

## **Feminization of Elderly Population in Karnataka**

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### **Introduction:**

21<sup>th</sup> century is the aged and elderly population century because several countries of the world come out from the 'younging' stage and entered to the 'Old Stage' in the process of population ageing. Although still children out number of the aged persons but this situation remove shortly because in the world level every month 8.70.000 people added the adult age group or old age group or third age categories. The adding number of the elderly people varies from male to female and it's creating many socio-economic and health problems in elderly women in Karnataka.

### **Study area:**

**1.0.** The Southern state of Karnataka is pioneer in many fields among the Indian states. It is located in the Western part of the Deccan plateau. It is surrounded by Maharastra in the North, Andhra Pradesh in the East, Tamilnadu in the South and Southeast, Kerala in the Southwest and Goa in the Northwest. In the Western part it is flanked by the Arabian Sea.



### **Study area Map**

It extends Latitudinally from 11°31' to 18°45' North and longitudinally from 74°12' to 78°40' East. The total geographical area of the state is about 1, 91,791 Sq.kmAs per 2011 census Karnataka has 6.1 crore population with 3.1 crore males and 3.0 crore females. It has 5.31% of India's total population and ranks ninth in the country. The total Elderly population in 2001 was 4.1 million with 1.9 million males and 2.1 million females. As per 2011 census

Karnataka has 9.55% of elderly population in total population is 8 95% in males and 10.17 % in female. It shows that the in Karnataka, population ageing process is feminizing

**Objectives:** The objectives of the present study are:

- To examine the Feminization nature of in the process of Population ageing in Karnataka.

- To examine the Implication of feminization of Elderly Population in Karnataka.

**Methodology:** The present study is based on the secondary source of information collected from different sources like the reports and tables of Karnataka on age, census of India and other sources related to elderly population. The feminization of elderly population has been understood with the help of Gender wise percent and decennial growth of elderly population. It has been worked out using the following formula

$$\text{Elderly population} = \frac{\text{Number of Persons aged 60 years and above in the same period}}{\text{Total Number of Persons in Particular period}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Decennial growth} = \frac{\text{Present population} - \text{previous population} = \text{Difference,}}{\text{Previous Population}} \times 100$$

### Discussions:

**5.1: Feminization of Elderly population in Karnataka.** Developed countries have high percent of elderly population but developing countries have huge number of total elderly population. For example, India has only 8.4 percent of elderly population although it is the second nation in the world in terms of absolute number of elderly population in 2011 with 10.8 crore.

In Karnataka, the number of elderly population has been growing at a remarkable rate. In 1971 the total number of elderly population was 17.8 lakhs. However it is almost doubled with in a period of 20 years with 33.86 lakh in 1991 and by 2011 the elderly population has reached to 58.3 lakh. In Karnataka on an average every day 277 persons and Annually 1.01 lakh people add to the later life in Karnataka.

Karnataka is one of the state in India, where men out numbered the women in general population but it is opposite in the case of elderly population with females are predominant among elderly population. In 1971 Karnataka's total number of elderly male was 9.1 lakhs against 8.7 lakhs female and rose 16.95 and 16.91 in 1991, to 27.7 and 30.64 lakhs in 2011, (Fig 4.2). It shows that in Karnataka and the growth of elderly population is gradually tilting in favour of female elderly than male leading the ageing process towards feminization.

<b>Table: 5.1 of General and Elderly in Karnataka: a comparison from 1971 to 2011</b>						
	<b>Elderly population</b>			<b>General population</b>		
<b>Decades</b>	<b>Total (in lakhs)</b>	<b>Male (in lakhs)</b>	<b>Female (in lakhs)</b>	<b>Total (in crore)</b>	<b>Male (in crore)</b>	<b>Female (in crore)</b>
<b>1971</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>1.49</b>	<b>1.43</b>
<b>1981</b>	<b>24.6</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>12.4</b>			
<b>1991</b>	<b>33.86</b>	<b>16.95</b>	<b>16.91</b>			

<b>2001</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>21.6</b>			
<b>2011</b>	<b>57.84</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>30.64</b>	<b>6.10</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>3.00</b>
<b>Difference from 1971 to 2011</b>	<b>40.04</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>21.94</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>1.60</b>	<b>1.56</b>
<b>Source:</b> Compiled by the researcher by use of from 1971 and 2011 census data						

From 1971 to 2011 the total elderly male and female added are 18.1 and 21.94 lakhs respectively. On an average every day 99 men and 120 women have been entering into the later life. At the same period every day 880 men and 858 women added to the general population in Karnataka. It had shown in our study area favouring Masculine in general population and feminine nature in Elderly population.

<b>Table. 5.2: Sex wise Per day Average adding number of General and elderly from 1971 to 2011</b>					
General Population			Elderly Population		
Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1739	880	858	110	99	120
<b>Source:</b> Compiled by the researcher by use of census data.					
<b>Lunged:</b> T-Total, M-Males, F-Females					

### 5.1.1: Trend of Feminization in Different Age Cohorts of the Elderly population:

Elderly population is not a homogeneous group. So demographers and others often classify them into different groups or cohorts based on the socio-economic factors. In developed countries, they commonly classify into 3 classes such as young *old* (65 to 74 years), *Middle old* (75 to 84 years) and *oldest old* (85 years and above). Recently United Nation population division and US census bureau of population division begin to think extend of oldest old categories from 80 or 85 years and above to 100 years and above. In India the elderly population is classified into three age cohorts. They are '*Young old*' with 60-69 years, '*Old-old*' with 70-79 years and '*Oldest old*' cohorts with 80 years and above aged group population. The present study has adopted the census of India's criteria for classifying the elderly population into different age cohorts.

In Karnataka, elderly population itself is ageing in terms of number although the percent of oldest old age cohort is positive and remaining is negative. In Karnataka from 1981 to 2011 the percent of young old among the total elderly was slightly decreases from 63.2 to 61.3 percent but old- old and oldest old age cohorts elderly are gradually are increased from 26.9 to 27.2 and 9.9 to 11.5 (Fig: 5.1 ) respectively due to slow increases of life

expectancy. In 1981 life expectancy at birth was 60.4 years as a result more number of elderly concentrated in young old age group, it is increases 68.8 years in 2011 with increase of nearly 9 years. Therefore, elderly population distributed into higher age group as a result total elderly increased but within the different age cohorts proportion of Young old elderly slightly decreases others are increase between 1981 and 2011. However in Karnataka from 1981 to 2011 the growth of young old is least with 133 percent, old-old are 141 and oldest old group is highest with 155 percent.

**Fig 5.1: Distribution of Elderly in Different Age Cohorts in Karnataka in 1981 and 2011**

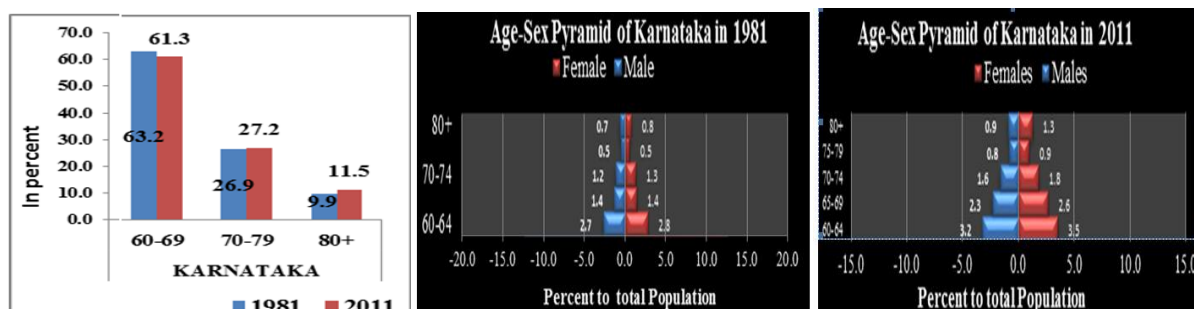


Table:5.3: Gender Wise Growth of Elderly in Different Age Cohorts in Karnataka						
Age Cohorts	1981 (Total)	2011 (Total)	Changes	Growth of Elderly between 1981 and 2011		
				Male	Female	Total
Young old	1537476	3580171	2042695	122.6	143.2	132.9
Old - old	658048	1585551	927503	134.8	146.9	141.0
Oldest old	263265	671161	407896	132.0	176.2	154.9
Source: Compiled by the researcher by use of census data						

In terms of gender, in the last four decades (1981 and 2011) different age cohort elderly growth rate is in favour to female and more favour to female in higher age group than their counter part. In Karnataka it is 122.6 and 143.1 percent in young old male and female elderly and increased 134.8 and 146.9 percent in old- old, 132.0 and 176.1 percent in oldest old age cohorts respectively.

### Implication of feminization of Elderly Population:

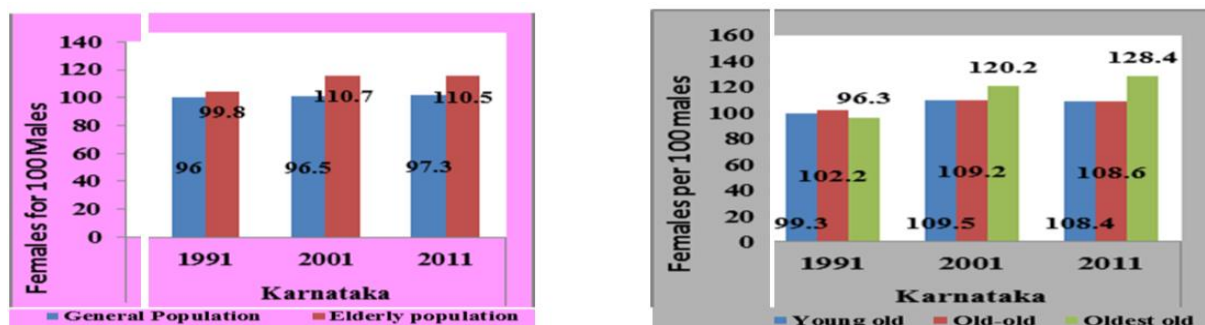
#### Change in the Sex Composition:

In Karnataka feminization of elderly changing the sex composition of the elderly population. Sex ratio indicates the nature of balance between two sexes in terms of numbers of different age groups. It is also called 'Gender ratio' which is the number of female per 100 males. The sex ratio is above 100 indicates the dominance of female over men and below

100 indicates the male dominance in the society. There is a variation in the sex ratio between the western and eastern countries. In the western countries the trend of sex ratio has been in favour of female both in general and elderly population however, in east, especially in India, the general population sex ratio favours male and it adverse in old age, it became more adverse at higher age groups.

In Karnataka the sex ratio among the elderly population is becoming feminine. The General population sex ratio is 97.2 and it is 110.5 among elderly population in 2011 (Fig: 4.14). This reveals the fact that there are more than 110.5 female elderly populations for every 100 male elderly populations. This is due to the low female child mortality and high female elderly life expectancy.

**Fig: 5.2: Sex ratio of General and Elderly and elderly in Different Age Cohorts in Karnataka**



The sex ratio among the elderly population has been increasing with the increase of age. It is 108.4 in young old, 108.6 in Old- old and 128.4 among oldest old age group in 2011(Fig:4.15) in Karnataka. This indicates the stronger biological strength of women to survive. A larger number of women are surviving the risks of maternal mortality and they are also less susceptible to the life style risk factors characterizing the male population. As a result the sex ratio of elderly population in Karnataka has becoming feminine.

**Change in the Marital Status :** Feminization of elderly Population change the social status of the elderly women from married to widowed, head of the family to member of the family and others. Marital status of any population includes Married, Widowhood, Never married, Separated and Divorced population in respect of both male and female.

Table .6.2.1. Marital status of Elderly in Karnataka (in %) from 1991to 2011				
Decades	Marital status	Persons	Males	Females
1991	Never married	7.8	9	6.6
2001		2.4	2.8	2.1
2011		2.3	2.5	2.2
1991	Married	56.4	79.1	33.8
2001		62.3	85.2	39.5

2011		63.7	86.3	43.3
1991	Widowed	35.6	11.6	59.7
2001		34.7	11.6	57.8
2011		33.4	10.8	53.9
1991	Separated/divorced	0.3	0.3	0.3
2001		0.4	0.3	0.5
2011		0.5	0.4	0.7
Total		100	100	100
Source: Compiled by the researcher by use of census data				

**Never Married:** Marriage plays an important role in Indian family because family formation through the marriage. Marriage is expected to provide inbuilt security for the care of the older persons and other vulnerable groups. In Karnataka never married males among elderly population has decreased from 9.0% in 1991 to 2.8% in 2001 and 2.5 in 2011 among female it was decreased from 6.6% to 2.1% during 1991 to 2001 and 2.2 in 2011(Table:6.2.1).

Although decrease trend is very slow in women than the men. It shows in Karnataka the feminization of elderly population increase the never married elderly women than the men. Due to the lack of availability of the partner in old age, the tradition and family system to restricts marriage of the aged population and never married aged people themselves no interest about their marriage in old age. The percent of never married female was low in young old age group and high in oldest old age group. The similar trend can be observed in their counterparts.

**Married and Widowed:** Loss of spouse is a major disorder in old age and an individual although Striking differences are observed between widows and widowers at the age of 80 years and above. The percent of married elderly women increased from 33.8% to 39.5% and 43.3% from 1991 to 2001 and 2011 (Table: 6.2.1) and the percent of widowed came down from 59.2% to 57.8% and 53.9% in the same period in Karnataka. This is an indication of the increase in the life expectancy of females and reduction in age difference of couples.

Compared to the percent of widowed males with married males at the same age group or total is substantially higher. For example in 2001 widowed elderly male was 11.6% and married male was 85.2% in Karnataka. It was opposite in their counterpart female in the same period widowed and married female percent is 57.8 and 39.5 percent respectively, because females have longer life span compared to the male, women to marry men older than themselves and widowed men are much more likely to re-marry and thus they overcame this situation. Women generally did not re-marry as compared to the men, except when she is

young and no children. Although a remarried woman's social status is not same as that of remarried men.

The marital status data relating to the 60 years and above shows that there is a progressive reduction in the percent of the widowed in both sexes which is the reflection of the improvements of the life expectancy. However the bulk number of female widowhood compared to the male in 2011 the percent of widower was 11.6% and widows were 57.8%. It is 11.6% among male and 57.8% in females in 2001.

**Divorced /Separated:** The incidence of Divorce /separation among the aged female is found to be more because most of the divorced/ separated females never get married due to the social restrictions unlike in the case of male Divorced /separated population. In Karnataka the percent of Divorced male was 0.3 in 1991 and it was same even in 2001 and little increased in 2011 with 0.4, although compare to female it is slow. In the case of female it was 0.3 % in 1991 and increased 0.5% in 2001 and further increased in 2011 with 0.7. it shown men are more lucky to re-marry female are most lucky to live alone.

### **Implication on Health:**

Early in life infections are still the leading causes for death but in the old age most of the death caused by the non-communicable diseases like physical disability, physical and mental problems. From 2001 to 2011 elderly disabled population has increased Karnataka from 17.3 to 19.1 with 1.8 percent decadal increase.

The present study used the census data grouped the disabled elderly into two broad groups such as Physical and psychological disability on the basis of physical and psychological functions of the human bodies. Physical disabilities are more common among the elderly and physical problems are frequently magnitude the serious mental disability among the elderly. The physical disability includes the seeing, hearing, speech, and movement disability of the elderly.

**Physical Disability:** In Karnataka among the total disability a great number of elderly populations are physically disabled than the psychological disability. In 2001, 93.4 percent of total disabled elderly population are physically disabled and it increased 96.5 percent in 2011. The problem of *seeing and hearing* are predominate in female, *speech and movement* problems are dominate in males.



Compared to the female, Males are taking treatment for seeing and hearing problems as a result less number of elderly male population suffering from these problems. The problem of *movement* was less in female in all regions because females engage in the house hold activities until to their death, this trend was very negligible in their male counterparts and most of the male elderly retired from their job formally or informally they did not do the house hold activities.

<b>Table: 4.Physical Disabled Elderly in Total Disabled Elderly in Karnataka – 2011</b>			
<b>Physical disabilities</b>	<b>Persons (%)</b>	<b>Males (%)</b>	<b>Females (%)</b>
<b>Seeing problem</b>	30.43	26.39	34.57
<b>Hearing problem</b>	18.34	17.69	19
<b>Speech problem</b>	3.31	3.56	3.05
<b>Movement problem</b>	22.06	26.72	17.3
<b>Source:</b> Compiled by the researcher by use of census data			

**5.2.3.2: Psychological Disability:** In this section the mental illness and mental retardation are considered as the Psychological problems of elderly population because these are related to the mind and brain function. In Karnataka the percent of Psychological disability among the elderly is low. It could be explained by the fact that existing social cultural milieu which discourage the family members to disclose the problems in the public. Therefore the percent psychological disabled elderly people were very low and it is decreased from 6.6% to 3.5% from 2001 to 2011 in Karnataka.

Compared to the male and female Psychological problem was high in female in Karnataka and because males are more likely to married and females are most likely to widow. The widowhood status create the psychological problem in the females because after the loss of spouse majority of the female elderly suffering from isolation, loneliness and living alone situation. Females are more emotional than the male and society is also to restrict the widowed, divorced and separated female elderly to participate the some traditional programmes.

**Findings:** In Karnataka the elderly population is increasing from decade to decade with a variation in gender and Different age cohort. The General population has more number of male and among the elderly population female are more in number.



1. In Karnataka the growth of elderly population is gradually tilting in favour of female elderly than male leading the ageing process towards feminization. On an average every day 99 men and 120 women have been entering into the later life.
2. In Karnataka, elderly population itself is ageing in terms of number although the percent of oldest old age cohort is positive and remaining is negative.
3. In the last four decades (1981 and 2011) the growth of different age cohort elderly is in favour to female and more favour to female in higher age group than their counter part.
4. The feminization of elderly Population change the social status of the elderly women from married to widowed, head of the family to member of the family, social participation to isolation and others.
5. In Karnataka the process of population ageing increase the never married elderly women than the men. Due to the lack of availability of the partner in old age, the tradition and family system to restricts marriage of the aged population and never married aged people themselves no interest about their marriage in old age.
6. Compared to the percent of widowed males with married males at the same age group or total is substantially higher. In 2001 widowed elderly male was 11.6% and married male was 85.2% in Karnataka. It was opposite in their counterpart in the same period widowed and married female percent is 57.8 and 39.5 percent respectively, because females have longer life span compared to the male, women to marry men older than themselves and widowed men are much more likely to re-marry and thus they overcame this situation. Women generally did not re-marry as compared to the men, except when she is young and no children. Although a remarried woman's social status is not same as that of remarried men.
7. In Karnataka the percent of Divorced male was 0.3 in 1991 and it was same even in 2001 and little increased in 2011 with 0.4, although compare to female it is slow. In the case of female it was 0.3 % in 1991 and increased 0.5% in 2001 and further increased in 2011 with 0.7. It shown men are luckier to re-marry female are most lucky to live alone. In different cohorts the percent of divorced population decreases with increasing the age in both sexes although compared to the females, the young old males divorced percent increases and oldest old percent decrease along with the increase the decades.
8. Compared to the male and female Psychological problem was high in female in Karnataka and because males are more likely to married and females are most likely to widow.

**Conclusion:**

This paper has examined and analysed the feminization in process of population ageing with the help of gender wise percent of elderly population during the last five decades in Karnataka. It changing the sex composition and creates the gender disparities in the marital and increases the disabled elderly female population in total and general disabled population. Therefore the Government and other agency should be give more importance to the elderly women welfare programme.

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