Chapter V

Summary, Conclusion And Suggestion
5.1. Summary

The present study was undertaken to study the adjustment and values of old age people in Kashmir. The objectives which were formulated for the present investigation were as: to analyze the demographic background of the respondents, identification of old aged male and female subjects in rural/urban settings, to measure adjustment patterns of the old age subjects, to measure value patterns of the old age subjects, to compare male and female old age subjects in their adjustment and value orientation and to compare rural/urban old age subjects in their adjustment and value orientation.

The study was made on the rural and urban aged population of Kashmir. The sample for the present study comprised of 400 old age subjects in the age of 60-90 years. The aged included both the sexes coming from varied family and socio-economic background. The data was collected from Pulwama, Kupwara and Srinagar district of Kashmir. The questionnaire used for data collection comprised of three parts which are as (a) Information schedule (b) Shamshad Hussain and Jasbir Kour old age adjustment inventory (SJOAI-1994) (c) Allport-Vernon-Lindzey scale of values (Indian adaptation -1980).

The subjects above the age of 60 years were contacted and administered with aforesaid tools to collect information regarding the demographic
background; Shamshad Hussain and Jasbir Kour old age adjustment inventory was used to measure the problems of adjustment faced by older people in areas of health, home, social, marital, emotional, financial and overall adjustment areas and Allport-Vernon-Lindzey scale of values was used to measure the value pattern of old age subjects, especially theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political and religious values. In the adjustment scale the responses given by the subjects were scored with the help of scoring key. One score was given to the response in the direction of adjustment and 0 (zero) to the response in the direction of mal-adjustment. Hence the higher score indicates better adjustment. The responses were scored area wise. The sum of scores in different areas provided measure of overall adjustment. In order to classify the respondents as highly adjusted and highly maladjusted category the percentiles were calculated. The respondents who’s score falls below 20th percentile were considered as maladjusted and those who falls above 80th percentile were considered as highly adjusted. Similarly, the frequency table for values was obtained having the highest score in the respective scale. For the present study mean, standard deviation and “t-test” for significance of difference of means were employed for male and female respondents living in rural and urban areas of Kashmir.

5.2: Conclusions

The sample constituted 49.75 percent of rural respondents and 50.25 percent of urban respondents. The males were more in number as compared to females. A majority of the old age subjects studied (69.7 percent) belonged to the joint family. The study revealed that the joint family was prevalent among respondents. The size of the sample was largest in the young old age group (60-65 years). The marital status of respondents in urban area was at equilibrium with rural areas. While comparing the marital status of rural and urban old age subjects it was observed in the rural sample a majority (77.88 percent) was married at the time of study and a meager percentage of spinsters (2.02 percent)
were found, while as widows constituted 7.53 percent and widowers constituted about 12.57 percent. The marital status of urban respondents indicated that 78.60 percent of elderly were married at the time of study, 12.43 percent were widows and widowers constituted about 6.96 percent and about 2.0 percent of sample was never married in urban area. A majority of respondents were first born. A large percentage (94.2 percent) of male respondents was educated. The literacy rate of female respondents was about 60 percent. Pension was major source of income because the most of the respondents were in government jobs at the time of retirement. A vast majority of respondents were school teachers followed by housewives and a large proportion of respondents fall in the income group of Rs.3001/-6000/= per month. Study further revealed that about 67.5 percent of respondents were in government jobs at the age of sixty followed by 18.0 percent respondents in private jobs and those who were self employed and house wives constituted about 14.5 percent. It was observed that about 46.5 percent of respondents were working after retirement and about 53.5 percent of respondents were not working after retirement. The scanning of leisure time activities revealed that the gardening predominates with the bulk of the respondents followed by reading books, watching television and praying. The nature of job undertaken by the respondents after retirement were private jobs, agriculture and business entrepreneurs, however the non-governmental respondents continued to be on their primary jobs.

The present study clearly shows that there is higher prevalence of maladjustment among females as compared to males in health, home, social, marital, emotional, financial and overall adjustment. The proportion of being highly mal-adjusted in female category is almost approximately twice. The male respondents have taken the better dividends and predominated in highly adjusted group. In home adjustment it was observed that males were predominant and females appearing under this category hardly numbered. Similar was the case with the social adjustment where maximum number of
males was highly adjusted as compared to females of same category. The marital adjustment among males scores highest out of other parameter of adjustment. In other studies the marital adjustment is higher in males as compared to females, but not to such an extent as observed in present study which is almost four times higher in males as compared to females.

As far as rural / urban variance is concerned there was no significant difference in health, social, marital, emotional and overall adjustment but there was a significant difference in home and financial adjustment which was higher in urban respondents. It was found that there was no significant difference in health, social, marital, emotional and overall adjustment of rural and urban respondents. Likewise, under category of “highly maladjusted” females are appearing in large number as compared to males and the magnitude under the category for females is higher for adjustments like marital, health, emotional, overall adjustment, home, financial, and social. While comparing the two groups on mean score on various areas of adjustment among rural males and rural females, it was revealed that adjustments like marital, emotional, financial and overall adjustment were significant. The other adjustments which does not appear significant is health, social and home adjustment for either sex.

However, in urban area in similar categories indicated for all the areas under highly adjusted categories males takes the better dividends as compared to females and the ratio of males to females is approximately 1:3. The magnitude of males in category of “highly adjusted” for areas like marital, financial, home, health, social, and overall adjustment and emotional adjustment is very high, while it is very low in case of females of same category for marital, social, overall adjustment, health, home, financial, and emotional adjustment. The males in rural areas are highly adjusted in marital, emotional, financial and overall adjustment. Under highly maladjusted category urban females are the worst hits as compared to males for all the areas of adjustment. While comparing the two groups, the statistical technique revealed that there
was a significant difference between means scores on various areas of
adjustment in case of urban male and urban females and it was found that urban
males are highly adjusted as compared to urban females.

It has been observed that both elderly males and females have given
sufficient importance to social, aesthetic and religious values on the basis of
dominance. Out of all the six areas of values studied for either sex only one
parameter namely aesthetic value appeared to be significant which is indicative
of fact that males possess more aesthetic value than females. It was seen that
there exists insignificant difference between mean scores on the theoretical,
aesthetic, social, political and religious values in case of rural and urban
subjects’ only economic value appeared to be significant and was found higher
in urban respondents. It has been further observed on the basis of dominance
that male old age subjects have shown a higher preference for the aesthetic
value followed by social, religious, theoretical and economic values, while
female old age subjects posses more social value which is followed by religious
and theoretical value. After knowing the value profile of male and female old
age subjects, It was inferred that out of all the six areas studies for either sex
only one parameter namely aesthetic value appeared to be significant .The other
areas like theoretical, economic, social, Political and religious were not
significant. This is indicative of the fact that males possess more aesthetic value
then females.

The study revealed that there is no difference between the two groups
(rural and urban) on the various areas of values and the percentages achieved on
the basis of dominance indicated that the two groups are approximately equal to
each other in either category except theoretical value, which seems double
among urban respondents as compared to rural respondents. While comparing
the two groups on percentages, a ‘t’ test was computed which revealed that
only economic value appeared to be significant and was found higher among
urban respondents, however, other values like theoretical, aesthetic, social,
political and religious values proved to be insignificant. It was seen that there exists insignificant difference between mean scores on the theoretical, aesthetic, social, political and religious values in the case of rural and urban subjects. Study further revealed that on the basis of dominance rural males are more aesthetic, social and religious; however, rural females top the list in values like social, aesthetic and religious.

It was attempted to find significance of difference between mean scores on six values in case of rural males and rural female subjects, a t-test was conducted and out of all the six areas studied for either sex only two areas namely theoretical and social values appeared to be significant. The theoretical value was high among rural males and social value was high among rural females. The other areas like economic, aesthetic, political and religious values were not significant.

Further an attempt was made to study values among urban males and females which showed that urban females are more social followed by theoretical, aesthetic, religious, political and economic values. Study revealed urban females are more social as compared to urban males. Study further revealed that urban males appraised to be more religious than urban females and urban females are more theoretical than urban males. All the six values were subjected to t-test only aesthetic value appeared to be significant, however, other areas like theoretical, economic, social, political and religious values proved insignificant.

It has been seen that both elderly males and females have given sufficient importance to the social values. Human behaviour is primarily social in nature and it does not only mean interaction with others but also the love of others and love for social communication on the part of the individuals. The interaction with both family and friends is maintained in old age. In Kashmir the old people have enough abilities to spare, by which they can pursue any
form of fine work or art. This trend is clearly visible from present study where aesthetic value occupies second highest place in value preference for all areas in case of rural and urban respondents. In the present study the older individuals seemed to have strong religious beliefs and therefore, it becomes evident that a religion does have a pronounced effect on old age. This can be explained by the fact that a belief in religion renders high morale, lessened death anxiety and better adjustment; one may find comfort and satisfaction in their lives through religion.

The urban aged people in Kashmir seem to pay some preference to the theoretical value. It could be attributed to the persuasion of knowledge with age factors as cautiousness, intelligence, memory etc tend to turn some what static if not declining. The reason for preferences for the theoretical value may be the level of education of respondents. The level of education is the single most reliable indicator of intellectual, functioning in old age. Sufficient education stimulates a desire to stay mentally alert and gives the power of analysis, criticizing and discussing that are all essential to the persuasion of knowledge. The economic value was also given some preference next to theoretical value. This is explained by the fact that economic security is one of the most primary aspects of life. For the elderly people, the amount of money to which they have access, can determine not only the length of their lives but the quality of their lives as well. The political value pattern of aged males and females residing in rural and urban areas seemed to show almost the same kind of preferences.

India being a developing country, the status of aged women itself has not been at par with the status of men in familial, health, social and psychological spheres. Older women constitute half the number of the aged population and a majority of them are living in rural areas and are illiterate, ignorant and economically dependent. However, since independence many steps have been taken to raise their status, but tradition die hard and this is very true for Indian women. Despite the increasing inroads of education and technology, the
familial status by and large does not seem to have undergone any change. This is more so with regard to the aged women belonging to rural areas as well as for Kashmir. It is only the younger generation of women who are having the benefits of education and modernization to some extent. The present study clearly shows that there is higher prevalence of maladjustment among females as compared to males in various areas of adjustment. The proportion of highly adjusted male category is almost three times as compared to females. Present study indicated adjustment of men and women which revealed worsening of adjustment of women in the areas of health, home, emotion and social aspects with increasing age. Knowledge and acceptance of the self is central feature to successful aging. A positive self-concept goes a long way in helping a person to adjust to stresses and strains of ageing.

5.3 Implications and Suggestions to improve the plight of the older persons

In view of various adjustment problems which elderly people face in old age, it is desirable to make arrangements for free counseling to the old people, about how to regulate life in their situations. This is necessitated due to the fact that people after retirement find themselves in a new set-up about the areas of which they are more or less ignorant. Moreover; this kind of an advisory service can also help the old to accept their senility as an inevitable fact. Creating facilities for recreation for the old should be given much importance as that for the other age groups. These ideas should be integrated with the general housing scheme and with the planning for old age homes. The problems of adjustment among the elderly persons have been felt in different spheres within the family and in the society as a whole. It is, therefore, desirable to build on the social value and to strengthen the capacity of the family to cope with the problems of care of the elderly especially when there are so many competing demands on the financial, manpower and other resources of the family. Simultaneously, Governmental and voluntary efforts should be made to identify problems that
are likely to confront the old people under the changing situations and to come forward with purposeful planning.

The demographic aspects like income, education and financial status significantly influence adjustment among older women. The women who were in lower income groups with less education show more mal-adjustment during older years. In the series of studies on elderly widows, women living in joint families exhibited poor adjustment and reported low life satisfaction. It is also true that elderly women are more superstitious than elderly men. Hormonal changes associated with menopause seem to have an influence on the nature of the adjustment in the later years. It influences general health; this brings about a less positive outlook regarding one self. Aged women with negative self-concept indicated maladjustment.

Appropriate role activity and engagement probably helps adjustment and sense of psychological well-being. A high degree of activity regularly was more highly correlated to successful ageing. The effect of the family life cycle is more traumatic for women than men because of their deeper involvement in female roles in the domestic sphere. They change of role induced by the marriage of the elder son implies a greater identity crises for women rather than men. A woman is likely to have more problems than her husband in making adjustment at home. The male can keep out of minor friction at home by keeping himself or spending part of his time out of the house.

The relationship between the spouses is a central feature of an individual’s social and emotional life. Among the various factor that contribute to adjustment in middle and later years of life is the nature and level of communication between husband and wife appears to be an important factor to a happy and well-adjusted life. With the parental responsibilities generally both husband and wife again become dependent upon each other for companionship. Whether they adjust to these changes depends upon the quality of relationship
between the spouses. The aged who live with their spouses are better adjusted. The cash flow/monthly income appears to be directly correlated with better adjustment as compared to limited or restricted cash flow. Potential for generating income is higher in urban population of respondents as compared to respondents in rural areas of either sex. Where average clubbed income is lesser than the urban areas for either sex governs that most important factor which helps in higher adjustment, financial pattern of the respondents for either sex.

Economic insecurity appears to be sole concern of elderly in said study and loosing economic independence with increase in age appears to be a major factor in deciding whether a particular individual under study is highly adjusted or highly mal adjusted. This itself-explains status of economic dependence is closely related to the adjustment pattern under study and confirms to a greater extent that financial worries have a close bearing with well being of the respondent. This also partly explains that aged females especially residing in rural areas are more dependent and therefore fall under highly mal-adjusted group. This economic dependency appears to be directly related with the adjustment of the aged people in rural areas thereby creating more economic insecurities.

It is duty of the children to take care of parents and that they should mingle with the aged persons frequently and that itself will make them happy and in that case there will not be any problem and no need of old age of homes. Both the aged and their children should compromise in many aspects of life to peaceful life. We should examine the opinion instead of out right rejecting it; we should cooperate with the elderly and live according to their desire. The media can play a major role to promote care of aged. The media can also propagate awareness programmes to the care givers and younger generations to help the aged. Documentaries on the problems and care of the aged can help to improve the conditions of aged.
Children should take care of the aged particularly in financial and health matters. One should develop patience to listen to the elderly. Patience is essential in life. We should care for the aged as they cared for us. Affection in parents and children is an important family bond in getting old age care. We should develop strong affection between parents and children from childhood. Children should be advised to take care of old people and suggestions should be given to them through religious groups. The large families should be encouraged, in families with more members; the old will get more attention and care.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

1. Studies should be conducted on various socio-economic, demographic, psychological factors, which have differential influence on the adjustment of the elderly across different classes and ethnic groups on proper stratification of the elderly in the community.

2. Studies should be carried out to pinpoint the factors affecting the adjustment of the elderly people living in different socio-economic settings of Kashmir.

3. Studies should be carried out on need patterns of elderly (Health needs, mental needs and economic needs) and role and status of elderly in the family.

4. Looking towards present youth, further researches ought to be done on perception, approach, behaviour and attitude of youth towards elderly people and on family relationship.

5. The industrialization and urbanization has consequently led the aged population to encounter problems which were never heard of in the past, further research need to be done to study the impact of such changes on the elderly population.
6. One of the most important problem among elderly is of retirement which is mandatory, keeping this in view studies should be conducted on new life style characterized by decreased income and required activity, increased free time, perception of void in life, financial problems, loss of status accompanied by a sense of helplessness.

7. A comparative study should be conducted on adjustment pattern of elderly living in joint and nuclear families.

8. Longitudinal studies of value pattern of older individuals should be carried out because studies made on value pattern are very less as compared to adjustment in old age.