

ORIGINAL RESEARCH**A descriptive study to assess the social problems and coping strategies among senior citizens living in selected villages of district Fatehgarh Sahib Punjab****¹Prabhjot Singh, ²Priyanka Chaudhary, ³Sukhmanpreet Kaur**¹Ph.D Scholar & Associate Professor, ²Associate Professor, ³Assistant Professor, Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, India**Correspondence:**

Prabhjot Singh

Ph.D Scholar & Associate Professor, Desh Bhagat University, Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, India

Abstract

A Descriptive research study was conducted to assess the social problems and coping strategies among senior citizens in selected villages of district Fatehgarh Sahib. The descriptive research design was adopted and standardized questionnaire was adopted for sample of 60 senior citizens of age above 60 years were selected by convenient sampling technique. The results revealed that there was a significant association between gender, education, type of family, family monthly income and source of income of social problems among senior citizens. The study was concluded that most of the senior citizens did not face any social problem and senior citizens who faced any social problem uses adaptive coping strategies.

Introduction

Ageing is a natural process. "old age put more wrinkles in one's mind than on his face". In words of Seneca, "old age is an incurable disease". Senior citizens face three serious problems viz; poverty, disease and loneliness. A social and psychological problem tormenting the elders is loneliness. The children go away to far off countries in search of economic betterment. Even if they live within the country, due to the spread of western ideas such as "spacing, privacy, individualism and non interference", the nuclear families are becoming the norm even in villages. Love marriages have further aggravated the breakup of the joint family system. Even within joint families, the elders feel lonely owing to the denial of due respect, concern and care by youngsters. The younger generation generally lacks sensitivity towards elders. All these factors have contributed to the psychological trauma called loneliness, which eventually leads to depression.

Objectives

1. To identify the social problems of senior citizens
2. To identify the coping strategies of senior citizens
3. To find out the association of social problems with selected demographic variables.
4. To find out the association of coping strategies with selected demographic variables.
5. To find out the comparison social problems and coping strategies.

Methodology

A descriptive study was used to conduct study among 60 old age people of selected villages of Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab by using Non-probability convenience sampling technique. Structured interview schedule to assess social problems and coping strategies of senior citizens were adopted to collect the data from the study subjects. The reliability of tool was found to be 0.62. Ethical permission granted from Institutional ethical committee. Data has been collected within 15 days time period in month of November 2021.

Findings of Study

Findings related to sample characteristics

The baseline data of senior citizens shows highest percentage of subjects i.e. 78.3% were in age group 60-70 years. 46.7% of the subjects were male and 53.3% were female. According to educational status 30% were illiterate, 20% had education up to primary level, 30% up to middle level, and 16.6% up to secondary level and only 3.3% had education up to graduation & above. The majority subjects i.e. 76.6% were Sikhs. More than half subjects belong to joint family i.e. 73.3%, Majority of the subjects were married i.e. 68.3%. With respect to subjects family monthly income, 78.3% subjects reported their monthly income is 10,000-20,000, 11.6% reported monthly income between 20,000-30,000, 8.3% reported monthly income between 30,000-40,000, 1.6% reported monthly income more than 40,000. Maximum subjects i.e. 46.6% reported their source of income as remittance from children, 25% had income from pension and 28.4% had self-employment.

Table 1 Responses of senior citizens related to loneliness

N = 60

Sr. No.	QUESTIONS	ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
HOW OFTEN						
1	Do you feel that you are no longer close to anyone?	7 11.7%	3 5%	5 8.3%	8 13.3%	37 61.7%
2	Do you feel as if nobody really understands you?	7 11.7%	4 6.7%	5 8.3%	5 8.3%	39 65%
3	Do you feel you have nobody to talk to?	4 6.7%	4 6.7%	8 13.3%	5 8.3%	39 65%
4	Do you feel that your relationships with others are not meaningful	7 11.7%	2 3.3%	2 3.3%	10 16.7%	39 65%
5	Do you feel you cannot tolerate being so alone?	9 15%	1 1.7%	3 5%	5 8.3%	42 70%

Table 2 Responses of the senior citizens related to poor health

Sr. No.	QUESTIONS	ALWAYS	USUALLY	SOMETIMES	RARELY	NEVER
HOW OFTEN						
6	Your daily living activities are interrupted due to pain in joints.	15 25%	7 11.7%	7 11.7%	8 13.3%	23 38.3%
7	You experience problems in work due to poor vision.	14 23.3%	3 5%	9 15%	10 16.75%	24 40%
8	You are unable to interact with others due to hearing problems.	3 5%	2 3.3%	5 8.3%	3 5%	47 78.4%
9	You experience difficulty in health check-ups due to poor family support.	5 8.3%	0 0%	2 3.3%	5 8.3%	48 80.1%
10	Do you feel that you are ignored by family members due to illness.	5 8.3%	0 0%	0 0%	5 8.3%	50 83.4%

Table 3 Response of senior citizens related to economic dependence

Sr. No.	Questions	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often:-						
11	Do you feel that you are ignored by family members due to economic dependence?	6 10%	4 6.7%	3 5%	4 6.7%	43 71.6%
12	You are dependent on others for your daily living things?	15 25%	7 11.7%	5 8.3%	4 6.7%	29 48.3%
13	You have sufficient money according to your needs	23 38.3%	14 23.3%	8 13.4%	3 5%	12 20%
14	Do you have feeling of economic insecurity	8 13.4%	3 5%	4 6.7%	13 21.6%	32 53.3%
15	Do you lack funds for health care expenses	5 8.3%	2 3.3%	5 8.3%	8 13.4%	40 66.7%

Table 4 Response related to abuse

Sr. No.	Questions	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often:-						
16	You are asked to sign papers that you did not understand	3 5%	2 3.3%	0 0%	2 3.3%	53 88.4%
17	People take things from you or use your money without your permission	2 3.3%	0 0%	5 8.3%	3 5%	50 83.4%
18	You are pressurized to change your power of attorney	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	2 3.3%	58 96.7%
19	People talked to you in a way that made you uncomfortable	2 3.3%	1 1.7%	5 8.3%	4 6.7%	48 80%
20	People touch you without your consent	1 1.7%	2 3.3%	0 0%	1 1.7%	56 93.3%

Table 5 Responses related to family and community

Sr. No.	Questions	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
How often:-						
21	Do you feel that old age affected your role in the family and community	8 13.3%	1 1.7%	4 6.7%	7 11.6%	40 66.7%
22	You are not involved in decision making in your family	11 18.3%	6 10%	4 6.7%	3 5%	36 60%
23	Do you feel sad due to illness of spouse	6 10%	3 5%	8 13.3%	7 11.7%	36 60%
24	Do you feel negative attitude towards senior citizens in the society	3 5%	1 1.75	1 1.75	3 55	52 86.6%

Table 6 Distribution of the coping strategies of the senior citizens

Coping strategies	N	%age
Adaptive	59	98.3%
Maladaptive	1	1.7%

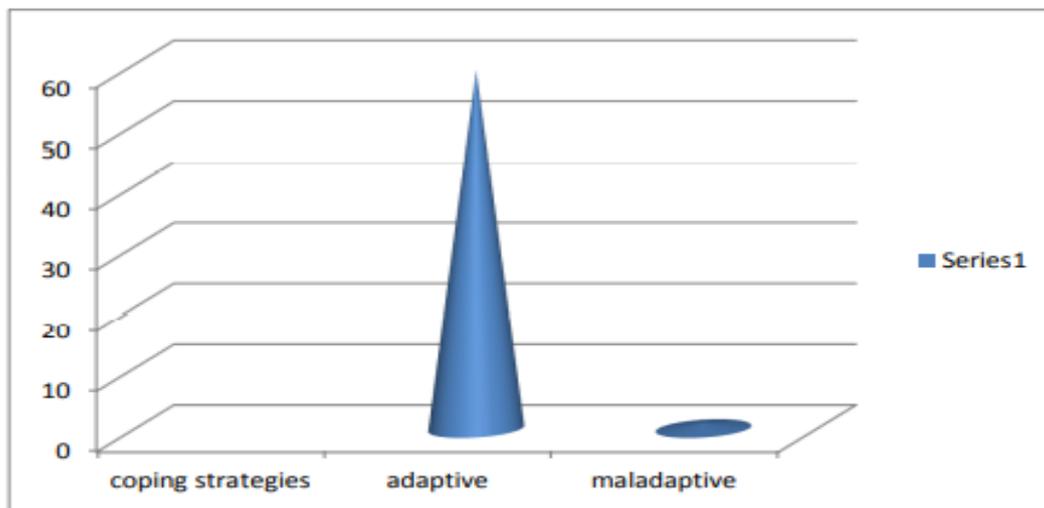


Fig 1 Bar diagram represents that 98.3% of subjects uses adaptive coping strategies followed by 1.7% subjects who uses maladaptive coping strategies.

Table 7 Comparison between social problems and coping strategies

DISCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	SCORES	
	SOCIAL PROBLEMS	COPING STRATEGIES
Mean score	19	13.2167
N	60	60
S.D	13.5569	2.358

Association between social problems of senior citizens with selected demographic variables.

The results revealed that:

There was a significant association between age, gender, education, type of family, marital status and social problems of senior citizens. It was also revealed that there was a non significant association between religion, number of children, family monthly income, source of income and social problems of senior citizens.

Association between coping strategies of senior citizens & selected demographic variables.

The results revealed that there was significant association found between marital status and coping strategies. There was no significant association found with the age, gender, education, religion, type of family, number of children, family monthly income and source of income.

Comparison between social problems & coping strategies of senior citizens.

There was negative direction but not significant correlation between social problems and coping strategies of senior citizens.

Discussion

Mahadewi W et al. (2015) explained about the senior citizen are in need of vital support that will keep important aspects of their lifestyles intact while improving their overall quality of life. The results revealed that there is a significant difference between senior citizen living in old age homes and those living within family setup in their death depression as well as life satisfaction. Study concluded that senior citizen living within family setup have significantly higher death depression and life satisfaction and senior citizens living in old age homes have significantly low level of death depression and life satisfaction.

In the present study, only 37% of the subjects usually and 33% of the subjects sometimes feel loneliness whereas 39% of the subjects usually and 33% of the subjects sometime experiencing problems due to poor health. Results also revealed that 38% of subjects sometime and 37% of the subjects usually economically dependent on others. Forty four percent the subjects were usually and 31% of the subjects were sometimes abused by other people. At last 45% of the subjects sometime and 22% of the subjects rarely experiencing problems related to their family and community members.

Limitations of study

The study was descriptive in nature and was conducted in village Rerki of district Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab with the Sample of 60 subjects were chosen by convenient sampling technique. Only limited samples was studied as there was limited time available for data collection.

Conclusion

The present study was undertaken to assess the social problems and coping strategies of senior citizens, their relationship with each other and their association with selected demographic variables. In the present study, only 37% of the subjects usually and 33% of the subjects sometimes feel loneliness whereas 39% of the subjects usually and 33% of the subjects sometime experiencing problems due to poor health. Results also revealed that 38% of subjects sometime and 37% of the subjects usually economically dependent on others. Forty four percent the subjects were usually and 31% of the subjects were sometimes abused by other people. At last 45% of the subjects sometime and 22% of the subjects rarely experiencing problems related to their family and community members. It was also revealed in study results that 98.3% subjects had adaptive coping strategies while 1.7% subjects had maladaptive coping strategies

References

1. Dsouza L. Elder Abuse: A Concern for Social Work Practice [Internet]. Available from: [URL:http://www.slideshare.net/dyutirajagiri/elder-abuse-a-concern-for-social-work-practice](http://www.slideshare.net/dyutirajagiri/elder-abuse-a-concern-for-social-work-practice) lloyd-dsouza.
2. Singh RK. Rights of Senior Citizen [Internet]. 2008 Available from: [URL:http://www.legalserviceindia.com/article/1170-Rights-Of-Senior-Citizen.html](http://www.legalserviceindia.com/article/1170-Rights-Of-Senior-Citizen.html).

3. Rao B. Adult Learning In the 21St Century [Internet]. Available from: [URL:http://books.google.co.in/books](http://books.google.co.in/books).
4. IIMC HERALD. Old Age and Loneliness: Love our seniors [Internet]. Availablefrom:URL:<http://ourseniors.wordpress.com/2008/09/26/the-truth-about-seniorcitizens-in-india/>.
5. WHO. Population of old age people [Internet]. Available from: www.who.int/ageing/en.
6. Dave SA. Old Age Social & Income Security: A Report [Internet]. 1999 Available from: URL: [http://www.seniorindian.com/oasis .htm](http://www.seniorindian.com/oasis.htm).
7. Sharma P. Old Age Solutions: report on elder abuse in India [Internet]. Available from: [URL:http://oldagesolutions.blogspot.in/2010/06/report-on-elder-abuse-in-india-helpage.html](http://oldagesolutions.blogspot.in/2010/06/report-on-elder-abuse-in-india-helpage.html).
8. Children's, Women's and Seniors Health Branch. Social Isolation among seniors: An emerging issue [Internet]. 2004 March. Available from: URL:http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2004/Social_Isolation_Among_Seniors.pdf.