

# Growing Number of Female Senior Citizen in Old Age Homes: Challenges and Solutions

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## Abstract

*The increasing trend of the elderly population is a worldwide matter of concern. Nepal is a developing country facing challenges such as a lack of economic growth, low per capita income, poor pension system, and unemployment. These factors make life even more difficult, especially for elderly people. This study has tried to explore the growing number of old age homes for elderly people and especially the problems that elderly women face at these homes. The purpose of this study is to reveal the problems of older people, especially women, and their feelings about their safety. To complete this study several old age homes were visited and interacted with elderly people. In this course, elderly women and the members of the old age management committees were interviewed as the key informants of this study. The research concludes that the relationship between family and elderly people is getting worse due to the increasing modern lifestyle. And, as a result, elderly people are facing health and financial problems as well as security. Elderly women also have been victims of sexual abuse.*

**Key words:** *Jestha Nagrik, Old age home, Conflict, Peace, Social Security.*

## Background

Nowadays, due to technology, healthcare, economic growth, and education, there are challenges in considering and dealing with senior citizens. In the days of yesteryear, in Nepali society, it was a tradition to honor, respect, and treat people as respectable persons when they say grandma and grandpa. Especially children used to grow up in the arms of their grandmothers and fathers. They enjoyed spending more time with their grandparents. Even if they went somewhere, they used to cry and whine if they could not go together, but now it seems that the elderly grandmothers and grandfathers are far away from the children. Children also seem to have less attachment to their grandmothers and grandfathers than before. As the culture of the nuclear family grows, the distance and alienation between the older generation and the new generation of the family develop. As a result, senior citizens are becoming a burden within the family

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and they are compelled to live in old age homes and senior citizen care centers. It is emerging as a huge problem and challenge along with the development of our society. Old age is a difficult time for many people, a time of declining health, reduced income, the loss of a meaningful role, or the death of a loved one. These problems can create great unhappiness for elderly people and can damage relationships with spouses and children (Shoaib et. al., 2011). With this situation in mind, an attempt has been made to conduct a survey study on the condition of women and their growing shelter, especially in old age homes and senior citizen care centers. Old age is a natural process, and aging brings changes in gestures and behaviors. The relationship between family and society in terms of roles and responsibilities also changes. Older people lose their many desires, opportunities, and spouses due to aging. They feel lonely; however, they are well-off (Ashiq & Asad, 2017). The most important thing to be considered is understanding their feelings by listening to them, respecting them for their life experiences and ultimately attaining some sense of peace from their family and society. Caring, regard, adoring, and sharing are characteristics and esteem of Nepali society. Family individuals take after this esteem to ensure each other. These variables give vitality to develop self-regard.

The above scenario shows that the issue of older people, especially older women, is important and needs to be addressed by society.

This study was conducted with the aim of exploring the experiences of women in old age homes. It seeks to address key questions, including the reasons why older women seek residence in ashrams and care centers. Specifically, it examines whether these women choose such facilities for safety, access to food and shelter, or other underlying factors.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- a) To explore the problems and challenges faced by senior women living in old age homes.
- b) To assess the perceptions of senior citizens regarding old age homes.
- c) To explore their views and expectations concerning the social security policy of Nepal.

### **Methodology**

In this study, a total of 12 old age homes were selected randomly for primary data collection using a purposive sampling method. Among them, one home was selected from Kaski district, one from Tanahun district, two from Bhaktapur, one from Lalit-

pur and seven homes from Kathmandu. The main objective of this selection criterion is to gather the perceptions of elderly women from different districts regarding their experiences of staying in old age homes. The focus is to understand their personal experiences and viewpoints about living in such facilities. Primary information was collected from female elderly living in these elderly care centers. Each old age home was visited, and data was collected through group discussions with senior citizens, individual interviews with elderly residents. Interviews with members of the old age home management committees were taken and direct observations were made. For this purpose, Constitution of Nepal 2072, Elderly Persons Act 2063, Elderly Persons Ordinance 2065, senior citizens related program reports, souvenirs, brochures and progress reports were taken as secondary sources. This study attempted to analyze the problem by focusing on qualitative aspects.

### **The definition and government policy related to senior citizens**

The world's total population is 7.9 billion. The world's population growth rate is exceeding the standard for population growth, making it a challenge for every country in modern times. There are 703 million elderly people (over 60 years old) in the world (Worldometers, 2022). Similarly, there are 670 million people aged 60 and above in Asia-Pacific (Asia-Pacific Population Aging Report, 2022). As per Census Nepal 2021, 10.21% of the total population of Nepal are elderly people. The aging population is gradually increasing, so the safety of the elderly has become a concern for the country and society.

According to the Senior Citizens Act 2006, a senior citizen is defined as an individual who has reached the age of sixty. The Social Security Act 2018 has encompassed various groups of people who are eligible for social security. The entitlement of citizens for social security includes senior citizens, widows, indigent, incapacitated, helpless person, helpless single women, people with disabilities, children and children who are unable to take care of themselves. These groups receive social security allowances. Dalit and single women receive senior citizen allowance after they have reached the age of sixty years, and other senior citizens receive allowances after completing the age of seventy years. Nepal government provides such allowances by specifying the areas of distribution such as; destitute citizen allowance, incapacitated and helpless allowance and helpless single women allowance. The government has specified single women as those who have not married after being divorced or widowed or living upon getting a legal separation, and unmarried.

According to the Act, any citizen who is entitled to more than one kind of social security allowances, can however only get one of the benefits and are given choices

as per their interest, thus eliminating the chance of getting double allowance. The Act however does not explain the special categories of the citizen as per their source of income. All senior citizens come under the social security allowances.

The Government of Nepal, through the Ministry of Health and Population, has developed a Geriatric Health Service Strategy aimed at safeguarding the health rights of senior citizens. This strategy focuses on enhancing health promotion and protection, ensuring effective delivery of health services, and improving the social health insurance system.

This paper focuses to motivate senior citizen and enhance awareness on family and community level, strengthen and expand health protection system for senior citizen, increase access and the affordability and utilization of quality health services and assistive devices by senior citizens, develop a senior citizen-inclusive health system to address the health needs of senior citizens in an appropriate manner, motivate and enhance the professional and technical competence of health personnel to provide quality geriatric health services effectively and efficiently, expand and strengthen innovative and implementable social health insurance reform measures to respond to the needs of senior citizens and their family members. It is a positive development that, after more than three decades of democracy, the Ministry of Health has taken the initiative to address the genuine health issues of senior citizens. Previously, there were significant challenges for senior citizens, including the need for dedicated hospitals and separate wards. Additionally, the care and treatment of seniors require doctors and nurses with specialized expertise in geriatrics. This paper has focused on the need for specialized doctors and nurses in this field.

The sixteenth plan (Fiscal Year 2024/25 – 2028/29) addresses programs aimed at ensuring the security of senior citizens and facilitating the transfer of intergenerational skills (National Planning Commission, 2024). However, it lacks specific quantitative targets. The plan identifies several challenges, including violence against women, children, senior citizens, and marginalized communities, as well as economic, social, and cultural racism, and deep-rooted traditional thinking. The plan does not specify which types of traditional thinking and intergenerational skills are being addressed. It also lacks details on how social relations between generations will be improved and how senior citizens can be empowered in the evolving context of Nepal. While the plan acknowledges traditional thinking as a challenge, it does not clearly explain how this thinking impacts senior citizens. The plan does not address how to handle the growing senior citizen population, the migration of youth, or the increase in both profit-based and non-profit old age homes. These issues significantly impact family dynamics and structures, but the plan lacks strategies for addressing these challenges.

Since 2024, Ministry of women, children and senior citizen has emphasized the importance of transferring the knowledge, skills, and experiences of senior citizens to the younger generation. Discrimination against senior citizens by family members, society, or others will lead to legal prosecution and penalties for those involved. Welfare Committees (Kalyankari Samittee) have been established at both the central and district levels through coordination with governmental and non-governmental stakeholders. Senior citizens often feel reluctant to express complaints against their children, even when they face difficulties from family members. This report highlights that in rural areas, senior citizens are sometimes abandoned in unknown urban locations, placed in old age homes, or forced to beg on the streets. In response, it is essential to provide special protection for senior citizens. The Government of Nepal has initiated various support measures, including allowances, healthcare services, transportation, and more.

Nepal is a country with a diverse culture based on a diverse caste system. The socio-cultural system of Nepali society is as diverse and complex as geography itself. Whatever the geographical and cultural differences, the concept of social security is not entirely unique to Nepal's small communities. Quadagno (2022). Gerontology can be categorized into two main types: biological or physical gerontology and social gerontology. Biological or physical gerontology focuses on the physiological aspects of aging, examining how the body changes and adapts over time. Social gerontology addresses the social, cultural, and psychological dimensions of aging, exploring how individuals experience aging within societal contexts and how it affects roles, relationships, and well-being. Together, these two branches provide a comprehensive understanding of the aging process from both biological and social perspectives.

Bhandari (2019) has discussed Nepal's social security system in his paper entitled "Social security system of elderly population in Nepal." Reviewing the historical development of social security in Nepal Bhandari argues that the Hindu and Buddhist religion provides basic activities of social security such as giving alms, philanthropic health education services. He cites Mathema (2012) stating that social security policy of Nepal in the ancient period during Lichhavi, Malla even Rana regime was primarily based on a feudalistic and dictatorial system that depended upon the order of the state. Through the people's movement, the Rana regime's end followed historical democracy introduction in 1951. The country adopted new constitutions and formulated acts and regulations. The shape of Nepal 1991 had recognized social security as a state responsibility. The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2007 and constitution 2015 have ensured social security as people's fundamental rights (Mathema, 2012, as cited in Bhandari, 2019).

Rastriya Jetha Nagrik Mahasangh (National Senior Citizen Federation) (2017) has published a survey report on the condition of senior citizens in Nepal and an area of

improvement. The federation of senior citizens discusses senior citizen's problems like financial, health, social and family-related problems.

### Living conditions of senior citizens in nursing homes

According to the observation of 12 centers as mentioned above including Kathmandu, the living conditions of senior male and female citizens in those centers are as follows:

Nursing homes' Names	Women	Men	District
Devghat Old Age Home	23	10	Tanahun
Om Briddhasram	8	–	Bhaktapur
Janak Baba Ashrit Mandir Brid-dashram, Tahachal	8	–	Kathmandu
Special organization in honor of senior citizens, SANEPA	10	6	Lalitpur
Matatirtha Vridhasram, Matatirtha	20	–	Kathmandu
Pokhara Old Age Home, Kaski	7	3	Pokhara
Social Welfare Center Old Age Home, Pashupati	110	80	Kathmandu
Himalaya Old Age Home, Gongbu	20	9	Kathmandu
Nishaya Seva Sadan Jeshtha Nagarik Awas Vridhashram, Baneshnar	35	6	Kathmandu
Siddhi Shalikram Vridhashram,	25	9	Bhaktapur
Ama Ghar Vridhasram	24	1	Kathmandu
Jestha Nagrik Nursing Syahar Kendra Farping, Sheshnarayan	6	4	Kathmandu
<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>128</b>	

Source: Field visit 2074

According to the table shown above, there are 216 women and 128 men in 12 old age homes. From this number, the number of women in old age homes is more. As this data

shows there are 80 men in Pashupati's old age home in Kathmandu while the number of men in other old age homes is very less. Currently, there are 86 nursing homes in operation in Nepal. The old age homes are located in the areas of Bhaktapur, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Tanahun, and Pokhara. The selection of old age people of old age home will be based on following criteria:

- a) Ability to speak and listen
- b) Ability to remember
- c) Ability to understand

### **Types of old age homes in Nepal**

Based on field visit 2074, it was found that there are mainly four types of old age homes: the first is free of cost, the second is a mix of free services and services where residents can contribute voluntarily, and the third type provides services for a fee. The latter includes private or for-profit old age homes that offer services to those who can afford to pay.

The number of old age homes is increasing in Nepal today. According to Social Welfare Center, Pashupati, report 2074 an old age home was first opened with the aim of providing shelter to the destitute and unable to work. When discussing where and how it started, according to the information given by Sribind Khanal, accounting officer of Social Welfare Center, Pashupati, it started with the work of keeping the Guthi in Pashupati's temple or entrusting it to Pashupati's temple by giving some money after working in the palace during the Rana period. According to him, it is a dumping site , like a place to be thrown away when it is not working. During the Rana period, it was especially important to bring more women. When the women who worked in various roles including Susare in the palace got old, they were kept there as it was the easiest and safest place to look after them . It is said that old age homes were developed from such thinking. In fact, people becoming weak and old is not a new thing, but what determines human existence is important. Nowadays, the trend of residential homes for the elderly is increasing not only in Nepal but also in the world. When studying from the perspective of what kind of old age homes are in Nepal, it seems that those old age home can be classified in the following ways:

#### **(a) Government-funded old age home**

Government-funded old age homes provide free or subsidized care to elderly individuals in need, particularly for senior citizens who are homeless, disabled, or without family support.

In Nepal, this type of old age home is "Samaj Kalyan Vriddhasram" operated in Pashupati, Kathmandu. The government has assigned necessary staff to properly manage this nursing home. According to Khanal the senior citizens of this ashram are divided into three categories: 1) unable to speak 2) using wheel chairs 3) abiding the rules and regulations of the ashram

#### **(b) Cost-free old age home dedicated to social service**

Cost free Vriddashrams (old age home) are operated by individuals and social organizations with a sense of social service. Numerically, these type of old age homes are significantly running in Nepal. Himalaya Old Age Home in Kathmandu, Pokhara Old Age Home in Kaski, Matatirtha old age home, and Kalimati Aama Ghar in Kathmandu are some of the examples.

Facilities in free old age homes are minimal. There, all the senior citizens with abnormal health conditions, those who have lost their mental balance and normal conditions are kept in one place so that the environment there seems uncomfortable, but the disabled senior citizens whose names and addresses have not been disclosed have been picked up from the streets by the operators and are provided with food, shelter and other services, said Khanal.

#### **(c) Old age homes operated for profit, charging fees for services**

Since the family is unable to provide the necessary services to the elderly people who are from the family but are suffering from various diseases, it has been observed that for some time now, the operation of old age homes with fees has been started for commercial purposes targeting them. The number of such old age homes is increasing. Fees for living environment, medical services, bhajankirtan, yoga, tours etc. are charged from the senior citizens (their responsibilities). Due to the services provided according to the fee, the people living here seem to be happy materially. In such centers, Sevasdan Sanepa Height (Lalitpur), The Home Hermitage (Lajimpat), Hope Hermitage Elderly Care (Gairidhara), Siddhi Shaligram Vriddhashram Bhaktapur and other centers are specialized in the service of senior citizens. It seems that the purpose of such ashrams is to do economic business for services. Timely food, necessary medical treatment, nursing services etc. are provided as needed, but it seems that these ashrams are occupied by people who have retired from jobs are getting pension, and they have their own land and house.

#### **(d) Semi-Government-Funded Old Age Homes**

According to Shirvind Khanal these are semi-government nursing homes, with half of the costs borne by the government and half of the costs managed by various donor



committees. Devghatdham Old Age Home in Tanahun is a semi government old age home. The Devghat Development Committee has been giving five lakhs annually to this old age home. (Khanal, 2074). Khanal also informed that people distribute food and clothes to the elderly people on birthdays, parents' day and other special festivals mostly at all type of old age homes as mentioned above.

### **Key issues**

Following are the important issues that emerged after discussion with senior citizens:

#### **(a) Feeling of missing**

The men of the old age home had no one to look after them, had problems with eating and living, had no home, had been sick and had no one to look after them. They say that they have come to the old age home today because they have no one to take care of them and love them. "Why would anyone come? They express their pain to whom they want and come there, but their nature seems to be that they want others to pay attention to them. The answer of some of them is that they have no one to take care of them or they have suffered because they have no children. But women remember their past experiences, remember their past relationships and feel that they have to live without any responsibilities and obligations to their families. Most of the senior women in the aforementioned old age homes, who had previously lived with their families, often feel a sense of homelessness due to the absence of their loved ones. While they receive respect and have access to facilities at the old age home, they still experience feelings of loneliness. Without work or responsibilities, their daily routine mainly consists of eating, sitting, and sleeping.

#### **(b) No companionship**

"I am not alone; I am in a group," says Parwati Adhikari of Nishahaye Sewa Sadan old age home, Buddhanagar, "but I do not feel the same companionship as I did at home." She says "everyone is busy on their own, eats and sleeps and whenever someone gets ill, they are put in a corner in isolation." She repeatedly expressed her desire to go back home stating that whatever little life she had in village she was much satisfied than in Vriddhaashram.

#### **(c) Impact on elderly care and emotional connection**

In discussions with the seniors residing in old age homes, many expressed that they receive adequate food, clothing, and respect from the staff and fellow residents. Despite these provisions, they often feel a deep sense of longing for their own homes and family members. They face emotional challenges stemming from their separation from their families and familiar surroundings. This underscores the importance of not only meet-

ing physical needs but also addressing the emotional and psychological well-being of seniors, as their connection to family and home plays a crucial role in their overall happiness and quality of life.

Apart from this, they are also victims of abuse. In this regard, Dr. Thagunna (2074) writes, "Elderly abuse is a condition in which physical, emotional, psychological, sexual or financial harm is done to the elderly. Caregivers do such careless behavior knowingly or unknowingly." These are behavioral problems towards the elderly and these behaviors also affect their mental health. However, in comparison, women are less affected by these problems as they are active in various jobs than men. Elderly women who are in good health help in the kitchen in the old age home, some make lamps and sell them, some tend the vegetable and flower garden. They say that this makes it easier for them to pass the time and also gives them the feeling that they have at least done something meaningful.

#### **(d) Centers as dumping site**

As they get older, they face various physical difficulties. Due to this, some change in their nature occurs. As the age gradually increases, it becomes difficult to walk, sleep, eat, hear and see, and because it is not accepted naturally by the family, it is felt that the elderly do not work or are a burden on the house. However, some senior citizens also say that they came with nobody and nothing. Some of them do not want to tell where their family members are because they were brought here by others. In any case, the beginning of living in an old age home is not easy, natural and respectable. They say that they are making a living as much as they can by working. Some of them even told me not to ask about such things because they would get angry and hurt even more when they asked about the family. "Who wants to come here ?" "Now we are waiting for death," some old women said with tears in their eyes. The question arises as to whether the old age home is a respectable place or not, due to the fact that it feels like a dumping site. Being in a situation where you have to feel inferior while living in an old age home has made you think about the arrangement, facilities and behavior of the old age home.

Seventy-nine-year-old Jyoti Thapa of Pashupati old age home in Kathamandu expresses her feelings about living in an old age home by stating, "Birda Ashramma basnu jailma base jastai ho, kaidi jasto thuniyaka chham" (Staying in an old age home feels like being in prison, confined within boundaries). Her words vividly reflect the emotional isolation and restricted sense of freedom that many elderly residents experience in such facilities. Although they may not have family members nearby, friends, relatives, and neighbors in the village can serve as a surrogate family, allowing them to share their

experiences with one another.

### **(e) Sense of duty**

There is a need to understand the responsibility and duty of senior citizens except those who are sick and disabled. After getting old, it is necessary to think about the question of whether you only take services or only have the right to receive services. While talking to senior citizens living in old age homes it was found that they strongly expect to receive care and love from their families. They also have a sense of responsibility and obligation to transfer the knowledge to the younger generation.

### **(f) Old age home is not a solution**

In fact, the trend of opening old age homes is spreading widely. It can be both good and bad. Good in the sense that it is good to give support to the helpless, nobody and nothing, and bad in the sense that opening an old age home and letting them eat and live is a big thing? Does this fulfill the responsibility of the family, society, and the state towards senior citizens? What are the responsibilities and obligations of the elderly? And what are their rights? Do they feel safe there? Or are they not being exploited subtly or invisibly? Because some old women have also complained about some men living in old age homes teasing them or talking rubbish. Therefore, it cannot be believed that women are safe even if they are old. It is also necessary to be able to speak for yourself or tell about the violence against you. There are old women in the world who have fought for women's rights.

### **(g) Practicing an active lifestyle**

As the age increases, many health problems arise. However, it should not be considered that they are completely disabled or unable to do anything, because physical activity helps people to stay healthy even in old age. The arrangement of necessary treatment helps to stay healthy. Therefore, families, old age home operators and even the state should think about creating an environment for health care and physical activity for senior citizens.

### **(h) Health problems**

Health problem is actually the most important problem of senior citizens. Dr. Chhetri (2018) states, "Due to being affected by diseases and problems with increasing age, the ability of senior citizens to be active and active decreases due to which their self-reliance also decreases and they are seen as a social - family burden." It is the experience of doctors that as the age increases, elderly people suffer from Alzheimer's, Parkin-

son's, cancer and malnutrition, physical and mental weakness surround us. These are some visible and easily identified diseases, but women do not want to tell about these diseases because they also have uterine diseases. This aspect is also important in the context of senior women citizens. It seems that there are more problems in the treatment of these diseases, especially in old age homes. Although the health treatment of senior citizens is done from time to time with the help of various organizations free of charge, but the problem of regular treatment of chronic diseases like cancer, Alzheimer, rheumatism and asthma is a problem, especially according to the members of the old age homes that are run free of charge.

### **(i) Lack of safe environment for women**

Some women of old age home who cannot speak complained about not being safe in their in their village. They have not been able to express their thoughts. Some women have not even reached the age of 60 are being kept at the old-age home for their safety. Although the mother is not yet 45 years old, she says that she is safe in the old age home.

Articles about senior citizens are being published in various newspapers and media outlets. Various studies have been conducted and opinions have been published from different angles about the health conditions of senior citizens and the service facilities that senior citizens get. But in that process, especially the specific experiences of senior women and their internal problems are not clearly brought forward. Overall, the problems of senior citizens are explained and what is more remarkable is that this issue is seen from a patriarchal angle. In this context, Kandel's (2074) view is important. He writes, "In Nepali culture and tradition, daughters should not take care of their parents, instead the parents should be taken care by the daughter-in-law and the son. Daughter, learn to love your husband's parents, not the parents." This saying discriminates between sons and daughters because as much love and respect as sons give to their mothers and grandmothers, daughters have the right to give the same love and respect. It also raises another question, does the daughter-in-law sends the mother-in-law and the father-in-law to the old age home? Is she the only one responsible for this? In fact, not only son-in-law, but daughter-in-law both have the right and duty to respect and love their mother and father equally. In this way, the tendency to look at the issue of senior citizens through patriarchal eyes and finally see only women responsible for, which is not fair. Such thinking does not give a scientific and solution to the problem. Today's era and the consciousness of this era should rise above the favorable gender discrimination and think about the problems of senior citizens and try to find a solution.

According to old age home manager, men are more difficult to control than women.

Women can be relatively adjusted to eat, live, and work, but most of the men do not want to do things like planting vegetables, cleaning, and washing clothes with the women there. Women do these things voluntarily. This makes them feel lighter in their mental and physical condition. Male senior citizens also plant flowers in gardens, water them and pick up pieces of paper and plastic around them and throw them in the garbage basket, but very few men do this. Looking at the overall activities of women and men, men do not participate easily to do works. This can be considered as the result of patriarchal thinking.

#### **(j) Utilization and deployment of potential capacity**

Senior citizens have the right to explore and utilize their abilities, skills, and talents in various settings as needed. In old age homes, those who engage in activities such as assisting in the kitchen, cleaning their rooms, or tending to a kitchen garden tend to remain more active than others. They are more likely to experience happiness, safety, and respect if a supportive environment is fostered, enabling them to contribute as valuable resources based on their physical abilities. Women who are unmarried, widowed, or divorced, and have no sons seek protection and often find refuge in old age homes.

Women still do not feel safe and respected in society. Especially economically and socially because there is still a tendency to devalue, ignore or not believe in the potential of women. Although some feel content in old age homes, they often feel that they have no other choice but to live there. These women understand the importance of family and home and yearn for the protection and care they expect from their loved ones, society, and others. Staying at home is considered a privilege, yet for some, circumstances leave them with no option but to stay in an old age home.

#### **An example (case) of Pokhara**

94-year-old Savitri Bohra of Pokhara old-age home has been living in the old-age home for 10 years. One of his daughters is married and at home. She says that she came there saying that she should not stay in her daughter's house, but rather stay in an old age home. She is still active at the age of 94. In her spare time, she sells spinning lamps. She spends it on buying food she likes whenever she wants, buying prasad for the deity and giving dakshina with tika. This is how she actively lives her life. Others say that seeing his activism inspired others too. Therefore, those who can physically move from one place to another, can be made to do income-generating activities for such old people. It can be believed that this will have a positive effect on their mental and physical condition.

#### **(k) Limited awareness of social security policies.**

Many senior women have limited knowledge about the social security policies in old

age home. While some are aware of the government's old age allowance, that is usually the extent of their understanding. Most of these women lack citizenship, making them ineligible for the allowance, which causes frustration. Due to the absence of a proper address and relatives, they are unable to obtain citizenship through the old age home.

### **(l) Harassment and sexual abuse**

Female residents of old age homes, which accommodate both men and women, especially those who are weak, and have visual and hearing impairment have raised concerns regarding incidents of sexual harassment and abuse by their male counterparts. They feel uncomfortable sharing these matters with others. These are very sensitive issues that are difficult to discuss in front of senior citizens. They have to endure harsh words and teasing from men.

### **(m) Understanding Vulnerability**

It is essential to understand the vulnerability of women. Old age women become more vulnerable due to modernization, urbanization, industrialization. It affects the family structure because traditionally, they are dependent on their family, living with their children and informal social networks for care (Chiweshe & Gusha, 2012). The family, social networks, aging, class, and gender dimensions are essential for conceptually understanding during the formulation of social security policy. The external and internal factors of the country affect to self-esteem of old-age women. Due to lack of conceptual clarity of gender policymakers, political parties, and government at times neglect them. Safety and security from family and state is essential to reduce the harms on older women. Women's old age starts after sixty years of age and ends in death. Old age is one of the vulnerable situations in a natural process of life. In this stage people experience decreased physical strength and deteriorating health conditions with age related disease (Ahmad, et al., 2016, p. 27).

### **Conclusion**

Even from this small study, the number of Old age home (*Vridhashram*) in Nepal seems to be increasing. In our society, which is becoming unitary family-oriented, the tendency of the individual is becoming more dominant than family intimacy. Due to the increasing inter-generational conflict, senior citizens are often disappointed and go to old age homes. Senior citizens expect respect, but most of the new generation today have not been able to understand that. Therefore, despite having children and wealth, the situation of senior citizens with mental imbalance is becoming critical due to the lack of caregivers. Although an old age home seems appropriate for helpless women senior citizens, in the eyes of others, the ashram has become like a building waiting for death. Giving food, clothing and giving a place to sing hymns is not a service to

parents. It is also the duty of children to increase their willpower and share in family responsibilities. Interactive programs should be conducted from time to time to change the attitudes or mindsets of senior citizens and to make the new generation understand that aging is a condition that happens to every human being. Senior citizens are respected and respectable parents of the society. Their experience should be taken positively. Subjects related to senior citizens should be included in the local curriculum. Both daughters and sons should understand that taking care of their father and mother, keeping them away from family attachment means weakening their morale. The love and respect of the family and the respect and relationship of the society is their right. Women should be able to feel that they are safe from everything in the society and in the family. There should be no compulsion to go to an old age home. This thinking needs to be developed in all levels of citizens.

The government should make a plan and work for a senior citizen who has contributed to the family, children, society, country and people in one way or the other throughout her/his life. It seems necessary that all the organizations established and registered in the name of social services should prepare the infrastructure and run the senior citizen-friendly service center.

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