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## AGEING POPULATION OF CUNCOLIM TOWN

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**Abstract:**-Ageing is a universal fact and no society can escape it. The aged are one of the most vulnerable and high risk groups in terms of health, development and socio- economic status in society. Cuncolim a small town located in Salcete taluka of South Goa District has been selected for the study. The following paper focuses on the study of aged population of Cuncolim town. Here an attempt is made to understand the aged population, their life, family life, interpersonal relations of the aged, socio- economic status, health problems and planning of old age. The study is based on primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through questionnaire method by conducting a random survey of aged population of Cuncolim town wherein a sample of 135 aged was considered. Secondary data is 1991 and 2001 Census data to show the aged population of Goa. The study reveals that the aged of Cuncolim town play a very important role in decision making of family matters as they contribute their mite, wisdom and knowledge towards the development of family and community. In modern times, the aged play a passive role in decision making of family matters but a favourable attitude towards the aged is observed in Cuncolim town. The family shows due respect, love and care to its aged.

**Keywords:**socio- economic status , Population Ageing , demarcation , physical dependence.

### INTRODUCTION

'Population Ageing' is a process by which the proportion of old people increases more rapidly than the proportion in the other age groups. These changes happen mainly due to the decline in fertility and mortality. The demarcation of the aged from the rest of the population is generally by 60 years. Due to demographic changes, the proportion of the aged persons is increasing throughout the world.

According to 1991 census the population of Goa in the age group of 60-80+ was 82,507 which include 35,735 male and 46,772 females. And as per 2001 census the population of Goa in the age group of 60-80+ was 1,12,273 which included 49,676 males and 62,597 females. Thus there is an increase of 29,766 aged over a period of ten years.

The Government of Goa has instituted a scheme called Dayanand Social Security Scheme which was launched on 2nd October, 2001 and which came into force from 1st January, 2002. It is an initiative under "Freedom from Hunger". The scheme provide monthly pension to senior citizen (60 years and above), disabled person and single women of ₹1000 per month. The monthly pension amount is transferred by electronic clearance system in the individual accounts.

Old age aggravates the financial problems of aged, which leads to social isolation and loneliness, feeling of uselessness and unwanted, health problem, questions on living arrangements, feeling of economic and physical dependence, etc.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To understand the life style pattern of the aged.
- 2) To understand the family, socio- economic status and health problems of the aged.
- 3) To delineate the interpersonal relations of the aged.
- 4) To understand the need for planning of old age.

### DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through questionnaire method by

conducting a random survey of aged population of Cuncolim town wherein a sample of 135 aged was considered.

Primary data was collected to study the aged population, their life, family life, interpersonal relations of the aged, socio-economic status, health problems and planning of old age.

The primary data obtained through questionnaire is converted into percentage value and is analysed to draw findings.

Secondary data is 1991 and 2001 Census data to show the aged population of Goa.

#### **Study area**

Cuncolim town is located at 15017'N latitude and 73098'E longitude. It is situated in the extreme south of the Salcete taluka in South Goa. Cuncolim has an area of 28.69sq.km. and covers an area of about 0.39 percent of state geographical area and 10.39 percent of the taluka geographical area.

It is bounded on the west by villages of Chichinim, Assolna and Ambelim; on the North by villages of Sarzora, Mullem and Paroda; on the east by Ambaulim and Balli; on the south by Fatorpa and Titoli.

Cuncolim lies in the coastal plain with an average elevation of 18 meters from mean sea level. The area is covered by Basaltic rocks and the soil found is sandy loam.

It has a tropical maritime and monsoonal type of climate with profound orographic influence.

#### **Background information of surveyed aged population of Cuncolim Town**

Of the surveyed aged population, 68 were males and 67 were females. Age wise distribution showed that 50.4% of the aged were in the age group of 60-70, 37% in the age group of 70-80, 11.2% in the age group of 80-90 and 1.4% in the age group of 90-100. Thus the surveyed aged population were in 60 to 95 years of age.

About 71% of the aged were married and 25% were widow/ widower, 2% aged were divorcee and 3% were unmarried.

The surveyed aged belongs to three religious groups i.e. Christians, Hindus and Muslims. The Christians account for 57%, Hindus account for 49% and Muslims account for 9% of surveyed population.

Majority of the surveyed aged (98.5%) live in their own house whereas a small percent of aged (1.5%) live in rented house.

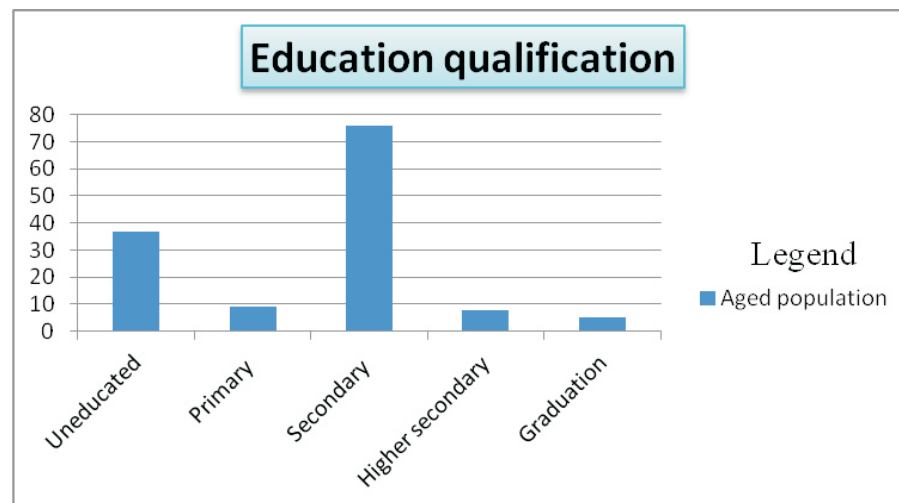
In Goa usually the son has to take care of his parents. About 66.6% aged stay with their son and 6.6%, stay with their daughter. About 22% of aged managed their life staying with their spouses and 1% stay with brother. There is a small percent of surveyed aged i.e. 3.7% who stay alone as they have no one to look after them.

#### **Educational qualification and occupation of the aged of Cuncolim town**

**Table1**

<b>Educational qualification</b>	<b>Aged population</b>	<b>Percentage of the aged population</b>
Uneducated	37	27.4
Primary	9	6.6
Secondary	76	56.2
Higher secondary	8	6.1
Graduation	5	3.7
Total	135	100

Source- sample survey, December 2012



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 1

Table 1 and figure 1 reveals that a huge proportion of aged of Cuncolim town are educated. This accounts for 72.6% of surveyed aged population. About 9% of aged have Primary education, 56.2% have Secondary education, 6.1% have Higher secondary education and 3.7% are Graduates.

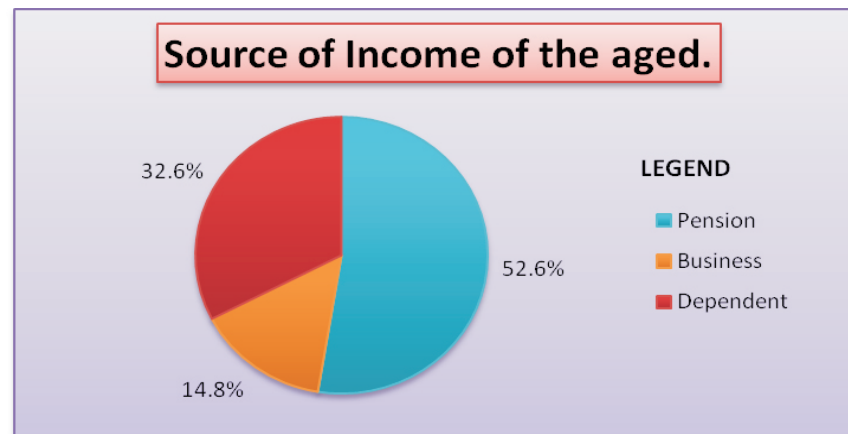
About 27.4% of aged of Cuncolim town are uneducated. The uneducated aged and those having lower education worked in lower order jobs and primary occupations like domestic servants, sweeper, mechanics, farmers and agricultural labourers. Whereas the aged having Higher secondary education and Graduation worked as clerks, teachers, government servants, nurse, forest officer and banker in their working age. Some were happy with the household duties of a housewife.

**Source of income of the aged.**

**Table 2**  
Source of income of the aged.

Source of Income	Aged population	Percentage of aged population
Pension	71	52.6
Business	20	14.8
Dependent	44	32.6
Total	135	100

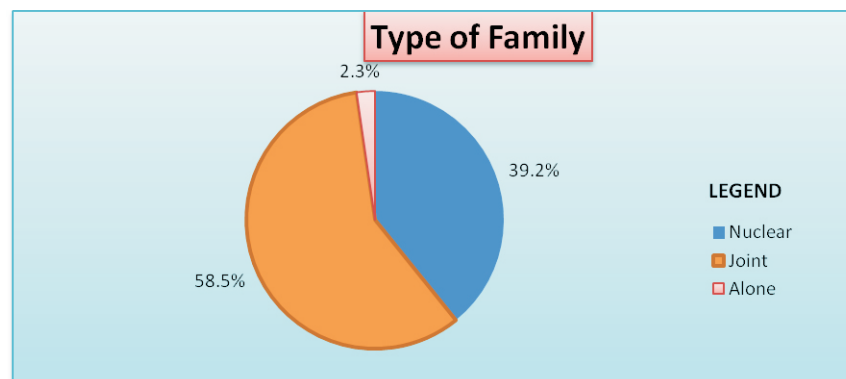
Source- sample survey, December 2012



Source- sample survey, December 2012 Fig 2

Table 2 and figure 2 reveals that 52.6% of aged depend on Pension and 14.8% of aged have their small business (running a shop, stitching clothes, embroidery work, cane weaving, tuitions). There is significant number of aged (32.6%) who are dependant on their children and relatives and also depend on government scheme like Dayanand Social security scheme.

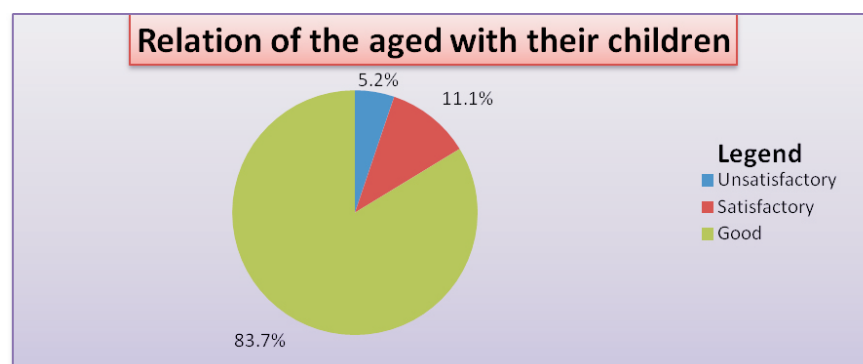
**Type of family.**



Source- sample survey, December 2012 Fig 3

Figure 3 reveals the family life of the aged of Cuncolim town. 58.5% of aged live in joint family system. The advantage of joint family for the aged is that it provides emotional support and looks after the day to day needs of the aged in the family whereas 39.2% of aged live in nuclear family and 2.3% aged live alone.

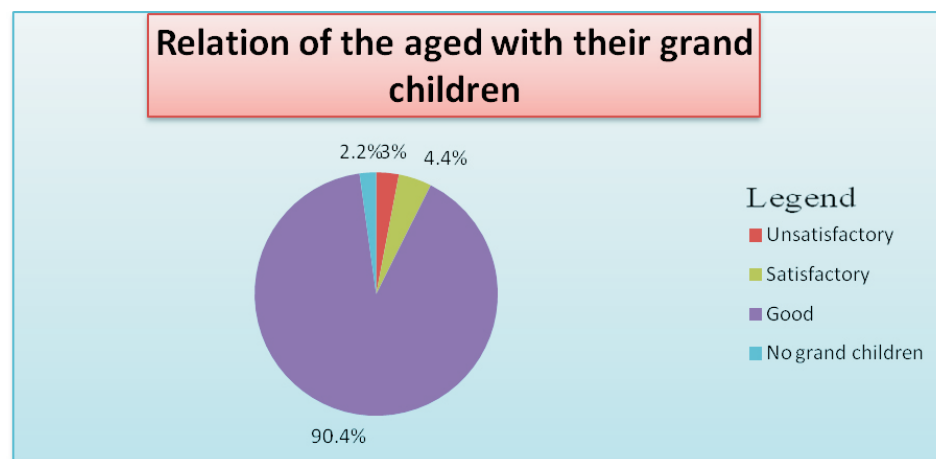
**Relation of the aged with their children**



Source- sample survey, December 2012 Figure 4

Figure 4 reveals that 83.7% of aged have a good relation and 11.1% have a satisfactory relation with their children. The aged provide a lot of emotional support to the family as a whole. But 5.2 % of aged have an unsatisfactory relation with their children and often have conflicts.

**Relation of the aged with their Grandchildren.**



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Figure 5

Figure 5 reveals that 92.4% of aged have a cordial and good relation with their grand children. They spend considerable time of the day with their grand children, taking care of them when parents are at work. Thus the grandparents give lots of love, care and showed concern towards their grandchildren, which in turn provides a sense of emotional security and happiness to the grandchildren. About 4.5% of aged have satisfactory relation with their grandchildren. But 3.0% of aged have unsatisfactory relation with their grandchildren. This was mainly because grandparents were dominating, trying to inculcate disciplinary attitudes in their grandchildren, they tried to dictate moral, cultural heritage down the generations.

**ROLE OF THE AGED IN FAMILY DECISION MAKING.**

In modern times, the aged play a passive role in decision making of family matters but a favourable attitude towards the aged is observed in Cuncolim town. The family shows due respect, love and care to its aged. In taking family decisions, the aged are consulted as they contribute their mite, wisdom and knowledge towards the development of family and community. Thus a huge majority of 76.3% of aged play a very important role in decision making of family matters, but 23.7% of aged play a passive role.

**Mobility of the aged**

About 74 % of aged walk without any support because they are physically fit. While 26 % of aged move with support of a stick, wheel chair, support of others because they are physically weak and unable to do their personal work and move about. Health related problems.

**(a) Biological/ Physiological problems.**

Health related problems of the aged of Cuncolim town include sensory impairment, blood pressure, diabetics, heart problems (cardiovascular problems), chest pain, T.B, asthma, inability to walk, loss of weight, joint pain, cough, urinary problems and acidity.

Majority of the aged, face sensory impairment which includes impairment of eyes (cataract) and hearing impairment.

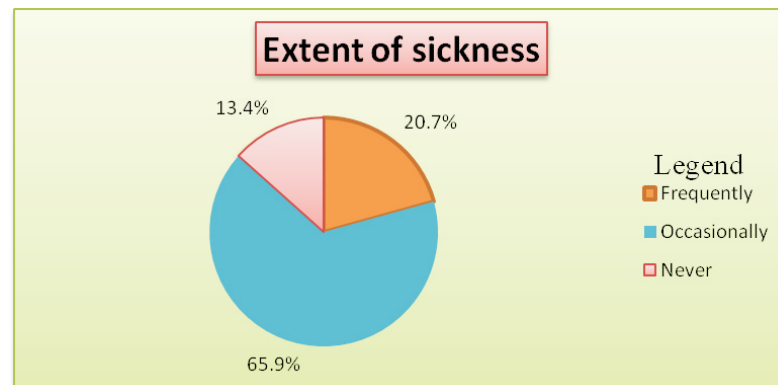
**(b) Psychological problems**

The aged of Cuncolim town face physiological problems like feeling of isolation, loneliness, loss of interest in life, neglect, insecurity, frustration, irritability, moody, feeling of uselessness, lack of confidence and insomnia.

The aged face another major psychological problem of Memory loss. This accounts for 14.8% of surveyed aged population.



**Extent of sickness**

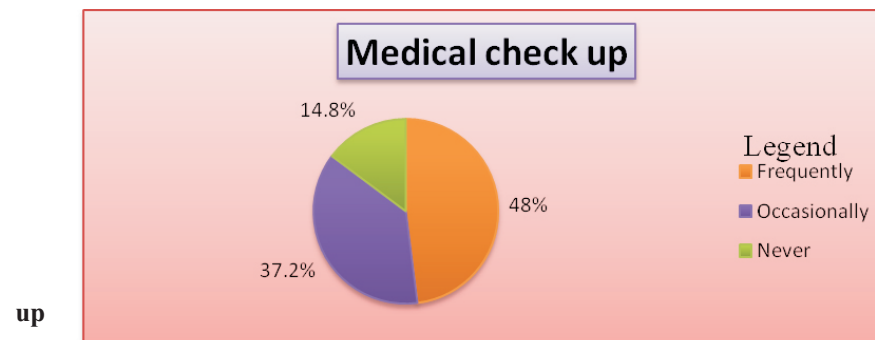


Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 6

Sickness is common among the aged of Cuncolim town. About 20.7% fell ill frequently where as 65.9% fell ill occasionally. About 13.4% respondents claimed that they never fell ill. For 70% of aged their ailment has affected their day to day activities.

**Medical check up**

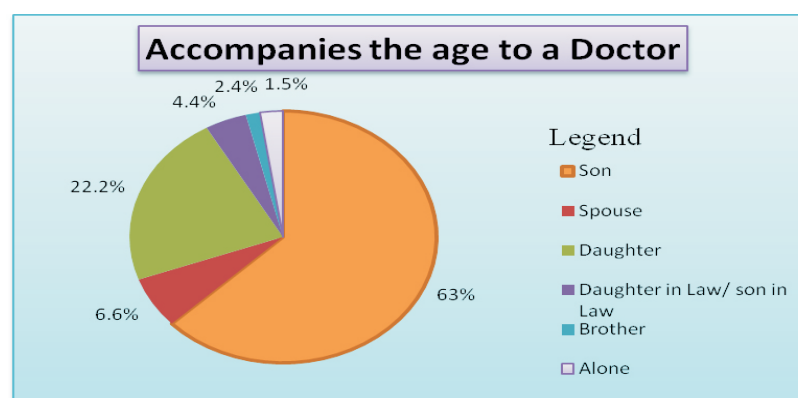


Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 7

Figure 7 reveals that 48% of aged required frequent medical check up as they were suffering from asthma, diabetics, blood pressure for many years. Whereas 37.2% of aged go for check up whenever the need arises and 14.8% of aged never bothered to go for medical check up and ignored the diseases and lived with it, as some cannot afford to go for frequent medical check up, while others considered that these health problems are a common phenomena in old age and they preferred home remedies.

Due to health problem 41.4% of aged have to consume medicines daily whereas 58.6% consume medicines whenever the need arises.



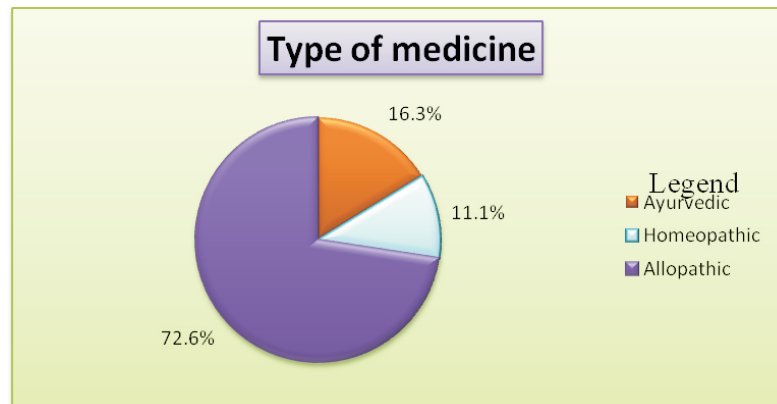
Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 8



A majority of aged depend on their sons and daughters to take them to doctor (62.9% of aged depend on their son and 22.2% of aged depend on their daughter), 6.6% of aged depend on their spouse, 4.4% aged depend on their daughter-in-law/son-in-law, 1.5% depend on their brother and a very small percent(2.4%) of aged are capable to move independently and they manage to go to a doctor by themselves.

**Medication**



Source- sample survey, December 2012 Fig 9

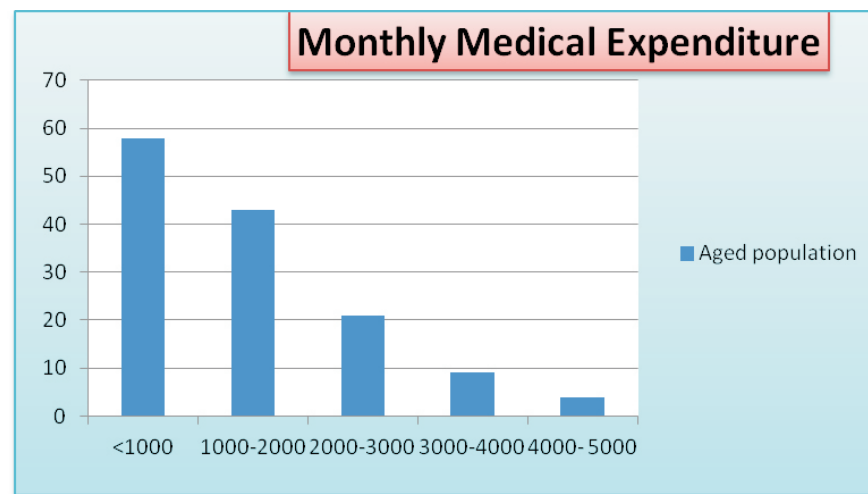
Figure 9 reveals that 72.6% of aged of Cuncolim town consume Allopathic medicines whereas 16.3% consume Ayurvedic medicine and 11.1% rely on Homeopathic medicines.

**Medical Expenditure**

**Table 3**  
Monthly medical expenditure of the aged of Cuncolim town

Monthly Medical Expenditure ₹	Aged population	Percentage of aged population
<1000	58	43.1
1000-2000	43	31.8
2000-3000	21	15.5
3000-4000	9	6.6
4000- 5000	4	3.0
Total	135	100%

Source- sample survey, December 2012



Source- sample survey, December 2012

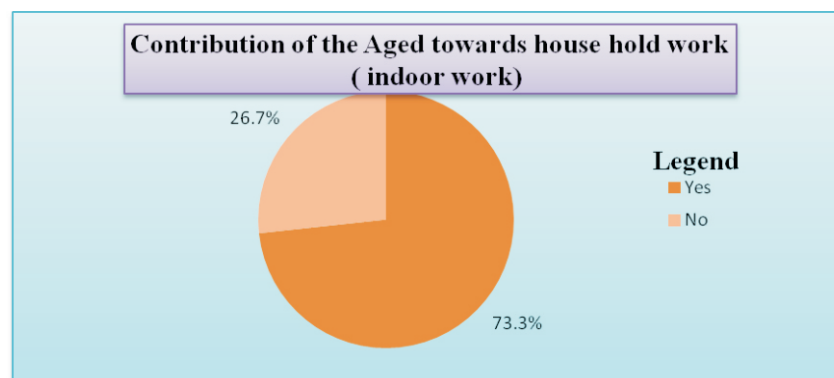
Fig 10

Table 3 and figure 10 reveals that the medical expenditure on the aged ranges between ₹ 400 to 5,000 per month. This includes money spent on doctor's fee, medical check up and medicines. For 43.1% aged the medical expense per month is up to ₹ 1000. Followed by 31.8% aged whose medical expense ranges between ₹ 1000-2000, for 15.5% aged the medical expenses are between ₹ 2000-3000. In some cases the medical expenditure goes above ₹ 3000, but it accounts for a small percentage of aged population (For 6.6% aged, the medical expense ranges between ₹ 3000-4000 and for 3% aged, the medical expense is between ₹ 4000-5000)

#### Medical/Health insurance

A small proportion of aged have secured their future through health insurance policy. This account for 23% of surveyed aged whereas 77% of population do not have health insurance policy thus they meet their medical expenses through pension and government welfare schemes like Dayanand social security scheme or depend on their children's or relatives to pay their medical expenditure.

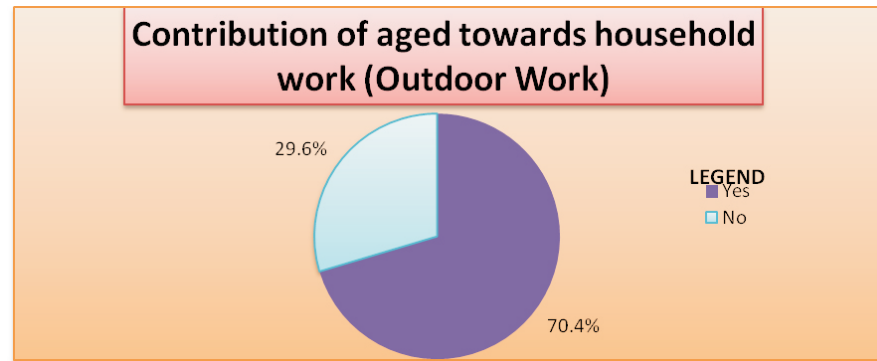
#### Contribution of aged towards house hold work.



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 11

Figure 11 reveals that 73.3 % of aged help in house hold work of cooking, cleaning the house, and look after their grandchildren when parents are at work. Whereas 26.7% aged are physically or mentally ill, so unable to perform household work.



Source- sample survey, December 2012

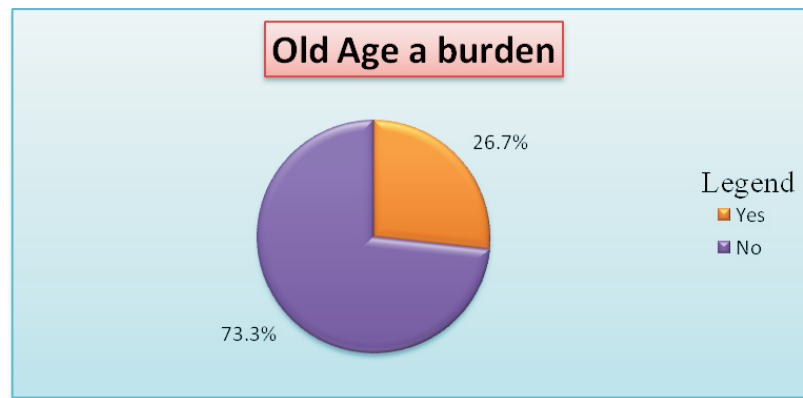
Fig 12

Figure 12 reveals that 70.4 % of aged do outdoor work like shopping; paying electricity, water, telephone bills; go to the bank, etc.

**Recreation of the aged of Cuncolim town.**

Most of the aged of Cuncolim town enjoy and spend their time watching television serials and movies. Some who are able to move about independently, prefer to go with their family and friends for drama, outings and parties. There are others who prefer spending their free time with their grandchildren.

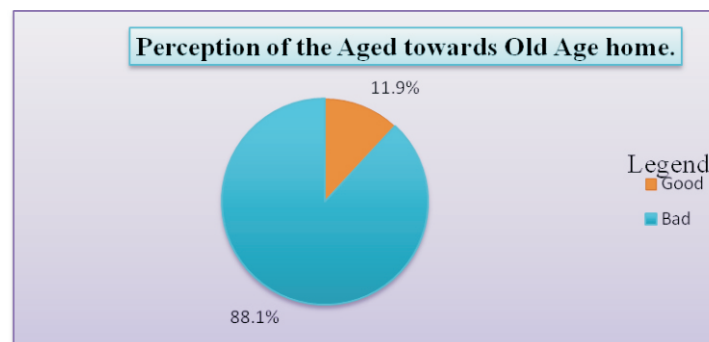
**Perception of the Aged of Cuncolim town towards Old age and Old age home**



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 13

The survey conducted reveals that 26.7% of aged perceive their own old age as a burden as they are physically and mentally weak and suffer from physical and psychological ailments. Thus they have to depend on their children for financial and physical help. Whereas 73.3% aged do not consider old age as a burden as they enjoy good health and are less dependent on their children for their personal needs.



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 14.

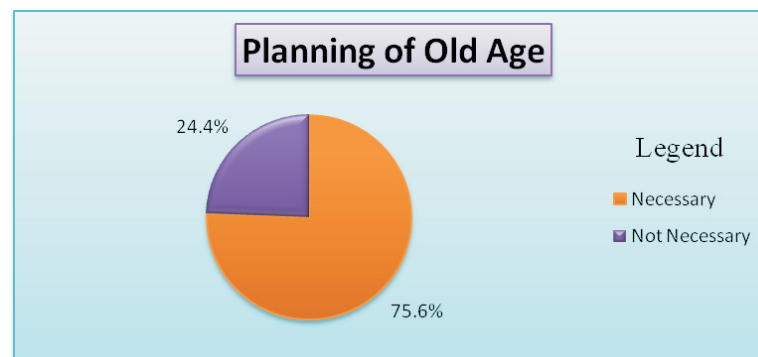
Figure 14 reveals that 88.1% of aged do not like the idea of staying in old age homes. They are of the opinion that old age is a time to relax as they have worked throughout their life for their family and now it is the children's responsibilities to take care of their old parents. But 11.9% of aged are of the opinion that staying in old age home is good, as they have no one to take care of them and for some they cannot get along with their daughter –in-law. Thus they feel they are a burden to the family and relatives and desire to stay in an old aged home.

**Planning of Old Age**

**Table 4**  
**Planning of Old Age**

<b>Planning of old Age</b>	<b>Aged population</b>	<b>Percentage of aged population</b>
Necessary	102	75.6
Not Necessary	33	24.4
Total	135	100

Source- sample survey, December 2012



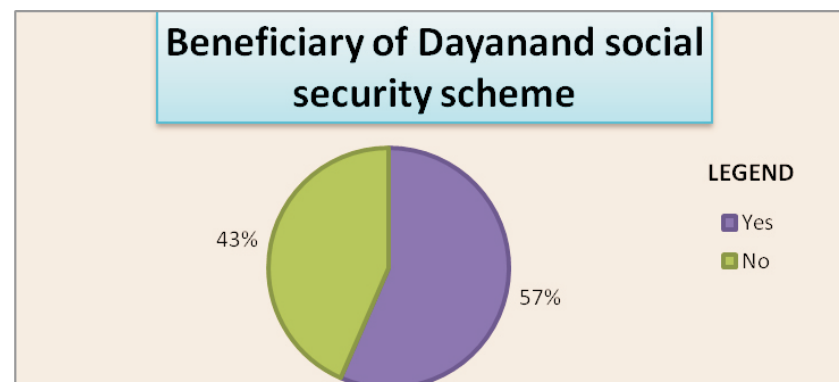
Source- sample survey, December 2012

**Fig 15**

Figure 15 reveals that 75.6% aged of Cuncolim town are of the opinion that planning of old age is necessary and one should save a portion of their income to be financially secure and to be less dependent on their children and relatives.

About 24.4% of the aged are of the opinion that planning of old age is not necessary. They are of the opinion that they have worked throughout their life to meet the needs of the family and in particular the children, so now it is the moral responsibility of the children to take care of their parents.

**Dayanand Social Security scheme.**



Source- sample survey, December 2012

Fig 16

More than 55% of aged benefit from Dayanand Social security scheme. Figure 16 reveals that 56.2 % of senior citizens / aged avail of this scheme but 43.8 % of the senior citizens do not avail of this scheme because of lack of awareness and some consider that it is below their dignity to avail of the money of the government scheme.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Most of the aged of Cuncolim town are educated. This accounts for 72.6% of surveyed aged population. There is significant number of aged (32.6%) who are dependant on their children and relatives. For others, the source of income is pension and business. About 58.5% of aged live in joint family which provides emotional support and looks after the day to day needs of the aged in the family. The aged provide a lot of emotional support to the family as a whole. They take care of their grandchildren when parents are at work which provide a sense of emotional security and happiness to the grandchildren. The aged of Cuncolim town play a very important role in decision making of family matters as they contribute their mite, wisdom and knowledge towards the development of family and community.

Health related problems of the aged include sensory impairment, blood pressure, diabetics, heart problems (cardiovascular problems), chest pain, T.B, asthma, inability to walk, loss of weight, joint pain, cough, urinary problems and acidity. The aged also face physiological problems like feeling of isolation, loneliness, loss of interest in life, neglect, insecurity, frustration, irritability, moody, feeling of uselessness, lack of confidence and insomnia.

Sickness is common among the aged of Cuncolim town and it has affected their day to day activities. The medical expenditure on the aged ranges between ₹ 400 to 5,000 per month. A small proportion of aged have secured their future through health insurance policy.

The aged are of great help to the house hold as they help in cooking, cleaning the house, take care of their grandchildren and also manage outdoor work like shopping; paying electricity, water, telephone bills; go to the bank, etc.

About 73.3% aged do not consider their old age as a burden as they enjoy good health and are less dependent on their children for their personal needs.

#### SUGGESTIONS

- 1) Children should be taught the value of respect for elders from very beginning, both at school and at the home.
- 2) Adequate means of passing leisure time should be made available by building senior citizens hall with suitable reading and recreational facilities.
- 3) Saving of the aged should be invested in schemes which can yield maximum interest.
- 4) The old persons must not give up working. They must take up job suitable to their health status.
- 5) Private practitioners should provide treatment to the aged at nominal charges.
- 6) Proper health care facilities should be provided in the government hospitals, doctors should pay more attention to the aged, taking special care in treating their needs.
- 7) The government should form a policy frame work including special old age pension which are adequate to cover their financial requirement.

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