

**A STUDY ON EMOTIONAL DEPRIVATION AND INFLUENCE OF DIFFERENT FACTORS AMONG ELDERLY PEOPLE IN AN URBAN AREA OF CHIDAMBARAM**Vivin Vincent<sup>1</sup>, N. Ethirajan<sup>2</sup>, John William Felix<sup>3</sup>**HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:**

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**ABSTRACT: BACKGROUND:** Emotional deprivation is recognized as a serious public health concern in developing countries. Of the various dimensions of ageing, physical vulnerability compounded by economic vulnerability resulting in emotional vulnerability is of great concern for developing societies like India where ageing occurs rapidly due to the phase of demographic transition

**OBJECTIVE:** To assess the emotional deprivation of the elderly population and To find out the influence of different factors on emotional deprivation

**METHODOLOGY:** A descriptive follow up community based study was conducted on population of elderly for a period of one year (October 2010 to September 2011) in four service areas namely Old Bhuvanagiri area, Mantakkarai, Omakkulam, and Sengattan of Urban Health Centre, under Department Of Community Medicine, Annamalai University of Chidambaram. Taking prevalence as 55%, with 95% confidence interval, the sample size necessary was calculated and arrived at 324. The tools used includes interview schedule and a modified version of 12 items General Health Questionnaire was used to measure emotional deprivation. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS 17<sup>th</sup> version Software which included descriptive statistics, Pearson chi-square test and ANOVA.

**RESULTS:** Emotional deprivation of the respondents through the visits measured has started with a lower level in the first visit (Mean: 28.273±12.85) and got increased in the subsequent visit (Mean: 36.64±11.35). In first visit majority had mild emotional deprivation (56.8%). But in last three visits majority had moderate emotional deprivation 80.2 %, 75.9% and 66.4% respectively. The role of different factors that influences the emotional deprivation such as age, marital status, financial security, dependency and living arrangement were found to be statistically significant in this study.

**CONCLUSION:** The present study revealed that there is high prevalence of emotional deprivation in the sample population. This study is an attempt, in this direction, to measure the emotional/psychological well-being among the elderly population and to analyze the factors responsible for this.

**KEYWORDS:** Emotional Deprivation, Elderly, Ageing.

**INTRODUCTION:** Emotional deprivation.<sup>1</sup> is defined as the subject's perception of a state of loneliness and hopelessness due to the lack of adequate warmth, affection, interest, and nurturance from the caretakers. Deprivation and exclusion are the common phenomena in almost all-ageing societies. The elderly in the developing countries also suffer from chronic deprivation and poverty as socio-economic relations change. Chambers (1995) described the eight dimensions of deprivation among the elderly as poverty, social inferiority, social isolation, physical weakness, vulnerability, seasonality, powerlessness and humiliation of the aged. Of the various dimensions of ageing, physical vulnerability compounded by economic vulnerability resulting in emotional vulnerability is of great concern for developing societies like India where ageing occurs rapidly due to the phase of demographic transition characterized by rapid fertility decline and increase in life expectancy.<sup>2</sup>

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In the beginning of the last century 12 million Indians were 60 years of age or more. The projected figures for the years 2001 and 2025 are 70 million and 177 million respectively. The expectancy of life has increased significantly in the last few decades.

Emotional deprivation is recognized as a serious public health concern in developing countries.<sup>3</sup> The study of social lives of the elderly covers a large area, ranging from interpersonal relationships, living arrangement, adaptation to retirement, to intergenerational gap, health, care received, death, bereavement, and the politics of age.<sup>4</sup> This study is an attempt, in this direction, to measure the emotional deprivation among the elderly population and to analyze the factors that influence emotional deprivation among elderly. Knowledge and the experience gained out of this study will be highly relevant in the present context of rapid socio demographic transition in our country.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:** A descriptive follow up community based study was conducted on population of elderly for a period of one year (October 2010 to September 2011) in four service areas namely Old Bhuvanagiri area, Mantakkarai, Omakkulam, and Sengattan areas covering 12,525 population of Urban Health Centre, under Department Of Community Medicine, Annamalai University of Chidambaram, a municipality in Cuddalore district of Tamilnadu.

The prevalence of emotional deprivation in various studies conducted among Indian elderly people varies from 55% to 65%. Taking 55%, with 95% confidence interval, the sample size necessary was calculated and arrived at 324. In the service area of Urban Health Centre, 60 years and above were enlisted by a primary visit made to all the streets in the service areas. The total number of elderly enlisted was 410. From the 410 enlisted, the required sample of 324 was selected. Inclusion criteria was all elderly subjects with 60 years of age and above willing to participate were included in the study.

Exclusion criteria was known patients with established stroke with hemiplegia and elderly subjects with severe mental disorder like degenerative diseases, prolonged amnesia, major psychological problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar disease and chronic speech and hearing disturbances were excluded from the study. The tools used includes interview schedule and a modified version of 12 items General Health Questionnaire was used to measure emotional deprivation. With the standard GHQ-12, another 14 items were added from the GHQ-60.

Scoring was given for each question. The score ranges between 0 – 3 for each question. For a total of 26 questions, the minimum score is 0 and the maximum is 78. Cumulatively, no person will get a zero score in the scoring system. According to the total score, subjects were classified as follows.

Emotional Deprivation	Scoring
Insignificant	0-26
Significant	27-78

After the identification of the houses and the initial data collection was carried out, the subjects aged 60 years and above were interviewed. After the first visit, 3 more follow up visits with 3 months interval approximately in between were made to evaluate if there was any change in emotional deprivation reporting/assessment because of the interaction/visits of the investigator.

During the course of the study, 3 subjects expired and 10 could not be followed in the subsequent follow up visits and thereby a total of 13 were excluded from the analysis.

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Data collected was entered in Microsoft excel sheets and compiled. Statistical analysis was done using SPSS 17<sup>th</sup> version Software which included descriptive statistics, Pearson chi-square test and ANOVA.

### RESULTS:

**Socio Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population:** Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 60-64 years (39.2%). Mean age of the respondents was 68.11 (Range 60-94). Among the males, majority (30.1%) belong to the age group of 65-69 years, whereas majority of the females (49.7%) belong to the age group of 60-64. (Table no. 1). Majority of the respondents were married (72.2%) and living with the spouse, followed by widowers (22.8%). (Table no. 2). Majority of the respondents (67.6%) were having 2-4 children, followed by 5 and above. (Table no. 3). 93.8% of the respondents were having male children, whereas 6.2% did not have male children (Table no. 4). 83.3% of the respondents were having female children, whereas 16.7% did not have female children. (Table no. 5). Majority of the respondents (34.3%) were having primary level education, followed by illiterates (33.6%) and those with secondary level of education (24.1%) (Table no. 6). Looking at the financial status of the respondents in the past, a majority of them (60.49%) were found to have lower income jobs. (Table no. 7). A current perception of financial security is found to be lower among the majority (73.98%). With an idea of ascertaining the current financial productivity, the present occupational status of the respondents was looked into. A majority of them (61.1%) were found to be dependent/not working. However around 30% were found to be working either full time or part time. (Table no. 8). 60.5% of the respondents have reported that they did not have any financial stability. A majority of the respondents (65.2%) were living with their spouse and children, followed by their children alone (14.8%). (Table no. 9). Majority of the respondents (69.8%) were found to have no difficulty in carrying out their daily activities.

**Emotional Deprivation of the Respondents:** Emotional deprivation of the respondents through the visits measured has started with a lower level in the first visit and got increased in the subsequent visit. In first visit majority had mild emotional deprivation (56.8%). But in last three visits majority had moderate emotional deprivation 80.2%, 75.9% and 66.4% respectively (Table no. 10 and 11).

**Factors Influencing Emotional Deprivation:** It is evident from the results that the proportion having emotional deprivation has been found to be increasing as the age increases. (Table no. 12). With regard to the sex of the respondents and emotional deprivation, no significant differences were found. The results obtained have indicated no significant difference between the number of children one has and their emotional deprivation. The results have indicated that the respondents who were living with their children (64.6%) have had relatively more significant emotional deprivation as compared to other groups. The number of subjects in other groups is small, true comparison cannot be made/will not be appropriate (Table no. 13). Those who were dependent were found to have had significant level of deprivation than those who were not dependent. (Table no. 14). Significant difference was found between the current marital status of the respondents and their level of deprivation. (Table no. 15). Emotional deprivation is 50% among those who perceive themselves with lack of financial security as compared to 32.8% who reported having financial security. The difference was found to be statistically significant. (Table no. 16).

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**DISCUSSION:** This descriptive follow up community based study was designed to assess the emotional deprivation among the 324 identified elderly subjects. The role of different factors that influences the emotional deprivation such as age, sex, and marital status, number of children, financial security, dependency and living arrangement were analyzed.

The present study conducted among the 324 elderly subjects has 163 males (50.3%) and 161 females (49.7%) which show that there is equal distribution of male and female in the sample. A majority of the male and female elderly respondents were in the age group of 60-64 years (39.2%).

72.2% were married and 68% were literates. Majority (67.6%) were having 2-4 children. 93.8% of the respondents were having male children. Looking at the occupation of the respondents in the past, 60.49% of them were employed in low income jobs.

In the present study 43.2% of the elderly subjects had significant emotional deprivation. Gangadhar.<sup>5</sup> in his study on geriatric emotional deprivation in 112 elderly in Karnataka reported almost similar finding of 47.32% of emotional deprivation in the population studied. I. Peytremann-Bridevaux.<sup>6</sup> et al in their study on emotional deprivation among elderly people in Switzerland reported that the prevalence of depressive symptoms was 28.2%.

Emotional deprivation of the respondents through the visits measured has started with a lower level in the first visit and reporting got increased in the subsequent visits. The increase in the emotional deprivation in the follow up visits may be explained with the fact that interaction /sensitization received might have influenced their concern for health and thereby the increase. Responding to queries and advocacy, role of the investigator during the interview, conversation /interaction by the investigator which could have influenced the rapport of the subjects also could have helped the subjects to come with more information regarding their deprivation may be the reason for the increase in the emotional deprivation observed in the follow up visits. (Table 24).

Further it was observed from the study that emotional deprivation of the subjects examined, tends to increase as the age increases which has been found statistically significant. When the emotional deprivation of the subjects in the age group 60-64 was 37.8%, it was found to be 68.8% in subjects with 80 years and above. ( $\chi^2=20.958$ ; p value <0.001). (Table 26). Similar findings were reported by A.P.Singh.<sup>7</sup> et al among elderly subjects in Delhi.

A majority of the respondents (65.2%) of the study population were living with their spouse and children, followed by their children alone (14.8%). The results have indicated that the respondents who were living with their children (64.6%) have had relatively more significant emotional deprivation as compared to other groups. The number of subjects in other groups is small, true comparison cannot be made / will not be appropriate. ( $\chi^2= 15.505$ ; p value=0.004) (Table 29)

A study conducted by Ira Das.<sup>8</sup> et al at Agra concluded that there is a positive significant effect of companionship of spouse upon emotional well-being of elderly. Similar findings were observed in the present study also. (With spouse-41.0%, separated/unmarried – 49.41%). Subjects who were staying with their spouse were found to have a better emotional status than those who were staying alone which was statistically significant. ( $\chi^2= 4.125$ ; p value=0.042) (Table 31)

Majority of the respondents (69.8%) in the present study were found to have no difficulty in carrying out their daily activities.

Those who were dependent were found to have had significant level of deprivation than those who were not dependent, (dependent- 69.4%, not dependent- 31.9%) and this was found to be statistically significant. ( $\chi^2 = 48.999$ ; p value<0.001. (Table 30) Dennis. R. Revicki.<sup>9</sup> et al have reported similar findings in their study on elderly subjects at Washington.

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In the present study, among the elders who were financially poor in their past, 73.98% were found to have a perception of financial insecurity at present. This is much higher when compared with the National Sample Survey Office 52nd round figure.<sup>10</sup> of 51.1%. 61.1% of the subjects in the present study were found to be dependent / not working at present. Emotional deprivation is 50% among those who perceive themselves with lack of financial security as compared to 32.8% who reported having financial security. The difference was found to be statistically significant. ( $\chi^2= 9.322$ ;  $p$  value=0.002) (Table 32) Dr. Mian-Yoon Chong.<sup>11</sup> in his community based study in Taiwan on elderly subjects has reported similar findings.

**CONCLUSION:** The present study revealed that there is high prevalence of emotional deprivation among elderly population and no gender difference was observed. Factors like age, marital status, financial security, number of children, and dependency status had a significant influence on emotional deprivation.

Age Group	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
60 -64 years	47(28.8%)	80(49.7%)	127(39.2%)
65 -69 Years	49(30.1%)	42(26.1%)	91(28.1%)
70 -74 Years	33(20.2%)	13(8.1%)	46(14.2%)
75 -79 Years	20(12.3%)	8(5.0%)	28(8.6%)
80 Years and Above	14(8.6%)	18(11.2%)	32 9.9%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>163(100.0%)</b>	<b>161(100.0%)</b>	<b>324(100.0%)</b>

Table 1: Age and Sex Wise Distribution of the Respondents

Marital Status	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Married	125(76.7%)	109 (67.7%)	234(72.2%)
Divorcee	4(2.5%)	0 (0.0%)	4(1.2%)
Separated	3(1.8%)	5 (3.1%)	8(2.5%)
Single	3(1.8%)	1 (0.6%)	4(1.2%)
Widower	28(17.2%)	46 (28.6%)	74(22.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>163(100.0%)</b>	<b>161(100.0%)</b>	<b>324(100.0%)</b>

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents According to Marital Status

Number	Frequency	Percentage
No. Children	8	2.5%
1 Child	22	6.8%
2-4	219	67.6%
5 And Above	75	23.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Distribution Of Respondents According To The Number Of Children

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Number	Frequency	Percentage
No Male Children	20	6.2%
1 Male Child	111	34.3%
2-4 Male Children	177	54.7%
5 And Above Male Children	16	4.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 4: Distribution of Respondents with Number of Sons**

Number	Frequency	Percentage
No Female Children	54	16.7%
1 Female Child	118	36.4%
2-4 Female Children	146	45.06%
5 And Above Male Children	6	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5: Distribution of Respondents with Number of Daughters**

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	109	33.6%
Primary	111	34.3%
Secondary	75	24.1%
Higher Secondary	7	2.2%
Diploma	36	0.9%
Professional	19	5.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 6: Distribution of Respondents According To Their Educational Status**

Type	Frequency	Percentage
Low Income Jobs	196	60.49%
Moderate Income Jobs	91	28.09%
High Income Jobs	37	11.42%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 7: Distribution of Respondents According To Their Previous Occupation Based On Income**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Working Full Time	60	18.5
Working Part Time	35	10.8
Pensioner	31	9.6%
Dependent	198	61.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 8: Distribution of Respondents According To Their Current Occupation**

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Staying With	Frequency	Percentage
Spouse & Sons/Daughters/ Joint Family	211	65.2%
Spouse Only	25	7.7%
With Children	48	14.8%
With In Laws /Relatives	18	5.6%
Alone	22	6.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 9: Distribution of Respondents According To Their Living Arrangement (Stay)**

Visit	Emotional Deprivation			Total
	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Visit 1	184 (56.8)	132(40.7)	8(2.5)	324(100)
Visit 2	42(13.0)	260(80.2)	18(5.6)	320(98.8)
Visit 3	62(19.1)	246(75.9)	4(1.2)	312(96.3)
Visit 4	86(26.5)	215(66.4)	10(3.1)	311(96.0)

**Table 10: Measured Emotional Deprivation in Different Visits**

Visit Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
First Visit	28.273	12.85891	324
Follow Up Visits	36.6401	11.35713	311

**Table 11: Mean Emotional Deprivation Through Visits**

Age Group	Emotional Deprivation		Total
	Insignificant	Significant	
60-64	79 (62.20%)	48(37.8%)	127(100%)
65-69	61 (67.0%)	30 (33.0%)	91(100%)
70-74	25 (54.34%)	21 (45.65%)	46(100%)
75-79	9 (32.14%)	19 (67.86%)	28(100%)
>=80	10 (31.25%)	22(68.8%)	32(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>184(56.79%)</b>	<b>140(43.21%)</b>	<b>324(100%)</b>

**Table 12: Emotional Deprivation and Age**

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Staying with	Emotional Deprivation		Total
	Insignificant	Significant	
Spouse & Sons/Daughters/ Joint Family	123(58.29%)	88(41.7%)	211(100%)
Spouse Only	19(76.0%)	6(24.0%)	25(100%)
With Children	17(35.40%)	31( <b>64.6%</b> )	48(100%)
With In Laws /Relatives	9(50.0%)	9(50.0%)	18(100%)
Alone	16(72.73%)	6(27.27%)	22(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>184(56.79%)</b>	<b>140(43.21%)</b>	<b>324(100%)</b>

**Table 13: Living Arrangement and Emotional Deprivation**

$X^2 = 15.505$ ; P Value=0.004

Dependency Status	Emotional Deprivation		Total
	Insignificant	Significant	
Dependent	30 (30.6%)	68(69.4%)	98(100%)
Not Dependent	154(68.1%)	72(31.9%)	226(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>184(56.79%)</b>	<b>140(43.21%)</b>	<b>324(100%)</b>

**Table 14: Dependency and Emotional Deprivation**

$X^2 = 48.999$ ; P Value < 0.001

Marital Status	Emotional Deprivation		Total
	Insignificant	Significant	
Married	141(59.0%)	98(41.00%)	239(100%)
Others	43(50.59%)	42(49.41%)	85(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>184(56.79%)</b>	<b>140(43.21%)</b>	<b>324(100%)</b>

**Table 15: Marital Status and Emotional Deprivation**

$X^2 = 4.125$ ; P Value=0.042

Status	Emotional Deprivation		Total
	Insignificant	Significant	
Stable	86(67.19%)	42(32.81%)	128(100%)
Unstable	98(50.0%)	98(50.0%)	196(100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>184(56.79%)</b>	<b>140(43.21%)</b>	<b>324(100%)</b>

**Table 16: Perception of Financial Security and Emotional Deprivation**

$X^2 = 9.322$ ; P Value=0.002

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