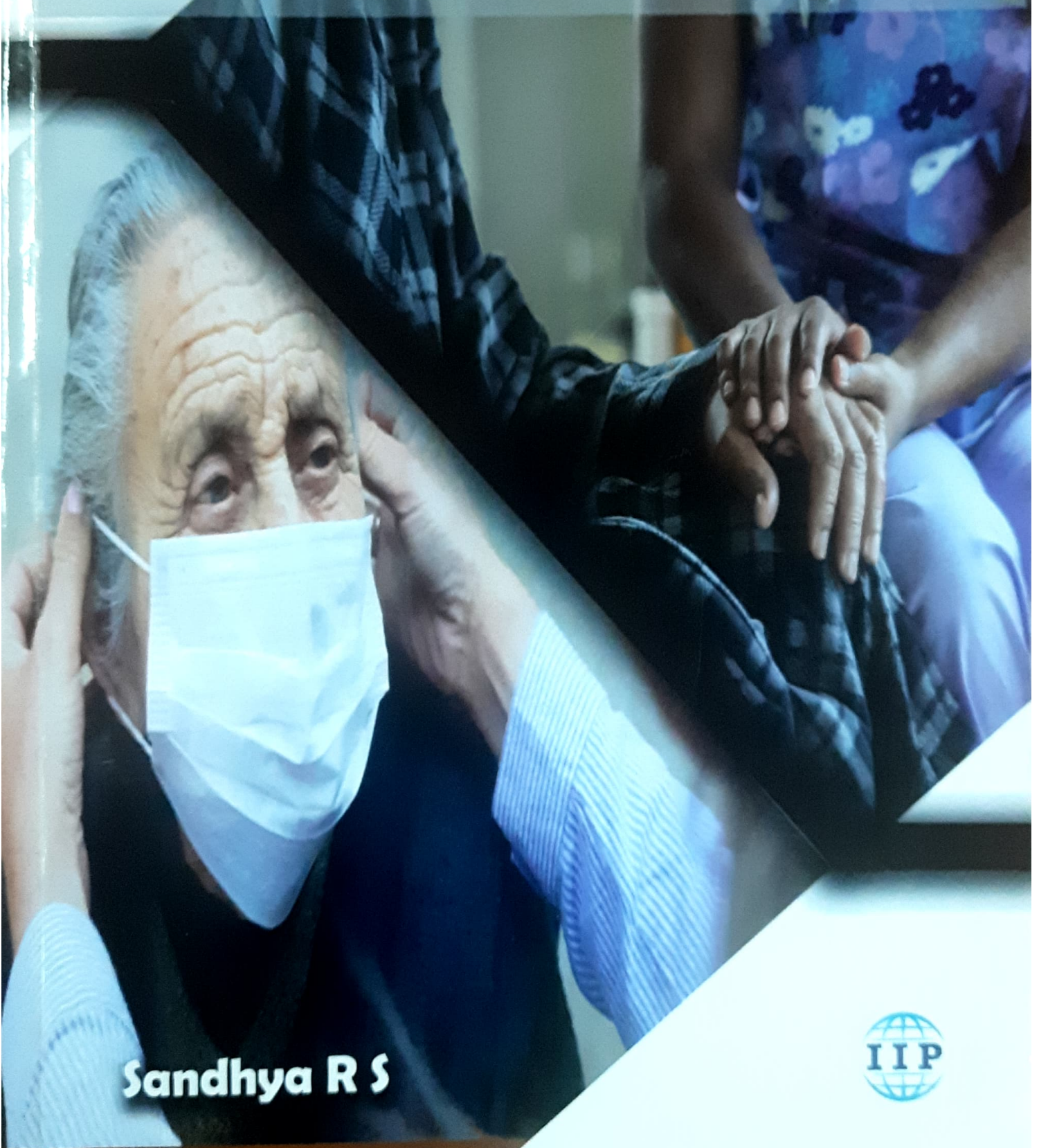


Pandemic – Coping and Resilience Reflections of the Elderly



Sandhya R S



COPYRIGHT © Sandhya R S

DISCLAIMER

The author is solely responsible for the contents published in this book. The publishers or editors do not take any responsibility for the same in any manner. Errors, if any, are purely unintentional and readers are requested to communicate such errors to the editors or publishers to avoid discrepancies in future.

ISBN: 978-1-68576-035-9

MRP Rs. 500/-

PUBLISHER & PRINTER: Selfypage Developers Pvt. Ltd.

Pushpagiri Complex, Beside SBI

Housing Board, K.M. Road

Chikkamagaluru Karnataka

Tel.: +91-8861518868

E-mail: iph@insc.in

Published on: 6th September 2021

IMPRINT: INSC Publishing House (IPH)

Contents

Geriatric Research Output: An Analytical Study Based on DOAJ	1 - 6
<i>Amrutha Madhu V.V., Abdulla A</i>	
The Plight of the Elderly during Covid Time	7 - 9
<i>Achu Alex</i>	
Perception of Health Adapting to the Social Reality: An Analytical Study on Elderly during Covid-19 Era	10 - 13
<i>Alvin Dorsy, Angel Treesa Anil, Mekha P S, Nisha S, Minna K K, Rwithik M Ramesh, Navya Kishore , Vishnupriya K T</i>	
Active Ageing and Covid Pandemic: Aftermath of Mobility Restrictions on Elderly in Kerala	14 - 21
<i>Dr. Amala Mathew</i>	
Anxiety and Coping Methods: Elderly & COVID -19 Pandemic	22 - 27
<i>Ani Merly Paul, Dr. Lekshmi S Kaimal</i>	
Ground Reality of Elderly during Covid 19 Pandemic: A Study Conducted In Bonacaud Estate	28 - 33
<i>Anoop KA, Dr. Noha Laj, Dr. Sandhya RS</i>	
Elderly Parents of the Migrant Workers: The Unsung Survivors of the COVID-19 Situation	34 - 43
<i>Anwasha Guha</i>	
Corona Pandemic and the Tribal Elderly: An Experience from Kerala	44 - 50
<i>Asoora VT</i>	
Impact of Social Isolation Due to Covid-19 on Health in Older People: Mental and Physical Effects and Recommendations	51 - 55
<i>Ms. Beena C A</i>	
Care for the Elderly during the Covid-19 Pandemic in Kerala	56 - 63
<i>Chandrakleha C S, Dr Pushpam M</i>	

Corona virus Disease (COVID-19) in Elderly –Presentation, Preparedness and, Prevention	64 - 73
<i>Dr. Anand P. Ambali, Dr.Santhosh B. T.</i>	
The Experience and Coping Mechanism of Older Adults during Covid-19 Pandemic; a Qualitative Study	74 - 84
<i>Irshad CV, Umakant Dash</i>	
Impact of Covid-19 on the Personal Life of Selected Elderly in Terms of Anxiety in Kerala	85 - 94
<i>Jacob N C</i>	
Impact of COVID-19 Stress on Obsessive-Compulsive Traits among the Elderly	95 - 98
<i>Maneesha, P.U., Nimy, P.G.</i>	
Covid-19 Lockdown and Its Impact on Mental Health of People with Drug Abuse Disorder: A Powerful Storm	99 - 108
<i>Manzoor Ahmad Malla</i>	
Impact on the Life of Single Women, Widows and Destitute	109 - 114
<i>Naina Kohli</i>	
Government Interventions for the Elderly and Care Work During Covid-19 Pandemic in Kerala	115 - 124
<i>Nancy Liza Thomas, Rajesh Komath</i>	
Changes in the Character Pattern of Elderly: in The Course of Covid19 Pandemic	125-129
<i>Aiswarya S.S, Ayana N.K , Arsha. R.Chandran, Binishamol .B.S Athira.P, Manjusha.J, Nihal. N</i>	
The Silent Evil of Elder Abuse during SARS-COV-2 Pandemic	130 - 134
<i>Dr. A.Puvi Lakshmi</i>	
Impacts of Covid-19 on Elders: A Sociological Study	135 - 143
<i>Riswan. M, Rifka Farwin MT</i>	

The Impact of COVID19 on Economically Disadvantaged Senior Citizens	144 - 155
<i>Mr. Robin Mathew, Dr. Tia Mathews, Ann Martin</i>	
‘Elder Friendly Life Space Designs’ - Evoking Government and Community Intervention	156 – 168
<i>Ms. Rose Mary Francis, Dr. Anooja Thomas K, Ms. Umaira Banu</i>	
Psychological Imbalance Faced By Older Adults Due To Covid-19 Outbreak	169 - 172
<i>Abhaya C V, Aromal Sivan, Ashna Das P, Devu S Reghu, RhithuVimal, Sara Alex, VeenaVenu</i>	
Impact of Pandemic and the Importance of Government Measures and Community Support for Elderly Population	173 - 180
<i>Dr. Seema M.P</i>	
Social Capital for Aging Population: Relevant Ingredient in Times of Isolation	181- 184
<i>Sharon Jose, Surya Thampi</i>	
Adjusting To the New Normal: Coping Style, Social Support and Psychological Distress of Elderly during Covid-19	185 - 194
<i>Dr. Sindhu Joseph</i>	
Environmental Education and Sustainable Development During Covid-19 Pandemic	195 - 198
<i>Sini.L</i>	
Social Risks and Risk Management by the Elders in Urban Slums	199 - 205
<i>Seenivasan Siva Priya, Dr. S. Sakthi</i>	
The COVID-19 Pandemic: Elderly, Survival, Strategies and Challenges	206 - 212
<i>Somrita Sengupta, Sumita Saha</i>	
The Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic and Lockdown on Mental Health of Elderly People in India	213 - 218
<i>Subitha K</i>	

Anxiety, Social Support and Coping Strategies of Elderly Women with Schizophrenia during COVID 19: A Single Case Study <i>Sulfath S</i>	219 - 224
Ageing Amidst the Pandemic: An Overview of Social and Emotional Issues of the Elderly in Kerala <i>Surabhi Ghai</i>	225 - 228
Impact of COVID- 19 Pandemic on Elderly Workers <i>Dr.Swapnarani SS</i>	229 - 235
Impact of Homeopathy and Lifestyle Management on Financial Security and Mental Health of Senior Citizens during COVID-19 <i>Dr. Tinu Mathews, Robin Mathew, Nobin B</i>	236 - 247
A Review of Impact of Covid-19 on People with Dementia and Their Caregivers <i>V. Vaijyanthi</i>	248 - 252
A Retrospective study on Elderly during the lockdown 2020 <i>Varsha.A.S</i>	253 - 256
The Covid -19 Experiences: Adjusting to the New Normal <i>Dr. M. Thamilarasan</i>	257 - 266

Impact of COVID- 19 Pandemic on Elderly Workers

Dr. Swapnarani SS

Assistant professor

Department of Sociology

Thunchath Ezhuthachan Malayalam University, Tirur

Abstract

Novel corona virus outbreak affected the life of people in all over the world. The multifaceted impact of Covid 19 pandemic affects severely the employment sector especially the workers who are in the unorganised sector .The effects are varied according to the nature of sector. Large number of senior citizens are working in these sectors to meet basic needs of their life. Socio economic pressures forced them to be in the work sector .Covid 19 pandemic impacted the livelihood of elderly seriously, many of them loss job, wages and as they are the high risk category facing more threats and challenges such as poor immune system due to ageing and slow recoveries from diseases. So the present study is focusing on the elderly who are working in the unorganised sector. Now itself the society is not free from pandemic situation. Everyone had passed through lockdown days and it severely limit the socio economic growth. Social distancing, use of mask and sanitising are the part of life of everyone. New varieties of viruses are also reporting. Despite a high risk category, the life situations of elderly forced to be in the work sector. So it is an urgent need to ensure proper mechanism to protect them.

Key words: Ageing, Elderly workers, Unorganised sector, Covid-19

Ageing is a process of growing old. There is no common agreement regarding the definition on ageing because the social meaning on ageing varies in societies but in general chronologically 60+ aged is considered as an aged person. The population ageing is increasing at an alarming rate. Many projected datas are showing the hike in the population of aged. World Population Ageing Report-2015 indicates that population ageing -the increasing share of older persons in the population - is poised to become one of the most significant social transformations of the twenty-first century, with implications for nearly all sectors of society, including labour and financial markets, the demand for goods and services, such as housing, transportation and social protection, as well as family structures and intergenerational ties.

Recent statistics of UN also shows the increased rate of population ageing as a global phenomenon. Every country in the world is experiencing growth in both size and proportion of aged in the whole population. In 2019, there were 703 million persons aged 65 years or over in the global population. This number is projected to double to 1.5 billion in 2050. Globally, the share of the population aged 65 years or over increased from 6 percent in 1990 to 9 percent in 2019.The projected version shows 16 per cent hike in 2050 (UN Report,2020). The number and proportion of older people in an unprecedented pace and rate is also reported by WHO. In 2019,the

number is increasing of people 60 years and older is 1 billion and the projected population shows the increase of 1.4 billion by 2030 and 2.1 billion by 2050 (World Health Organization). Thus the hike in ageing population emphasises the importance of protection of older persons. Recently UN declared 2021-2030 as the decade of healthy ageing in the context of unprecedented rate of aged population and for the need of whole society approach to support the older persons. These are indicating global effort to the concern of the life and social conditions of elderly.

The UNFPA report on ageing population in India also shows the increasing trend. The share of the population over the age of 60 is projected to increase from 8 percent in 2015 to 19 percent in 2050. By the end of the century; the elderly will constitute nearly 34 percent of the total population in the country (UNFPA, India Ageing Report 2017).

Hence the elderly population is the significant share of society and their wellbeing and care is a socially important matter. It is generally assumed that elderly are unproductive and the biological ageing process brings many physical and mental social disabilities. But the presence of elderly in the unorganised sector is a reality. Large number of elderly are the part of this sector, there is no retirement. Many are working in different spheres of it.

Generally they are not welcomed in job market due to ageing and largest migration of guest workers in Kerala. Even then some are getting opportunities to work in many shops, flats as helpers but not all the time. So many are engaged in self employed activities like lottery selling, small vegetable shops, tea shops, fruit shop etc.. In spite of many health issues, many are economically active and contributing to the family.

The presence of elderly in the work sector can be attributed to the Talcott parsons idea on the structural isolation theory. He observed that age differences are vital for the overall functioning of the social system. The social roles of persons are differentiating according to their age, in childhood, adolescent and in old age. While stressing the social roles of elderly he assumed that it varies within society. In industrial societies due to retirement elderly loss most important social roles and they become isolated from their children. Grown up children took up most of the social roles. But in farm families, elderly experiences less separation because of the contribution with children to run the family. So the structural isolation is less in this family. Thus the same situation can be identified with aged person in the unorganised sector as they are providing economic support to the family even then the force or pressure due to social and economic reasons.

Covid-19 pandemic is a very serious health issue facing all over the world. It is a disease caused by a new Corona virus, which has not been previously identified in humans. In most cases, Covid-19 causes mild symptoms. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell. Around 1 out of every 6 people who get Covid-19 becomes seriously ill and has difficulty breathing.

The major threat of this disease is it can spread easily. People can catch Covid-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are spread when a person with Covid-19 coughs and exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch Covid-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, and then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch Covid-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with Covid-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets (WHO).

It is said by experts that pandemic exceeds the number of death at the time of economic depression in 1930. It is also reporting that elderly people are more vulnerable in the present situation. The number of death cases of elderly are increasing at higher rate. As the current Corona virus Disease (Covid-19) pandemic spreads across the globe, the elderly population (60 years and above) become particularly vulnerable (Armitage R, Nellums LB., 2020; Onder G et al., 2020, cited in Alok & Muraleedharan, V.R., 2020). Mortality data from different countries and various studies show that the elderly population is more susceptible compared to their younger counterparts (Onder, G et al., 2020, Guan, Wet al cited in Alok & Muraleedharan, V.R., 2020)

Older people, and people of all ages with pre-existing medical conditions (such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, lung diseases or cancer) appear to develop serious illness more often than others (WHO).

All of the government and other responsible agencies are cautioned the precautions about to taken by elderly. The death chance is increasing whenever a person is loaded with other diseases. Government took measures like lock down and suggesting social distancing, quarantine, wearing mask, sanitizing etc. through medias, mobile phone, and also announcing at railway and bus stations. Nowadays these practices become the part of life of everyone. So much social changes are happening by the pandemic. In academic realm, it is current debating issue Potential underlying health conditions and physical changes due to ageing process brings more threat and challenge to the elderly people. Pandemic is seriously affecting the ill people especially among elderly. Lockdown is one of the very important measure government taken to prevent the pandemic.

From the month of March onwards India government ordered nationwide lockdown as a preventing strategy of Covid-19. Four times govt. declared nationwide lockdown. After that govt. loose the restrictions but still the pandemic threat is going on. All the people are taking precautions against the pandemic by social distancing, wearing masks, sanitising and Covid protocol is ordered everywhere by government in offices, organizations, public places and in every public gatherings.

Beyond all these measures, loose practices and non serious, careless attitude of public is a threatening issue and it increases the number of infected people. This situation also urge the importance of more care to elderly people. Kerala government

also restricts free moving of elderly i.e., above 60 aged and recommends more precautions.

After lockdown shops, organisations, offices etc are reopened and government imposes restrictions also to prevent the infections. Nowadays almost normal life established. But the threat of Covid-19 is still haunting. The vaccination efforts continuing with priority list of the people who would mostly be affected. The elderly and the aged are in the priority list.

Impact of Covid -19 pandemic on employment sector especially on unorganised sector are larger. They don't have any security of their job. Their life and livelihood depends on the income they earned daily. Lockdown measures and anxiety about the infection due to high risk deprived the life of elderly. Like Parsons argument, the productive role of elderly provided with less structural isolation. But the pandemic situation and vulnerability of the aged stressed the life of elderly. They could not be engaged in work due to more restrictions and high health risk. But now the life is entering into a new normal days and they are also working with all these new normalities. Here the paper is focusing on the major problems faced by the elderly workers of unorganised sector in the pandemic situation and the coping strategies they have taken to overcome the situation.

I. Methodology

For understanding the impact of Covid-19 on elderly workers in the informal sector, 10 key informant interviews were taken at Tirur town in Malappuram district. Among the 10 respondents two are lottery sellers, three are small merchants, two are securities, one as working as ticket collector in a theater, two are autorikshaw drivers. Interview guide is used to collect data.

Major problems

As it is informal sector, the respondents are working without any security and safety. The poor economic background and lack of support from the family are the major reasons to work. But some are interested to engage in economic activities. Even though there is economic pressure some social conditions are also there i.e.; living conditions are also pressurise them. That is almost all of them are bread winner of their family. All of their grown up children are married and the children have their own family responsibility, moreover earning very meagre income and belonging informal sector also. Some have daughters only and they are also married, live with husband's house. In the case of one respondent, economic burden necessitate the need of income. His daughter is a divorcee and have three children who is living with him heighten the economic burden. Except one, other respondents reported that they were not faced any harassment and abusing words from the family members due to absence of income. He said that because of poor health he was not been able to work for two months. In that period he was so much disturbed with the abusing words from his wife in the absence of income. Now itself he is an unhealthy person to work and he don't

like to work but the inadequacy of income and the attitude of family force him to engage in the work field. This social conditions are also evident.

Nowadays the attitude of elderly caring is also diminished in society. Even though the income earned by the elderly are less, the status of an economic contributor provides respect among family and society. Due to lockdown measures like everyone the elderly were at home and could not continue in the work sector. So it positively helped to spent time with family but at the same time they felt isolated as a result of the lack of physical contact with friends, children and grand children. Some were felt difficulty in purchasing medicine and to visits hospital.

During lockdown they could not engage in the work. But nowadays the life is becoming normal, shopes and offices are reopened and the social life of people are getting a new normal but cautious about easily spreading Covid -19 infections with all the guidelines from government to prevent. The problem lies in this situation that the public who are coming to interact with these elderly workers are not taking precautions properly. So it brings fear of infections. Because the high health risk factor heighten the anxiety and tension. One auto driver said that many guest workers and native people are travelling without botherations of the Covid-19. That makes the problem dangerous to us. We are demanding proper wearing of mask but no one behave according to the Covid protocol.

Another issue is related with economic difficulties. Covid 19 hit the whole economy badly and brought a confusing future. The lockdown measures throws up some challenges to all workers who are working in the informal sector. Many economic issues are also facing the elderly workers during Covid-19 although it is affected by all the people, in the case of elderly who have high health risk. These elderly people are using their daily income to manageht multiple needs such as basic family needs, running the business and have to pay the rent for the building. As they belong to many fields, needs are also varying. At the lockdown time small merchants could not open the shops but have to give rent and electrical charges to the building for the shop owners. They got time to pay the rent but still it is with them as debt. Even though they could open the shops the business is not running as it was in the days before Covid-19.

Still the economy is dominated with the effect of pandemic and the economy is not running profitably. One small merchant who is selling bags near to school building said that he don't have much income to survive due to closed schools. Another one respondent who is a stationary shop owner near to a government office building said that he started the shop expecting more work from the offices. The day before Covid-19, shop was profitable. After lockdown, offices were reopened but first time the workers were less it was allowed only 50% workers and the possibilities of unexpected Covid infections again minimises the number of workers. Moreover in Saturdays also the number of workers is less. Generally the shop is running without much profit as in earlier days. So the debts are remaining and now itself the economy is not become normal as such the days before Covid pandemic.

It could be understood that many of the shops are starting near to the office building and educational institutions but due to Covid-19 the whole economy stagnated and the workers face so much difficulty to run the business and managing daily needs of their family.

Another issue is raised by small merchants who said that as they are running small shops but categorised as business men in the ration card. So they are possessing non priority ration card of govt Civil supplies corporation. So in the Covid-19 situation they couldn't make available the food grains at a nominal rate through this system.

As the pandemic is affected the whole people, the possibility of borrowing and lending money is a difficult thing. The absence of income and inability to support others in this time was very much affected all the people.

Coping Mechanism

Here the researcher looks at how they manage the difficulties during Covid-19. They could spent time with family during lockdown and they spent time by watching television and engaged in small activities at home. As it is too difficult to collect money from relatives and friends, but they could manage. For many small merchants got relaxation in paying the rent especially those who are in the Municipal area and due to interference of trade unions like *VyapariVyvasaiEkopanaSamiti* could access one lakh loan from Urban Cooperative bank. They said that the availability of loan is very much helpful to run the shops. But in the case of auto workers they don't get any such measures to overcome the absence of work. Government agencies and other voluntary efforts by providing food kit services and other food supply mechanism were very helpful to face the pandemic situations. In the pandemic time everyone could access different pension in which they involved.

II. Conclusions

The Covid-19 pandemic is very much affected all the people irrespective of age. But the high health risk factor affected the elderly much more. Even though the elderly workers in the unorganised sector are facing so much difficulties, they are managing the pandemic situations.

References

- [1] Armitage R, Nellums LB. COVID-19 and the consequences of isolating the elderly. *Lancet Public Health* 2020;0. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(20\)30061-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(20)30061-X)
- [2] *Caring for our Elders Early responses, India Ageing Report-2017*. New Delhi: UNFPA.
- [3] Guan W, Liang W, Zhao Y, Liang H, Chen Z, Li Y, et al. Comorbidity and its impact on 1590 patients with Covid-19 in China: a Nationwide analysis. *Eur Respir J*. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1183/13993003.00547-2020>.
- [4] Haralambos, Michael, Holborn, Martin, Chapman, Steve & Moore, Stephen, (2013). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. London, United Kingdom: Harper Collins Publishers Limited.
- [5] Onder G, Rezza G, Brusaferro S. Case-fatality rate and characteristics of patients dying in relation to COVID-19 in Italy. *JAMA*. 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.4683>.

*Perceived Anxiety, Social Support and Coping Strategies of
Elderly During Covid 19 Pandemic.*

- [6] Ranja,Alok&Muraleedharan,V.R. Equity and elderly health in India: reflections from 75th round National Sample Survey, 2017–18, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. *Globalization and Health*. United Kingdom: BMC.<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-020-00619-7>
- [7] UNReport(https://www.un.org/development/desa/pd/sites/www.un.org.development.desa.pd/files/files/documents/2020/Jan/un_2019_worldpopulationageing_report.pdf accessed on 17/2/2020)
- [8] World population ageing Report.(2015). New York: United Nations.
- [9] World population ageing Report 2019.(2020).New York: United Nations
- [10] World Health organisation<https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-covid-19-risks-and-safety-for-older-people>https://www.who.int/health-topics/ageing#tab=tab_ accessed on 17/2/2020

About the Author



Dr. Sandhya R S is the Professor and Head, Department of Sociology, University of Kerala. After completing Post-graduation in Sociology, she did her Ph.D. in Sociology with Social Gerontology as specialization from University of Kerala. She started her career as Assistant Professor (2006) in the School of Gandhian Thought and Development Studies, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, and later she served as Professor (2018) in the School of Distance Education, Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam. In 2020, she joined as Professor in the Department of Sociology, University of Kerala. She has 15 years' experience in teaching and produced seven PhD's under her guidance. She has published three books and more than 15 research publications including National and International reputations. She availed Post-Doctoral Fellowship from Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi. General Sociology, Gerontology, and Gender Studies are her areas of interest. She has completed two major research projects, funded by UGC and Inter University Centre for Organic Farming and Sustainable Agriculture, Mahatma Gandhi University funded by Govt. of Kerala.



InSc Publication House (IPH)
Selfypage Developers Pvt Ltd

ISBN:978-1-68576-035-9



MRP Rs.500/-