

Empowering Seniors: Case Study Perspectives On Wellbeing Enhancement

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	As the global population of older adults continues to grow, nations worldwide are witnessing a significant demographic shift. Both developed and developing countries are facing the challenges and opportunities associated with this aging population. Consequently, international frameworks have emerged to address the specific needs and rights of older individuals. This research paper, "Empowering Seniors: Case Study Perspectives on Wellbeing Enhancement," delves into the multifaceted strategies that bolster the wellbeing of the elderly population. Through an in-depth analysis of various case studies, the research highlights effective interventions and programs tailored to enhance physical, emotional, and social wellbeing among seniors. The findings underscore the importance of personalized approaches, community involvement, and innovative practices in creating a supportive environment for aging individuals. By exploring diverse perspectives and real-life applications, this study provides valuable insights into best practices for empowering seniors to lead fulfilling and healthy lives. Keywords: Senior citizens, Wellbeing, Wellness, Community Development, Living Alone

Introduction

As the global population of older adults continues to grow, nations worldwide are witnessing a significant demographic shift. Both developed and developing countries are facing the challenges and opportunities associated with this aging population. Consequently, international frameworks have emerged to address the specific needs and rights of older individuals. It is imperative for each nation not only to endorse these provisions but also to implement them effectively, ensuring that older individuals can fully exercise their rights and maintain a dignified quality of life.

In India, historical traditions once revered the elderly, with joint family structures promoting communal living, resource sharing, and collective responsibilities, including communal meal preparation. However, the forces of globalization, urbanization, and industrialization have led to changing priorities and the breakdown of traditional family units. Consequently, many older individuals find themselves marginalized within smaller nuclear families, often experiencing neglect or reduced social support.

Recognizing that aging is a natural process, safeguarding the rights and well-being of older individuals is crucial. International conventions have established comprehensive laws and policies aimed at promoting various aspects of elderly well-being, including physical and mental health, access to education and employment opportunities, encouraging healthy aging practices, ensuring adequate healthcare and nutrition, providing eldercare facilities, and supporting caregivers. A thorough examination of both international conventions and domestic legislation is essential to identify gaps and opportunities for further action.

This research paper explores the multifaceted strategies that bolster the wellbeing of the elderly population through case study analysis. By examining effective interventions and programs tailored to enhance physical, emotional, and social wellbeing among seniors, this study aims to provide valuable insights into best practices for empowering seniors to lead fulfilling and healthy lives.

Literature Review

Global Demographic Shifts and Aging

The global population is aging at an unprecedented rate. According to the United Nations, the number of people aged 60 and older is expected to double by 2050, reaching nearly 2.1 billion. This demographic shift presents both challenges and opportunities for societies worldwide. An aging population requires increased healthcare services, social support systems, and age-friendly environments.

International Frameworks for Elderly Rights

International conventions, such as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the United Nations Principles for Older Persons, provide comprehensive guidelines to promote the rights and well-being of older adults. These frameworks emphasize the importance of ensuring that older individuals can fully participate in society, access healthcare and social services, and live with dignity.

Changing Family Structures in India

In India, traditional family structures have undergone significant changes due to globalization, urbanization, and industrialization. The joint family system, which once provided a strong support network for the elderly, is increasingly being replaced by nuclear families. This shift has led to reduced social support and increased instances of neglect and isolation among older adults.

Wellbeing Enhancement Strategies

Various strategies have been implemented worldwide to enhance the wellbeing of older adults. These include community-based programs, healthcare initiatives, social support networks, and policies aimed at promoting active and healthy aging. Personalized approaches that consider the unique needs and preferences of older individuals are crucial for the success of these interventions.

Methodology

This research employs a case study approach to examine the effectiveness of various wellbeing enhancement strategies for older adults. Data was collected through qualitative methods, including interviews with older individuals, caregivers, and professionals working in eldercare, as well as reviews of relevant literature and policy documents. The case studies were selected to represent a diverse range of interventions and programs from different

Changing Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal relationships are ongoing interactions between members that involve the mutual fulfillment of primary and secondary needs. The main basis of relationships is the self-disclosure, being compassionate, honest, flexible, accepting, patient, respect, regards, knowing of personal and intimate information about each other. There are different types of interpersonal relationships that we form with other people.

Interpersonal relationships are important for your overall physical and emotional happiness. Relationships help fighting loneliness and also giving you a sense of purpose in life. For instance, the closeness with family and friends is an essential part of your social support. All over the world changes in interpersonal relationship are strongly appearing in a family structure.

The interpersonal relationships can be analyzed by through cohesion, flexibility and communication within family. Cohesion means togetherness, defined as the emotional bonding that family members have with one another. The level of cohesion can be identified and measured by emotional bonding, boundaries, coalitions, time, space, friends, decision-making, interests and recreation that the family members share with each other.

There are four levels of cohesion ranging from disengaged (very low) to separated (low to moderate) to connected (moderate to high) to enmeshed (very high). It is generally considered that separated and connected levels of cohesion create a balanced family whereas families with disengaged or enmeshed level of cohesion are generally seen as unbalanced family (problematic for relationships over the long term).

When cohesion levels are very high (enmeshed systems), there is too much consensus within the family and too little independence. On the other hand extreme (disengaged systems), family members do their own thing, with limited attachment or commitment to the other family members.

Family systems where cohesion level is moderate or moderate to high tends to be more functional across the life-cycle whereas extreme level of cohesion (i.e. disengaged or enmeshed) lead to an imbalanced family. In disengaged relationship family members have little involvement and seeking personal separateness and independence. Individuals often do their own things, separate time, space and interests predominate, and members are unable to turn to one another for support and problem-solving. In an enmeshed relationship there is an extreme amount of emotional closeness, and loyalty is demanded. Individuals are very dependent on each other and reactive to one another. There is a lack of personal separateness and little private space is permitted. The energy of the individuals is mainly focused inside the family and there are few outside individual friends or interests.

The second dimension Familial interpersonal relationships are flexibility, which refers to the amount of change in its leadership, role relationships and relationship rules. This concept includes leadership (control, discipline), negotiation styles, role relationships and relationship rules. The focus of flexibility is on how systems balance stability versus change. There are four levels of flexibility, which range from rigid (very low) to structured (low to moderate) to flexible (moderate to high) to chaotic (very high). As under cohesion, balanced levels of flexibility (i.e. structured and flexible) are more conducive to family relationships than unbalanced level of flexibility (i.e. rigid and chaotic).

Families with the rigid rules, roles and single handed leadership have a tendency to maintain the status quo. Under flexible relationship, families have an open platform for decision making, negotiations are allowed, active involvement of children, roles are shared and rules can be changed whenever appropriate.

Communication is the third dimension of interpersonal relationships, and is measured in terms of listening skills, speaking skills, self-disclosure, clarity, continuity tracking, and respect and regard among the family members. The listening skills involve empathy and attentive listening. Speaking skills include speaking less for oneself and more for others. Self-disclosure relates to sharing feelings about self and the relationship. Tracking is staying on topic, and respect and regard relate to the affective aspects of the communication and problem-solving skills. It has been considered that a family with good communication between family members is balanced, whereas an unbalanced family tends to have poor communication.

The interrelationships within family can also be analysed in terms of the types- i.e. conjugal, filial and fraternal. Traditionally, families are considered to be the strongest unit where the filial and fraternal relationships among members are stronger and conjugal relationships are weaker, and most of the time compromised. Similarly when we talked about the authority pattern within the traditional families, the eldest male member (who was popularly known as the *karta or mukhiya*) is the in-charge of family matters and is highly controlling. The decisions taken by the *karta* are binding on family members, with limited scope for negotiations. The roles are strictly defined and the rules do not change.

With the important role of *karta*, the power structure was clearly defined which was acceptable to all. In the same way, younger generation members listened to the elder people. Not a single person dared to defy the order of the *karta*. Such abidance to family norms was there due to the socialization through the childhood period. All these aspects of authority pattern within family make it a healthy and happy unit where no ideological clashes arise between two generations.

The chances of any clashes between the generations were also avoided in the ashram system. Ashram system, which was more organized, excluded any possibility of conflict between the individual and society. The *ashrama* way of living appears to be a solid foundation for social order. The most striking element of this pattern is that individual growth and social wellbeing are not mutually exclusive. This system is discussed in the following section.

Ashram Vyavastha

The word *ashram* signifies a halt, a stoppage on a stage in the journey of life just for the sake of rest in a sense in order to prepare oneself for the further journey. The *Ashramas* then are to be regarded as resting place during one's journey on the way to final liberation which is the final aim of life (Prabhu)¹².

The *Ashram*³ *Dharma* or *vyavastha*, or system, was a well-established socio-religious institution and was followed in ancient Indian society. It refers to the Hindu way of life, according to which of a person's life is well-ordered into distinct stages. The theory of *Purusharthas* finds its actual manifestation in this Hindu scheme of ashrams. The *ashrama* system is linked to a larger social structure known as the "*Varna System*," which governs individual obligations (Rao, n.d.)⁴.

The notion of ashram system demonstrates the fundamental meaning and purpose of human life. He must live it with great care and consideration. Through the *Ashrama* doctrine, the great seers of Indian society provided rules for the design of man's life. The *ashrama* philosophy excludes any possibility of conflict between the individual and society. The *ashrama* way of living appears to be a solid foundation for social order. The most striking element of this pattern is that individual growth and social wellbeing are not mutually exclusive⁵.

According to the Ashram system, the life of an individual was to be regulated harmoniously according to the identifiable stages of life. It was believed that an individual has to perform different functions and duties in his life time, which fall into four stages (*Ashrams*), namely -*Brahmcharya* (studentship); *Grihastha* (householder); *Vanprastha* (forest dweller); *Sanyas* (ascetic) coinciding with the physical, psychological,

² Prabhu, P.H. *Hindu Social Organisation- A study of the Socio-Psychological and ideological Foundation*. Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd.: Bombay.

³ The word *Ashrama* is originally derived with the combination of two words "A" and "Srama" where "A" means all around and "Srama" means "to exert oneself". Thus, *Asrama* means all round training and development of an individual

⁴ Rao, C. N. *Historical Moorings of the Indian Society*. S. Chand Publications.

⁵ Ibid (See Rao).

familial, social and spiritual needs. This system was meant to maintain discipline, peace and harmony in the family and society. Each of the stages was intended to prepare for the next (Tiwari & Pandey, 2013)⁶.

Contextualizing the Ashram System in Contemporary India

In these modern days, people do not subscribe to the norms of the Ashram system as such, but reference to this system can be made here in the current study to understand how it resolved the intergenerational conflicts and clashes.

In the *brahmacharya* and *grihasta* ashram stage, the chances of intergenerational clashes were not there. In the *brahmacharya* stage, the boys went to *gurukul* and spent most part of their adolescence and youth there. The inmates of *gurukul* were groomed to take up their adult roles. As they entered the stage of *grihasta* ashram after their marriage was solemnized, their parents set out for forests, demarcating the *vanaprastha* stage for the parents. From *vanaprastha* stage they moved to *sanyasa*- since the two generations of parents and children is separated out in the later two stages, the chances of intergenerational clashes did not arise.

If we analyse today's situation in contemporary society, the stage of *grihasta ashram* (householder) initializes with marriage of a young couple, whereby the family of procreation begins. The married couple raise their children and live with them, and perform their parental duties towards their children till the time the latter are capable to care of themselves. They continue to live together sharing common house and hearth under the family system. The activities under *brahmacharya* and *grihasta ashram* are undertaken here. Since the joint family comprises of three or more than three generations, we can see intergenerational interactions taking place. The chances of intergenerational clashes are resolved by strictly adhering to the power structure where *karta* is imposing and his decision and orders have to be followed by all. Since people do not enter into the stage of *vanaprastha* and *sanyasa*, they spend most of their life in the former two stages. i.e. the *brahmacharya* and *grihasta* ashram stage. Today the life of householder has extended upto 75 years (on average) instead of 60 years and householder remains engrossed in domestic affairs till the life ends. There is hardly any time left for a man to repay the sacred debt, which he owes his community and his nation.

The *vanaprastha ashram* marked renunciation and detachment for the aging persons under ashram system. Renunciation and detachment of parents from their familial responsibilities does not occur now since parents do not leave their families. This means not forming new material attachments with things and people, decreasing attachments with existing relations or from all previous attachments, and letting go of your ego, feelings of superiority or inferiority, revenge, fear and things that are beyond human control are not possible now.

In the context of nuclear families, the intergenerational clashes are somewhat resolved as the children from a household establish their own family of procreation after they get married.

The issue now arises with respect to the elderly people- what happens to them as they grow old and are not active in terms of earning their livelihood. What is the nature of interpersonal relations in the modern families and how these relations can be evaluated in terms of cohesion, flexibility and communication are there in the modern family?

For the sake of this detachment from their relations, elders are accepting the concept of modern *vana*. These modern *vana* can be retirement homes, community livings and living alone at home (without the responsibilities of the families, children, and grandchildren).

All of us want to transit into the *vanaprastha* stage on our own terms, with careful preparation with deliberate and masterful strides. We do not want to be dragged, screaming and protesting by the merciless time. We have spent our entire childhood and young adulthood deliberately, or accidentally, preparing for adulthood through studying, learning occupational skills, gaining societal behaviour skills and many more in order to have the best possible adult life. Similarly, in our adult life, we should dedicate a portion of our time to preparing for our retirement age, which for many of us may be quite long.

So the reason being, after fulfilling family responsibilities in the *Grihasta stage*, the aging or aged people prefer to devote their life for themselves and detachment from previous attachments. Such type of detachment adopted by the certain segment of elders, who are preferring to stay either in retirement home or alone at home.

Data Presentation

This section of the chapter consists of the case studies collected from the field. There are 15 case studies out of which 8 are studies of senior citizens who stay at a retirement homes and 7 are studies about elderly who reside in their own homes. The names of the participants have not been mentioned here to maintain their privacy and keep their information confidential.

Case studies of elderly who live in the retirement homes:

⁶ Tiwari & Pandey(2013). The Indian concepts of lifestyle and mental health in old age. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, 55(Suppl 2), S288-292. <https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5545.105553>

S.No	Stay	Personal Descripti on	Case Study Description	Reason s
Case Stud y 1	Retireme nt Home	Age: 75 Sex: Female Status: Unmarried Occupati on: Retired as class 1 Gazetted officer from the Indian Railway Family: Nil	She has been staying in a retirement homes for the past 15 years. I met her during an interaction in initial field work in retirement home. She is active in her daily chore work and also had a very caring nature not only for me also for other residents. As, she is among those residents who saw various changes both positive and negative in retirement home. During my interactions, he told about her life achievements when she worked with drama segment of Doordarshan and gave solo performances on various fronts. She has a wonderful voice for which she was appreciated for singing in retirement as well as in her career tenure. Due to ageing she stopped singing. For her daily routine she had an addition help for day to day activity with the help provided by retirement home. Her help stays with her from early morning since evening or if required she stays with her at night. Her help is staying with her from last 12 years. The respondent keeps herself engaged with the activities conducted within the compound, chit chatting only with whom she is comfortable, watching television and sometimes go outside campus for buying daily chore things. She is a great follower of God Sai Baba, so her every conversation starts and ends with the blessings of God Sai Baba. With all her life experiences he told the reason for not getting married and decision for shifting to this retirement home. She has a property in Dwarka which she sold and fixed the amount in bank. With the help of interest and the pension she is receiving from the railways, she is leading a quality life. Inspite of having property at the time of retirement she chose to stay in the retirement home for safety issues. She felt that staying alone in her house could be a security problem. If she fell ill, there would be no immediate assistance. There is also a risk of falling prey to the scams targeting elderly. She decided to live here, although the pension she is receiving from the railway was never sufficient for her maintenance in retirement home.	Safety
Case Stud y 2		Age: 67 Sex: Female Status: Widow Occupati on: owner of stationery shop Family: single daughter	The woman used to own a stationery shop along with her husband in Shahdara. They also had a house with a small garden. But after the demise of her husband, the responsibility of handling the shop came on her shoulders. For some years she managed to handle the business but with the age it became difficult for her to manage all the work. She has one daughter who is married and settle down in her life. It is difficult for her to come and help her mother with the shop. Moreover, she also has a family to take care of. Thus, the daughter suggested her mother to shift to the retirement home. This way she can be mentally free on the part of her mother. For bearing the expenses of the retirement home she sold her one property and gave house on rent. Alongwith with the amount received after selling property her daughter and son in laws also ready to help her with additional expenses. In an interaction with her she told that after the demise of husband I didn't had much interest in doing work either at shop and home. So I got bored and	Indepen dence

			emotionally weak. After looking at deteriorating mental health my daughter and son-in-law suggested to shift with them but my daughter also stays with her in-laws, so the situation was not friendly. But on the insist of their children I shifted with them but after sometimes I shared my concern to daughter. After understanding my concern she suggested me to shift in retirement home which was near to her residence. I stayed there for 2 months but I was not comfortable with the services provided for them. Then I got to know within the retirement home about the environment and services of other retirement home. So I planned to shift their. After shifting to new retirement home I keep myself engaged with the activities and I also have a group of same group inmates. With whom we twice or thrice a week we plan to go outside campus for changing our life routine. Alongwith this I chitchat, watch television in common area with other inmates and go for walk within the campus and sometimes park near to our retirement home. This way I pass my day. In interaction she also told about the services provided by the retirement home and how much those services are beneficial for making them keeping happy and both mentally and physically fit.	
Case study 3		Age: 66 Sex: Male Status: Unmarried Occupation: Retired as registrar from Central Government University Family: Nil	He had a house in Delhi, but due to health issues related to diabetes and arthritis, he decided to stay in a retirement home. He was single and did not have additional family responsibilities. At the retirement home he is staying from last 4 years. In an interaction he told the reasons for preferring to stay here. He had many health issues for which he needs pertaining to specific diet plan. Its tough to manage that diet plan at home and here all food requirements are met at proper time. Additionally, the retirement home also provides facilities for physiotherapy, proper medication and doctor consultation, which helped in recovering from his health problems. During interaction he shared his life experience and told his daily schedule. In daily routine he wake up early morning for walk (for atleast 45 minutes) afterwards spend some quality time with other age-mates in park. Then after breakfast I read newspaper and solve newspaper Sudoku and puzzles. After lunch I take a nap for relaxing a body. Then afterwards spend quality time with the other residents of retirement home in common area till dinner time. This regular schedule keep me active and mentally fit. While interacting with him I noticed that he is having swelling, so asked the reason. He responded that i came yesterday after 17 days trip with friends and I have an arthritis it happens whenever season change.	health
Case Study 4		Age & Sex: Husband age – 71 and Wife age – 66 Status: Couple Occupation: The husband	Initially, the couple got settled in Bangalore after retirement of the husband, where their son works. Later on they shifted to parental home i.e. district – Bulandshar, Uttar Pradesh for taking care of their property. After staying there for some time, they felt that the atmosphere did not suit them. Thus, they decided to shift to the retirement home in Mayur Vihar, Delhi, for their mental peace. From Mayur Vihar, they could easily commute by their car to their parental home for taking care of their property. They visit and stay with their son when they feel like, but did not	Mental Peace

		retired from the Army Family: One son	prefer to stay with their son permanently. Similarly, their son also came and stayed with his parents during holidays. Everybody was happy with this arrangement. In an interaction they told that we are doing this arrangement from last 3.5 years. After retirement we didn't setup our base (home), as our son had started working and he got married too. So as every parents we planned to shift with son and daughter-in-law but our son had a corporate job. So in search of better opportunity he keeps moving every 2-3 years. This became tough for us and we had parental property which also we need to take care of. So we planned to move to parental home. During interaction they also clear that we are getting old so cannot do this movement activity from retirement home to parental home. May be after sometime we need to decide to stay at one place with a proper helping hand. For engaging themselves they watch TV, reading newspaper, playing chess or cards with fellow members. As this retirement home a huge where where kirtan or other activities conducted on regular basis. So passes in performing religious activities which give mental peace.	
Case study 5		Age & Sex: Husband age – 69 and Wife age – 67 Status: Couple Occupation: The male retired as Director from Water Supply Department, Delhi Family: Two sons and one daughter	In this case, respondents were living from last 3 years, before that they were living their own house with whole family of 9 members. They remained occupied with family responsibility and fed up with the arguments and tension at home. They were not able to find the mental peace. For mental peace male partner go out in the evening with their fellow members. Meanwhile wife stuck with the daily chore issues. Both respondents were very religious persons. After the husband's retirement, the couple wanted to devote their time in religious practices and visit holy places. But they were getting tied down at home with the responsibilities of their family, such as taking care of their grandchildren. They had two sons and both of them worked in the corporate sector. Their wishes particularly, husband's wish would have remained unfulfilled, if they decided to stay with their sons. So, the husband decided to shift to the nearby retirement home along with his wife. In the retirement home, people can afford to go on pilgrimages, where group tours are organized to the holy places. Thus, the couple joined these groups and fulfilled their wish for going to the pilgrimages. The couple kept on visiting their family on weekends. This made the family relations healthier and the elderly couple lived life on their own terms and conditions, and enjoyed their freedom. In interactions they told that for keeping themselves engaged we go both go for walk and do yoga which we didn't spare time at home. Here for everything we didn't need to depend on anyone. Everything we get at appropriate time. For keeping mind healthy we used to read religious book and keeping healthy conduct with our fellow members.	Like-minded people
Case study 6		Age: 75 Sex: Female Status: Widow Occupation:	In an interaction she told I shifted here after her husband's death. Till that she lives independent life with her husband but after his demise she felt alone because she don't have much to do and at every corner of house she had memories. Nearby she didn't have a friend of same mind set. So after knowing a concept of	Self respect, dignity

		on: Homemaker Family: Two sons	retirement home and facilities and atmosphere she think about moving to retirement home. Then the lady informed her sons about her decision to move to a retirement home. Her sons were married and settled in Delhi and Bangalore respectively. There were back-talks from her relatives about this decision, but she did not care much. For her, living independently with dignity matters the most. This is how she lived with her husband and all her life so she did not want to compromise on this aspects. For managing the expenses of retirement home, her husband left with pension and other financial benefits. She also told that I am fond of reading books so for engaging day I use to read books and try to summarise their stories to my fellow members. Alongwith this I try to keep myself mentally and physical fit by keeping myself occupied with various activities like meditation. Her children and grandchildren visit her and she visits them too on regular basis. However, she is happy environment we have at the retirement home where she has a company which she would not have when her sons would be away at work. In retirement home we have lot of people either service provider or the resident that's why never have a feeling of loneliness and depressed.	
Case Study 7		Age: 72 Sex: Male Status: Divorcee Occupation: Retired as Colonel from Indian Army Family: Two children (one son and one daughter)	In this case, he was staying in retirement home for last 6 years. I met him on the very first day of my visit to a concern retirement home. He was sitting in the common area waiting for his sugar free tea, as he was diabetic. Firstly, he asked me "are you relative of someone and with whom you want to meet". In response in told the name of manager to conduct an event inside a campus. Then she starts talking and told me about her past journey in armed forces. In briefing his life experience he told that I got divorced with the responsibility of kids. After serving few more years he took voluntary retirement from the Army in 1992 from the post of colonel. During her career he pursued course and took a diploma from there, after which he went to USA with their kids and worked in NASA for 14 years. His children are settled in the USA but after serving 14 years he decided to come back to India, as his relatives were here only. After coming back, he decided to stay in a retirement home, although he had his paternal house in Delhi. He did not want to stay with his relatives. His primary reason for shifting was the loneliness. In the retirement homes, he enjoyed the company of people of his age. He could interact with the fellow mates and engage in group activities thus he moved to the retirement home. He could have easily stayed with his children but he did not want to be an obligation for them. His children came to visit him, thus he maintained good relationship with them as well. During interactions he shared that for keeping my day productive I use to keeping checking my financial assets, arrange my regular visits to hospital for medical checkups. For leasure time I love to spend time with my laptop, walking, playing games with the fellow members.	Burden on Family or relatives
Case		Age &	At the time of retirement they bought a house and lived	Ideologi

Study 8		Sex: Husband age – 76 and Wife age – 78 Status: Couple Occupation: The male retired from Indian Air force and wife is homemaker Family: one son and two daughters	their till 2017. In 2017 they shifted to retirement home, as their health starts deteriorating, especially wife met with hip bone fracture. Due to that she faced lot of problem in physical movement. In house they need a multiple helps for work. As their children (son and daughter are settled in US and another daughter is doctor in Bangalore) asked them to settle with them but they prefer to stay in their house and later on in retirement home. Their preference for retirement home is the safety, healthy environment, a special care to wife (required after fracture). More importantly they don't have to bother much for domestic help because all such facilities are part of retirement homes. During interaction with them they told that we are in that phase of life when we have to take care of each other. Our most of the time passes in sorting day to day chores. With all this the female respondent enjoy her company within the campus and male respondent enjoys his. Female respondent is religious, so they both keep on arranging their trips to various places. For health checkup they use the facility of campus and for treatment they go to any empaneled hospital. So they don't need to bother much about the expenses and facilities for keeping them satisfied. In their discussion they hinted that till we are able to manage their affairs we are here in retirement home and when we need care from children then can plan to move with their son.	cal Clashes
Case Study 9	Living Alone at home	Age: 67 Sex: Female Status: Widow Occupation: Gynaecologist Family: one son	In this case, both the husband and wife were doctors and they stayed in a housing complex in Faridabad. They have a son who is an engineer and is settled in the United States. After the death of her husband, the son insisted her mother to shift with him, as he is a US citizen. Her mother was also entitled for residential visa and could live easily with him. However, the lady wanted to stay back in India and continue her practice. She wanted to help more people and keep up with the work that she was doing for decades. Her son visits her in India whenever he can and she also visits him. Both are happy with this living arrangement. Moreover, in a housing society, the safety could not be assured. Interaction with her was very energetic and enthusiastic. She is well to do in her career and not need much money for her living but she was continued with her work. For her daily chore work she has a permanent maid who works for her at home and even at clinic. In her daily routine she wakes up early morning and starts her day with newspaper. Afterwards, around 10:30am she left for clinic and stayed there till 1pm or depend upon the number of patients. Again in evening (from 4:30 pm-7:30pm) she gave time to her patients. After a hectic schedule at clinic she is not left with energy for other activities. At night time she reads research work related to her field which keeps her updated with the changes. She also shares her experience and knowledge with medical college in guest lectures. As doctors have no holidays but on weekend she try to keep herself active for social life. Mostly she spends her weekend with the relatives or friends staying nearby. For entertainment I go for shopping and watch television. For social cause I use to go to orphanage, where I spend time with kids and do their check up, if	Follow passion

			required. This activity gives me happiness and make me feel that my life is fruitful.	
Case Study 10		Age & Sex: Husband age – 69 and Wife age – 65 Status: Couple Occupation: The elderly male is retired as Colonel from the Army Family: two sons	The couple has an apartment in a housing society and both of their sons have their apartments in the same society. However, both sons prefer to have one of the meals either lunch or dinner, along with their parents. This practice has been followed by family almost every day, or 3-4 days a week. It is a happy family and none of them have any problem with this arrangement. The parents i.e. the elderly couple willingly took the responsibility for their son's domestic help's expenses. There was no compulsion from their children to do so. They lived separately as they wanted some time for themselves and wanted to live independently. They believe that living this way would maintain good bonding and there will also be a balance. During interactions with this couple they shared their life experiences in which female respondent told that she worked for handling and managing primary school till she turn 63 years. Presently she remained occupied with day to day activities. For their personnel help at home they kept one servant for mopping, cleaning and utensils. She is more passionate for cooking food by her own. The male respondent stated that I wake early in morning so routine of making tea for wife is my responsibility and also help her in daily chore work. Alongwith this he use to go to polo club trice a week where after playing he spend time with fellow members within cafeteria of the military polo club. Alongwith these activities they keep themselves engaged with their walking schedule either in the morning or evening. Purchasing daily utility items and mostly they also buy essential veggies and groceries for their sons who live in the same society. They also have a huge circle within the society of same age group (retired people). Additionally, female respondent stated that she also a kitty group of retired females from military background. So once in a week she go for that. Recently they blessed with the granddaughter (during visit she was 8 months old) so their full attention was her only. As their daughter in laws is working so in their absence for few hours they take care of her with the full time help.	Dependancy and Miscommunication.
Case Study 11		Age & Sex: Husband age – 72 and Wife age – 69 Status: Couple Occupation: Husband retired as the Director from Chemical Industry and Wife is a retired	The couple prefers to stay in their own house in Delhi, which is near the husband's brother's house. His son also lives in the Gurugram, next city to Delhi. Still they don't prefer to stay with their son. My interaction with them was absolutely different from others. As, both husband and wife were retired from the government jobs and taking good pension. Due to job and transfers in government job husband got shifted to multi places whereas wife was in school so she managed to stay at particular city for not to hamper the studies of their son. In their experience they stayed apart for one or the other reasons. Now it's time when we can stay together and wanted to spend their lives in their own way with the harmonious environment in our surrounding. So they preferred to stay in our own house instipe of shifting to Gurugram. Additionally, they stated that if we move with our childrens then we have to work accordingly and need to take addition responsibility such as taking care of	Live independently and not bound by responsibilities.

		school teacher Family: One son	house and granddaughter. Moreover we have to fix our schedule as per their convenience which later on spoils the relationship within the family. But the time of requirement we all as a family make adjustment for helping each other. They say that they love their grandchildren immensely but they do not wish to be tied down with their caretaking. They do not take any money from their son. But they give gifts rather than giving cash to their son. For engaging themselves they shared their daily routine in which they regularly go for walk and for yoga they call trainer who train them with their brother and sister-in-law, who reside in the same locality. This way they spend few hours of our day. For social life we had good family as well as friends circle in same city. So more or less one in a week we gather for good cause. For daily chore items like veggies and fruits they go to local market but for groceries we order that. For their regular help they have domestic help for whole day, who do everything except cooking food(even chopping too).	
Case Study 12		Age & Sex: Husband age – 66 and Wife age – 64 Status: Couple Occupation: Retired as Director from the Ministry of Small-Scale Industries Family: One son and one Daughter	The elderly couple had very welcoming nature and their house was maintained very nicely with approx. 100 plants in their house. They were staying with their father who was around 90 years(able to do his daily chore work). This was unique and good experience where two elders of different age group living under one roof. Here younger elderly have a responsibility towards their father for taking care of their health and basic requirement. For looking after their father and outside work they hired male help. In absence of younger elderly he can take care of their father. For daily house chore they hired another female help who do mopping, cleaning, utensil, cutting veggies and other related work. In an interaction they told that how our days passes we even don't know. The female respondent herself give hours to their plants and with that she is having a good circle within their community. So regularly she goes out with them either for walk or shopping. Whereas, the male respondent helps his wife managing plants. With that he goes for walk and spends time with members of same age group. Very regularly with their wife they go for outing and vacations with our common friends. During interaction they told about their son and Daughter-in-law who settled in the US and Daughter and Son-in-law settled in Canada. They maintain a good relationship with their children. However, they have never been to the US but their kids come to home yearly. They also do not take any kind of monetary help from their children; rather they pay for the expenditure of their children. For instance, their daughter-in-law enrolled in an MS course and the fees was very high. The entire fees were paid by the father-in-law. He did this at his own wish. Lastly, they said we don't prefer to go and stay with their children or think of settling with them because they believe that their life is here. If their son and daughter in law will come back to India in future then they will not settle down in Delhi. Their preferable location will be Bengaluru. So it will be tough for them to adjust with the changed environment.	Healthy Relationship
Case		Age: 65	In this case, the elderly couple built a house and shifted	Comfort

Study 13		Sex: Female Occupation: Homemaker and husband retired from the Indian Airforce as Technical Engine Family: Two Daughters	there. Both of their daughters are married and settled in Delhi. The husband got a stroke attack after which he was bedridden. He along with his wife was brought to their daughter's house where they stayed for almost eighteen months. The elderly woman wanted to go back to her own house and do things her way but this was a concern for her daughters and sons-in-law. Everybody felt it would be perilous to live in her house alone with their bedridden father. But the elderly woman was determined to go to her house. Therefore, the daughters arranged for a cook and domestic help to take care of the household chores. She took care of her husband's maintenance as she did not allow any nurse or caretaker to be near him or touch him. She is very happy with the decision she took, although her daughters still feel that they are at constant risk. They visit her weekly with the elderly couple's supply of medicines, pension and other necessities. During interaction she shared her engagements, her maximum time spend with her husband's activity. This regular schedule gives her stress, so for removing stress and for keeping healthy mind she use to do meditation. Her younger sister who lives nearby also visits her on regular basis which gives her happiness and feels her free from stress. She also add on one thing that her morning starts after giving breakfast to husband I spend atleast 1:30 hrs for prayer. This activity creates a positive vibe in a house.	and Independence
Case Study 14		Age & Sex: Husband age – 69 and Wife age – 65 Status: Couple Occupation: Husband retired from Delhi Police as class I officer and Wife is a homemaker Family: One daughter and two sons	In this case, the couple wants to stay at their home in Delhi after their retirement. As their both sons are well placed in career, one as class I officer in Delhi administrative job and other is placed in private sector on good position. They can live their life with comfort either at their own house or with either of son but they want to live their retirement gracefully. In interaction he told that all his kids got settle down before his retirement and he also constructed a house of three floors. His both sons live in same building on different-different floors. As all retiree he also spends a year after retirement with staying at home and looking after his parental property in nearby village. After a year he planned to invest his some savings to construct an English medium primary school in their native place, which is around 35 kms. from their residence in Delhi. With the success of one school, now they are planning to open another branch in nearby village. For the betterment of school he keeps on adding things within the compound. His step helps in providing education to village kids and employment to youngsters. During interaction he shared his schedule in early morning I left for school with driver and come back around 3pm-4pm. Afterwards have some rest and give time to wife. Generally I go for walk in evening. On weekends he gives full time to his family either it can be family work, meeting friends and relatives. He also added one more thing, his full day engagement in school make him active and capable of understanding the challenges of today's time period.	Comfort and Ideological clashes
Case Study 15		Age & Sex: Husband age – 72	The couple is staying at their home which they bought after retirement. Their house is in locality of retired governmental official where they have similar mind set of people. This was one of the important reasons why	Engagement with producti

		and Wife age – 69 Status: Couple Occupation: Husband retired from PSU and Wife is also retired as school teacher Family: One son and one Daughter	they didn't give a thought of settling with their children. Their son works with multinational company in Mumbai and daughter also works and settles down in Dubai after marriage. As they are having good relationship with children, so either of them visit each other's places. At the time of requirement we are always there for each other. Otherwise in a year we spend atleast 3 to 4 months with their kids. Among both, male partner keep themselves engaged with playing golf in morning and in evening walk or other activity either with partner or community friends whereas wife engage herself with consultancy of Tarot card reading or home affairs. As she started learning tarot card in late 50s and this skill helps her keeping busy with productive work. They both have common friends in a society. So mostly in evening they sit together in a club house or at anyones place. They also added that we are leading a quality at this age because of the savings, investment and the mediclaim benefits attached with our job. They are fond of travelling and exploring new places. So once a year they arrange their trip either in India or abroad for at least 21 days. They ended with the lovely statement if our children were greedy then they always have an intention of taking money from us but by god grace they are not taking any support but whatever we have that will be their only. This way our life is full of happiness and peace.	ve work and healthy relation ship.
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Wellness among the Elders

Wellness is a concept which defines the building up of individual's strength and optimization of their potential. *Wellness is much more than physical health*, as it promotes practicing healthy habits in daily lifestyle to attain better physical and mental health. Research shows that those elders, who embrace wellness as part of their life, receive significant benefits. *Wellness is holistic and involves interconnection between spirit, mind and body*, which are integrated, dynamic and it is directly related to the environment (Halbert Dunn⁷). Parse⁸ also opines that health and wellness are continually changing processes that are personally created and interdependent with personal commitment.

For Maslow⁹, the main goal of wellness is self-actualization, or the realization of individual personal potential. For Meyers and Sweeney¹⁰, wellness addresses the dynamic person and environmental interactions and transactions that facilitate regular growth and development among people. According to Johnson 1989¹¹, "Wellness is the process of adapting patterns of behavior to lead improved physical, emotional, and spiritual health and heightened life satisfaction.

In the light of above discussion, it can be concluded that wellness is an active process which makes individuals more aware of and make choices for their successful existence. Generally wellness makes individual more conscious, self directed, positive and more affirmative attitude. This aspect and components of wellness among elders is covered in this research

The Wellness model given by Swarbrick is the best way to explain wellness. Swarbrick's model efficiently provides eight dimensions of wellness, which include the Physical, Spiritual, Social, Intellectual, Emotional/Mental, Occupational, Environmental and Financial aspects. All the dimensions of wellness are overlapping and interrelated in such a way that each dimension can have a good or negative impact on the others. The most successful component of this model is that it focuses on people's everyday habits and routines to develop and strengthen new behaviors (Swarbrick, 1997)¹².

⁷ Dunn H.(1959). High level wellness for man and society. *American Journal of Public Health*. ;49(6):766–792.

⁸ Parse RM.(1998). *The human becoming school of thought: A perspective for nurses and other health professionals*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Ltd.

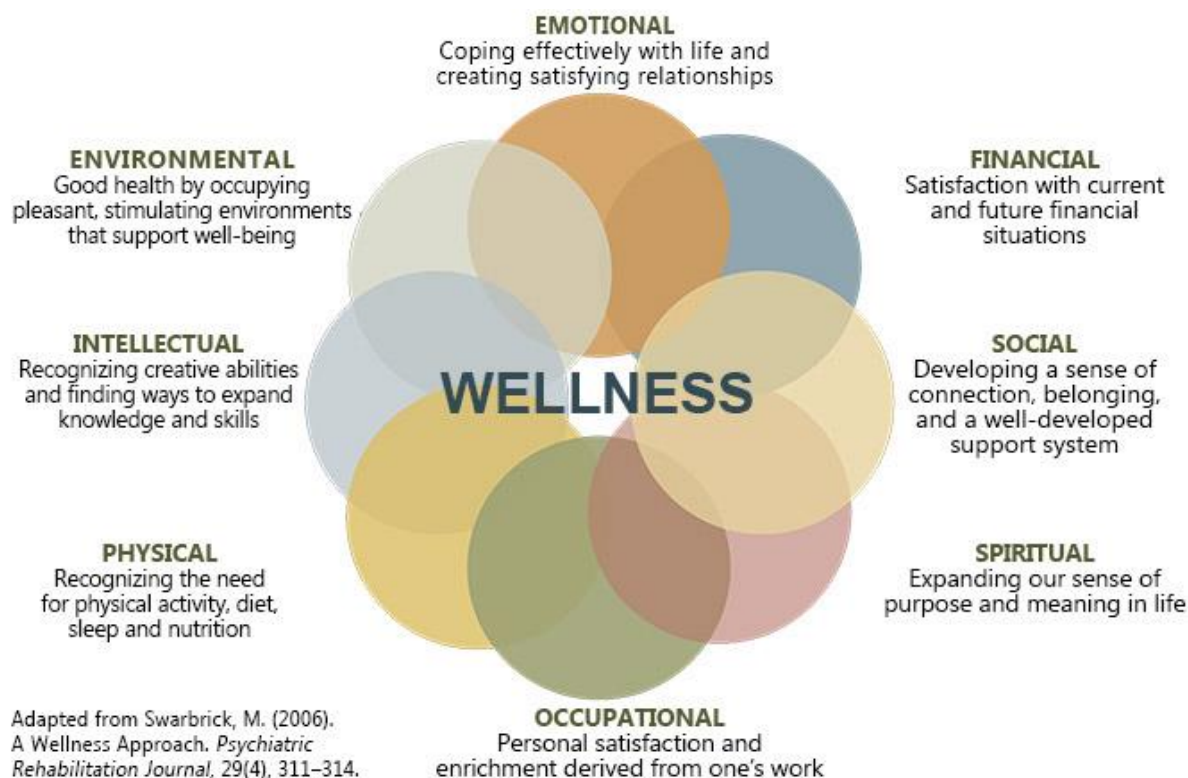
⁹ Maslow. A. H. (1954). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper.

¹⁰ Meyers JE, Sweeney TJ.(2005). The indivisible self: An evidence-based model of wellness. *The Journal of Individual of Psychology*. 67(3):270–279.

¹¹ Johnson, J.(1989). *Wellness:A context for living*. Thorofare, NJ:Slack.

¹² Swarbrick,M.(1997). A wellness model for clients. *Mental Health Special Interest Section Quaterly*, 20,1-21.

In India, senior citizens have made adjustments in their lifestyle due to the change in family patterns. The institutional facilities for the elderly are increasing which is an advantage for them. Retirement homes are the places where the elderly are shifting because they have a system in place where their Physical, Spiritual, Social, Intellectual, Emotional/Mental, Occupational and Environmental requirements are addressed. They can live there happily without any stress as there is always someone to care for them, look after their medical needs, provide personal assistance, and maintain their health issues. This has turned out to be a good option for elderly parents whose children have migrated or shifted away from them. However, they need to be financially stable to pay for the monthly expenditure at the retirement homes. With the change in the “social fabric” and modern patterns of living, we cannot ignore that the retirement homes have become a part of our social system (Rajagopal, 2017)¹³.



Source: - Adapted from Swarbrick, M. (2006). A Wellness Approach. *Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal*, 29(4), 311-314

Fig: Eight Dimensions of Wellness

The elderly are choosing their dignity and respect above all. Many elderly people are willingly deciding to move to retirement homes. They feel that they do not want to disturb their children and want to live an independent and respectful life.

In many cities “Retirement colonies” have come up where all the facilities are provided such as the library, prayer rooms, swimming pools, activity centre, hobby classes, and an option of dining and cooking, assisted medical care. The senior citizens feel that opting to live in such housing societies or retirement homes makes them and their children happy. They are assured that in case of emergency or illness immediate care can be provided and they can live a secured, safe and content life in their old age (IANS, 2014).¹⁴

Reasons for the trend of Living Alone among the Elders

From the above discussion, the study has pointed out various important factors because of which the elderly is deciding to either move to a retirement homes or live in their own homes. The overview of the trends of living alone has been illustrated in the diagram below and has been discussed in detail in the following paragraph.

The trend of living alone has been the central topic in this chapter where lifestyle of elders both in retirement home and at home has been discussed. Retirement homes are a place where individuals can avail facilities to

¹³ Rajagopal, V. (2017, August 19). *Old age homes as a fact of life*. The Hindu.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/open-page/old-age-homes-as-a-fact-of-life/article19523768.ece>

¹⁴ IANS. (2014, June 3). Living with dignity: Old-age homes choice of the elderly (Feature, with images). *Business Standard India*. https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/living-with-dignity-old-age-homes-choice-of-the-elderly-feature-with-images-114060300819_1.html

lead a better lifestyle. Wellness includes various components as described in the earlier sections (section 4.5.2) physical, mental, spiritual, environmental and emotional factors. By practicing and inculcating these healthy habits in our everyday life, we can live better.

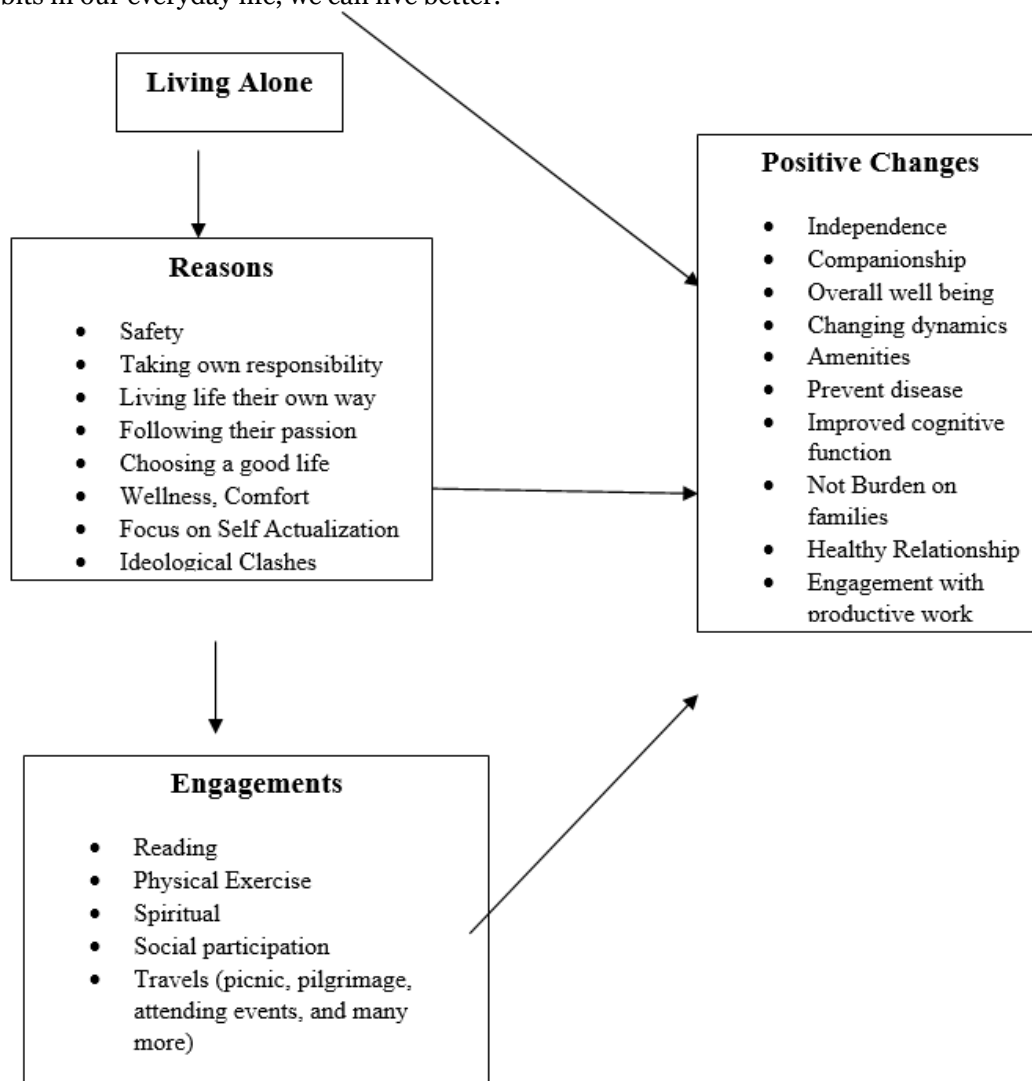


Figure: Flowchart illustrating overview of Trends of living Alone

The reasons behind the trend of living alone either at the retirement homes or alone at homes can be deciphered from the case studies given in the chapter and are represented in the diagram. These reasons can be discussed in detail here-

Safety & Security: Retirement homes have a full time security staff in their campus for monitoring the premises and providing immediate help to seniors in case of emergencies.

These homes are monitored by CCTV cameras at all vantage points with round the clock surveillance manned by trained staff. They provide 24 x 7 emergency cares with good emergency first aid, arrange for On-call doctors, ambulances on alert etc.

It includes safety, which is a major concern when it comes to older people who decide to stay alone. There could be a risk of falling or slipping on the floor, and they suffer from increased vulnerability due to weak bone joints, reduced visual and hearing abilities. Moreover, safety issues for the senior citizens also surface due to the increased crime rate against the senior citizens, as the trend shows in the year 2019 shows. In 2019, 4,897 cases for crime against senior citizens (aged above 60 years) were registered in 19 metropolitan cities as compared to 4,230 cases during 2018. This shows the increase of 15.8% during 2019 over 2018. If we look at the trends under specific crime heads, there are cases of theft (30.3%, 1,482 cases), which are crimes in highest number. These are followed by FCF (Forgery, Cheating & Fraud) with 22.5% (1,100 cases) during 2019¹⁵.

In the retirement homes, there is always a security guard and there are various safety provisions which guarantee the safety of senior citizens.

¹⁵ 2019, *Crime in India*. Vol. 1, National Crimes Record Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs.

Changing Mind Set: The next point which was gathered from the responses of the senior citizens showed that they are not scared to take their decision to live on their own. This depicts the shift in the traditional belief that children have to take care of their parents. Older parents do not want this anymore.

Sense of Freedom: Another important reason for living alone is their sense of freedom to live their life in the way they want. All of them remain very busy and occupied in their family, taking up the familial responsibilities, which does not give them time to pursue their hobbies. In their retirement life, they want to do things that please them. They do not want to be burdened with responsibilities. They are happy to help out, share responsibility, help their children and grandchildren but at the same time do not want to be bound with familial ties.

Living life their own way: Loss of independence is the major criteria among certain section of elders. They have spent their entire lives living independently, working, raising families, beliefs and taking their decisions. If they find a point when other members of family start taking decision on their behalf, they won't like it. This feeling can lead to depression, anger, or destructive behavior, or can damage the interpersonal relationships.

Following their passion: Continuing or adopting a new passion helps in successful ageing. On the basis of responses received from respondents, following passion gives a new reason to your life. It keeps you busy and could make your post-retirement life peaceful and joyful. Pursuing a passion keeps your body and mind in their best condition. It also gives a positive attitude towards life.

Choosing a good life: By collecting all positive energy, that is being churned out by the passion or from within or surroundings, keeps you feel rejuvenated. Every day appears like a new day and the regular age-related health issues or depression stay away from your surroundings.

Wellness, Comfort: Another reason gathered from respondents during interaction was their concern about their wellbeing and comfort. For being happy and healthy, undoubtedly elders need to know about physical and mental wellbeing. While living with their children, their priorities are their children and grandchildren. This daily routine deteriorates physical and mental strength among elders. Most importantly, lack of awareness regarding the changing behavioural patterns among elderly people at home can lead to be abused by their kin.

Focus on Self Actualization: Self-actualization talks about the need for personal growth and development that exists throughout your life. It keeps individual happy, maintain peace of mind, and satisfaction which can help in successful ageing. Self-actualization of the elderly resulted in resisting against the destructive effects of internal and external stress and moving in the direction of growth.

Self Esteem: While interviewing every respondent talked about self respect or self esteem. Every individual has self-esteem and they are aware of its presence and it is influenced by time and role. As they become old, somehow they tend to become dependent on their family members. This leads to make elders dependent and feel unimportant, a burden and they also feel that other people perceive them as such. For this fear they prefer to stay alone.

Ideological Clashes: Last and the foremost reason of staying alone are to keep control on family clashes. When two or more generations are living under one roof then there is a possibility of ideological clashes. So maximum of respondents stated that a healthy relationship can be maintained with distance.

Positive changes among Elders

The reasons for shifting and engagement of the elderly also add up to the changes visible among elders and situation after taking their decision for staying alone. These positive changes are briefly described below:

Level of cohesion, flexibility and communication – Respondents accepted that change in the level of cohesion, flexibility and communication is the key reason for the changing dynamics in family structure. Within family there is lack of cohesion (i.e. togetherness), discipline, leadership, control makes an unbalanced family. This leads to detachment, create a rift between generations.

Independence – Most of the participants affirmed that they decided to stay alone, so that they could live their life independently. During leisure time, one can keep oneself involved in numerous activities as per their choice. These activities get a vent out to tensions and take away a lot of burden, thus creating a feeling of independence.

Companionship – Fewer friends or a smaller friend group leads to lesser scope of interaction, culminating into isolation. The older people need to socialize more to create “social stimulation” in their lives, or else there is a high chance of slipping into depression. The responses from the case studies reflect the same. The

respondents find presence of their and friends very soothing- they share meals with them (in retirement homes) and all of them participate in activities, which keeps them happy. Otherwise, if they stayed at their homes with family, their children and grandchildren would be busy in schools/ colleges or at work, and they would have to stay alone all day.

Overall wellbeing – While staying alone either at retirement homes or alone at home, all the dimensions of wellness are taken care of. Thus, the residents experience a general boost in their wellbeing. Similarly, those elderly who choose to stay in their own house also feel that their general well being is at a higher level.

Mental peace – The residents at the retirement homes, or the elderly people who live alone in their homes seem to be satisfied and at peace with themselves. This mental peace is crucial for them in post-retirement period of their lives. A lot of people experience depression or a void after their retirement. The respondents were seen to be engaged in things as per their choice. In many retirement homes, there are workshops on healing, meditation, spiritual talks which also bring peace to the senior citizens. The opportunities for engaging in these activities are lesser for the people staying independently in their homes.

Amenities – All the facilities for better help are available in retirement homes to support the elderly. Their diet is prepared according to their health conditions and choice. Extra diet supplements, facilities for physiotherapy etc are available at the retirement homes. Recreational activities such as picnics, visits to pilgrimage, board games, and art and craft activities are organized to keep them cognitively, physically, emotionally and spiritually active. Some of the respondents mentioned that they decided to shift so that they don't have to worry about what food to eat and could go on pilgrimages freely, which brought them happiness.

Prevent disease – As immediate medical help is available in the retirement homes, some of the respondents felt it would be good to move there. Few of them said that their health improved in the retirement homes. This can be counted as a positive attribute of a retirement homes. Similarly, those elders staying alone at home are also very conscious about their health. They also go for regular medical check –ups.

Improved cognitive function – In a retirement homes, there is a possibility of better cognitive behavior because of the activities, group interactions, companionship, activities and games played by the older adults, as they could keep their brains active. This can prevent memory loss, dementia and other illness which are common in old age.

Analysis using Functional Perspective

According to Crosnoe and Elder 2002¹⁶, the Functionalists state that those individuals who have access to resources and stay agile throughout their life adapt themselves better during their old age. Under the Functionalist perspective, one of the “gerontological theory” is the **activity theory**, which emphasizes the importance of ongoing social activity. This theory also suggests that a person's self-concept is related to the roles held by that person i.e. retiring may not be so harmful if the person actively maintains other roles, such as familial roles, recreational roles, volunteer & community roles. To maintain a positive sense of self the elder person must substitute with new or alternative roles. And studies show that the type of activity does matter, just as it does with younger people¹⁷. According to Robert J. Havighurst, activity not only beneficial for the community, but it also engages older adults (both physically and mentally) and allows them to socialize with others. This increases feelings of self-worth and pleasure, which are important for happiness and longevity.

The **continuity theory** proposes that older adults maintain the same activities, behaviors, personalities, and relationships as they did in their earlier years of life. The theory considers the individual personality traits such as beliefs remains relatively constant throughout a person's lifetime (internal structure) and external structures of continuity to describe how people adapt to the their circumstances and set their goals. This is an attempt to maintain social equilibrium and stability by making future decisions on the basis of already developed social roles (Atchley 1971¹⁸; Atchley 1989¹⁹).

¹⁶ Crosnoe, Robert, and Glen H. Elder. 2002. Life Course Transitions, the Generational Stake, and Grandparent-Grandchild Relationships. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 64(4):1089–1096.

¹⁷ Diggs J. Activity Theory of Aging. In: Loue S.J., Sajatovic M. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Aging and Public Health*. Springer, Boston, 2008.

¹⁸ Atchley, R. C. (1971). Retirement and leisure participations: Continuity or crisis? *The Gerontologist*, 11, 13-17. http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/geront/11.1_Part_1.13

¹⁹ Atchley, R. (1989) A Continuity Theory of Normal Aging. *The Gerontologist*, 29, 183-190. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/2519525>
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/geront/29.2.183>

This is clearly reflected in the answers of the respondents, who said that they no longer wished to do things as they were expected to. They did not subscribe to the opinions of their relatives or children. They just want to live a life with dignity- they were inclined to perform their duties and social obligations towards their children and others, but did not want to be restricted. The decision of shifting to retirement homes provided them with the opportunity to maintain their activity levels and social involvement, which is ultimately leading to a happier and healthy life.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the scenario is changing in urban India. In ancient India, the *Ashram* System was the norm where, in each stage of *Ashram* an individual was expected to do his specified duties. This system is obsolete now in modern Indian society and the various stages of the ashram system can be observed in their changed perspective, and some may have become redundant altogether.

The present discussion enlightens us about the current situation among elders. The case studies from the field give a perspective on how older adults wish to spend their lives. The chapter also highlights various reasons for the elderly people to shift to a retirement homes, or decide to stay in their own house. The availability of better specialized facilities helped them in leading a secured life. This also shows that general health is better if all the interconnected dimensions of wellness are met. The analysis also captured the activity theory and the continuity theory, which helped us to understand the changing trends among elders in a better way. This is indeed encouraging and optimistic aspect for the future.

This connects to the next chapter where some of the case studies will be discussed in detail to understand that is the elderly are genuinely living their lives independently by analyzing the determinants and engagements.