

Impact of social security measures among elderly in rural area

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ABSTRACT

Social Security is increasingly seen as an integral part of the development process. It helps to create a more positive attitude not just to structural and technological change, but also the challenge of globalisation and to its potential benefits in terms of greater efficiency and higher productivity. Thus, Social Security has been recognised as an instrument for social transformation and progress and must be preserved, supported and developed as such. Old Age Pension schemes have a huge opportunity to impact the lives of the elderly in a positive way. Social security serves as an insurance against uncertainty about the longevity of life. The study has been taken under the objective: Evaluating the Impact of old age pension scheme among rural people. Pudur village situated in Odanturai panchayat of Karamadai Block, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu was selected as the area for the study. The total size of the sample is 100. The data was collected with the structure interview scheduled developed by the researcher. The highlights of the study are the changes of the scheme significantly increased the likelihood that the elderly live independently. It also avoided from begging, provided free health facilities, help in obtaining support and respect in the family and also improving the living conditions of the elderly.

Key Words : Rural people, Elderly, Old age pension, Social security

INTRODUCTION

India's social protection system is currently undergoing an important series of changes commensurate with the country's recent growth and poverty reduction experience. As growth has slowed somewhat following the global financial crisis, Government and other observers have increasingly begun to realize the important role that social policy can play in building a strong and resilient economy.

A Social Security System (SSS) is one whereby the state provides various benefits to those who are unable to be productive. Social security system is generally meant to serve the socially deprived conditions, such as poverty, old age, disability, and unemployment, etc. Security Act, which came into force in 2009, is merely an enabling legislation; it does not

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seek to put on the statute books any specific comprehensive scheme of social security.

Pension is a financial tool for old age income security. India, like most other developing countries, does not have a universal social security system to protect the elderly against economic deprivation. They can achieve the income security not only through productive employment, but through social protective mechanism.

Old age presents its special and unique problems but these have been aggravated due to the unprecedented speed of socioeconomic transformation leading to a number of changes in different aspects of living conditions. The needs and problems of the elderly vary significantly according to their age, socioeconomic status, health, living status and other such background characteristics (Siva Raju, 2012).

For older people, ageism is an everyday challenge. Overlooked for employment, restricted from social services and stereotyped in the media, ageism marginalizes and excludes older people in their communities. (Levy *et al.*, 2002).

Social Security is increasingly seen as an integral part of the development process. It helps to create a more positive attitude not just to structural and technological change but also the challenge of globalisation and to its potential benefits in terms of greater efficiency and higher productivity. Thus, Social Security has been recognised as an instrument for social transformation and progress and must be preserved, supported and developed as such.

Old Age Pension schemes have a huge opportunity to impact the lives of the elderly in a positive way. Social security serves as an insurance against uncertainty about the longevity of life.

Pension plans provide financial security and stability during old age when people don't have irregular source of income. Unlike most of the developing countries, India did not have a universal social security system for the old aged people.

The study has been taken under the following Objectives:

- Assessing the socio economic status of old age pension scheme beneficiaries,
- Evaluating the impact of old age pension scheme among the beneficiaries.

Number of beneficiaries benefited on the various old age pension scheme:

Anita and Kumar (2014) conducted a study on 'National Pension System- Swavalamban Scheme' the study had an attempt that Unlike most of the developing countries, India did not have a universal social security system for the old aged people. As there is no formal pension scheme in India for the newly appointees, a need was felt to have a scheme so that people can save for their future when they are no longer working. It was also felt that for the person of small, unorganized sector, without regular income there should be a scheme to develop among them the habit of saving for their old age. Against this background the government of India announced in the budget of 2010-11 a pension scheme known as NPS Swavalamban. The paper discusses the important features of this newly announced pension scheme. It also lists out the challenges that the scheme is facing and finally gives the conclusion so that the small town uneducated people also have the financial security and independency in their old age.

Saravanan Jothi, Subitha Lakshminarayanan, Jaya Lakshmy Ramakrishnan, Ramya

Table 1 : Beneficiaries of old age pension scheme 2002 - 2015						
Year	Expenditure in crore	No. of beneficiaries reported NOAPS/ IGNOAPS	No. of beneficiaries reported IGNWPS	No. of beneficiaries reported IGNDPS	No. of beneficiaries reported NFBS	No. of beneficiaries reported Annapurna
2002-03	1582.99	6697509	N.A	N. A	85809	768593
2003-04	651.85	6624000	NA	NA	209456	1051773
2004-05	872.56	8079386	NA	NA	261981	820075
2005-06	1041.02	8002598	NA	NA	276737	853179
2006-07	1977.42	8708857	NA	NA	243972	860785
2007-08	3104.47	11514026	NA	NA	334153	1041133
2008-09	3796.37	15020640	NA	NA	425292	1009792
2009-10	4718.83	16333578	3213467	699680	343726	1015655
2010-11	5352.36	17059756	342590	728004	335044	968419
2011-12	6192.4	21384404	3628467	794249	330240	778682
2012-13	6626.33	22712043	4960887	1090270	386005	838914
2013-14	8347.22	22331089	6197062	1579246	277537	780795
2014-15	9314.02	22981127	6333059	1087361	293977	928333

Source: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (20014-2015)

Selvaraj (2016) conducted a study on beneficiary satisfaction regarding old age pension scheme and its utilization pattern in Urban Puducherry: A mixed methods study” the main objectives of the study are to assess the beneficiary satisfaction and utilization pattern of the monetary benefit received under the old age pension scheme and to explore the perception of the stakeholders regarding delivery of the pension. The study was a mixed method research consisting of both quantitative surveys and qualitative in depth interviews. The survey was conducted among 205 randomly selected beneficiaries of old age pension scheme. Around 12 qualitative interviews were conducted with beneficiaries, family members and Anganwadi workers. The study found that almost 80% of participants’ avail pension from banks. 98 per cent felt that receiving pension had given them economic empowerment, self-esteem and renewed confidence in life. The study concluded that the Financial assistance to the elderly empowers them and improves their social status, independence, self-esteem and overall quality of life.

Rajan (2001) explains the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS) was introduced on 15th August 1995 under the National Social Assistance Scheme. Many states give the lowest pension amount of Rs.60/- per month, while the State of West Bengal Pays the highest amount of Rs 300/-. The Government of India introduced Annapurna scheme on 19th march 1999 as another social assistance scheme. This scheme was aimed at covering those destitute who are otherwise eligible for Old Age Pension Scheme. In Karnataka this scheme is yet to begin.

Chakravarty (2001) reveals the vulnerability of the poor elderly and those in the unorganized sector has been the focus of several studies in view of the inadequate social security measures which increases their risk of becoming social and economic burdens in old age. The single most significant form of social assistance to the elderly in the unorganized sector is the Old Age Pension (OAP) scheme. Empowering the female elderly by improving

their situation through governmental and non-governmental efforts in providing relief measures for economic assistance, health care, legal awareness and assistance and change in the attitude of the family, society and service providers have been suggested by several researchers.

Mehrotra (2008) conducted a study on “Social insurance system for India’s unorganised sector workers: The case and the cost”. India needs a comprehensive social insurance system of old-age pension, death/ disability insurance, health insurance and maternity benefits for workers in the unorganised sector. This paper argues that in the first phase, this system should be confined to those below the poverty line (BPL), which will keep fiscal costs down. Keeping fiscal costs down initially would be politically astute, as it could help in limiting the opposition to such social insurance on fiscal grounds. Over time, it should be expanded to incorporate those above the poverty line (APL); those above the poverty line in the unorganised sector will be required to bear an increasing share of the total costs through own contributions, with contributors in the higher income deciles paying a larger share of the total premium costs. The paper lays out the case for, and the costs of, such a BPL-focused social insurance system.

The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has recommended adoption of the existing elderly self-help groups to the state government of Bihar and plans to initiate pilot projects based on this model in five other states. MoRD has decided to include the elderly self-help groups approach implemented in the help age - Indo-German Social Security Programme (IGSSP) pilot projects within the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, which aims to benefit 70 million rural poor households through self-help groups. Expert meetings on pensions have been conducted to review the strategies, priorities and approaches of the programme with regard to old age security. The programme has conducted a study for the Ministry of Finance to estimate unorganised workers’ willingness to pay for a comprehensive social insurance. A study on the ‘Use of existing Pension Schemes by Low Income Households’ was carried out for the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The outcome of the support for elderly self-help groups in Bihar has been evaluated by an impact study (Web: www.giz.de/india).

METHODOLOGY

Pudur village was selected as the area for the study which is under Odanthurai Panchayat, Karamadai Block, Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu. The total size of the sample is 100. Survey method has been used for collecting the data and interview Schedule was prepared and collected the information from the old age people residing in Pudur village.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age:

The table shows that 80 per cent of the beneficiaries are under the age group of 65-70, whereas 10 per cent are under the age group of 71-75 followed by 8 per cent under the age group of 76-80 years and 2 per cent are above 80 years.

Gender:

Among 100 beneficiaries survey 50 per cent are male and the other 50 per cent are

female.

Caste:

55 per cent of the elderly are belonging to the schedule caste community, 20 per cent are from schedule tribe community, 25 per cent belonging to backward class community.

Table 2 : Socio economic characteristics of the elderly (N=100)			
	Characteristic	N	Per cent
Age	65-70 years	80	80
	71-75 years	10	10
	76-80years	8	8
	Above 80	2	2
Gender	Male	50	50
	Female	50	50
Caste	BC	25	25
	SC	55	55
	ST	20	20
Religion	Hindu	78	78
	Muslim	17	17
	Christian	5	5
Education	Illiterate	23	23
	Primary school	71	71
	High school	6	6
Marital status	Married	96	96
	Unmarried	1	1
	Widow	3	3
Types of family	Joint	82	82
	Nuclear	18	18
Family size	Up to 3 (small)	4	4
	4 to 5 (medium)	14	14
	Above 6(large)	82	82
Occupation	Coolies	43	43
	Private employee	30	30
	Small scale business	20	20
	Agriculturist	7	7
Source of income	Receiving old age pension	100	100
	Small business	15	15
	Agriculture	7	7
	Support from son/daughter	43	56
	Daily wage	22	22
Annual income	<20,000	25	25
	20,000-30,000	27	27
	30,000-40,000	19	19
	Above 40,000	29	29

Source: Field survey data 2017

Religion:

78 per cent of elderly are found to be in Hindu religion, 17 per cent are Muslim and 5 per cent are Christian religion.

Education:

Whereas educational status of the beneficiaries 71 per cent of elderly studied up to primary school, 23 per cent of elderly are illiterate and 6 per cent studied up to high school.

Marital status:

The marital status of the elderly people is found that most of the elderly are married which is 96 per cent and only one per cent is unmarried and 3 per cent were widowed.

Types of family:

Majority of the elderly are living in a joint family which is 82 per cent and 18 per cent living in nuclear family. It is amazing to note that in rural area traditional system is functioning in spite of westernization, modernisation in urbanisation.

Family size:

82 per cent of the beneficiaries belongs to a large family (above 6 members) and 4 per cent belongs to small family (up to 3 members).

Occupation:

43 per cent of elderly are working as coolies, 30 per cent are private employee, 15 per cent are doing small scale business and 7 per cent are agriculturist.

Source of income:

Cent per cent of the beneficiaries are receiving old age pension as a main source of

Table 3: Impacts of the old age pension scheme (*N=100)		
Impacts	N	Per cent
Self-dependent	88	88
Self-esteem	79	79
Enhanced lifestyle	69	69
Avoid from begging	93	93
Obtain support and respect	81	81
Free health facilities	86	86
Fulfilment of daily needs	65	65
Provided medical security	68	68
Freedom to live	89	89
Independency	95	95
Happy	92	92
Confident	96	96
Improved the health status	93	93
Encourage to live	89	89

Source: Field survey data 2017, *Multiple response

income, followed by support from their sons and daughters (56 %), daily wages (22 %), doing small business (15 %) and agriculture (7 %).

Annual income:

29 per cent of the annual income is above Rs. 40,000, followed by Rs. 20,000-30,000 (27 %), (25 %) < than Rs. 20,000 and 19 per cent is in the range of Rs. 30,000-40,000.

The data reveals that because of the Old Age Pension, 96 per cent of the beneficiaries felt that they are confident, followed by independency with 95 per cent, 93 per cent it helps them to avoid from begging, 89 per cent have a freedom to live, 88 per cent helps them to be self-dependent, and 68 per cent of the beneficiaries are agreeing that the scheme helps them in obtaining medical security which is necessary during old age time where most of them have different diseases.

Awareness on concession and rights meant for elderly :

In order to know the knowledge on concession and rights meant for elderly, has been collected for the Old Age Pension beneficiaries is presented in the Table 4.

Table 4 : Awareness on concession and rights meant for elder (*N=100)		
Types of concession	N	Per cent
Railway (1/2 concession)	67	67
Bus fair	55	55
Special deposit rates	60	60
Airlines	41	41
Old age home health insurance	56	56
Right to property	72	72
Right to respect at home / private life	69	69
Right to freedom of thought and conscience	84	84
Right not to discriminated against age	79	79
Not to abuse	83	83

Source: Field survey data 2017, *Multiple response

The data previews that 84 per cent of the beneficiaries having knowledge on right to freedom of thought and conscience, followed by (83 %) not to abuse, (67 %) concession of railway and (55 %) bus fare.

People are aware of free scheme utilisation because they want to enhance their standard of living and to manage their problems.

Suggestions:

- Social security policy should be strengthened
- The government should increase the amount of old age pension.
- Efforts should be made for income generation to support themselves and their families
- The government should Implemented other facilities such as recreation centres, day care centres etc.
- The government should develop hospitals for the elderly people especially in rural

areas

- The elderly people must get all the policies and programmes from the government in terms of any circumstances health problems or poverty conditions.
- Pension payment method should be adopted keeping in mind that no pensioner should have to travel beyond three km to collect pension

Conclusion :

During old age, many seniors undergo difficult transitions in their lives such as retirement, financial problems, declining health, the death of spouses, partners and friends that can strain their social network. This strain is particularly worrisome because it occurs at a time when the aged most urgently need the social support - to help them recognize emerging problems, provide immediate care, and /or facilitate help from outside sources. Due to various reasons, majority elderly people have a sense of insecurity in old age. There is a need to provide appropriate awareness, comprehensive and accessible services, so as to enable the elderly to realize their full potential and lead a comfortable, healthy and happy life it is also necessary to encourage positive attitudes towards the elderly people. Therefore, the social security measures for the elderly has been implemented.

It is high time that the public should be made aware of this growing problem and be advised to plan ahead for their insurance in old age. Thus the solution to the problem of the aged demands integrated measures to tackle the problem of individuals in different phases of life and not only when they reach their senescence period. The old on their past should also learn to adjust with life in the modern family. So they also have to prepare to accept old age. Not only the individual and the family but the society also should prepare to face the problems of the aged persons.

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