

## **Social Support and Social Security of Elderly Population in Sri Lanka**

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### **Abstract**

*Elderly Population in Sri Lanka is increasing rapidly with the decline of fertility and mortality rate which will become one of the most critical challenges in the future. The main objective of this study is to examine the role of the government, private sector and the volunteer organizations and its adequacy regarding socio-economic security of the increasing rate of elderly population in Sri Lanka. While using secondary data for the study, descriptive analysis method was adapted to analyze the data. It was revealed that from recently, governmental and non-governmental organizations of Sri Lanka are launching various programs for the welfare of the elderly population in the country. Although non-governmental organizations like 'Help age' are carrying out valuable services for the welfare of the elderly population; it is not adequate for the increasing rate of elderly population as expected in the future. While there is a tendency of an increase in the Pension payments of retired government servants, present government pension scheme and the provident fund scheme of the private sector are not sufficient to meet the demand of the rapidly increasing percentage of elders in Sri Lanka. Although a small percentage of lower class elders are in receipt of social security benefits, it is not adequate even to meet the expenses of their daily food requirements. On the other hand, even the government pensioners are facing difficulties with the increasing rate of cost of living.*

**Keywords:** Social support, social security, elderly population, government, non-government

### **Introduction**

Population ageing is a phenomenon that was subjected to much consideration in the world. Especially, ageing of population in developing countries occurs much speedily than in developed countries. Sri Lanka is regarded as one of the developing countries among many, where ageing of population takes place rapidly. It is anticipated that the aged population in Sri Lanka would be 22% by the year 2030. With the instance of rapid increase in the ageing population, there will be a vast decline of the younger generation who are supposed to take care of the elderly population. Traditional responsibility of caring for and administering protection by family members, seem to be slackening gradually owing to economical and social changes caused by way of migration, urbanization and the increased contribution by women workforce locally and abroad (De Silva, Boyagoda and Ranagalage, 2008).

The question that arises when people are getting old is that as to what type of economical and social protection should be given to them. It could be seen that various countries adapt different steps to provide necessary requirements when ageing of the population increases. Especially, developed countries in the world have to spend a large amount of financial provisions for numerous programs launched for the purpose of social security of ageing population. This is also a typical feature that could be seen in developing countries in the world. The reason for this situation is that in any country, in the course of development; social development is also expected concurrently because welfare and economic backing has to be extended towards the dependents. Therefore, the governments of the world have to bear a compulsory cost in the course of procurement of policies for the aged population.

When considering about Sri Lanka, although the security activities provided for elderly population by the government is minimal, free health services, education, pension scheme and other reliefs and concessions have to be regarded as an important assistance granted by the government. But some of these concessions are not directly targeted for elderly people which are a weakness that will make room for the need of planning a program directly aimed at the welfare of rapidly increasing elderly population.