

# A Study on Psychological Distress and Emotional Wellbeing of Destitute Elderly Special Reference to Kozhikode District Kerala

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## ABSTRACT

Psychological distress and mental well-being are associated with lack of social support and loneliness. Older people suffer from many mental health problems and lack of emotional well-being. Therefore, it is important to address this issue in order to care for and support them. Men and women differ in terms of psychological stress and its components, namely anxiety and depression. Furthermore, men and women experienced similar levels of religiosity and stress, and women experienced higher levels of loneliness than men. **Research Methodology:** This study was conducted with special emphasis on psychological distress and mental well-being among extremely poor elderly people in Kozhikode district, Kerala. The sampling technique used in this study is probability sampling. The sampling method used in this study was simple random sampling. The sample included 60 extremely poor elderly people. **Instruments of data collection:** Data collection will be carried out in this study using uniquely designed questionnaire and interview methods. **Results:** In this study, 65 percent of the respondents had a moderate level of psychological distress and mental well-being among the elderly in extreme poverty, and 15 percent of the respondents had a good level of psychological distress and psychological well-being among the elderly in extreme poverty. 20 percent of respondents have low psychological stress and mental well-being among poor elderly people with distress and mental well-being. Psychological stress and mental well-being among poor elderly people.

**KEYWORDS:** Psychological Distress, Emotional Wellbeing, Destitute Elderly

## INTRODUCTION:

Aging is an individual process that occurs at different rates in different people. Many factors affect the aging process, such as psychosocial factors that may speed up or reduce the rates of physiological changes. Aging is a physiological phenomenon, and complex progressive changes in an organism accompany it. Old age is usually explained as it starts from age 60. Old age can be subdivided into early old age, it extends from age sixty to age seventy, and advanced old age begins at seventy and extends to the end of life (Hurlock, 1981). Aging is a natural process and any change in an organism over time (Kaur, 2011). Maheswari (2010) suggests that in India, the decline in fertility is further exacerbated by the increase in life expectancy, leading to fundamental changes in

the age structure of the population and resulting in an aging population. In 1991, the number of elderly people in India was 56.7 million, and in 2001 it was 72 million. Moreover, 1 in 10 senior citizens in the world calls India home. Furthermore, the absolute and relative size of India's elderly population will increase in the future (Maheswari, 2010). Among the many issues faced by the elderly in society, economic issues occupy an important position. Older people suffer from many mental health problems and a lack of social support. In care homes, the lack of close friends and relatives often causes problems such as loneliness, which has a negative impact on mental health. Therefore, it is important to address this issue in order to care and support them. This study focuses

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on psychological distress and mental well-being among poor older adults.

## DEFINITION

### Psychological distress

Psychological distress is seldom defined as a distinct concept and is often embedded in the context of strain, stress and distress. –Tayanna Hanumantappa 2010)-

### Emotional well-being

Emotional well-being (EWB) includes a positive balance of pleasant to Unpleasant affect and a cognitive appraisal of satisfaction with life in general. (Keyes, 2003)

### Elderly

The elderly are defined as persons aged 65 years or older - (crews and zavotka, 2006)

### Destitution

Destitution is a state of extreme poverty that results from the pursuit of Unsustainable livelihoods, meaning that a series of livelihood shocks and/or Negative trends or processes erode the asset base of already poor and vulnerable Households until they are no longer able to meet their minimum subsistence Needs, they lack access to the key productive assets needed to escape from Poverty, and they become dependent on public and/or private transfers (Sharp, Devereux & Amare (2003)-

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Maheswari (2010)** suggests that in India, the reduction in fertility level is reinforced by an increase in life expectancy, which has produced fundamental changes in the population's age structure, leading to the Aging population. There were 56.7 million Indian older people in 1991, and 72 million in 2001. Also, today India is home to one out of every ten senior citizens of the world. In addition, both the absolute and relative size of the population of the elderly in India will gain strength in the future.

**Jabin (2016)** attempted to study the relationship between loneliness and depression among old-aged people. Loneliness plays an important role in determining depression among old-aged people. Depression levels can be reduced by reducing loneliness among old-aged people.

**Pettigrew and Roberts (2008)** conducted a study to determine whether the increasing social isolation

experience in old age results in feelings of emotional isolation and thus of loneliness. Furthermore, they concluded that the specific behaviors leading to ameliorating loneliness include friends and family considered an emotional resource, engaging in eating and drinking rituals to maintain social contacts. Moreover, spending time constructively by reading and gardening. In addition, specific recommendations are provided for interventions designed to prevent and treat loneliness among older people.

## Methodology of the Study

### Objectives of the Study

- To study the personal details of respondents.
- To assess the levels of psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- To investigate the influence of personal factors on psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- To study the relations between personal factors on psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- To examine valuable suggestion about psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.

**Scope of Research:** The scope of this research includes destitute elderly special reference to Kozhikode district Kerala.

### Research Design

The research design adopted by the researcher is descriptive in nature.

### Universe of the study

The study was conducted in study destitute elderly special reference to Kozhikode district Kerala.

### Sampling

The sampling technique used in the present investigation is probability sampling. The sampling method adopted for the present study is simple random sampling. The size of the sample was 60 female social work students.

### Tools of data collection

The research prepare self made questionnaire and data collection is interview methods. The statistical tools applied by the researcher are Percentage Analysis, Chi-square, T-test and ANOVA.

**Findings of the Study**

Factors	Medium	Frequency	Percentage
Age	60yrs-65yrs	45	75%
Gender	Male	47	78%
Educational Qualification	Primary	50	83%
Marital status	Married	40	67%
Religion	Hindu	39	65%
Nativity	Urban	36	60%
Saving	Yes	50	83%

**Simple Percentage Analysis**

- The majority (75%) of respondents are in the 60-65 year age group.
- The majority (78%) of those surveyed are male.
- The majority (83%) of respondents are primary education of the respondents.
- More than half (67%) of the respondents are married.
- More than half of the respondents (65%) are Hindu.
- More than half (60%) of those surveyed belong to the urban community.
- The majority (83%) of those who say they are saving say yes.

**DISTRIBUTION OF THE RESPONDENTS ACCORDING TO THEIR LEVEL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING OF DESTITUTE ELDERLY**

S. No	Psychological distress and Emotional wellbeing	Respondents	Percentage %
1	Good	09	15
2	Moderate	39	65
3	Poor	12	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

**INTERPRETATION**

The above table highlights the levels of psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly. It is understood from the above table that 65 percent of the respondents have moderate levels of psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly, 15 percent of the respondents have good levels of psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly, and 20 percent of the respondents have poor levels of psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.

**INFLUENCE OF PERSONAL PROFILE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING OF THE RESPONDENTS**

Variables	Statistical tool	Value	Result
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & age of the respondents	ANOVA	F= 1.447 P<.000	Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & gender of the respondents	t-test	t = -.059 p>.943	Not Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & education qualification of the respondents	ANOVA	F= 4.101 P<.002	Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & marital status of the respondents	t-test	t = 4.876 p>.090	Not- Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & religion of the respondents	ANOVA	F= 4.101 P<.000	Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & nativity of the respondents	ANOVA	F= 3.829 P>.061	Not-Significant
Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly & saving of the respondents	ANOVA	F= 2.773 P<.009	Significant

- There is significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on the age. It is inferred that age influence the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on the gender. It is inferred that gender does not influence the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.

- There is significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on the educational qualification. It is inferred that educational qualification influences the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly with respect to different marital status of the respondents. It is inferred that marital status does not influence the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- There is significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly with respect to different religion of the respondents. It is inferred that religion influences the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.
- There is no significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly with respect to different nativity of the respondents. It is inferred that nativity does not influence the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly of the respondent.
- There is significant difference in the mean scores of the respondents based on level of Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly with respect to different saving of the respondents. It is inferred that saving influences the Psychological distress and emotional wellbeing of destitute elderly.

### Recommendations

- Mental health problems are common in older adults and may include isolation, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, dementia, and psychosis.
- Many older adults suffer from sleep and behavioral disorders, as well as cognitive impairment and confusion as a result of physical disabilities or surgical procedures.
- Common social and emotional problems may include loss of autonomy, sadness, anxiety, loneliness, financial constraints, and lack of social networks.
- These psychosocial problems can also affect and contribute to physical health. Having someone to talk to can help older adults cope with difficult emotions such as loneliness, fear, and frustration.
- Additionally, ongoing psychological support can help reduce the risk of developing mental and physical problems.

- Timely psychological diagnosis can help recognize warning signs of neurodegenerative diseases and take early preventive measures.

### CONCLUSION

This study found that older age is associated with decreased social support, increased loneliness, lower psychological distress, and higher religiosity. Lack of family support causes stress. People who suffer from high levels of stress and anxiety experience greater feelings of loneliness. And family support is a factor that reduces anxiety. Higher levels of depression occur due to lower levels of support from family, friends, romantic partners, and perceived low overall social support. Psychological stress is high when there is less social support from family, friends, and special people. As psychological stress increases, feelings of loneliness also increase. Older people have high levels of religiosity when they are very lonely. Having a special person in your life reduces feelings of loneliness. In this study, 65 percent of respondents had moderate levels of psychological distress and mental well-being among poor elderly people, and 15 percent of respondents had moderate levels of psychological distress and mental well-being among poor elderly people. 20 percent of respondents had good levels of psychological distress and 20 percent of respondents had poor levels of psychological distress Stress and mental health among poor older adults.

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