

Extent of satisfaction derived by elderly people about old age homes of Uttarakhand, India

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in two regions of Uttarakhand State *i.e.* Kumaon Haldwani block of Nainital district and Garhwal (Haridwar and Dehradun district). Fifteen elderly people from each selected old age homes, Nirmala (Haldwani block), Geeta Kutir and Vridh Sewa (Haridwar) and Prem Dham (Dehradun) were selected randomly for the study, thus making total sample size of sixty elderly. The sex ratio was 26 males and 34 females. A three-point rating satisfaction scale was developed. This scale concerned to assess satisfaction derived by the inmates residing at old age homes. The scores were interpreted such that higher the score the greater the satisfaction derived by elderly people. The scores earned by elderly people were categorized in three ranges *i.e.* 40-50 low, 51-61 moderate and 62-72 as high levels of satisfaction. Satisfaction scores revealed that the working with ventilator had earned the lowest total score, because the elderly females faced difficulties due to extra height, while daily scheduled activities of the old age home had earned the highest total score. Majority of elderly people were found to be in moderate and high range of satisfaction level, because the old age homes were provided an ambience that could ward off depression and gave them a feeling of purpose and belongingness as the authority immersed them in wholesome and worthwhile activities that fostered a sense of community among their peers. The elderly people belonging to the old age home II though were found to be high risk prone yet they affirmed to be satisfied with the available facilities. In addition, elderly people have stated that they have to be satisfied with the services as they have no choice.

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In India, urbanization and industrialization have brought about major changes in the social structure. The centuries-old joint-family system disintegrated, and with it collapsed the safety net of parents and grandparents. Since the welfare of the elderly has been a low priority with the state, they have nowhere to turn, and are left disillusioned, shattered and lonely. As per recent statistics, there are 1018 old age homes in India today. Out of these, 427 homes are free of cost while 153 old age homes are on pay and stay basis, 146 homes have both free as well as pay and stay facilities and detailed information is not available for 292 homes. A total of 371 old age homes all over the country are available for the sick and 118 homes are exclusive for women. There is therefore an urgent need to examine the various aspects of this new and fast growing population to ensure the design of appropriate policy and programmes directed to meet the varied needs of this vulnerable and dependent group. However, few studies have been undertaken to document the condition of the elderly in the country and those living in old age homes (Dandekar, 1993; Das and Shah, 2001; GOI, 1991, 1998, 2000; Ranjan *et al.*, 1999; Rao *et al.*, 1982; Sharma, 1999; Sharma and Peter, 1992; Anonymous (1987). In this context, the present study is an attempt to fill some

of the gaps in the study of the elderly population and the existing institutional support available to them. The study was undertaken with the overall goal of understanding the existing institutional facilities available for the care of the elderly people.

Housing satisfaction is an area of research that has received considerable attention. Much of this literature is concerned with examining the types of factors that may have an influence on satisfaction. For example, among the factors found to affect housing satisfaction most strongly is inadequate space (Kinsey and Lane, 1983). There are many common misapprehensions about the sources of housing satisfaction and dissatisfaction among older people. The physical quality of the housing that they occupy is the most important factor in explaining older people's satisfaction with their housing. Mishra (1993); Bagga (1997); Dandekar (1996); Nalini (1997) and Ranjan *et al.* (1999) have looked at the structure of old age homes, life of the inmates, and their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, loneliness, depression and family linkage of the inmates. Bagga (1997) mentioned that the under-engaged and idle residents of old age homes feel more depressed and listless. McCray and Day (1977) reported that the differences in housing satisfaction have been found