**Ageing**

*“Age is an issue of mind over matter.*

*If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”*

*– Mark Twain*

1. **Overview**

* The main development of ageing issues
* Demographic patterns. By 2030, one-third of Singapore’s population will be aged 65 years and older.
* Economic, social and political impacts
* Personal and psychological impact
* Conflicting views about this social development
* According to Singapore Home Nursing, the percentile of elderly persons aged 65 years and above is estimated to increase from 7.0% of the population in 1997 to 18.4% by 2030.
* Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong are some of the countries facing this social development of a graying society. Singapore is one of the fastest ageing populations in the world.

1. **Impacts of Ageing**

Economic

* Health cost
* Undermine productive labour force
* Smaller affluence consumer have seen in terms of lower expenditures
* Manpower shortage
* Greater burden on working class (e.g. higher taxes) - switch taxes from direct to indirect (GST)
* Greater health expenditure costs incurred (e.g. hospital visits) together with weaker employment opportunities for elderly will lead to financial burden

Social

* Challenging to maintain social status quo – role of the seniors – (vulnerable, socially diminished in terms of contribution)
* Shape social values – Knowledge-based economy 🡪 New ideas – confronting and challenging for the elderly
* Challenge to traditional social values – it is technologically -defined society with modern values that revolutionized the mindset of the society

Political

* More younger voters who are concerned of political impact on the ageing population – employment issue, way of life (consumerism vs thrifty values), resource allocation
* Conflicting interests between the youths and elderly

Personal lifestyle

* Adjust to fast-paced society – technological development
* High degree of competition – more competition from skillful workers
* Globalization – from foreign values and competition from other countries

psychological impact

* socially deprived and excluded – social enclaves – a separated group from the society (disenfranchised segment)
* anxiety and stressful environment
* isolation, anti-social behaviour and mental illness

1. **Problems of the Ageing Issue in Singapore**

* Rising cost of expenditure on healthcare
* Ageing population will contribute to increasing dependency ratio

(economics, health support)

* Greater stress on the allocation of resources between the youths and the elderly (economic and social aspect)
* Decline in the health of the workers due to aging will contribute to a fall in productivity
* Undermining social cohesion due to shift in the norms and values

(traditional cusine, new values (LGBT, religious values, cohabitation, YOLO vs family values, traditional marriages) – manner of social interaction

* Greater family and social tension as family members are facing more care-giving issues in a more demanding modern society

Build more community care centre for the elderly or organize more events for the youths (Youth Oylmpics)

* Complex political development as governmental institutions struggle to cater to the interests of both the youth and the elderly

1. **How do countries cope with the ageing issue?**

Economic Policies

* Ensuring elderly workers stay employed by extending age of retirement
* Financial planning. *E.g. CPF Scheme*
* Skills Future Plan – constantly upgrade the skills of the senior workers
* Holistic education development – can work for a loner time span – adjust to change in technology

Institutional & Infrastructural Policies

* Senior citizens corner for recreational activities
* More elderly-friendly infrastructures and facilities to facilitate social interaction- IT Silver Academy – help the elderly to adjust to digital lifestyle
* Provide more healthcare support with the set of community hospitals and clinics

Social Policies

* Raise the status and identity of senior citizens through campaigns which recognize the contributions of the elderly – Senior Citizens Award / Senior Citizens Week by MCYS
* More support programmes developed by senior community group to help frail elderly – Singapore Programme for the Integrated Care for the Elderly (SPICE) by AIC (Agency for Integrated Care)
* Integrated programmes to help elderly to upgrade their skills to adapt to an IT-inclined and fast-paced modern society