

Elderly Population of Kerala

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Abstract

The phenomenon of ageing in Kerala presents a unique demographic transition characterized by a steadily increasing elderly population. With improvements in healthcare, lower fertility rates, and longer life expectancy, the proportion of individuals aged 60 and above has been rising consistently, outpacing national trends. By 2001, the elderly constituted 10.5% of Kerala's population compared to the national average of 7.5%, and this figure grew to 12.6% by 2011. Currently, an estimated 4.8 million people in Kerala are over 60 years of age. This demographic shift is accompanied by significant social transformations, including changes in family structures, community roles, and the status of elderly individuals, particularly elderly women, many of whom are widows. The study highlights the implications of this ageing trend for social policy, healthcare, and community support systems in Kerala.

Keywords: Ageing in Kerala, Demographic Transition, Geriatric Health, Widowhood Social Change

INTRODUCTION

Ageing can be defined as a decline in the level of mortality and or reduction in fertility with advancing age. It is an extensive. Concept which embraces physical, Psychological and social changes.

The ageing process in kerala is witnessing an increase in the ratio of elderly population along with fundamental changes in families and communities. In 1980's Kerala's 60 plus population, overtook the national average and by 2001 it had risen to 10.5% against a national average of 7.5%. The 60 plus demographic expanded to 12.6% of Kerala's population in 2011, when the national average was 8.6%. Currently estimated 48 lakh people in kerala aged over 60.

Women outnumbered men among elderly population. It is also to be noted that majority of old age people in kerala are widows.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To present a comprehensive profile of socio-economic status of elderly population of kerala.
2. To identify the economic burden of elderly population.

The demographic trend shows that kerala is currently passing through the most critical stage of demographic transition as a result of fertility and mortality changes, particularly steeping the 70s and 80s and the consequent age structural transition. One of the important consequences of the demographic transition is population aging. The term aging of a population refers to a relative increase in the number of aged persons. It is evident that changes in facility and mortality have brought positive changes in the number of older persons. The move in the age composition in favor of old age has implications on Kerala's socio – economic situation.

Increasing old age dependency: The ratio of the dependent population to that of the working age population is declined as the dependently ratio and is an important indicator of the economic burden

carried by each worker. Old age dependency is the ratio of persons aged 60 years and above to the working age population. The dependency ratio increase, implies obviously that the proportion of elderly in the total population increases as a proportion to the working population.

Aging lowers working life of persons. Elderly when employed meaningfully and kept busy, tend to live healthier and longer. Employment keeps the elderly busy, entertained as well as providing them with the feeling of social relevance.

October 1st every year is celebrated all over the world as international day of the elderly and as part of this ministry of social justice and empowerment has been celebrating the occasion every year by organizing a series of programs and facilitating distinguished senior citizens, organization's and panchayaths, with the Vayoshrestha Samman.

The policies and programs for the old age people aim at their welfare and maintenance, especially for senior citizens, by supporting old age homes, day care centers, mobile medical care units etc.

Rastriya Vayoshri Yojana : - a central scheme for providing physical Aids and Assisted living devices to senior citizens.

1. Age friendly panchayath
2. Vayomithram
3. Vayo Amrutham
4. Mandahasam
5. Syamprabha Home
6. National old age pension scheme.

These are various welfare measures undertaken by central and state government for the upliftment of old people.

CONCLUSION

Kerala Today has a very large population of old people. These demographic shifts are taking place alongside many other rapid social and economic changes that are transforming the lives of older people. Hence a good plan should be implemented to have a shift of population from majority of old generation to young generation. To reduce the dependency burdens a far sight thought to be implemented.

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