

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis entitled '**The Elderly People in Darjeeling Hills and Their Quality of Life**' has been prepared by me under the supervision of **Prof. Maitreyee Choudhury**, Centre for Himalayan Studies, University of North Bengal.

No part of this thesis has the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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CERTIFICATE

I certify that the dissertation entitled “**The Elderly People in Darjeeling Hills and Their Quality of Life**” submitted by Smt. Jayashree Dey in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the University of North Bengal has not been published previously, nor submitted for any degree of this University or any other University. She has fulfilled all the requirements of Ph.D regulation of this university for the submission of this dissertation. The paper is a product of the candidate’s own investigation. She has completed the work under my guidance and supervision.

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PREFACE

The last phase of the demographic transition model is the ageing of population. There has been a substantial improvement in life expectancy. Presently the world has more elderly people than before. According to, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015 (pp.9) stated that in 2015 there were 901 million people aged 60 years or over worldwide which is an increase of 48 percent over the 607 million older persons. By 2030, the number of people aged 60 years or over is projected to grow by 56 percent i.e. to 1.4 billion. In India, the share of the elderly population has increased from 6.8 percent in 1991 to 7.4 percent in 2001 and in 2011 the share increased to 8.6 percent (Central Statistics Office 2016, pp.19). West Bengal has 8.5 percent of the elderly population in the total population of the state (Central statistics office 2016, pp.14). It is seen that the percentages of the elderly persons for India and West Bengal are same.

The pertinent question which arises with the increase in the number of aged population is sustainability of their quality of life. The prime queries which needs to be addressed are: whether the lives of the elderly would be associated with adequate health care; will have a strong and sufficient income or financial resource to support themselves; whether they would be able to contest with the changing family pattern with younger generation migrating in search of work and aspiring high ambition; whether loss of social role and recognition become a matter of concern for the elderly.

Therefore, with increase in population ageing a dictum has been added by the WHO to study the quality of life (QOL) which has called for 'adding life to years' and not years to life. With the unprecedented changes in our social structure due to urbanization, industrialization and migration one needs to be concerned about the quality of life of the elderly as the trend clearly reflect that ageing will soon emerge as a major social challenge in future. Population ageing is a matter of concern and vast resources need to be dedicated towards the support, care and treatment, building relevant infrastructure, supporting financially to the needy and worthy elderly so that they live a dignified and quality life.

Article 41 of the Indian Constitution provides that ‘the state shall within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved wants’. The State should fully recognize its duty towards the aged as provided by the Indian Constitution and take effective steps in providing adequate provision especially in health and financial security of the elderly.

In brief, the study proposed to assess the quality of life (QOL) of the elderly in Darjeeling hills with the help of various indicators pertaining to economic, social, health, residential environment and psychology and personal autonomy. The aim of the study was to determine the elderly people’s perception about their lives based on the above indicators. The study also delved into knowing the extent to which the QOL of the elderly men and women differ in Darjeeling hills. Data were collected through stratified random and purposive sampling method totalling 300 respondents for 15 sample areas. Small case studies were taken to help a better understanding of the subjective impact of ageing in the changing social structure.

Much valuable information have been collected regarding the QOL of the elderly in Darjeeling hills with certain obvious limitation. The data based facts will help in understanding the factors which contribute or do not contribute in shaping the QOL of the elderly. I profoundly believe that the present study will help to gain some insight about the elderly’s life and may motivate and help other studies to strongly advocate the cause of the elderly.

Jayashree Dey.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ADL | Activities of Daily Living |
| BKPAI | Building Knowledge Base on Population Aging in India |
| BPL | Below Poverty Level |
| CVD | Cardio Vascular Disease |
| DPSP | Directive Principles of State Policy |
| GDS | Geriatric Depression Scale |
| GIS | Geographic Information System |
| HLE | Health Life Expectancy |
| IADL | Instrumental Activities of Daily Activities |
| IAY | Indira Awas Yojana |
| IGNOAPS | Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme |
| IPOP | Integrated Programme for Older Persons |
| MFI | Micro Finance Institution |
| MORD | Ministry of Rural Development |
| NBA | Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan |
| NFBS | National Family Benefit Scheme |
| NFHS | National Family Health Survey |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organizations |
| NMBS | National Maternity Benefit Scheme |
| NOAPS | National Old Age Pension Scheme |
| NPOP | National Policy on Older Person |
| NSAP | National Social Assistance Programme |
| NSSO | National Sample Survey Office |
| OGD | Open Government Data |
| PA | Psychological Acceptance |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| PES | Perceived Environmental Stress |
| PF | Provident Fund |
| PHE | Public Health Engineering |
| PIB | Press Information Bureau |
| PWD | Persons With Disabilities |
| QOL | Quality of Life |
| RGGVY | Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana |
| SC | Schedule Caste |
| SD | Standard Deviation |
| SPSS | Statistical Package for the Social Sciences |
| SRS | Sample Registration System |
| ST | Schedule Tribe |
| SWB | Subjective Well-Being |
| TDS | Tax Deduction Scheme |
| TSC | Total Sanitation Campaign |
| UN | United Nation |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNPD | United Nations Population Division |
| UTs | Union Territories |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| WHOQOL-BREF | World Health Organization Quality of Life Instrument |