



# Elderly Care By Families In 21st Century – Some Issues And Challenges

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**Abstract:** Caring of the aged is one of the most challenging social issues in today's world. The population of elderly in India is shown significant growth from 24.7 million in 1961 to 149 million in 2022. Old age is last stage of human growth and development cycle. After the Globalization and Westernization was adopted in the country the living styles of the people changed a lot. The social institutions like families are broken into nuclear; the traditional values of the families are being neglected, with this the kins of the family members are not showing concern on their elders. With this the elderly people are facing multiple psycho-social challenges. It is estimated that by 2031 the elderly population will reached to 193.4 million and 347 million by 2050. Economical backwardness of the families is one of the most challenging factors in elderly care. With the backwardness the families are need to migrate frequently to other cities, states and even other countries. Leaving the elderly parents at the home causes for mental illness. In other hand with the heavy burden in works the love and affection is missing during the elderly services. This paper focused on what are the challenges faced by the elderly people during the receiving services and what are the difficulties are being faced by the family members in provision of services are being studied.

**Index Terms** - Elderly, Care, Aged, population, services, challenges, family etc.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Caring of the elderly people one of the most noticeable social challenges in modern day society. A person after 60 years is naturally called as old age person. The organs of the body gradually stops functioning and unable to do any works independently. The population of elderly in India is shown significant growth from 24.7 million in 1961 to 149 million in 2022. Old age is last stage of human growth and development cycle. At this stage, the elderly people are facing multiple physical, psychological and social challenges today due to economical and ill health conditions. It is estimated that by 2031 the elderly population will reached to 193.4 million and 347 million by 2050, which is about 20% of the entire national population. Among them

about 40% are in poor wealth conditions and 18.7% of them are living without any income, in this situation Geriatrics care is one of the most challenging tasks today.

21st century brought many social changes in the social institutions like families in the name of globalization and westernization. These changes impacted multiple ways on the people lives in their day to day life. In earlier days where the Indian society existed with joint families with strong traditional and cultural roots the elderly people were given highest value, but when the culture is degraded individualism is increased and families are divided into nuclear families and avenue local families.

The relationship between the elders and their kins are gradually declined and in today's world the relationships between parents and their kins are looks like mechanical. At their ending, every elder wish to live their lives with their children and their families along with the fulfilment of their basic needs such as food, cloth and shelter. They required physical and emotionally support like Personal care, Health Management, Mobility assistance, companionship from the families. But today, in nuclear families it seems like impossible due to mechanical way of life styles. In this situation, satisfaction of the elderly people needs like safety needs from the children, need for love and belongingness for the elderly people are quite impossible.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:**

1. The longitudinal Aging Study of India (LASI) 2021 report of Ministry of Health and Family welfare highlighted that in India 75% of the elderly people are suffering from One or more chronic diseases, 33% of them shown undergone to depression and 32% of them are living with low life satisfaction and 70% of the elderly are dependent for every day maintenanceii.
  2. Despite of strong cultural roots, the family caring in India for elderly facing financial, emotional and physical difficulties. Over work, physical and emotional stresses etc. are reasons for thisiii.
  3. Since last few decades' traditional joint families are disintegrated due to urbanization and modernization and leave the older people vulnerable and isolatediv.
  4. Due to demography and social and emotional change like rural to urban migration, nuclear families, the elderly care paradigm is changed. With the work pressure, the elderly are left alone in the home cause's mental illness among them. Due to disintegration of traditional support they are looking for the outside supportv.
  5. Income created by elderly is used for the families, but their due share from the same is not given to them.
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## **3. OBJECTIVES:**

1. To identify the relationship between changing of families and elderly care in 21st century.
2. To identify the impact of economic conditions on elderly care.
3. The challenges faced by elderly people in receiving the services.
4. The challenges faced by care givers in serving to the elderly people.

#### 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

In order to study the proposed research topic the primary data will be collected from the selected families both elderly people and their kins by using un structured Interview schedule. A total number of 60 families were studied which includes SCs, STs, BCs and Other communities equally. The field area is Jagtial District and kodimial Mandal of Telangana State. Descriptive research design was utilized for the proposed study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

##### 1. Social Background of the families:

Social Background	Number	Percentage
Scheduled Castes	15	25%
Scheduled Tribes	15	25%
Backward Castes	15	25%
Other Castes	15	25%
TOTAL	60	100%

Source: Field study

The data was gathered from the 60 families randomly in which elderly people are living. Among the 60 families 15 (25%) of the families selected from each social group i.e. SC, ST, BC and Others.

##### 2. Type of Families:

Social Background	Nuclear	Joint Families	TOTAL
Scheduled Castes	12 (80%)	03 (20%)	15 (100%)
Scheduled Tribes	09 (60%)	06 (40%)	15 (100%)
Backward Castes	13 (86.6%)	02 (13.4%)	15 (100%)
Other Castes	14 (93.3%)	01 (6.7%)	15 (100%)
TOTAL	48 (80%)	12 (20%)	60 (100%)

The above table shows the type of families. Among the SCs, 12 (80%) of the families are Nuclear families and 03 (20%) of the families are Joint families. Among the STs, 09 (60%) of the families are nuclear families and 06 (40%) of the families are joint families. Among the BCs, 13 (86.6%) of the families are Nuclear Families and 02 (13.4%) of the families are Joint Families and among the others 14 (93.3%) of the families are nuclear families and 01 (6.7%) of the families are Joint Families. All together 48 (80%) of the families are nuclear families and 12 (20%) of the families are joint families.

From the data it can be proved that the conversion of families from joint families to nuclear families is high among the Other Communities, followed by backward communities, Scheduled Communities and low among Scheduled Tribes.

### 3. Economic Status of Families

Social Background	Poor	Middle Class	Rich
Scheduled Castes	09 (60%)	05 (33.3%)	01 (6.7%)
Scheduled Tribes	11 (73.3%)	03 (20%)	01 (6.7%)
Backward Castes	04 (26.7%)	09 (60%)	02 (13.3%)
Other Castes	02 (13.3%)	10 (66.7%)	03 (20%)
TOTAL	26 (43.3%)	27 (45%)	07 (11.7%)

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the economic status of the selected families. Out of total 60, majority of the families 27 (45%) are middle class families, followed by 26 (43.3%) are poor families and 07 (11.7%) only rich families. Number of poor families is high among Scheduled Tribes (73.3%) and Scheduled Castes (60%) and number of middle class families are high among Other Castes (66.7%) and Backward Castes (60%). Rich families are less in all the categories and Other Castes (20%) are at the top among the communities.

## 5. RESPONSE OF THE CARE RECEIVERS:

### 6. Satisfaction Levels with the care providers Behaviour with in the family

Response	Poor	Middle Class	Rich	TOTAL
Highly Satisfied	02 (7.7%)	02 (7.4%)	00 (-)	04 (6.7%)
Satisfied	09 (34.6%)	04 (14.9%)	01 (14.3%)	14 (23.3%)
Neutral	06 (23.1%)	05 (18.5%)	01 (14.3%)	12 (20%)
Dissatisfied	06 (23.1%)	09 (33.3%)	01 (14.3%)	16 (26.7%)
Highly Dissatisfied	03 (11.5%)	07 (25.9%)	04 (57.1%)	14 (23.3%)
TOTAL	26 (100%)	27 (100%)	07 (100%)	60 (100%)

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the satisfaction levels of the care receivers (elders) with the behaviour of care givers. Among the poor families, 34.6% of the respondents are satisfied with the behaviour of their family members during the elderly care, followed by 23.1% of each are said neutral and dissatisfied, 11.5% of them are highly dissatisfied and 7.7% of them are highly satisfied. Among the middle class families, 33.3% are dissatisfied with the behaviour of family members, followed by 25.9% are highly dissatisfied, 18.5% are

neutral, 14.9% are satisfied and 7.4% are highly satisfied. Among the rich families, 57.1% of the families are highly dissatisfied with the behaviour of their family members and 14.3% each are satisfied, neutral and dissatisfied. Among all the families, 26.7% are dissatisfied, 23.3% each are highly dissatisfied and satisfied, 20% are neutral and only 6.7% are satisfied.

The data clearly proven that the behaviour of the care givers is not good towards the elders. Majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the behaviour of their family members during the course of service. It causes for the depression and psychological illness among the elders.

#### 7. Satisfied with the services provided by families

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	21	35%
No	39	65%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows whether the care receivers are satisfied with the services provided by their family members. Out of total number of 60, majority of the respondents 39 (65%) are not satisfied with the services provided by the family members whereas only 21 (35%) of them are satisfied. It proves that the services provided by the family members in fulfilment of their needs are not sufficient.

#### 8. Difficulties in receiving the care from families

Response	Number	Percentage
Physical abuse	29	48.3%
Emotional abuse	42	70%
Not providing the food and medicines timely	37	61.7%
Not getting support during the physical move	33	55%
Isolated	35	58.3%
Any others	23	38.3%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows that kind of difficulties faced by the elders from their families. 70% of the elders experiencing emotional abuse from their families, 61.7% of them unable to receive food and medicines timely, 58.3% of them are Isolated in the homes, 55% of them not getting any support during the physical move, 48.3% of them experiencing physical abuse from their family members and 38.3% of the facing other challenges. The data clearly proven that the domestic violence against the elderly people is high among the modern day families.

## 9. Fulfilment of Emotional needs by the families

Response	Number	Percentage
Often	12	20%
Sometimes	16	26.7%
Never	32	53.3%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows how far the emotional needs of the elderly people are fulfilled by their family members. Among the total number of 60, majority of the respondents 32 (53.3%) said their family members never fulfilled their emotional needs, followed by 16 (26.7%) of them said sometimes and 12 (20%) of them said frequently their family members fulfil their emotional needs.

The data clearly proven that the families are not supporting the elders in fulfilment of their emotional needs. It might causes for multiple health consequences mentally which causes for their early exit.

## 10. Old age Homes are the best solution for Your Issue

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	28.3%
No	43	71.7%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the opinion of the respondents whether the old age homes are solution for the elderly care problem. Among the 60 elders, majority of them 43 (71.7%) are said this is not the better solution for their issues whereas 17 (28.3%) of them said this is the best solution for elderly care issues.

**6. RESPONSE OF THE CAREGIVERS:**

## 7. In your point of view what is elderly care

Response	Number	Percentage
Provision of Basic Needs	47	78.3%
Provision of Basic needs and emotional support	08	13.3%
Love towards the elders	05	8.4%

Source: Field study

The above table shows the data opinion of the family members on elderly care. In their opinion, majority of them 78.3% felt that elderly care means provision of all the basic needs, whereas 13.3% of them felt elderly care includes provision of basic needs along with emotional support and 8.4% felt showing love towards the elderly is elderly care. This is shows lack of awareness of family members on elderly care.



## 8. How far you interact with your Parents:

Response	Number	Percentage
Often	12	20%
Sometimes	26	43.3%
Never	22	36.7%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows how frequently the family members are interact with their elders. 43.3% of them said they interact with their elderly sometimes when time permits, followed by 36.7% of them agreed they never interact with their elders and 20% of them said frequently they interact with their parents /elders.

## 9. What kind of difficulties you are facing in elderly care:

Response	Number	Percentage
Economic Challenges	49	81.7%
Frequent Displacement	29	18.3%
Lack of Time to taking care or talk	42	70%
Unable to provide separate facilities	44	73.3%
Social difficulties like feeling ashamed when visitors came	21	35%
Difficulties with over work stress	37	61.7%
Spouse issues	41	68.3%
Decision making challenges	48	80%
Any others	27	45%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the difficulties in taking care for the elders. 81.7% of them felt economic challenges as elderly people required multiple supports like health check-ups which is interlinked with the financial matters. 70% of them didn't find any time to talk with their elders and care towards them personally which the elderly people expecting from their kids, 48% of them felt with frequent displacement they are unable to take care of their elders, 73.3% of them unable to provide separate facilities like room, bed, toilet etc. which are essential. 61.7% said with heavy workload and stress they are unable to take care of their elders, instead of that, their anger and frustration is transform towards their elders, 68.35 of them facing challenges with their spouses on elderly care, 80% of them facing decision making issues and 35% of them are felt ashamed when the visitors came to home.

## 10. Old age Homes are the best solution Elderly Care

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	49	81.7%
No	11	18.3%
Total	60	100%

Source: Field Study

The above table shows the opinion of the respondents on elderly care. Out of total number of 60 respondents, majority of the respondents 49 (81.7%) said old age homes are best alternate solution for the current elderly people challenges whereas 11 (18.3%) of them are not felt the same.

## 7. FINDINGS:

1. From the data it can be proved that, after the globalization the role of families in elderly caring is declined.
2. The elderly people are not satisfied with the attitude of the family members during the provision of services. The aggressive and anti-humanistic attitude reduce is the reason for that.
3. The elderly people are undergone emotional and psychological abuses in multiple forms.
4. Maximum number of families failed in provision of emotional support for the elderly people.
5. Majority of the families are concentrating on provision of Basic needs rather than emotional needs.
6. Higher requirement of the money, frequent displacement, issues of the spouse, lack of time in taking care, stress at work place, decision making are the multiple challenges facing by the care providers.
7. There is a contradiction between the elders and family members on old age homes. Family members felt this is the best solution for the elderly care, whereas elderly people don't felt the same.

## 8. SUGGESTIONS:

Changing of the families in this dynamic society is common phenomenon. But the elderly people should not affect with this shift. For that

1. The families have to understand its norms and responsibilities. Morals and ethics should be reviving and those are promoted by the educational and religious institutions.
2. Establishment of alternate supporting system like geriatric services should be widened and it should be provided at free of cost and the geriatric care also need to include as one of the subject in education sector at all levels.
3. Financial assistance and social assistance like insurance should be provided by the governments which reduce the financial burden on the families. Elderly health emergency care centres should be available in all the cities.

## 9.CONCLUSION:

Family's conversion from traditional mode to modern affects the elderly people the most. They are neglected socially, economically and psychologically by their families. With this the life span of the elderly people is gradually declined. There are multiple alternates for the elderly care like old age homes, palatial care units, but most of the elderly people wish to stay with the families at their ending. Elders are the drivers of traditional values to the upcoming generations, which can give stability for the society. The governments and other social institutions must focus on this issue to give them dignified life at their ending.



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