

Original Article

Residence Types and Emotional Well-Being of Elderly People in Contemporary Society

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Received: 19 December 2025

Revised: 22 January 2026

Accepted: 09 February 2026

Published: 28 February 2026

Abstract - This study examines differences in emotional well-being among 120 elderly individuals aged 60-75 years residing in old-age homes and their own homes in Bhopal, India. Elderly people who have completed secondary education and are cognitively competent are included in the study. Emotional well-being was measured with PERMA-Profilier and interviews. The results from two-way Analysis of Variance showed that the effect of residence types on emotional well-being was significant, but gender and the interaction effect were not significant. By investigating the joint role of gender, residence type, and well-being, the present study makes a contribution to the existing studies about the aging process and psychosocial adjustment. These findings call for the importance of family support systems, community-based care programs, and policies that will result in the improvement of the elderly population's overall well-being.

Keywords - Aging, Elderly, Emotional well-being, Gender, Residence.

1. Introduction

India's life expectancy has increased to approximately 72 years and above. Improved healthcare facilities, massive vaccination, improved hygiene, and sanitation contributed to this. However, population ageing is accompanied by challenges, like straining healthcare systems and pensions, and a place where the elderly receive care. At this stage, elderly individuals undergo many changes, both physically, socially, and emotionally. While some of the elderly live a life without responsibilities, others face illness or the loss of a spouse. All of these experiences have an impact on emotional well-being.

Elderly people living with family have better interpersonal skills, which benefit them with emotional support and a sense of belonging [1,2]. However, while living with family is often assumed to enhance the well-being of older adults, this is not universally the case. At times, due to family conflicts or financial issues, individuals move to old-age homes or are sent there against their will. In advanced age, this dramatic shift not only disrupts social interaction but also constrains personal freedom due to the regulations of old-age homes [3]. Research examining gender differences in the emotional well-being of the elderly shows mixed findings. Some studies reported that elderly females have high emotional strain because of caregiving demands and broken family relationships in later years [4], whereas other investigations find no significant gender differences in

psychological adaptation among the elderly [5]. Additionally, international studies indicated that institutional living is linked to increased risks of loneliness, depression, and lack of emotional resilience, while home-based living is linked to increased emotional attachment and autonomy [6,7].

Despite growing research in this area, there are limited studies in the Indian context examining the relationship between gender and residence. Existing studies have examined these variables separately as opposed to analysing the interaction effects. This gap identifies a need for systematic research to consider the effect of gender and residence on the emotional well-being of the elderly.

The present study addresses this gap by comparing the emotional well-being of the elderly residing in their own homes and in old-age homes in Bhopal, India. It is a 2x2 factorial design. Using interviews and the PERMA Profiler, the study examines both the main effects and interaction effects of gender and residence type on emotional well-being. The research adds to the understanding of the process of psychosocial ageing and residential transitions among elderly people. With the demographic trends in India depicting an ever-increasing number of elderly populations, the results have important implications in community-based care programs, family engagement, and social policies. This study also emphasises the psychosocial aspects of aging that have been ignored because of the dominance of medical issues.



1.1. Research Questions

- Is there any difference in the emotional well-being of male and female elderly?
- Does emotional well-being differ for the elderly in homes and old-age homes?
- Is there an interaction effect between gender and residence?

1.2. Hypotheses

- H1: The emotional well-being of females would be better than that of males in the elderly group
- H2: The elderly group living at home would have higher emotional well-being than those residing in old-age homes

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants

Primary data in this research were gathered from older people in residential homes and old-age homes. The sample size consisted of 30 males and 30 females in an old-age home and 30 males and 30 females residing in their own homes, aged between 60 and 75 years.

2.1.1. Inclusion Criteria

- 12th grade or above
- Cognitively competent

2.1.2. Exclusion Criteria

- Illiterates
- Speech impairments

Demographic details were also collected, and stratified random sampling was employed in this study. Prior approval was obtained from the old-age home, and informed consent was taken from all the participants

2.2. Instrument

The emotional well-being is measured through the PERMA Profiler created by Butler and Kern [8]. This inventory assesses five fundamental aspects that are positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment, as well as two other domains, including a health-related area and a negative emotions domain. It is made up of 23 items, which are measured using an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 10 (always). The PERMA Profiler has set high psychometric standards, in terms of test-retest reliability of 0.84 and internal consistency reliability of 0.94, which makes it a very powerful instrument in assessing the multidimensional factors of emotional well-being.

2.3. Procedure

After receiving the written permission of the AASRA Old Age Home, data collection was launched. The sample was taken among two categories, where elderly individuals residing in old-age homes, and others in their own homes. Informed consent was received before the participation, and the respondents were guaranteed the confidentiality and voluntary nature of the participation. Participants had to be cognitively competent and at least 12th-grade educated, and those with speech problems or illiteracy were excluded. There was no time limit. The majority of the respondents completed the form by themselves, with a few responding with the aid of the researcher. Both quantitative and qualitative information were gathered in order to record not only the numerical rating but also individual thoughts and impressions of the family relations, personal autonomy, and emotional perceptions.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the S.D and mean of the emotional well-being for the different genders and residences. The difference between the emotional well-being of females living at home (M = 7.83, SD = 1.43) is higher than that of those in old-age homes (M = 6.69, SD = 2.31). Similarly, males in homes (M = 7.67, SD = 1.31) report higher emotional well-being than those in old-age homes (M= 6.53, SD = 2.30). The results of the two-way ANOVA are given in Table 2. A two-way ANOVA showed that the difference in gender on emotional well-being was not significant, $F(1,116) = 0.21, p = 0.647$. However, a significant difference in residence type was found, $F(1,116) = 10.80, p = .001, \omega^2 = .077$, indicating that the elderly individuals in their own homes were more emotionally well than the elderly individuals in old-age homes. The interaction effect between gender and residence was not significant, $F(1,116) = 0.00, P = .997$, suggesting that the effect of residence on emotional well-being did not differ by gender. Qualitative data show that old-age home female residents were generally more disappointed with their children but largely satisfied with their partners, compared to men in the old-age home. The elderly who are staying at old-age homes are usually emotionally upset when they reflect on the sacrifices they had to make in raising their children and the reality of not being with their children in their later years. But with time, most residents are shown to be undergoing a psychological adjustment process and eventually come to some form of acceptance of their situation and develop coping mechanisms that enable them to come to terms with their current state.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Emotional Well-Being Scoring by Gender and Residence Type

Gender	Residence	N	Mean	SD
Male	Home	30	7.67	1.31
Female	Home	30	7.83	1.43
Male	Old-age Home	30	6.53	2.30
Female	Old-age Home	30	6.69	2.31

Table 2. Two-way ANOVA Summary Table for Emotional Well-Being

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Gender	0.760	1	0.760	0.21	.647
Residence Type	38.840	1	38.840	10.80	.001
Gender x Residence	0.000	1	0.000	0.00	.997

3.1. Discussion

The study identified how place of residence and gender influence the emotional well-being of the elderly population. The results showed that individuals in their own homes report greater emotional well-being than those in old-age homes, and that place of residence influences the emotional well-being significantly. Elderly people living at home have more opportunities to prioritise emotionally meaningful goals. There is no effect of gender on emotional well-being and no interaction effect.

Quantitative data reveal that those living at home handle stress and challenges more effectively than those in old-age homes. The elderly who relocated to an old-age home suffered from loneliness and limited social interactions. This was supported by a study that revealed a strong relationship between living arrangements and depression among elderly people. Those who were dissatisfied with their place of residence reported a higher level of loneliness compared to those living with family. Both men and women exhibit similar levels of psychological adaptation in later years. The cognitive health of women starts to decline earlier than that of men. For elderly men, continued employment contributes positively to their mental abilities. Some studies indicate that there is no gender disparity in the level of depression. The lack of interaction effect in the study shows that, in spite of their gender, people are more comfortable and peaceful when staying at home and are more resilient.

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4. Conclusion

This study concluded the following:

1. The elderly residing in homes have better emotional well-being than those residing in old-age homes.
2. Gender does not have any major impact on emotional well-being.

The results of the current research are relevant in the context of families, caregivers, and policymakers who are interested in the welfare of the elderly. The fact that place of residence has a considerably large effect on emotional well-being can emphasize the necessity to provide older adults with the opportunity to spend time at home with their families. To enhance the sense of belonging and psychological security, family members are advised to support and involve elderly people in decision-making processes and keep in touch with them often. Social workers can use these results to develop community-based elderly care initiatives that can enhance ageing in place and increase the effectiveness of family-based support systems.

7. Acknowledgement

The authors express gratitude for the time and excellent contributions of all the elderly participants who have helped in the successful completion of this study. Also, the administration of AASRA Old-age home, Bhopal, gave permission and positive assistance.