

Active and Healthy Ageing among Scheduled Tribes

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ABSTRACT

Active ageing is the key word in any debate on ageing of population around the globe. But research on aging have seldom considered the plight of marginalized groups nor tried to quantify the overall wellbeing of aged among tribal community in India. On this perspective this paper tries to explore the data available on tribal elderly population in an attempt to quantify the active ageing process of the tribal elderly population in India. Scheduled tribes in India have a lesser proportion of aged with 6.9% of the population above 60 years compared to 8.6 among the general population in India. Employing McGahan composite index normalization the composite indices is estimated. The health index values indicate that only one in ten elderly have good health. Community participation index depicts a better scenario with more elderly being scored under the 'moderate' and 'good' participation index. Distribution of elderly population by security index shows that 'good' security index values are observed among the medium wealth quintile category of elderly. Overall the Scheduled Tribe population in India shows a moderate level of active ageing. Females are slightly at disadvantage in the overall active ageing index. Welfare of the tribal elderly population demands attention in par with the general population in promoting active ageing among the tribal elderly population in India. A holistic approach encompassing health, social, economic and psychological aspects could be promoted with strong government support for the active and healthy ageing of the tribal population in India.

'Active Ageing', 'Healthy Ageing', 'Productive Ageing' etc are some of the concepts being discussed greatly in the recent past in India. All these concepts gained importance with rapid ageing process in the country and a positive approach to the ageing process.

However, a universal definition to these concepts is rather difficult to find as these concepts differ depending on the purpose of the definition. WHO defines 'Active Ageing' as the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age? It applies to both individuals and population groups Active ageing encourages the involvement of older adults in society and highlights the capability and knowledge that older people own [2]. Healthy ageing is about "optimizing opportunities for good health, so that older people can take an active part in society and enjoy an independent and high quality of life" (<http://www.healthyageing.eu>). Robert Butler introduced the concept of 'Productive Ageing' when he addressed the issue of elderly productivity. Productive ageing refers to any activity by an elderly person that contributes to producing goods and services or develops the capacity to produce them . Every country in the World is experiencing increase in aged population both in numbers and proportion. With increasing numbers of aged population economic and social changes are essential to ensure progress in development. These changes are vital in achievement of the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs on poverty eradication, third goal on ensuring healthy lives and well-being at all ages, promoting gender equality, decent work and employment for all, reducing inequalities, and the goal of making sustainable cities and communities are interlinked and population ageing is particularly relevant for the achievement of these goals. As per the World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision, one in eight people worldwide was aged 60 years or over in 2015. One in six people globally would be 'older persons' by 2030 as per the projections which mean an increase of 56 per cent in

the number of aged people (60+ years) in the World during 2015-30. This will be one in five by the middle of the twenty-first century. The report shows that globally, in 2050 the oldest-old (aged 80 years or over) will number 434 million, having more than tripled in number since 2015, a growth rate much faster than growing even faster than the number of aged persons overall. The ageing process is most advanced in high-income countries. Japan is home to the World's most aged population with a ratio of 1: 33% aged 60 years or over in 2015. Developing countries are expected to experience faster pace of population ageing than that which occurred in developed countries in the past. India is home to 13% of the World's older population. In India, the number of older persons is projected to grow by 64 per cent during 2015-30 [5]. Aged population (60+ years) in India as per Census of India 2011 data is 10,38,49,040 which is 8.6% of the total population. This is an increase from 7.45% in 2001. Wide interstate variations are observed in the proportion of aged population. Decreasing fertility and increasing life expectancy leads to continued ageing of population. So, in the States that are already into replacement levels of fertility the proportion of aged population is higher. Kerala, the first State to achieve replacement levels of fertility 3 decades earlier (in 1987) has the highest proportion of aged population (12.6%). Goa (11.2%), Tamil Nadu (10.4%), Punjab (10.3%) and Himachal Pradesh (10.2%) are closely placed in the list of States that are rapidly ageing. Such higher aged population proportional to the total population raises concerns primarily on quantum of the active work force population who have to support the aged population. The immediate concerns are the type of living arrangement, participation in society, social security, proportion of elderly with functional limitations and disability and the disease burden among the elderly. With increasing longevity and debilitating chronic diseases, many elder citizens now need better access to physical infrastructure. So, it is the geriatric Citation: Nair SB, Thara ET (2018) Active and Healthy Ageing among Scheduled Tribes in India. J GerontolGeriatr Res 8: 495. doi:1

Active ageing Index; Healthy ageing; Scheduled tribes; India; Security; Community participation

Keywords: