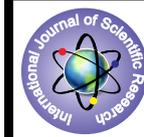


How do the Elderly Perceive a Day Care Centre for Themselves?



Home Science

KEYWORDS : Old age, Elderly, Day Care Centre for Elderly

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ABSTRACT

Old age; where aged termed as 'Elderly', face changes in physical, mental, emotional and psychological aspects. The increased Elderly population and modifications in formal structure and moves in intergenerational relations has focused this issue in India. Remarkable growth of old age homes in India draws attention towards uneasy relationship between ageing parents and their offspring. The adjustments of this group, their feelings of contentment and ease, disappointment and hopes from family members provide an interesting field of inquest. The opinions of Elderly weigh up and therefore; an investigation was done to know how elderly perceive a Day Care Centre for themselves. A survey was conducted through a well structured questionnaire that brought out transparent image of this ambiguous thought. Reactions and opinions of elderly living in Old Age homes has supported institutional support as compared to elderly residing in family set up.

INTRODUCTION

Old age

Old age; vital stage of later life where an aged termed as 'Elderly' faces changes in physical, mental, emotional, psychological aspects and are prone to various diseases and illnesses. Physical changes such as graying of hair, wrinkle formation, weak functioning of body organs, loss of memory and many more carries them towards the 'Depressive mode'. It is also a period of "Integrity vs. Disparity", in which a person gets feeling of uselessness and unproductive civilian. Moreover, transitions from traditional to modern life in India have expanded nuclear families and have seriously affected the social context.

Improvements in general health and nutritional standards of population have increased life expectancy at birth. The population in India by 70 million elder persons in 2000 is increasing remarkably and likely to rise to 177 million by 2025 and 324 million by 2050. In addition, majority of elderly (90 percent) in rural India, live with no social security, thirty percent live below poverty line and another 33 percent just marginally over it.

Old Age Homes

The onus of caring elderly is more on State than on family that necessitates creation of adequate institutional support. As per fresh statistics, there are 1018 old age homes in India today. Out of which, 427 homes are free of cost while 153 homes are on pay and stay basis, 146 homes have both services and detailed information is not accessible for 292 homes. Total 371 old age homes are for sick and 118 homes are exclusively for women. A majority of old age homes are concentrated in developed states including Gujarat.

Tremendous growth of old age homes in India represents relationship between Elderly and their children and points towards the needs of old age homes for different socio-economic backgrounds. This adjustment process of elderly, their feelings and expectations from family members give an interesting ground of inquiry.

Elderly Day Care Centre

It is an envoy of the Old Age Homes where the uncared seniors have chance to avail basic necessities. Opinions of senior citizens weigh up in this era. Therefore, investigation was done to know how elderly perceive a Day Care Centre for themselves.

Under the categorization, Home Science Extension and Communication, the Department of Extension and Communication that started in 1953; through its various programmes aims at contributing in development communication through teaching, research, and extension. Research work and applying its results in real life has been major strengths of the Department.

I truly believe that, this well reputed Department with its masterly advice, technical sense and corrective actions would be the best source for receiving opinions on the problem of elderly. To focus this upcoming threat, an effort was made in the form of a small study by the Department.

Objectives

1. To study the perceptions of Elderly, regarding Day Care Centre for themselves in Vadodara city.
2. To study the perceptions of Elderly regarding the Day Care Centre for themselves with reference to ...

- Physical aspect,
- Social aspect,
- Emotional aspect,
- Psychological aspect, and
- Health aspect

METHODOLOGY

Population of the study

The population of the study comprised of elderly residing in family set ups as well as in old age homes in Vadodara city in 2012.

Selection of the Sample

Fifty elderly from Vadodara city were selected, out of which twenty five elderly were selected from family set ups and same from old age homes. Data was collected by mixed sampling technique under which Simple Random Sampling, Stratified Sampling with Equal Allocation, snow ball technique and purposive Sampling techniques were deployed.

Tool

A structured Questionnaire was provided to collect data to study the opinions of elderly. To prepare questionnaire, the investigator visited Library of the Department of Extension and Communication, M.S.U. of Baroda, reviewed literatures from reports, articles, books, journals, and magazines related to the subject of the study.

The questionnaire was divided into six categories that consisted of Background information of the elderly; Elderly Day Care Center from Physical, Social, Emotional, Psychological and Health Aspects respectively.

Data Collection

Data was collected personally by investigator in October 2011. Fifty percent of elderly residing in family set ups were contacted in a public garden named "Deepika Garden" in Karelibaug area of Vadodara city. And the rest through home visits as per the list. The elderly residing in old age homes were either selected randomly or through contacts of other elderly living in same old age homes. The investigator did not face any major problem while collecting data.

MAJOR FINDINGS**An Elderly Day Care Centre from Physical Aspect**

- High Majority of the elderly (96 percent) from OAH and more than half of the elderly (56% and 52% respectively) from NOAH; described a Day Care Center with happy and encouraging environment where one gets chance of living with family and not be a burden.
- Majority of elderly from OAH (88 percent) and NOAH (72%) opined that such centers provide opportunity of celebrating important days and different festivals of life.
- Less than half of the sampled Elderly from OAH (44%) and NOAH (48 percent) perceived that it can provide opportunities of following one's routine life with dignity. Whereas more than half of the elderly from OAH (52 percent) and less than forty percent of the elderly from NOAH (36 percent) viewed the day care centre as a place to get freedom from dependency.

So, above data affirms the positive hopes of elderly living in OAH and NOAH for Day Care Center with different infrastructural luxuries as far as the physical aspect is concerned.

An Elderly Day Care Centre from Social Aspect

- High Majority of the elderly (Above 90%) from OAH and sixty four percent Elderly from NOAH assumed that absence of friendly person can be filled in the centre by availing social life.
- More than half of the Elderly (52%) from both the set ups opined in favour of joining such centers due to insecurity aroused from the family.

Hence, with reference to social aspect, elderly living in both the set ups aspire to live more socialized life, and want to be helpful to each other in safe environment.

An Elderly Day Care Centre from Emotional Aspect

- High Majority of elderly residing in OAH (92%) and NOAH (84%) opined in favor of the centre where one gets warmth from the same aged people.
- High Majority of elderly from OAH opined that one joins centre when contribution of elderly in family is not appreciated (84%) so time can be spent in joyful and satisfying manner (80%) in centre. Whereas only majority of elderly (68%) from NOAH set ups agreed with this aspect.
- Less than forty percent of elderly from both OAH (36%) and NOAH (32%) presumed an opportunity of self expression in Day Care Centre for Elderly.

Therefore, the above mentioned data, it can be depicts that Elderly have desire to get warmth, want to receive appreciation for their contribution, and want to spend time joyfully in a satisfied manner in centre.

An Elderly Day Care Centre from Psychological Aspect

- High Majority of elderly from OAH (96%) and majority of elderly (68%) from NOAH presumed day care center to spend stress free time.
- High Majority of elderly from OAH (80%) and fifty six percent of elderly from NOAH presumed that loneliness and sadness can be kept away in the centre.
- More than 60 per cent of elderly from OAH and NOAH assumed an Elderly Day Care Center to adopt an improved life style by following other elderly of centre.
- Only thirty two percent of elderly from NOAH and more than half of elderly from OAH set up perceived Day Care center where absence of family members can be filled up.

So, above mentioned data affirms that, Elderly expect secured, stress free feelings in relaxed mode with lots of self confidence

to live further. And getting recognition as productive citizens and getting relief from bored and monotonous life in centers.

An Elderly Day Care Centre from Health Aspect

- High Majority (92%) and majority (60%) of the elderly from the OAH perceived an elderly day care center of availing regular health checkups.
- Majority of the elderly from OAH (76 percent) and less than half (40 percent) of the elderly from NOAH perceived the center which provides emergency treatment.
- Majority of the elderly (64 percent) from the OAH and less than half of the elderly (48 percent) perceived a centre that can provide better care to the elderly.

Data obtained with reference to health aspect contrasted in both the set ups for better accessibility of emergency treatment.

IMPLICATIONS

After analyzing aforementioned data, it is highlighted that, despite the Day Care Centers for Elderly provide better care with respect to infrastructure facilities, that keeps them socially engaged, can give emotional outlets, satisfy psychologically, and provide immediate and better health facilities; it can have many detrimental effects on Indian Social system. It can break families and can result in lack of emotional bonding amongst the family members which is smack on Indian Family system for which the country is famous worldwide.

As Elderly have alternative of joining Day Care Centers for themselves, this would create conflicting situation in the family and can hamper socio-economic and personal growth as well. Moreover, family economy gets affected as encouragement and emergence of selfish and cunning claims, cheating and frauds may take place and children may lose their hereditary rights.

Thus, as each coin has two sides, the Day Care Centers for Elderly may seem to be beneficial on one hand but has oodles of unconstructive implications on the other hand.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing aforesaid data in all above five aspects, it was easy to affirm that elderly living in OAH supported dual institutional facility as well as family life without being a burden. On the counter part, elderly residing in family set ups, despite having conflicting situations in family, rejected the concept of Elderly Day Care Center.

Investigation in this aspect reflects the acceptance of elderly position in the family, treatment given to them by family members and role of support systems for them. They themselves lack sensibility for this difficulty. Consequently, this leaves them to live in same condition.

SUGGESTIONS

- Threats from ever growing problem of elderly could only be minimized by providing proper institutional facilities and generating awareness concerning it amongst the elderly and community. This can be done through frequent article publications, Blog sharing and visuals with statistical representations on the social networking sites, documentaries repeatedly shown on television, and by conducting seminars and symposiums to transfer messages in this regard.
- Various Governmental and Non-Governmental organizations should initiate such facilities for welfare of the elderly.

In nutshell, we need to find out alternatives to present condition of elderly in family as well as in institutions and that can be made possible only by providing institutional facility of Day Care Centers for them.

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