



An Analysis of Happiness, Adjustment & Awareness of Elderly Persons: A Study of Haryana State

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Abstract

A study in Haryana state analysed elderly people's knowledge and awareness of old-age homes and the Senior Citizens act 2007. Results showed that 56.44% were knowledgeable about old-age homes, mostly learned from friends, but 80.69% were not aware of the act, mostly learned from media. Awareness was higher among within-family respondents than old-age home residents. 61.88% of within-family respondents had irregular interactions with friends, and 77.48% saw their daughter-in-law as important in their lives. 46.78% reported no family member taking care of them due to conflict, 21.29% said daughter-in-law took care, and 51.49% reported sharing happy moments with family. 37.87% felt perceived as a burden by family, 39.11% of within-family, 36.63% of old-age home residents. 48.76% received food from chefs, 48.02% from family. 37.63% found "satsang" as source of entertainment, 72.53% felt happy living at home. 50% of family respondents did not ask about happiness, 52.47% of old-age home residents attributed happiness to tasty food, 51.98% agreed daughters are more responsible in caring for parents. 40% work to maintain health, 29% to occupy time, 53% of family respondents, 70% of old-age home residents work to occupy time.

Keywords:

Introduction

Family is the basic and universal social institution, and it is a fundamental part of society (Pandey, 1994). The family provides psychological, social, and economic support to all its members. In traditional societies, the elderly was accorded a higher social status compared to their counterparts in Indian society. Indian culture supports the elderly in the family and gives them due respect. However, with the shift from joint to nuclear families, aging has become a social problem. Elderly people encounter more unwanted behaviour from children in the family, and they feel discomfort as a result (Coleman and Gressay, 1986). There are various ways in which the elderly can be involved in society. They can participate in social networks made up of friends and family, volunteer, engage in economic activities, and belong to clubs and organizations. However, older individuals may face



discrimination and barriers to full participation in society due to issues such as ageism, poverty, poor health, low educational levels, limited mobility, and lack of access to resources. In this context, achieving social involvement and integration requires multiple components to be in place simultaneously. It is important for all individuals and social groups to be included in the political, social, cultural, and economic structures of society so that they can have a say in decisions that affect them. A consensus on these guiding principles is essential for society to reduce and ultimately eliminate exclusion (Integration and Involvement of Seniors in Society, 2009).

Institutional Care

In the past, those without families were cared for by institutions such as Sadavarta, Dharmshala, Mathh, and Village Panchayats, providing for the destitute in a traditional manner. However, due to westernization and urbanization, these social and religious institutions have failed to fulfill their duties. Elderly individuals were once held in high esteem, but that is no longer the case. The impact of liberalization, globalization, and privatization has led to a shift from a collectivist "we" mentality to an individualistic "I" mentality, with society becoming increasingly independent. Family members are often too busy to care for the elderly, resulting in a weaker primary unit of social security and assistance for the elderly. We are attempting to understand the concept of "Institutionalization of the Elderly". Western societies often rely on it due to families being unable to care for the elderly. It is not surprising that older generations are often mistreated and subjected to abuse by their own children or relatives. Old Age Homes have a long history in India, with the first one being established in Thrissure, Kerala by the Raja of Cochin in 1911. These homes are now run by NGOs and the government (www.helpageindia.org).

Adjustment

Adjustment is a behavioural process that occurs when an individual fulfils their needs and removes obstacles (barriers) in their life. Some important factors that influence the adjustment process in the family include attitude after retirement, availability of roles for the aged person, mutual understanding between husband and wife, marital satisfaction, attitude towards death, and the status of physical and mental health. Other factors that influence the process include poor economic conditions and feelings of isolation (Shukla et al, 2013).



Today, old-age homes are becoming increasingly necessary because older populations face a large number of problems such as lack of social security, social role and recognition, and lack of opportunities, etc. The population of the aged is increasing worldwide (Vani et al, 2013).

Review of Literatures

Kotwal and Prabhakar (2009) conducted a study on the physical needs and adjustment of elderly individuals in Jammu City. The study surveyed 100 elderly individuals, with 50 being male and 50 being female, all of whom were 65 years of age or older. Data was collected through a structured interview schedule. The results of the study found that most of the respondents lived in joint families and were satisfied with their financial status. The majority of the respondents also reported watching television as a means of spending their time. Additionally, it was found that females preferred reading religious literature while males preferred reading newspapers. The study also revealed that most of the elderly respondents reported health issues such as high blood pressure, joint pains, diabetes and poor eyesight. Additionally, the researchers observed that even though the elderly respondents lived in joint families, their spouses were often the primary caregivers during times of illness, highlighting a gap between younger and older generations.

Srivastava (2010) conducted a study on the physical mobility and satisfaction levels of older women in urban areas. The study, entitled "Urban Older Women of Girwa Tehsil (Udaipur District)," aimed to understand the differences in physical mobility and satisfaction among older women of different income groups. The study was conducted in the Udaipur district of Rajasthan, using a sample of 225 respondents. Data was collected through interviews and analyzed using chi-square tests. The results of the study showed that older women in the higher income group had higher levels of physical mobility and satisfaction compared to those in the middle and lower income groups. Lakshmi and Roopa (2013) studied the topic of "quality of life of elderly men and women in institutional and non-institutional settings in the urban Bangalore district." In this study, a comparison was made between the respondents who lived in institutional and non-institutional settings with regard to the quality of life of elderly individuals. The study was conducted in the Bangalore district. A random sample of 800 persons was taken who were between the ages of 65 to 76 years. Out of the total 800 elderly individuals, half of the respondents lived in old age homes established in



institutional settings, and the other half lived in non-institutional settings. Half of the total respondents were males, and half were females. Responses were gathered from the elderly individuals using a schedule method. The results of the study showed that there were differences between institutional and non-institutional respondents in terms of social relationships, independence, quality of life, psychological and physical status.

Bhattacharya et al., (2013) conducted a study entitled "adjustment pattern of elderly people belonging to nuclear families of Kolkata city." The objective of the study was to understand the priority needs and adjustment patterns of elderly people living in nuclear families in Calcutta city. A total of 200 elderly persons were studied, half of whom were males and half were females. The study used a well-structured questionnaire-schedule method to gather information from the respondents. The researchers compared the data between the respondents of 65-70 years and 71-76 years age group. They found that females were less adjusted compared to males. Additionally, the respondents of both age groups gave top priority to a congenial family environment. The data also revealed that females in their old age had lower income and authority compared to males of the same age. The study by Zulfikar in 2014 focuses on the adjustment problems faced by older adults in various areas such as old age, marital, social, and emotional adjustment. The study recommends preserving traditional values such as living in a joint family and promoting mutual cooperation and understanding between younger and older generations to mitigate these challenges. The study also suggests that efforts should be made by government, non-government organizations, religious institutions, and individuals to address these issues.

Joseph et al. (2014) conducted "Life Satisfaction among Inhabitants of Selected Old Age Homes at Chandigarh: A Cross-Sectional Survey". Life satisfaction among the aged is a central construct in the psycho-social study of aging. The study was conducted among inhabitants of four urban-based old age homes in Chandigarh. This cross-sectional study used a structured interview, and data were collected by three researchers in July 2013. Convenient sampling was used by the researchers. Only those persons who were 60 years old and above were included in the study. The findings of the study indicated that more than one-half of the inhabitants of old age homes with an urban background were married and literate. It was also found that the majority (56 percent) of the total respondents were employed in the private



sector. Bedi (2015) in the study "The Importance of Social Media and Well-being in the Elderly" made some important observations. Social media allows elderly individuals to share memories with family and friends, reducing social isolation and loneliness. They commonly use platforms such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and Flickr to share memories, videos, and pictures. Additionally, social media provides opportunities for the elderly to save money through coupons and other discounts, and it offers a convenient way for them to communicate and connect with family and friends without leaving home. Through social media, elderly individuals can improve their self-competence, mental health, and overall well-being.

Sil (2016) conducted research on "an analysis of social adjustment among old age people of Bengal." The aim of the research was to understand the "magnitude of social adjustment of old age people regarding to the modern life and also compare the variables gender wise." The researcher selected 50 elderly persons (22 females and 28 males) randomly from the population of elderly persons. Age-wise, all the selected people belonged to 60-80 years age group. The results of the study showed that health, emotional, and financial factors of male respondents were better compared to those of female respondents. On the other hand, old age women had a more honorable position in the home and social aspect. Overall, social adjustment for adult males was significantly better than that of old age women. The study also found that both retired old age women and men had lower levels of social adjustment (below 45 percent) and old age men were in a superior position than women.

The study by AARP Grandparents (2019) highlighted the important role grandparents play in their grandchildren's lives. The survey found that 81 percent of grandparents believed they had an important role in the lives of their grandchildren, with 52 percent viewing themselves as sources of wisdom and 40 percent as storytellers. Additionally, many grandparents also filled the role of teacher, mentor and day-care provider. The study also revealed that many grandparents felt they were better mentors and parents than modern parents, with 46 percent strongly disagreeing with the statement that "parenting today is better than it was" and only 20 percent agreeing. Overall, the study emphasized the significant contributions grandparents make to the lives of their grandchildren and the importance of their role in modern families. The study by Aroogh and Shahboulaghi (2020)

highlights the importance of social engagement for older adults and its impact on their overall well-being. The research demonstrates how interacting with friends and community members can bring a sense of fulfilment and joy to older adults. The authors define social participation as a structured process that involves individuals engaging in collective, conscious, and voluntary actions that lead to personal growth and the attainment of goals. The study also emphasizes that social engagement not only benefits the older adults themselves, but also their families and loved ones.

Methodology: -In brief, methodology is a detailed blueprint for conducting research. The present study aims to Analysis of Happiness, Adjustment & Awareness of Elderly Persons: A Study of Haryana State. It follows an exploratory-cum-descriptive research design, and information is collected through interview-schedule, observation methods and secondary sources. Old Age Homes in Haryana were selected based on their functionality, and seven districts (Karnal, Rohtak, Sonipat, Jind, Kaithal, Faridabad, and Rewari) were chosen as they were found to be more functional during a pilot study. These homes are monitored by NGOs and the government. Seven nearby villages (Lahli, Baldi, Garhibrahman, Akalgarh, Devigarh, Fatehpur, and Gokalgarh) were also selected randomly. A total of 404 elderly individuals (50% from Old Age Homes and 50% from nearby villages) were purposively selected from the universe of the study.

An Analysis of Happiness, Adjustment, and Awareness among Elderly: -

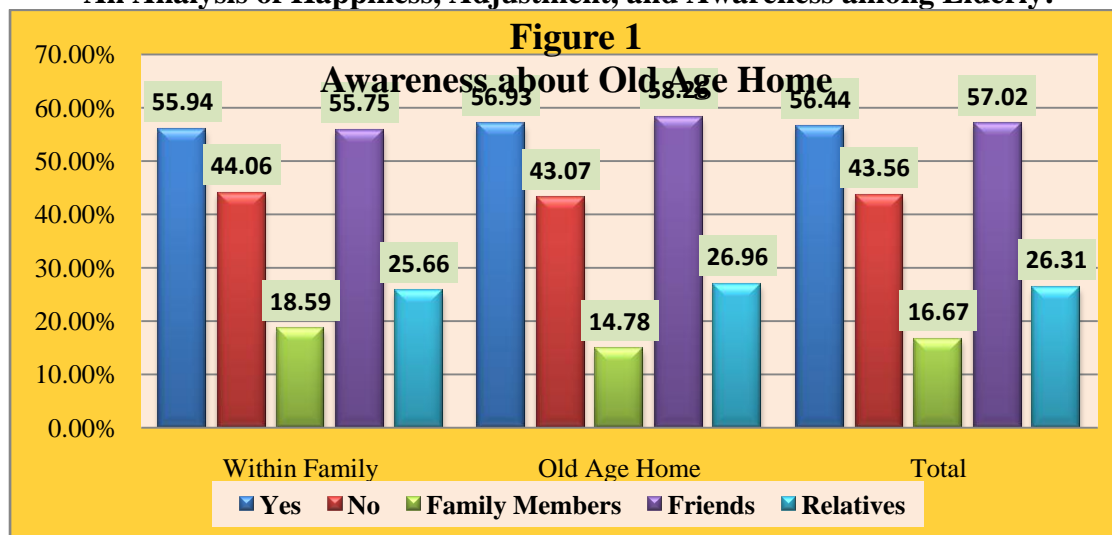


Figure 1 reveal that 56.44% of the total respondents are knowledgeable about old-age

homes, while 43.56% are not aware. Among within-family respondents, 55.94% know about old-age homes, and 56.93% of old-age home residents have knowledge about the concept. Additionally, those who responded positively were asked about their source of knowledge. 57.02% of those who replied affirmatively said they learned about old-age homes from friends, while 26.31% learned from relatives. Among within-family respondents, 55.75% got their knowledge from friends, and 58.26% of old-age home residents received information from friends. Among old-age home respondents, 58.26% of those who answered affirmatively stated that they obtained information about old-age homes from their friends

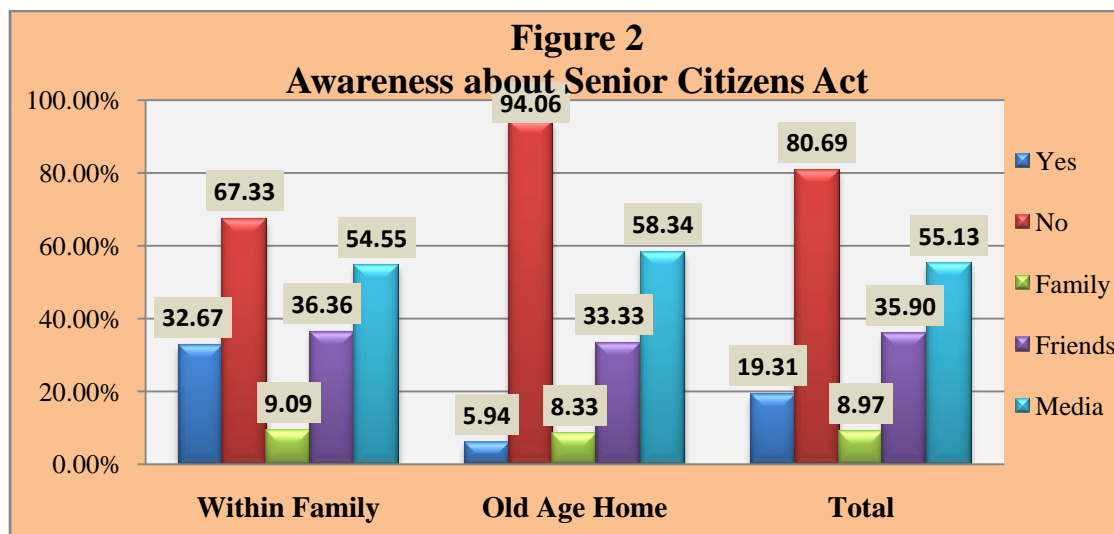
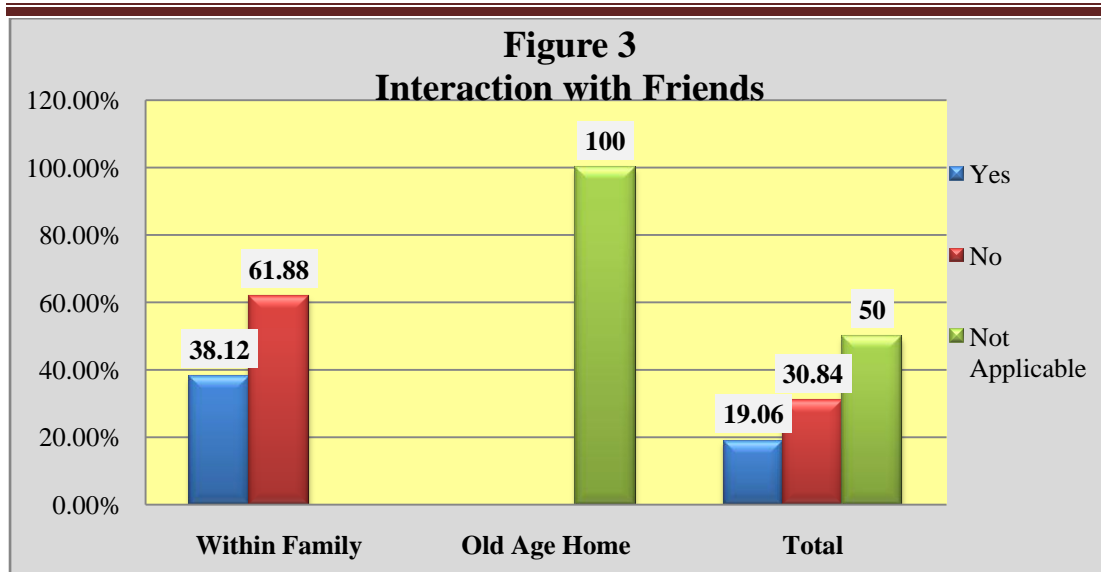


Figure 2 reveal that 80.69% of the total respondents are not aware of the Senior Citizens act 2007, likely due to low literacy or education levels. Only 19.31% of the total respondents are aware of the act. Among within-family respondents, 67.33% are not aware, while 32.67% are aware. An overwhelming majority (94.06%) of old-age home residents are not knowledgeable about the Senior Citizens Act. Of the 78 respondents who answered affirmatively, 55.13% learned about the Senior Citizens act 2007 from media sources such as newspapers, television, and radio. 35.90% got information from friends. Among within-family respondents (66 total), 54.55% learned from media, and 36.36% from friends. For old-age home residents (12 total), 58.34% got information from media.



The Bar Graph 3 reveals the frequency of interaction between the respondents and their friends. Out of the total 202 respondents, those who live within a family, around two-thirds (61.88%) have reported not regularly meeting their friends due to reasons such as disability, distance, family conflict, or loss of friends. On the other hand, almost two-fifths (38.12%) of the respondents still regularly interact with their friends, as most of their friends live close to them, making it convenient to meet. It's worth mentioning that this question was not asked of respondents living in old age homes, as they have relocated and may not have the opportunity to meet their friends.

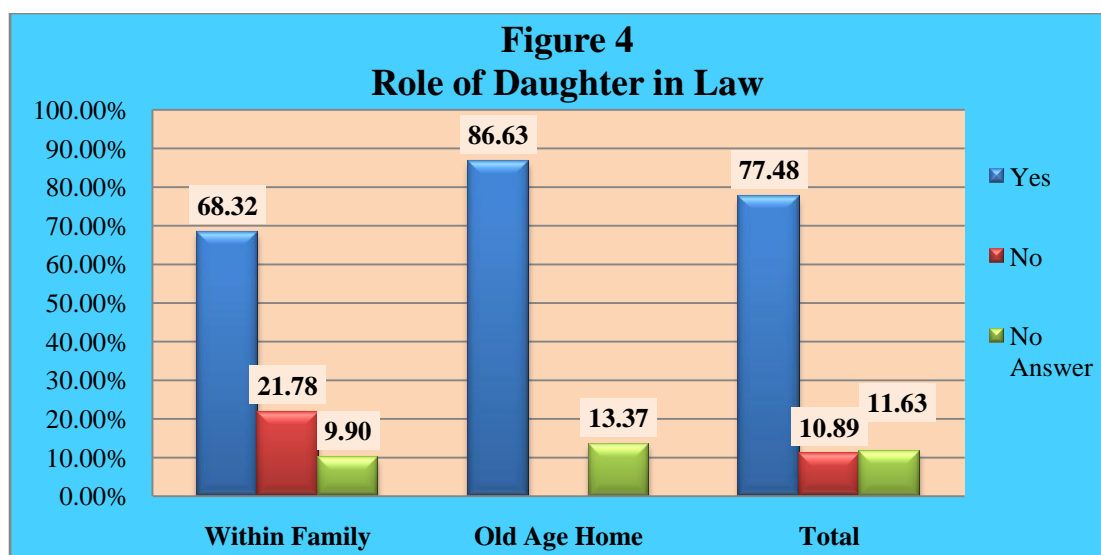


Figure 4 indicate that the majority (77.48%) of total 404 respondents believe that their

daughter-in-law plays a vital role in their lives. Out of the respondents who live within a family, 68.32% hold the same view. Similarly, 86.63% of the respondents from old age homes also believe that their daughter-in-law plays an important role in their lives. On the other hand, 10.89% of total respondents do not think that their daughter-in-law plays an important role in their life.

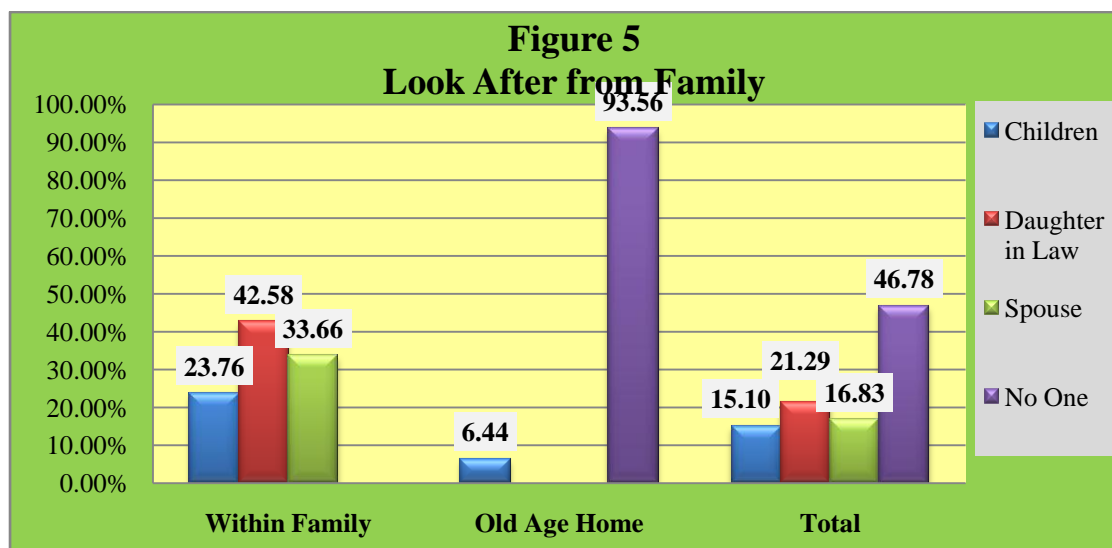


Figure 5 indicates that out of 404 respondents, approximately half (46.78%) reported that no family member takes care of them due to family conflict. Around one-fifth (21.29%) of the respondents said their daughter in law takes care of them. Over two-fifths (42.58%) of the respondents living within the family stated that their daughter in law is the one taking care of them, while one-third (33.66%) are cared for by their husband or wife. A large majority (93.56%) of the respondents living in old age homes reported that no one from their family members takes care of them.

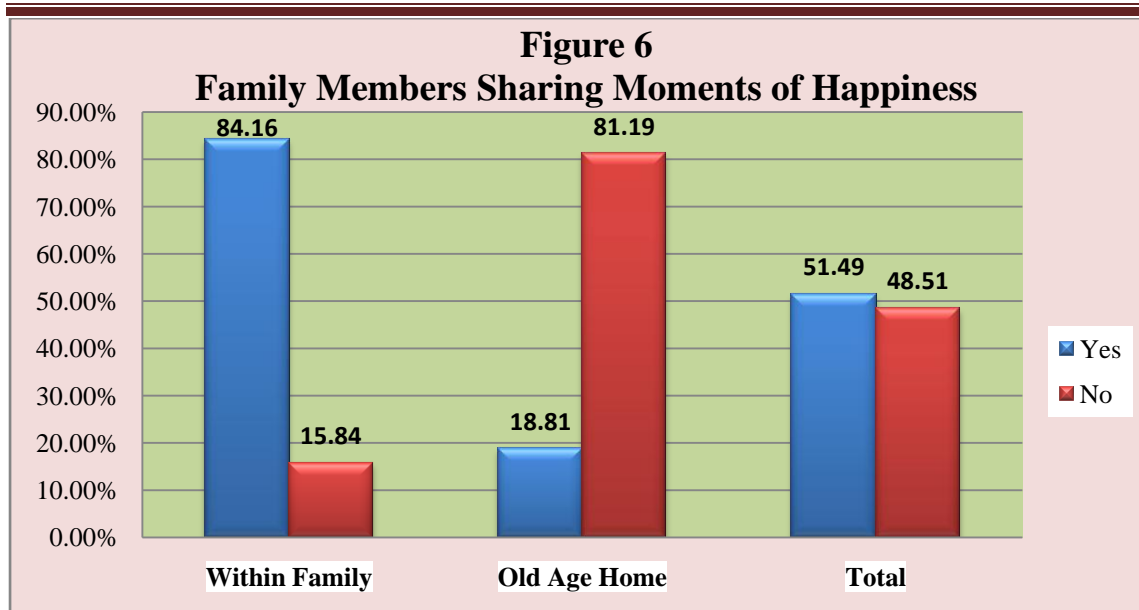


Figure 6 shows the extent to which respondents' family members share moments of happiness with them. Out of all the 404 respondents, slightly more than half (51.49%) reported that their family members do share their moments of happiness with them. Conversely, just under half (48.51%) indicated that their family members do not participate in their moments of happiness. The majority (84.16%) of respondents living with their families answered positively that their family members share their happy moments with them. In contrast, respondents living in old age homes reported that their family members do not share their happy moments with them.

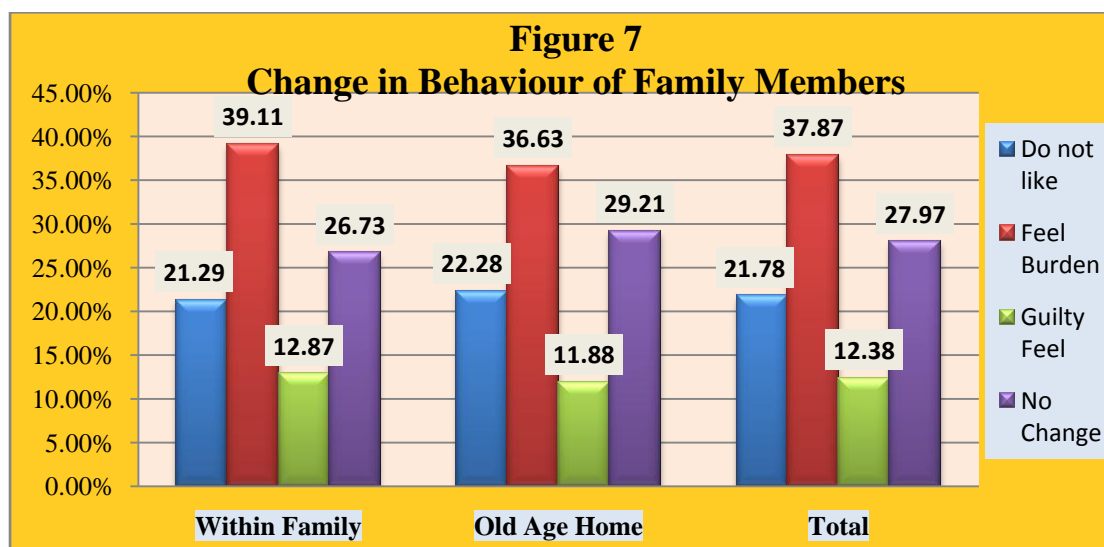


Figure 7 show that 37.87% of the total respondents reported that the behavior of their family members changed and they were perceived as a burden in old age. On the other hand, 27.97% reported that the behavior of their family members remained unchanged. In the case of respondents living within their families, 39.11% felt that they were considered a burden in their old age, while 26.73% reported no change in family behavior. Meanwhile, 36.63% of respondents living in old age homes felt they were perceived as a burden by their family members, while 29.21% reported no change in family behavior.

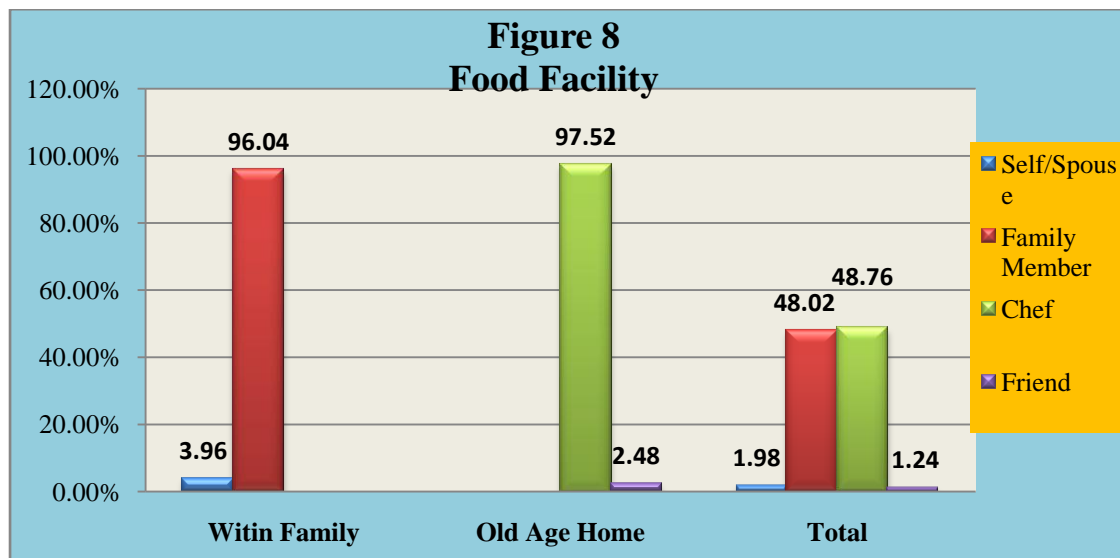
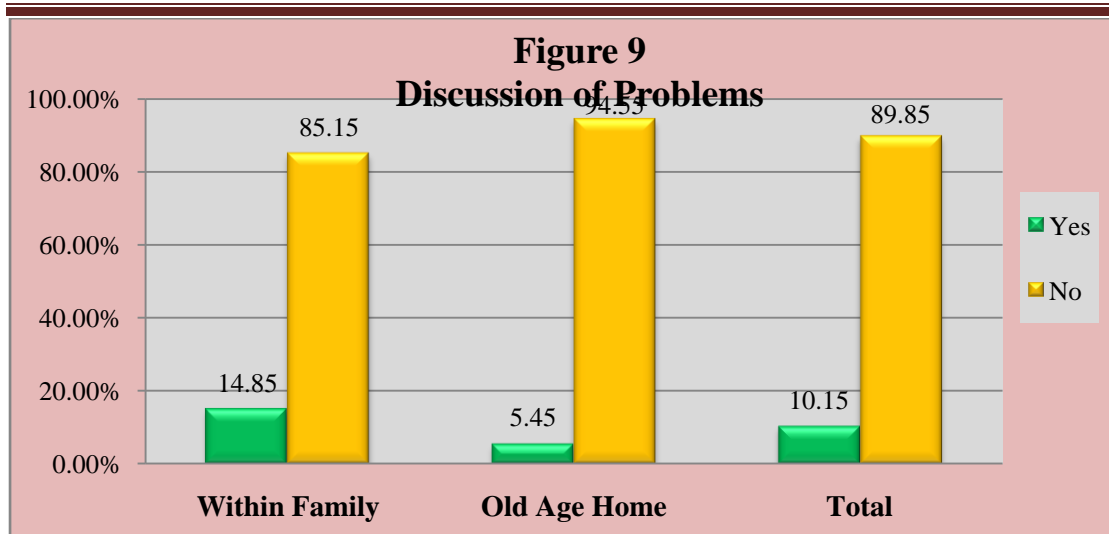


Figure 8 show the source of food for the elderly respondents. Approximately half of the total 404 respondents (48.76%) stated that they are served food by a chef, who is hired by the old age home they live in. These respondents reported that the old age home has two to three chefs who cook tasty food and serve it at the appropriate time. On the other hand, nearly the same percentage of respondents (48.02%) stated that their food is cooked by their family member. These respondents live within their families.



The figure 9 show that a vast majority of the respondents, 89.85%, stated that their family members do not have time to listen to their problems and therefore, they are not discussed. Among respondents who live within family, 85.15% responded similarly, while 94.55% of the old age home respondents also replied the same.

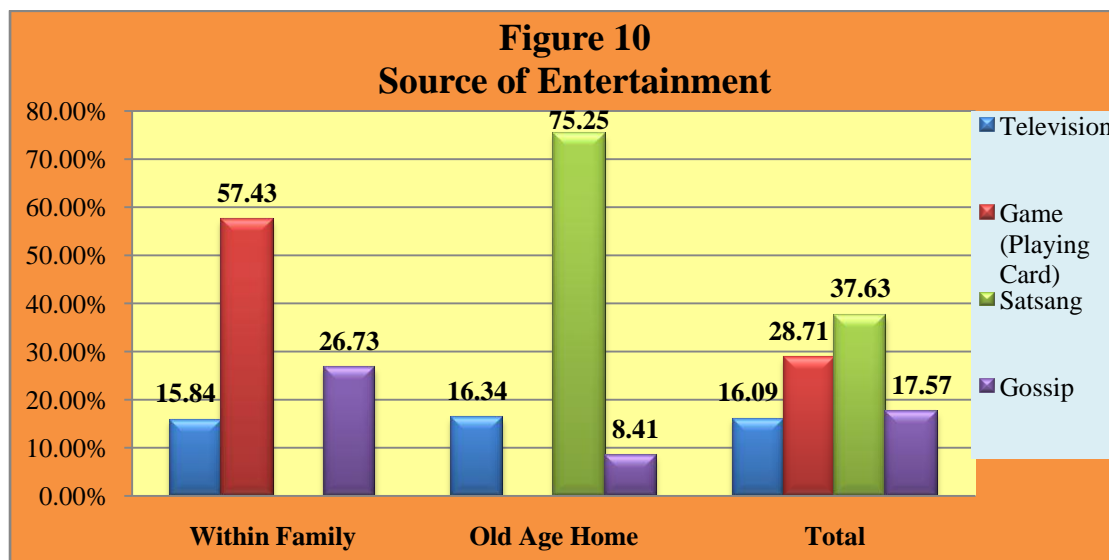


Figure10 show that 37.63% of the total respondents find "satsang" as a source of entertainment and find it peaceful and joyful. 28.71% of the respondents find playing card games as the source of entertainment, offering social enjoyment and pleasure. Watching television and gossiping are the main source of entertainment for the rest of the respondents. Note that all respondents who reported playing card games as their source of entertainment

are male. The data from Table and Figure 4.33 shows that the source of entertainment for respondents who live within family is different from those who live in an old age home. For respondents living within family, the majority (57.43%) stated that playing cards is the main source of their entertainment, while more than one-fourth (26.73%) said that gossip is their source of entertainment. On the other hand, for respondents living in an old age home, the majority (75.25%) stated that 'satsang' is their main source of entertainment.

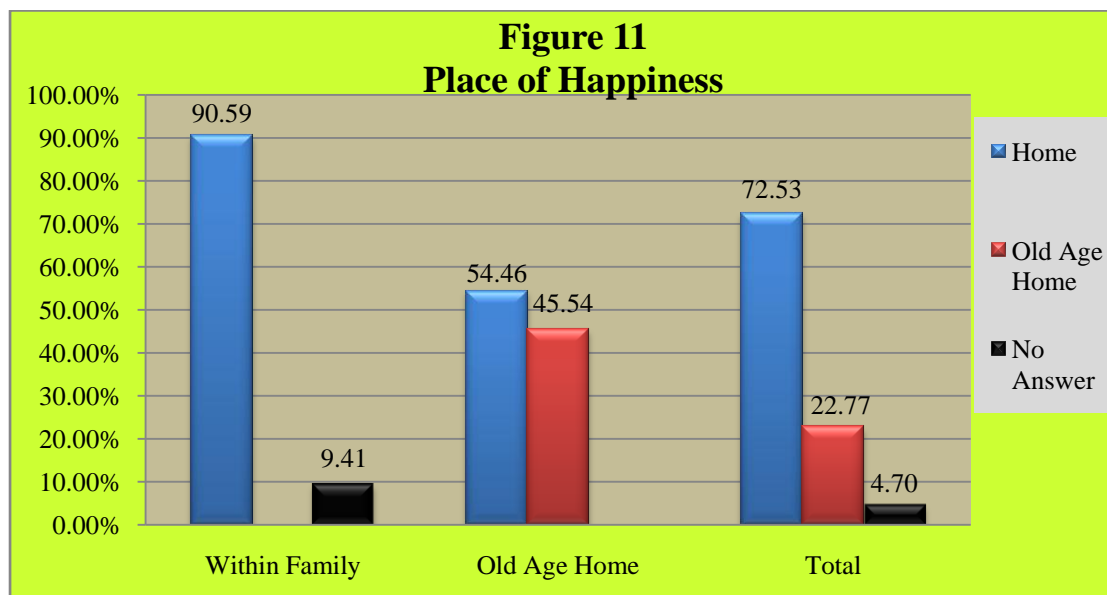


Figure 11 show that a majority (72.53%) of the total respondents reported feeling happy living at home. They mentioned that they have the opportunity to spend time and share ideas with their children, grandchildren, and relatives. However, slightly over one-fifth (22.77%) of the total respondents said they feel happier living in old age homes because of the indifferent behavior of their children. Within family respondents showed an overwhelming majority (90.59%) feeling happy living at home, while over half (54.46%) of the old age home respondents felt the same.

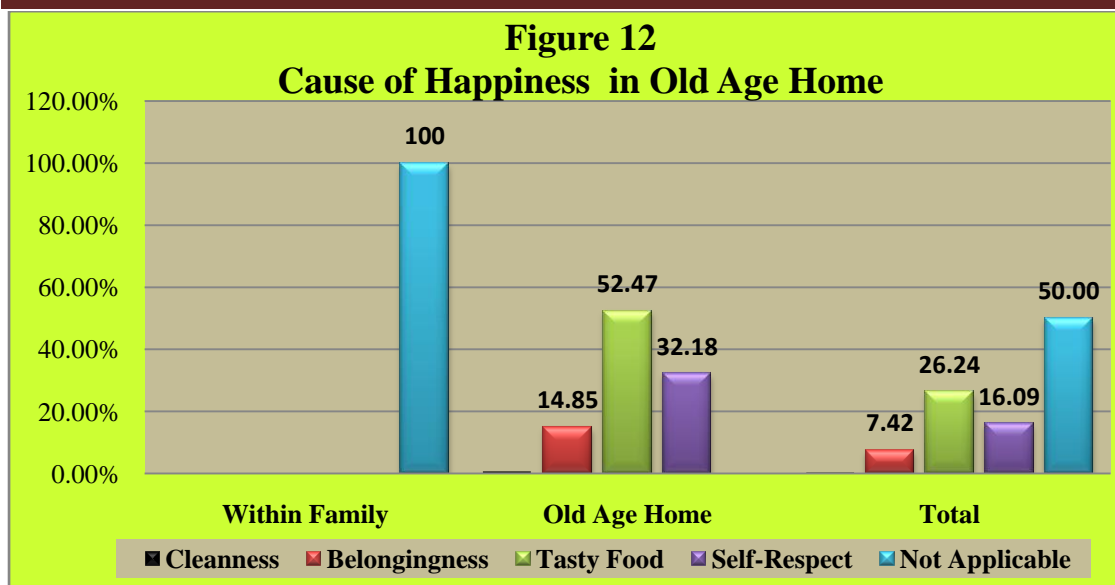


Figure 12 show that 50% of the respondents don't ask question regarding happiness because they live with family. 26.24% of the respondents said that tasty food makes them happy, 7.42% of the respondents said belongingness is the main cause of their happiness, while 16.09% said that self-respect is the cause of their happiness. 52.47% of the respondents from the old age home said that tasty food makes them happy, 14.85% of the respondents said belongingness is the main cause of their happiness, while 32.18% said that self-respect makes them happy.

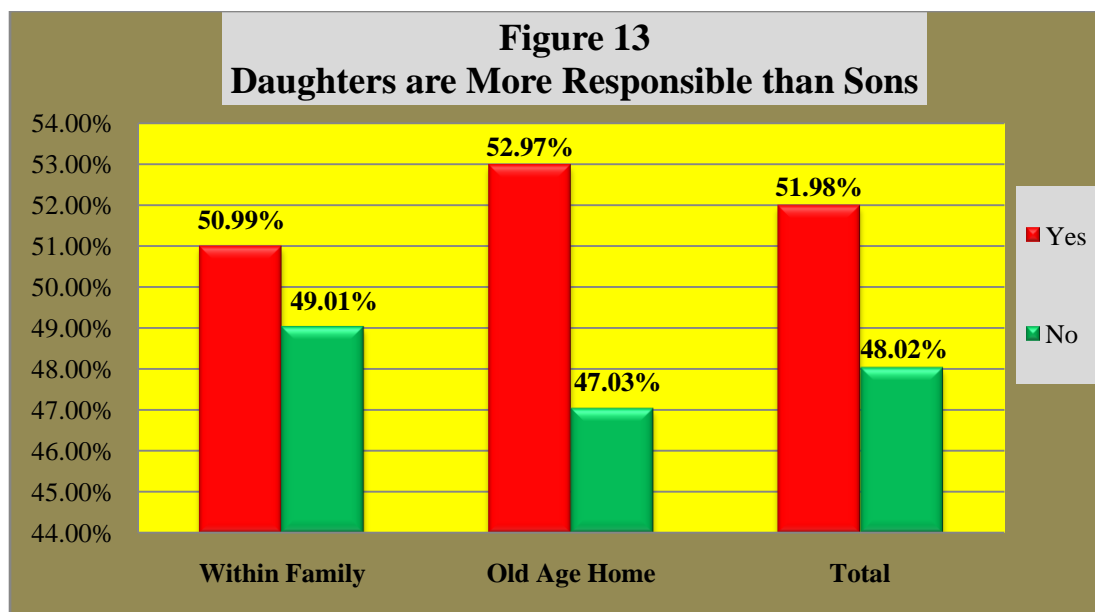


Figure 13 show that over 51.98% of total respondents agreed that daughters are more

responsible than sons in caring for their parents. They said that daughters take the lead in household tasks and have a closer relationship with their parents. Additionally, they strive to keep the family together. On the other hand, less than half (48.02%) of the respondents disagreed that daughters are more responsible than sons. They argued that daughters are overly praised for small actions. Of the respondents within the family, slightly more than half (50.99%) agreed that daughters are more responsible, and a similar percentage (52.97%) of respondents from old age homes had the same opinion.

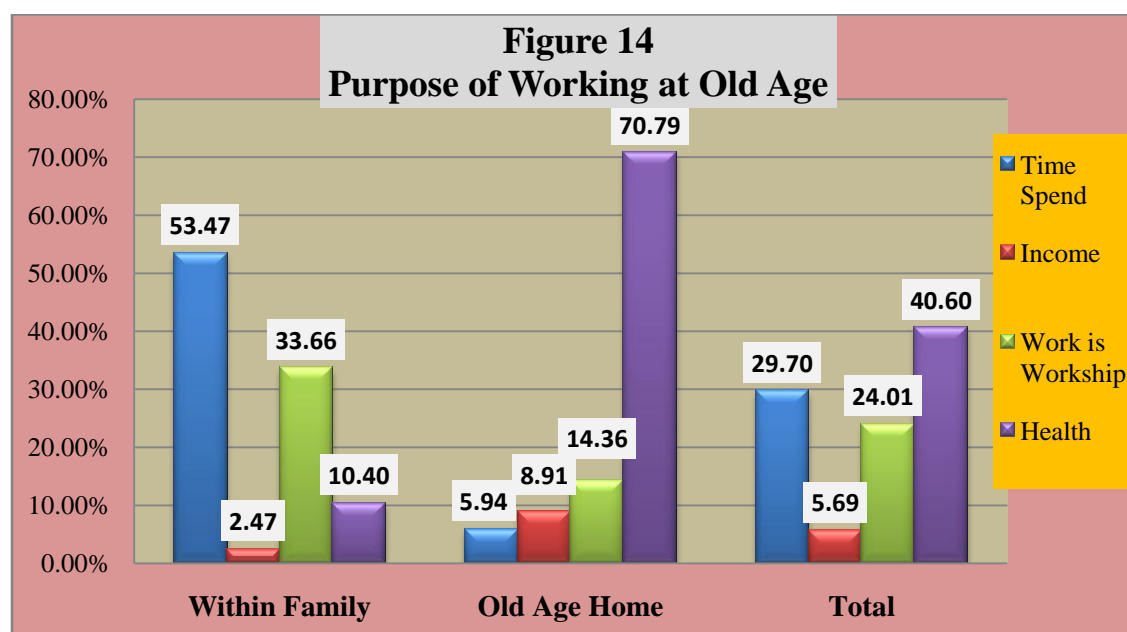


Figure 14 reveal that slightly more than 40% of total respondents stated that maintaining their health is the primary reason for working at an old age. They believe that work keeps them physically fit. However, over 29% of total respondents cited that they work to spend their time. Among the respondents within the family, over 53% said that they work to occupy their time. On the other hand, more than 70% of respondents from old age homes indicated that they work to maintain their health.

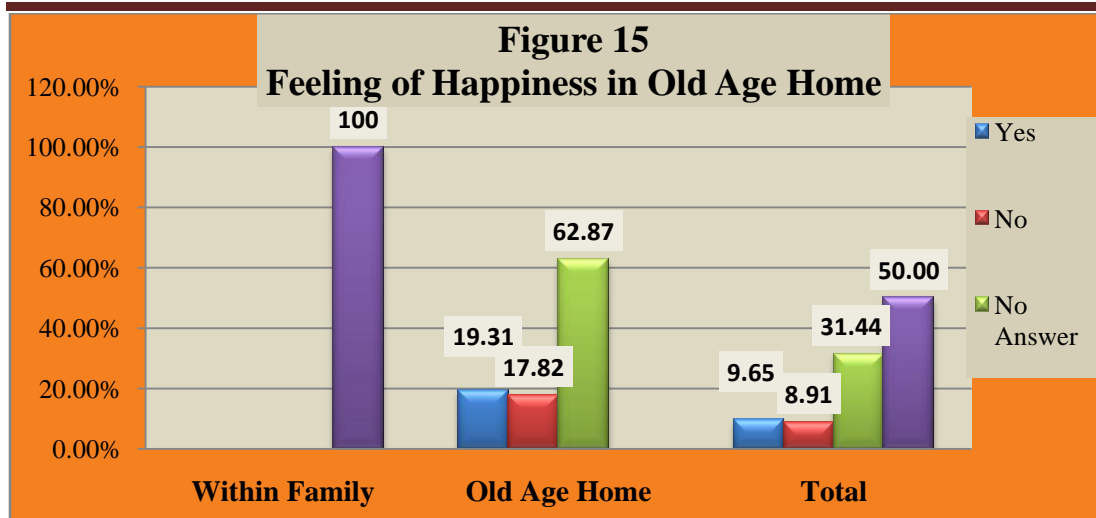


Figure 15 show that half (50%) of the total respondents were not applicable as they live within their family. Meanwhile, just under one-third (31.44%) did not answer the question regarding happiness in an old age home due to the presence of staff at the time. Only 9.65% of the respondents answered positively about feeling happy in an old age home, while the remaining 8.91% answered negatively. Of the old age home respondents, more than 62.87% did not answer the question regarding their feeling of happiness due to the presence of staff. Only 19.31% answered positively, and the remaining 17.82% answered negatively.

Conclusion

The study analyzed the knowledge and awareness of elderly people in Haryana state about old-age homes and the Senior Citizens act 2007. The results show that 56.44% of respondents are knowledgeable about old-age homes, with the majority of them learning about it from friends. However, 80.69% of respondents are not aware of the Senior citizen's act 2007, with the majority of the informed respondents getting their knowledge from media sources. The study also found that the awareness levels about both old-age homes and the Senior citizens act 2007 are higher among within-family respondents compared to old-age home residents. The study also analyzed the frequency of interaction between the respondents and their friends and their perception of their daughter-in-law's role in their lives. The results show that 61.88% of the within-family respondents do not regularly interact with their friends due to various reasons, while 38.12% still have regular interactions. The majority of total respondents (77.48%), both within-family and old-age home residents, believe that their daughter-in-law plays a vital role in their lives. On the other hand, 10.89% of respondents do



not consider their daughter-in-law as playing an important role in their life. The question about interaction with friends was not asked to old-age home residents, as they have relocated and may not have the opportunity to meet their friends.

The study also looked at the caregiving arrangement and the extent to which family members share moments of happiness with the respondents. The results show that 46.78% of the respondents reported that no family member takes care of them due to family conflict, while 21.29% said their daughter-in-law takes care of them. Among within-family respondents, 42.58% are taken care of by their daughter-in-law, and 33.66% by their husband or wife. The majority of old-age home residents (93.56%) reported that no one from their family members takes care of them. In terms of sharing moments of happiness, 51.49% of the total respondents reported that their family members do share their happy moments with them, while 48.51% indicated that their family members do not participate in their happy moments. The majority of within-family respondents (84.16%) answered positively that their family members share their happy moments with them, while old-age home residents reported that their family members do not share their happy moments with them. The result of the study shows that 37.87% of the total 404 respondents reported that the behavior of their family members changed and they were perceived as a burden in old age, while 27.97% reported no change. 39.11% of those living within families felt like a burden, while 36.63% of those in old-age homes felt the same way. Figure 8 indicates that 48.76% of the respondents receive food from chefs hired by the old-age homes they reside in, while 48.02% are served by their family members. 37.87% of the total respondents reported that the behavior of their family members changed and they were perceived as a burden in old age. On the other hand, 27.97% reported that the behavior of their family members remained unchanged. In the case of respondents living within their families, 39.11% felt that they were considered a burden in their old age, while 26.73% reported no change in family behavior. Meanwhile, 36.63% of respondents living in old age homes felt they were perceived as a burden by their family members, while 29.21% reported no change in family behavior. 37.63% of respondents find "satsang" as a source of entertainment, with 28.71% finding card games as their source. 72.53% of total respondents reported feeling happy living at home, while 22.77% feel happier in old age homes. Among those living within their



family, the majority (57.43%) find playing cards as their source of entertainment and 90.59% feel happy living at home. For those living in old age homes, the majority (75.25%) find "satsang" as their source of entertainment and 54.46% feel happy living in the home.

The results of the study suggest that the opinions of elderly respondents on happiness and responsibility for caring for parents vary. 50% of the respondents living with family don't ask about happiness, while 26.24% attribute their happiness to tasty food and 7.42% to belongingness. Meanwhile, 52.47% of old age home residents attribute their happiness to tasty food and 14.85% to belongingness. Over 51.98% of respondents agreed that daughters are more responsible than sons in caring for parents, while slightly more than half of those within the family and old age homes agreed with this viewpoint. On the other hand, 48.02% of respondents disagreed that daughters are more responsible, citing that daughters are overly praised for small actions. 26.24% of the respondents said that tasty food makes them happy, 7.42% of the respondents said belongingness is the main cause of their happiness, while 16.09% said that self-respect is the cause of their happiness. 52.47% of the respondents from the old age home said that tasty food makes them happy, 14.85% of the respondents said belongingness is the main cause of their happiness, while 32.18% said that self-respect makes them happy. In a survey, slightly over 40% of respondents said that maintaining their health is the main reason for working at an old age. Over 29% said they work to occupy their time. 53% of family respondents cited that they work to occupy their time, while 70% of old age home respondents work to maintain their health.

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