CHAPTER - II
THEORIES RELATED TO SOCIAL GERONTOLOGY
AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In Section A of this chapter we shall consider the various theories appropriate and applicable to the present research work. There are biological theories of ageing, psychological theories of ageing and a host of sociological theories which are examined to throw light on the present research work. The biological theories of ageing include the programmed theory of ageing and the unprogrammed theory of ageing. The psychological perspectives consist of experimental psychology, developmental psychology consisting of the contributions of Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler and Erikson. From the sociological perspectives we consider structural functionalism including the consensus perspective, disengagement theory, activity theory, etc. Symbolic interactionism from the view point of Mead, Blumer, W.I Thomas, Goffman, the sub-culture theory of ageing; phenomenology, modernisation theory, social role theory and also critical social science theory. Specifically applied in this research work are the disengagement theory, the political economy of old age, symbolic interactionism and the labeling theory, the sub-culture theory of ageing and the modernisation theory.

In section B of this chapter we shall examine the research methodology applied in this research work.

Section - A

Role of Theory

A theory cannot be specifically termed right or wrong. There are theories that can be regarded as useful or profitable. A single theory cannot accurately represent a reality but it may give an insight more clearly than other theories about a particular phenomenon. The utility of a theory depends on its effective functioning, firstly to explain past events; secondly, to predict future events and thirdly to generate new theory. One function of theory is to explain facts about some existing phenomenon. Frequently facts may appear unimportant and disconnected but they may be connected by some theoretical explanation. An example of this is the similar
responses observed about bereavement, retirement and to amputation. In all these three instances may be explained by reactions to the loss of something valued. Such theorising is possible because there exists a system of relationships that connect different facts. When facts are linked theoretically together, it adds to our understanding of earlier disconnected phenomena. Use of theory enables us to summarise certain specific features which can be generalised beyond the immediate field of study. This enables theory to predict future courses. Finally, good theory should be capable of generating new theory, capable of greater explanation and prediction. Good theory should also generate testable hypotheses which results in empirical testing. Theory hence, denotes areas yet to be explored and indicate which facts to observe. In this manner, new findings and empirical generalisations emerge which are thereafter used to amend existing theory if deemed necessary (Bond, John; Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheila, 1996)

A General Introduction to Various Theories in Social Gerontology:

In social science literature, several perspectives have thrown light to the study of the elderly. The theories of disengagement, activity, labelling, modernisation, sub-culture, etc. are notable among them. None however, is considered adequate to deal with the multi faceted phenomenon of social and functional ageing.

Successful ageing, according to the Eriksonian model of life stages, is determined by the completion of expected life tasks and sense of achievement or fulfillment derived. Thus ego integrity determines success, and despair determines failure. In the ‘social role’ theory, the importance of social roles in the past and at old age are highlighted. For healthy and productive ageing, the ‘activity’ theory is generally preferred to the ‘disengagement’ theory. The society’s perception, however, still favours social retreat or disengagement for older persons. Thus, increase in longevity without any social planning for at least 15-20 years for a sizeable population is bound to create social problems and add to the mental and social health burden of society (Singh, R.R, 2002)
Classification of Various Theories Related to Social Gerontology - A Brief Outline

Before analysing the various theories related to old age, we shall consider theories related to old age, we shall consider the manner in which these theories may be classified, as cited by Bond, John; C. Peter and P. Sheila, (1996.)

I) Biological Theories of Ageing

(1) Programmed Ageing
(2) Unprogrammed Ageing

II) Psychological Perspectives

(1) Experimental Psychology
(2) Development Psychology
   a) The Development of Personality
      - Sigmund Freud
      - Carl Jung
      - Alfred Adler
      - Erik Erikson’s Stages of Life

3) Life Span Development Psychology

III) Sociological Perspectives

1) Structural Functionalism
   a) Concesus Perspective
   b) Conflict Perspective

2) Disengagement Theory

3) Activity Theory

IV) The Theory of Political Economy of old Age

1) Symbolic Interactionism
   - Mead
   - Blumer
We shall now examine and analyse these theories within the perspective of the study of old age.

**Biological Theories of Ageing**

**Programmed Ageing**

Most biological beings (including plants) undergo a process of ageing. But some simple and primitive forms of algae and amoebae may go on reproducing by simple cell division indefinitely if the environment in which they live is conducive, but more complex cells and organism appear to have a limited life-span and reproductive capacity. The two processes natural selection and the process of evolution operate together by modifying the characteristics of the ‘New’ members of a species - in other words, it is reproduction and the early part of life which are of biological significance in terms of evolution. Survival into ‘old age’ is rare in the wild, most individuals being wiped away by accident or predation before the onset of senescence. Thus, natural selection may have permitted the accumulation of genes which work to the ‘good’ of the organism in early life (When most individuals survive) even though these same genes lead to physiological decadence later in the life span (when few surviving individuals remain to be affected. It could be argued that the human being is not built or created for old age in the industrialised world any more is the rat for a laboratory - for both artificial environments are very different from the world in which natural selection has operated for millennia. Various genetic mechanisms have been put forth to account for the ageing phenomena and the determination of lifespan, and such view ageing as ‘programmed’.
Events during growth, development and reproduction are regulated by ‘signals’ from nerves or hormone-secreting glands. In the brain a prime area which controls such hormones is the hypothalamus that is closely connected to the pituitary gland. Theories known as clock theories of ageing make suggestions that changes are controlled by some kind of pace-maker whose main function is to direct the timetable of development until sexual maturity and reproductive ability are attained. Therefore, in the absence of a programme, the functions of a hypothalamus and pituitary become deranged and lead to physiological decline.

There are primarily two types of cells that make up mammals; ‘Fixed cells, which after development do not divide further and serve the organism for the rest of its lifespan (for example, brain cells) and ‘dividing’ cells which carry on replacing themselves throughout the lifespan (for example, skin, hair, or gut-wall cells). But both these types of cells will need to continue to make new molecules such as proteins, a process under genetic control, for the metabolism, function and repair of the cell and in the case of the dividing cell, for replication. Hayflick and Moored showed that a variety of dividing cells from human tissues were only capable of a certain number of cell divisions: they could not replicate indefinitely when cultured, dying off after a period of time. A cell while reproducing should make accurate copies of itself for if there is a serious error the result would be lethal to the cell or transform it to a ‘malignant’ cell. However, it is only through natural selection of occasional ‘good mistakes’ that evolution has been able to operate. Thus, there must be a balance between expanding cellular energy on maintaining accuracy in cell division, and allowing some faulty copies: it has been proposed that the Hayflick Phenomenon (of limited numbers of cell divisions) is an example of genes ‘switching off’ the mechanisms which maintain accuracy, there by conserving energy but allowing errors to accumulate and cause senescence. (Bond, John; Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheila, 1996)

Unprogrammed Ageing

Theories of programmed ageing depend on the concept that genetic mechanisms are involved and such mechanisms make evolutionary sense. There are also other
mechanisms related to ageing which are 'unprogrammed', because of random damage affecting molecules concerned with cell structure, function and metabolism. For instance, many molecules link collagen and elastin (the proteins which make up connective issues such as cartilage) may have their structure and physico-chemical properties changed with the process known as 'cross-linkage'. Such changes can also cross-link the strands of DNA, the molecule which carries genetic information.

Within cells, many metabolic processes take place such as oxygen utilisation, generating toxic by-products known as 'free-radicals'. These substances are absorbed by several defence mechanisms which have evolved to protect the cell. Sometimes these free radicals may damage membranes which surround cells and thereby cause breaks in the strands of DNA. Errors involved in the transfer of genetic importations from DNA - in the process of cell replication or the synthesis of proteins - might have serious consequences. These errors in protein synthesis could themselves lead to further defects in protein synthesis and genetic information processing, resulting in yet more error containing proteins in a malicious circle of 'error catastrophe' leading to cell death (Bond, John; Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheile, 1996).

**Implications of Programmed and Unprogrammed Theories of Ageing on Biological Ageing**

No single theory on ageing can explain completely the cause of ageing, nor can a single cause explain everything about ageing. But in general these biological theories of ageing explain the following about ageing:

i) Replication of genetic material is the fundamental property of 'Life'.

ii) Due to random physico-chemical interactions (non-programmed') replication has an inherent risk of error.

iii) The process of natural selection would essence a balance between catastrophic error and extraction on the one hand and too little error to allow necessary change on the other, so that ageing ('programmed') represents a stable evolutionary strategy.

iv) Lastly and in conclusion it should be noted that ageing processes evolved at a time when few...
animals (or human being) lived to old age because of circumstances of risks of starvation or accidental death was very high. Rapid and profuse reproduction helped to preserve the gene pool which was more important than the prevention of senescence in the individual. Presently since more individuals reach old age, it is supposed that evolution may take humans in a different direction for the generations to come.

**Psychological Perspectives**

It is more common place to view ageing from the psychological perspective than biological perspective. But the discipline of psychology has placed less stress on the study of ageing. In recent times more emphasis is placed on an interdisciplinary study of ageing and therefore psychological ageing was incorporated to have a better understanding of this concept of ageing.

**Experimental psychology**

Different research methods are employed by psychologists and these methods reflect the various roots of psychology. Psychology was first developed as a laboratory-based science during the second half of the nineteenth century with the intention of analysing human intellectual functioning and ability, 'cognitive' processes by which people gain knowledge or become aware of their environment. The key topics for psychological study are perception, memory, learning and reasoning. The first proponents of this new science were predominantly Germans, but was later pursued and developed primarily by the United States and Britain.

**Psychological Ageing and Experimental Psychology**

**Sir Francis Galton** (1822-1911) is credited with the first distinct contribution to the field of ageing. His main concern was to find some understanding of the hereditary basis of intelligence, and was primarily involved in measuring individual differences in motor performance and discrimination tasks. He also implemented the first large-scale collection of empirical data across the whole life span.

A major impact on psychology's development was the formulation of the intelligence (IQ) test in the first part of the 19th century. Efforts of an American psychologist named Terman who adopted techniques developed by Bint and Henri in France
to assess more complex performances of judgment and knowledge. The success of the IQ measure as a means of selection gave psychologists a reputation of measuring absolute individual capabilities.

During this period the age differences that were observed on psychological tests received limited critical examination. The remarkably poor performance by older people on a wide range of tasks was considered superficially and explained as being due to the apparently inevitable process of biological degeneration. But well before the end of the nineteenth century a picture of psychological ageing as a regressive movement was well established. Cognitive 'disorganisation' was considered to follow the reverse order of development with higher order abilities degenerating first. The model presented of psychological development and ageing was a unitary one, a sequence of growth and rapid build-up of abilities in early life followed by a period of relative stability and then followed by a long period of decline. Within this context of reference the psychological study of ageing was seen as of limited interest and was unsurprisingly an unpopular field of research. At the most, research on older individuals could be perceived to provide an additional dimension to investigations on the explanation of general theories of cognitive functioning (Bond, John; Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheila, 1996.)

**Developmental psychology**

In Europe rather different traditions of psychology were fostered. The idea of human development was given importance. Psychology in Anglo-American perspective viewed young and old and compared them against an ideal standard of functioning where the young not being able to attain this standard of functioning and the old as falling away from it. Where as European psychologist gave more importance to the idea of developmental stages in personality. This idea of progressive development of personality in stages is best and most represented in the work of Jean Piaget (1896-1980) on the cognitive development of children. Piaget himself did not look beyond childhood, but his methods and interpretations have been used to propose further stages of cognitive development in adulthood.
The Development of Personality

- Sigmund Freud (1856 - 1939)

In developmental psychology the most well-known contributions from Europe has been in the area of personality study. Thinking on human behaviour was revolutionised by Freud by proposing causes for human motivation which opened a new train of thought in psychology. Freud stressed that people did not always act in rational ways, nor were they necessarily aware of the bases or causes of their action. Since Freud and his associates were involved in the treatment of mentally disturbed people, the ideas and knowledge generated by them were not freely accepted by other psychologists in the study of normal individuals.

- Implications of Freud's study on Ageing.

As such, Freud himself was not interested in ageing and his description of developmental stages is limited to the very early periods of life. Nevertheless, Freud's contributions served other psychologists to probe into the ideas of ageing.

- Carl Jung (1875-1961)

Carl Jung was a one time colleague of Sigmund Freud but broke away from him to establish a rival school of 'psychoanalysis'. Carl Jung laid stress to what he termed the second half of life. According to Jung mid life was a crucial juncture leading the individual opportunities for new developments. These new developments were less to do with the outside world and more to do with interior processes that he referred to with the term 'individuation'. Here a person could achieve a new balance in personality. To Jung the value of symbolic and religious experience was important in creating a state of harmony between the individual and the world around him.

Significance of Carl Jung's Work on Ageing

Just like Freud, Carl Jung's work does not have a direct impact on studies on ageing but Carl Jung went further in the stages of life and particularly made an analysis on the later half of life. This threw light only on a limited scale to the development on studies on ageing. Carl Jung is remembered for his contributions to the study of the psychology of adulthood, which helps in the study of old age by later psychologists.
Alfred Adler was another associate of Freud. Adler also analysed the different aspects of human motivation. He disagreed with Freud's stress on sexuality as a motivating factor in all people's lives is a feeling of inferiority. All individuals develop this feeling of inferiority to some extent because of the inferior position they once occupied as children when power and authority were exerted by adults. Adler viewed subsequent developments of an individual's lifestyle as a means of compensating for these feelings of inferiority. In extreme for this could manifest in remarkable achievements by people with some handicaps, but this could also be expressed negatively by in excessively self assertive behavior. Adler himself proposed that the most successful resolution of such an inferiority problem could be in involvement with others and in the development of 'social interest'.

Adler's Views and Their Implications on old Age

Adler's views are relevant to gerontology because feelings of inferiority and loss of self-esteem can become major issues in late life as a result, for instance of physical decline, loss of status, beauty and other attributes. In old age the possibilities for friendship and close relationships may be diminished. According to Adler rigid, rejecting attitudes in older people and even disengagement can be viewed as problems resulting from a fear of inferiority. Adler proposes a therapy in a constructive manner by suggesting that feeling of inferiority and neurotic lifestyles can be overcome by helping the individual to develop a wider interest in others and cultivating a sense of belonging.

Erik Erikson's Stages of Life

The most influential pioneer theorists on personality development has been the contributions of Erik Erikson to the study of ageing. He is well acknowledged for his abounding impact on adult personality research. In his work 'Childhood and Society', Erikson has provided a framework for the whole lifespan in terms of a series of tasks to be fulfilled. The baby's first psychological task in life is described as developing a sense of trust rather than a sense of mistrust. The following childhood stage is characterised in terms of
'autonomy', 'initiative' and 'industry'. In adolescence the issue is the development of 'ego identity' versus 'identity diffusion' - Erikson is most popular for his formulation of the concept of 'identity crisis' and in adulthood the development of intimacy versus a sense of 'isolation'.

In middle age the concern is one of 'generativity', a word coined by Erikson himself. He describes it as 'primarily the interest in establishing and guiding the next generation'. This could be focus on one's own family but it may also include broader areas of interest in the society in which one lives.

**Pertinence of Erikson's study on Old Age**

According to Erikson, the task of the last stage of life that is old age is to achieve 'ego integrity', an assumed sense of meaning and order in one's life and in the universe, as opposed to despair and distrust. This involves acceptance of one's one and only life cycle as something that had to be and that, by necessity, permitted of no substitutions. Despair may be expressed in feelings that one has failed and does not have the time to attempt another life or an alternative road to integrity, and also in a disgust with other people, particularly the young.

**Life-Span Developmental Psychology**

Erik Erikson is justly considered to be one of the founders of life-span developmental psychology. Life-span developmental psychology has proved to be fruitful in the study of the psychology of ageing. In recent times there has been a new interest in the study of whole life spans within personality psychology. Erikson is credited in this tradition for his contribution to 'psychography' through his books on Luther and Gandhi.

The relevance of Erikson's theory to ageing often focuses on the last stage 'integrity'. Erikson's theory is much more complicated than such brief presentations. This theory does not merely imply that at each stage the 'task' is either left unresolved or resolved, thus moving forward to further development. But a solution might be only relatively successful, and this will have repercussions on all the following stages. Therefore major unresolved residence of earlier difficulties can have an impact on later life and make the issue rather different for each individual according to his or her own past experience.
Implications of Erikson's Theory in Understanding Old Age

The importance that Erikson placed on the integrity of the life span is his lasting contribution and one that is vital to an understanding of old age. In order to understand people in old age it is necessary to see them from the perspective of their whole life history with their problems either successfully or unsuccessfully resolved from their earlier periods of life.

Erikson's approach to human development and human ageing contains the following important implications.

a) Firstly, the situations of the elderly will differ according to their histories. The paths of development in the lives of different people are likely to diverge the longer they live, and the more experiences they imbibe, rather than growing more alike as they age, they become more unique or different.

b) Development occurs on a number of different areas. There are no bases to think that intellectual development and physical development follow the same path of development. Thus, as is the case with each phase of the day, each stage of life has its own characteristics and potentialities that are to be acknowledged.

c) Another characteristic of the life-span approach is the recognition of reciprocal influences between the individual and his environment. This is also another feature of human psychology emphasised by Erikson. The development of an individual requires the right psychological circumstances for another's successful development. Erikson placed great importance to the interdependence of the generations where the old need the young and vice versa. This is an important concern for psychology as it has traditionally put its emphasis on measuring individual characteristics while often ignoring the role of the environment.

Thus, the contributions of Erik Erikson to the understanding of old age is very significant. Erikson's contributions has led to new vistas of thought regarding the elderly. His ideas of 'integrity' in the last stage of the life span is often considered to be his highest contribution in developmental psychology.

Sociological Perspectives

The study of ageing has been studied from a number of different perspectives in
sociology including structuralism, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, modernisation theory, action theory, etc. We shall discuss these theories in their connection to ageing in the forth coming sections.

**Structuralism**

Broadly speaking structuralism as an approach is based on the assumption that all our social behavior, our attitudes and values are the result of the organisation and structure of society in which we live. An improvement in this view is to consider the components of social structure as in consensus with each other or else to view these components in conflict.

**Structural Functionalism - a Consensus Perspective**

All sociological perspectives together focus society as being ordered - that is, a belief that in most situations the range of possible actions is quite limited and so we have a good idea of how we should behave as well as we are able to predict, of course within limits, the behaviour of others. The consensus perspective of functionalism is based on the assumption that, on the whole societies can be regarded as stable and generally integrated wholes but differ by their cultural and social structural arrangements. This perspective in society has been borrowed from the natural and biological sciences. When sociology first branched out as a discipline separate from philosophy Comte employed scientific methods modelled on the lines of natural sciences.

It stresses that societies are integrated wholes was based partially on the crude analogy between social and biological organisms. Such an analogy stems from the fact that both social and biological organism, firstly have a tendency to survive against all opposition and on the other hand, a tendency to decay. Most biological organisms are systems which are made up of a number of distinct interconnected parts. All these parts are affected and respond to changes in other parts of the organism. This analogy does not indicate that the social systems are a replica of the biological system as regards structure, but that the different parts of the social system are also affected by and respond to changes in other parts of the system. Different parts of the biological system fulfill different functions and roles. Some functions are noted to be more important for the survival of the organism than others; so also in a society, individuals and
institutions fulfil a variety of functions and roles. For instance, if the human organism loses a
limb, it adapts to this change; if there is a heart failure, the body eventually dies. The human
organism is thus open to adaptation but is mortal. Similarly, in its simplest form structural
functionalism describes society as an adaptive and open system whose different parts function
to keep united and relatively unchanging. (Bond, John; Coloman, Peter and Peace, Sheila,
1996)
The Disengagement Theory of Ageing

There are two theories on ageing offered by the structural functionalist
perspective. One is the disengagement theory which stresses the phasing out of old people from
certain roles so that society can continue to function. The other is the activity theory which
emphasises the need to keep old people active and integrate them in society so as to make
society to continue to function.

The disengagement theory was first propounded by Cumming and Henry (1961) in
‘Growing old’ : “Disengagement in an inevitable process in which many of the
relationships between a person and other members of society are severed and those remaining
are altered in quality. As individuals grow older they and society will prepare in advance for the
ultimate 'disengagement' which is the result of incapacitating disease or death. The theory
states that the process of disengagement is the method by which society prepares for the
structure of its members so that when the inevitable arrives it does not disrupt the orderly
functioning of society.

Criticism Levelled at the Disengagement Theory

There are mainly 3 criticisms charged against the disengagement theory.
a) The theory implies by suggestion that disengagement is desirable and therefore
condones a policy of indifference towards the problems of older people.
b)Disengagement is not inevitable and non-engagement in old age effects the life-long pattern
of social interaction for some people.
c) The data presented in 'Growing Old' is stated to be incorrectly interpreted since cultural
values and the economic structure combine to create a situation in which a large proportion of
older people are disengaged.

**Activity Theory**

The activity theory considers a different view in explaining the process of ageing. According to Havighurst, successful ageing can be achieved by maintaining into old age the activity patterns and values typical of middle age. By denying the onset of old age, happiness can be achieved in old age and where the relationships, activities or roles of middle age are lost, it is important to replace them with new ones so as to maintain life satisfaction. There is considerable evidence to suggest that in North America, the level of activity developed by individuals over a lifetime tends to persist in their later years.

**Criticism of the Activity Theory**

The major criticism levelled against the activity theory is its idealistic viewpoint. It is totally unrealistic to expect, for all save a small minority, that people can maintain the level of activity associated with middle age through to old age in consideration of the limitations imposed by biological changes alone. The activity theory is also unrealistic because the economic, social and political structure of society prevents the older worker from maintaining a major activity of middle age, that is 'productive' employment.

**Theory of Political Economy of Old Age**

Conflict theorists regard themselves as radical critics of the consesus theorists. They are sometimes considered to be related to political views rather than sociological views with their strong emphasis on Marxist perspectives.

Marxism is primarily understood within the historical context of the interpretation of the evolution of societies or social systems. Social change is explained historically by examining the evolution of modern industrial society from ancient economies based on slavery, which passed through the medieval economy based on serfdom, passing on to the capitalist economy based on wage labour. Marxism is also deterministic in that it predicts the evolution of capitalist society to socialist society. Like other forms of structuralism, it is synthetic in its analysis of social change, being concerned with the whole society rather than with specific parts.
In the study of ageing the conflict perspective is represented by the theory known as the political economy of old age.

The Political Economy of Old Age

Political economy is considered to be a study of the interrelationships between political structure, economic structure and social structure. In other words, between the government organisations, the labour, the labour market, social classes and status groups. The focal attention of this perspective is on the interrelationship between the economic and political structure in society and the way they have an impact on the distribution of resources and social goods. In Britain thinkers such as Townsend, Walker and Phillipson have adopted a political economy perspective in which the central concept is the idea of structured or structural dependency. Structural dependency describes the development of a dependent status that results from a restricted access to a wide range of social resources, particularly income.

Application of the Political Economy Theory To Old Age

As mentioned above structural dependency is a growth of a dependent status that arises from a restricted access to a large range of social resources, mainly income. This is observed in the large numbers of elderly people who live in poverty.

According to Townsend, a review of secondary data on earnings, incomes and assets, housing circumstances and benefits in kind shows that above one in every four elderly people have incomes which are equal to or below the state Poverty Line. Since the elderly are not usually in 'productive' work it has long been established that elderly people feature in the lower levels in the income distribution. Society is inclined to reward present work but not past work and therefore society does not reward old age. Frequently elderly people are discriminated against by economic and social policies which usually benefit the young employed and the well-off. Thus, dependent status in old age due to poverty are related to low resources and restricted access to resources through the life cycle.

Bond, Coleman and Peace illustrate this relationship by considering the effects of retirement on a person's access to resources. Before retirement manual workers who form the majority of elderly men, experienced a reduced economic status. Due to early retirement schemes
more and more elderly workers are pushed into less skilled jobs and into unemployment. After retirement the inequalities resulting from low pay, unemployment and disability are carried on into old age. The decline in the real value of savings and pensions means that the worse-off are the very old. Retirement also restricts access to social resources in the form of a reduction in social relationships once the retired person is away from the world of work.

**An Estimation of the Political Economy of Old Age**

The political economy theory follows the Marxist tradition and has focused its analysis and development of social explanations on class inequality and the relationship between economic production and later life. However, critical gerontologists have remarked on the narrowness of this approach, which concentrates on inequalities resulting from poverty and economic disadvantage.

**Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic interactionism can be viewed as a broad term covering a number of characteristics which relate to a wide sociological and social psychological perspective. The basic and central ideas in symbolic interactionism characterise a somewhat different frame of reference known as action theory. This understanding is possible by attempting to look at the world as they do and also how the world looks to them. This includes learning the ideas, motives and goal which make people act. After learning these things about individuals, the sociologist gains an understanding of why they act in certain ways in order to achieve particular ends in the face of their individual situations.

Symbolic interactionism emphasises the understanding of the individual and is very different from structural functionalism which stress on social structures and facts which are considered to exist independently of individual members of society. Structural functionalism emphasises on the understanding of social action in context to social systems rather than social action as generated through individuals in their particular situations. Thus, social action is adopted by a broad range of social theories but is rather difficult to study empirically while linked to broad social structures rather than small groups.
Mead and Symbolic Interactionism

The founding ideas of symbolic interactionism were provided by Mead in Chicago and the major contributions to this perspective have been American. At the core of Mead's approach is the assumption that there is a basic difference between animal reaction and human conduct. According to Mead, conduct to human species. Added to this is the concept of self. Individuals also undergo experiences and are aware of doing so.

Mead considers human action as distinct from human behaviour. Behaviour is confined to stimulus-response relationship. This concept of action depends on an individual's ability to plan his actions, reflect on past experience and also reflect on himself in the same way as he looks upon other kinds of objects in the environment. Human beings have a capacity for self-consciousness which sets them apart from animals and central to this ability of the individual is to take the same attitude towards himself as others take towards him. In this manner the individual becomes an object like any other object and to took upon oneself as an object is to see oneself as others do.

It is understood that for different individuals the same object will have very different connotations which will depend on such factors as previous experience and present purposes. Individuals will also experience the many different meanings they hold for others, reflected back on them. Interestingly, in order to handle this complexity, individuals construct pictures of themselves according to the general, typical and prominent views of themselves as shown by others such pictures are conveyed through the medium of language which Mead refers to as the significant symbol. Via such exchanges individuals learn the ways of acting which others expect and the self consciousness necessary to engage in social life. Such meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by other people in dealing with the things they encounter. It is explaining such processes that is the hallmark of symbolic interactionist approaches that is, providing an understanding of how and why things are as they are, by finding out about the circumstances of people's lives.

Blumer, W. I. Thomas and Goffman on Symbolic Interactionism

Blumer's contention is that circumstances in people's lives do not exist in
themselves as stimuli to which the individual reacts. But what forms circumstances depends on the motive, plans and knowledge that the individual has in mind. For Blumer, social action therefore has to be interpreted as the mindful action of individuals initiated to bring about certain purposes.

Symbolic interconnections have remarkably shown how behaviour which from one perspective would be interperspective is a rational response to situations or circumstances. Members of society tend to define their own circumstances and respective identities. This is understood by a dictum attributed to W. I. Thomas: "if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." From this definitional approach has been derived what has come to be known as the labelling theory of deviance, that is, how members of society come to define and label some of its members as deviant in certain ways and interaction is made in such a way that the person adopts the characteristics appropriate to the label. The labelling theory has been adopted in the study of ageing to explain the way in which elderly people are compelled to act out specific roles. Thus, once someone has been labelled old, they may receive a retirement pension, they are expected to act the role of elderly or retired person and do not seek employment. Goffman strived to understand how people come to decide, through social interaction, who they are and he explains life being just like life on the stage.

Sub-Culture Theory of Ageing

There are a number of interactionist theories touching on the studies of ageing although there are few interactionist theories specific to the study of ageing. In the interactions approach, the main theory related to ageing is the sub-culture theory of ageing. The sub-cultures tend to form when members in any group in society, such as elderly people, interact with each other markedly more than they do with other people in society. The growth of a sub-culture would be fostered if elderly people have a positive affinity to each other and if they excluded themselves from interaction to a large extent with other groups in society. There are a number of factors which contribute to the development of a sub-culture. Compulsory retirement will have its impact in encouraging group affinity, with the decline in family contacts, the development of communities. A boom in day care will encourage the development of a sub-culture. The bond in
family ties, particularly in moments of ill health and disablement, the contribution in health and disablement, the contribution in employment and also structural divisions which make elderly people a heterogeneous group in society. Moreover, changes in the structures of the family, and the lack of employment opportunities for old people imply that sub-cultures may still develop because of the processes of labelling.

**Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology**

In recent years the ethnomethodological perspective has been used extensively as an underlying theoretical perspective in various studies of ageing, but has produced no grand theories of ageing. This is so because of the very nature of ethnomethodology.

It is from the Phenomenological philosophy of Husserl that the basic assumptions of ethnomethodology has been derived and therefore is very different from other sociological theories. Husserl strives to describe the ultimate foundations of human experience by 'seeing beyond' the details of ordinary everyday experiences to describe the 'essences' which underlay them. It is only by understanding these essences do we have a foundation of all experiences which enable us to recognise and classify it in an intelligible form. To have a grasp of these essences it is necessary for the philosopher to be aloof from the usual ideas of the world, to examine the range of experiences before us - past, present and future. Phenomenology involves perceiving phenomena in the world as objects or events which are, in essential respects, common - that is the essential others as they are for ourselves. Thus, the basics of social life are not within the mind and experiences of an individual, but in a commonly lived world of experience. This is a social world known in common with others.

Schutz developed the phenomenological approach in sociology and consequently became known as ethnomethodology (ethno= people, ethnomethodology = the study of people's methods). This approach is specifically concerned with the language used in and used to describe everyday life. The phenomenological approach is concerned with the basis of common assumptions we all make in order to understand and perceive the routines and activities of our everyday lives. This order is achieved through what Schutz has termed our taken for granted assumptions that is, our expectations of what should happen in a normal day and how we expect
others to act. Here Schutz used the term ‘typifications’ which maintains the social fabric.

Typifications involve the common ways of classifying objects such as buying rice, and experiences such as anger or affection, but to classify them in ways which are capable of being redefined. For instance, one taken for granted assumption is that others, largely see the world as we do, something which is not really so. It is through the process of socialization that these elements of everyday life are learned. These of elements of every day life are identified as ‘mental tools’ that we carry around in us in order to adapt our own actions according to the situations in which we find ourselves. Therefore, like interactionists, phenomenologists and ethnomethodologists are concerned with how members of a social group perceive, define and classify the ways in which they actually perform their activities and what meanings they attach to acts occurring in the context of their everyday lives. (Bond, John; Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheila, 1996)

Modernisation Theory

One of the most significant theories to have been developed on historical changes and attitudes towards old age is the modernisation theory. The modernisation theory argues that modernisation as a historical process resulted the lowering of the status of older people in society. The process of industrialisation resulted in a loss of respect for old age and the term ‘old’ got a negative implication. Although in medieval and Renaissance times Shakespeare painted a bleak picture about old age in his ‘As You Like It’, old age had its proper place in the life cycle, deserving respect due to qualities of wisdom manifest because of experience. The early versions of the modernisation theory portrayed the mass of pre-industrialised societies as fairly constant in their respectful attitude to the old. According to Fisher such a society was predominantly non- literate in its culture, had an agrarian economy, possessed an extended family structure and was rural in residence. Although the old were few in number, their authority was very great. In the extended family the aged wielded power, and in the agrarian economy they controlled the land. This traditional culture surrounded them with an almost magical aura of knowledge and authority.

But according to Fisher modernisation altered all this in various ways such as first of
all, the development of modern health amenities multiplied the numbers of the elderly, contributed to the ageing of the population and its work force. Such a situation consequently, formed pressures towards retirement, forced the elderly out of the most cherished and highly considered roles, deprived them of utility, restricted their income and lowered their status. Secondly, the modern economic technology created new occupations and converted most of the old ones, which led to loss of jobs, incomes and status by the aged. Thirdly, urbanisation drew the young to the cities and broke down the extended family and replaced it with the nuclear family. Lastly, the growth of mass education and literacy made the knowledge of the elderly irrelevant and led to no reverence of the aged on account of their superiority of knowledge and wisdom.

From the above details it can be seen how within our perceptions of power, the power of the individual has always been closely linked to the power of land, capital and communication systems. Changes within society and productivity system affect how people of different ages are perceived. Modernisation by itself is not the sole reason for the devaluation of people as they age. At present the contention is on what is the correct interpretation of these changes. Stone contends that these changes are an indication of the growth of individualism and egalitarianism rather than the lowering of respect of the elderly. The end result is the same, that is, the loss of respect due to the older person.

In Fischer’s view the replacement of contempt in place of veneration for the older people was followed in its wake by pity, since old people were seen no longer as the defeated foe but as individuals in need of help. Thus, in our present times old people are marginalised and undervalued.

**The Social Role Theory**

The social role theory draws attention to acceptance, expectation, support and stimulation in social relationships. As individual’s role includes attitudes, values, behavioral expectations and behaviors, as well as his/her capacities and opportunities. Roles are perceived, accepted, played and integrated by individuals.
Adaptations, shifts, gains and losses occur in social roles. Past experiences, present perception and future aspirations of an individuals determine the role, its performance and effectiveness. (Singh, R.R., 2002)

Critical Social Science

The critical social science perspective covers or encompasses a number of sociological perspectives such as post-Marxist perspective, post-structuralists and post modernists unified by their criticism of industrial and post-industrial society.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the West are known to be the Enlightenment period in Western thought and culture and that period was dominated by the idea that by means of science and technology human life would improve on the whole. This thought is evident in modern capitalism which supports the view that economic growth and technological change would increase the wealth for the benefit of everyone.

But critical social science theory opposes and challenges the Enlightenment philosophy suggesting that societies oppress individual members who are unaware that their lives are controlled by these social forces. Marx exposed this idea within his concept of class consciousness. Classical Marxists like Gramsci went further than Marx's ideas about class and class consciousness and suggested that the state was essentially suppressive so as to control opposition to the capitalist system. This repression was achieved through the control of knowledge and science, since social knowledge is subordinated to the needs of capitalism.

Even though we might consider the different institutions in society, for example education and economy to be helpful, post-structuralists and postmodernists argue that we are actually being suppressed by them. The fact that we are perfectly happy with our society and do not feel suppressed and controlled does not nullify this view but supports it. It proves how trapped we are within the structure of our ways of thinking.

In our day to day lives we take most things for granted. This is seen in the way we take for granted our everyday customs, forgetting that we did not construct them but inherited them. We inherited them through the medium of language. One of our most stable
institutions is language which was created and developed in particular times and places. Post structuralists and post modernists therefore try to understand language and social categories it describes and we take for granted by taking a historical perspective. This involves the examination of the conditions under which our taken for granted ideas were created and developed.

Therefore, the greatest challenge of critical social science is rooted in the critique of instrumental reason - it is a critique of the effort to explain the natural and social world in order to predict or control it. A critique of experimental reason exposes the link between knowledge and domination. For instance, it shows how the interests of gerontologists in explaining ageing is linked to a covert strategy of social control by the dominant social group. (Bond, John, Coleman, Peter and Peace, Sheila, 1996)

Sociological Theories Applicable to the Current Research Work

Different studies on ageing have focused on different angles. Since old age is a multifaceted phenomenon, theories of ageing also have focused on ageing from different perspectives. Not all sociological theories on ageing can be applied to any single study on ageing because one theory may focus on ageing from one angle and a study on ageing may focus on another angle. The current study on ageing similarly can adopt only some sociological theories on ageing. The study of the elderly in old age homes is a somewhat novel pathway and any sociological theory might not fit such a study because these theories were formulated keeping in mind the the general elderly in society and not in the context of the elderly in old age homes. Nevertheless, some of these sociological theories can be applied in this research study of the elderly. Let us consider these sociological theories that are closely associated with the current research work and their applicability.

The Disengagement Theory

The disengagement theory is one of the structural functionalist theories. According to this theory disengagement is a natural process in which many of the relationships of the elderly are cut off. This is a process prepared by society in advance for the
final disengagement which results from disease or death and therefore does not disrupt the smooth functioning of society.

The disengagement theory can be applied and is relevant to the present research on the study of the elderly in old age homes. Consider the situation of the elderly prior to their entry into the old age home, there are various causes for their entry - such as poor health, lack of monetary independence, no family members to take care of them, living alone, etc. Thus, if we examine these causes or situations for admission into the old age home, for instance poor health it points out to the individual's inability to care for himself and therefore also contribute to the family and community and hence he is in a state of being disengaged. The cause for admission to the old age home is due to lack of monetary independence because he is disengaged from economic productivity and therefore is of no use to the family. If the family members are unable to care for him, it again point out to the fact that he is unable to care for himself (which implies that he is also in no state to contribute to society) and hence he is disengaged and so admitted to the old age home. The elderly living alone are at times also admitted to the old age home after he has contributed to his family and society and is later unable to care for himself. Therefore, the underlying cause for all of them is their inability to contribute to their family and people around them and also their inability to take care of themselves. Being unable to care for oneself includes their gradual loss of roles and aloofness (disengagement) and therefore they are unable to contribute to their home setting and society and therefore they enter the old age home.

After their admission to the old age home they are usually totally disengaged from their family and society as they are usually cared for by the old age home. In the old age home they are hardly expected to contribute anything and therefore they are totally disengaged from the society and live isolated lives. Thus, in the old age home they are usually totally severed from their families, friends, earlier contacts, their associates in their former place of work, their neighbors, etc. The old age home becomes a place of greater disengagement than the family. But for individuals who lived singly, the old age home might be a place for new contacts among other inmates since the old age home is a new setting with new people around, the elderly might withdraw within themselves and be disengaged from the people surrounding them.
Thus, there usually comes a stage in every individual’s life when he/she disengages himself/herself from society and the old age home is considered to be a suitable place for them if the family or near ones are unable to care for them.

**The Political Economy of Old Age**

The focus of attention of this perspective is how the economic and political structure in society is interrelated and the manner in which they have an impact on the distribution of resources and social goods. According to their perspective there is a structured dependency which implies the development of a dependent status that is the result of a restricted access to a large range of resources, specifically income. This dependency can be noticed among the large number of elderly who live in poverty.

The Political Economy of old age can be applied to the present study of the elderly in old age homes. The elderly in charitable old age homes are not usually involved in ‘productive’ work nor are they occupied in gainful employment and therefore occupy a lower social strata as regards income. This is because society does not reward past work but only present work. Thus, these elderly are unemployed, their real value of saving and pensions have declined. Along with this, being retired they are restricted in their access to social resources due to a reduction in social relationships in the former place of work. Thus the political economy of old age is applicable to the present study of the elderly in charitable old age homes.

However, this theory only focuses on the economic status of the elderly, and is not holistic in its approach. But concerning only the economic angle of the elderly, this theory has its benefits in its applicability to the present research.

**Symbolic Interactionism and the Labelling Theory**

According to symbolic interactionism, people construct pictures of themselves according to the general typical and prominent views as shown to them by others. These pictures are transmitted via the medium of language. Through such exchanges individuals learn the ways of acting which others expect and they develop the selfconsciousness necessary to engage in social life. Symbolic interactionism provides an understanding of how and why things are as they are by finding out about the situations of people’s lives.
Interestingly, in this connection Marshall, Victor W (1986) makes an analysis of symbolic interactionism in its relevance to old age. According to him, those who draw on the symbolic interactionist perspective, stress that people develop a concept of self that can be considered as a kind of model. Our cognitive map of the individual is relationships with other people. This model which is the self concept, is both influenced by the feedback received from other people and influencer of the behaviour of the individual. For example, if many important or 'significant' others routinely act toward older people as if those people were incapable of maintaining independence those older people highly likely to develop a view of themselves as dependent and on the basis of this self-attribution, to act in a dependent manner there by reinforcing the view of the significant others.

Thus, in the old age home an individual has a minimum of responsibilities and duties towards himself and others around him since the institution itself caters to the needs of the individual. Hence the authorities and caretakers in the institution care for the elderly inmates and gradually the inmates accept a minimum of roles, since that is expected of them. Therefore the elderly inmates in the old age home begin to act according to what the 'significant' others expect them to do. Slowly and gradually in due course of time these elderly begin to be dependent on the 'significant' others (authority and caretakers) and their contribution to themselves and others reaches the bottom line.

In symbolic interaction, the labelling theory of deviance has be derived from the thoughts of W. I. Thomas. According to the labelling theory of deviance, some members in society are labelled as deviating and people in society interact and treat these deviants as deviants and therefore these labelled and treated as deviants develop the characteristics suitable to the label. This labelling theory has been applied in the study of ageing to explain how the elderly are forced to act like the elderly and take on roles typical of the elderly. Therefore when someone is termed or labelled old, they retire, receive a pension, do not seek employment and confined to the home. This situation might in some cases act as a propellent to enter the elderly in old age homes. In the old age homes they are labelled more clearly as elderly and the label sticks more strongly to them. They are treated as elderly and
have to follow rules and regulations in the old age home befitting the elderly. Thus comes to reality W. I. Thomas' dictum: if men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences.

The Sub-Culture Theory of Ageing

The sub-culture theory of ageing is another theory which has branched off from the theory of symbolic interactionism. As per the sub-culture theory of ageing sub-cultures form or do not form according to certain circumstances and situations. If a group of elderly people interact with each other considerably more than with other groups in society, it would lead in the formation of a sub-culture of the elderly. The main factors contributing to the formation of a sub-culture of the elderly are - compulsory retirement, decline or weakening of family contacts, similar problems, similar interests, etc. There are also certain factors which under the development of a sub-culture of the elderly, they include - strong family ties, dependability on the family in difficult times such as sickness, occupation in employment and a resistance to accept old age, etc.

The sub-culture theory of ageing can be applied in the situation of the elderly in old age homes. When the elderly are turned away from their families and they enter the old age home, they begin to interact with the elderly in the old age home. They know that they share similar problems and are placed in a similar situation to those of others around them. Therefore, gradually they develop social contacts which strengthen in time and thus forms a sub-culture of the elderly. They discuss and share similar problems and therefore they derive support from each other. A sub-culture of the elderly also forms in the old age home because they have a minimum of interaction with people outside the old age home and therefore they rely solely on the other inmates for companionship, sympathy and understanding.

Modernisation Theory

The main theme of the modernisation theory is that after industrialisation the status of the elderly declined. In the pre-industrial society the elderly enjoyed a high social status as they were respected for their knowledge, wisdom and experience and they held positions with authority. The dawn of industrialisation changed this status quo and the rank of people with no
power, authority and dignity. This was because the industrial society required people with modern knowledge and experience and the knowledge and experience of the elderly was considered to be out-dated.

The modernisation theory is relevant to the present study on the elderly in old age homes. We shall first consider and bring to mind the elderly who are in old age homes who were earlier in their homes with their families. As per the modernisation theory, the elderly lost their respect and authority in the family and society- this is a situation which gives ground for the family of the elderly to enter the elderly to old age homes. Had there been respect and authority that an elderly person possessed in his family, it would not be an easy task to enter him to an old age home. Thus one reason out of the reasons for the admission of the elderly into old age homes is lack of respect and regard for the elderly by their family members. Another reason is to consider the elderly to be of no use (or devalued) and therefore they are admitted to the old age home. At times even if the elderly are unwilling to enter the old age home, the family might compel them to seek admission as the family has no regard for the feelings and opinions of the elderly in matters of the elderly’s refusal to enter the old age home. This is because of the devalued status of the elderly in the family.

Thus, for the current research work on the elderly in old age homes we have considered certain sociological theories as relevant and applicable. These include the disengagement theory whereby we notice that the prime and driving cause for the elderly to be admitted into the old age home is their disengagement from themselves, their family and society. While these elderly are in the old age home, they are further disengaged from their family and society as they are totally cut off from their family and society and so are isolated (disengaged). We also find political economy applicable to the present study. This theory is applicable here as it outlives the economic condition of the elderly, who are ones with a low economic status because of political and economic conditions and therefore they are forced to enter charitable old age homes. After being in old age homes, they are further led to be in a situation of the elderly that is described by the theory of political economy of old age. The theory of symbolic interactionism is also applicable to the study of the elderly in old age homes. In symbolic interactionism, the
role played by the significant others is important. If the significant others in the old age home (inmates, caretakers and authority) treat the elderly as dependent individuals, in course of the time these elderly would develop traits of dependents. The labelling theory is also applicable to the present study of elderly. If the elderly are labelled as ‘elderly’ and are treated as such, they are more likely to develop the characteristics of the elderly. The sub-culture theory of ageing from the symbolic interactionist perspective is another theory applicable to the current research. A sub-culture of the elderly forms when the elderly in old age homes are confined to themselves and do not freely interact with each other. Lastly, the modernisation theory is also applicable to the study of the elderly in old age homes. Since the dawn of modernisation, the status of the elderly has declined due to various reasons and therefore family members of the elderly are greater inclined to admit the elderly to old age homes.

Section B

- Research Methodology

The current research work has many angles and dimensions to it. Discussed below are the various objectives of the present study.

Objectives of the Study

The following constitute the main objectives of the present research work.

1. To find out the reasons for the admission of the elderly in charitable old age homes and conditions before the admission of the elderly in old age homes.

2. To examine the living conditions of the elderly in charitable old age homes; including relations with other inmates, authority and caretakers and conditions of recreational facilities in old homes.

3. To examine the personal opinion of the elderly concerning their life in charitable old age homes.

4. To study the relationship between the elderly and their family members.

5. To ascertain and analyse the household structure of the respondents who are residing in old
6. To examine the financial status/income of the respondents along with an examination of the health conditions of the elderly in charitable old age homes.

7. To divulge the attitude of the elderly towards faith in God and fear of death.

Hypotheses

Mentioned below are the hypotheses of the current sociological study.

1. The elderly with poor economic background or no economic independence are more inclined to seek admission in charitable old age homes.

2. The greater the number of employed women in the homes, the more likely are the elderly to be admitted in old age homes.

3. A healthy life style and physical well being and good health are positively correlated.

4. The greater the expression of contentedness and satisfaction in life, both past and present life, the more likely are the elderly to be healthy.

5. Faith in God and fear of death are negatively correlated.

The Sampling Procedure

The universe of the present study consists of elderly residents from 10 charitable old age homes in the state of Goa. The list of the names and addresses of the charitable old age homes in Goa was procured from the Institute of Public Assistance Providoria, Chimbel, Goa and the Telephone Directory of Diocesan Centre for Social Communications Media, Panjim, Goa. Of these old age homes, 2 were run by government and 8 were non-governmental
charitable old age homes. These 10 charitable old age homes were situated in different parts of Goa, namely Old Goa, Calangute, Diwar, Charao, Ucasaim, Siolim - Porta Vado, Vaddi - Siolim, Nachinola, Candolim (Governamental old age home) and Chimbel (Governamental old age home).

Table of Charitable Old Age Homes (Area -wise) and Respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Area of OAH</th>
<th>Residents</th>
<th>Respondents Selected</th>
<th>Respondents Interviewed</th>
<th>Nature of O.A.H.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M  F  T</td>
<td>M  F  T</td>
<td>M  F  T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Old Goa</td>
<td>6  37 43</td>
<td>5  33 38</td>
<td>3  29 32</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Calangute</td>
<td>0  13 13</td>
<td>0  12 12</td>
<td>0  9 9</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Diwar</td>
<td>16 11 27</td>
<td>14 10 24</td>
<td>11 8 19</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Charao</td>
<td>7  10 17</td>
<td>6  9 15</td>
<td>3  7 10</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ucasaim</td>
<td>9  17 26</td>
<td>8  15 23</td>
<td>6  12 18</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Siolim, Porta Vado</td>
<td>11 27 38</td>
<td>10 24 34</td>
<td>7  22 29</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Vaddi - Siolim</td>
<td>0  31 31</td>
<td>0  28 28</td>
<td>0  25 25</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nachinola</td>
<td>8  23 31</td>
<td>7  21 28</td>
<td>4  18 22</td>
<td>Charitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Candolim</td>
<td>30 0 30</td>
<td>27 0 27</td>
<td>24 0 24</td>
<td>Institute of Public Assistance, Providoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chimbel</td>
<td>32 52 84</td>
<td>29 47 76</td>
<td>24 44 68</td>
<td>Institute of Public Assistance, Providoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>119 221 340</td>
<td>106 199 306</td>
<td>82 174 256</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the above table the area wise distribution of charitable old age homes in Goa are considered for the study. Revealed in the table are the total number of residents in each old age home along with the sex composition. 90 per cent each of male and female respondents were selected from each old age home using the lottery method of sampling. Of these 90 per cent of the respondents a few of them were unwilling or unable to answer the interview and therefore mentioned in the table are the numbers of male and female respondents who actually answered the interview. Lastly, mentioned in the table is the nature of
old age homes - either charitable private old age homes or run by the government.

From the above table it is evident that Sl. No.1 is an old age home in Old Goa with a total of 43 residents out of which 6 were males and 37 were females. Out of these 38 were selected for the interview i.e. 90 percent males and 90 percent from the female section. This works out to be 5 males 33 females (90 percent each) In this old age home a total of 32 respondents were actually interviewed, 3 being males and 29 being females. This old age home was a charitable old age home.

In this same manner for each old age home the same methodology has been followed.

Thus, in all these ten old age homes there were a total of 340 residents, of these 119 were males and 221 were females. For the interview from all these old age homes were 106 males and 199 were females selected (i.e. 90 percent of the respondents), a total of 306 respondents. Of these 90 percent males and females, 82 males and 174 females were actually interviewed, making a total of 256 respondents.

The researcher was unable to interview all the respondents selected for the study due to various reasons such as inability to respond to the interview due to ill health in body or mind, unwillingness to be interviewed, not inclined to share their personal lives, not being present in the old age home due to visitation to the family, etc. At the outset the purpose of the visit had been revealed to the inmates. They posed several queries about the study, such as purpose and use. Only a few respondents showed a negative response. The researcher used a structured interview schedule to collect data from the respondents. The data collected for this study was fed into a computer. Analysis of data is presented through frequency and percentage tables. In appropriate instances, the chi square test is used in this research work.

The Pilot Study

Before venturing into the actual field area of Goa, a pilot study was conducted in Belgaum city to interview the inmates of old age homes. A total of 50 respondents were selected. The pilot study proved very useful and helped to draft an appropriate and more accurate interview schedule for the actual study in Goa. Certain questions were rephrased, some were deleted and
some more questions were added to the final interview schedule to be used in the field of Goa. Through this pilot study the researcher gained confidence to actually conduct the interviews in Goa. Strategies to gain the report of the respondents by putting them at ease was learnt by the researcher during the pilot study. All in all the pilot study served its purpose by preparing and refining the researcher for the actual interview to be conducted in Goa.