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Social problems of elderly residing in old age homes of Haryana

¹Tanvi Sharma, ²Dr. Rashmi Tyagi, ³Dr. Tamanna Sharma and ⁴Dr. Jatesh Kathpalia

¹PhD Scholar, Department of Sociology, COBS&H, CCS HAU Hisar, Haryana, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, COBS&H, CCS HAU Hisar, Haryana, India

³MPT Student, Department of Physiotherapy, UIAHS, Chandigarh University, Mohali, Punjab, India

⁴Assistant Scientist, Department of Sociology, COBS&H, CCS HAU Hisar, Haryana, India

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Corresponding Author: Tanvi Sharma

Abstract

Aging is an inevitable aspect of life, yet societal changes like urbanization and shifting family structures have left many elderly individuals vulnerable to neglect and isolation. Gender disparities and economic pressures exacerbate these challenges, leading to issues such as poverty and lack of social security. The erosion of socio-cultural values further compounds elderly people's vulnerability. Despite these obstacles, initiatives like old age homes aim to address the needs of seniors, particularly those affected by rural homelessness. By understanding and addressing these social challenges, societies can ensure that elderly individuals receive the care and support they deserve in their later years. The study was conducted in five cultural regions of Haryana to make a total sample of 200 respondents. Age, caste, family type, family size, annual income before coming to the old age home, living arrangement before entering the old age home and land holding after coming to the old age home were found to be significant with social problems of the respondents residing in old age homes. The resolution of social issues encountered by senior citizens residing in old age homes necessitates a comprehensive strategy that includes community-building events, cross-generational initiatives, peer support groups, technology integration, pet therapy, cultural engagement, volunteer involvement, counselling services, and staff development. Old age homes have the ability to provide its inhabitants with a more lively and rewarding living environment through the provision of emotional support, meaningful relationships and a feeling of community. These programmes are designed to improve the general quality of life for senior citizens residing in old age homes, reduce social isolation, and foster wellbeing.

Keywords: Aging, elderly, social security, rural homelessness, social challenges, old age home

1. Introduction

The unavoidable and natural result of human life is ageing. Once we are born, we cannot avoid or skip this stage of life, which is old age. Life expectancies were lower and extended families cared for the elderly in the pre-industrial age. Families have a duty to provide considerate and humane care. Elderly individuals were respected and admired. The onset of urbanisation and industrialization has profoundly altered social and household life on a global scale. Young people are now compelled to leave rural communities in search of employment in order to live, and the extended family has vanished. Many elderly folks are ignored, forgotten, and have no one to care for them.

Indian custom is that the younger generations or other family members have always given the elderly members of the family social security. Elder family members have a position of status and authority. The position of the elderly in the family is a good indicator of their standing in society and the nation. However, there is a decline in the death rate, which results in a continuous increase in the population of people 60 years of age and above. For many older people, this means a loss of power and status as they become more dependent (Amiri, 2018) [2]. This is due to the tremendous advancements made in the fields of medical facilities,

health, education, and other schemes or programmes for old people. Therefore, it can be concluded that this success story of the ageing of the human population has provided us with ample evidence to recognise the superiority of medical advancements, public health, economic and social development over illnesses, injuries, and other factors that contributed to the historically limited life spans.

In India, issues that older women and older men deal with differ, whether they are social, cultural, physical, psychological, or economic in nature. This is because these obstacles are interconnected, and one issue can lead to more than one issue. In terms of health, home, social, marital, emotional, and financial adjustment, older men have done better than older women (Barik and Panda, 2014) [4]. In contrast, older women were more financially reliant on their relatives. Males are often the highest earners in Indian society. Non-institutionalized elderly feel more financially secure than institutionalised elderly because our societal norms and beliefs prevent the children from leaving their elderly parents to fend for themselves in later life (Purohit, 2016) [7].

The socio-cultural value system is being depleted at the same time as occupations are becoming more diverse and less focused on agriculture, individuals who are actively

seeking employment are moving to cities in greater numbers to pursue better education, and the nuclear family structure is taking the place of the extended family. This has created issues for elderly people's security (Acharya, 2011) ^[1]. Elderly family members cannot be cared for by younger ones. Many have an ageist mind set and believe that older people can't keep up with the latest fashions and technological advancements (Thapa *et al.*, 2019) ^[8].

The issues pertaining to the elderly are becoming more prevalent, and state-level services have not yet been developed. On the other hand, the primary issues that older people deal with include health issues, poverty, domestic abuse of the elderly, and a lack of state-sponsored social security (Ashiq *et al.*, 2017) ^[3]. The fact that homelessness is a worldwide issue is tragic (Keenan *et al.*, 2019) ^[6]. In order to promote active ageing, the senior population worldwide lacks sufficient assistance from social security systems that handle critical ageing concerns such as appropriate living arrangements, economic independence, social support, and homelessness.

Elderly individuals are moving into old age homes as a result of the rise in rural homelessness (First *et al.*, 1994) ^[5]. Therefore, this study will aid in understanding senior citizens' social challenges and how they are managing them. The following goals have been incorporated into the design of this study by considering all the significant factors:

Objectives of the research

1. To study the nature and extent of social problems faced by people residing in old age homes.
2. To delineate the factors associated with the social problems of old aged people.
3. To suggest strategies to mitigate the social problems of aged people.

Methodology

Five distinct cultural pockets - Bagar, Khadar, Mewat,

Nardak, and Ahirwal - in the state of Haryana were the sites of the study. From each cultural enclave, two districts were chosen at random. Each area had twenty responders chosen specifically for the research. A total of 200 respondents were chosen, including 10 elderly male and 10 elderly female respondents who are 60 years of age or older and are reside in old age home situated in both rural and urban regions of designated districts. With the use of well-planned and controlled interview schedules, data was gathered.

Result

1. Recreational and Social life of the respondents living in the old age home

Data regarding recreational and total life of the respondents living in the old-age home is unveiled in table 1, where 98.00 percent of the respondents agreed that they had never written letters to anyone, followed by activity of playing cards with 96.00 percent, engaged in any work/business/service with 85.00 percent, reading books with 78.00 percent, member of club with 77.00 percent, listening to radio with 52.00 percent, visiting somebody's place with 50.00 percent, watching TV with 43.00 percent, exercising and doing physical activities to stay with 38.50 percent, visiting the place of worship with 32.50 percent, newspaper reading with 31.00 percent and Bhajan singing/religious activity with 11.00 percent. While on the contrary, 82.00 percent of the respondents accepted that they have been doing Bhajan singing/religious activity on daily basis followed by exercising and doing physical activities to stay fit with 44.50 percent, visiting the place of worship with 27.00 percent newspaper reading with 17.00 percent, engaged in any work/business /service with 15.00 percent, member of a club with 12.00 percent, listening to radio with the 10.50 percent, playing cards with 2.00 percent, writing letters and visiting somebody's place are the two activities which were not done by any respondent on daily basis.

Table 1: Recreational and Social life of the respondents living in the old age home

Sr. No.	Activities	Daily	Occasionally	Never
1.	Watching T.V.	18 (9.00)	96 (48.00)	86 (43.00)
2.	Listening to Radio	21 (10.50)	75 (37.50)	104 (52.00)
3.	Bhajan singing/ Religious activity	164 (82.00)	14 (7.00)	22 (11.00)
4.	Playing cards	4 (2.00)	4 (2.00)	192 (96.00)
5.	Exercising and doing physical activities to stay fit	89 (44.50)	34 (17.00)	77 (38.50)
6.	Writing letters	00 (0.00)	4 (2.00)	196 (98.00)
7.	Newspaper reading	34 (17.00)	104 (52.00)	62 (31.00)
8.	Visit somebody's place (friends/relatives)	00 (0.00)	100 (50.00)	100 (50.00)
9.	Reading books	12 (6.00)	32 (16.00)	156 (78.00)
10.	Member of club	24 (12.00)	22 (11.00)	154 (77.00)
11.	Visit the place of worship	54 (27.00)	81 (40.50)	65 (32.50)
12.	Engaged in any work/ business/ service	30 (15.00)	00 (0.00)	170 (85.00)

*Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

2. Level of satisfaction towards the recreational and social life of the respondents: It is clearly imparted by the table 2 regarding level of satisfaction towards the recreational and social life of the respondents at old age home where 89.00 percent of the respondent said that they are satisfied with the activity of Bhajan singing/religious activity followed by the activity of visiting the place of worship with 54.00 percent, exercising and doing physical

activities to stay fit with 42.00 percent, newspaper reading with 41.50 percent, listening to radio and visiting somebody's place with 38.00 percent each, watching TV with 37.50 percent, member of club with 19.00 percent, engaged in any work/business/service with 15.00 percent, reading books with 10.00 percent writing letters with 5.00 percent and playing cards with 2.00 percent. Highest percentage of the respondents that is 25.50 percent was

found among the respondents who were not satisfied with the activity of newspaper reading due to the unavailability of newspapers, followed by exercising and doing physical activity to stay fit with 21.50 percent, visiting the place of worship with 21.00 percent, watching TV with 18.50

percent, visiting somebody's place with 16.00 percent, reading books with 15.00 percent, listening to radio with 6.00 percent, member of club with 4.00 percent, and playing cards with 2.00 percent respectively.

Table 2: Level of satisfaction towards the recreational and social life of the respondents

Sr. No.	Activities	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Not Doing
1.	Watching T.V.	75 (37.50)	37 (18.50)	88 (44.00)
2.	Listening to Radio	76 (38.00)	12 (6.00)	112 (56.00)
3.	Bhajan singing/ Religious activity	178 (89.00)	00 (0.00)	22 (11.00)
4.	Playing cards	4 (2.00)	4 (2.00)	192 (96.00)
5.	Exercising and doing physical activities to stay fit	84 (42.00)	43 (21.50)	73 (36.50)
6.	Writing letters	10 (5.00)	00 (0.00)	190 (95.00)
7.	Newspaper reading	83 (41.50)	51 (25.50)	66 (33.00)
8.	Visit somebody's place (friends/relatives)	76 (38.00)	32 (16.00)	92 (46.00)
9.	Reading books	20 (10.00)	30 (15.00)	150 (75.00)
10.	Member of club	38 (19.00)	8 (4.00)	154 (77.00)
11.	Visit the place of worship	108 (54.00)	42 (21.00)	50 (25.00)
12.	Engaged in any work/ business/ service	30 (15.00)	00 (0.00)	170 (85.00)

*Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

3. Social Problems faced by the respondents residing in the old age home

The data in table 3 clearly reveal regarding social problem faced by the respondents residing in the old-age home that 82.00 percent of the respondents are not engaged into employment and only 15.00 percent of the respondents were always engaged into employment, which is also ranked I among all the social problems perceived by the respondents. Respondents who agreed that they were not provided with the transportation facilities for visiting or social ceremonies were 68.50 percent. More than half of the respondents i.e., 51.00 percent said that inmates quarrel with each other sometimes whereas 37.00 percent of the respondents said that inmates' quarrel with each other always. One-third of the respondents i.e., 33.00 percent said that they were

always involved in any social activity or group. Whereas, on the contrary 21.00 percent of the respondents accepted that they are not at all involved in any social activity or group. Old age home provides the transportation facilities for visiting/Social ceremonies was the second most prominent problem found among the social problems faced by the respondents residing in the old-age home, followed by inmates quarrel with each other, involved in any social activity/group, residents have supportive/friendly nature to each other, participate in social and cultural activities organised in old-age home, feel restriction on going out, celebrate festivals, interact to other inmates, restriction on outer world contact, restriction on making phone calls and congregate meals at rank II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI and XII respectively.

Table 3: Social Problems faced by the respondents residing in the old age home

Sr. No.	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Not at All	N=200		
					TWS	WMS	Rank
1.	Engaged into employment	30 (15.00)	6 (3.00)	164 (82.00)	534	2.67	I
2.	Old age home provides the transportation facilities for visiting/ social ceremonies	48 (24.00)	15 (7.50)	137 (68.50)	489	2.44	II
3.	Inmates' quarrel with each other	74 (37.00)	102 (51.00)	24 (12.00)	450	2.25	III
4.	Involved in any social activity/ group	66 (33.00)	92 (46.00)	42 (21.00)	376	1.88	IV
5.	Residents have supportive/ friendly nature to each other	58 (29.00)	126 (63.00)	16 (8.00)	358	1.79	V
6.	Participate in social and cultural activities organized in the old age home	91 (45.50)	78 (39.00)	31 (15.50)	340	1.70	VI
7.	Feel restriction on going out	39 (19.50)	24 (12.00)	137 (68.50)	302	1.51	VII
8.	Celebrate festivals	122 (61.00)	64 (32.00)	14 (7.00)	292	1.46	VIII
9.	Interact to other inmates	139 (69.50)	49 (24.50)	12 (6.00)	273	1.36	IX
10.	Restriction on outer world contact	16 (8.00)	20 (10.00)	164 (82.00)	252	1.26	X
11.	Restriction on making phone calls	16 (8.00)	12 (6.00)	172 (86.00)	244	1.22	XI
12.	Congregate meals	196 (98.00)	4 (2.00)	00 (0.00)	204	1.02	XII

4. Level of Social Problems faced by the respondents residing in the old age home

Table 4 clearly show the level of social problems faced by the respondents residing in the old-age home where 61.50

percent of the respondents face medium level of social problems and 38.50 percent of the respondents face low level of social problems whereas 0.00 percent of the respondents face high level of social problem.

Table 4: Level of social problems faced by the respondents residing in the old age home

Sr. No.	Level of Social Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (12-20)	77	38.50
2.	Medium (21-28)	123	61.50
3.	High (29-36)	00	00.00

5. Association between Socio-economic profile and Social Problems of the respondents

In table 5, the association between social economic variables and social problems of the respondents residing in the old-age home has been orchestrated where it can be clearly seen that age was found to be simply significant with the social problems of the respondents residing in the old-age home with chi-square value of 8.363 at 5 percent of significance level. The highest percentage of the respondents that is 75.90 percent with medium level of social problems were found among who were in their late old age that is above 80 years followed by 72.90 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problem, who belong to middle old age group that is 70 to 80 years of age group and 53.70 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problem were found among who belong from the early old age group that is 60 to 70 years of age group. Caste, family type before entering the old-age home and family size before entering the old-age home was found to be simply significant with the social problems of the respondents residing in old-age home. It can be clearly seen in the table that the highest percentage of the respondents with medium level of social problems was found among the backward class with regard to caste followed by 63.20 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems who belong from the general category, 59.00 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems who belong from the scheduled caste and 40.00 percent of the respondents belong to other backward classes. Social problem in relation to family time before entering the old-age home clearly depicts that respondents who belong from the joint family type were facing with medium level of social problem that is 70.00 percent which was also higher than the percentage from the respondents who belong from the nuclear family type that is 55.80 percent. Highest percentage that is 71.40 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems was found among the respondents who belong to a large family size which consist of 7 to 8 members in the family. Respondents education was found to be highly significant with social problems of the respondent is residing in old-age home with chi-square value of 27.709 at 1 percent level of significance where highest percentage of the respondent was found among the illiterate With social problems followed by 78.50 percent of the respondents with social problem was found who got their education up to primary level, 58.60 percent of the respondents with social problem was found among the respondents who got their education up to middle level,

51.70 percent of the respondents with social problems was found among who got their education up to high school level whereas 40.00 percent of the respondents were found with social problems among who got their education up to graduate and post graduate level. Family education was also found highly significant with the social problems of the respondent where, 72.70 percent of the respondents belong to the family whose family education was found to be low followed by 70.30 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems were found who belong to medium level of family education and 41.50 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problem was found among whose family education was high. Respondents occupation before entering the old-age home was found to be highly significant with social problems of the respondent is residing in old-age home with chi-square value of 21.726 at 1 percent of significance level where highest percentage of the respondent with medium level of social problems was found among the farmers that is 100.00 percent followed by 75.00 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problem was found among who were among entrepreneurs/ business, 60.90 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problem was found among who were involved in public sector in their occupation, 58.80 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems was found among who were homemakers and 49.50 percent of the respondents were found with medium level of social problems who were involved in private sector before. Income of the respondent before coming to the old-age home was found to be simply significant whereas income of the respondent after coming to the old-age home was found highly significant with chi-square value of 38.114 at significance level of 1 percent where 71.30 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems was found among the respondents who were earning lower level of income after coming to the old-age home followed by 20.00 percent of the respondents with medium level of social problems belong to the medium level of income group who were earning 30,000-60,000 rupees annually. Residence before coming to the old-age home, landholding before coming to the old-age home, material, possession, back at home before coming to the old-age home was found to be highly significant with the social problem of the respondent where is land holding after coming to the old-age home and living arrangement before entering the old-age home was found simply significant with the social problems of the respondent.

Table 5: Association between Socio-economic profile and Social Problems of the respondents

Socio-economic variables		Social Problems		
1.	Age (Years)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Early old (60-70)	57 (46.30)	66 (53.70)	123 (61.5)
2.	Middle old (70-80)	13 (27.10)	35 (72.90)	48 (24.0)
3.	Late Old (Above 80)	7 (24.10)	22 (75.90)	29 (14.5)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)

$\chi^2 = 8.363^*, 0.015$				
2.	Caste	Low	Medium	Total
1.	S.C.	16 (41.00)	23 (59.00)	39 (19.50)
2.	B.C.	00 (0.00)	8 (100.00)	8 (4.00)
3.	O.B.C.	12 (60.00)	8 (40.00)	20 (10.00)
4.	General	49 (36.80)	84 (63.20)	133 (66.50)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 9.172^*, 0.027$				
3.	Family Type (before entering the old age home)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Nuclear	53 (44.20)	67 (55.80)	120 (60.00)
2.	Joint	24 (30.00)	56 (70.00)	80 (40.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 4.069^*, 0.043$				
4.	Family size (before entering the old age home)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Small (upto 4)	41 (49.40)	42 (50.60)	83 (41.50)
2.	Medium (5-6)	28 (31.50)	61 (68.50)	89 (44.50)
3.	Large (7-8)	8 (28.60)	20 (71.40)	28 (14.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 7.191^*, 0.027$				
5.	Respondent's education	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Illiterate	00 (0.00)	20 (100.00)	20 (10.00)
2.	Primary	12 (23.50)	39 (76.50)	51 (25.50)
3.	Middle	12 (41.40)	17 (58.60)	29 (14.50)
4.	High school	29 (48.30)	31 (51.70)	60 (30.00)
5.	Graduate and Post Graduate	24 (60.00)	16 (40.00)	40 (20.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 27.709^{**}, 0.000$				
6.	Family Education	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Low	12 (27.30)	32 (72.70)	44 (22.00)
2.	Medium	27 (29.70)	64 (70.30)	91 (45.50)
3.	High	38 (58.50)	27 (41.50)	65 (32.50)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 16.277^{**}, 0.0003$				
7.	Respondent's Occupation (before entering the old age home)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Public sector	9 (39.10)	14 (60.90)	23 (11.50)
2.	Private sector	47 (50.50)	46 (49.50)	93 (46.50)
3.	Entrepreneur/ Business	7 (25.00)	21 (75.00)	28 (14.00)
4.	Homemaker	14 (41.20)	20 (58.80)	34 (17.00)
5.	Farmer	00 (0.00)	22 (100.00)	22 (11.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$1\chi^2 = 121.726^{**}, 0.0002$				
8.	Income of the respondent before coming to old age home (Annually)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Low (0 - 50,000 rupees)	44 (38.60)	70 (61.40)	114 (57.00)
2.	Medium (50,000 - 3,00,000 rupees)	11 (23.90)	35 (76.10)	46 (23.00)
3.	High (3,00,000 rupees and above)	22 (55.00)	18 (45.00)	40 (20.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 8.734^*, 0.0127$				
9.	Income of the respondent after coming to old age home (Annually)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Low (0-30,000 rupees)	47 (28.70)	117 (71.30)	164 (82.00)
2.	Medium (30,000 - 60,000 rupees)	24 (80.00)	6 (20.00)	30 (15.00)
3.	High (60,000 rupees and above)	6 (100.00)	00 (0.00)	6 (3.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 38.114^{**}, 0.000$				
10.	Residence before coming to old age home	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Rural	29 (27.40)	77 (72.60)	106 (53.00)
2.	Urban	48 (51.10)	46 (48.90)	94 (47.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 11.824^{**}, 0.0006$				
11.	Living arrangement (before entering the old age home)	Low	Medium	Total

1.	Husband-Wife	8 (50.00)	8 (50.00)	16 (8.00)
2.	Husband-Wife with children	18 (25.70)	52 (74.30)	70 (35.00)
3.	Widow with children	23 (37.70)	38 (62.30)	61 (30.50)
4.	Widow alone /others	16 (47.10)	18 (52.90)	34 (17.00)
5.	Another Old Age Home	12 (63.20)	7 (36.80)	19 (9.50)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 11.674^*, 0.0199$				
12.	Land Holding (before)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Land less	65 (47.10)	73 (52.90)	138 (69.00)
2.	Marginal (<2.5 ha.)	4 (18.20)	18 (81.80)	22 (11.00)
3.	Small (2.51-5 ha.)	8 (38.10)	13 (61.90)	21 (10.50)
4.	Semi medium (5.01-10 ha.)	00 (0.00)	19 (100.00)	19 (9.50)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 20.044^{**}, 0.0002$				
13.	Land Holding (after)	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Land less	77 (41.40)	109 (58.60)	186 (93.00)
2.	Marginal (<2.5 ha.)	00 (0.00)	4 (100.00)	4 (2.00)
3.	Small (2.51-5 ha.)	00 (0.00)	4 (100.00)	4 (2.00)
4.	Semi medium (5.01-10 ha.)	00 (0.00)	6 (100.00)	6 (3.00)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 9.424^*, 0.0242$				
14.	Material possession back at home before coming to old age home	Low	Medium	Total
1.	Low	23 (45.10)	28 (54.90)	51 (25.50)
2.	Medium	8 (11.40)	62 (88.60)	70 (35.00)
3.	High	46 (58.20)	33 (41.80)	79 (39.50)
	Total	77 (38.50)	123 (61.50)	200 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 35.589^{**}, 0.000$				

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

**Significant at 1 percent level of significance.

*Significant at 5 percent level of significance.

Conclusion and Suggestions

Aging is an inevitable aspect of life, yet societal changes like urbanization and shifting family structures have left many elderly individuals vulnerable to neglect and isolation. Gender disparities and economic pressures exacerbate these challenges, leading to issues such as poverty and lack of social security. The erosion of socio-cultural values further compounds elderly people's vulnerability. Despite these obstacles, initiatives like old age homes aim to address the needs of seniors, particularly those affected by rural homelessness. By understanding and addressing these social challenges, societies can ensure that elderly individuals receive the care and support they deserve in their later years. The study was conducted in five cultural regions of Haryana to make a total sample of 200 respondents. Age, caste, family type, family size, annual income before coming to the old age home, living arrangement before entering the old age home and land holding after coming to the old age home were found to be significant with social problems of the respondents residing in old age homes. In summary, the resolution of social issues encountered by senior citizens residing in old age homes necessitates a comprehensive strategy that includes community-building events, cross-generational initiatives, peer support groups, technology integration, pet therapy, cultural engagement, volunteer involvement, counselling services, and staff development. Old age homes have the ability to provide its inhabitants with a more lively and rewarding living environment through the provision of emotional support, meaningful relationships, and a feeling of community. These programmes are designed to improve the general quality of life for senior citizens residing in old age homes, reduce

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