

## Adjustment and Mental Health among Senior Citizen Living in Old Age Home and Community Dwelling

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### ABSTRACT

India is diversified culture and is known to interdependence and harmony in family bonding. With the modernization and modified family system the older age people have adjustment problem with the younger generation, that troubles the mental health of the elderly. **Objective:** The present study focused on the Adjustment and mental health of senior citizen living in old age home and with family. **Method:** The research was conducted with 400 elderly people (200 living with family and 200 living in old age home) in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu. Social Adjustment scale for aged by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Ms. Rachna Khandelwal (2008) and Positive mental health inventory by Agashe and Helode (2008) was collected along with socio-demographic details. **Results:** The statistical analysis of Correlation test and t-test were performed in this study. The result indicates that adjustment and positive mental health were positively correlated. In addition, it was found that there is significant difference in the adjustment and mental health with respect to living environment.

**Keywords:** Adjustment, Mental Health, Elderly, Old age home, Community-dwelling

According to United Nations Population Fund and the International Institute for Population Sciences report, India's senior citizen population is expected to double at 20.8% by 2050, and 36% by the end of the century. Lifestyle of the Indian population is embedded with the traditional culture where they have strong bonded family roots and customed traditions that are been followed in family. Growing older is a transitional time where one needs to adapt with numerous demands, adjustments, and changes (Lalithakumari, 2017). With modernization and urbanization of the family system older people have difficulty in adjusting with the environment.

Adjustment is defined as “The process of modifying behavior or way of thinking to accommodate the evolving demands of environment”. One of the major changes that causes adjustment problem is the retirement. Lifestyle of the older adults change from routine activity to ideal role at home, financial changes, the way elder looks at the world changes. In general, declining health, decreased mental ability, and growing economic dependency make it harder to change for old age people (Shukla et al., 2013). The poorer adjustment may lead to the poor mental health.

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People take on several roles throughout their lives. role of friends, spouses, coworkers, patients, in-laws, grandparents, and so on; role of parents toward their children; and so on. One of the most dramatic changes is retirement. Older people retire and give up jobs and social roles that most likely offered status and financial rewards. In addition, older people may see changes in their social networks after retirement. As an example, partners may discover that they are now spending a great deal of additional time interacting than they spent in the past. Elderly parents may take on the role of grandmother or even great-grandparent, which entails additional obligations and duties. Older people may find themselves in a situation where they have to ask for help rather than provide it due to age-related functional impairments. The stress of these role transitions can have an impact on their mental and physical health.

According to WHO 2019, reports that 1 in every 8 individuals were living with mental health problems. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Positive mental health is not merely the absence of mental health problems but it is the presence of positive emotions, meaningful life, satisfaction, maintaining fulfilling relationships and positive understanding of the others.

### ***Objective of the study***

- To Examine the relationship between adjustment and mental health among Senior citizen.
- To compare the difference in adjustment and mental health with respect to living environment of senior citizen.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Hypotheses***

- There will be significant relationship between Adjustment and Mental health.
- There will be significant differences in adjustment and mental health among senior citizen living in old age home and community-dwelling.

### ***Research Design***

The data used in the present study were obtained from a cross-sectional study which includes Senior Citizens living in old age home and community-dwelling. The survey research was conducted with 370 elderly people (187 living with family and 183 living in old age home) using purposive sampling in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu.

### ***Instruments used***

Social Adjustment scale for aged developed by Dr. Devendra Singh Sisodia and Ms. Rachna Khandelwal (2008) was used to measure the adjustment of aged. The scale consists of 50 statements on 5 dimensions Health, Family, Finance, Interpersonal Relationship and Spouse. Positive mental health inventory developed by Agashe and Helode (2008), it consists of 36 items on three dimension - self-acceptance, ego strength and philosophy of life respectively. socio-demographic details were collected along with the questionnaires.

### ***Data Analysis***

Pearson Correlation test was used to find the relationship between Adjustment and mental health and t-test were performed to investigate the difference in adjustment and mental health with respect to living environment of senior citizen.

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**RESULTS**

**Relationship between Adjustment and Mental health**

*Table 1. Shows the relationship between Adjustment and Mental Health*

	Self-Acceptance	Ego Strength	Philosophy of life	Positive Mental Health
<b>Family Adjustment</b>	.095	.210**	.249**	.237**
<b>Spouse Adjustment</b>	.263**	.111*	.104*	.197**
<b>Interpersonal Adjustment</b>	.225**	.083	.238**	.238**
<b>Health Adjustment</b>	.480**	.451**	.164**	.435**
<b>Financial Adjustment</b>	.317**	.319**	.146**	.314**
<b>Overall Adjustment</b>	.486**	.418**	.304**	.495**

Note: 1. \*\* denotes significant at 1% level

2. \* denotes significant at 5% level

Table 1 reveals that Adjustment and Positive Mental Health have significant positive correlation with areas of adjustment - Family Adjustment has positive relationship with Ego Strength ( $r = .210$ ), Philosophy of life ( $r = .249$ ) and Positive Mental Health ( $r = .237$ ) at  $p < 0.01$  significance.

Spouse Adjustment has significant positive correlation with Self-Acceptance ( $r = .263$ ), Ego Strength ( $r = .111$ ), Philosophy of life ( $r = .104$ ) and Positive Mental Health ( $r = .197$ ). Further, Interpersonal Adjustment has significant positive correlation with Self-Acceptance ( $r = .225$ ), Philosophy of life ( $r = .238$ ), Interpersonal Adjustment had also significantly positive correlation with Positive Mental Health ( $r = .238$ ).

Health Adjustment has significant positive correlation with Self-Acceptance ( $r = .480$ ), Ego Strength ( $r = .451$ ), Philosophy of life ( $r = .164$ ), Health Adjustment had also significantly positive correlation with Positive Mental Health ( $r = .435$ ). Financial Adjustment has significant positive correlation with Self-Acceptance ( $r = .317$ ), Ego Strength ( $r = .319$ ), Philosophy of life ( $r = .146$ ), Financial Adjustment had also significantly positive correlation with Positive Mental Health ( $r = .314$ ).

Positive correlation indicates that with increase in one variable, the other variable correspondingly increases. The obtained result reveals that high Adjustment have high Positive Mental Health. Thus, Adjustment and mental health have Positive relationship.

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**Table 2. Shows the difference in the Adjustment with respect to living environment.**

Dimensions of Adjustment	Living Environment				t-value	Level of significance
	Old age Home		Community dwelling			
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D		
<b>Family</b>	29.23	6.891	31.56	5.406	-3.619	<0.001**
<b>Spouse</b>	28.94	5.835	30.62	7.438	-2.409	.017*
<b>Interpersonal</b>	31.36	6.597	34.49	4.337	-5.391	<0.001**
<b>Health</b>	31.06	7.135	34.59	6.769	-4.875	<0.001**
<b>Financial</b>	31.48	7.978	35.05	5.646	-4.981	<0.001**
<b>Overall</b>	152.07	17.393	166.30	18.508	-7.620	<0.001**

Note: 1. \*\* denotes significant at 1% level  
2. \* denotes significant at 5% level

Table 2 showing the differences in Adjustment with respect to living environment. The results indicate P value is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to dimensions of Family, Interpersonal, Health, Financial adjustment of senior citizen. Hence there is significant difference between the senior citizens living in old age and community dwelling with regard to dimensions of adjustment. Based on the mean score, Senior citizens living in community dwelling have better adjustment than senior citizens living in old age home. When older people move from a community to an old age home, their way of life might drastically change that causes adjustment problems in elderly living in old age home (Kiik & Nuwa, 2020).

**Table 3. Shows the difference in the Mental health with respect to living environment**

Dimensions of Mental Health	Living Environment				t-value	Level of significance
	Old age Home		Community dwelling			
	Mean	S. D	Mean	S. D		
<b>Self-Acceptance</b>	7.57	1.986	8.60	2.057	-4.895	<0.001**
<b>Ego Strength</b>	7.50	1.888	8.09	1.821	-3.088	.002*
<b>Philosophy of life</b>	4.89	2.634	5.92	2.433	-3.906	<0.001**
<b>Positive Mental Health</b>	19.96	5.391	22.61	4.669	-5.059	<0.001**

Note: 1. \*\* denotes significant at 1% level  
2. \* denotes significant at 5% level

Table 3 showing the differences in dimensions of Mental health with respect to living environment. The results indicate P value is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level with regard to dimensions of mental health and Living environment. Hence there is significant difference between the senior citizens living in old age and community dwelling in self-acceptance, ego strength, Philosophy of life and overall positive mental health. Based on the mean score, Senior citizens living in community dwelling have better positive Mental health than senior citizens living in old age home. Senior citizen living in community dwelling are independent, live closely with their family and relatives which foster their mental health than the senior citizen in old age home (Kamleshbhai & Rai, 2003).

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### DISCUSSION

The results reveal that Adjustment and Positive Mental Health have significant positive correlation among senior citizens. When the senior citizens have better adjustment in the aspects of family, spouse, health, interpersonal and financial they have positive mental health. Adjustment has positive relationship with psychological wellbeing (Rekha, M.S 2020). The transitions in the life of senior citizens like retirement, loss of loved ones, financial dependence, lack of routine works make poor adjustments in their life which impacts the positive mental health. The results also indicates that significant difference in significant differences in adjustment and mental health among senior citizen living in old age home and community-dwelling. According to the researcher, community-dwelling older lives independently and with spouse, children, grandchildren and society whereas elderly living in old age home are not with their loved ones to share their feelings. This causes the elderly to have often negative feelings and leads to poor mental health.

### CONCLUSION

The study concludes that adjustment and positive mental health is positively correlated and senior citizens with different living environment have significant differences in the adjustment and mental health. In order to enhance the positive mental health for the elderly, the old age home needs to assist the residents in becoming more independent, adaptive, and active that created good adjustment in them. Social interaction with the society fosters the positive mental health in senior citizens living in old age home. Family members of the senior citizen must understand the needs of elderly and provide an independent space for their priority and help them adjust with the difficulties they face in old age.

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### ***Acknowledgement***

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The authors have indicated that their authoring and the publication of the work do not include any conflicts of interest.

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