



**An exploratory study of
prevalence of Abuse of older
persons in a selected population
of Oldage homes of Delhi.**

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Introduction

- Elder abuse is defined as any form of mistreatment resulting in injury or loss against an elderly person.
- There are several types of elder abuse.
 - Physical abuse happens when someone uses force to cause bodily injury or pain and includes battery and assault. Improperly restraining or drugging an elderly person is also considered physical abuse.
 - Sexual abuse occurs when an elderly person is raped or otherwise sexually assaulted without their consent. It can also happen when porn or other sexually explicit materials are shown to elders against their will, or when the elder is forced to watch sex acts between other people.

Introduction

- Abuse of the elderly is increasingly some form of abuse in the home. Identification of cases of abuses among elderly by appropriate screening tests and prompt reporting to service providers may help to provide services in OAHs and prevent negligence and abuse of elderly.
- Certain factors may put the elderly at higher risk for abuse in oldage homes. These include the intensity of any dementia and the level of physical disability, whether or not the elder is physically aggressive and isolation that requires them to be alone with caregivers for any length of time.

Need for the Study

- Abuse of the elderly is increasingly some form of abuse in the home. Identification of cases of abuses among elderly by appropriate screening tests and prompt reporting to service providers may help to provide services in OAHs and prevent negligence and abuse of elderly.
- Hence this study is planned to screen the elderly for abuse, and to examine whether any mechanisms are in place to prevent and deal with abuse of persons staying in OAHs.

Objectives of the study

- To determine the perceptions about elderly abuse and neglect among residents of selected OAHs of Delhi
- To examine whether any mechanisms are in place to prevent and deal with abuse of persons staying in OAHs.

Operational Definitions:

- **Older persons:** Residents who are staying in OAHs for at least 6 months.
- **Perception:** Perception refers to a cognitive process by which people develop a view about elder abuse.
- **Abuse:** Abuse includes intentional infliction of physical or mental injury, sexual abuse, or withholding of necessary food, clothing and medical care to treat the physical and mental health needs of an elderly person by one having the care, custody or responsibility of an elder person.
- **Mechanisms are in place:**
A planned manner of responding infavourable or unfavourable manner with respect to elder abuse.

METHODOLOGY:

- Explorative cross sectional survey design.
- **Population & Sample:**
- All of the 132 elderly male and female residents living in four of the OAHs of Delhi.
- **Tools:**
 - Demographic and selected variable- data sheet
 - Hwalek–Sengstock Elder Abuse Screening Test Standardised Scale and
 - Checklist to assess psychosocial and legal mechanisms available in OAHs.

Ethical clearance:

- Ethical clearance was taken from respective authorities of OAHs and a written consent from subjects.
- The participants of the study were interviewed by the researcher to fill the structured questionnaire on knowledge and attitude regarding elder abuse. Each interview took approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

Data Analysis:

- Socio-demographic characteristics were described using frequency and percentage.
- Likert scale 6 point ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree were grouped in to two major categories in order to describe the frequency and percentage of agreement and disagreement to each of the items of the attitude questionnaire.
- i.e. Agree Strongly agree, agree and slightly agree and disagree Strongly disagree, disagree and slightly disagree .

Table No.1: Socio demographic characteristics of study participants (n=132)

	Percentage
Gender	
• Male	47.5%
• Female	52.5%
Education	
• Never attended school	6.3%
• Primary School	28.8%
• Metric	22.5%
• Graduate & Above	42.5%
Monthly income in Rupees	
• Nil	
• 100-4000	10%
• 5000-9000	30%
• 10000-15000	30%
• > 20000	30%
Type of Family	
• Joint	25%
• Nuclear	75%
Family	
• Son	40%
• Daughter	35%
• No Child	20%
• Never married	05%

Results

I. The difference in abuse and neglect with their original homes

- Most 82% of the subjects reported that their condition is better in terms of physical care and safety
- And they experience abusive behavior much less as compared to their own kith and kin 71% .
- One reason is that they have high expectation from their children and high tolerance of bad behavior.
- This is not the case with OAH staff.

Results

2. Attitude of blaming elderly for their abuse:

- Three fourth of the subjects blamed themselves for their abuse with regards to stay in OAHs.
- Two thirds 67.5% of the adults believe that they would be less exposed to violence if they had more understanding of adult children's problems.
- Majority 60% of the participants blamed children and their spouses for provoking aggressive behaviour which lead to violence and 38% believes that the refusal to demand of money from elderly lead to violence behaviour of the family members.
- None of the participants agreed that there would be less family violence if the elderly lived in nursing home or live separately from their children.

Table No.2:Types of abuse experienced by study participants (n=132)

	Different types of abuse/ Neglect	Percentage
1	Borrowing money from elderly parents and not returning	10%
2	Occasional manhandling by staff	22%
3	Using swear words	32.5%
4	Occasional manhandling by son/daughter/son in-law /daughter in-law s	75%
5	Physically touching elderly without their consent	63%
6	Abandoning of elderly	11%
7	Placement of elderly in the oldage home by telling false story	12%
8	Personal hygiene requirements are not met.	15%
9	Nutrition requirements aren't met.	10%
10	Safety requirements aren't met.	20%
11	Health needs are not met	80%
12	Lived in homes which have unsuitable conditions.	20%
13	Exposed to violence such as beating, slapping, kicking, biting and throwing goods.	10%
14	Exposed to shouting, insulting and ridiculing.	10%
15	Money and goods are stolen, getting by force and misuse.	10%
16	Behaving to elderly as if they were imprisoned in home and excluded from society.	20%

Results

3. Different types of abuse/ Neglect

- **Borrowing money from elderly parents and not returning is reported by 10% of the respondents.**
- **Occasional manhandling by staff is reported by 22% of the respondents.**
- **Using swear words is reported by 32.5% of the respondents.**
- **Occasional manhandling by son/daughter/son in-law /daughter in-law s is reported by 75% of the respondents.**
- **Physically touching elderly without their consent is reported by 63% of the respondents.**
- **Abandoning of elderly is reported by 11% of the respondents.**
- **Placement of elderly in the oldage home by telling false story is reported by 12% of the respondents.**
- **Personal hygiene requirements are not met is reported by 15% of the respondents.**

Results

3. Different types of abuse/ Neglect

- **Nutrition requirements aren't met is reported by 10% of the respondents.**
- **Safety requirements aren't met is reported by 20% of the respondents.**
- **Health needs are not met is reported by 80% of the respondents.**
- **Lived in homes which have unsuitable conditions is reported by 20% of the respondents.**
- **Exposed to violence such as beating, slapping, kicking, biting and throwing goods is reported by 10% of the respondents.**
- **Exposed to shouting, insulting and ridiculing is reported by 10% of the respondents.**
- **Money and goods are stolen, getting by force and misuse is reported by 10% of the respondents.**
- **Behaving to elderly as if they were imprisoned in home and excluded from society is reported by 20% of the respondents.**

Results

4. Possible causes of elderly abuse by OAH staff as perceived by Respondents :

- Lack of training of OAH staff 98%
- Lack of concern towards duty 84% .
- Poor attitude towards their own parents 100% .
- Majority 61.3% of the participants felt that elderly women were more exposed to abuse and neglect than male.
- A tiny portion 7.5% of the subjects reported that more abuse and neglect is inflicted on those who are from families of low socioeconomic and weak cultural status.

Results

5. **Psychosocial and legal mechanisms available in OAHs: according to records and staff of OAHs**
 - **All 100% reported that legal mechanisms is available in OAHs if any incident is reported.**
 - **All 62% reported that psycho-social neglect cannot be ruled out due to over load of work, lack of training, quick turnover of staff, inadequate salary, temporary nature of job status,**
 - **But never the less reprimanding is done by supervisors if any incident is reported /observed.**
 - **While all the participants 100% agreed that they have responsibility of preventing elderly abuse and negligence and elderly abuse is a criminal act, surprisingly, a one third of them 30% did not agree that it is their individual responsibility to report elderly abuse or neglect when they witness one.**

Results

General comments:

- Overall experiences of staying in OAHs: Elderly adults who use community and home-based services experience several advantages to using this type of homes over their own home.
- Community services in OAHs also give many elderly adults the opportunity to attend social events with other older adults. In many cases, elderly in OAHs continue to stay active in their communities.
- Mechanisms for prevention of abuse are not visible.

Conclusion

- ❖ Older adults in need of care are frequently turning to oldage home and community-based care for their needs.
- ❖ This shift from home to old age home, allows many elderly adults to meet their needs as they age. While some families are able to care for elderly relatives in their homes, others must rely on old age homes to take care of their loved ones.
- ❖ If increasing numbers of elderly are reporting abuse by staff members and their families then it will become a problem to run institutions on which people can put their trust in.
- ❖ *There is urgent need to put mechanism in place for prevention of abuse and neglect of the residents of abuse*

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