



Welfare Policies and Programmes in Odisha: Securing a Peaceful Life for Senior Citizens in Institutional Care

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Abstract

Senior citizens in our society struggle to live peacefully due to various challenges. They are being neglected by their children because of major factors like health issues and generation gap. Senior citizens require social dignity, financial security, and legal aid privileges to protect their rights and fulfil basic needs. Public policy are panacea for the welfare of senior citizens in democratic governance. These policies should be effective, elderly centered and based on moral values. Implementation of welfare elderly policies can minimise the violence against elderly population. Government of India has been enacted various senior citizens policy for their maintenance and healthy life. Aims and objectives of these policies are provide elderly health benefits, financial assistance, food security, residential benefits, religious travelling facilities and social engagement benefits etc. Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme- 1995, National Policy for Older Persons- 1999, Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act- 2007, National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly-2010 and National Policy on Senior Citizens -2011 are creating a senior citizens friendly environment. In Odisha, Odisha State Policy for Senior Citizens-2016 and ABADANA Scheme- 2024 are showing the activism of state government. This study examines the effectiveness of elderly policies, identifies the policy gap and recommends some strategic improvement.

Keywords: Senior citizen, Public Policy, Social dignity, financial security, Democratic governance.

Introduction

Senior citizens (Aged 60 and above) of India presently comprise approximately about 10.5% of total population. As per survey report by 2050, the ratio is anticipated to double to over 20%. In Odisha, elderly currently consist around 9.5% to 10% of total population. The elderly in Odisha face financial hardships and social isolation. Due to high morbidity, depression and several physical and psychological ill conditions they cannot live a normal life. Neglect and abuse by

children and relatives they also lost their hope of life. Some survey reveals that 80% of senior citizens in rural areas continue to work well to survive. UNFPA India study identified that about regarding 10% of senior citizens experience abuse, with women being slightly more exposed than men. Data collection on elderly abuse in Odisha reveals that mainly one in ten to one in five elderly face mistreatment. Both our national state government implemented various welfare elderly policies to abide by constitutional provisions. Some provisions like Article 41(Right to Public Assistance), Article 46(Protection of vulnerable section), Article 21(Right to life and personal liberty) and Article 38 (To promote social security) directly ensure the welfare of elderly. In Puri District an elderly couple namely, Dayanidhi and Pramila Behera were exploited by their children since 2023. They alleged that, the children denied caring, proper food and respecting also. This report stated that the elderly couple were faced verbal abuse by the children. As per this allegation, the Puri Sub-Divisional Magistrate Court ordered to the son and daughters for live their house immediately. (Odishatv.in, 16 May 2026) This administrative order represents the serenity and supremacy of our welfare policy titled Maintenance and Welfare of Parents Senior Citizens Act. In our state, this kind of incident becomes common to see. Non- Government Organizations (NGOs) play vital role to connect the elderly with welfare public policies through awareness programme, counselling and other activities. Lack of administrative incapability, public awareness and sufficient financial assistance elderly the policies cannot reach the destination. The study examines the significant role of public policy and how these fulfil needs of senior citizens in Odisha. Author represents the field study results of a research proposal conducted in selected elderly resided in old age homes in Puri District.

Objectives of the Study

To study about various problems faced by senior citizens in Odisha .

To discuss about the significance of government policies and programmes implemented for welfare of the senior citizens.

To analyze the conditions of elderly respondents in selected old age homes of Puri district.

To identify gaps arising between policies and practices in care homes.

To provide suggestions for government, NGOs and community groups to improve the quality of care.

Review of Literature

Radhika Kapur (2023), conducted a study titled Understanding National Policies and for Senior Citizens to find out the key role of national welfare policies for wellbeing of our elderly. She described regarding health policies are mostly required for elderly physical and psychological development. Author discussed that national policies are providing elderly financial benefits, economic rights, social inclusion and recreational facilities. Finally study aspired for implementation of more effective schemes and programs for creating elderly friendly society.

N Sherin Susan Paul (2016) in his article titled Geriatric Health Policy in India: The need for scaling-up Implementation discussed about benefits of the National Policy for Older Persons

enacted in 1999. Author analysed how the policy directs to family members to take care of their elderly parents in a humanitarian mindset. He stated that the policy also encourages to voluntary organization for providing supplementary care for vulnerable senior citizens. This study informed about development of senior recreation day care model by the initiative of The Rural Unit for Health and Social Affairs Department of well-known medical college in South India. Author gave all the credit to our geriatric health policy implemented for elderly living in both rural and urban regions.

Ipsa Mohapatra (2019), started a study titled Awareness about Social Security Schemes among Elderly: A Comparative Study among Rural and Urban Population of Khurdha District, Odisha to find out the social awareness about various welfare schemes. The result showed that among the social security measures like free health in the urban care services as few as 2.22% in the urban areas and 26.67% in rural areas utilized the scheme. Author argued that health workers should provide their effort to create a health senior citizens-friendly society. Study concluded to recommend for organising health awareness programmes in these areas.

Tushar Kumar Goyal (2025) in his article titled Social Security of Senior Citizens: A Sociological Study of the Physical, Socio-Psychological and Economic Problems of Elderly in Western Odisha to keep objectives as study the common health problems of elderly, gaps in social security programmes for elderly and importance of NGOs for their developments. The study found about the causes of physical health problems, social and emotional problems and financial insufficiencies of older populations. Author also suggested improving health care, setting up community centres for elderly, organising awareness campaigning and strong implementation of government programmes.

Method of Study

This study is part of a Ph.D. study titled “Public Policy and Care of Senior Citizens: A Case Study of Old Age Homes in Puri District”. To find out the objectives of the study researcher conducted a field work. In field visit researcher met 120 elderly inmates from 8 old age homes of 6 blocks, namely Delang, Kanas, Nimapara, Pipili, Puri Sadar and Satyabadi in Puri District. The selected old age homes are aided by central government scheme Integrated Programme for Older People (IPOP) - 1992. This study selected 15 respondents from each old age homes among 120 senior citizens. The study is based on random sampling method where each respondent has an equal priority to give their consents. The selected elderly inmates were from age groups between 60 years and above. Including respondents were staying in old age homes or more, able to understand, reply questions and given written informed consent. Exclusion criteria of data collection were the respondents of non cooperative, physical unsound (e.g. Problem in Speech, Hearing and Vision). The researcher conducted field study through participant observations, focus group discussions and open ended questionnaire to explore the conditions of senior citizens in old age homes and execution of senior citizens policy in old age homes.

Key Roles of Welfare Policies and Programmes for our Elderly staying in Care Homes

In Odisha, currently our elderly face many problems like pension delay, labour dependency, high diseases Burdon and abuse. Effective elderly policies and programmes are needed for their development. Family support and understanding about old age sickness and dependency also main factor that included in policies. Therefore welfare of elderly can strengthen by active policies and philanthropic perspective of government. Old age homes are became heavenly destinations for abounded elderly residents in Odisha. Public policies for senior citizens in old age homes focus on providing basic shelter, food and nutritional support, safety and security, and healthcare benefits. These constitutional and legal frameworks are administered by both national and state policies. These policies are listed below.

The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007

This policy mandates for mandatory establishment of old age homes for protection of their life and liberty. Section 19 of the act directs that state governments bound to set up and manage minimum one old age homes in every district. The care homes must be a secure place for neglected older parents. These old age homes also senior citizens friendly and well equipped to give basic requirements like food, clothing, and health care. The act indicates to maintenance tribunals to order children or relatives for paying monthly maintenance to old parents who unable to maintain themselves. This financial support can be benefited for elderly reside in private and NGO managed old age homes.

Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens (IPOP)

This act launched in 1992 by the government of India for empowering the NGOs, Panchayatiraj Institutions and local governance for elderly protection and rehabilitation. The government helps these organizations for smooth maintenance of old age homes. Main objectives of the scheme are providing basic needs like food, clothing and medical care, conducting programmes for active ageing, and providing institutional care. In the year 2016-17, approximately 396 old age homes were provided financial aid under this welfare scheme of our country.

National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE)

This policy directs to health service providers and rehabilitation personnel for visit regularly to old age homes. This act recommends to health workers for providing special treatment facilities to bedridden and disables elderly inmates. Objectives of this policy are to provide physiotherapy facilities, providing supportive medical machines and free Medicare for elderly inmates. It also provides health education and trainings to caretakers for providing home safety to inmates.

Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS)

It helps senior citizens live in old age homes for purchasing daily amenities, medicines and other requirements. Even in state-run or NGO- managed care homes where food and shelter are given, funds can be used for personal toiletries and specialized medical care. Having a personal income reduces total dependency on others, giving residents a sense of self respect, dependency and dignity.

Other Welfare Schemes

- Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY (Senior Expansion)
- Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana(RVY)
- Grievance Redressal and Support (Elderline-14567)
- ABADANA Scheme
- Madhu Babu Pension Yojna(MBPY)
- Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana(AVYAY)
- Vayoshreshtha Sanman

Results

Among the 120 majority of elderly aware about Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) and Madhubabu Pension Yojana (MBPY). Average numbers of inmates utilized these schemes. Some respondents knew about Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY (Senior Expansion). Very few respondents were aware about the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007. Result revealed that very few respondents were also aware about an essential welfare scheme like National Programme for Health Care of the Elderly (NPHCE). Majority of elderly people did not have any knowledge about many schemes. All respondents of these old age homes were indirectly utilized welfare schemes. Some stated that they got back a new peaceful life after staying in these care homes. Majority of respondents explained that they got essential amenities like food, clothing, shelter, health care and recreational facilities. Some respondents missed their families and some felt happy to stay there. Majority of elderly aspired for more facilities in care homes like sufficient Medicare, regular doctor visits, increasing food quality, local pilgrimages, sanitation and proper room sharing. Some respondents revealed against rude behaviours of care takers recruited in care homes.

Suggestions

Government of Odisha should implement more effective separate state elderly policies and insure the national policies.

Increasing financial aid towards elderly policy should give a peaceful new life to senior citizens. Regular visits and proper investigations of officials of respective elderly welfare departments should enhance the sound service delivery in old age homes.

Old age homes are required periodic visits of physiotherapists; psychotherapists, neurologists, and dieticians for ensure a healthy life style in care homes.

Old age homes should maintain sanitation, cleanliness, and other decorum for creating a better environment.

Counselling of abandoned elderly, training of old age homes personnel and sensitizing programmes for protecting elderly rights and dignity should also provide a peaceful new life to elderly.

Conclusions:

Public policy is a key determinate of elderly welfare and it also create a senior- citizens friendly society. Day by day modernization and generation gap are destroying the relationship between elderly parents and children. Lack of awareness also affects the dignity, rights, liberty and peace

of senior citizens in our society. Elderly population faces financial insufficiency in maintaining a peaceful life both within their homes and in residential setup. In Odisha senior citizens are benefited by many schemes and programmes but effective execution enhances its quality. This study examines the effectiveness of policies in Odisha and its impacts on elderly living in care homes. Researcher tries to find out the shortcomings of policies in our state.

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