hence, it is vital that they should possess adequate knowledge in terms of child development. Child development is a comprehensive area and individuals are required to possess complete knowledge. The social workers communicate to these individuals, important aspects. Taking care of the health care requirements of the children, diet and nutrition, their training, education, play activities and providing them other activities are important in child development. As the child grows, it is vital to communicate to him in terms of values and principles, which contribute towards his overall growth and development. Aged members of the family are the ones, who mainly communicate to their grandchildren, in terms of values, norms, principles and ethics.

Security of the aged people is of utmost significance. In the present existence, there has been prevalence of abuse, criminal and violent acts against the elderly. These acts not only impede their psychological approach, but also in some cases, they experience physical impairments. They usually communicate regarding these problems to the social workers. They make provision of security to them, so that they are able to live their life, free from stress and tension. The aged people feel insecure due to number of aspects, these include, theft, robbery, deceiving, verbal abuse, physical abuse and financial exploitation. In order to alleviate their insecurity from these aspects, they communicate in terms of their problems to social workers. There have been cases, when these individuals experience problems from their own family members, hence, one of the most effective remedies is to live separately from abusive family members. The senior citizens have the right to evict their children out of their homes, if they impose threat upon their security.

In some cases, when aged people live alone, they usually hire helpers and caregivers. In some cases, when one gets angry and frustrated, they tend to hurt others. Aged people, in some cases tend to get angry upon their helpers and caregivers. There are numerous causes for this, as when they are alone, the helpers may not perform their jobs in an appropriate manner or they may not listen properly to the instructions and so forth. The social workers usually convey the viewpoint to the aged people that they should communicate with helpers and caregivers in a calm manner. Even when they have done something inappropriate, they

should be communicated with in a decent manner. Politeness and decency are the aspects that enables the individuals to retain their helpers and caregivers for long-term. Some of the helpers do not tolerate harsh treatment and may leave their jobs immediately.

The social workers have the main objective of helping the aged people to live a life that is free from any kinds of stress, pressure or anxiety. If they experience any kinds of health problems or illnesses, they are adequately guided regarding how to utilize medical facilities. The main areas, which the social workers focus upon include, remaining active, promoting positive relationships, promoting and sustaining friendships, developing positive thinking, generating the attitude of kindness and generosity for others, getting engaged in physical, social, cultural, religious, recreational and other activities, consuming a healthy and a nutritious diet, taking adequate rest and performing one's daily life routine in an adequate manner.

Measures to Alleviate the Problems of the Aged People

The measures that aim to provide solutions to the problems of the aged people have been stated as follows:

Improving the Economic and Social Welfare – In order to provide solutions to the economic and financial problems of the aged people, they should be made provision of full time or part time employment opportunities. This would enable them to generate a source of income, improve their economic and social welfare and reduce their dependence upon other individuals. The pension scheme is also beneficial to the individuals, who are particularly in a destitute condition. In the pension scheme, it is important that the aged people should be able to receive their pension on a regular basis and without implementation of formalities (Summary and Conclusion, n.d.).

Improving the Health Conditions – The development of health care and medical facilities even in rural areas, free medical check-ups, provision of advanced methods, ensuring that individuals are getting their proper nutrition, medicines, and keeping the environment clean are some of the factors that aim at improving the health conditions. The aged people should get engaged in some physical activities. Within the household, it is necessary that the environment should be amiable, there should be provision of civic amenities and facilities, restrooms and clean drinking water. The individuals need to possess the awareness that preparation of meals and other household functions should be carried out in a clean environment (Summary and Conclusion, n.d.).

Improving their Participation in Activities and Functions – The aged people are encouraged to participate in various activities and functions. These may be social, cultural or religious. Participation in these activities and functions help them to alleviate their loneliness and it stimulates ones mind-set. In old age homes, one gets involved into playing of games, indoor and outdoor, individuals read, socialize with each other and render an operative participation in the case of celebration of a festival or event. Mostly the aged people are encouraged to give their ideas and suggestions, as they are experienced. This is when one has to organize a function in a family, old age home or a society, when one has to seek suggestions and ideas in case of any problems or issues and individuals share with each other their daily life experiences. Sharing of joys and sorrows is regarded important and aged people find it soothing (Summary and Conclusion, n.d.).

Implementation of National Policies and Programs – When formulation of policies takes place, it is vital that the aged people should be given equal importance as the other individuals. Voluntary organizations that aim at helping them should be given assistance. Society and state should formulate the policies, taking into consideration their needs and requirements. The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act (MWPSCA) enacted in December 2007 to ensure need based maintenance for the parents and the senior citizens needs to be more completely and equally implemented in all the states as awareness of this Act (Summary and Conclusion, n.d.).

Residential Aspects – The aged people prefer to stay within their own homes. They either live by themselves or with their family members. In the case of one's housing and residential aspects, security is the main concern. The individuals are required to keep the doors and windows locked, keep their valuables and money in safe places or if they feel that their security is under threat, they need to obtain the services of a security guard. Housing is being developed on a rapid scale within the country, but usually in terms of nuclear families. In some cases, the aged people reside within the nuclear families (Arokiasamy, 1997). When they obtain respect from their children and grandchildren, when they take care of their needs, then they feel pleasurable and contented in living with them.

Family and Community – The main role of the family and community towards the aged people is to provide them support and assistance. The family is the first and the foremost institution, which needs to take care of the requirements of the aged members. Family members are supposed to provide solutions to the health, economic, social,

psychological and other miscellaneous problems. In case of any event or incident, aged people feel contented, when their family members are around. For instance, in case of medical treatment, or visiting a physician, support of family members is of utmost significance. On the other hand, the members of the community are required to interact with the aged people in a respectful manner, possess a helping nature and make provision of assistance and services that would lead to their well-being.

Education – Education and information regarding various aspects enables the individuals to lead productive lives. When they are well educated and informative, they will be able to look after their health care requirements, consume adequate diet and nutrition, possess information in terms of how to implement their security, manage their household chores in an appropriate manner, interact well with others, work for the welfare of the community, carry out other transactions in an effective manner and alleviate the feelings of stress, pressure, anxiety and depression. An educated person is able to make effectual utilization of their skills and abilities and does not feel worthless. In some rural communities, there have been establishment of adult education centres that aim to upgrade the literacy skills among the aged people, who are above 60 years of age. These individuals have either dropped out of school long time ago or have never been enrolled in school before.

Non-Government Organizations – The main objective of the non-government organizations is to focus upon the welfare of the aged people. The role of non-government organizations and other agencies have been geared towards their protection and security. The aged people, who have experienced any form of abuse or mistreatment usually develop apprehensiveness and vulnerability and seek assistance from non-government organizations. The abuse and mistreatment can be in the form of financial exploitation, different forms of abuse, and other criminal and violent acts. The aged people, who are primarily alone and frail, they are supported by these organizations to live a safe and secure life.

Extra-Curricular Activities – The aged people normally get engaged in extra-curricular and creative activities. These enable them to remain occupied, they are able to make use of their skills and abilities and one's mind-set remains normal through getting engaged in these activities. For instance, they get engaged in various kinds of games, which may be indoor, such as chess or carom or outdoor, such as badminton or tennis. They get engaged in physical activities, these include, walking, running, yoga, meditation and so forth. They get involved in the production of handicrafts and artworks. Preparation of meals is

another activity that mostly elderly women take pleasure in. Elderly women even get engaged in activities such as knitting or embroidery for more than four hours a day. Hence, getting involved in extra-curricular and creative activities help them to make use of their skills, they remain occupied, feel contented and pleased and develop a social circle by donating or gifting the items.

Living Separately – Aged people have their own viewpoints and perspectives. They follow their norms, values and cultures in life. They usually do not take pleasure in generating awareness regarding technology or other modern strategies and methods that are influencing the lives of the younger generation. When there is disagreement in the viewpoints of the aged people and other members of the family, they prefer living separately from them. They possess the viewpoint that when they will live separately, they will not be able to get influenced by any factors that are affecting the livelihoods of others. They feel that living separately will enable them to make their own decisions and live their lives in accordance to their own norms, values, principles and standards. In order to live separately, they either live in separate houses, or even move to old age homes or ashrams.

Conclusion

The problems of the aged people are diverse. These are, social, economic, psychological, health, crime, abuse and other miscellaneous problems. The miscellaneous problems may be relating to inability to get accustomed to modern and innovative techniques and methods, traditional viewpoints and perspectives, occurrence of conflicts and disputes, disagreements, inability to get along with others, boredom, lack of knowledge and awareness, loss of control, low self-esteem and lack of preparedness for old age. Some of these problems are enduring, which do not have solutions. For instance, when a person is unable to walk, it is a possibility that he may be able to walk after sometime or may not be able to walk. On the other hand, solutions can be implemented for some other problems, for instance, one can seek assistance and help in providing solutions to abuse and crime.

There have been implementation of measures and policies that aim at alleviating the problems of the aged people. These include, improving the economic and social welfare, improving the health conditions, improving their participation in activities and functions, implementation of national policies and programs, residential aspects, family and community, education, non-government organizations, extra-curricular activities and living separately. The most important aspects are health care, financial security, housing and family and

community support. When these are available then they are able to live their lives efficiently, practice their norms and principles, make their own decisions and are able to get along with other individuals.

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