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An analysis of social adjustment among old age people of Bengal

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Abstract

The concept of joint family is decreasing in Indian democracy. As a result, the gerontocratic influence is gradually dying away. This creates problems not only for childhood but also for old age people. The old aged men and women are facing adjustment problems in the important spheres of their social life. The purpose of the present study was to find out the magnitude of social adjustments of old age people of Bengal in different shears of modern life and compare them between two genders. A total of 50 old aged people were randomly selected for the study among them 28 was men and 22 were women. Their age was in between 60 to 80 years. Social adjustments were the criterion in this study. Shamsad-Jasbir Old-age Adjustment Inventory (SJOAI, 1995) was used to measure the variables. All statistical analyses were done using standard statistical software. Only 0.05 level of confidence was considered in this study. Result revealed that the old age men and women of Bengal were below the 50 percentile (Men = 43.21 and women = 36.82) in overall old-age social adjustment. The old age women were in a worst position than old age men and study found this difference ($t=3.01$) was statistically significant ($P>0.05$). From the findings it was concluded that old age men and women of Bengal had a high level of social adjustment problems and this problems was higher among old age women than old age men.

Keywords: Old age people, Social adjustment, Social recognition, Adjustment problems.

1. Introduction

Because of rapid transformations in population age distributions, the number of older persons markedly increases and there is a relative decrease in the number of younger persons. Thus, the twenty -first century is projected to be the century of population ageing, and even the size of the population is expected to decrease considerably in a number of countries over the coming decades (Lutz, Sanderson, and Scherbov, 2004; United Nations, 2005) ^[1, 2].

The concept of joint family is decreasing in Indian democracy. As a result, the gerontocratic influence is gradually dying away. This creates problems not only for childhood but also for old age people. The past recognition of old men and women in the family neighborhood and community as mentor has been reduced to a good extent in modern Indian life. Obviously, a retired old man or woman perceives in certain family situations of his or her low social worth and self-esteem. In their futile effort to rationalize respective effects of frustrations they perceive significant psychological distance with younger generation and develop adjustment problems in the important spheres of social life. These people are facing stress for death anxiety, sense of isolation, feeling of social deprivation due to negligence, feeling of disability and dependency and low self esteem. Several researchers have reported that a large section of old men and women badly need health care, financial assistance, social recognition and counseling service to cope with concomitant stress for overcoming these situations (Dutta, 1989; Saha 1984; Ananthaman, 1982) ^[3, 4, 5]. Present study was designed to find out the magnitude of social adjustments of old age people of Bengal in different spheres of modern life and compare them between two genders.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Subject

A total of 50 old aged people were randomly selected for the study. Among them 28 was men and 22 were women. Their age was in between 60 to 80 years.

2.2 Criterion measure

Old age social adjustments were the criterion in this study.

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2.3 Tool and test used

Shamsad-Jasbir Old-age Adjustment Inventory (SJOAI, 1995) [6] was used to measure the variables.

2.4 Statistical procedure

All statistical analyses were done using standard statistical software. Only 0.05 level of confidence was considered in this study.

3. Results and Discussion:

The Shamsad-Jasbir Old-age Adjustment Inventory (SJOAI) measured old age adjustment by measuring six different aspects of social life. These are health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial dimension of old age people. The mean and standard deviation of integrated score of health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial dimension of old age people have presented in Table-1 and Table-2. The t-value for the integrated score of health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial dimension of old age social adjustment for both men and women has also presented in Table-1 and Table-2 which indicated that health, marital, emotional and financial dimension of old age social adjustment for between men and women were significant statistically.

Table 1: Descriptive and Inferential statistics of integrated score of health, home and social variables of Old Age Social Adjustment

Variables	Health		Home		Social	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Mean	13.05	15.07	15.77	16.32	13.82	14.23
Standard Deviation	3.26	3.21	2.05	2.8	5.91	2.63
t-value	2.08*		0.77^		0.52^	

*Significant at 0.05 level. ^Not significant statistically.

Table 2: Descriptive and Inferential statistics of integrated score of marital, emotional and financial variables of Old Age Social Adjustment

Variables	Marital		Emotional		Financial	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Mean	8.14	11.12	10.68	12.39	7.77	9.62
Standard Deviation	3.15	2.05	2.12	2.64	1.41	1.47
t-value	3.51**		2.34*		3.78**	

*Significant at 0.05 level. ** Significant at both 0.05 and 0.01 level.

The mean and standard deviation of overall old age social adjustment integrated score of old age man and women has presented in Table-3. As per the normative scale of the Shamsad-Jasbir Old-age Adjustment Inventory (SJOAI) the mean value of old age social adjustment for both men and women were below the 45 percentile. The percentile of old age adjustment for men was 43.21 and for women it was 36.82. The details of inferential statistics also have presented in Table-3. The t-value of old age social adjustment integrated score for both men and women in Table-3 was significant statistically.

Table 3: Descriptive and Inferential statistics of Old Age Social Adjustment

Overall Old Age Social Adjustment		
Gender	Women	Men
Mean	66.95	79.34
Standard Deviation	13.05	13.06
t-value	3.01**	

**Significant at both 0.05 and 0.01 level.

The emerging changes in the age and sex structure of India's population, particularly at old and older ages will have a profound impact on the demographic landscape and are expected to pose multifaceted developmental challenges. While the knowledge base with regard to the elderly in terms of their demographic, social and economic conditions, health needs and their living arrangements are fairly extensive in developed countries, it is woefully inadequate in India. Present study found poor social adjustment score in different dimensions of social life between old women and men which have presented graphically in Figure-1 and overall social adjustment among old age men and women in Bengal population which has presented graphically in Figure-2.

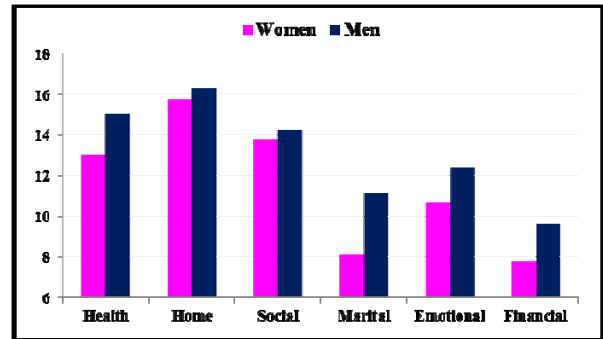


Fig 1: Graphical representation of integrated score of health, home, social, marital, emotional and financial variables of old age social adjustment between men and women

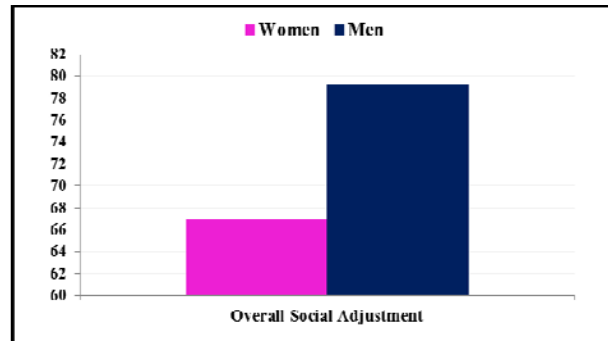


Fig 2: Graphical representation of overall old age social adjustment

Survey report conducted by BKPAI on the status of elderly people in India on 2012 and found low level of educational attainment, poor level of health, low marital status and low level of economic independency among the elderly population in selected states.[7] The lower old adjustment level in different dimensions of social life, found in this study was more profound among old age women than old age men. The BKPAI survey report further supported this fact of findings.[7]

4. Conclusion

From above findings it was concluded that old age men and women of Bengal have poor overall social adjustment which was below the 45th percentile and poor social adjustment was significantly profound among old age women than old age man.

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