

Transforming the Approach for Elderly Care in Urban Setup: Prospects and Criteria for Developing 'Age-Friendly City'

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ABSTRACT

Although it is establish fact proven by previous researches that active and positive aging is the key for being younger and energetic yet 'Age-friendly city' policies and social setups are inevitable steps to overcome the challenges of later life. Data collected in present research, emphasized upon the key consideration for policy makers to address 'Age-Friendly city'. Empirical evidences were collected based on responses from professionals total 60 respondents have been selected through 'Expert opinion Survey' from 12 specific categories five area experts from each category i.e. Administrators, Academicians, Policymakers, Urban Planners, Gerontologists, Economists, Political Scientists, Architects, Social Activists, Law Professionals, Psychologist, Geriatrics, Media Experts were approached.

Present paper explores different aspects of 'Age-Friendly City' such as flux in demography of aging at Global, National and Jaipur city level, model for deciding components and criteria for developing 'Age-Friendly City' with its required and desirable components. Shaping 'age-friendly city' plans and policy needs a fair link between shift in demographic profile of elderly and infrastructural developments with affordable and effective institutional care. Therefore, at the end consideration for policy makers in order to make Jaipur as an 'Age-friendly city' have been discussed in this paper

Keywords

Urban Governance, Elderly Care Framework, 'Age-Friendly City', Geriatrics, Gerontologists, e-counselling, Smart City Mission

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Introduction

In 21st century few of the major social issues are around urbanization and Urban Governance pertaining to ageing population and urban development. The United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network has released the World Happiness Report 2019, wherein "India has witnessed a sustained drop to 140th position this year compared to the 133rd place in the year 2018. India featured in the list of five countries that had the largest drop since 2005-2008 in the index, along with Yemen, Syria, Botswana and Venezuela". Therefore, the significance of the present paper is much more because it focuses on exploring aspects of 'Age-Friendly City', which addresses the serious need of action for this vulnerable section of the society.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on ageing (2007) expresses the international concern raised on the challenges of adjusting to an ageing world. Elderly persons are assets of society, so the avoidance feeling among elderly is painful. As Kaushik Basu (2019) pointed out about gaps between demand and supply of social welfare and focus on the fact that "India can hide data but not the truth".

However, the fact is that India's elderly population is increasing dramatically from last three decades Therefore a research is needed on more comprehensive and right direction in the view of legal and other security provisions for the elderly with special reference to the urban development and e-governance.

This paper sets out to examine the notion that aging in India should be assumed and responded as a rights-based category. As a developing country with transnational political and economic ties framing new laws for elderly care is must. Further, how much these laws and policies are reaching to the beneficiaries is one of the objectives of study

during present research along with the following research aspects:

(A) Aspects of Research:

- a) To understand key components of an 'Age-Friendly City'
- b) To focus on vision of an 'Age-Friendly City', to address and evaluate problems of elderly in Jaipur City.
- c) To identify the considerations for policy makers in order to make Jaipur an 'Age-Friendly city'

The impact of urbanization affects the experiences of ageing at different levels. "Forces of social change like industrialization, urbanization and now globalization have put the elderly at the cross-roads. Joint family systems have given way to nuclear families, pattern of occupation and livelihood changed, adding to vulnerabilities of the aged." [Kaushik A. and Kumar S. 2020] The focus of research is to emphasize on empirical evidences based on responses from professionals who have better understanding on the aspects of elderly care along with the process of urban planning.

(B) Data Collection Techniques:

1. Online Google Questionnaire
2. Focus Group Discussions,

In present research responses from total 60 respondents have been collected through 'Expert Opinion Survey'. These respondents have been selected from 12 specific categories. 5 area experts from each category from Jaipur i.e. Administrators, Academicians, Policymakers, Urban planners, Gerontologists, Economists, Political scientists, Architects, Social Activists, Law Professionals, Psychologist, Geriatrics, Media experts were approached.

Firstly, Google Questionnaire, was filled up by them and based on the responses received exclusive clarity through the above questions on aspects of ‘Age-friendly city’ have been further discussed through the focus group survey was been conducted. Content analysis based on close and open-ended responses explored the path for development of aspects of ‘Age-friendly city’ framework for future.

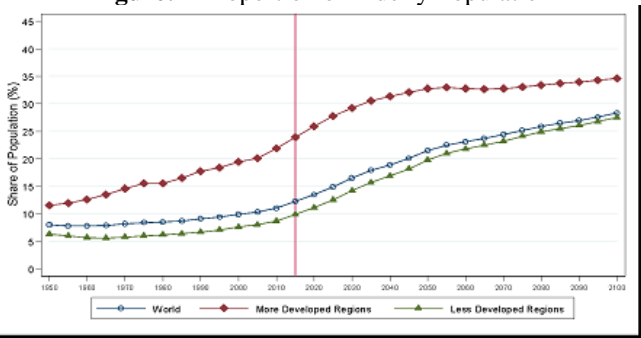
Why ‘Age-Friendly City’?

With rapid changes in the phenomena of ageing and the emerging prevalence of nuclear family set-ups in urban India in recent years, the elderly people are likely to be exposed to emotional, physical and financial insecurities in near future. The inter-generational relations among family members and generation gap in society at general poses the demand of framing a policy for ‘Age-Friendly Cities’. Extensive changes in population ageing indicates a broad overview for reviewing the existing policies and development model at global and local levels.

Global Perspective: Global initiatives towards an ‘Age-Friendly city’ at local level

According to a report published by WHO on Ageing in 2015 between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will nearly double from 12% to 22%. By 2020, the number of people aged 60 years and older will outnumber children younger than 5 years. In 2050, 80% of older people will be living in low- and middle-income countries. This report also argues regarding a continuum of affordable, accessible, high-quality and ‘Age-friendly’ health and social services addressing the needs and rights of people as they age.

Figure: 1 Proportion of Elderly Population



Source: David. E. Bloom & Dara Lee Luca, (2016).

Figure 1 is highlighting proportion of elderly in India that require further examination regarding its impact on existing policies for elderly people, worldwide. In the above figure 1 changing scenario of proportion of elderly population stresses upon the need of ‘Age-Friendly’ infrastructure, policy document, information technologies along with outstanding security and support for elderly.

Levasseur M, Dubois MF, Génereux M, Menec V, Raina P, Roy M, Gabaude C, Couturier Y, St-Pierre C (2017) promoted population health in ageing and defined “Age-friendly communities as a promising population intervention to enhance positive health, social participation and health equity in aging. Eight issues and concerns have been voiced by older people as characteristics of an age-friendly community: 1) outdoor spaces and buildings, 2) transportation, 3) housing, 4) opportunities for social

participation, 5) respect and social inclusion, 6) civic participation and employment, 7) communication and information, and 8) community support and health services.” Above global studies enrich our understanding of aging in India and inspires for more effective model and action plan to address age-friendly city environment.

Jaipur City

Identifying Jaipur as a ‘Smart City’ membership doesn’t necessarily denote an ‘Age-friendly city’, but as it is committed to listening and working with its older population to create one. Therefore, planners and policy makers at local level in India should refer global initiatives to understand different models which would help them in building a social environment for elderly. Hence Jaipur has been identified to understand how we can have Jaipur as a, ‘Age-Friendly city’.

Table: 1

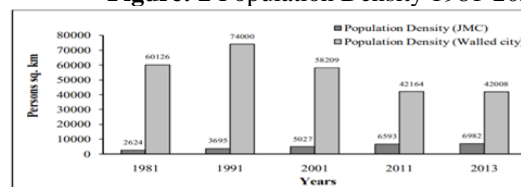
Population Growth in Jaipur City (1941-2011)

Years	Total Population	Growth Rate (%)	Annual Average Growth rate (%)
1941	1,75,800	-	-
1951	2,91,000	39.59	3.96
1961	4,03,400	27.86	2.79
1971	6,36,800	36.65	3.67
1981	10,15,567	37.30	3.73
1991	15,18,743	33.13	3.31
2001	23,22,575	34.61	3.46
2011	30,46,163	23.75	2.38

(Source: Census of India 1941, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011)

The above Table 1 reflect upon fluctuating pattern of population in Jaipur city. A Cross sectional study by Sharma D. K. , Kewalramani S, Yadav R., Sharma B. N. and Manohar R. K. on Bio-social Profile of Elderly residing in Jaipur City (2015) highlighted that “the most obvious factor is the greater longevity of elderly women compared to elderly men in Jaipur. In addition, the age gap at marriage being as high as 8-10 years, which compounds the likelihood of women outliving their spouses. Moreover widowers tend to remarry while widow remarriage is still uncommon in India. Profile of this population is required to frame comprehensive policies to make ageing a comfortable experience. So this cross-sectional study was carried out from September 2009 to August 2010”

Figure: 2 Population Density 1981-2020



(Source : Census of India 1981, 1991, 2001 & 2011) Temporal Changes in Population density of Jaipur Municipal Corporation

Figure 2 highlighted population density in Jaipur municipal corporation (JMC) and Jaipur Wall city 1881-2020. The above figure showcase that historic wall city’s density is reducing and JMC’s density is increasing which highlighted that urbanization is influencing more day by day.

Need of transforming Jaipur as an ‘Age-Friendly City’

At present population of elderly in Jaipur is 7.5% of its total population (census 2011). The demographic shift has been witnessed with low fertility and mortality rate along with trend of living longer to in Jaipur. The growing dependency ratio is an alarming situation in Jaipur and also highlighting the need of framing an exclusive framework for an ‘Age-Friendly City’.

However, Jaipur city has not yet come in the category of poor elderly care support but according to the responses received during the present research regarding process of urbanization and problems of elderly in Jaipur city will be soon falling in this category.

Thus, it is high time to explore all possibilities to develop ‘Age-friendly city’ model all over. Priority for major shift in action plan taken for ‘Age-friendly’ infrastructural change is very essential. As it is evident from the above Figure 2 that the trend of worldwide population indicates less importance to the issue of covering elderly population under social and state security scanner by India.

While discussing ‘Age-Friendly’ initiatives, ageing issues and responses in India, Biju Mathew (2020) highlighted the similar study on Kerela, which emphasizes on “developing informed frameworks and models for transforming Kerala to an ‘age-friendly’ state as a pilot ‘age-friendly’ initiative in India. Kerala is fast ageing with a greying population and increasing demands on the fiscal, health and social security mechanisms. Institutionalization of state government schemes/projects takes its own time. It may be noted that the ‘age-friendly’ initiatives will lead to action to be taken in grass-roots level for senior citizens through day centres. Ultimately, the day centres will be converted into Age care Service Centres of Government where all actions related to senior citizens will be coordinated by the people, of the people, for the people (ESHGs in rural and SCAs in urban will lead the action). ‘Age-friendly’ initiatives will do ground-breaking work into making ‘ageing’ a wonderfully productive period of life.”

Prospects and criteria for agenda of ‘Age-Friendly City’

Ming-Ming Lai, Shi-Ying Lein, Siok-Hwa Lau, and Ming-Ling Lai (2016) empirically tested eight key features of WHO guidelines to ‘Age-friendly city’. It was found that “the transportation and housing domain is perceived as the most important feature in building an ‘Age-friendly’ environment is outdoor spaces and buildings play an important role in the adaptability of adults in their living environment. The community support and health services domain is perceived as another significant ‘age-friendly’ feature.” It is evident that the concept of ‘Age-Friendly’ city

is new to India. Even it is identified that smart cities are lacking in achieving its indicators.

“The qualitative exploration of an age-friendly environment was undertaken by D. Alley, P. Liebig, J. Pynoos, T. Banerjee, and I. H. Choi, (2007) using the Delphi method to solicit opinions from 15 professionals in the areas of gerontology, township planning, and development. The result reveals that accessible and inexpensive transportation, housing, healthcare, safety, and prospective social involvement are the criteria for an ‘Age-friendly’ environment.”

Data collected in present research while exploring qualitative understanding of the way ahead from twelve categories of professionals’ i.e. Administrators, Academicians, Policymakers, Urban planners, Gerontologists, Economists, Political scientists, Architects, Social Activists, Law Professionals, Psychologist, Geriatrics, Media experts were approached. The identified key components for ‘Age-Friendly city’ are of two categories:

1. ‘Required’, 2. ‘Desired’.

Here, category 1. ‘Required’ addresses to essential and must have aspects and category 2 ‘Desired’ components cover desirable and good to have aspects while planning for ‘Age-friendly city’ development.

Table 3:

Model for deciding components and criteria for framework of ‘Age-Friendly City’***

Categories of key components for framework of ‘Age-Friendly City’	Criteria
I. Required Components <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Age-friendly’ plan with them not just for them • Regular Assessment Programme • Health Care System: quick medical assistance • ‘Age-friendly’ infrastructural development • Accessible Transport • Housing ramps • Lift/Walking path • Especial road crossings etc. • ‘Age-Friendly’ Parks, Walking Tracks • Creation centres like multi-talented homes for all ages • Multiple interface virtual database for all age to enhance their skills • Citizen friendly administration • Reservation Criterion and health facilities • Elderly Dedicated kiosks, e-mitra and help centres for elderly • Community and Health Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digitalization of governance for easy accessibility of services • Separate Ministry for Elderly • Elderly care as separate entity • Effective implementation and governing policies regarding • ‘Life with Dignity’ Measures • Well-equipped elderly care home services • Health Insurance and financial support • Fulfilment of basic needs of elderly peoples • Safety • Training on preventive dimension of healthcare for people aged 40-60 • Geriatric Wards and Geriatric medical care • Digital Literacy Programmes

- 2. Desirable Components**
- Employment opportunities for elderly people
 - Life-long learning capacity development for elderly
 - Self-actualization course
 - Life management skill training
 - Proper counselling Nutrition and care
 - Help Line for Elder Abuse Awareness
 - Rules and guidelines for Government Offices for decrease wait time for seniors.
 - 'Age-friendly' social and family environment
 - Social gathering spaces
 - Pollution free hygienic environment
 - Psycho Therapy Centres
 - Recreation club
 - Rules and guidelines for Government Offices for decrease wait time for seniors
 - Self Help Modules for emergency
 - Civic participation and Employment
 - Mobile Health Units

*** (Model is based on the responses received during research on question ‘What are the key components of an ‘Age Friendly City’?)

The risk in rapidly drop in happiness index of elderly and their living arrangements along with increase of avoidance, disease and disability has become a major concern and risk in process of urbanization. Various models have been developed in order to improve the passive ageing and care giving facilities.

This has some vital concerns ranging from sustained participation in social and productive activities to standard of living and Rights of senior citizens. Hence, Model presented as in Table 3 can certainly grab the attention of urban planner and policy makers.

International reports and studies show that the phenomena of ‘age-friendly city’ is grabbing attention of urban planners. Study by Kelly G. Fitzgerald MPA & Francis G. Caro (2014) have also highlighted that “Population Ageing and increased urbanization have challenged governments and other civic organization to consider how best to develop a community that is accessible for all of its inhabitants.”

Vision of an Age Friendly City to Address & Evaluate Elderly Problem

The responses received from professionals on vision of an ‘Age-Friendly City’ to address and evaluate elderly problem indicated that, in present urban set up of Jaipur it is a high time to have proper policy and its implementation.

Multiple responses received and 61 % of respondents acknowledged that better plan for aging with access to basic amenities and availability of modern infrastructure should be made available on priority basis. 58.3% strongly agrees that awareness and encouragement for active ageing is a must. However with higher concentrations 47.2 percent professionals proposed that with advancement in capacity building, techno friendly training for elderly along with an increase in numbers of elderly care centres are highly needed.

India being a vast country with diversity, faces the problems of elderly at different level in urban and rural set-up. As greying years were considered as boon for the society, but become ban and disturbing years in recent years. What would be the reason for increase in challenge for elderly worldwide?

In order to deal with this scenario, changes in vision regarding ‘Age-Friendly City’ the social setup and ‘political

will’ is must. The responses received from 61 percent of practitioners and professionals involved in elderly care, where majority of them raised the need of access to basic amenities and modern infrastructure is crucial. Awareness and encouraging active ageing environment, capacity building, techno-friendly training were also the preferences made by many respondents in order to shift vision and approach to deal with emotional, physical and financial insecurity in the years to come.

Figure 4 : Source of Smart Infrastructural support to address problems of Elderly

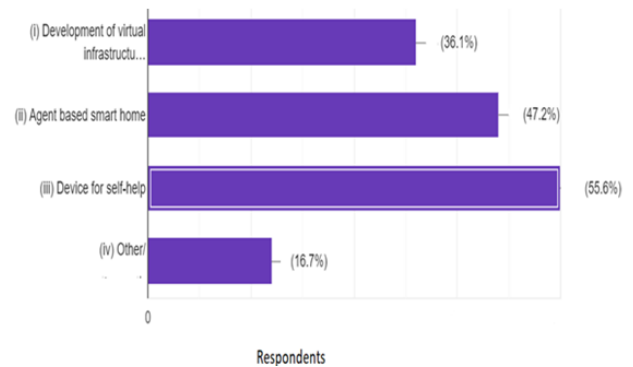
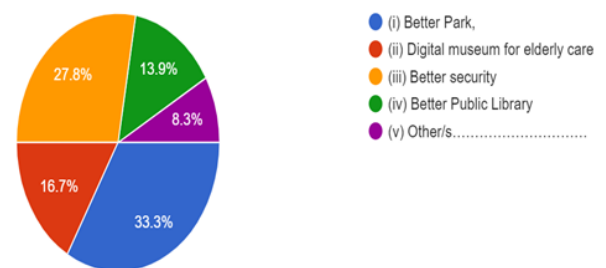


Figure 4 showcase the responses regarding infrastructural support for elderly care in urban set up and highlighted the need of device for self-help at large with and agent based smart homes. In order to receive emergency care around 36.1 percent of respondents were of the opinion that the development of virtual infrastructure may help the elderly effectively.

Although multiple answers to this question specifies that more comfortable and promising support to elderly may be provided by using all the suggested options with some more as suggested in Table - 4.

Figure 5 : Essential Facilities for Spending Leisure Time of Elderly



Elderly care professionals also responded about the status of leisure time preference. While giving their comments on essential facilities 33.3 per cent they were more concerned about better availability of Parks, 27.8 per cent were opting for better security and digital museum for elderly care. Geriatrics clarify that due to health constrain this section of society generally avoid visiting public libraries.

The trend in above pie chart Figure 5 indicates that the preference is quite high for medicine at home. Out of total professionals, 33.3% of them express positive views on medicine at home. Almost similar responses have been observed which is 27.8% opted for virtual caregivers. Some respondents also mentioned that alert automation and

training for fraud detection are also effective technologies in order to provide elderly care.

Consideration for Policy Makers for Making Jaipur as an ‘Age-Friendly City’

Table -4 Consideration for Policy Makers

S.No.	Particulars
1.	Separate ministry to deal with elderly issues
2.	Smart transportation and safe roads to cater to the need of elderly.
3.	Special allowances to families which maintain the elder person and compulsory health insurance for elderly
4.	Allocation of geriatric hospitals, wards, geriatric specified services at work places, community centres or other hospitals.
5.	Professional volunteer for making informal communication and emergency care
6.	Virtual interaction training for elderly
7.	More expenditure of GDP on elderly
8.	Providing basic amenities and emergency care at door step
9.	Regular health check-ups, Yoga, meditation and exercise centres
10.	Commitment of urban development agencies toward their professional duties
11.	Positive and helping attitude and concern of family and state
12.	Regular improvement in caregiving services and infrastructure
13.	Current awareness regarding law, elderly welfare schemes
14.	Keep on learning technical developments
15.	Separate Counters/Help desk for elderly in hospitals, bank and Govt. Offices.
16.	Step free access to public places
17.	Special pathways at street crossings
18.	Door step delivery of goods and services
19.	Free e-rickshaws for elderly in the city

20.	Reverse Mortgage loan counselling for securing old age income
21.	Public libraries with open discussion forums
22.	‘Age-friendly’ primary health care
23.	Provision for increased pension and maintenance of elderly by state
24.	Cooperation of different ministries to address elderly issues
25.	Voluntary Bureau of elderly
26.	Low floor public conveyance
27.	Dedicated urban space social gathering and public parks
28.	Development of basic amenities
29.	Recreation parks as per elderly needs
30.	Provision for paid and unpaid old age homes
31.	Sensitive open/ semi open / closed public spaces for sharing their skills designed for elderly.
32.	Urban space to facilitate for adaption of newer technology in everyday life
33.	Public platform for training for dedicated caregivers
34.	Safe walking paths, reducing air pollution level with green and clean city agenda
35.	Senior citizen benches in pavement areas
36.	Online and offline counselling centre for learning gaps and ambiguities of law
37.	More equitable future policy framed keeping them in loop
38.	Smart housing facilities for elderly and special homes for elderly who live alone
39.	Centres for positive and active ageing
40.	Monitoring centres for high risk category elderly support

Flux in technology, electronic communication and changing family structure and function in urban area, are forcing the move in the lives of elderly in numerous ways. Shaping ‘age-friendly city’ plans and policy needs a fair link between shift in demographic profile of elderly and infrastructural developments. Urbanization has also increased the dependency ratio of older generation and demand for institutional care of elderly. A response from elderly care providers and other stakeholders of elderly care mechanism and ‘Age-friendly city’ planners has been carefully collected in the present research. Based on the responses collected during the research it was easier to know about the recent developments and needs of elderly care in order to frame the prospects for ‘Age-friendly city’ and further policies accordingly.

In this regard Dr. S. Sampath Kumar Professor & Head, Dept of Sociology & Population Studies, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore delivered an online lecture on July, 09, 2020 on ‘Demography of Ageing’ and insisted to the future generation researchers that their consideration towards understanding social context of elderly should be on priority. The future study should focus upon implementation part of ‘The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 and The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens (Amendment) Bill, 2019. He also spoke about aspects of efficient care giving, physical assistance, emotional assistance, financial assistance, and intellectual assistance to elderly will certainly address the challenges of older persons. In the human society, ageing is considered as a process and elderly issues are to be seen in the light of social phenomenon rather than physiological, as ageing is always understood in the background of social setting. A deeper understanding of ageing in the present day

society needs the review of ageing as a process at the individual level and at the societal level. Aging takes place within a social context which exerts various constraints upon the individual

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