

**APPENDIX A:  
(Interview Schedule)**

## IINTERVIEW SCHEDULE

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### **A. General Information**

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Marital Status:
4. Caste:
5. Religion:
6. Educational Qualification:
7. Present occupational status:
  - i. Retired/ non-working
  - ii. Govt. employee
  - iii. Pvt. Employee
  - iv. Self Employed/ Business
  - v. Any part time / casual skilled job
  - vi. Manual work
  - vii. Any other unskilled / semi-skilled job
  - viii. Any other
  - ix. Never worked/ Housewife
8. Occupational status in the past:
  - i. Govt. Job
  - ii. Pvt. Job
  - iii. Self Employed/ Business
  - iv. Any Part time/ casual skilled job
  - v. Manual work
  - vi. Any other unskilled/ semi-skilled job
  - vii. Others
  - viii. Never worked/ Housewife

### **B. Family Background:**

Details of your family members (Details of spouse, children, their spouses and Grandchildren and others if staying with you)



### **C. Economic Aspects:**

1. Whether you have any present source of income? Yes / No  
If yes, Give details:
2. Whether you own any Assets/ Property/ Plot of Land/ Jewellery/ Shop /House /Flat /Garden/ Fixed money/ LIC/ Other savings.
3. Do you have a Bank Account? Yes/ No  
If yes,
  - a. Are you aware of the amount of money in your Account? Yes/ No
  - b. Whether you are able to operate the Account yourself? Yes/ No  
If no, give reasons:
    - i. You are not aware of the ways to operate bank account.
    - ii. You have some physical problem and thus need someone to accompany you.
    - iii. Due to the lack of confidence
    - iv. Any other

Also state your relationship with the person who helps you in this matter:

- i. Husband
  - ii. Son
  - iii. Daughter-in law
  - iv. Daughter
  - v. Son in law
  - vi. Grand children
  - vii. Relatives
  - viii. Neighbours
  - ix. Friends
  - x. Any other
4. Whether you are monetarily supported by any of your family members who provide you money for your general expenses: Yes/ No
- If yes, provide the details of the person:
- i. Husband
  - ii. Son
  - iii. Daughter-in law
  - iv. Daughter
  - v. Son in law
  - vi. Grand children
  - vii. Relatives
  - viii. Neighbours
  - ix. Friends
  - x. Any other

Also state whether the amount provided to you is sufficient or not?

- i. Yes, it is sufficient.
  - ii. No, it is not.
  - iii. I have to manage somehow.
  - iv. Indifferent
5. In case you have a source of earning or ever have a lump sum amount of money in your hand, how do you usually spend the amount? State the frequency at which you spend for the following:- (*Give your answers as Always- A Mostly- M, Sometimes – SM, Rarely - R, Never –N,, Not Applicable- NA*)
- i. For buying gifts for your Grandchildren.
  - ii. Spend on your children or on other family members
  - iii. Spend on other requirements of your family
  - iv. For buying commodities of daily needs, including food items for yourself.
  - v. On buying medicines for yourself and other health related issues.
  - vi. On your travelling
  - vii. Contribute to your family for your own upkeep.
  - viii. For religious purposes.
  - ix. Spend on addiction, like betel leaf, gutka, tobacco, others.
  - x. Any other purpose
6. Are you free to spend money on yourself? Yes/ No  
If No... state the reasons:
7. In case you require something and cannot afford to buy it for yourself...whom do you generally approach?
- i. Husband
  - ii. Son
  - iii. Daughter-in law
  - iv. Daughter
  - v. Son in law
  - vi. Grand children
  - vii. Relatives
  - viii. Neighbours
  - ix. Friends
  - x. Any other
8. Do your family members always get you or buy the things that you wish to have?
- i. Always
  - ii. Mostly
  - iii. Sometimes
  - iv. Rarely

- v. Never
- vi. Not- Applicable

9. Do you think that your needs are always met with priority?

- i. Always
- ii. Mostly
- iii. Sometimes
- iv. Rarely
- v. Never
- vi. Not Applicable

10. Are you free to travel to places of your choice? Yes /No  
If yes, State the places where you generally travel.

- i. A religious place,
- ii. To visit a friend
- iii. To visit a relative.
- iv. To visit children
- v. Go for a tour.
- vi. Others

State the frequency at which you travel.

- i. Always
- ii. Mostly
- iii. Sometimes
- iv. Rearly
- v. Never
- vi. Not- Applicable

Do you travel...?

- i. Alone or
- ii. Accompanied by someone

In case you are accompanied by someone...state your relationship with the person.

- a. Husband
- b. Son
- c. Daughter-in law
- d. Daughter
- e. Son in law

- f. Grand children
- g. Relatives
- h. Neighbours
- i. Friends
- j. Any other

Who generally provides you the travelling expenses?

- i. Husband
- ii. Self
- iii. Son
- iv. Daughter-in law
- v. Daughter
- vi. Son in law
- vii. Grand children
- viii. Relatives
- ix. Neighbours
- x. Friends
- xi. Any other

#### **D. Social Aspects:**

##### **Degree of Role loss:**

1. Who is the decision maker of the family that you are presently staying in?  
Who was the decision maker of your family previously (may be in a different family where you used to stay.)?

If there is a change...state your feelings towards the change:

- i. It's normal.
- ii. You have no other option but to compromise with the present situation.
- iii. The previous person as a decision maker was better than the present one.
- iv. The present person is more capable as a decision maker
- v. Your authority is lost due to the change.
- vi. Your authority or position is not affected.
- vii. You feel relieved.
- viii. Indifferent.
- ix. Not Applicable

2. Mention the frequency at which your family members consult you or include you in the discussion when any decisions are being taken in the family:

- i. Always
- ii. Mostly
- iii. Sometimes

- iv. Rarely
- v. Never

State the matters in which you are consulted:

- i. Matters related to Property
- ii. Matters related to Marriage
- iii. Matters related to the Education of children.
- iv. Matters related to their jobs
- v. Matters related to buying furniture or any durables for the household
- vi. Matters related to buying gifts for any relatives or friends.
- vii. Religious affairs
- viii. Matters related to rituals
- ix. Matters related to Child rearing
- x. Any other....please mention

In case your consultation is not sought in any matter what are your feelings towards it?

- i. Its normal
- ii. You have no interest to be a part of the discussion
- iii. You feel that you are not capable to give them a better suggestion
- iv. If given a chance you can suggest them something better, for being more experienced
- v. You feel insulted and feel that your position is lost.
- vi. Indifferent.
- vii. Not Applicable.

3. Mention the frequency at which your family members inform you about any decisions being taken in the family:

- i. Always
- ii. Mostly
- iii. Sometimes
- iv. Rarely
- v. Never

In case you are not informed, state your feelings towards it?

- i. It's normal.
- ii. You have no interest to know.
- ii. You feel that you are worthless.
- iii. You feel insulted and feel that your position is lost.
- iv. You feel bad.
- v. Indifferent.
- vi. Not Applicable.

4. Who is the decision maker of your family with regard to household affairs.....like managing the kitchen affairs, deciding matters related to the interior of the house, items of daily consumption that is to be brought from the market etc.

Who was the decision maker of these affairs in the past (may be in a different family where you used to stay.)?

If there is a change...state your feelings towards the change:

- i. Its normal.
- ii. You have no option but to compromise with the present situation.
- iii. The previous person used to manage the household affairs better than the present one.
- iv. The present person is more capable.
- v. If given a chance you can manage these affairs better than anyone else.
- vi. Your authority is lost due to the change.
- vii. Your authority or position is not affected.
- viii. You feel relieved
- ix. Indifferent.
- x. Not Applicable

Mention the frequency at which you are consulted by your family members with regard to these household affairs:

- i. Always
- ii. Mostly
- iii. Sometimes
- iv. Rarely
- v. Never

In case you are not consulted, state your feelings towards it?

- i. It's normal.
- ii. You have no interest to know.
- iii. You feel that you are worthless.
- iv. You feel insulted and feel that your position is lost.
- v. You feel bad.
- vi. Indifferent.
- vii. Not Applicable.

5. If you were a working women but not working presently....state the reasons for the loss of your job.

- i. Retirement
- ii. Physical Problem
- iii. Due to family pressure

- iv. Lost interest in job
- v. Any other reasons...please mention

State your feelings towards the loss of your job by expressing your opinion towards these statements: (Answer with *Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Disagree/Strongly Disagree/ Indifferent*)

- i. "Loss of job with old age is natural and inevitable".
- ii. "Retirement is healthy because after struggling for the whole life, old age is the period when one needs some rest".
- iii. "After retirement or loss of job it is difficult to spend time".
- iv. "If given an opportunity I would like to join job again and do something productive".
- v. "Loss of job has affected my position in the society and also in my family".
- vi. "I feel to be a burden to my family members due to economic dependence".
- vii. "Loss of job has shattered my self-confidence".
- viii. "I feel depressed due to the loss of an earning source and increasing economic dependence".
- ix. "I want to engage myself in some social and community service".

6. Are you presently engaged in some welfare activities or social or community services?

If So...please give details and state your level of satisfaction by being a part of these services.

If No...Would you like to get yourself engaged in such activities?

7. What are the needs that you are generally faced with, apart from the basic needs of a two square meal, clothing and shelter?

8. What are the services that you generally provide to your family?

- i. Looking after Grandchildren
- ii. Feeding grandchildren
- iii. Take them for bath
- iv. Take them to school
- v. Helping them to do their homework.
- vi. Taking them to parks and for walk
- vii. Dusting and cleaning the house
- viii. Washing clothes
- ix. Washing utensils
- x. Helping in the kitchen
- xi. Cooking
- xii. Buying vegetables and other items of grocery
- xiii. Offering puja
- xiv. Any other...mention
- xv. None

9. State your feelings towards “I feel that my contributions are not given enough importance by my family members” (Answer with *Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Disagree/ Strongly Disagree/ Indifferent*).

**Extent of Social Acceptance (both inside and outside the family):**

1. What amount of time do you generally spend on your Grandchildren?
- i. Mostly
  - ii. Sometimes
  - iii. Rarely
  - iv. Never
  - v. Not Applicable
2. What are the activities do you generally perform with them?
- i. Looking after them
  - ii. Feeding them
  - iii. Taking them for bath
  - iv. Take them to school
  - v. Helping them in their studies
  - vi. Playing with them
  - vii. Story telling
  - viii. Going out for walks with them
  - ix. Interacting/ Gossiping
  - x. Go for outing
  - xi. Go for shopping
  - xii. Watching T.V together
  - xiii. Any other
  - xiv. Not Applicable
3. What amount of time do you spend with your Children (any one of your living children, both residing and non-residing with you)?
- i. Mostly
  - ii. Sometimes
  - iii. Rarely
  - iv. Never
  - v. Not Applicable

What are the activities do you generally perform with them?

- i. Interacting/ Gossiping
- ii. Sharing Problems
- iii. Discussion about family
- iv. Go for outing

- v. Go for shopping
- vi. Go for walk
- vii. Going to religious places
- viii. Playing games
- ix. Watching T.V together
- x. Attend social gatherings together
- xi. Any other
- xii. Not Applicable

What amount of time do you spend with your Children (co-residing with you)?

- i. Mostly
  - ii. Sometimes
  - iii. Rarely
  - iv. Never
  - v. Not Applicable
4. Do you have any friends from your neighbour or outside? Yes/ No  
If Yes, how often do you generally meet or interact with them?
- i. Everyday
  - ii. Often
  - iii. Sometimes
  - iv. Rarely
  - v. Never
  - vi. Not Applicable

What do you generally do when you meet them?

- i. Sit and Gossip
- ii. Go out for walk
- iii. Sharing Problems
- iv. Religious Discussions
- v. Do social activities together
- vi. Discuss about family
- vii. Playing games
- viii. Attending any club or old people's association
- ix. Going out for shopping
- x. Watching T.V together
- xi. Go for outing
- xii. Go to religious places together
- xiii. Attend social gathering/ parties together
- xiv. Any other
- xv. Not Applicable

5. How often do you generally meet or interact with your neighbours?
- i. Everyday
  - ii. Often
  - iii. Sometimes
  - iv. Rarely
  - v. Never
  - vi. Not Applicable
6. What are the activities that you generally do when you interact with your neighbours?
- i. Sit and Gossip
  - ii. Go out for walk
  - iii. Sharing Problems
  - iv. Religious Discussions
  - v. Do social activities together
  - vi. Discuss about family
  - vii. Playing games
  - viii. Attending any club or old people's association
  - ix. Going out for shopping
  - x. Watching T.V together
  - xi. Go for outing
  - xii. Go to religious places together
  - xiii. Attend social gathering/ parties together
  - xiv. Any other
  - xv. Not Applicable
7. What do you generally do when any guest visit your home?
- a. Welcome the person and interact with him/ her
  - b. Prefer not to talk to the person and thus withdraw from any kind of interaction.
- Do your family members introduce that person to you? Yes/ no
8. In case you have your spouse...how do you usually spend time together?
- i. Sit and Gossip
  - ii. Going for Walk
  - iii. Sharing Problems
  - iv. Religious Discussion
  - v. Doing Social Activities together
  - vi. Discussion about family
  - vii. Playing games
  - viii. Attending any clubs or old people's association
  - ix. Going out for shopping
  - x. Watching T.V Together
  - xi. Go for outing
  - xii. Go to religious places together

- xiii. Attend social gathering/ parties together
- xiv. Any other
- xv. Not Applicable

9. Mention the frequency of the following as : *Everyday/ Often/ Sometimes/ Rarely/ Never/ Not Applicable*

- i. How often do you generally go out for a Walk?
- ii. How often do you generally go out for Shopping?
- iii. How often do you generally go out to Religious institutions?
- iv. How often do you generally go out with your family members?
- v. How often do you generally visit a nearby friend?
- vi. How often do you generally attend Social gatherings?

10. Are you engaged with any Religious institutions or some other kind of association?  
If so ...Give details

How often do you visit there?

What are the activities you generally perform there?

**Perception on the following matters:**

Express your opinion towards the following statement: (**Answer with Strongly Agree/ Agree/ Strongly Disagree/ Disagree/ Indifferent/ Not Applicable**)

- i. "All my requirements are met by my family members".
- ii. "I get enough money from my family to meet my daily needs".
- iii. "Whenever I ask for something or place my requirements before my family, my needs are urgently met".
- iv. "At the time of illness or any other physical problem my family members take care of me and provide me with enough support".
- v. "I am satisfied with the amount of time my family members spend with me".
- vi. "I am satisfied with the amount of time my Grandchildren spends with me".
- vii. "I feel that my family members are too busy and do not have enough time to take care of me".
- viii. "I feel lonely as my family members are too busy and do not have sufficient time to talk to me".
- ix. "Whenever I am faced with any problem, I can always share it with my family members".
- x. "I feel dominated by the younger members of my family on every issue".
- xi. "I feel that my family members misbehave with me and do not listen to me as they used to do previously".
- xii. "I feel bad when my son and daughter-in law are going for a party, or for shopping, leaving me alone at home".

- xiii. “Now a day’s young stars do not know how to respect their elders”.
- xiv. “Working women cannot take proper care of their family, children and of the elderly members of their family. Thus women should not go out for work”.
- xv. “Children should not leave their parents and shift to some other town for their job and career”.
- xvi. “Now a day the daughter-in-laws do not listen or respect their in-laws”.
- xvii. “I feel insulted when the younger members of my family say humiliating words to me”.
- xviii. “Whenever there is an argument in your family between two younger members, you should keep mum and not interfere”.

**Care and support from family members:**

1. Do you face generally with any health related problems? Yes/ No  
If yes, Give details.
2. How would you describe your health status at present? Good/ Satisfactory/ Bad/ Worse.
3. Do you get enough money for your medical expenditures? Who provides you the money for your medical needs?
4. Do your family members take you to the doctor whenever it is required? Who generally accompanies you while going to the doctor? Who pays the doctor’s visit?
5. Do your family members look after you whenever you are sick or are suffering from any health problems?
6. Whenever you are suffering from any physical problems, does any of your family members helps you in performing your daily activities like washing clothes, taking bath, feeding you etc. Yes/ No
7. Are you satisfied with the diet being provided to you by your family members?
8. During illness who generally gives you the medicine or keep an eye on it?
9. Do your family members come and sit beside you to ask about your health status?

# APPENDIX: B

## (Publication)



## **A sociological study of ELDERLY Women in URBAN middle class and poor families**

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### **Abstract:**

*This paper attempts to make a comparative study of the extent of economic problems, level of social acceptance, degree of role loss and their adjustment towards it; and the extent of health care and support received by the elderly belonging to the middle and poor class. Role of factors like marital status, present working and income status of the respondents as well as their spouses, their contribution in the family, living arrangements are also assessed in analyzing the above factors. The study was conducted in the Municipal areas of Siliguri in Darjeeling district, West Bengal among 100 samples, 50 belonging to each category. The findings of the study show that the level of economic problems and health care and support received by the elderly is determined by their economic class, marital status, occupational status and income of the respondents and their spouses. However the degree of their role loss and social acceptance is largely determined by their living arrangements and participation in activities in their family, in addition to the above factors.*

**Key words:** *Elderly, Middle class, Poor class*

### **INTRODUCTION:**

The growing number of elderly, in the population of the world has posed some serious challenges not only for the demographers but also for the economist and policy makers. In the present era, this phenomenon has not only restricted itself to the developed countries but is increasingly becoming a common feature even of the developing countries of the world, including India. Another dimension of this phenomenon is the sex ratio of this population which shows a larger proportion of females than males. This phenomenon, which is often referred to as 'feminization of the aged population' will have some significant consequences, especially for a country like India. India being a patriarchal society, often attributes low status to its female population. Old age, associated with deteriorating physical and psychological health further aggravates her problems and drags them to a more dependent position. Social classes play a major role in influencing the experience of old age. Factors like Occupation, Education, Income, Ownership of Property, Resources held by the person in old age etc associated with social class are important in determining their Power, Authority, Opportunities, Social Acceptance, Family support and care etc.



### Review of literature:

**Bhadra(2011)** has highlighted that decline in physical activity results in dependency, loss of social status, loss in decision-making power, role loss, decreased social interaction, and neglect of the elderly women both inside and outside the family. **Yadava, Yadava and Sharma (1996)** have reported that there is a significant association between the working status of the elderly, economic contributions made by them, educational status, prior occupation and the caste group and their acceptance by the family members. **Nasreen (2009)**'s study revealed that dependency has a direct relation with the age and gender of the elderly. Moreover, the study reflects that economic and physical dependence are inversely related to the status of an elderly and with the quality of their interpersonal relationships. **Panda (2005)**'s study concluded with the findings that elderly females who accept changes in roles and age related changes, not only shares cordial relations with her family members but also feel satisfied with her life. **A.G.Arivukarasu's (2011)** in his study among the elderly found that the living arrangements of the elderly have a great impact on their physical and psychological wellbeing. **Maruthakutti (2011)**' study revealed that Age, Sex, Education, Marital status, Occupation, Income and Living Arrangements are some of the important determinants of the well being of the elderly. **Ushashree (1997)** found that economic position of the family and the elderly and their gender some important factor that determines the position of the elderly and the social supports available to them. **Audinarayana (2012 a)**'s study revealed that the co-residence with their children served as a major factor in the provision of care and support extended to them by their children.

During the review of the previous literature it was found that hardly any studies assessed the status of the elderly based on the social class. Hence in the present study, an attempt has been made to make a comparison of the elderly women in the urban areas belonging to two different social classes i.e. the middle class: families whose members belong to professional and intellectual groups and whose primary source of income comes from non-manual works; and poor class: who are mostly slum dwellers, pavement dwellers, earning their livelihood on daily basis in informal sectors and whose primary source of income come from manual works.

### Objectives:

In this context, the study will look into and comparatively investigate:

- The extent of economic problems and their adjustment towards it.
- The degree of Role loss of the elderly and their adjustment to it. Their level of Social acceptance within their family.
- Access to health care services and care and support extended to them



### ***Methodology:***

The present study was conducted in the municipal areas of Siliguri in the district of Darjeeling, West Bengal. The sampling unit for the present investigation are, women aged 60 years and above. Efforts were made to study 100 samples, with equal proportion of sample belonging to each category. Samples were drawn through Random sampling method. Stratified Random sampling was also used as the samples were stratified based on Class, Marital status, Working and income status, Educational status, Pattern of Living arrangements,. Necessary data and information was collected through direct contact with the target group, through intensive field work, observation, personal interview with the help of interview schedule, Data were also be collected from secondary sources. Data processing involved various manipulations necessary for preparing the data for analysis. The data was analyzed qualitatively and report was prepared.

### ***Findings:***

#### ***Profile of the samples:***

Data shows that large majority of the respondents' falls in the age group of 60-69 years, followed by a smaller number belonging to the age group of 70-79, while a much smaller number of elderly i.e. 12% belongs to the age group of 80+. The marital status of the respondents reflects that the numbers of widows are relatively much higher. Their total number is 57%, (with 52% and 62% belonging to the middle class and poor class respectively). This category was followed by the number of women who falls in the married status (40%), followed by small proportion who are unmarried and divorced/separated.

While looking at the class differences with regard to Educational status it is observed that the number of Illiterate in the poor families is much higher when compared to the number of illiterates in the middle class families. Simultaneously, non-formal education was received by 26% of the elderly of the poor families, whereas in case of middle class families the percentage is 6%. Contrastingly, formal education till std. x was found to be received by a higher number of middle class elderly as compared to the poor class. High School Education was received by a very small number of elderly in the middle class whereas in case of the poor class this number is more insignificant. Moreover, education till Graduation and Master degree were found to be received by only 12% and 8% of the elderly of the middle class as compared to none of the elderly of the poor class.

#### ***Living Arrangements of the Elderly:***

The study shows that majority of the elderly of the studied area, irrespective of their class, resides with their children and spouses (if married). Though the number residing with their married children and spouse (if



married) both in the middle class and poor families is much more (i.e. 50% and 46% respectively) as compared to the number of elderly residing with their unmarried children with or without spouse. While comparatively analyzing the situation, it was revealed that co-residence of the elderly with their married children in case of both the classes were mostly found in case where she is a widow. A significant number of married elderly i.e. 14% and 12% elderly belonging to middle and poor class respectively were found to be living with their husband alone. Besides these quite a small number of elderly were found to be living alone.

***Economic status: Extent of economic problems and their adjustment towards it:***

***Present occupational status:***

The study reveals that quite a small proportion of the elderly covered under the present study are engaged in economically gainful activities or some sort of remunerative work. This proportion is however, much higher for the elderly belonging to the poor class (52%) than the middle class elderly (12%).

***Table 1 : Present Occupational Status ( in percentage)***

Categories	Middle Class	Poor Class	Total %
Working	12%	52%	32%
Non-working	88%	48%	68%

***Source of income:***

The study reflects that almost 51% of the elderly covered under the present study has at least one source of income. However this percentage was significantly higher in case of poor class elderly in comparison to the elderly belonging to the middle class.

***Monetary support:***

86% of the elderly belonging to the middle class and 74% belonging to the poor class reported to receive monetary support from others. In majority cases the main source of monetary support are their son/s, daughters and husband (in case of married elderly). In case of married elderly belonging to both the classes, the primary source of monetary support are their husband, while in few cases support is received jointly from their husband and children. However 3% of the elderly belonging to the poor class reported that at the time of need, they receive monetary support from their neighbours, as their own children doesn't provide them with any kind of support.

It was revealed that the percentage of elderly reported to receive satisfactory monetary support is higher in case of middle class and married elderly. This reflects greater satisfaction among the middle class elderly with regard to the support received, than the elderly of the poor class.



### *Spending of money:*

Freedom to spend money on own needs were reported more by the elderly of the middle class, married elderly with earning husband and widows with a source of income. In contrast to this, 44% of the elderly belonging to the middle class and 64% belonging to the poor class reported to have restrictions in such matters.

### *Needs:*

The study reflects that a much higher proportion of the elderly (64%) belonging to the middle class reported that their needs are 'mostly' and 'always' met by their family members as compared to only (12%) of the elderly belonging to the poor class.. However, as compared to none of the elderly of the middle class, 24% and 8% elderly of the poor class reported that their needs are 'rarely' and 'never' met.

Majority of the elderly of the middle class elderly covered under the present study reported that their needs does 'mostly' and 'sometimes' respectively get priority by their family members/children. This percentage is much less in case of poor class elderly. Looking at the total picture it can be concluded that the middle class elderly are in a much better position when it comes to prioritising and fulfillment of their needs. Fulfillment of needs and the level of priority assigned to the needs, besides class are found to depend on the marital, income and working status of the respondents and their spouses

### *Degree of role loss and their adjustment towards it:*

#### *Participation in Decision making:*

The study shows lesser participation of the elderly women in the decision making of the household. However, comparative analysis suggests higher participation of poor class elderly women in decision making than the middle class elderly. The decision making power in most cases were found to rest in the hands of the husband where the elderly is married and co-residing with him. It should be noted that the number of elderly accepting the change in decision making as normal are found to be more in case of middle class families than in case of poor class.

Almost, 32% of the middle class elderly and 18% of the poor class elderly are 'always' consulted by their family members when any decisions are being taken in the family, these elderly are mostly married and are co-residing with their husband with or without children or where the elderly is herself the decision maker of the family. On the other hand 18% and 24% of the elderly belonging to middle class and poor class respectively are 'never' consulted in any matter. This to a great extent reflects their acceptance of the middle class elderly among the family members.



### **Participation in the management and decision making of household affairs:**

However, the study shows that the role of management of household affairs in majority cases have been transferred to the daughter-in laws of the family, though in case of a considerable proportion of cases the authority still rests with the elderly (i.e. 26% in case of each class). Besides these, in few cases the elderly are seen to participate jointly with their daughter-in laws/ daughters in the management of these affairs. In this context the number of elderly participating in the management of household affairs is higher in case of poor families (60%) than in case of middle class families (54%). In this context, the attitude of the elderly towards the change in the management of household affairs was also studied. The assessment revealed that elderly showing positive attitude was comparatively much more in number (80%) in case of middle class than in case of poor class (59%) elderly.

The data related to the frequency of seeking their consultation by their family members in these matters revealed that nearly 60% of the respondents belonging to both the classes are consulted 'always' and 'mostly' by their family members in these matters. Majority of the elderly stated that 'it is quite normal' and they don't feel bad if they are not consulted on these issues. However the proportion of women having such attitude is much higher in case of middleclass than the poor families.

### **Participation/ Contribution in household work/ chores:**

Contribution in household activities provides the elderly a sense of contribution to her family. Data shows that, 14% respondents belonging to the middle class and 6% belonging to the poor class does not participate in any household activities. Like poor class, though in few cases poor health and disability of the middle class elderly are a reason for their non-participation in household chores but in other cases, due to presence of daughter-in law and maid in the family the elderly are almost left with no work to perform. Comparative analysis shows that higher proportion of the elderly belonging to the poor families performs these activities than the elderly of the middle class families.

### **Social Acceptance of the elderly within the family:**

This factor is assessed by studying the level of their participation with their grandchildren and children.

### **Extent of participation and involvement with Grandchildren:**

In case of 44 elderly of middle class and 45 elderly of the poor class who have grandchildren, it was found that 50% and 33% elderly belonging the middle and poor class respectively spends time with their



grandchildren 'often'. On the contrary, nearly 9% elderly belonging to the poor class stated that their grandchildren 'never' spend any time with them. Such cases in majority were mostly reported by the elderly having poor /strained relation with their children and daughter-in law.

### **Extent of participation and involvement with Children:**

Comparative analysis of the table shows that a higher number of elderly belonging to the poor class spends time 'often' and 'sometimes' with their sons than the elderly of the middle class. The reason for spending less time, as stated by most of the middle class elderly is the nature of their son/s job, which leaves them with little time to spend on their family. Moreover, 9% of the middle class elderly as against 28% of the poor class reported that their sons 'never' spend time with them. As revealed by the elderly, in most of such cases the elderly is not having a cordial relation with her son/s.

Extent of the participation of the elderly with their children and grandchildren were however found to depend on the level of their participation in household activities and their living arrangements.

### ***Health Care and Support extended by the family members:***

#### **Present health problems of the elderly:**

Almost 94% of the elderly covered under the present study were found to suffer from one or more health problems at present. However, a slightly higher number of elderly belonging to the middle class reported to suffer from health problems as compared to the poor class elderly.

#### **Self-perspective of health status:**

Self- perspective of own health status as 'Bad' was reported by a slightly higher in case of poor class elderly (46%) than the elderly of the middle class (42%). On the other hand, 22% of the elderly reported to have 'worst' health condition, whose proportion is also much higher in case of the middle class. Comparative analysis of the data shows that rating of own health status as 'good'/ 'satisfactory' was more commonly reported by the poor elderly as compared to their counterparts.

#### **Medical Expenses:**

Comparative analysis shows, a significantly lower proportion of the elderly of the poor class receiving enough financial support for medical expenses, than the elderly of the middle class. This to some extent is definitely due to the differences in the economic condition of both the classes which in turn reflects a significant association between the economic status and the level of health care and medical support received by the elderly.



Data also shows that in case of the middle class elderly, the monetary support is received mostly from their son/s co residing with them. In case where the elderly is married, the support is mostly received from their husband. On the contrary, it is quite significant to note that unlike the middle class elderly, a much higher proportion of the poor elderly (30%) reported that they meet these expenses on their own. Comparative analysis shows that elderly receiving support from their son/s and husband in this regard was found to be much low in case of the poor elderly. However, neighbours role is worth mentioning role in case of poor elderly. All these findings suggest that poor class elderly tends to depends less on their family members for health related expenses than the elderly of the middle class, as in most cases these needs are met by their own resources.

### **Monetary support and assistance provided by family members in the treatment of the elderly:**

Data gathered reveals that majority of the elderly of the middle class (80%) reported that they are 'always' or 'mostly' taken to the doctor whenever any requirement is felt, as compared to 48% elderly of the poor class. It is important to note that in these cases the poor class elderly were mostly found to depend on their neighbours/ friends to assist or accompanying them to the doctor. The study reflects that daughters play a very important part when it comes to health care and support of the elderly especially in case of the poor class. While accompanying the elderly to the doctor, the role of daughter was found to be significantly high among the poor elderly (42%) than the elderly of the middle class (34%). This was followed by 30% of the elderly who are accompanied by their sons. Husband's assistance in this regard is enjoyed by a higher proportion of the elderly belonging to the middle class (24%) than the poor class elderly (14%). However, going to the doctor alone was reported more among the middle class elderly i.e. 8% elderly as compared to 2% of the poor class. Thus in this regard, a higher dependence on their kins were found among the middle class than their poor counterparts, a significant proportion of whom depends on their neighbours and friends for this.

For a much higher proportion of elderly, belonging to the middle class, it is the son who pays the doctor's fee (48%), followed by husband (32%). This was followed by very small proportion who reported that the fees are paid mostly daughters (6%), son-in laws (4%), and relatives (6%). Moreover, 10% of the elderly reported that they pay the fees themselves with their own money. In contrast to this, a greater number of elderly belonging to the poor families (30%) were found to self-reliant in this issue, followed by son/s and husband.

### **Health care and support provided by family members:**

Data in this section reflects that a higher number of the elderly covered under the present study agreed that their family members look after them during illness. However, the percentage is much higher in case of the poor class (92%) than the middle class (88%) elderly. In this context the study found that irrespective of



the social class, a higher number of elderly are looked after by their daughters during illness. Another significant proportion was found to receive assistance by their daughter-in laws in this regard, which shows slightly higher proportion for the elderly belonging to middle class than the poor elderly.

The proportion of the elderly belonging to the poor class who expressed their satisfaction with regard to the same is much lower (56%). Besides these quite a significant number of elderly belonging to the middle class reported that they are mostly reminded by their family members for taking medicines but this proportion is significantly less among the poor class. A higher proportion of elderly agreed that during illness their family members, come and sit beside them to enquire about their health which is higher in case of the middle class elderly 96% than the poor class 80%.

### Conclusion:

The study thus reveals lesser economic problems and more care and support received by the elderly of the middle class than their poor counterparts. Moreover, social acceptance and adjustment to economic problems and role loss were also found to be influenced by class factor. Besides these, working status and income of own and spouse, marital status and living arrangements were also found to influence above mentioned factors to a large extent.

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