CHAPTER-8

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

India’s demographic contours suggest a steep rise in the elderly population in the coming decades as a result of declining fertility, increasing expectation of life at birth and demise at later ages. As per the 1991 census, the population of the elderly in India was 57 million as compared with 20 million in 1951, 77 million in 2001 and 100 million in 2009. There has been a sharp increase in the number of elderly persons between 1991 and 2009 and it has been projected that by the year 2050, the number of elderly people would rise to about 316 million. India has thus acquired the label of "an ageing nation" with 7.7% of its population being more than 60 years old. The subsistence of this major chunk of the society is indeed becoming an startling issue for governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities.

The present research work aimed at looking into the role that NGOs play for the welfare and care for the older persons in Chandigarh. There is enough literature on the role that the NGO sector plays in the development realm of India. The last two decades have seen an unprecedented growth of non-governmental organizations in India. While voluntarism has been an age-old phenomenon, it is only in the last couple of decades that so much is being talked, written and debated about it. Modern voluntarism is significantly different from the conventional voluntarism in the form, content, intent and impact. Conventional voluntarism was primarily aimed at charity and relief at best social welfare and social reform. It sprang out of religiosity, generosity and altruism. It was inspired by idealism rather than ideology. Modern voluntarism, while incorporating some of the elements of conventional voluntarism, is based on ideology rather than idealism. It aims at achieving development and social justice rather than relief and welfare. NGOs in India have contributed substantially toward social activism through their intense campaigns, people’s mobilization programmes and effective networks. NGO started being considered as an important part of civil society and also received explicit recognition from the government. The different chapters of the study delve upon the role of NGOs in welfare of older persons as well as the relevant issues and problems of the older persons. In the pages to follow major findings and suggestions have been raked by crystallizing the role of
NGOs vis-à-vis welfare of older persons in Chandigarh.

**Major Findings in Relation to NGOs**

- The foundations for the philanthropy could be seen benefitting the poor, the down trodden, the destitute in the pre-independence era.
- NGOs have emerged as agencies of social change and have become integral aspect of social transformation.
- In post-independent period a phenomenal rise could be seen in the number of NGOs. As per survey done by PRIA 1.2 million NGOs are working in Asia.
- The supplementary role of NGOs in socio-economic development of Nation was promoted and supported by Five Year Plans.
- NGO is an umbrella concept covering wide sphere of society, as playing its role in environment, awareness building, science and technology, women development, welfare of older person, child development, education, health, rural development etc.
- NGOs work for and with the people. The live example is Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association. The senior citizens are working for senior citizens.
- NGO workers are endowed with missionary zeal and commitment. They reached the unreached. Help Age India a national level NGO has targeted the unreached poor to provide them food, shelter, clothing, security and above all a life full of dignity.
- Their plans and programmes are people-centred. Help Age India provides services to the people according to their needs such as Cataract operations for senior citizens suffering from ophthalmic disorder, income source to unemployed dependent aged, old age homes for homeless aged, emergency services for victims of varied disasters.
- People’s participation is the quintessence of NGO’s work. Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association through its project Sharvanika and Vanita encourages the participation of young volunteers as well as the women from rural areas to work for social welfare as a whole.
- NGOs spend a good deal of their time and energy in people’s preparedness to ensure that they are psycho-socially equipped to carry out their programmes. Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association provides a detailed training
programme to prepare sharavanika’s to exhilarate them to work for welfare of senior citizens.

- NGOs are competent to sensitise people and create awareness about the root cause of the social inequalities. As HAI make senior citizens aware of their rights and about the evils like elder abuse and neglect.

- NGOs are the one who truly empowers the people and enable the disadvantaged to access and control over the resources. For instance, HAI financially empowers the senior citizens by providing them employment under their project ‘Income Generation Programme’ and medically empowers them by providing medical treatment at their doorstep through Mobile Medicare Units.

- According to web portal of NGOs in India, 50 NGOs are working in Chandigarh out of which seven are working for the welfare of older persons.

- NGOs working for older persons in Chandigarh are registered with Societies Registration Act 1860 or Indian Trusts Act 1882.

- The activities of NGOs working for the welfare of older persons in Chandigarh embraces medical help, old age homes, reverse mortgage, empowerment in social, financial, and political fields etc.

### Major Findings in Relation to Ageing

- The older persons are divided into four categories such as the young-old (60-69 years), middle-old (70-75 years), old-old 75 or above, very old (80 or above). There is still no agreement on the age at which a person becomes old.

- The unprecedented growth of older persons worldwide can be seen.

- According to UN population division 2009, total world population was 6.8 billion out of which the number of older persons was 800 million that is 11% of the world population. 19.8% was 60+ population, which is projected to 27.1% in 2025 and to 56.8% in 2100.

- According to UN assessment 2009 the world aged population 60 or over is 10.8%, 65 or over is 7.5% and 80 or over is 1.5% in all three ages groups percentage of females outnumber males.

- In 2009, 60 or over percentage of male in world was 9.7% and females was 11.9%, 65 or over percentage of male in world was 6.6% and females was
8.4% and in age group of 80 or over percentage of males in world was 1.1% and females was 1.9%.

- In India the aged 60 or over were 100 million in 2009 & projected to 316 million in 2050.
- The growth rate of elderly population is rapidly increasing in India. As per census report of India 2011 it is raised from 1.77% in 1991 to 2.1% in 2011 as compare to the growth rate of total population which is declining from 1.99% in 1991 to 1.02% in 2011.
- The total population of Chandigarh was 0.9 million in 2009 and the elderly population of Chandigarh was 52,555 that is 5.47% of the total population of Chandigarh in 2009.
- The rapid expansion of this advanced age group can be attributed to increased life expectancy at birth in India which ranges from 62.5 years in 2000 to 70 years in 2009.
- The older persons face wide-ranging problems including medical, financial dependency, social isolation, loneliness, abuse, neglect.
- In 1999 National Policy for Older Persons was introduced to mitigate their diversified problems.
- The NPOP visualised to extend its support to older persons in area of financial security, health care, nutrition, welfare, education, protection of life and property.
- NPOP is not implemented properly and completely as no framework was laid down in the policy.
- The most vulnerable among the older persons who belong to high risk category (for example older persons residing in remote area or tribal areas) were not given adequate attention.
- No special attention has been given to vulnerable older women in India.
- Varied schemes like NICE, OASIS, ADHAAR, have been introduced with an objective of empowering the elderly population to find satisfactory solutions for their problems.
- Under the scheme of NSAP the amount of pension was raised to Rs. 200 per month from Rs. 75 per month and under IGNDPS the State governments were also urged to contribute equally towards the pension scheme.
• Senior Citizens (Maintenance, Protection and Welfare) Act 2007 was introduced to secure a life of dignity for senior citizens but people are reluctant to make use of this Act as it goes against their kith and kin.

• Elder abuse and neglect in India and the city Chandigarh is comparatively less but its presence can be felt by going through few case studies available with Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association, HAI and the police.

• Officials of NGOs and OAHs were of the opinion that neglect and verbal abuse is more prevalent in the city. However no systematic study has been done so far on elder abuse in Chandigarh.

• The older persons who own their house were leading a dignified last phase of their life as compare to older persons who do not own their house.

• 68.03% of the respondents expressed lack of respect from their children and 65.67% opines that their dependency for one or the other reason on their children is the prime reason for this disrespect.

• 68.45% of the respondents were not in the favour of taking any action as per the Act against their own children.

• The government have come out with a draft of new National Policy for Senior Citizens 2011 which aims at mainstreaming the older persons.

Major Findings in Relation to Old Age Homes

• The concept of OAHs is gradually emerging as one of the most viable options among the senior members of the society. As is evident from the increasing number of OAHs in India, 728 in 1998 to 1258 in 2010.

• All types of OAHs have been established that is paid, unpaid, charitable, governmental, non-governmental and private.

• HAI has provided elaborate guidelines for setting up of old age homes.

• The three old age homes selected in the present study partially fulfil the criteria of establishing OAH given by HAI.

• OAH-1 (Home for the Old and Destitute People, Sector-15 D, Chandigarh) was providing services to older persons free of cost whereas OAH-2 (Sri Satya Sai Old Age Home cum Seva Centre, Sector-30 B, Chandigarh) and OAH-3 (Senior Citizens Home, Sector-43 A, Chandigarh) were providing services to older persons on payment basis.
• All the three old age homes were registered with Chandigarh Administration.
• Proper admission process is followed by the management of all the three homes.
• Admission criteria in OAH-1 was open for all but in OAH-2 and OAH-3 only those older persons were accommodated who were having suitable paying capacity.
• All the three OAHs were having good number of rooms ranging from 20-40 sufficient enough to accommodate 40-60 inmates in each. In all only 66 inmates were residing in three OAHs.
• OAH-1 and OAH-2 were having sufficient numbers of inmates as per the accommodation available such as OAH-1 has 40 intake capacity and 29 inmates were residing, similarly OAH-3 also has 40 intake capacity and 28 inmates were residing. But in OAH-2, which has intake capacity of 60 inmates, only 09 inmates were residing.
• The three OAHs were having well-constructed buildings. OAH-1 and OAH-3 were well-ventilated but OAH-2 was not having proper lighting and ventilation provisions.
• The rooms in OAH-1 were small but airy whereas in OAH-2 the rooms were spacious but suffocative as no window was available for cross ventilation, no iron net doors were available for air, only hard wooden doors were available which obstructs the fresh air flow and if kept open the mosquitos create a mess in the rooms. In OAH-3 the rooms were spacious, well ventilated and connected.
• In OAH-1 in the women’s wing the washrooms were attached with rooms and in males wing common washroom was separately situated which was stinking, slippery and was not clean. In OAH-2 the washrooms were stinking and the inmates residing at first floor were facing water problem also. Whereas in OAH-3 washrooms were clean and were having proper water facility.
• Kitchen area in OAH-1 and OAH-3 was clean and healthy food was distributed to the inmates but in OAH-2, the kitchen was stinking with foul smell of rodents, cobwebs were noticed and food distributed to the inmates was also not according to the taste and requirements of the inmates.
• Adequate staff was available in OAH-1 and OAH-3 but in OAH-2 the staff was inadequate as well as most of the times the office was found closed or was occupied by the inmates only. Manager was mostly absent from his duty. Secondly no guard was there to check the entry of the visitors. Anybody at any time can enter the home which is against the guidelines of the HAI.
• The staff available in OAHs was not well trained. Majority of the members were volunteers except the sweepers, gardener, and cooks.
• The three homes were located closed to the market, bank, bus stop, temples and hospitals etc.
• Provisions for medical aid facilities were available in all the three OAHs.
• The inmates of OAH-1 were found more satisfied as compared to inmates of OAH-3 and inmates of OAH-2 were not at all satisfied with the services of the home.

**Major Findings in Relation to Help Age India**

- HAI caters to needs of 1.5 million older people in areas of health care, livelihood support, residential care etc. every year.
- HAI is providing services in both rural and urban areas of Chandigarh.
- HAIC conducts awareness programmes on elder abuse on 15th June every year on the occasion of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day through rallies, interactive discussions, media representatives etc.
- No survey has been done on elder abuse by HAI Chandigarh. But the prevalence can be felt as during field visits as certain cases of elder abuse were noticed which are discussed in the relevant chapters. However the magnitude of this problem cannot be accurately assessed because victim’s lack of courage to report the concerned authorities.
- HAI also conducts seminars, workshops and conferences, every year. This not only keeps them busy but also provides them opportunity to participate and share their views on current topics.
- HAI, Chandigarh has maintained strong network with local government also, to provide safety/security to senior citizens through the relevant police network.
• HAI, Chandigarh is also running physiotherapy centres, age care hubs in Chandigarh to provide healthcare services to the older persons.

• Help Age is spreading its wings gradually to reach out to older persons in need of help through its helpline initiatives so as to address their problems on the spot. An estimate of 80 enquiries is received per month through the helpline initiative.

• Mobile Medicare Unit (MMU) the most popular project of HAI Chandigarh is engaged in providing healthcare services for older persons at their doorsteps. During the year 2010-11 an approximate 20518 patients were treated through MMU.

• Nearly 12 million older persons in India suffer from blindness due to cataract. Every year HAI approximately organizes 60,000 cataract operations on older people free of cost. As many as 3000-4000 cataract operations are organized by HAI, Chandigarh.

• ‘Sponsor-A-Grandparent’ is yet another significant major project of HAI. As many as 17000, older persons all over the country have been adopted under this project.

• The efforts of HAI can also be treasured from the fact that after 15 years of lobbying by Help Age with the Central Government, the NPOP was announced in 1999. The draft for the policy was also provided by HAI after various discussions.

• HAI’s new project ‘Value Education on Age Care’ meant to sensitize the school students on ageing issues. The school children are motivated to collect donations for the care of the older persons. In the year 2010 approximately 10-12 lakhs were collected by schools through this scheme.

• 96% of the income generated by HAI is spent on charitable projects being run for welfare of older persons.

• 91.5% of the beneficiaries were satisfied with the services provided by HAI Chandigarh branch.

• 72.5% of the respondents have suggested to set up OAHs and Day Care Centres for older persons in rural areas.
Major Findings in Relation to Chandigarh Senior Citizen’s Association

- Chandigarh Senior Citizen’s Association is an association of senior citizens working for the welfare of senior citizens in Chandigarh.
- It has set up 7 physiotherapy centres, 2 acupressure and magnet therapy centres, yoga centre and a Reiki centre.
- In 2010, approximate 3557 patients were treated in their 7 physiotherapy centres, 190 patients were treated through their 2 acupressure and magnet therapy centres, 30-40 senior citizens were attending yoga sessions arranged by the association and 25-30 patients were treated every month in their Reiki centre.
- Patients seeking Reiki therapy were not regular due to lack of faith in the therapy.
- The members of Chandigarh Senior Citizen’s Association visit in different government hospitals thrice a week to furnish necessary guidance to the senior, poor and illiterate patients and also to facilitate their check-ups in hospitals.
- Through its two projects Sharavanika and Vanita, Chandigarh Senior Citizen’s Association provides services to the older persons who are alone and have no body to care for them. Project Vanita is to empower the destitute old women.
- Majority of the respondents expressed discontentment with regard to the Sharavanika and Vanita projects owing to their failure to provide long term happiness to the sufferers.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

HYPOTHESIS 1: “GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE WELFARE AND CARE OF THE AGED ARE NOT FRIENDLY WITH THE TARGET GROUP”

All aged irrespective of their physical and mental health and economic viability need economic security, emotional care and psychological support in one form or the other for their wholesome existence. In response to the growing changes in age
composition and faster ageing, the National and State governments have for the past few years been engaged in drawing a set of policy initiatives to help the older persons to overcome their hardships. However, these measures have failed to satisfactorily mitigate the grievances of the aged. Some major and alarming issues related to the aged are stated as follows:

- There are more elderly in rural areas. There is also movement of the elderly from urban to rural areas.
- 90 percent elderly persons are from the unorganized sector, with no social security at the age of 60+.
- 30 percent of older persons live below the poverty line.
- Dependency ratio is higher in rural areas.
- The older women outnumber older men and face different set of problems during old age.
- A good majority of the aged especially the widowers, living in rural areas or below poverty line face neglect, sarcasm, frustration and violence.
- In the absence of familial support or government’s social security net the older persons are still working and earning their own livelihood.
- Prevalence of disability is high among the aged and is gradually increasing.

The National Policy for Older Persons 1999 is regarded as the Magna Carta for older persons in India. The opinion of older persons about NPOP illustrates that 73.82 per cent of the elderly were aware about the existence of NPOP in India. Thirty three (33%) per cent of the older persons were of the view point that NPOP is properly implemented due to which they are getting good services from the Government of India. While 55.36 per cent of the older persons were of the opinion that NPOP is formulated and awaits its implement action. Whereas 25.32 per cent of the respondents showed their dismay that NPOP has nothing to do with the problems of older persons living in rural areas. However 40.12 per cent of the elderly were agreed that NPOP to a lesser extent is beneficial for the elderly population. The respondents felt that most of their problems remain unresolved on account of the
government’s sincerity and commitment towards older persons. This supports the view that initiatives taken by the government for welfare of the older persons failed to provide requisite security net to the older persons.

The other chief step taken by Government of India was introduction of Senior Citizens (Maintenance, Protection and Welfare) Act, 2007. It promises almost everything for the older persons as they advance in age. The elderly respondents however expressed reluctance to make use of this particular Act due to personal reasons and social stigma. Indian culture and traditions are known for family bonding and majority of the Indian parents’ despite their suffering at the hands of their kith and kin would not dream to go against them.

It has been observed that the majority of the aged have failed to vouch safe their interest on account of this Act. As a matter of fact the Act failed to evoke sufficient response or enthusiasm amongst the aged.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data is used to test the Hypothesis 1: “Government policies and programmes for the welfare and care of the aged are not friendly with the target group”. The study revealed that the given hypothesis stands validated.

HYPOTHESIS 2: “OLD AGE ACCOMPANIES WITH IT SEVERAL PROBLEMS”.

Ageing is the accumulation of changes in an organism or objects over time. It refers to a multidimensional process of physical, psychological and social change. Some dimensions of ageing grow and expand over time, while others decline. Reaction time, for example, may slow with age, while knowledge of world events and wisdom may expand. It is often considered that health hazards in old age are a constellation of problems such as increased susceptibility to infection, inability to cope with physical and psychological stress, degenerative arthritis, blood pressure, diabetes and vascular diseases of heart and brain, cancer of various organs and cognitive impairment due to declining brain size or more importantly various types of cognitive disorders. Above all in old age the physical strength deteriorates, mental stability diminishes; money power becomes bleak coupled with negligence from the kith and kin. The aged thus suffer from numerous familial, social, economic,
physiological and emotional problems.

The present study reveals that 94.64 per cent of the elderly people were suffering from multiple health problems, and 44.64 per cent of the respondents were economically dependent on their family members, who find it difficult to meet their demands because of the fast changing life style. The increase in cost of living as a result of the unabated inflation and dependency on others especially during sickness aggravates the situation leading to great emotional disturbances. Loneliness is the most burdensome for the aged especially for those who have nobody to live by. Maltreatment of older people either in the family setting or in institutional setting is emerging as a very serious issue.

It can be analysed from primary as well as secondary data that old age accompanies with multiple problems. Everybody has to face the dilemma of last phase of their life. The analysis of both primary and secondary data is used to test the Hypothesis 2: “Old age accompanies with it several problems”. The study revealed that the given hypothesis stands validated.

HYPOTHESIS 3: “INMATES ARE SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE OLD AGE HOMES.”

Inmates of three OAHs under study expressed satisfaction with regard to the premises in which they were residing. The buildings were big, well ventilated and airy along with lush green grounds. They also expressed satisfaction with regard to the quality and service of food being served to the inmates. All the OAHs strictly follow the time schedule of the meals with the exceptions of sick and ill-disposed inmates. Since the residents of OAH-3 belong to the affluent families they could manage to eat goods of their own choice as eatables and their snacks were available on payment basis. The residents of OAH-2 suffered the most in the absence of appropriate quality of food more so their grievances were also not mitigated, as the management did not give timely ear even to their genuine problems.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data is used to test the Hypothesis 3: “Inmates are satisfied with the services provided by the old age homes.” stands partially validated.
HYPOTHESIS 4: “NGOS ARE PROVIDING CARE TO ONLY A LIMITED NUMBER OF OLDER PERSONS IN CHANDIGARH”

As visualized in the present study various NGOs have been involved in providing welfare and care services to the ever increasing elderly population in the country. In 2009, the number of older persons had surpassed 700 million in World and 90 million in India. Similarly the total population of Chandigarh was 0.9 million in 2009 and the older population of the city was 52,555 that is 5.47 per cent of the total population of Chandigarh in 2009. The national level NGO viz. Help Age India touches the lives of 15 lakh elders through its extensive services every year to provide them with a better quality of life in terms of health, dignity, independence and empowerment. Besides creating awareness among the school children about the needs of the aged in the society, it also conducts various sponsored events like painting competitions, debates, and grandparents meets. Help Age India, Chandigarh is providing limited and partial services to approximately two thousand older persons in Chandigarh, whereas the Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association is rendering services to approximately four thousand older persons. As a matter of fact only 66 older persons in total are benefitted to stay permanently at the OAHs, a home away from their own home. These are managed by NGOs or Chandigarh Administration and no other major registered NGO is providing stay services to the disillusioned, dejected and homeless older persons in Chandigarh. Thus a limited number of older persons are getting services and benefited from the city based NGOs. The scenario is raw and pathetic.

Thus the analysis of both primary and secondary data shows that the Hypothesis 4: “NGOs are providing care to only a limited number of older persons in Chandigarh” stands validated.

HYPOTHESIS 5: “THE PERSONNEL WORKING IN NGOS ARE NEITHER ADEQUATE NOR TRAINED”

NGOs by virtue of their dedication, human touch and nearness to the community are served by unpaid social workers imbued with the spirit of service and did not require any special education or training for performing these functions. However, in the present era of professionalism, employees need proper education and
training to impinge upon the quality of services to be provided to the diversified target
groups. The present study revealed that all the four NGOs rendering services to the
older persons in Chandigarh [Help Age India, Chandigarh Senior Citizens
Association, Lions Club Chandigarh Central (running OAH) and Sri Satya Sai Trust
(running OAH)] had a well-defined hierarchical structure comprising chairman or
president, vice-chairman or vice-president, secretaries duly elected from amongst its
varied members. These position holders are however assisted by office staff to deal
with routine office work. All these organizations are equipped with adequate staff,
retired officials from higher posts of varied fields under state or central government.
However, none of existing staff recruited has received any orientation training in
these organizations except the zeal to work for the society as a whole and for older
persons in particular. The class IV staff viz. cooks, sweepers, gardeners, drivers were
trained out of their own experience only.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data is used to test the Hypothesis
5: “The personnel working in NGOs are neither adequate nor trained” stands partially
valid.

HYPOTHESIS 6: THE FUNCTIONING OF NGOS SUFFERS DUE
TO INADEQUACIES OF FUNDS"

Finance is the life blood of any organization. An organization fails to achieve
its goals due to inadequacy of funds. In this regard the NGOs do not present a rosy
picture. Besides governmental funding major source of income are the donations from
national and international organizations. In the recent past NGOs have witnessed two
diverse phenomena, on the one hand there have been mushrooming of the NGOs and
on the other the donations have dwindled considerably owing to unabated rise in cost
of living and a significant change in the attitude of donors. Thereby, leading to
paucity of funds with majority of NGOs making it awfully difficult to undertake even
their normal functioning.

With the ever increasing grey population coupled with multifarious increase in
their problems the aged in India are the hardest hit owing to failure of the NGOs to
undertake adequate welfare and care measures for them.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data is used to test the Hypothesis
6: The functioning of NGOs suffers due to inadequacies of funds” stands validated.

Issues and Suggestions

- The objective of NPOP has not yet been achieved due to ineffective implementation mechanism by GOI.
  - The current National Policy is well considered, comprehensive, objective and sound, it only needs to be strengthened and implemented. The Policy will make a change in the lives of senior citizens only if it is implemented.
  - The gaps in the policy need to be identified with a view to make the policy relevant and implementable.
  - The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as the Nodal Ministry should play dominant role in ensuring regular Inter-Ministerial Meetings to monitor respective ministry’s Action Plan for the benefit of older persons.
  - National Council for Older Persons should play the role of an effective monitoring agency for implementation of the Policy. There should be a small Executive Committee selected from amongst the members for the purpose of effective monitoring and initiating discussion on urgent topics.

- The statements used by the Parents and Senior Citizen’s Act of 2007 are ambiguous in nature as given below:
  - Senior citizen is defined as “any person above 60 years and includes parent, whether or not senior citizen”. This implies that a parent with a child who is not a minor whether or not 60 years will be defined as a senior citizen.
    - The Act should clearly define the term senior citizens as well as the age of the parents for whom this Act has been enforced.
  - Similarly the term “Relative” means any legal heir of the childless senior citizen who is not a minor and is in possession of or would inherit his property after death. Does that mean that the content of the person’s will should be revealed beforehand and does that also imply that there will be no changes about the inheritance of property once a will is written?
The Act should be reviewed for giving such provisions which gave vague impressions and create confusion for senior citizens.

The act also proclaims that the state government should set up old-age homes in every district and that each is to house at least 150 people. Although this clause is added with the indigent elderly in mind, it is not clear as to why the bill has to specify the size of old-age homes.

It is the requirement of the day to establish more old age homes around the Nation as the number of senior citizens is increasing erratically. But specifying the availability of accommodation by an Act sounds ambiguous.

Government is side-stepping its own responsibility by not coming up with more supportive measures for the senior citizen and instead is passing on much of the responsibility to the children, grandchildren and heirs.

Government should provide security net to the older persons in the form of good pension, establishing unpaid OAHs and implementation of various policies, programmes, rules and regulations meant for welfare of the older persons.

- Absence of proper rules and regulations governing OAHs.
  - The Government should frame proper guidelines for establishment of OAHs

- Untrained staff in the select OAHs.
  - Management of OAHs should recruit trained staff that can provide proper care to the inmates and should deal with the problems of older persons empathetically.

- Families of the inmates of OAHs are not participating in the affairs of the OAHs.
  - The management must encourage the families of the inmates to participate in various activities of the OAHs.

- Inadequate participation of residents in management and the affairs of OAHs.
  - The management should encourage the inmates to shoulder the responsibility of managing their own home by inculcating ‘we feeling’ in them.
• Help Age India has established and has supported many OAHs around the Nation but no OAH has been established by HAI in Chandigarh.
  o HAI should establish its own unpaid OAH in the city to provide shelter to those indigent older persons who are not getting space in OAH-1 due to less intake capacity and other two OAHs in the city which are paid in nature.
• The select OAH-2 is in pathetic condition and the inmates residing are living a pitiful life.
  o Government or NGO like HAI should support OAH-2 and should help those inmates who are living a sinful life in OAH-2.
• OAH-2 has intake capacity of 60 but only 09 inmates were residing in the home.
  o Government should find out the reasons and should suggest measures to fully utilize the space for the welfare of indigent older persons around the city.
• Inadequate funds and grants available with select NGOs for the welfare of older persons.
  o Government should provide adequate grants for varied projects of NGOs for the welfare of older persons. NGOs should also evolve new methods to generate more funds.

Recommendations

❖ Setting up of a separate Department for older persons, frequent meetings of the Screening Committee to ensure that the benefit of the Integrated Programme for Older Persons reaches the target group.

❖ Uniform age criteria should be applicable in every Ministry and Department.

❖ Identify Ministries and guide them to undertake the programmes pertaining to senior citizens to their full potential. The most important would be the ministries dealing with the rural population and their related issues like poverty alleviation.

❖ NPOP should be expanded for the need of the below poverty line (BPL) elderly and definition of the BPL category should be clearly spelt out. Criteria
have to be developed for identification and modalities have to be worked out to ensure that the maximum persons get benefits. The needs of the other vulnerable and marginalised older persons who do not necessarily fall in the category of BPL should also be taken into consideration.

- Special attention should be given to older females so that they do not become victims of triple neglect and discrimination on account of gender, widowhood and age.

- National Association of Older Persons should be established. There should be serious deliberation on implementation.

- There should be serious deliberation on the role of the family in providing care to the older persons and alternative mechanism.

- Ministry of HRD should be persuaded to introduce small curriculum on geriatric care and issues at school level. Gerontology may also be incorporated in MBBS Degree Course.

- General awareness among the masses about the rights of senior citizens should be generated.

- There should be serious deliberation on implementation of NPOP as well as Act 2007.

- The review committee should be established to review the Parents and Senior Citizens Maintenance Act 2007 to clarify the ambiguous statements of the Act.

- Finally, since the police force will have to actually enforce the decisions of the tribunals, their performance in this regard has to be evaluated from time-to-time.

- Most of the NGOs are working for women welfare or child welfare. There is a need to enhance the participation of NGOs for welfare of older persons in Chandigarh.

- Pension amount which is up to Rs. 500/- for older persons should be increased by the Government to financially empower the older persons.

- Government should provide proper and adequate healthcare services for the older persons.
- Government should encourage the participation of older persons in policy making as well as policy implementation.
- NGOs should also encourage the participation of older persons especially residing in rural areas to keep them engaged for their good health.
- Government should appreciate and support the efforts of older persons who are working for the welfare of the older persons like Chandigarh Senior Citizens Association.
- Basic needs of the older persons should be defined within the framework of their Constitutional Rights and Directives to the State.
- Each Ministry/Department/Agency of the Central and state governments must be charged with the responsibility of formulating /laying down standards or protocols for maintenance, care and protection.
- Elder neglect, abuse and violence and the attendants conditions that appear to be associated with the phenomena must be dealt with more sternly.
- Research organizations should be encouraged to undertake analyses of these phenomena through access to FIRs filed by the police authorities.
- Aged friendly government policies and programmes have to be framed out to give solace to the elderly population of the nation.
- The State must provide old age pension to all older persons living below the poverty line.
- Establishment of more OAHs is the demand of the day. The government should extend support to voluntary organizations and philanthropic bodies to set up more number of old age homes to provide care and support to vulnerable elderly, particularly in rural areas.
- The government needs to crystallize the concept of institutional living and prepare appropriate guidelines to safeguard the social, economic, medical care of the older persons.
- Governments and NGOs must encourage the older persons to plan their retirement life much before their retirement day.
- To get health insurance policy must be compulsory for all during working
days to save the dry days of life.

- There should be optimum utilization of the government provisions meant for the older persons.

- Older persons must be encouraged by the government as well as by NGOs to contribute their knowledge and experience in the welfare of the society.

- It is necessary to have police helpline in each community and vigilance committees in every residential colony which should work hand in hand with the resident’s associations, senior citizens forums of the area to cope with the obnoxious and uncivilized behaviour on the part of children towards parents. The law alone cannot be of much help to the victim in elder abuse cases.

- Combined efforts of governments, non-governmental organizations, community and individuals are required to deal with the imminent grey society.

In the end, which is most difficult to subsume, the researcher would feel amply award if the present study stimulates serious thinking in some of the crucial areas of old age, old age care, elder abuse, old age homes and empowerment of older persons. As this field is quite ripe for more detailed investigations and there are many gaps visible where no systematic enquiry has been attempted so far. The researcher has to submit that this is just an individual endeavor. Many other areas related to the theme can further be explored by the future researchers.