

Old Age Home: The Biggest Concern of Human Relation

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ABSTRACT

The increasing global population of elderly individuals has heightened the significance of old age homes as critical environments for supporting the well-being of seniors. This research explores the intricate dynamics of human relations within old age homes, emphasizing the paramount concerns impacting the quality of life (QoL) of residents. The study investigates key factors such as physical environment, social activities, personal autonomy, healthcare access, loneliness, staffing, cultural sensitivity, family dynamics, and the transition process. Through a comprehensive literature review and mixed-methods research design, this paper aims to identify and address the primary challenges faced by elderly residents in old age homes. Findings indicate that a supportive physical environment, active social engagement, respect for personal autonomy, and accessible healthcare services are essential for enhancing QoL. Moreover, addressing loneliness through social support programs, improving staff training, and fostering cultural inclusivity are critical for residents' well-being. Family involvement and a well-managed transition process further contribute to positive resident experiences. Policy implications include advocating for enhanced staffing ratios, culturally sensitive practices, and improved healthcare provisions. This study underscores the importance of a holistic approach to elder care that prioritizes human relations, thereby ensuring that old age homes provide a dignified and fulfilling living experience for elderly residents. Future research should focus on developing and implementing evidence-based interventions to further improve the QoL in these settings. This paper contributes to the ongoing discourse on elder care, highlighting the need for systemic changes to address the complex needs of an aging population.

Keywords: Elder care dynamics, old age homes, human relations, quality of life, healthcare access, cultural sensitivity, loneliness, family dynamics, policy implications, Institutionalized aging, Social isolation ramifications, Geriatric well-being, Cultural inclusivity challenges, Staffing impact.

INTRODUCTION

The demographic landscape of the world is undergoing a profound transformation as the proportion of elderly individuals in the population steadily increases. This demographic shift can provide and pose various challenges as well as opportunities for the new generation for millennials worldwide the development of appropriate care formation to make sure that the elderly people all over the world must live with their full dignity, health, well-being along with the respect they deserve. The result of this demographic change in world can be seen by the dependency of the peoples on the old age homes. Shift in family structures, urbanization, and evolving social standards have vanished the elderly care in the modern family this can be seen in most of the families in today's time , in many cultures households involving more than one generation is depriving at a vigorous rate . The consequences of this deprivation can be seen through the dependency of the world population on old age homes for the elderly members of their family and many consider it as a solution for many elderly individuals . The reliance of today's generation on the old age homes for the care , assistance , service of the elderly individuals can raise a serious question of the quality of attention and the nature of human relation within these organization .

Human relations play a vital role in enhancing the wellbeing and mood of the elderly residents in old age homes the way of interaction with care providers , family members and the fellow residents notably influence residents mental and psychological health . Researches have shown that strong communal and social connections can reduce feeling of loneliness , reduce the risk of depression , and enhance overall life contentment among senior citizens such empathy and improving human relations within these institutions is essential for promoting the well-being and better quality of living for elderly residents.

DEFINITION AND SCOPE OF OLD AGE HOMES

Old age homes also known as nursing homes , assisted living facilities , or residential care homes, are institution designed to provide housing and care for elderly individuals who may need assistance with daily activities this include medical needs and care , and a simple supportive, happy living environment these needs and requirement are very dynamic in terms of services and assistance these institutions provide along with the level of care provided and their operational models.

There are several types of old age homes, each encountering different needs of individuals :

1. Nursing homes : These kinds of institutes are designed for those elderly individuals that provide high level of medication care including skilled nursing assistance are required for resident having serious health issues and they require daily and continuous medical attention

2. Assisted living facilities : These homes provide assistance for daily activities such as clothing, bathing , dressing and medication management but the disadvantage of these homes is that they do not provide intensive medical care for elderly residents . they are designed for those elderly individuals who can manage themselves but need some help along with a degree of independence
3. Independent living communities : Here the residents or senior citizens are provided with the residential setups where they can live independently but prefer security and social opportunities for a community setting. They often offer amenities like housekeeping , meal services and recreational activities .
4. Continuing care retirement communities : These homes provide residents a continuous chain of care , allowing its residents to move from independent living to assisted living and nursing care as their need change over time .

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN OLD AGE :

More than fourth-fifth (82.77%) of subjects shared the fact that their major problems were related to medical and healthcare. 56.34% elderly respondents claimed that their major old age problems were related to social issues. About one third (34.16%) respondents have been facing problems primarily due to financial issues. Every fifth older person (20.6% elderly respondents) was found to be disturbed primarily due to legal matters and cases pending in various courts. 5.67% elderly said that their major problem in old age were related to other medical , financial , social and legal matters. Out of 5124 older persons who claimed financial problems as their major problem 51.8% older persons were from rural areas while 48.2% were from urban areas. Out of 12415 older persons , who termed medical problems as their most prominent problem , 47.09% were from rural areas 52.91% were from urban areas.

In comparison to rural elderly , urban elderly were suffering from social problems as their share in such problems was 60.15% in comparison to 39.85%. In legal problems ,share of urban elderly was quite high (83.56%) in comparison to rural elderly (16.44%). When data was further analysed, it was found that older men was facing more problems in all categories i.e., medical , social , legal, other, except financial problems were out of 5124 older persons who ranked financial problems as no. 1 , 50.09% (2847) were older women in comparison to 2250 older men. Among 12415 older persons who termed medical problems as their major problems 60.07% were older men against 39.93% older women.

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN ASPECTS OF OLD AGE HOMES :

In modern societies , in contrast to the conventional societies the old aged people are deprived of defined roles and statuses and are poorly integrated into the social structure .the elder members of the family can no longer take it for granted to put their claim on their own children for the support they require and along with the social participation they need and if someone gives any advice to them it would be ignored and considered irrelevant . The major problem of the society is that they have created a stigma for elderly people and what is that ? Well they have considered old age for modern society has youth and even the accepted values of society are those of the young . Modern society has created a way of living that considers only beauty , knowledge and intelligence . In old age many changes take like physical change and biological change this include hardening of arteries and change in bone framework which in result leads elderly persons to same medical problems in thinking . Heart problems , strokes , prostate , lack of mobility , eye diseases , bone fracture , lack of mobility , arthritis and many more . And the consequences of these can be seen through the effect on the individual whether it is psychologically , emotionally or mentally and this can further results in change in the way of their living , deprived health , psychological problems . In most of the country the elderly persons have to face these problems by themselves with the little help from their children and relative. The influence of retirement on the elderly people is enormous as it results in role , power , status , opportunities for interaction , etc. Therefore, retirement at a point defines middle age from old age can lead to low self-esteem , decreased level of contentment , feeling of loneliness and hopelessness.

There are three necessities of elderly individuals and they are as follows health needs , economic needs and socio – emotional needs . If we take a look on the health need so , although we have the best laid out medical system but in this government alone cannot meet the needs . Illness maybe a major calamity for elderly who belongs to a lower level of society and also if he/she lives far away from the hospital or the medical centre . If in case he/she falls ill it would difficult for him/her to reach the hospital without any member of the family who will express his/her inability . Generally, the members of the family in the modern society do not care for the treatment of the elderly members. The main problem is the lack of infrastructure and resources.

There are around 70 million elderly citizen population , and out this half of them are elderly women, almost 55 % of the elderly women are receivers instead of givers it is upsetting that the condition our elderlies are facing.

The major aspect to consider is that the socio-psychological and emotional needs of our elderly followed by various factors like urbanization , liberalization , etc. The joint family system has been broken up . And guess what people don't even care what their elderlies are doing they are happy as being a nuclear family instead of living in a joint family . There has been has significant shift in the family structure since independence but the main thing to notice is that the change is particularly rapid in the last three decades or so . Sadly , this change is not good , it has been come for the worse . Five decades ago, the elderly person in the Indian family was the official head of the whole family he had taken decision , he had to keep everyone together without any conflict and much more . But if we take a look on the condition of elderly in modern families we will observe that they had been demolished from this privileged position . Today in most of the

households the senior most member of the family is treated just like any other member of the family and also without any respect. The senior citizen in such condition has become nothing but a burden on the family think is it okay say all these , no a big no. It can be also seen that the senior members in the most prosperous and well-mannered families feels ignored and rejected . Joint families have diminished and small nuclear families have emerged in which the young couple finds it difficult to keep their elderly members with them . Today's society is more materialistic than the past . The united nation has declared 1999 as the “ international year for older persons” hence we should promise that each one of us shall look after an elderly person . If you don't have an elderly member in your family adopt one in the neighbour . We should remember always that all of us will grow old one fine day.

OLD AGE HOME SYSTEM :

The modern society consider that Old age homes is nowadays is necessary for senior citizens because the younger do not have the time to meet their needs like medical expenses , special food, etc. And most of the people think that old age homes as better place for elderly citizens because they provide mental and physical status and also greater possibility of communal bounding with other residents . In most of the countries elderlies suffer from many problems this includes social, economic, physical and psychological problems. But in today's context younger generation are not performing their duties and also they are ignoring the elder members of the family. The old people think that they are burden on the family which cause them to live a depressed life . Because of this reason many old age homes had established in the past few decades and in this situation old age homes have helped the elderly members to live a healthy and happy life with full safety and security . In old age homes our elders are well treated than from their own homes and they also get an opportunity to live their life to the fullest.

Elders have always been seen as equivalent as gods and the culture of filial piety is one that has been deeply embedded in our culture . Traditionally aging parents live with their adult children .but nowadays old age homes age homes are considered more better and prominent this dynamic world there has been a pattern shift as a consequence of modernization, urbanization an increase in life expectancy due to advancement made in medical science, increased literacy rate and migration of younger generation . Also, today people have much exposure to diverse culture in the world , there is a tendency for most to long for privacy and independence .

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIP OF THE RESPONDENTS

Parents carry a hope that their children will take care of them. However, the process of communal change such as urbanization, migration and industrialization have a bad effect on the care of elderly people. In a recent study it was found that 96.60% of the elderly women get support from their sons and daughters-in-law. The effect of this phenomenon is evident from the weakening of the traditional bond of joint family. The elderly have been the biggest sufferers of this change of values and family system. Many of them feel that the attitude of younger generation towards them has undergone a tremendous change and become less satisfactory. There is a common belief that in old age people tend to become more and more inclined towards religion. To an extent, religion provides a sort of social support in the form of personal contact with other people at religious gatherings with whom they could share their thoughts. It is believed that, 'it is around this social and religious participation that the life of the old revolves. It was observed that 33.3 percent of those living in families reported participation in social and religious ceremonies. They expressed that their interaction to relatives and friends was due to their involvement in the religious functions.

TABLE 1: SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF OAH RESIDENTS

Table-1: Socio-demographic profile of OAH residents

Socio-demographic details		Gender		Total (N=174)
		Male (N=44, 25.3%)	Female (N=130,74.7%)	
Age (Mean: 72.8 yrs)	60-69	14 (19.2%)	59 (80.8%)	73 (41.9%)
	70-79	11(19.6%)	45 (80.4%)	56 (32.2%)
	80 year & above	19 (42.2%)	26 (57.8%)	45 (25.9%)
Education (Mean: 6.6 yrs)	Illiterate	05 (7.9%)	58 (82.1%)	63 (36.2%)
	Up to 8 th	09 (20.9%)	34 (79.1%)	43 (24.7%)
	Up to 12 th	08 (25.8%)	23 (74.2%)	31 (17.8%)
	Graduate and above	22 (59.4%)	15 (40.6%)	37 (21.3%)
Marital	Married Living	14 (8.0%)	22 (12.6%)	36 (20%)

RESULTS

Reasons for Living of Elderly to In Old Age Homes: An Exploratory Study

Status	Alone			
	Married Living together	08 (4.5%)	08 (4.5%)	16 (9.1%)
	Never married	05 (33.3%)	10 (66.7%)	15 (8.6%)
	Widow/widower	15 (15%)	85 (85%)	100 (57.5%)
	Divorced	02 (28.6%)	05 (71.4%)	07 (4.0%)
Occupation	Household work (no productive work for male)	10 (8.1%)	113 (91.9%)	123 (70.7%)
	Pensioner	25 (64.1%)	14 (35.9%)	39 (22.4%)
	Business /others	09 (75%)	03 (25%)	12 (6.9%)

A TOTAL OF 174 OLDER ADULTS PARTICIPATED IN THE STUDY . TABLE 1 PROVIDES THEIR SOCIO DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS

A home where old residents are provided with nursing care and assisted living services based on their needs and concerns is known as a retirement home. These can also be known as old peoples home or old age homes. In India, compared to the well-established traditions of elder care within the family unit, old age home is a relatively new concept. A foundation of Indian society, The traditional family system, has traditionally ensured that aging parents live with their adult children, where they are cared for with respect and reverence. In the Indian system of joint family commitment, elders are seen as the guardians of wisdom and the personifications of cultural and familial values. Deeply embedded in the Indian psyche, is The culture of filial piety has dictated that aging parents live with their adult children, a system that has been both a privilege and a duty. However, this system has been increasingly challenged by the forces of modernization, urbanization, and younger generation longing for privacy, in recent years. Nuclear family units have been recently gaining more traction in India.

Moreover, It is also being seen that slowly but steadily the Indian traditional unit has been yielding to the transition from joint familial living arrangements in favour of which is being propelled by developments such as longer life expectancy brought about due to progress made by medical science, greater literacy rates and a mass movement toward urban locales or even overseas for the younger population seeking respite. As a consequence of being exposed to western cultures and lifestyles the young generation has been infected with independence virus like Americans, so because of these societal changes, old age homes have come up as a rescue plan forcibly rather than acceptably due to problems faced by them. As per this Press Information Bureau (PIB) report, presently there are 502 old age homes in India .As per The Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Every district in India should have a Senior Citizen Home under the Integrated Programme for Older Persons(IPSC) .

The Government of India, 2023 Also under Section 19 (iii) 'The State Governments shall provide and make adequate arrangements for set up sufficient old age homes in locations as they deem necessary to address the needs of destitute senior citizens' Govt. Centre for Social Justice and Empowerment also executing a Central Sector Scheme identified as Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP). For the establishment and maintenance of old age homes, Scheme for financial assistance to recycle of Panchayati Raj, institutions, local bodies, and non-governmental voluntary organizations are being told. A range of services can be provided in these homes whether they be private or public, including in-home care, hourly adult care, hospice care, assisted living, and nursing care. With the aim of providing uncompromised care and attention to the elderly, One of the first charitable old age homes in India was established on 25th April 1918, . The facilities offered include boarding, food, entertainment, recreation, and medical services, all provided free of cost.

The elderly get a new lease on life with these old age houses, it allows them to live with dignity and respect in their twilight years. The rise of old age homes is merely a symptom of this societal change. It has been noticed that the traditional role of family to be at or near centre for elder care is changing. Even though the provision of institutions for elderly people offers one response to the logistical dilemmas confronting many families, questions are raised about family duties and what should be defined as acceptable familial conduct in the Indian society. Lifestyle and working style are somewhat

changed due to The advancement of technology. Students and youth moving out of their places to city for studies, child-welfare people arriving there who's getting job seekers round the clock in order relations are found elsewhere outside traditional family structures.

In addition, the personal need for privacy and individualism have increased due to the exposure to global cultures. Such development has further helped in the normalization of an on-your-own model of living, in which there is not a multiple-person family back in place to participate in care-giving. This trend is particularly more pronounced in the urban areas as compared to the rest of the world. Due to these societal changes, old-age vulnerabilities are now being focused more on by the government. The enactment of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act in 2007 was one such silver lining which showed that at least there are attempts being made to ensure that our elderly persons were given due colour under law so as not to make them feel alien or outcaste within their own family folds. This Act enforces that children should support their elderly parents and also make place for a legal remedy (Government of India, 2007). Still, state to state has different levels of enforcement being enforced. Apart from governmental measures, non – profit organizations (NGOS) are also helpful in providing care to the elderly.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize and value the contributions of the elderly to society . All levels should celebrate The elderly's care and their involvement for encouragement. As the famous saying goes, "To forget the elderly is to , ignore the wisdom of the years." Very vital part of one's house or life are The elderly ; they are the custodians of our cultural heritage. Our shared memory is carried by them, and they are the teachers of real values. Therefore, to ensure that old people are treated with the respect and kindness that they deserve, It is one's duty as a part of society to make sure. This requires a collective effort from individuals, families, communities, and the government. In a nutshell, the need for a balanced approach that combines modern solutions with traditional values is needed with the rise of old age home and elder care homes in India. Hence it is necessary to create a society where not only are the elderly merely tolerated rather they are respected as the key holders of the past and the ones who pave the way for the next generations.

CONCLUSION

The misbehaviour of children and financial crises can significantly impact the emotional well-being of the elderly, leading to feelings of ignorance and neglect. As families face mounting pressures, including economic instability, the elderly often find themselves isolated and undervalued. The lack of emotional support can be particularly challenging for older adults, who may have spent their lives nurturing their families, only to find their needs overlooked in their twilight years. This emotional detachment can compel many seniors to seek alternative living arrangements, as they desire a more supportive environment where they can feel valued and cared for. The shift in societal dynamics has resulted in a growing number of older adults considering Old Age Homes (OAHS) as viable options for a problem-free life, away from the stressors of familial discord and economic hardships.

Increased acceptance of OAHS in the current system calls for an imperative aspect, which is emotional support facilities within those institutions. Physical care is indispensable, but emotional well-being is just as important to enable the elderly to grow and live well. Arranging settings that make it possible to experience friendship, participation, and psychosocial support would do a world of good for the elderly people. Governments and voluntary agencies in India need to exercise efforts in building programs that provide institutional care and support especially designed for older people. This includes hiring professionals that are trained to give counsel, organizing social activities meant to encourage interaction between residents, and ensuring the elderly's emotional needs are met with empathy and respect. Such investment in emotional support facilities will help bridge gaps between elderly people and their families, resulting in an even more inclusive and nurturing environment that pays homage to their dignity and life experiences.

The improvements of emotional support in Old Age Homes will eventually lead to better living conditions among seniors and make up a more empathetic society. With the current pressures facing many families, there is a pressing need to develop systems capable of providing adequate care to the elderly. With acknowledgment of this emotional well-being as an element of the elder-care system, our seniors would live with dignity and surrounded with understanding and empathy. Altering our stance regarding the value that a society provides its elders will bring to the old amongst us a sense of belonging and purpose.