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A STUDY ON BASIC AMENITIES AVAILABLE IN THE OLD AGE HOMES IN MADURAI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Ageing has been defined as the total constellation of social, biological and psychological changes that occur in last stage of life. Ageing of the population is one of the most important demographic factors that have emerged in the 21st Century. Old age is the closing period of the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous more desirable periods or times of 'usefulness'. Old age homes are a boon to those who do not enjoy the support of their children or have nobody to take care of them. At least old age homes provide them shelter, food and company. But definitely, nothing can compensate living with affectionate children and grand children. The objectives of the present study are as follows: i) to understand the socio - economic conditions of inmates of old age homes in the study area, ii) to identify the basic amenities available in the old age homes in the study area and iii) to suggest measures to reduce old age homes and improve the conditions of existing homes. This study is based on primary data. The data were collected form Madurai District. There are 30 registered old age homes in Madurai district. From each home, 10 respondents have been selected by adopting systematic sampling technique. Totally, the researcher has selected 300 respondents for this study. Average, Simple Percentage and One-way ANOVA Test are used to analyze the collected data.

Keywords: Old age, Inmates, Old age Homes, Age, Gender, Nature of Home, *etc.*

INTRODUCTION

Ageing has been defined as the total constellation of social, biological and psychological changes that occur in last stage of life. Ageing of the population is one of the most important demographic factors that have emerged in the 21st Century. Old age is the closing period of the life span. It is a period when people 'move away' from previous more desirable periods or times of 'usefulness'. Old age is considered as a curse, being associated with deterioration of all physical, psychological factors, isolation from social, economic, and other activities. Socially, this stage was considered as the sum total of one's lived experiences. Hence, the society offered a space of respect to the old. In such a society, the aged were the repositories, transmitters, and sole authorities of wisdom and knowledge. All these provided a 'golden age' concept to this stage, old age.

Old age homes are a boon to those who do not enjoy the support of their children or have nobody to take care of them. At least old age homes provide them shelter, food and company. But definitely, nothing can compensate living with affectionate children and grand children.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Old age is not a new phenomenon; it is as old human society. The elderly population in India is continuously increasing and also the problems faced by these people are increasing simultaneously. The number of people in old age homes is constantly increasing and also most of the parents are now deciding to live in the old age homes rather than living with their children. Now-a-days, these people are facing the problems like lack of care, emotional support and economic support from the family *etc.* Our culture recognizes the status of the parents on par with God. A moral duty is put on the children are observing in our society is that the children are not willing to take care of their parents, they do not want to spend money on them. The wards are treating their parents as aliens, and they do not want to share an emotional bond with parents. These children are forgetting that the foundation of their life is built up by the parents. They are forgetting their moral and ethical duties towards their parents. This is because of fast life, industrialization, money oriented minds, *etc.* Children have no time to look after their parents, because of their busy schedule and as a consequence of this situation the elders are getting neglected. At this time, some elderly people are shifted to the old age homes. Older people are considered a burden, because it is assumed that older persons have reduced physical and intellectual capabilities and are therefore dependent on the younger generation. The old people feel totally neglected and sometimes they have to take refuge in homes for the aged which are run by some social organizations. Feeling of loneliness, social economic status of aged, change in social roles, adjustment problems in old age, generational gap are some important factors behind need for institution. Old age persons suffer from unhappiness caused by their feeling of usefulness, loneliness, economic insecurity and adjustment problem. Old age is the closing period of life span. Some spend later part of life happily, whereas others face untold hardship and denied even the minimal comforts of life.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are: i) to understand the socio - economic conditions of inmates of old age homes in the study area, ii) to identify the basic amenities available in the old age homes in the

study area and iii) to suggest measures to reduce old age homes and improve the conditions of existing homes.

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data. The data were collected form Madurai District. There are 30 registered old age homes in Madurai district. From each home, 10 respondents have been selected by adopting systematic sampling technique. Totally, the researcher has selected 300 respondents for this study. Average, Simple Percentage and One-way ANOVA Test are used to analyze the collected data.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

AGE – WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Generally, the aged people thought that in the home, their wards have not considered them in taking any decision in family matters and felt isolated. Hence, it is very essential to classify the sample respondents on the basis of their age and the same is displayed in Table 1.

TABLE 1

AGE – WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Age in years	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Below 60	123	41.00
2.	60 – 70	126	42.00
3.	70 – 80	36	12.00
4.	Above 80	15	5.00
Total		**300**	**100**
Minimum Age – 52		**Average Age – 63**	**Maximum Age – 86**

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

It is evident from Table 1 that, out of 300 respondents, 126 (42.00 per cent) respondents belong to the age group of 60 years to 70 years. The remaining 123 (41.00 per cent), 36 (12.00 per cent) and 15 (5.00 per cent) respondents are in the age group of below 60 years, 70 years to 80 years and above 80 years respectively. Minimum age, average age and maximum age of the inmates are estimated and the values are 52 years, 63 years and 86 years respectively.

GENDER – WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Gender plays a vital role in all aspects. According to the Hindu Undivided Family Law, the right to hold property is vested in the hands of the male members and not in female members. Normally male children are having more rights to get the parental properties than the female children. Hence, to get property share from their parents, to some extend the sons try to look after their parents. But the parents are taken care more by the female children than the male children. If a parent having female child is lucky enough compared with male child. But now – a – days, by Law both the male and female children are having equal rights to get the parental properties and at the same time the taking care of parents by their children in general (both male and female) declined. In this regard, the researcher wanted to classify the sample respondents on the basis of their gender. Accordingly, the researcher classified the respondents on the basis of gender and the same is shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

GENDER – WISE CLASSIFICATION OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	113	37.67
2.	Female	187	62.33
Total		**300**	**100**

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

It is evident from Table 2 that out of 300 respondents studied, 187 (62.33 per cent) respondents are female and the remaining 113 (37.67 per cent) respondents are male. In the study area, the female inmates are more in number compared to male inmates. The main reason behind this is no property, no savings in the names of female members. Even though there is a Law for equal property rights for male and female, the male members are dominating and give only very less share to their female heir. This tendency should be changed and equal property share should be given to the female members. Because of this share of parental property, the women at the old age can be taken care of by their wards.

SOCIO – ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The researcher wanted to identify the socio – economic status of the sample respondents in the study area, because the ultimate aim of the researcher is to identify from which socio-economic group, more number of people come and reside in the old age homes. Accordingly, the researcher has collected information and the same in depicted Table 3.

TABLE 3

SOCIO – ECONOMIC STATUS OF THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Upper Class	12	4.00
2.	Middle Class	124	41.34
3.	Lower Middle Class	105	35.00
4.	Upper Lower Class	40	13.33
5.	Lower Class	19	6.33
Total		**300**	**100**

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Table 3 shows that out of 300 respondents, 124 (41.34 per cent) respondents are from middle class family. Another 105 (35.00 per cent) respondents are from lower middle class family. The remaining 40 (13.33 per cent), 19 (6.33 per cent) and 12 (4.00 per cent) respondents are from upper middle, lower and upper class families respectively. It is understood from this table that a majority of the respondents are from middle class and lower middle class. If we put together nearly 76 per cent of the sample respondents fall under these socio-economic groups. From this table, one can come to the conclusion that the middle and lower middle socio-economic groups are not taking care of their elders and sent them to the old age homes.

NATURE OF HOME

The old age homes are of two types. One is a free home, where the inmates have not paid any fees for the stay and the facilities provided. The second type of home is a paid home, where the inmates have to

pay money to the home authorities for the stay, facilities provided and the care taken. In this context, the researcher wanted to classify the sample respondents on the basis of nature of homes. Accordingly, the researcher has collected and classified the information and the same is presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
NATURE OF HOME

Sl. No.	Nature of Home	No. of Homes	Percentage
1.	Free Home	12	40.00
2.	Paid Home	18	60.00
Total		**30**	**100**

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Table 4 clearly depicts that out of 30 homes taken for the study, 18 (60.00 per cent) homes are paid homes. The remaining 12 (40.00 per cent) homes are free homes. It is identified that out of 300 respondents, 180 (60.00 per cent) respondents are staying in paid homes and the remaining 120 (40.00 per cent) respondents are staying in free homes. It is inferred from this table that nearly 2/3rd of the sample respondents are staying in paid homes. It means money is not a problem.

FEES PAID BY THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

The researcher wanted to aware the money paid by the sample respondents as fees to the old age homes. Accordingly, the researcher has collected the information about the amount of fees paid by the sample respondents and the same is given in Table 5.

TABLE 5
FEES PAID BY THE SAMPLE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Fees (in Rs.)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Below 1500	112	62.22
2.	1500 – 3000	44	24.45
3.	Above 3000	24	13.33
Total		**180**	**100**
Minimum Fee = Rs.1000		**Average Fee = Rs. 2250**	**Maximum Fee = Rs.5000**

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

It is inferred from Table 5 that out of 180 respondents stayed in the paid homes, 112 (62.22 per cent) respondents pay a monthly fees of below Rs. 1500 to the home authorities. The remaining 44 (24.45 per cent) and 24 (13.33 per cent) respondents pay the amount ranges from Rs. 1500 to Rs. 3000 and above Rs. 3000 per month as fees to the old age home authorities. The researcher estimated the maximum, minimum and the average amount of fees paid by the inmates and the same is Rs. 5000, Rs. 1000 and Rs. 2250 respectively.

BASIC AMENITIES IN OLD AGE HOMES

The researcher wanted to identify the basic amenities available in the old age homes in the study area. Accordingly, the researcher has collected the information and the same is given in Table 6.

TABLE 6

BASIC AMENITIES IN OLD AGE HOMES

Sl. No.	Particulars	Yes	No	Total
1.	Kitchen	27 (**90.00%**)	03 (**10.00%**)	30 (**100%**)
2.	Dining Room	17 (**56.67%**)	13 (**43.33%**)	30 (**100%**)
3.	Television	28 (**93.33%**)	02 (**6.67%**)	30 (**100%**)
4.	Library	05 (**16.67%**)	25 (**83.33%**)	30 (**100%**)
5.	Garden	27 (**90.00%**)	03 (**10.00%**)	30 (**100%**)
6.	Swings	04 (**13.33%**)	26 (**86.67%**)	30 (**100%**)
7.	Newspaper	28 (**93.33%**)	02 (**6.67%**)	30 (**100%**)
8.	Trips to Religious Place / Movie / Picnic	08 (**26.67%**)	22 (**73.33%**)	30 (**100%**)
9.	Temple inside the Premises	28 (**93.33%**)	02 (**6.67%**)	30 (**100%**)
10.	Pooja Room	24 (**80.00%**)	06 (**20.00%**)	30 (**100%**)
11.	Doctor's Room	05 (**16.67%**)	25 (**83.33%**)	30 (**100%**)
12.	Physiotherapy Centre	03 (**10.00%**)	27 (**90.00%**)	30 (**100%**)

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Many basic facilities are provided by the old age homes to their inmates. It is understood from Table 6 that a majority of the homes are having Television, Garden, Kitchen, Temple and Pooja rooms in their premises itself. Separate dining room and doctor facilities are not available in many homes.

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ON BASIC AMENITIES IN THE OLD AGE HOMES ACCORDING TO NATURE OF HOMES

Table 7 depicts the results of ANOVA on various basic amenities available in the old age homes on the basis of nature of homes. Nature of home is the independent factor and the basic amenities in the old age homes such as availability of kitchen, dining room, television, library, garden, swings, newspaper, trips to religious place / movie / picnics, temple inside the premises, pooja room, doctor's room and physiotherapy centre are the dependent factors.

TABLE 7

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE ON BASIC AMENITIES IN THE OLD AGE HOMES ACCORDING TO NATURE OF HOMES

Facilities Available		Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F – ratio	Significance
Kitchen	Between Groups	0.164	1	0.164	1.816	0.179**
	Within Groups	26.836	298	0.090		
	Total	**27.000**	**299**			
Dining Room	Between Groups	0.000	1	0.000	0.000	0.996
	Within Groups	73.530	298	0.247		
	Total	**73.530**	**299**			
Television	Between Groups	0.002	1	0.002	0.036	0.849
	Within Groups	18.664	298	0.063		
	Total	**18.667**	**299**			
Library	Between Groups	0.014	1	0.014	0.101	0.751
	Within Groups	41.653	298	0.140		
	Total	**41.667**	**299**			
Garden	Between Groups	0.413	1	0.413	4.624	0.032**
	Within Groups	26.587	298	0.089		
	Total	**27.000**	**299**			
Swings	Between Groups	0.046	1	0.046	0.395	0.530
	Within Groups	34.621	298	0.116		
	Total	**34.667**	**299**			
Newspaper	Between Groups	0.002	1	0.002	0.036	0.849
	Within Groups	18.664	298	0.063		
	Total	**18.667**	**299**			
Trips to Religious Places / Movies / Picnics	Between Groups	0.036	1	0.036	0.184	0.668
	Within Groups	58.630	298	0.197		
	Total	**58.667**	**299**			
Temple inside the Premises	Between Groups	0.002	1	0.002	0.036	0.849
	Within Groups	18.664	298	0.063		
	Total	**18.667**	**299**			
Pooja Room	Between Groups	0.009	1	0.009	0.056	0.813
	Within Groups	47.991	298	0.161		

	Total	**48.000**	**299**			
Doctor's Room	Between Groups	0.383	1	0.383	2.394	**0.123**[**]
	Within Groups	47.617	298	0.160		
	Total	**48.000**	**299**			
Physiotherapy Centre	Between Groups	0.036	1	0.036	0.400	**0.527**
	Within Groups	26.964	298	0.090		
	Total	**27.000**	**299**			

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

5 per cent Level of Significance

The row labeled between groups gives the variability due to kitchen; the row labeled within groups gives variability due to random error. The result shows that, p – value is 0.179, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and concluded that there is no significant relationship between kitchen facilities available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

Regarding dining rooms available in the old age homes, the results shows that p – value is 0.996, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between dining rooms available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The results of availability of television available in the old age homes show that, p – value is 0.849, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between television facilities available in the old age homes and the nature of homes in the study area.

Regarding library facilities available in the old age homes, results show that p – value is 0.751, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between library facilities available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The result of the garden facilities available in the old age homes show that, p – value is 0.032, which is less than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been rejected and concluded that there is a significant relationship between garden facilities available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The results of swings facilities show that, p – value is 0.530, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between swings facilities available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The results of newspaper facilities show that, p – value is 0.849, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significance relationship between newspaper available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The result of the trips to religious places / movies / picnics show that, p – value is 0.668, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is

concluded that there is no significant relationship between trips to religious places / movies / picnics organized in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

Regarding the temple inside the premises of old age homes, the results shows that p – value is 0.849, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between temple inside the premises of the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The results of pooja room available in the old age homes show that, p – value is 0.813, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between pooja room available in the old age homes and the nature of home.

The results of the availability of doctor's room in the old age homes show that, p – value is 0.123, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between doctor's room available in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

The results of the availability of physiotherapy centre show that, p – value is 0.527, which is greater than the five per cent level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis has been accepted and it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between availability of physiotherapy centre in the old age homes and the nature of homes.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

The study found that most of the inmates of the old age homes are economically dependent and less educated. Further, the health conditions of the inmates are not satisfactory. In this regard, the researcher has made the following suggestions to improve the status of the inmates of the old age homes:

- In the olden days, most of the people were in joint family and had a chance to live with each other and share their views and ideas. It has created affection and attachment with each other. Give and take policy was inculcated among the children in their younger age and the most important is nurtured the habit of giving respect and taking care of the elders. But in the modern age, we are all separated and forgotten the values of joint family system and follow nuclear family, no chance or rare chance for meeting relatives, helping one another *etc*. Totally the moral and social values developed by our forefathers are depleted. Sending our fathers and mothers to the old age homes is the reflection of the above said. Hence, all the parents should take initiate to impose the value of joint family system, respect to the elders *etc*., to avoid the mushroom growth of the old age homes.

- Parents always want to spend all their earnings for the growth and development of their children with the faith that they will take care in the future. Because of that only many parents won't make any savings for their future. It means, they think only about the future of their children not their future. But now – a – days, many children not react according to their parent's action. Hence, it is safe, if the parents make some savings for their future.

- Due to the age factor and loneliness, the elderly people in the old age homes are affected both physically and mentally. They should need counseling to remove mental stress and health facilities to free from

physical problems. To examine the health conditions and provide medical facilities to the inmates of the old age homes, geriatric homes should be constructed by the Government.

- The values and importance of elders in the family should be imparted to the young minds and make them safeguard every ones parents and control the mushroom growth of the old age homes. Severe Law should be introduced in this regard. Counselling should be given to both the parents and children.

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