OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

With increasing age a majority of physical and psychosocial changes take place making the person frightening, repulsive, irritated, sad and moody. “Different adjustments need to be made by different individuals as they grow older; these include physical changes, which refer to the external adjustments that occur, and psychological changes, which refer to the internal adjustments that occur” (Kleinke, 1998). Due to rapid change in society with globalization and urbanization, the old people experience numerous adversities like retirement, economic hardship, immobility, detachment and chronic illness which in turn make them prone to loneliness, helplessness, anxiety and depression. Because of their limited social network and poorer family contentment they are likely to report adjustment problems, loneliness, gloominess and anxiety.

Elderly people document a broad range of depressing and negative events. Old age is generally associated with losses and bereavements of close friends, relatives and major among these losses is the demise of a spouse or life partner. Spousal bereavement is very distressing which can lead to loneliness, helplessness, sadness and depression. The elderly who do not cohabitate with their children, grandchildren or relatives are less likely to prevent such problems. “Generally, the younger generation fulfills the economic, social, emotional and physical needs of the older members of the family. While some may be financially supported by their children or other family members, most elderly depend upon their personal retirement savings/ pensions to meet their demands. They are supposed to make different adjustments irrespective of their living arrangements which give rise to loneliness, helplessness and depression” (Gahlawat and Gupta, 2016).

The United Nations General Assembly (1991) declared 1st October as the International day of older persons to celebrate and increase alertness about the concerns of elderly people. At the international level, the plan of action on aging is materializing but very little is actually done to alleviate the conditions of the aged in India. There is an urgent need to focus on these issues. The old persons who have the prospects to spend time and share activities with their family members, friends or relatives can contribute to
successful aging but contrary to this lack of such opportunities can lead to loneliness, helplessness and depression. Because of altering family and economic structure, empty nest syndrome, deficient support system including both instrumental and emotional support, relocation of children, etc. the living arrangements of older people have of utmost importance in India. “Urbanization tends to wear away the family's ability to look after the old people as well as diminish co-residence of adult children with the elderly” (Bongaarts, 2001) consequently result in hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness and depression in them.

The challenges and problems of elderly people are in abundance hence is a rich area for investigation of variables like adjustment, loneliness, helplessness, death anxiety and depression among elderly people. These senior citizens are in need of vital acknowledgment. It is important to examine the social psychological factors as these have not been addressed together. Living with or without spouse or children does not inevitably entail that the old people do not have adjustment problems, loneliness, helplessness, anxiety or depression. It would also facilitate to recognize the varied dimensions of what it to be an old person in this current society. Moreover the current study would insert to the customary body of researches by contributing experiential information about these issues in older population. The study would offer supplementary knowledge on all these variables and would indicate whether different age levels i.e. older old (65- 74 years) and oldest old (75- 84 years), living arrangement i.e. living with family and living without family and gender play important role or not. Thus the following study problem has been worked out.

PROBLEM

“To study adjustment, loneliness, helplessness, death anxiety and depression among elderly people”.

OBJECTIVES

1. To assess and compare the adjustment of elderly people who are older old (65-74 years) and who are oldest old (75- 84 years).
2. To assess and compare the adjustment of elderly people living with family and elderly people living without family.
3. To assess the gender differences on adjustment among elderly people.
4. To determine the interactive effects of age, living arrangements and gender on adjustment among elderly people.
5. To assess and compare the loneliness of elderly people who are older old and who are oldest old.
6. To assess and compare the loneliness of elderly people living with family and elderly people living without family.
7. To assess the gender differences on loneliness among elderly people.
8. To determine the interactive effects of age, living arrangements and gender on loneliness among elderly people.
9. To assess and compare the helplessness of elderly people who are older old and who are oldest old.
10. To assess and compare the helplessness of elderly people living with family and elderly people living without family.
11. To assess the gender differences on helplessness among elderly people.
12. To study the interactive effects of age, living arrangements and gender on helplessness among elderly people.
13. To assess and compare the death anxiety of elderly people who are older old and who are oldest old.
14. To assess and compare the death anxiety of elderly people living with family and elderly people living without family.
15. To assess the gender differences on death anxiety among elderly people.
16. To study the interactive effects of age, living arrangements and gender on death anxiety among elderly people.
17. To assess and compare the depression of elderly people who are older old and who are oldest old.
18. To assess and compare the depression of elderly people living with family and elderly people living without family.
19. To assess the gender differences on depression among elderly people.
20. To determine the interactive effects of age, living arrangements and gender on depression among elderly people.

Keeping into account the above aims and objectives the following hypotheses were framed.

**HYPOTHESES**

1. There would be significant difference on adjustment between elderly people who are older old and elderly who are oldest old.
2. The adjustment of elderly people living with family would be better than elderly living without family.
3. There would be significant gender differences on adjustment among the elderly people.
4. There would be a possibility of obtaining significant interactive effects of age, living arrangement and gender on adjustment among elderly people.
5. There would be significant difference on loneliness between elderly people who are older old and elderly who are oldest old.
6. The elderly people who are living with family would score low on loneliness than elderly living without family.
7. There would be significant gender differences on loneliness among the elderly people.
8. There would be a possibility of obtaining significant interactive effects of age, living arrangement and gender on loneliness among elderly people.
9. There would be significant difference on helplessness between elderly people who are older old and elderly who are oldest old.
10. The elderly people who are living with family would score low on helplessness than elderly living without family.
11. There would be significant gender differences on helplessness among the elderly people.
12. There would be a possibility of obtaining significant interactive effects of age, living arrangement and gender on helplessness among elderly people.
13. There would be significant difference on death anxiety between elderly people who are older old and elderly who are oldest old.

14. There would be significant difference on death anxiety between elderly people who are living with family and elderly living without family.

15. There would be significant gender differences on death anxiety among the elderly people.

16. There would be a possibility of obtaining significant interactive effects of age, living arrangement and gender on death anxiety among elderly people.

17. There would be significant difference on depression among the elderly who are older old and who are oldest old.

18. The elderly people who are living with family would score low on depression than elderly living without family.

19. Female elderly people would score more on depression than male elderly people.

20. There would be a possibility of obtaining significant interactive effects of age, living arrangement and gender on depression among elderly people.