

Employment Status of the Elderly Referring to the Social Security Organization of Tehran

Mohammad Taghi Joghataei (PhD)

Professor of Neuroscience - Iran University of Medical Sciences

Ali Reza Kaldi (PhD)

Associate Professor, University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences (USWRS)

Abstract:

The aim of this study was to examine the employment status of the elderly over 60.

A survey was carried out on the employment status of the elderly referring to the Social Security Organization in Tehran. A Questionnaire along with interview was used for data collection. The samples were chosen randomly and selected through the people referring to 30 social security offices in Tehran, 15 people from each office and totally 450. To analyse the data, descriptive statistics and Chi-square test were applied.

Based on the results, 86 percent of the elderly are unofficially employed. Also, 95.7 percent of the questioned people are working after retirement and 7.2 percent have two jobs at the same time. 70.9 percent declared that their income is not sufficient for life expenses. 97.4 percent said that they are employed contract-based and temporary. 58.2 percent of them assumed that their main present problem is inability to cover the life expenses.

Therefore, different needs of the

elderly should be studied to improve their living status by providing them necessary support. This subject can be implemented under social policy Plan and through compiling a comprehensive welfare act for the elderly and providing proper services adapted to their needs.

Key words:

The elderly, Employment, Social Security, Social Policy, Rehabilitation.

Introduction:

The survey intends to study the elderly employment status in Tehran. According to the statistics, over 60 elderly population has become 3.36 times more between 1956 to 1996 (Shokri 1994; Khalil Akhlaghi 2001). However, employed manpower became 2.47 times more totally. To some extent, this increase affects over 60 elderly. After retirement, this population tries to find another job opportunity for living expenses. The research shows the elderly status and describe employment situation of the elderly groups.

On the other side, number of the elderly 60-over year old was increased from 5.25% to 6.64% comparing to the whole population

of the country during 1976 and 1996. In other word, population of over 60-was 11.8 percent compared to the whole manpower in 1996, and population 65-over year old was 7.70 percent comparing to the whole manpower in the same year (Joghataie, Asadi and Mohammad 1999).

60-over year old employed people were 1,250,000 persons in 1996 and 65-over year old employed were 705,000 persons at the same time (Seyfolahi 1996). 60-65 employed population comparing to 65-70 year old was 27.1 percent higher. From the whole 60-over year old population, 91.6 percent are employed and 8.4 percent are unemployed. Out of this number, 91.8 percent are male and 93.5 percent are female who work comparing to 8.2 percent male and 6.5 percent female who do not work (Siyam 2001).

Among the inactive elderly population, about 98.3 percent are housewife women and 1.7 percent men at home, 30 percent of the elderly have income without working. There are 5.72 percent elderly men with income without working, comparing 37.5 percent elderly women with income without working (Tavassoli 2000).

Most of the over 60 elderlies are self employe. About 97 percent of the male elderly and 3 percent of the female elderly do not receive any wage for their activities. 16 percent of the 60-over years old were employed by private sector in 1996 (Ebrahimi 1996). This shows that people will be engaged in the private sector after retirement. So,

because of their activities after retirement, they have physical, social and mental problems that should be Considered (Kaldi 2003;2004).

There is a significant difference between men and women in terms of employment in private sector. 90 percent of the men are working in the private sector while about 82 percent of the elderly women are employed in private sector. Despite this, concerns continue to be expressed over the employment status of the elderly.

The purpose of the present study was to find out the employment status of the elderly over 60 years old in Tehran. Furthermore, to study the situation of those elderly who have income problem and the existing support for them.

Theoretical Perspective:

Looking after the manpower means the measures that are taken during working and unemployment time from the work force. This measure can be taken through widening the insurance facilities such as medical care, pension and unemployment insurance. This is quoted from the scientists like Harbins, Core, Dunlop and Myres, which is declared under human resource economy (Roozbehan 1995). Lack of attention to manpower which is the human asset of each country, can cause a huge economy loss (Hooyman 2002).

We can point out to the assurance and unity in retirement views. but the considerable point about the relation between general economy and social systems is the employ-

ment policy with the retirement subject (Morgan 2001). Therefore, in the countries that there is a possibility for the workers to be employed in private sector or to work independently, employees try to get retired earlier and sometimes with the record of less than 30 or 40 years, even with a lower pension in order to work in other place. However, in the country with less work possibility, workers try to increase their seniority to have a higher pension (Etezad-Pour 1995). Sometimes, early retirement is approved as a national policy in order to create job opportunities for the unemployed people that leave a heavy expense for the social security (Maltby 2004). Nevertheless, retired people have to work in other workplaces for various reasons.

There are different ways in the countries to face with retirement problems regarding to the social, economic and cultural circumstances (Taleb 2000). They combine a few theories or decrease the crisis to find alternatives for the retirement issues. One of the solutions is to increase age of retirement. In some industrial countries, the elderly cannot be retired until 70 years old. It has many advantages and it causes the elderly feel useful (Lenartson 2001). but considering south countries, it cannot be applied everywhere (Goodman 1998).

Of course, regarding unemployment rate in Iran, speaking about upgrading age of retirement needs a fundamental study. It is obvious that retirement for the people like university professors only because of

reaching 60 years old is not appropriate (Sam-Aram 1997).

Another way is to meet the least needs for the retirement. In this approach, a person that spent his/her life for the country, must have the minimum basic needs covered and society should provide him the required facilities, regardless whether he himself could meet his needs. Expanding general insurance is an effective solution.

Situation analysts believe that by giving the roles to the elderly, even small, we try to avoid disorders or delay them and try to prevent lack of mobility, loneliness and weakness to confront with the elderly and retirement crisis.

Furthermore, based on the social support theory, new roles should be replaced the former ones. The roles are useful if they are accompanied by the incomes, even small. According to this theory, the society provides a series of the specific jobs for the elderly and retired people and the salary would be paid just for the social support purpose not for the efficiency. Medical profession, moreover, approves replacing sport, artistic, political and social activities along with mental activities considering the special physiology of the elderly. Balanced nutrition, adequate sleep and mental health are the required factors to have a social support from the elderly and retired people (Shajari 1994).

Financial activity view focuses on the financial status of the elderly and it suggests that the real crisis for the elderly is the time that they are considered as an unemployed person

after retirement, especially if the elderly is incapable physically. The theory emphasizes that the elderly should be in a good financial situation and suggests the people to save some money while working for their retirement period, and they should not rely on to the pension and social security allowances. It also proposes to the government to deduct a sum from the salary of the employees and keeps it in a special investment account for the retirement time and even the government can use it, in case of need, providing to replace the sum.

Based on the monitoring view, specific jobs can be delegated to the elderly considering their physical capability that helps them to retain the health.

This survey has benefited from the above mentioned theories.

Method

The objective of this investigation is to evaluate evidence supporting this survey. For the present study, a survey was carried out on the employment status of the elderly referring to the Social Security Organization in Tehran. As it is not always possible to collect and study the whole society's opinion, scientific field survey can be feasible.

For the research, statistical society was limited to the elderly from Tehran who has been retired between 1996 till 2003. Since retirement problems and retired people demands are common and similar in different cities of the country, the results of this survey can be generalized to all of the retired population in

Iran.

Population in this survey is the employed elderly in Tehran. All the retired men on pension that are receiving benefits from the Social Security Organization, from 1996 to 2003 are selected as the statistical society of the survey. The reason to choose the years between 1996 and 2003, is to get information on the latest group who has been retired according to the current regulations.

To determine the sample (number and type), a preliminary survey was performed in Spring 2004 from 20 retired people randomly. The sample volume was selected based on the existing diversion in the target group.

Accordingly, the number of the sample was 450 people that were divided between the social security branches in Tehran.

To determine samples in each office of the social security (30 branches in Tehran), at first, number of samples was determined comparing to each year and considering the retired people from 1996 to 2003.

Then, the questionnaires were prepared and distributed among the retired people with 10 percent extra. The questionnaires were filled in a face to face interview from the pre-determined samples.

There were 85 close questions and one open question. Close questions were chosen as the main questions of the survey. The data was analysed using SPSS program.

Results

In this study, the questions concerning the characteristics of the

elderly such as age, education, number of children, living status and head of family status, as well as the question regarding their employment status is examined.

As table 1 shows, 35.3 percent of the samples in 66-70 years old group are unofficially employed, 30.1 percent in 60-65 years old group have a job after retirement, 19.9 percent in 71-75 years old group are unofficially employed.

29 percent of the interviewees in 60-65 years old group declared that their income is not sufficient in terms of the life expenses. 28.6 percent in 66-70 years old group have chosen this option, 12.3 percent in 71-75 years old, however, 1.3 percent of the interviewees above 75 years old have chosen this option. In total, 71.2 percent of the interviewees declared that their income does not cover their expenses.

18.5 percent of the interviewees in 60-65 years old have a full time job, 19.4 percent in 66-70 years old, 11.8 percent in 71-75 years old and 0.9 percent in above 75 years old have a part time job.

About the present recruitment situation of the interviewees, 29 percent in 60-65 years old have a contract based job, 4.5 percent have temporary contract and 0.4 percent in this age range have a permanent contract. In total, 77.7 percent of the interviewees have a contract - based job, 20.1 percent have temporary and only 2.2 percent have permanent contract.

Totally, 58.5 percent of the interviewees declared their most essential problem is inability earning their life,

19.4 percent lack of family and society attention, 14.5 percent lack of possibility to offer their experience and 7.6 percent physical and mental disability.

7.4 percent of the interviewees who has unofficial job are illiterate, 9.8 percent can read and write, 17 percent passed primary level, 29.9 percent have under high school education diploma, 10 percent hold diploma, 7.4 percent are post graduated, only 1.3 percent have official job and academic education.

Job satisfaction for the interviewees with under diploma respectively was: 0.2 percent excellent, 11.4 percent good, 14.3 percent medium, 7.6 percent a little, 0.7 percent poor.

31.7 percent of the interviewees with 4 or more children have contract based job, 27 percent have 3 children, 14.3 percent have two children, 2.5 percent have one child, 2.2 percent have no children.

28.1 percent with four or more children, not earning the life is their main present problem, 4.9 percent physical and mental inability, 3.6 percent lack of family and society attention and 3.1 percent lack of possibility to offer their experience was considered as their main present problem.

35.3 percent of the interviewees that live with their spouses, are unofficial employed, 31 percent with spouse and single children, 6 percent with married children, 8 percent alone, 5.8 percent with spouse and married children and 0.2 percent live with relatives are unofficially employed.

23.4 percent of the interviewees

that live with their spouse consider their main problem as not earning their life, 2.2% physical and mental inability, 6.5% lack of family and society attention and 8.5% lack of possibility to offer their experience were considered as the most essential problem.

Based on the results of table1, 8.3 percent of the interviewees who are officially employed, are head of the family, while, 5.4 percent of them are not. Furthermore, 72.7 percent of unofficially employed, are head of family while 13.6 percent are not head of the family.

Only 15 percent of the head of the family declared that they earn their life, however, 66 percent of them gave a negative answer to this question. Moreover, those who are not head of the family, 13.6 percent can earn their life, but 5.4 percent of them cannot earn their life.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the employment status of the elderly in Tehran. In this survey, 86 percent of the interviewees were unofficially employed, while 13.6 percent had an official job. Also, 57.8 percent of the interviewees got retired earlier than the due time and 35.2 percent of them got retired on time. 4.4 percent of them were re-invited to work and 2.2 percent retain their occupation after retirement age. 95.7 percent of the interviewees were working after retirement and 7.2 percent of them have two jobs at the same time. It should be mentioned that 70.9 percent of the interviewees declared

that their income was not sufficient for the life expenses. 97.4 percent of them were working on contract based and temporary. Concerning co-workers' acceptance on the elderly employment, 4.4 percent of them declared "very unsatisfied", 37.6 percent "unsatisfied", 39.6 percent "not satisfied nor unsatisfied", 16.4 percent "satisfied", 1.6 percent "very satisfied". In reply to the question "in the workplace everybody was treated the same regardless his age", 32.4 percent of the interviewees have an opposite opinion. In workplace, there are some cases that the colleagues and management do not have a positive attitude toward presence and employment of the elderly and even they consider the elderly as an obstruct for the current activities. This opinion is approved when it was declared in other word "Most of the managers have a respectful behavior toward their aged staff". In reply to the statement, 56.4 percent of the interviewees had an opposite view and only 9 percent were for.

Therefore, it is clear that more than half of the interviewees believe that the management does not have a respectful behavior with its aged staff. For the question "why they continue working in the elderly period", 60.9 percent of them replied, "because they did not earn their life". 57.8 percent of them declared that as pension was their only income which was not enough to pay the life expenses, they worked to earn their life.

Therefore, 58.2 percent of the interviewees believe their main problem was not earning their life and

more than one fourth of them considered their worry for the future not having sufficient income.

In 60-65 years old, 30.1 percent of the interviewees are unofficially employed, for 66-70 years old 35.3 percent and for 71-75 years old 19.9 percent. Additionally, 1.1 percent of the interviewees with above 75 years old were unofficially employed. According to the information, it seems that the elderlies over 60 years old work against their will, as economically they feel insecure and sometimes work pressure threatens their health, as one third of the interviewees declared that their health is in a relatively well status. Furthermore, 60.5 percent of the interviewees believed that employment for the elderly have disadvantages. 29 percent in 60-65 years old, 28.6 percent in 66-70 years old and 12.3 percent in 71-75 years old, declared that their income was not sufficient for the life expenses. Also, 39.3 percent believed that they could earn their life by personal saving, and 27 percent depended on their children assistance.

27.9 percent of the interviewees have diploma or higher degree and they work. 68.4 percent of them have under diploma or less degree. 36.2 percent of them that have four or more children are unofficially employed. 28.1 percent of the interviewees who have three children are unofficially employed. High number of children was the main reason that many elderly people had to do hard jobs, which in turn lead them to physical and mental problems. had

unofficial occupation, were head of family. Moreover, 66 percent of them declared that their income is not sufficient for the life expenses.

During retirement, the normal salary after reducing some certain amount is paid to the retired person. This reduction causes some problems for the retired person. On the one hand, the person faces with retirement issue, on the other hand, decrease of income increases his problems. Finally, he is obliged to get another job. Most of the elderlies faces with major problems in earning their life, hence they try to improve it by getting another job. The result of this study supports other studies (Joghataie, Asadi and Mohammad 1999; Siyam 2001).

Recommendations:

Considering the survey, the following recommendations are offered:

- Although 57.3 percent of the interviewees believed that 60 years old is the proper age for retirement and 25.6 percent said 65 years old and 12.2 percent believed 70 years old, it seems that to determine the proper age for retirement other elements can be considered such as type of physical and mental activities as well as the average life age and other appropriate factors for working, delay in decreasing income during retirement and avoiding re-employment.

- Determining average payment and benefits of the last two years of work as a base to pay the retirement, causes a decrease in their income. Therefore, they are obliged to be re-employed against their will.

It is suggested to review the regulations of pension payments while trying to prevent deduction from the elderly salary.

- To increase pension payment considering inflation rates to remove the big gap of their income with the life expenses.

- Creating retirement saving account and insurances that can be helpful to compensate decreases of income of the elderly.

- To perform training programs for people on health, family planning and birth control, population growth rate will be decreased that leads to more welfare and less economic pressure and getting rid of employment in the ageing period.

- Although working in higher age can be obligatory and lower jobs can be offered to the elderly, by having a correct planning, occupation guidance, and rehabilitation can satisfy many of the elderlies.

- To invite the retired people to work in proper occupation like for consulting the management, it can guarantee benefiting their high experience in the society.

- To create appropriate organization that can assess the retired people abilities and recruit them according to the employers' need. These organizations can be hold under retired union who are ready to work. They can built up an effective relationship with legislative and executive powers and benefit from facilities such as: insurance, assistance, credit card, special deductions, medical service for the elderly, cheap drugs, consulting and training service, recruitment and employment,

fulfilling the leisure time for the elderly.

- To reinforce the national secretarial committee of the elderly in order to draw more attention and assistance for employment and decreasing the poverty especially among the female elderly.

- Providing required equipment, loan, financial assistance, medical expenses and medical care via benefiting from supplementary medical insurance, creating elderly data bank for recruitment, benefiting the employed elderly from specific facilities to use public places like cinema, theater, other recreation centers, recognizing and presenting the talented elderly who has got considerable success in order to encourage the youth as a proper pattern of life can be very valuable. Therefore, it should be noted that the elderly needs should be studied in a wider term to ensure reaching to a suitable condition of life. This subject can be implemented in a social policy plan by compiling comprehensive acts for the elderly welfare via rendering proper services that is adapted to their requirements.

References:

Ebrahimi, M.H. 1996. Insurance and Social Security. Kavir Publications, Tehran.

Etehad-Pour, N. and Rajabi-Rad, F. 1995. Social Security in Iran. Zohal Publications, Tehran.

Goodman R. 1998. East Asian Welfare Model, Translated into Farsi by Kaldi, A.R. University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences, Tehran.

- Hooyman N.R. 2002. *Social Gerontology*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Joghataie, M.T., Asadi M.H. and Mohammad, K. 1999. Present situation of the elderly in Iran, *Hakim*, 2, 23-9.
- Kaldi A.R. 2003. *Sociology of Ageing*. University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences, Tehran.
- Kaldi A.R. 2004. Physical, social and mental problems of the elderly in district 13 of Tehran. *Age and Ageing*, 33, 3, 322.
- Khaligh Akhlaghi, P. 2001. *Problems of Social Security System in Iran*. MA Thesis, University of Allameh Tabatabaie, Tehran.
- Lenartson, C. and Silverstein, M. 2001. Does engagement with life enhance survival of elderly people in Sweden? the role of social and leisure activities, *Gerontology Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*. 56,6, 335-342.
- Maltby T. 2004. *Ageing and the transitional to retirement: A Comparative Analysis of European Welfare States*. Ashgate.
- Morgan, L. 2001. *Ageing: The Social Context*. Pine Forge.
- Pamplé, F. 1998. *Ageing, Social Inequality and Public Policy*. Pine Forge.
- Roosbehan, M. 1995. *Principles of Economic Development*. Taban Publications, Tehran.
- Sam-Aram, E. 1997. *The Present Situation of Elderly People in Tehran*. Research and Planning Centre of Tehran.
- Seifollahi, S. 1996. *Socio-Economic Status of Retired Members of Social Security Organization in Tehran*. Almizan Publications, Tehran.
- Shajari, Z. 1994. *Health Problems of the Elderly People*. Jahad Publications, Tehran.
- Shokri, A. 1994. *Economic Evaluation of Funds of Retired persons in Tehran*. Zohal publications, Tehran.
- Siyam, S. 2001. Economic status of the elderly. *World Health*, 5, 13-20.
- Taleb, M. 2000. *Social Security*. Razavi Publications, Mashad.
- Tavassoli, G.A. 2000. *Sociology of Work and Occupation*. SAMT Publications, Tehran.



Table 1: Distribution of age and employment status

Employment status	official employed	unofficial employed	Total
(percentage) Age			
60-65	3.4	30.1	33.9
66-70	4.7	35.3	40
71-75	4.7	19.9	24.6
75+	0.4	1.1	1.5
Total	13.6	86.4	100

Table 2: Distribution of education and satisfaction of the present occupation

Occupation	excellent	good	medium	a little	poor	Total
Satisfaction/						
Education						
Illiterate	-	1.8	4	1.3	0.4	7.6
Reading and writing	-	1.6	5.8	2.5	0.4	10.3
Primary	-	6.3	6.9	4.5	0.7	18.3
Under diploma	0.2	11.4	14.3	7.6	0.73	4.2
Diploma	0.4	10.7	5.8	-	0.2	17.2
Postgraduate	1.1	6.7	2.7	0.2	0.4	11.2
Bachelor and higher	0.9	0.4	-	-	-	1.3
Total	2.7	38.8	-	39.5	16.1	2.9
$X^2=178.24$	$df=24$					$P<0.001$



Table 3: Distribution of number of children and present retirement situation

Present retirement/	permanent	temporary	contract based	Total
No. of children				
without child	-	1.1	2.2	3.3
One child	0.4	1.1	2.5	4
Two children	1.1	3.3	14.3	18.8
Three children	0.2	6.9	27	34.2
Four and more children	0.4	7.6	31.7	39.7
Total	2.2	20.1	77.7	100
$X^2=17.75$	$df=8$		$P<0.05$	

Table 4: Distribution of life status and employment situation

Employment / Life	official employed	unofficial employed	Total
Status			
alone	2.9	8	10.9
with spouse	5.4	25.3	40.6
with spouse and single children	2.7	21	33.7
with married children	1.6	6	7.6
with spouse and married children	1.1	5.8	6.9
live with relatives	-	0.2	0.2
Total	12.6	86.4	100
$X^2=12.83$	df=5		P<0.05



Table 5: Distribution of head of family and employment situation

Employment situation/	official employed	unofficial employed	Total
Head of family			
yes	8.2	72.7	81
no	5.4	13.6	19
Total	13.6	86.3	100
$X^2=18.95$	df=1		P<0.001

