**PROBLEMS FACED BY SENIOR CITIZENS**

Indian society has witnessed an erosion of traditional values which has undermined the traditional position and society of the elderly. The family has undergone a sea change like the decline in the joint family system, fewer children due to acceptance of small family norms, increasingly participation of women in economic activities and migration of younger members from the rural areas to cities for employment. Moreover, the proportion of the elderly in increasing in society in relation to the total population due to better health care leading to prolongation of people's life.

The major problems faced by the senior citizens i.e. above 60 years of age are-

1. Physical problems,

2. Cognitive problems.

3. Emotional problems.

4. Social problems.

5. Psychological problems

6. Medical problems.

7. Financial problems.

8. Difference in attitudes.

**1. Physical problems**:

Most senior citizens who live alone suffer due to lack of companionship also some exacerbated by lack of mobility due to ill health. Loneliness and isolation are major concerns among elderly Indians above the age of 60. Also isolation can result in gradual depression and other mental disorders in the elderly.

**2.** **Cognitive problem**:

We develop many thinking abilities that appear to peak around age 30 and, on average, very subtly decline with age. These age- related declines most commonly include overall slowness in thinking and difficulties sustaining attention, multitasking, holding information in mind and word finding. These results in mental health issues and deals with dementia, Alzheimer's and depression amongst the senior citizens.

**3. Emotional problems**:

43% older persons are facing emotional problems due to loneliness, relationship issues etc. It was also observed that more than 45% elderly claims that their family members do not care for their needs and interests. Some childrens are so busy in their own world that they don't give any kind attention to their parents and thus parents suffers from emotional problems.

**4. Social problems:**

Senior citizens also face many social problems. These Includes social isolation, social mobility, feminization of aging, dependency, and authoritative problems etc. Hence, the research concluded that although there were many issues which made the life of senior citizens problematic, they still lived a satisfactory life as they were economically independent.

**5. Psychological problems:**

Old age is a terrible thing when they start losing friends and family. Many old people in 70s and 80s have to cope with the loss of a spouse, siblings, family members etc.. Also in the modern times we have seen a change in family dynamic with more and young adult moving away from home to work and live in different cities or countries. Elderly people are often left on their own which can get very lonely. This all results in psychological issues.

**6. Medical problems:**

As people age, they are likely to experience several conditions at the same time. Medical problems that are much common among the elderly are hearing loss, cataract, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia.

**7. Financial problems:**

In India majority of older persons face financial hardship in old age as most of them are not in a position to earn their livelihood. Their savings, if any, are not enough to meet their day to day, particularly the medical expenses. Also, the major causes of financial problems among the elderly individuals is lack of education. Due to lack of education, they are unable to acquire an efficient understanding of how to utilize financial resources for effective use.

**8. Difference in attitudes:**

Attitudes can positively or negatively affect a person's behaviour. A person's attitude might change according to one's past experiences, the people he associates etc. So when they get old their attitude towards life change. Some elderly may be friendly, some may not be social or free and that all depends upon his/her attitude.

**PROBLEMS FACED BY SENIOR CITIZENS**

In the rapidly changing landscape of Indian society, the traditional fabric that once held senior citizens in high regard has seen erosion. The time-honored joint family system, where multiple generations lived together under one roof, has gradually given way to nuclear families with limited living space. Moreover, the shift towards small family norms, driven by population control initiatives, has resulted in fewer children per family, leaving elderly parents with limited immediate family support. The modernization of the Indian economy has also seen an increased participation of women in the workforce, leading to a change in family dynamics, where they might have lesser time available to devote to elderly family members.

Furthermore, the migration of younger members from rural areas to bustling cities in search of better employment opportunities has exacerbated the issue. While this phenomenon has contributed to the economic growth of the country, it has also led to the dispersion of families, leaving elderly individuals living alone in their hometowns or villages, away from their children and extended family members.

The positive side of these societal changes is the improvement in healthcare, resulting in a significant increase in life expectancy. The progress in medical science and access to better healthcare facilities has led to more prolonged lives for senior citizens, allowing them to enjoy their golden years for a more extended period. Despite these advancements, senior citizens above the age of 60 face numerous challenges that impact their physical, cognitive, emotional, social, psychological, medical, financial, and attitudinal well-being.

**1. Physical problems:**

A considerable number of elderly individuals experience physical ailments, such as chronic pain, reduced mobility, and age-related illnesses like arthritis and osteoporosis. The lack of companionship and a support system at home can intensify these physical issues and lead to a decline in their overall health.

**2. Cognitive problems:**

As people age, certain cognitive abilities might subtly decline. Senior citizens might encounter difficulties in memory retention, problem-solving, and multitasking, leading to frustration and a sense of helplessness. Conditions like dementia and Alzheimer's disease can also take a toll on their mental well-being.

**3. Emotional problems:**

The feeling of loneliness and isolation can be emotionally taxing for senior citizens. Being separated from family and loved ones can create a sense of disconnect and may lead to depression, anxiety, and a diminished sense of self-worth.

**4. Social problems:**

The shift from joint families to nuclear families has resulted in elderly individuals feeling socially isolated and disconnected from their immediate family members. This lack of social engagement and support can lead to a sense of abandonment and can adversely affect their mental and emotional health.

**5. Psychological problems:**

The loss of friends, siblings, and family members can be profoundly distressing for senior citizens. Coping with grief and dealing with feelings of emptiness can be psychologically challenging, particularly when they might not have adequate emotional support.

**6. Medical problems:**

As people age, they become more susceptible to various health conditions. Senior citizens often experience hearing loss, vision problems, cardiovascular issues, and chronic diseases like diabetes and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). These medical problems can significantly impact their quality of life and independence.

**7. Financial problems:**

Financial insecurity is a prevalent issue among the elderly in India. Many older individuals face challenges in managing their finances as their earning potential decreases or ceases after retirement. Insufficient savings and rising healthcare costs can strain their financial resources, leading to economic hardships.

**8. Difference in attitudes:**

Attitudes among senior citizens can vary widely, influenced by a combination of their upbringing, life experiences, and personal beliefs. Some elderly individuals may remain social and open-minded, eager to embrace change and connect with younger generations. Conversely, others might become more reserved or cautious in their interactions, perhaps due to past experiences or a sense of disconnect from the rapidly changing world around them.

Addressing the problems faced by senior citizens requires a comprehensive and compassionate approach. It is crucial for society to recognize the invaluable contribution of the elderly and create an environment that promotes their well-being and inclusion. Government and community-led initiatives, such as senior citizen centers, healthcare programs, and social support networks, can play a pivotal role in ensuring that the elderly receive the care and attention they deserve. Encouraging intergenerational bonding and mutual understanding can bridge the gap between younger and older generations, fostering respect and empathy.

Additionally, healthcare facilities and resources need to be tailored to cater to the specific needs of senior citizens. Regular health check-ups, geriatric care, and accessible medical assistance can go a long way in improving their overall quality of life. Financial planning and retirement education can empower senior citizens to manage their finances effectively, providing them with a sense of security and autonomy in their golden years. Above all, fostering an attitude of appreciation and gratitude towards the elderly can positively impact their mental well-being. Celebrating their wisdom, experiences, and contributions can help senior citizens feel valued and respected, thereby promoting a healthier and more harmonious society.

In conclusion, while the changing dynamics of Indian society have brought about certain challenges for senior citizens, it is imperative that we collectively work towards creating an inclusive, caring, and supportive environment for our elders. By recognizing their needs and aspirations, we can ensure that they live their later years with dignity, grace, and the love and respect they truly deserve.