

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

SHEWANTI N. KASHYAP AND P. SHARMA

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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 Vriddh 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.

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to:

**SHEWANTI N. KASHYAP**  
College of Home Science,  
Rajendra Agricultural  
University, PUSA,  
SAMASTIPUR, (BIHAR)  
INDIA

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**I**n 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

between urban and rural residents. The former are more satisfied with inside storage and inside appearance and that latter are more satisfied with the structural quality of their units and where their units are located in relation to church and social activities. This study made by Ranjan *et al.* (1999) indicates that the majority of the residents are “overwhelmingly” happy, but it has not investigated what makes them feel so satisfied in the old age homes.

## METHODOLOGY

The present 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 people. The sex ratio was twenty six males and thirty four females. Extent of satisfaction derived by elderly people from old age home was one of the dependent variables in the present investigation. In order to get meaningful result, a descriptive three-point rating satisfaction scale was developed to measure the extent of satisfaction derived by the elderly people from the old age homes. It was judged for content validity and reliability using split-half method. Responses on each item in the scale were scored for highly satisfied (3), satisfied (2) and not satisfied (1). From the individual item score total and mean score of on each item of each elderly people was computed. 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. The mean scores of statements were calculated by the formula:

$$\text{Mean score} = \frac{\text{Total score of responses}}{\text{Number of elderly people}} \dots\dots (1)$$

The scores were interpreted such that higher the score the greater the satisfaction derived by elderly people.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Satisfaction status according to elderly people's old

age homes is presented in Table 1. As is evident majority of the elderly people have reported their satisfaction with the various services provided in the old age homes. The major reasons reported for expressing satisfaction are because of good services and good behaviour of the staff. 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 (Table 2). A few among this group also refused to give any comments and were found to just turn away from this line of questioning, indicating the pain they felt with such an arrangement. 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 will ward off depression and give them a feeling of purpose and belongingness as the authority immerse them in wholesome and worthwhile activities that foster a sense of community among their peers.

### Conclusion:

This study models the impact of architectural and psychosocial variables on house satisfaction of elderly people. Their opinions regarding satisfactions and dissatisfactions with the various services indicate that the majority are satisfied with the services provided and with the care taking of the staff. 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. The elderly people require special care in old age homes but it was found that these homes do not have a special geriatric facility and if there is one, it is prohibitively expensive.

### Implication :

The study provides an idea of the psychological, emotional and social aspects of the elderly living in old age homes as reflected by their satisfactions and dissatisfactions with various services provided and the advantages of such institutional living arrangement as against the disadvantages as well as their sense of isolation

**Table 1 : Distribution of elderly people by their scores on extent of satisfaction derived**

Score	Range	Vridh Sewa	Old age home			Total
			Geeta Kutir	Nirmala	Prem Dham	
40-50	Low	7 (46.6)	-	-	-	7 (11.6)
51-61	Moderate	8 (53)	8 (53)	8 (53)	15 (100)	39 (65)
62-72	High	-	7 (46.6)	7 (46.6)	-	14 (23.3)

Figures in parentheses represent percentage

**Table 2: Extent of satisfication derived by the elderly people about old age homes**

Statement	Old age home				Old age home				Old age home				Total score	Mean Score
	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV	I	II	III	IV		
	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15	F=15		
	Highly satisfied = 3													
	Satisfied = 2													
	Not satisfied = 1													
1. Size of room	-	-	5 (33)	1 (6)	15 (100)	15 (100)	10 (66)	12 (80)	-	-	-	2 (13)	12 <sup>4</sup>	2.0
2. Size of door	1 (6)	2 (13)	15 (100)	1 (6)	14 (93)	13 (86)	-	14 (93)	-	-	-	-	109	1.8
3. Size of window	-	5 (33)	10 (66)	-	14 (93)	10 (66)	5 (33)	15 (100)	1 (6)	-	-	-	13 <sup>4</sup>	2.2
4. Size of ventilator	-	-	-	-	13 (86)	13 (86)	15 (100)	15 (100)	2 (13)	2 (13)	-	-	116	1.9
5. Height of cupboard	3 (20)	-	-	-	12 (80)	5 (33)	6 (40)	4 (26)	-	10 (66)	9 (60)	11 (73)	93	1.5
6. Height of shelves	-	-	-	-	3 (20)	11 (73)	10 (66)	7 (46)	12 (80)	4 (26)	5 (33)	3 (53)	91	1.5
7. Working with door	-	3 (20)	1 (6)	-	13 (86)	12 (80)	14 (93)	11 (73)	2 (13)	-	-	4 (26)	118	1.9
8. Working with window	-	-	-	-	11 (73)	11 (73)	9 (60)	13 (86)	4 (26)	4 (26)	6 (40)	2 (13)	10 <sup>4</sup>	1.7
9. Working with ventilator	-	-	-	-	2 (13)	3 (20)	4 (26)	1 (6)	13 (86)	12 (80)	11 (73)	14 (93)	70	1.1
10. Direction of door	-	5 (33)	5 (33)	3 (20)	11 (73)	10 (66)	10 (66)	12 (80)	4 (26)	-	-	-	129	2.1
11. Direction of window	-	-	5 (33)	2 (13)	10 (66)	2 (13)	10 (66)	13 (86)	5 (33)	13 (86)	-	-	74	1.2
12. Direction of ventilator	-	3 (20)	-	1 (6)	5 (33)	12 (80)	15 (100)	14 (93)	10 (66)	-	-	-	102	1.7
13. Handles of door & window	-	6 (40)	3 (20)	1 (6)	11 (73)	9 (60)	12 (80)	14 (93)	4 (26)	-	-	-	126	2.1
14. Condition of walls, & ceiling	2 (13)	4 (26)	-	-	13 (86)	11 (73)	5 (33)	11 (73)	-	-	10 (66)	4 (26)	112	1.8
15. Condition of floor	-	-	-	-	9 (60)	3 (20)	8 (53)	9 (60)	6 (40)	12 (80)	7 (46)	5 (40)	89	1.4
16. Number of furniture	-	5 (33)	10 (66)	2 (13)	9 (60)	8 (53)	5 (33)	9 (60)	6 (40)	2 (13)	-	4 (26)	125	2.0
17. Size and shape of chair	-	6 (40)	-	-	6 (40)	9 (60)	11 (73)	10 (66)	9 (60)	-	4 (26)	5 (33)	88	1.4
18. Size and shape of table	-	5 (33)	5 (33)	1 (6)	11 (73)	5 (33)	10 (66)	14 (93)	4 (26)	5 (33)	-	-	120	2.0
19. Size and shape of bed	-	5 (33)	-	-	7 (46)	10 (66)	7 (46)	6 (40)	8 (53)	-	8 (53)	9 (60)	100	1.6
20. Mattress and cushion	-	7 (46)	2 (13)	-	5 (33)	8 (53)	9 (60)	8 (53)	10 (66)	-	4 (26)	7 (46)	108	1.8
21. Size of bathroom & W.C.	-	8 (53)	5 (33)	-	4 (26)	7 (46)	6 (40)	11 (73)	11 (73)	-	4 (26)	4 (26)	10 <sup>4</sup>	1.7
22. Facilities in bathroom	-	-	-	-	5 (33)	6 (40)	10 (66)	2 (13)	10 (66)	9 (60)	5 (33)	13 (86)	83	1.3
23. Internal temperature	-	-	-	-	7 (46)	4 (26)	15 (100)	15 (100)	8 (53)	11 (73)	-	-	101	1.6
24. Sanitary condictions (water logging)	-	-	5 (33)	-	4 (26)	8 (53)	10 (66)	15 (100)	11 (73)	7 (46)	-	-	96	1.6
25. Noise level	-	2 (13)	7 (46)	1 (6.6)	10 (66)	6 (40)	8 (53)	14 (93)	5 (33.3)	7 (46)	-	-	118	1.9
26. Daily activities	5 (33)	13 (86)	-	-	10 (66)	2 (13)	15 (100)	15 (100)	-	-	-	-	138	2.3
27. Number and type of luminaries	3 (20)	4 (26)	-	-	3 (20)	9 (60)	5 (33)	6 (40)	9 (60)	2 (13)	10 (66)	9 (60)	82	1.3
28. Natural lighting	1 (6.6)	8 (53)	-	1 (6.6)	10 (66)	7 (46)	7 (46)	9 (60)	4 (26)	-	8 (53)	4 (26)	112	1.8
29. Place of electric switches	-	-	3 (20)	-	3 (20)	11 (73)	12 (80)	6 (40)	12 (80)	4 (26)	-	9 (60)	98	1.6
30. Recreational facilities	-	5 (33)	-	-	5 (33)	15 (100)	15 (100)	10 (66)	15 (100)	5 (33)	-	5 (33)	100	1.6
31. Medical facilities	-	4 (26)	-	-	7 (46)	9 (60)	15 (100)	5 (33)	8 (53)	2 (13)	-	10 (66)	10 <sup>4</sup>	1.7

Figures in parentheses represent percentage

or whether such an arrangement provides the much needed comfort, solace and companionship of age-mates and the freedom to pursue their own activities without constraints. The findings of the present study can be utilized 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.

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Authors' affiliations:

**P. SHARMA**, Department of Family Resource Management, College of Home Science, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, U.S. NAGAR (UTTARAKHAND) INDIA

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