

MARGINALISATION AND IT'S IMPACT ON HEALTHCARE OF THE ELDERLY

[CHITRA.S.NAIR,
RESEARCH SCHOLAR, DEPT .OF SOCIOLOGY,
UNIVERSITY OF KERALA.]
highnet_net@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT.

One of the greatest achievements of the 20th century has been the significant growth of life expectancy at birth in almost every country of the world. In India, in the year 2002, over 81 million people were in the age group of 60+. This population is expected to go up to 324 million by the year 2050 .It means that 8% of the total population in the year 2002 belonged to the age group of older persons. This proportion is expected to be 21% by the year 2050. According to the 2001 census of Kerala, there are 10.5% elderly in the state. There are 19 lacs of people in the age group 60-69,11 lacs of people in the age group 70-79,and 3.9 lacs of people in the age group 80+. In this 80+ age group, 2.3 lacs of people belongs to the female group and more than 80% of them are widows

Eventhough health is at the heart of sustainable human development, it is no more considered as a bio-medical facility, but converges the social, economic, environmental and human rights issues of development which encompasses the provision of housing, transport, greenery, open spaces, sport activities, water supply, waste management, drainage and other physical and social infrastructure .The relationship between health and social well being, environmental quality, eco-system and economic activity has been assuming importance in recent years. **Social** well-being depends upon a healthy population, which in turn requires equitable access to good local environment including access to housing, health infrastructure, green space, recreation, cultural activities and public transport. The present study focuses on the marginalisation of the elderly with respect to health care, social security and socio economic independency and how the interplay of these factors influence the quality of care received by them. Primary and secondary data were used for the study. Primary data was collected from a sample of 100 elderly from the capital city of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, using an interview schedule.

Despite the unprecedented growth in the numbers and proportions of older people in the developing world, they remain neglected, on the margins of the development process. Poverty and exclusion remains the greatest threats to the well-being of the older people. Far too, many older people spend the later years of their lives in poverty, beyond the reach of even the most basic provision for social well-being and health. The majority of older people are women, often widows, who suffer the multiple disadvantages of their gender, ranging from abandonment to failing health.Today, development policies have been focused on achieving economic growth and increased productivity. Older people, typically characterized as economically unproductive, dependent and passive, have been considered irrelevant to development and at worst as a threat to the prospects for increased prosperity and freedom of their care takers. Healthy longevity has always been the cherished dream of man, but living a longer span does not necessarily imply an improvement in its quality.

