FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION
CHAPTER 5
FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study, “Psychological wellbeing of residents of Senior Care Homes: Case work Intervention” was conducted to verify the impact of interventions in psychological wellbeing for the residents in the Old Age Homes of Kerala. Major findings of the study and the suggestions and conclusion evolved from the study are presented in this chapter.

The single subject research design or intervention research was adopted for the study. The particular design was selected because the study involved a detailed pre assessment of the dependent variables, an intervention given to respondents using Case Work Method and a post assessment of the same variables.

The purpose of the intervention study is to measure the effectiveness of the intervention designed and implemented. An intervention on the psychological wellbeing was the independent variable and the impact of the intervention formed the dependant variables of the total study.

Objectives of the study:

- To examine the socio-demographic profile of the residents of the government and private senior care homes in Kerala
- To study the circumstances led the senior citizen to the care home
- To assess the psychological wellbeing of the residents in the care homes.
- To suggest intervention strategies on Psychological wellbeing of the residents of the senior care home.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of intervention strategies on elderly in the institution.
Hypothesis

Based on the objectives, hypotheses were formulated and were tested for significance.

- The feeling of autonomy will increase as a result of the intervention on psychological wellbeing.
- The intervention on psychological wellbeing will improve the Environmental Mastery
- The feeling of personal growth will develop as a result of the intervention on psychological wellbeing
- Positive relation with others of the residents will improve with the intervention on psychological wellbeing
- The intervention on psychological wellbeing and the self acceptance are significant
- The intervention on psychological wellbeing is significantly related to the purpose of life.

The universe of the study included all the residents in the Government and Private Care Homes in Kerala.

Simple Random Sampling is used for the selection of the Care Homes. The locale of the present study was the Government Old Age Home, Kollam and Bhavana Old Age Home, Kollam.

The tool for data collection was divided into two parts:- an interview schedule on the profile of the respondents and Carol Ryff’s Scale on Psychological Wellbeing.

6.1 Major Findings

6.1.1 Socio Demographic Profile

The socio demographic profile of the residents in Government and Private Home was collected:
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6.1.1.a Government Care Home

In the Government Care Home, 50% of the respondents were from the rural background. The economic status of the respondents showed that the majority in government senior care home were from a Middle economic background. 25% was from a low economic condition, where 41.7% was from Middle Income Group and the rest 33.3% was from a high income group. 33.3% of the respondents were separated and they stated the same as the reason for their family not taking care of them. 8.3% were Unmarried and they were of the opinion that they failed to get marry living for their family members and were in last left in the care homes. Another 33.3% were widow/widower where the lost of the spouse was their reason for leaving the house. Rest 25% of the respondents had their spouse still alive. 75% comprised to the SSLC and Secondary level education. All the respondents had acquired basic education and surprisingly 25% of the respondents were highly educated –UG/PG. In the present study 58.3% of the respondents were employed in Private, Government and Other areas of employment. None of the respondents were self employed.

6.1.1.b Private Care Home

In Private Care Home, half of the residents were from Urban and the other half from rural area. While looking into the economic status of the respondents, 58.3% are from the Low economic situation, while another 16.7% are from the Middle class and the rest 25% are from the High class. Considering the economic status, both the homes gave a similar result. Most of the respondents from the private Senior Care Home were separated. They comprised about the 58.3% of the total. The rest 25% of the respondents were Unmarried and the rest were Married.

Most of the respondents from the Private Care Home were employed, either in Government Sector or in the Private Sector. The Residents were mostly having Secondary Education. Only 25% are having high education like UG/PG.

6.1.2 Reason for Reaching the Senior Care Home

6.1.2.a Government Care Home

Only 33.3% of the respondents have the saving. They were of the opinion that they are saving money for their funeral and medical care during their final stages. 58.3% of the respondents were staying with their family. 25% were staying with their
relatives and rests were staying alone before they reach the Care Home. The reasons for 33.3% of the residents in senior care home were death of Spouse and family Migration. 16.7% reached the senior care home was the quarrels and Problems at the Family. 33.3% of the respondents came to know about the senior care home from their family and media which showed that the government has succeeded in reaching out to the public in the awareness creation about the government care homes. 16.7% came to know about the care home from their friends and 8.3% from their relative. 8.3% came to know about the care home from other source which was the Police. As an isolated individual, they were brought to the care home by the police. For 33.3% of the residents, they were bring to the care home by the family members or by the police. When the family dispute occurs and the case was taken to the police, as a recommendation of settlement, the police asked the family to take the senior citizen to the care home. Thus majority of the residents were brought by the police. 16.7% were taken to the care home by the relative and 8.3% by the friends. Another 8.3% reached the care home by the intervention of the Public as they were left alone at home and was reported in newspaper and the public brought them to the care home.

6.1.2.b Private Care Home

33.3% of the residents lacks a saving of their own. The majority which comes around 66.7% are having no property or money in their name. Most of them were living with their family members before coming to care homes. Another 33.3% were with their relatives and another 16.7% were living alone.

The majority state the reason for leaving their home were death of Spouse and other reason which included the disagreement with the next generation children. Majority of them came to know about the Senior Care Home from the Friends and the next from their family members and relatives. Also they were mostly brought to the Senior Care Home by their friends. Another 25% were brought to care home by Police as a solution to their disputes in family.

6.1.3 Psychological Wellbeing

The Carol Ryff’s psychological wellbeing has six dimensions- autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance.
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6.1.3.a Government Care Home

33.3% of the residents in the senior care home possess a low level of autonomy. 33.3% of the residents in the Government care home have a medium autonomy and a 33.3% have a high autonomy. 58.3% of the residents in the senior care home had a low level of environmental mastery. 8.3% of the residents had medium and another 33.3% had a high level of environmental mastery. The majority (50%) of the residents had a low personal Growth and rest 25% had a medium level of Personal Growth and a High Level respectively. 58.3% of the residents in Government Care Home had a low Personal Relation with the Others. 33.3% of the residents had a very high warm and intimate relation with the fellow residents and also with their care takers, where another 8.3% had a medium level of affection in their relationship with others. The rest which comes around the half of the residents have a low relationship. 58.3% of the residents were having a low level of Purpose in Life. Another 16.7% of the residents were medium scorer in purpose of life, while the rest 25% were high scorers in the component- purpose of life. 66.7% of the residents in care home had a low self acceptance. 16.7% of the residents had a higher self acceptance and the rest 16.7% had a medium level of self acceptance.

As a whole, the psychological wellbeing of the residents in the Government Care Home were equal for High, low and medium.

6.1.3.b Private Care Home

The Autonomy of the residents in the Private Care Home was Low. 58.3% were having a low Autonomy and 8.3% medium and the rest 33.3% has a higher autonomy respectively. 66.7% are having a low Environmental Mastery. Another 33.3% are having High Scores of Environmental mastery. The 58.3% of the residents in the Private Care Home are having a low Personal Growth. Another 8.3% are having Medium and 33.3% are having High Personal growth. 50% of the respondents were having a Low Positive Relation with Others. Another 16.7% and 33.3% were having Medium and High Level of Positive Relation with others respectively. 50% of the residents were having a low Purpose in Life which means they lack the accomplishments and achievements in their life. Another 16.7% and 33.3% are having a Medium and High Level of Purpose in Life Scores. 58.3% of the respondents were
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having a low Self Acceptance. The 8.3% were having Medium and 33.3% with High Level of Self Acceptance respectively.

To conclude, 33.3% of the residents in the Private Care Home have a low Psychological wellbeing where another 33.3% have a higher psychological wellbeing. The rest 33.3% have a low level of psychological wellbeing.

6.1.4 Hypotheses Testing

As the present research study was designed to inculcate the principles, tools and techniques of the Case Work Method, it follows the single subject research design. The Single Subject Research Designs are intervention research designs where the respondent act as its own control. The A-B pattern of the single subject design is used in the present study. The sample size is limited and there were only 24 samples for the Case Work Method- 12 from the government and 12 from the private senior care home. The “Celeration Line” Method proposed by White and Haring is used for the testing of hypotheses. The mean percentage was also calculated for the averages of pre and post intervention scores of the respondents.

The testing found that the intervention has a positive effect on the Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Purpose in life, Personal Growth, Positive Relation with others and the Self Acceptance of the residents in the Care Home.

6.2 Suggestions

The suggestions of the present research study can be looked at different dimensions:

6.2.1 Suggestions to the Government

Government has started various efforts to introduce more Senior Care Homes in the state of Kerala. Also the state policy on older citizens is promoted with the view to provide care and support for the elderly. The number of the elderly is found to be in the increasing phase. The mushrooming of the care homes can no longer considered as the sign of development. The government should come up with strict measures to prevent the dumping of the old in the care homes. Apart from the promotion of the institutionalization, the focus must be on the de-institutionalization and should
encourage the children to take care of their older parents. The government can start "Pakalveedu" Day Care Centres for the Senior Citizens and it will help the children to leave their parents in safety when they are at work. The Day care centres will also decrease the boredom to the senior citizens left alone and isolated at their home.

For the migrant children, the government should provide care and support facility for the older adults. Social Security Measures are not reaching to the real beneficiaries. The state provides pension and medical care support for the senior citizens, but many of the needy are still away from these measures. Only a few who required are covered in the scheme. There should be machinery to ensure that the benefits are reaching to those who need it. The government should also ensure the timely delivering of the services and pensions to the elderly. Many of the government programmes are not delivered at the proper time. Not the policy can provide the support; but the effective implementation needs to be ensured.

The government should ensure the service of a Multi-disciplinary team for the care of the elderly in Care Homes. The Multi disciplinary team should consist of physician, social worker, nurse, dietician, diabetologist, psychologist. The team need to work together for ensuring the best service to the senior citizens.

A unique elderly facility checklist for the Care Homes in the country should be implemented by the government. The facilities provided need to be stabilized and this will put an end to the commercialization of the services for the senior citizens.

6.2.2 Suggestions to the Management of care Homes

Both in the Government Care Home and in the private Care Home, the management is not providing the proper support or care. They provide the service as a charity. The attitude of the management needs a change. The efforts must be focused in such a way that the care homes for the elderly should feel that it’s their obligation to provide the acre and support for the elderly and not a charity they are giving. Also the infrastructure facilities of the care home must be user friendly. In Kerala, unlike in Western Countries, the infrastructure facilities of the care homes are not to the adequate facility. The ramps are lacking in almost all the acre homes. The care homes must follow the instructions putforth by the International Associations and Research centers. The facilities in the care homes must be adequate and helpful for the easy
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walking and usage of the elderly in care homes. Also the recreational activities for the elderly must be given utmost importance. The efforts must be directed to help the elderly to deal a life with gracefully.

The service of the multi-disciplinary team is required in a care home to ensure the psychological wellbeing of the residents. The psychological wellbeing is a component that requires the service of professional from various disciplines. The care homes need to encourage the community participation. The community must also be apart for sharing. The interaction with the community provides the best source of recreation for the elderly under the residential care.

The Visits of the School children to the Care Home need to be appreciated and promoted. A link with the nearby school and their visit to the care home add enthusiasm to the members in the care home. The cultural exchange and experience sharing need to be promoted. It will mutually benefit the children and the senior citizens.

The children need to be encouraged to visit their parents. There should be venue for the children to visit their old parents at the acre home. The care takers in senior care homes need to be provided with proper training. They need to be encouraged to have the training and also additional certificate programmes so that the support for the residents can be improved.

Many care homes lack adequate number of care givers. The appointment of the adequate number of care takers improves the services delivered to the residents. Also the Intervention programmes with regard to psychological help, inter-person relationship need to be promoted and encouraged.

6.2.3 Suggestions to Geriatric Workers

Geriatric Care Workers included the multi disciplinary team including the Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Diabetician, Social Worker, Nurse, Dietician and Occupational Therapist. The team work together to support the elderly and also to provide quality services to them. The efforts must be directed as a whole so that the elderly will be benefitted maximum from their services. As in the case of the elderly, a multidisciplinary targeted intervention is a necessity to provide quality services. The
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government and the management of the care homes must ensure that the multi disciplinary team is at the service to provide the support and care for the elderly.

6.2.4 Suggestion to the Social Work Institutions

The social work institutions should provide the course on the Geriatric support for the elderly. The social work students should practice and also should be enabled to provide the support for the elderly and also to the care givers. The present intervention should be considered as a model to provide services to the elderly. The interventions should be provided to the elderly to help them to find the meanings for their last years.

6.3 Implications for further research

The following are the suggestions for the future research:

- The experiment can be repeated using a larger sample
- More such modules can be developed with specific focus in mind
- A similar type of research can be planned for further areas of the state or the country itself.
- Follow up study can be planned to assess the effect of the intervention in the long run
- Comparative studies on institutionalized and deinstitutionalized elderly population.
- Intervention Research studies based on the other physical and psychological needs and awareness among the elderly.
- Studies on the effect of community participation in the life of the institutionalized elderly
- Intervention studies can be done with the care givers as the respondents
Conclusion

Various intervention researches focusing on the different needs of the elderly in being conducted in different parts of the country. However these interventions are not fully utilized because of many reasons. This study experimented two main aspects of social work profession. The greatest challenge was to carry out a method focused study as there were no many studies that can be categorized as a method focused study in social work discipline. The present study also designed and experimented an intervention programme on the psychological wellbeing of the elderly.

The psychological wellbeing is a complex phenomena which comprised of 6 dimensions- autonomy, personal growth, purpose in life, positive relation with others, environmental mastery and self acceptance. An intervention programme was designed covering all the six areas and the intervention programme is imparted to the respondents. The effect of the Case Work programme is analyzed and the effectiveness of the intervention programme is evaluated.