

**Two Day**  
**National Seminar**  
**On**  
**Social Work Intervention with Elderly: Community Engagement, Social  
Responsibility and Social Work Profession**

**Organised by:**

Department of Social Work, Visva Bharati University

In collaboration

With

National Institute of Social Defence (NISD) Ministry of Social Justice &  
Empowerment Gol, New Delhi

&

Anthropological Survey of India New Delhi

**18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January 2020**  
**Important dates**

Last Date of Abstract Submission: December 25<sup>th</sup> 2019

Intimation of Abstract Acceptance: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Full Paper Submission: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Registration: 6<sup>th</sup> January onwards, details will be initiated upon acceptance of abstracts

## **Social Work Intervention with Elderly: Community Engagement, Social Responsibility and Social Work Profession**

**Venue: Visva Bharati University, Santiniketan**

One of the most significant demographic changes of our time is the rapidly expanding number of older adults in the world population. In India, as well as in countries across the globe the population is aging very rapidly. The life expectancy level has also increased dramatically from the time of independence to the present, with further increases projected over the next two decades. The growing elderly segment of the population will likely introduce new societal challenges for providing this group with health care, financial assistance, and social and emotional support.

The aging population trend, in conjunction with social and economic trends, is also ushering in new concerns about changing family values, living arrangements, and lifestyles. Family caregiving for older adult relatives is also vital concern. The traditional Indian extended and joint family system has undergone changes due to factors such as mobility from rural to urban centres and transnational flow. Although the large proportion of the population lives in the rural setup, there is trend of increased mobility of young adults from the rural areas to urban areas for making a living. This trend has certain economic benefits, but also some drawbacks such as contributing to the nuclearisation of families, leaving behind the elderly parents, grandparents back in the rural set up. This has in various ways affected the lives of the elderly. Those who are frail and in need of emotional and social support, receive less care, and those who are more active and physically strong, receive less care, and those who are more active and physically strong, are less available to provide support for younger family members.

Support offered by elderly family members is typically in the form of doing simple household chores, maybe just fetching milk from the milk vendor in the neighbourhood, buying vegetables from the market, picking up or dropping the grandchild at the school, etc. But what has started to emerge and ail the society is that in the urban centers, where even middle class families struggle with the demands of living becoming costlier day by day, daughters in-law, who are traditional elderly caregivers, are increasingly taking up outdoor jobs for improving the economy of the 10 family. Under such compelling circumstances, it has become stressful for this traditional elderly caregiver to devote adequate time and effort both at work and back at home while taking care of the elderly along with other household activities. This has, in turn, led to the weakening of the traditional elderly caregiver support system and an increase in elderly problems in this changing scenario. So leaving aside the traditional value system, these changes have forced the contemporary planners, researchers and policy makers to think over these issues. This is even reflected in the national policy for elderly, which has suggested the idea and made available provisions for extension of support for the institutionalized elderly care apart from the larger participation of the voluntary and community sector. There is currently a good deal of discussion, debate, and public interest directed toward finding ways to ensure/support the involvement of the family in elder caregiving endeavors.

There has been a shift in the nature of relations in all societies over the years. The lifestyles and expectations of the generations are rapidly changing. With an increase in geographical and social mobility there occurs a change in relationships and the magnitude of shared experience among

family members. The large- scale migration of youth in search of jobs and education disturbed the emotional relationship between the young and old. These changes are isolating the aged and making it difficult for

them to manage and cope with changing conditions. It is also becomes difficult for the aged to have cordial social relations with the young Raju (2002). The changes in life expectancy, social and economic opportunities are altering people's expectations and desires with regard to their families. This accelerated change has generated a conflict between the young and the old leading to modification of traditional expectations and social understanding (United Nations, 1998, 2003) identified the determinant variables for change and conflict relations. These are class, gender, values, and change in beliefs and socio- economic transformations.

After India achieved her independence, the process of modernization took its high momentum, scope of white-collar jobs increased, mobility of people went up and women were empowered. All these factors together with other similar ones developed a drastic indirect impact on the aged and their social status reduced to a considerable extent and they are now suffering from a number of problems in the fast changing societies.

The general problems which these people now face may be noted as follows:

- Disintegration of the joint family/extended family system and shifting of authority from the older to the younger generation, i.e from father to son;
- Development of individualistic nature of living, i.e., rise of nuclear family system and attitudinal changes among the younger generation, thereby reducing social security for the aged;
- Dissimilar thinking, ideological clash and development of conflicting situations between generations;
- Reduction of social status to the secondary or even tertiary level in the family and also in the society;
- Leading a life of isolation with meagre or no income;
- Suffering from age-based diseases, lack of treatment and nursing facility by the household members etc.

Elderly has many sides, making it a complex, yet pleasant process which we all experience. The many physiological, economic, emotional and interpersonal aspects influence the social functioning and wellbeing of individuals in different ways. From the view of the youth and middle-aged, old age seems a remote period of life. However, the recognition that population are aging has motivated widespread public attention on the implications of the changing demographic structure, with much of the focus centering around the welfare and wellbeing of the elderly.

Aging now needs to be understood as a universal phenomenon of growth and development and not as a period of disease and disability. The increasing elderly population is a result of some very positive developments such as lower infant mortality and a parallel trend of decline in fertility and

increasing life expectancy due to medical progress, greater access to educational and economic opportunities and better public health facilities. In 1995, one in eleven of the world's 20 inhabitants was at least 60 years of age. By the year 2025, the corresponding proportion will reach one in seven (United Nations, 1996). During the next decade, the world as a whole is expected to gain around 100 million elderly. Three quarters of this will be contributed by the Third World with China and India contributing over two-fifths of this gain. Although the proportion of elderly in the developing countries is still quite modest, the overall number is large. Indian population has approximately tripled during the last 50 years, but the number of elderly Indians has increased more than fourfold. The 2001 census has shown that the elderly population (60+) of India accounted for 77 million and census

2011 data indicate that elderly population is projected to cross 100 million marks in 2011. During past decade Indian elderly population has increased at the alarming rate of 39.3%. In coming decades elderly population in India is expected to rise by 45-50%. It took more than 100 years for the aged population to double in most of the countries in the world, but in India it has doubled in just 20 years. The life expectancy has also gone up to over 70 years today. Better medical facilities, care and liberal family planning policies made the elderly, fastest growing section of society in India

Hence, from the above discussions it can be said that the senior citizens of Indian society face various problems which are age and culture based. Their problems are also based on the fast changing social system to a great extent in post-independence period of modern India

**Objectives of the seminar:**

- To develop awareness on social, economic and health issues related to Ageing and Old Age Care
- To provide a larger national background of issues related to Ageing introduced by demographic and the class changes, and the associated changes in family structure
- To give a contextual overview of the problems and challenges related to geriatric care in India
- To review key interventional paradigms, techniques and practices, and to initiate a multi-stakeholder discussion on resolving the challenges related to ageing.
- To highlight and locate the scope of social work intervention towards elderly issues and care
- To provide community based intervention in surrounding locality for awareness on Ageing

**Participants:** Faculty Members, Research Scholars, Students, Policy Managers, Practitioners (State, Civil Society, NGOs, etc.)

**Seminar Sub Themes:**

- Social & Political Issues related to Elderly
- Gender & Elderly
- Social Security, Financial Issues Geriatric Care & Issues
- Old Age Homes & Traditional support systems
- Policy and Programmes Health, Hospitals & Specialised Care
- Social Work and community intervention

**Registration Fee (s)****Paper Presentation**

Academicians/Practitioners -1000 INR

Students/Scholars-500 INR

Participation Fee: 300 INR

**Call for Abstracts:** Abstracts are invited on identified themes of the seminar and related areas (not exceeding 300 words) in MS Word (Font: Times New Roman, Size: 12, Spacing: Single). Please send your abstracts on the following

Email Id: [elderlyseminarsocialworkvbu@gmail.com](mailto:elderlyseminarsocialworkvbu@gmail.com)

**Publication:** The Department plans to publish selected papers presented at the seminar in the form of an edited book with an ISBN. Address for Correspondence: Dr Subhashree Sanyal & Dr.Paramita Roy Organizing Secretary(s) , Department of Social Work, Visva Bharati University, Birbhum West Bengal

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