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Q3(c)

Discuss the problems of elderly in India. What are the different perspectives to solve their problems?\\.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Tribal communities in India

Tribal communities in India: Definitional problems; Geographical spread; Colonial policies and tribes; Issues of integration and autonomy.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the problems of elderly in India. What are the different perspectives to solve their problems?
- Keep family, state, and market in view

Revision summary

Elderly problems include care gaps, poverty, widowhood, and health costs.

Joint-family ideology no longer matches residence.

Family-law, welfare, and market are the three solution perspectives.

Widows and informal workers are the most exposed.

Citizenship care must supplement, not only preach, filial duty.

Introduction

India's elderly face thinning joint households, weak pensions, and health costs, while they are still imagined as family dependents. Problems are material and honour-based at once.

Body**Problems**

- Smaller households, migration, and widowhood leave many without co-resident sons, despite **A. M. Shah's** warning not to equate household with care.
- Poverty, informal work without retirement, and feminization of later-life poverty hit widows hardest.
- Illness, isolation, and abuse sit beside the cultural claim that the ashrama of vanaprastha is honoured.

Perspectives on solutions

- **Familial:** strengthen the **Maintenance and Welfare of Parents Act** and moral duty. This fits tradition-modernization, but fails migrants and the landless.
- **Welfare-state:** pensions, Ayushman-type cover, and old-age homes as rights, closer to a citizenship view than to charity.
- **Community and market:** SHGs, day-care, and private insurance, which split by class.

Sociological caution

- Yogendra Singh would expect tradition to modernize into mixed care. Desai would ask who pays when surplus leaves the village.

Flow diagram

Ageing -> Household fission
Ageing -> Informal no pension
State pension health -> Rights
Family duty -> Rights

Conclusion

Elderly distress in India is the gap between kinship ideology and a mobile, informal economy. Solutions must mix enforceable family duty with public pension and health, or widows will carry the cost.

Facts & figures

Maintenance Act

Law that makes neglect of parents a justiciable failure of family duty.

Widow poverty

A core elderly problem where Seed and Earth meets missing pension.

Informal workforce

Most Indians age without occupational retirement security.

A. M. Shah

Household studies that caution against assuming the joint roof still equals care.

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