



LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES OF ELDERLY : A CASE STUDY OF KALABURAGI CITY



Shekhara Apparaya

UGC Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Sociology, Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi, Karnataka.

ABSTRACT

Ageing is normal process and working people throughout their workable age that is up to 55 to 60 years were busy in their outside employment and after retirement, it becomes difficult for them to spend time systematically. As such, the present study is made in Kalaburagi city to look into the leisure time activities of elderly people. Totally 100 retired teachers were surveyed on leisure time activities and the paper described the detailed leisure time activities of retired teachers.

KEY WORDS: Leisure Time Activities, Process, Working People, Employment

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a normal process; the aged should equip them to cope with it when it comes. Getting old is neither a social problem nor 'aged' is a problem creating group. The attitudes and structure of some societies impose upon the aged the status of being unwanted. 'Population Ageing' is a process by which the proportion of old people increasing more rapidly than the proportion in the other age segments. These changes happen mainly due to the decline in fertility and mortality.

Though aging is a normal process, yet old age is referred to as a problem. This is because with modernization and industrialization the roles and status of old people are on the decrease. The knowledge and experience of old people are not considered as significant in the proper functioning of the society. On the other hand, there is increase in average life expectancy. Advancement in medical sciences and better medical care and improvement in living conditions and public facilities have

prevented epidemics and brought the general diseases under control. One person in every seven will be over 60 years of age in 2025 in comparison to just one in every twelve in 1950. The declaration of 1982 as the International Year of the Aged by the United Nations shows the seriousness of the problem of old age (Upadhyay, 1996).

Raja (1996) emphasized that old age is a shift in an individual's position from active social participation to significant decline in role performance and from economic self-sufficiency to economic dependence. To most of the people, aging implies physiological and psychological changes. Aging has become a social problem because socio-economic shifts were affecting the ability of the family to continue with traditional care-giving role towards elders. While it is natural for a man to love his children love for parents is determined by the culture of the society and when the society is changing and becoming materialistic the needs of the parents tend to be ignored. Fast technological changes are creating doubts in the minds of the younger generation about the utility of knowledge and experience of the elderly. Old men are unemployed and usually have frail body and no income and for this reason none in the house may care for them. Although in comparison with developed countries the problem of older population is relatively small in India, seriousness is much more due to inadequacy of social security measures. Considering the socio-economic aspects, ageing is said to be an inevitable withdrawal or disengagement which results in decreased interaction between the ageing person and others. Considering the medical and health aspects it is true that old age itself is not a disease but a normal and natural condition. Of course, the aged lose resilience and fall victims of attacks of various diseases, immunity slowly goes down and viral attacks easily overpower the body. As for the socio-psychological aspects, the aged are beset with problems of isolation, neglect, loss of recognition, dependency and a feeling of boredom. Migration of the children in search of employment or tension in the family due to women working outside and thus unable to attend the elderly at home, make the elders feel neglected.

Shah and Joshi (1996) stated that Old age is a critical phase of life as much as childhood or adolescence and hence requires special consideration. Old age is considered as second childhood, because both the aged and the child have to depend on others for many of their personal requirements. The major problems of old age could be devaluation in status and income, deteriorating health, retirement, dependency, fear of death and shock of growing old. Old age should be tranquil as childhood should be playful. However, nobody prefers to have old age for a longer time, as aged people are looked upon as useless, non-productive, rigid and burdensome. This leads to various problems like cultural rejection, self-rejection, anxiety and panic, psycho-physiological exhaustion, isolation and unrealistic pre-occupation.

Table No. 1: Sex Ratio and Growth Rate among the Indian Elderly, 1971-2001 (Irudaya Rajan, 2006)

Age Range	Sex Ratio of Elderly (Male per 1000 Females)				Growth of Elderly (Percent)		
	1971	1981	1991	2001	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
60+	1066	1042	1075	1028	2.78	2.72	3.04
70+	1030	1026	1084	991	3.13	3.08	3.32
80+	950	990	1090	1051	2.54	4.35	2.35
90+	897	892	1019	NA	0.66	5.08	NA
100+	798	844	896	NA	0.19	0.44	NA

The above table shows that there is increase in female population compared to male elderly population. The age of survival is also increasing as there is increase in the percentage of growth of elderly people.

Present Study:

The present study is made to analyze the leisure time activities of teachers retired from their services. The first degree college was established in Kalaburagi city by the Government of Karnataka. Then the Sharanbasveshwar Vidya Vardhak Sangh opened degree courses in Arts & Science followed by Commerce. Many of the degree colleges were opened by noted private societies, associations and the Government later in the Kalaburagi city.

The study is an attempt to look into the leisure time activities of retired teachers in Kalaburagi city. The author surveyed total 100 retired teachers living in Kalaburagi city. Total 78 male teachers and 22 female teachers who are retired from their services are surveyed to collect the primary data.

One of the problems that confront aged persons is the utilization of leisure time of the elderly in their day-to-day life. A proper and productive utilization of leisure time enables the aged to combat social and psychological problems like loneliness, boredom and kinds of fears and frustrations and disappointments.

M.Laksmipathi Raju and V.Venkateshwaru (2002) in their research project viz., "The aged – A Social Development Perspective: Implications for Social Work Practice" found that the age persons in the villages did not properly plan for engaging themselves productively in leisure time, which was available to them. Productive planning of leisure has positive effects on ageing.

In the following pages, it is attempted to analyze how the respondents used leisure.

Table-1
Reading Printed Material, Watching TV and Listening Radio

Response	Male		Female		Total
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	
Regular	47	60	10	45.00	57
Not regular	18	23.00	9	41.00	27
Not interested	13	17.00	3	14.00	16
Total	78	100.00	22	100.00	100

From Table-1, it could be seen that 57 per cent of the respondents were engaged in reading printed material, watching TV and listening to radio.

Most of the respondents, especially men, read English and Kannada (regional language) dailies and weeklies. Some respondents felt that such an exercise not only kept them busy but also enhanced their knowledge of society, the nation and the world. A few were busy in reading research magazines. But there were 22 per cent who were not regular in reading printed material, watching TV and listening to radio. It was observed that a few were busy in looking after their lands. Still further, 21 per cent were not interested in any of the activities. This group was too old to engage in recreational activities.

It could be seen further from the data that a majority of the men (60%), compared to women (45%), were engaged in leisure time activities. When asked, women said that they were required to do domestic works. Therefore, they could not afford to engage in recreational activities. It was also found that more men (18%) than women (3%) were not interested in recreational activities. A deep probe revealed that a few men were engaged in playing cards at clubs. They came late night home and slept immediately.

To conclude, a majority of the respondents were engaged in useful and fruitful recreations. Men were more engaged in recreational activities than women. Men were also found in negative recreational activities.

Doing Household Work, Helping and Playing with Grand Children, etc.:

Prolonged span of life brings in its fold ample leisure time. Often it becomes difficult for the aged to plan for fruitful use of leisure.

The elderly generally like to contribute as much as their share as they can to help the married sons and daughters-in-law. They desire the family activities like taking care of grand children, marketing, cooking the food, etc.

There is a close relationship between grandparents and grand children. Their relationship is characterized by innocence and intimacy. Sahu (1988; 80) has narrated the relationship between grandparents and grand children. For the aged, grand children are believed to be the dearest of all the family members.

Table-2
Doing Household Work, Helping and Playing with Grand Children, etc.

Response	Male		Female		Total
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	
Very much	50	64.00	15	68.00	65
Not much	23	29.00	5	23.00	28
Not at all	5	7.00	2	9.00	7
Total	78	100.00	22	100.00	100

It could be seen from Table-2 that 65 per cent of the respondents were engaged in doing household works such as purchasing food grains, vegetables, oil, ghee, tea powder, etc. Thus most of the respondents assisted their sons and daughters-in-law in domestic activities. Besides, many were engaged in taking to and bringing back grand children to school and home. Quite a few of them gave coaching to their grand children. On holidays, the aged took their grand children to zoos, temples, historical places. Respondents also stayed back at home when both sons and daughters-in-law went to attend their duty (employment), or visited relatives or went to attend auspicious and non-auspicious occasions. Thus aged respondents were assets to their children and grand children.

It could also be seen from the data that 28 per cent of the respondents did not engage much in helping their sons and daughters-in-law, as their sons and daughters-in-law were staying in other cities or in different localities. Another reason was that relation between aged and sons and daughters-in-law were strained. But 7 per cent of the respondents just could not assist their children and grand children due to ill-health. On the whole, a majority of the respondents were found very helpful to their children and grand children.

It is significant to observe that a majority (68%) were found assisting their sons and daughters-in-law. Men mostly helped in outdoor activities, while women supervised household activities. Twenty nine (29%) per cent of men and 23 per cent of women could not help their sons and daughters due to various reasons, although occasionally they (aged) went to them and helped their children and grand children. Only 7 per cent and 9 per cent men and women, respectively, could not help their children due to health problems.

To conclude this section a majority of both men and women helped their children and grand children in different forms.

Attending Religious-spiritual Discourses and Going on Pilgrimages:

Man is religious by nature. He has an in-born and inherent tendency to believe in supernatural forces and undertake rituals and practices. Undertaking pilgrimages and attending religious-spiritual discourses such as lectures, pravachans, poojas, felicitations of heads of religious places, has been an important event of people's lives the world over.

Table-3
Attending Religious-Spiritual Discourses and Going on Pilgrimages

Response	Male		Female		Total
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	
Very often	51	65.00	5	23.00	56
Often	20	26.00	15	68.00	35
Rarely	07	9.00	2	9.00	9
Total	78	100.00	22	100.00	100

Data collected with regard to attending religious-spiritual discourses and going on pilgrimages, show that 56 per cent of the respondents attended religious-spiritual discourses and undertook pilgrimages very often, while 35 per cent did the same often. That means, majority used their leisure for listening to spiritual lectures and going on pilgrimages. But those, who did the same often said that due to financial constraints, lack of time and health demands, it was not possible for them to do the same very often.

But 12 per cent of the respondents attended spiritual lectures and went on pilgrimages rarely due to advancing age.

Data further show that more men (65%) than women (23%) showed interest in attending spiritual lectures and visiting popular religious places. The reasons given by women were: pressure of household duties, discouragement from men, disinterest in moving out of native place. However, 35% did say that they were interested in attending spiritual lectures and visiting religious places. Most of them said that they were not as free as men were. A small per cent of men (9%) and women (9%) expressed their inability to attend spiritual lectures and visiting religious places due to personal, familial and age reasons.

On the whole, a majority (56%) of the respondents in general attended spiritual lectures and went on pilgrimages very often, while 35 per cent did the same often. Women were not inclined to attend spiritual classes and undertaking pilgrimages, as much as men.

The findings of the present study are as follows:

1. A majority of the respondents well-planned their leisure time.
2. A majority of them spent time in reading printed material, watching TV and listening to radio.
3. A majority of them engaged in doing household duties and assisted their children and grand children.
4. A majority of them attended spiritual discourses and visited religious places.
5. Women respondents did not show much interest in planning their leisure time as much as men. They (women) found house-management, looking after grand children etc. as the main source of utilizing leisure.

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