

**Centre for Applied Social Research**

N.E.S.C. Study on the  
INTEGRATION OF THE ELDERLY  
IN THE FAMILY 2004

Report

N Richards  
A S Peedoly

Centre for Applied Social Research

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## **Summary**

In the Focus Groups (FGDs) that were held prior to the fieldwork exercise a number of important points were made. One of these was that policy makers often focus on the financial costs to society of maintaining publicly funded pensions, health care and social security, while ignoring the finer sociological aspects tied of what is often a mutual social support system operating between the different generations of a family.

In these FGDs there was a consensus among participants that there is currently a problem of exclusion of the elderly within the family. Some participants felt that they had a good life as an elderly person while others felt this was an exception to the rule. There was a general opinion that elderly people are not adequately integrated in the family. However, as we will see later this is not necessarily supported or reflected by the results of the fieldwork study.

The participants of the FGDs recognised the various ways that exclusion might manifest itself such as in emotional, financial and physical terms.

## **Fieldwork**

The fieldwork study was implemented using a representative sample of 1, 200 residents of the Island of Mauritius aged 40 years or older.

Fewer than 6% of respondents said that they lived in rented accommodation. However, where properties are rented they tended to be by respondents either from the General Population or the Muslim community.

A majority of the respondents said that they were the head of the household in which they lived, with Female respondents far less likely to be so than Male respondents.

A majority of respondents stated that they were the owner of the house in which they lived or the main contributor to the rent, but, again, Female respondents were less likely to be so than Males. Nevertheless, Female respondents tended to take on the role of householder or owner when widowed.

As this was a study based on a sample of respondents aged 40 years old or above there was a greater proportion of respondents who were retired than if the sample had been based on those aged 18 years old and above, Where respondents were working, which included some of those aged 60 years old and above, one third were working in Elementary Occupations.

Notwithstanding whether they were employed or not, 96% of respondents stated that they had some form of income, with 45% deriving their income from a Job or Business. However, 3% of respondents said that their sole source of income was financial support from children.

For those respondents aged 60 years old or over, 59% had a personal monthly income of less than Rs3, 000 while 79%, had a personal monthly income of Rs5, 000 or less; 95% of respondents aged 60 years old and above had a personal monthly income of less than Rs10, 000.

Looking at the household characteristics, 26% of respondents aged 60 years old or above lived in households where the total monthly income was less than Rs5, 000, while 66% lived in a household with a total monthly income of less than Rs10, 000.

Almost all of the respondents had at least one living child. And 83% of those with living children stated that at least one child was female. Some 94% of those respondents 60 years old or above had at least one living child.

Some 97% of all respondents agreed that it is only natural that the family should take care of their elders. As to the question of pensions, certainly an area of topical concern, 86% of all respondents felt that the retirement pension is inadequate to cover the living requirements of the elderly.

Respondents were also not too happy about current social service provision, less than half of all respondents feeling that current social services for the elderly were adequate.

They were a little happier with health service provision with 54% of all respondents viewing current health services for the elderly as being adequate. .

Respondents appeared happier with transport provision for the elderly, something that can be a crucial aspect in determining the quality of life that people, particular older people, enjoy.

Similarly, the majority of respondents felt that the provision of current television and radio programmes for the elderly was adequate and, staying with the theme of entertainment and leisure opportunities, 68% of respondents thought that the leisure facilities currently provided for the elderly were adequate.

Asked if persons aged over 60 years old who are willing to continue working should be given the opportunity to do so, 64% were in agreement.

Financial status can be a determining factor in the quality of life enjoyed and 63.5% of all respondents agreed that elderly people are better off today than before, However, 27% of those respondents aged 60 years old or above disagreed that the elderly are better off today while the percentage of respondents in agreement is correspondingly lower at 57%.

Continuing on the same theme, over three quarters of all respondents thought that the age of retirement should *not* be increased. However, there is a higher rate of agreement that the age of retirement *should be* increased among those respondents aged 60 years or above, 28%, than those aged 40 to 59 years old, 22%.

Respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old were asked if they had made any provision for their retirement and 34% said that they had.

Concentrating on this group of respondents the most common *sole* provision made was to have Regular Savings in the Bank, at 26%, while 19% had an Insurance Scheme.

Of the 66% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 Years old who said that up till now they had not made any form of provision for their retirement, over half of them said that they had not done so because they cannot afford to, while a further 21% said that they have not yet considered it, irrespective of whether or not they would be able to afford it. In general, a perceived lack of disposable income appears to be a major contributor to the lack of persons taking up private provision for their retirement, while many are also procrastinating.

Having made no private provision for retirement, some 69% of this group also disagreed that the State Pension would not be enough for their post-retirement financial needs.

However, 50% stated that they thought that it would be the State on whom they will perhaps have to rely financially when they retire. With a further 8% stating that it would be a combination of the State and their Children some 58% of this group of respondents expect to be reliant to some degree on the State after retirement. On the other hand, some 29% thought that it would be solely their children on whom they would have to rely for financial help after ceasing employment.

Of the group of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old, 55% said that they would prefer to live alone or with their spouse after they are retired while a further 32% said that they would prefer to live with their children, and 5% with other family members. Only 2% stated that they would prefer to live with other retired people in a shared home.

Some 80%, of respondents aged 40 years to 59 years old agreed that people today don't "place enough value on the part grand-parents play in family life".

However, 48% of these same respondents agreed that "grand-parents have little to teach grandchildren today". Concentrating on just those respondents who had previously stated that they agreed that people today don't place enough value on the part grandparents play in family life, 53% of them also went on to agree that grandparents have little to teach grandchildren today, while 84% of this group went on to agree that Grandparents Should Be Closely Involved In Deciding How Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up!

Continuing with what seems to be some confused thinking, some 71% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed that “Many People Today Do Not Appreciate The Help That Grandparents Give” while half of the respondents of this age group agreed that “Grandparents Tend To Interfere Too Much With The Way Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up”.

Notwithstanding the relatively high number of respondents who felt that grandparents tend to interfere too much with the way children are brought up, 91% agreed with the statement that with so many working mothers, families have an increasing need for grandparents to help.

Some 93% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed with the premise that older people living on their own face economic hardship and 87% agreed that they face personal mobility difficulties. A similarly high percentage, 86%, agreed that older people living on their own face transport difficulties while 93% agreed that older people living on their own face loneliness.

Turning to leisure opportunities, 79% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed with the statement that older persons living on their own face a lack of leisure options, while 93% agreed with the premise that older persons living on their own face a lack of physical security.

Some 82% of this lower age group of respondents agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of the sense of belonging to the family, 76% agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of a role to play within the family and 74% agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of importance to society.

Care of elders is an important issue and while we see a professed concern for the care of their elders, 48% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old said that if they looked after an elderly relative they would expect some form of financial contribution, with 31%, expecting a contribution from the elderly themselves and 51% expecting other family members to contribute. A massive 95% of this group of respondents would expect some form of contribution from the State. Yet again we see the reliance on the State that is prevalent in the public consciousness.

We saw before that very few people chose the option of living with other older persons in a care home environment as a preference for their living arrangements when retired. This view is supported by the fact that very few respondents aged 40 to 59 years old would consider putting elderly family members into caring environments. Some 87% said that they would *not* consider placing elderly relatives in a *private* care home, 81% said that they would *not* consider placing elderly relatives in a *state run* care home, and 84% said that they would *not* consider placing elderly relatives in an ashram, hospice or other similar place.



However, having noted the high number of respondents who said that it was their responsibility to look after the elderly and that they would not consider putting them into care facilities, 83% of respondents aged 40 to 59 years old stated that they did not have any person aged over 60 years of age living with them in their household

This may indicate several things among which we may include the inference that what one says should be done and what one does in reality do not necessarily amount to the same thing.

Of those respondents of the lower age group who have older persons living in the household with them, 63% stated that they help to look after the elderly persons living with them. Some 31% spend more than 20 hours per week offering care, while 14% of respondents in this situation state they gave care for between 39 and 99 hours per week.

In comparison, more than two thirds of carers offering care to elderly persons *outside the household*, 67%, offer that care for less than 10 hours per week.

Among respondents aged 60 years old and over there is clearly an income differential between men and women. Some 54% of female respondents of this age category had a monthly income of Rs 2,000 or less while 80% of women aged 60 years old or above had a monthly income of Rs 3,000 or less, compared to 36% of men.

Some 56% of respondents aged 60 years old or above lived with one or more children, either married and/or unmarried while 22% lived with their spouse only and 15% with other kin. Just 7 % stated that they live alone. Of those living alone, 65% were Female, although perhaps this is to be expected due to the greater life expectancy of women. 60% of those aged over 60 years old living alone were aged 60-65 years old.

97% of respondents aged 60 years old and above, including those who lived alone despite having children, considered their relationship with their children to be either very close or close.

Almost two thirds of respondents, 65%, agreed that in general, becoming old means depending on children. 83% of older respondents agreed that becoming old means being loved and cared after even more, and just 24% of older respondents agreed with the premise that becoming old means to feel excluded from family and social life. Some 71% of the older respondents felt that they actively participate in all decisions regarding the household, while 88% stated that they actively participate in all decisions regarding themselves.

85% of respondents aged 60 years old or over felt that they can rely on the emotional support of their children and 59% felt that they could rely on them for financial support.

64% of respondents from the older age group had received at least some financial support from at least one child in the previous six months, 26% having done so often.

74% of older residents with co-resident children stated that they had had meals together and 90% said that they participate in family outings with co-resident children, with 49% doing so often. 96% said that they often discussed family events while 79% said that they conducted casual conversation.

53% said that they look after grandchildren at least sometimes, including 36% who do so often and 17% who do so occasionally. Some 44.5% of this group of respondents stated that they never take this responsibility whereas 71% said that they assist in some degree with the housework.

77% of respondents aged 60 years old or over stated that they never need help in either personal care or with physical activities. However, 62% said that they needed assistance with paperwork or financial matters, 52.5% stated that they needed other practical help and 34% needed assistance with taking medicines.

Some 49% of those respondents aged 60 years old or over said that they sometimes need help with shopping, 20% stating that they always did. As to other outdoor leisure activities, 47% stated that they sometimes need help.

Some 37% of older respondents said that they sometimes needed help with maintaining the house in which they live, and 44% of respondents aged 60 years old or over stated that they need help with traveling at least some of the time.

Given the predominance of the elderly in the lower personal income brackets, 51% stated that not having enough money to live on is a big problem for them.

Over 84% of the respondents aged 60 years old and above did not consider loneliness to be a serious problem while 25% felt that they depend too much on other people. Nearly half of the older group of respondents said that they have important health problems

Only 16% of the over 60s stated that personal security is a serious problem for them. Loneliness is often promoted as an aspect of old age that is to be expected and we see that less than half of the respondents from the older age group, 48%, stated that it was not a problem at all for them. Some 15% saw it as a big problem.

Having previously investigated the assistance that some older respondents felt that they needed with various activities, 43% said that depending on other people is not a problem at all. However, the main worry seems to be about deteriorating health and half of the respondents of this age group felt that health is a big problem with just 17% saying that it was not a problem at all

Of those who said that not having enough money to live on was a big problem, one third, 33%, stated that they had *ever* tried to get help with this problem. Of those respondents who felt that having health problems was a major concern some 71% said that they had at some point tried to get help for this, while half of those who felt that being dependant on others was a big problem had *ever* sought help for this dependence.

49% of the older respondents said that they have some difficulty in getting out to go shopping. Similarly, 48% of older respondents said that they have difficulty in going out on social visits with 20% saying that they are unable to do so at all.

Some 75% of respondents aged 60 years old or above did not consider it a problem to know how to get the services needed while 25% said that they find it a major problem. When asked if they knew of any organization in the community they could turn to for help only 18% did know of an organisation.

Just 6% of those respondents aged 60 years old or above stated that they would like a full time job while a further 8% would like a part time job. Incidentally, 5% said that they already had a full time job and 3% said that they currently worked part time. 46% of the older group of respondents felt that they are not able to work.

We again see that health seems to be the most important cause of worry for the elderly with 86% of respondents aged 60 years old or above expressing some degree of worry about their physical health and 49% expressing concern about their mental health. In fact, 45% of this age group expressed some concern that they may be confined to an institution at some point in their old age. We also once again see the concerns expressed about the dependency that old people might have on other people with 66% of older respondents being worried about this. Being a victim of crime is not the top of the worry list for respondents with 51% not worried at about this particular problem. This supports the results on security seen earlier.

Of the group of respondents aged 60 years old or over, 71% were satisfied with their lives while 17% stated that they were unsatisfied.

A massive 94% of respondents aged 60 years old or above agreed that there needs to be the development of an effective public education programme on ageing while 92% agreed that there should be tax concessions for those who construct additional rooms to accommodate elderly relatives. In addition, 81% of older respondents agreed that there needs to be the development of elderly friendly housing. On the social aspect, 97% of older respondents agreed that a strong network of eldercare services would enable older persons to live with their families. There was virtually unanimous agreement with the statement that the government needs to develop a broad base of support services for carers.

## **INTRODUCTION**

People are living longer than ever before. The Mauritian population is steadily ageing. The elderly dependency ratio, 13 in 1997 is expected to rise to 36 by 2037.

The family has traditionally been seen as assuming a primary care giving role for the elderly. This burden has, more often than not, fallen on women. However, the trend is for women to marry later and to have children later, usually working in a full time occupation. In addition they often find themselves caring for both their children and their elders at the same time, carefully balancing the concerns of their own immediate families, professional life and their responsibilities for elderly care-giving.

At the same time as the proportion of older people in the population at large is increasing, the pool of available caregivers is shrinking. In addition, those adults now entering or approaching retirement were part of the generation that had fewer children, reducing the pool, as it were, of familial caregivers.

Caring for the physical and emotional needs of an elderly is a complex task. Many factors have to be taken into account such as the degree of any disability, the economic situation and the living environment of the older person. As the personal abilities of an elderly person decrease there is a progression in the amount of personal care and attention that is needed. Without an immediate and adaptable support system the elderly person can become isolated and feel detached from family, friends and the wider community.

A study carried out by DCDM, (June 2001), with funding from MRC made an assessment of the prospective role, contribution and needs of the elderly people of Mauritius by horizon 2010. However, the scope of that particular study was somewhat restrictive. The sample size was too small and the main focus was on people aged between 50 - 74 years old. Nowadays, many older persons may be living independently, or in households with younger members. It is crucial to capture the views and attitudes

of all of the players in understanding the desire and scope of the integration of the elderly in the family.

## JUSTIFICATION

World Bank statistics have shown that the proportion of elderly members of the population in many parts of the world is rapidly increasing. This is due to a fall in both fertility and mortality rates, particularly in Mauritius where fertility rates are often less than the replacement level and life expectancy is consistently increasing.

Population projections indicate that the elderly proportion of the population in Mauritius will more than triple between the years 2000 and 2037. This is an important consideration when planning for social services since health and other support-related issues.

<b>TABLE 1</b>				
<b>ELDERLY POPULATION BY BROAD AGE-GROUPS</b>				
<b>Both Sexes</b>				
<b>Age Group</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2037</b>
60-74	69,853	80,559	150,859	227,268
75+	17,674	26,933	39,687	96,447
<b>60+</b>	<b>87,527</b>	<b>107,492</b>	<b>190,543</b>	<b>323,715</b>

Table 1 shows the trends of increase and the projections made as to number of elderly persons in Mauritius. It also be noted that longevity is also an important issue in that not only is the rate of the over 60s among the population increasing but that people are living longer so that the numbers of people in all age groups is increasing as the population pyramid takes on a more rectangular form. The proportion of older persons aged 60-74 years old is projected to decline from 80% to 70% by 2037 while, subsequently, the proportion aged 75 years old and above is projected to increase from 20% to 30% over

the same period. This will have significant implications for social services such as health and social security.

The proportion of the elderly as part of the total population grew from 8.3% in 1990 to 9.1% in 2001 and is projected to reach 22% by 2037 (CSO). As elderly people live longer their needs are likely to escalate. An increasing number of elderly people may need some assistance with activities of daily living such as eating, toileting or dressing. The availability of caregivers to the elderly is a critical factor in their being able to remain in their home, enjoying an independent lifestyle, rather than having to be placed in a residential care environment.

According to 1996/97 Household Budget Survey, implemented by the CSO, more than 1 out of every 2 elderly persons lived in either extended or mixed households. Around 37% were living with their spouse and/or unmarried children and the remaining 8% were living alone. Elderly women were more likely than their male counterparts to be living alone. Around 11% of elderly women were living on their own compared to only 4% among elderly men

<b>Table 2</b>			
<b>Distribution (%) of elderly persons</b>			
<b>by living arrangements and sex - 1996/97 (HBS)</b>			
<b>Living Arrangements</b>	<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Living alone	8.1	4.1	11.4
Living with spouse only	11.8	15.9	8.6
Living with spouse and unmarried children	19.2	31.3	9.5
Living with unmarried children only	6.3	2.6	9.2
Other living arrangements	54.5	46.1	61.3

According to the year 2000 Census about 75% of households in Mauritius were of the nuclear type and the composition of an average household had decreased from 4.47 persons in 1990 to 3.93 by the year 2000.

We can see that while on the one hand the elderly population is increasing, on the other we are seeing the increase in preponderance of the nuclear family causing the erosion of the extended family structure, which, traditionally, has often provided some degree of social protection to the elderly.

This situation is often regarded as putting the elderly in a vulnerable position, with links with family members being wholly or partially severed.

The aims and objective of the study were to:

- 1.** Investigate the needs, expectations and lifestyle preferences of those currently over 60 years old.
- 2.** Investigate the desire and ability of adults living in family households, to care for the elderly within the household and their motives for doing so.
- 3.** Explore the possibilities and avenues for promoting the integration of the elderly in the family with reference to such issues as housing, safety, welfare benefits etc.
- 4.** Investigate the role and contribution of the elderly within the family
- 5.** Assess the expectations of adults currently aged, over 40 years old but not yet retired, regarding their preferred post-retirement lifestyles.
- 6.** Make recommendations with a view to improving the quality of life of the elderly.



## **SAMPLING METHODOLOGY**

### **1. Introduction**

One of the main objectives of the project was to try to find out what are the possibilities and avenues for promoting the integration of the elderly in the family, to the mutual benefit and satisfaction of all of the members of the family. The study covered such issues as the continuing changing form of the family type from extended into nuclear, the gradual loss of family cohesion, the expectations of the elderly and general and specific life satisfaction. The study addressed the views of those members of the population aged 40 years old and over.

### **2. Scope and Coverage**

The study was implemented in the Island of Mauritius with a target population of individuals aged 40 years old and above, living in private households. To ensure that the sample was representative of the target population, the sampling methodology took into consideration the following parameters:

- (i) the geographical spread of the sample
- (ii) ethnic groups
- (iii) social class
- (iv) the age of the respondent
- (v) the gender of the respondent

Other key demographic factors of the respondent such as education, occupation and marital status, were captured by the survey Questionnaire.

### **3. Sampling methodology**

The survey was conducted on a sample of 1, 200 individuals selected randomly over the whole island of Mauritius. The sample was drawn using a three-stage sampling design.

#### **Stage 1 - The selection of Enumeration Areas (EAs)**

100 EAs were selected after stratification using the 3 regional strata of urban, semi-urban and rural. The sampling frame for the EAs was the 2000 Housing and Population Census conducted by the Central Statistics Office. The number of EAs allocated in each stratum was performed using Probability Proportional to Size of Stratum, or PPS for short. The final selection of the EAs within a stratum was by systematic sampling. Stage 1 ensured that the sample was geographically representative.

#### **Stage 2 - The Selection of Households (HHs)**

After performing a listing of all households in each of the 100 EAs, 12 households were selected in each. The 100 listings obtained served as the frame for the selection of households. (12 HHs from each EA gave  $12 \times 100 = 1, 200$  HHs). The households were selected after stratification by ethnic group and expenditure class. The final selection of HHs was by using systematic sampling. Stage 2 ensured ethnicity and social class representative-ness.

#### **Stage 3 - The selection of Individuals**

The selection of one individual from each selected HH was done using the Kish Selection Table technique. 1, 200 individuals were selected from the 1, 200 selected HHs. The Kish Selection Table Technique is a process whereby the interviewer is given simple but rigorous rules for selecting one person from a given HH. The system is devised so that all individuals within a household belonging to the target population, in this instance

individuals aged 40 years old and above, have an equal probability of selection. Stage 3 ensured that the sample was representative of age and gender.

## **NOTE**

It is important to maintain randomness throughout the whole selection process. For a study of this type it was preferable to select a single adult in each household. Multiple interviews in the same household could have lead to compromising interview situations. For example this could be the second respondent overhearing some of another respondent's responses or one respondent, such as a husband, being a direct influence on the responses offered by another respondent, say their wife. These types of interviews would also have been inefficient because of high correlations.

The definition of the target population and the sample size was determined by the fact that the adult population of Mauritius is defined as those aged 18 years old and above, and the total number of those aged 60 years old and above within that adult population, as of the Census 2000, was 106, 340. It was decided to include only adults aged 40 years old and above.

For the purposes of the study, the statistical requirements were fully met by taking the decision to survey only adults in the middle, upper middle and 60+ age groups, in short those aged 40 years old and above.

The fieldwork for the study took place during June 2004.

## **KEY FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH ASSOCIATIONS OF SENIOR CITIZENS**

### **Introduction**

The recognition that populations are ageing has provoked widespread public debate about the implications of the changing demographic structure. Much of the discussion among policy makers has centred on the perceived financial costs to society of maintaining publicly funded pensions, health care and social security. However, it may well be that the contribution of the family in providing basic support is set to become increasingly important.

Up till now, the extent to which the elderly in Mauritius are perceived as being integrated within the family unit has not been adequately studied. As the elderly population is increasing in numbers and as a proportion of the total population, we are also witnessing the gradual supplanting of the extended family structure, which traditionally has provided social protection to the elderly population. In Mauritius, this has been replaced by the nuclear family with a concomitant gradual erosion of family cohesion and solidarity.

It is in this context that the present study was implemented. As the main aims were to identify the causal factors that are leading to the weakening of the family as a unit and to propose remedial measures that would lead to the promotion of the welfare of the elderly within the family unit the initial inquiry stage was the setting up of a number of Focus Group Discussions.

### **Methodological Approach**

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) are an effective means of gathering qualitative data. They can be held prior to the drafting of a quantitative survey questionnaire in order to generate hypotheses that can then be tested on a wider scale or they can be used as a means of unearthing more in-depth and valid data to balance that captured by the questionnaire method.

For this particular study, FGDs were used mainly as an informal basis on which to build the framework of enquiry. For this reason, the themes covered during the discussions were in strict accordance with the pre-determined parameters of the enquiry.

The FGDs were held with members of organizations generally representing the interests of senior citizens and the elderly. The organizations involved were selected from a compiled list of senior citizen associations based throughout the island. After the selection process, the organizations were approached and, subsequent to being appraised of the objectives of the study, were asked to nominate participants to take part in FGDs based on gender, ethnic group and their active position within the organization.

All of the FGDs were held at the University of Mauritius, with each group being moderated by a member of the CASR team. Two other members of the research team noted and recorded the views and comments made. All of the sessions were recorded on audio tape to support the written notes. The topics for discussion had been pre-determined but each meeting was allowed to develop naturally and to follow its own course, the moderator's task being only to ensure that each participant had a fair chance of being involved and that the core study topics, were, at some relevant point, brought up for discussion.

In all, 4 Focus Group Discussions were held with an average of 12 members per group. The Organisations involved were the Senior Citizens Council, Selex, the Federation of Senior Citizens of Quatre Bornes and the Association de 3e age de Ste. Anne

However, while it should be noted that FGDs can uncover interesting aspects associated with the research topic, the findings are anecdotal in nature rather than scientific. Therefore the information is presented as a separate part of the analysis, and should be read with caution and an open mind.

### **Exclusion or Integration?**

One of the most important findings of the FGDs was that there was a consensus among the respondents of all groups that there is a widespread problem of exclusion of the elderly within the family. While some respondents felt that they had a good life as an elderly person, with sons and daughters-in-law as well as their grandchildren pampering them, other members of the groups made a case for this being an exception to the rule. Although not quantifiable, it became quite clear that some elderly people often do not feel adequately integrated in the family.

In the groups this lack of integration was explained in various ways. Some perceived reasons given were the modern way of life where both husband and wife work, the breakdown of the extended family and its replacement by the nuclear family and the values of materialism and individualism which transcend so called 'traditional' values such as self-help and concern and respect for elderly parents and others. The mass media and computer games, which in some ways were felt to render redundant the role of grandparents, most notably in story-telling and general company, were also discussed as reasons, which many participants felt went some way to explaining the exclusion of grandparents from the family.

Empirically, this lack of integration was felt to manifest itself in emotional, financial and physical terms.

Most of the respondents agreed that, while the elderly have sacrificed and devoted their lives for their children, once the children get married they tend to focus their attention on their own new family and, in so doing, create a void in the life of their own parents.

Although it was agreed that individual experiences vary, in general, the participants felt that with old age they feel increasingly left to their own devices. This was a sentiment that cut across ethnic and religious communities and was part of the life experience of respondents regardless of their socio-economic status.

It was felt that old age was fraught with the experience and consequences of this exclusion, which often manifested as a perceived lack of respect, affection and care from loved ones.

Some of the respondents argued that simple formalities and courtesies, which are very important to them, such as greetings, visits and conversations are now often denied to them by their own children.

Many felt that the onus was on them to approach their children, for example having to take it on themselves to invite their children over for meals, in order to have their company.

One theme consistent to all the discussions was that daughters-in-law often represent a source of tension and conflict between sons and their parents, which sometimes makes it difficult for the two generations to co-exist in harmony. While some referred to this as a generation gap, others saw it as a problem that had always been there but that it had been more acceptable in earlier generations than it is now.

Related to this was the perception that, with more women working, the responsibility for care of the elderly, which had previously often been that of daughters-in-law, is now becoming the sole responsibility of the elderly themselves. In many instances, older persons, lacking the means of employing additional help, have to take care of themselves.

Some of the participants also felt that, being seen as elderly, they are often deliberately left out when it came to the family making important decisions. It was felt by some that it was as if being old their views seemed to have no contemporary relevance. The whole concept of the headship of a household, previously regarded by many as deferring to seniority, could now be questioned in the light of the experience of many participants of the FGDs. Some participants confided that, as they have little say, even in decisions that directly concern them, their headship of the household was in many ways nominal only

It was also generally agreed that the problems experienced and discussed are exacerbated in families or households where revenue is low. In these instances the elderly cannot expect much from their children and, sometimes, have to give up part, or all, of their meagre revenue to help their children. Some participants felt that in some of the very poor families the situation of the elderly is appalling, with intolerable levels of abuse and ill treatment sometimes inflicted on the elderly. This may be rooted in the perception of the younger family members that the elderly are viewed as “*dependent and useless*”, to cite the words of one particular participant who at the time of the discussion was actively working voluntarily at the grassroots level.

Many participants, some of whom were also involved in voluntary social work with their elderly counterparts, put across the point that they believed that poverty is an integral feature of the lives of many elderly people and that their respective families are often not of much help to them. Issues of the inadequacy of the basic retirement pension and the rising cost of living came up quite forcefully, being seen as important factors impeding the integration of the elderly in the community as a whole.

Because of their financial constraints, the elderly cannot actively participate in leisure activities.

Some graphic examples were given of how many old people stretch their resources by means such as increasing the dilution of milk powder, making a weaker, and subsequently less nutritious, solution, just so that their milk will last longer. They also said that they were often not able to afford any medicines prescribed.

## **Expectations of the Elderly from the Family**

### **Proximity**

Most of the participants felt that there is no better place for them to live than in the family. The closer that older persons can live to their children and grandchildren increases the feeling of security. However, for some of the participants, integration in, or exclusion from, the family does not necessarily depend on the geographical proximity of their children or other relatives. Some participants said that they felt excluded whilst living under the same roof. On the other hand, other participants believed that distance was not necessarily a problem as they could regularly keep in touch using telephones and transport facilities. The general consensus appeared to be that it was the frequency of contact, not geographical proximity, that makes the elderly feel part of, or left out of, the family. As one group put it, it eventually boils down to how far children and kin feel close to the elderly *through the heart and across the distance*.



## **Family v/s Residential Care Homes**

For many participants being sent to Residential Care Homes would be to directly hurt their dignity. Many participants gave examples of how, in their opinion, being sent to homes can lead directly to death, trauma or heart illness and loss of weight. Overall, Care Homes were viewed with fear and trepidation and somewhere where one lost the very pleasure of living.

However, it was agreed that, in some extreme cases, where the elderly are actually victims of verbal and physical abuse or ill treatment in their own home, and when no other option is available, Care Homes can be a useful option to consider. Some participants also felt that single elderly people might be better off in Care Homes provided that the standard of care is adequate. But *not one* participant, when asked, said that they would voluntarily wish to live in a Care Home.

## **Care, Support, Respect**

It would appear that expectations of the elderly on the family are not that great. While some participants believed that it was the duty of their children to take care of them and help them financially in their old age, others wished only to be loved and respected. It was felt by many participants that care and affection should also include a realization that many older persons also need, and rely on, physical help and assistance in relieving some of the financial pressure exacerbated by of the rising cost of living.

## **Elderly and childcare**

The role of the elderly in childcare was quite controversial. Many respondents felt that while on the one hand the elderly are not adequately integrated in the family, on the other they are 'utilised' when necessary to care for the grandchildren, taking them to and from school, baby-sitting, etc.

Some participants seemed resigned to this situation as they felt that no matter how good or bad their relationship with their own children, they considered it their duty to care for their grandchildren, albeit sometimes feeling exploited. Other participants felt that childcare is a real burden and that they become really servile in this process.

## **Gender and ageing**

It is well documented that women tend to outlive men. One theme in the study was to explore the differential experiences of old age with respect to gender.

The participants felt that although they live longer, women tend to be even less integrated within the family. .

It emerged that with a lack of care and support from children, there was also a double burden on many elderly women to care after their husbands and to do domestic chores.

However, it should be said that this argument was disputed by some of the male respondents who argued that, in return, when wives were sick they would take care of them. But it is interesting to note that this reciprocal care was more often than not only when women were sick.

Some women participants maintained that they had an unequal share of domestic tasks, and that they simply accepted this as one of the remnants of the traditional way of life.

### **The Role of the Elderly**

While many of the problems faced by the elderly in the family are assumed to be due to the 'uncaring' nature of children, some participants did put forward the view that quite often the elderly themselves are responsible for their own plight. Some reasons offered were the effects of senility or dementia that sometimes accompanies old age and a refusal to accept changing realities such as the difficulties of the young in reconciling work and family commitments. There was a perception of the 'faster lifestyle of children', and that the rhythm of life of younger people is often not compatible with that of the older generation thereby becoming a contributing factor to inter-generational tension.

Some participants were in favour of setting up education and training systems for the elderly in order to fully appraise them of the effects of the ageing process and to help them in preparing themselves for later life. For many respondents more emphasis should be laid on inculcating values of self-reliance, tolerance and acceptance among the elderly themselves. It was proposed that there should also be improved civic education for the younger generations in order that they can learn to value and help their grandparents and others. Adaptability to the problems associated with the integration of the elderly should be a two-way traffic.

## Section A Demographics

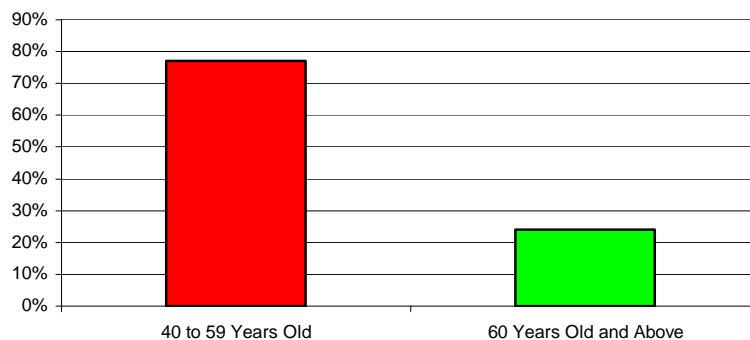
The study was based on a representative sample of 1, 200 people aged 40 years old or over living in the Island of Mauritius during June 2004.

Just over half of the sample, 50.2% was Female and 49.8% was Male. (*Table a1*)

One third of the sample, 33%, was aged over 56 years of age, although for the purposes of analysis the sample has also been re-ordered into the two age groups most necessary for achieving the desired and informative results. The first group is made up of those respondents aged 40 years to 59 years old, and the second group of those aged 60 years old and above, (*Table a2, Table a3*)

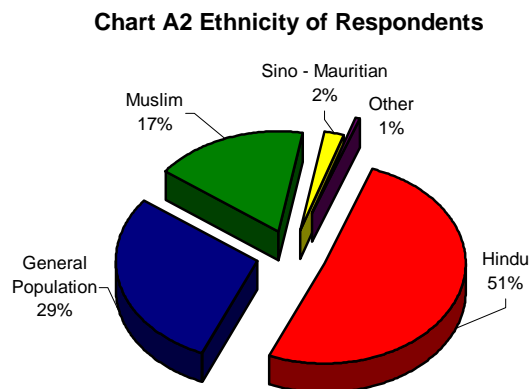
The result is that, as we see in Chart A1, 76% of the total sample was aged 40 to 59 years old while those aged 60 years old and above account for 24%.

**Chart A1 Age Groups of Respondents**



Given that the sample consisted of only those aged 40 years old or above it was to be expected that there was quite a high percentage of Widows and Widowers, 15%, among the respondents. (Table a4)

In Chart A2 we see that, just over half of the sample population, 51%, were Hindu, 29% from the General Population and 17% Muslim. As is usual for Mauritius, the Ethnic Group results correspond very closely to those for the Religion of the respondents. (Table a5, Table a6)



13% of the respondents had no formal education while, at the other end of the scale, only 3% had enjoyed an education up to degree level. Looked at by gross age groups we see that for those aged 60 years or older there was a *higher* concentration of respondents with a *lesser* attainment level of education. Where 6.5% of those between 40 and 59 years old had no formal education, for those age 60 years or above the percentage was as high as 33%. This is to be expected as the results of the historical changes in the provision of education are reflected in the life experiences of the population. Accordingly, we also see that Female respondents were more likely to have had no formal education. (Table a7, Table a8, Table a9)

## Tables for Section A Demographics

**Table a1**

		Number	%
Respondent Sex	Male	598	49.8%
	Female	602	50.2%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a2**

		Number	%
Age Category of Respondent	40 to 45 years	366	30.5%
	46 - 50 years	235	19.6%
	51 - 55years	204	17.0%
	56 - 60 years	134	11.2%
	61 - 65 years	84	7.0%
	66 - 70 years	73	6.1%
	71 - 79 years	65	5.4%
	80 to 89 years	35	2.9%
	90 + years	4	.3%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a3**

		No.	%
Age Groups	40 to 59 Years Old	918	76%
	60 Years Old and Above	282	24%
Group Total		1200	100%

**Table a4**

		Number	%
Marital Status	Single	46	3.8%
	Married	925	77.1%
	In a Union	9	.8%
	Divorced or Separated	41	3.4%
	Widowed	179	14.9%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a5**

		Number	%
Ethnic Group	Hindu	610	50.8%
	General Population	347	28.9%
	Muslim	208	17.3%
	Sino - Mauritian	29	2.4%
	Other	6	.5%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a6**

		Number	%
Religion	Hindu	609	50.8%
	Christian	381	31.8%
	Muslim	207	17.3%
	None Stated	3	.3%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a7**

		Number	%
Education	No Formal Education	152	12.7%
	Incomplete Primary Education	295	24.6%
	Passed CPE / Std.VI	287	23.9%
	Lower Secondary Incomplete	220	18.3%
	SC / Equivalent	169	14.1%
	A Level / Equivalent	27	2.3%
	Degree / Equivalent	35	2.9%
	Postgraduate Degree	9	.8%
	Other	6	.5%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table a8**

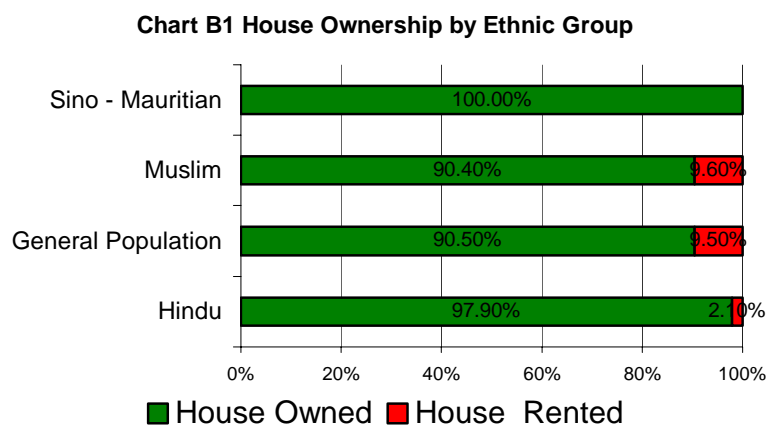
		Age Groups				Group Total	
		40 to 59 Years Old		60 Years Old and Above		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Education	No Formal Education	60	6.5%	92	32.6%	152	12.7%
	Incomplete Primary Education	199	21.7%	96	34.0%	295	24.6%
	Passed CPE / Std.VI	247	26.9%	40	14.2%	287	23.9%
	Lower Secondary Incomplete	197	21.5%	23	8.2%	220	18.3%
	SC / Equivalent	145	15.8%	24	8.5%	169	14.1%
	A Level / Equivalent	24	2.6%	3	1.1%	27	2.3%
	Degree / Equivalent	34	3.7%	1	.4%	35	2.9%
	Postgraduate Degree	7	.8%	2	.7%	9	.8%
	Other	5	.5%	1	.4%	6	.5%
Group Total		918	100.0%	282	100.0%	1200	100.0%

**Table a9**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		Number	%
		Number	%	Number	%		
Education By Sex	No Formal Education	37	6.2%	115	19.1%	152	12.7%
	Incomplete Primary Education	140	23.4%	155	25.7%	295	24.6%
	Passed CPE / Std.VI	144	24.1%	143	23.8%	287	23.9%
	Lower Secondary Incomplete	130	21.7%	90	15.0%	220	18.3%
	SC / Equivalent	101	16.9%	68	11.3%	169	14.1%
	A Level / Equivalent	13	2.2%	14	2.3%	27	2.3%
	Degree / Equivalent	22	3.7%	13	2.2%	35	2.9%
	Postgraduate Degree	6	1.0%	3	.5%	9	.8%
	Other	5	.8%	1	.2%	6	.5%
Group Total		598	100.0%	602	100.0%	1200	100.0%

## Section B Home

Less than 6% of respondents said that they lived in rented accommodation, with little or no difference in ownership of house by age. However, when viewed by ethnicity, Chart B1 shows that those respondents who considered themselves as Sino-Mauritian were all owners of the house in which they lived. Hindu respondents were less likely to be renting their home than those respondents who were Muslim or from the General Population. (Table b1, Table b2)



Over 60% of respondents said that they were the head of the household in which they lived. However, only 25% of Female respondents regarded themselves as the head of the household compared to 96% of Males. Where the respondent was widowed, 30% of Females and 18% of Males did *not* regard themselves as the head of the household. (Table b1, Table b2, Table b3)

63% of respondents stated that they were the owner of the house or the main contributor to the rent. However, only 31% of Female respondents said that this was the case compared to 95% of Males. Where respondents were widowed, 69% of Female respondents stated that they were the owner of the house or the main contributor to the rent. (Table b4, Table b5, Table b6, Table b7, Table b8)



## Tables Section B

### Home

**Table b1**

		Number	%
House Owned or Rented	House is Owned	1133	94.4%
	House is Rented	67	5.6%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table b2**

		Ethnic Group									
		Hindu		General Population		Muslim		Sino - Mauritian		Other	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
House Owned or Rented	House is Owned	597	97.9%	314	90.5%	188	90.4%	29	100.0%	5	83.3%
	House is Rented	13	2.1%	33	9.5%	20	9.6%	0	.0%	1	16.7%
Group Total		610	100.0%	347	100.0%	208	100.0%	29	100.0%	6	100.0%

**Table b3**

		No.	%
Respondent Head of Household?	Yes	726	60.5%
	No	474	39.5%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table b4**

		Sex of Respondent			
		Male		Female	
		No.	%	No.	%
Respondent Head of Household? (By Sex)	Yes	573	95.8%	153	25.4%
	No	25	4.2%	449	74.6%
Group Total		598	100.0%	602	100.0%

**Table b5**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Respondent Head of Household? (Respondent Widowed)	Head of Household	27	81.8%	103	70.5%	130	72.6%
	Not Head of Household	6	18.2%	43	29.5%	49	27.4%
Group Total		33	100.0%	146	100.0%	179	100.0%

**Table b6**

		No.	%
Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent / Loan	Not Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	448	37.3%
	Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	752	62.7%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table b7**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent / Loan (By Sex of Respondent)	Not Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	30	5.0%	418	69.4%	448	37.3%
	Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	568	95.0%	184	30.6%	752	62.7%
Group Total		598	100.0%	602	100.0%	1200	100.0%

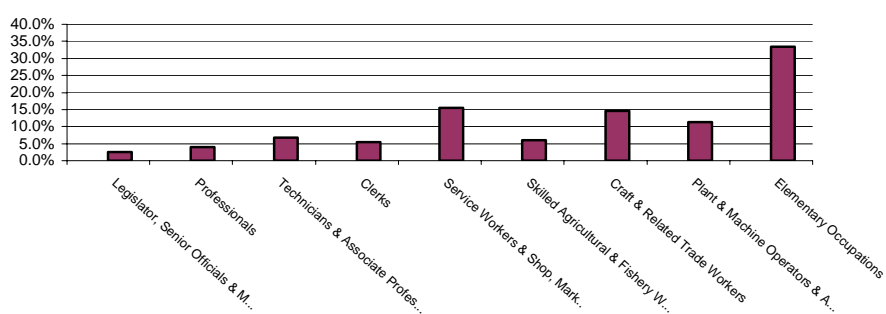
**Table b8**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent / Loan (Respondents Widowed by Sex)	Not Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	6	18.2%	45	30.8%	51	28.5%
	Owner of House or Main Contributor to Rent	27	81.8%	101	69.2%	128	71.5%
Group Total		33	100.0%	146	100.0%	179	100.0%

## Section C Work & Income

Chart C1 shows that of those respondents who were working, the largest proportion, over 33%, were working in jobs categorized as Elementary Occupations. (Table c1)

**Chart C1 Occupational Groups  
for Working Respondents**



### Income

Some 96% of respondents stated that they had some form of income, with 45% deriving their income from a Job / Business. However, it should be noted that 3% stated that their only source of income was financial support from children, 1% achieved their income solely from savings and a further 20% had other combinations of income, of which 4% had incomes based on other forms of “cash” or “kind”. (Table c2)

Of those respondents who to some degree listed income from a job or business, 14% had a personal monthly income of less than Rs3, 000, 36% had a personal monthly income of Rs5, 000 or less and 79% had a personal monthly income of up to Rs10, 000. For those respondents aged 60 years old or more, 59% had a personal monthly income of less than Rs3, 000, 79% had a personal monthly income of Rs5, 000 or less while 95% had a personal monthly income of less than Rs10, 000. (Table c3, c4)

### Household Income

Some 16% of households had a monthly combined total income of less than Rs5, 000 while a further 43% had a total household income of between Rs5, 000 & Rs10, 000. In all, 59% of all households had a total monthly income of Rs10, 000 or less.

For those respondents aged 60 years old or above 26% lived in households where the total monthly income was less than Rs5, 000, and 66% lived in a household with a total monthly income of less than Rs10, 000, indicating that households with older persons tend to have less total monthly income than those without.

*(Table c5, Table c6)*

## Tables Section C

### Work & Income

Table c1

		No.	%
Category of Current Job	Legislator, Senior Officials & Managers	17	2.6%
	Professionals	27	4.1%
	Technicians & Associate Professionals	44	6.7%
	Clerks	35	5.4%
	Service Workers & Shop, Market Sales Workers	102	15.6%
	Skilled Agricultural & Fishery Workers	40	6.1%
	Craft & Related Trade Workers	95	14.6%
	Plant & Machine Operators & Assemblers	74	11.3%
	Elementary Occupations	218	33.4%
	Group Total	652	100.0%

**Table c2**

		No.	%
Sources of Income	Non Contributory Pension	105	9%
	Contributory Pension	16	1%
	Private Insurance	1	0%
	Financial Support From Children	30	3%
	Savings	11	1%
	Job / Business	542	45%
	Other (in Kind)	46	4%
	Other (in Cash)	53	4%
	Non Contributory Pension + Contributory Pension	55	5%
	Non Contributory Pensions + Financial Support From Children	73	6%
	Non Contributory Pension + Job or Business	17	1%
	Financial Support from Children + Job or Business	30	3%
	Savings + Job or Business	27	2%
	Non Contributory Pension + Contributory Pension +Children	12	1%
	Other Variations of Income	132	11%
	No Response	50	4%
Group Total		1200	100%

**Table c3**

		No.	%
Personal Monthly Income Category of Respondent (some Income From Job or Business)	Less than Rs2,000	34	5%
	Rs2,001 - Rs3,000	55	9%
	Rs3,001 - Rs4,000	70	11%
	Rs4,001 - Rs5,000	72	11%
	Rs5,001 - Rs10,000	277	43%
	Rs10,001 - Rs15,000	77	12%
	Rs15,001 - Rs20,000	30	5%
	Rs20,001 - Rs25,000	15	2%
	Rs25,001 - Rs30,000	8	1%
	Rs30,001 - Rs50,000	5	1%
	Rs50,001 and above	2	0%
Group Total		645	100%

**Table c4**

		No.	%
Personal Monthly Income Category of Respondent (60 Years Old of Above)	No Personal Income	3	1%
	Less than Rs2,000	97	34%
	Rs2,001 - Rs3,000	67	24%
	Rs3,001 - Rs4,000	32	11%
	Rs4,001 - Rs5,000	24	9%
	Rs5,001 - Rs10,000	45	16%
	Rs10,001 - Rs15,000	8	3%
	Rs15,001 - Rs20,000	4	1%
	Rs20,001 - Rs25,000	1	0%
	Rs25,001 - Rs30,000	1	0%
Group Total		282	100%



**Table c5**

		No.	%
Household Monthly Income Category	Less than Rs2,000	17	1%
	Rs2,001 - Rs3,000	25	2%
	Rs3,001 - Rs4,000	55	5%
	Rs4,001 - Rs5,000	97	8%
	Rs5,001 - Rs10,000	517	43%
	Rs10,001 - Rs15,000	262	22%
	Rs15,001 - Rs20,000	100	8%
	Rs20,001 - Rs25,000	42	4%
	Rs25,001 - Rs30,000	35	3%
	Rs30,001 - Rs50,000	41	3%
	Rs50,001 and above	9	1%
Group Total		1200	100%

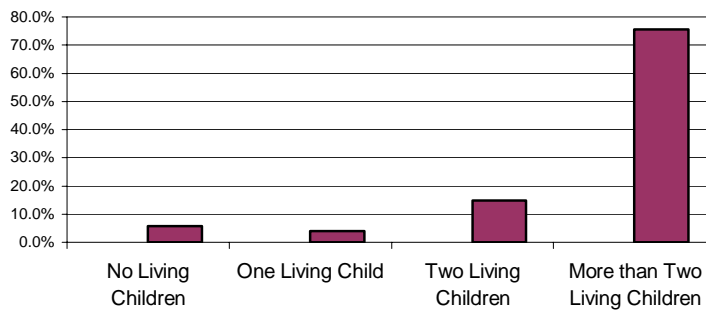
**Table c6**

		No.	%
Household Monthly Income Category (60 Years old or above)	Less than Rs2,000	12	4%
	Rs2,001 - Rs3,000	10	4%
	Rs3,001 - Rs4,000	25	9%
	Rs4,001 - Rs5,000	24	9%
	Rs5,001 - Rs10,000	114	40%
	Rs10,001 - Rs15,000	54	19%
	Rs15,001 - Rs20,000	20	7%
	Rs20,001 - Rs25,000	12	4%
	Rs25,001 - Rs30,000	4	1%
	Rs30,001 - Rs50,000	7	2%
	Group Total		282

## Section D Children

Some 92% of respondents had at least one living child. Of those with living children, 83% stated that at least one child was female. We see in Chart D1 that for those respondents aged 60 years old or more, 94% had at least one living child and 75.5% had more than two living children. Of course, this may still be the result of the higher birth rates of previous generations filtering through the system those who were marrying and having children in the late 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s now move into their retirement years. It is to be expected that there will be a difference as those generations of people who had children after the mid 1970s move into old age in the years to come. (Table d1, Table d2, Table d3)

**Chart D1 Living Children  
Respondents 60 Years Old & Above**



## Tables Section D Children

**Table d1**

		No.	%
Number of Living Children	No Living Children	96	8.0%
	One Living Child	114	9.5%
	Two Living Children	397	33.1%
	More than Two Living Children	593	49.4%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table d2**

		No.	%
How Many Of Living Children Are Daughters	None	189	17.1%
	One Living Daughter	447	40.5%
	Two Living Daughters	262	23.7%
	More Than Two Living Daughters	206	18.7%
Group Total		1104	100.0%

**Table d3**

		No.	%
Number of Living Children (60 Years Old & Above)	No Living Children	16	5.7%
	One Living Child	11	3.9%
	Two Living Children	42	14.9%
	More than Two Living Children	213	75.5%
Group Total		282	100.0%

## Section E

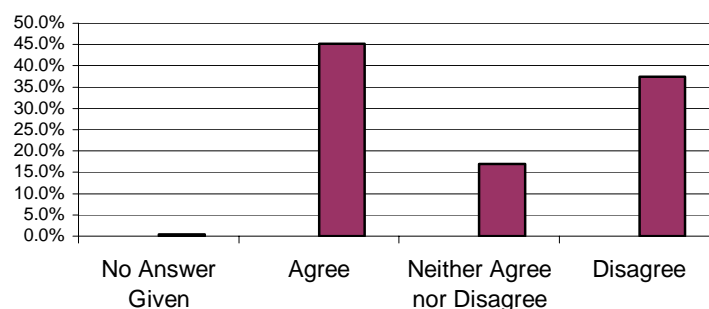
### The Situation of the Elderly

Some 97% of all respondents agreed that it is only natural that the family should take care of their elders. There was little difference in response between age categories, by sex of respondent or by income categories. This reflects what was said in the FGDs, that there was an element of duty attached to the care of the elderly by their offspring. (Table e1)

86% of all respondents disagreed with the statement that the retirement pension is adequate to cover the living requirements of the elderly. In this instance the percentages have been left disaggregated, as the rate of respondents who *Strongly Disagreed* was as high as 42%. (Table e2)

Turning to current social service provision, Chart E1 shows that less than half of all respondents, 45%, agreed that current social services for the elderly were adequate, while 37% disagreed and 17% were undecided. There was little difference in opinion by age. (Table e3)

**Chart E1 Current Social Service Provision is Adequate**



On the issue of the provision of health services, 54% of all respondents agreed that current health services for the elderly are adequate while 36% disagreed. (Table e4)

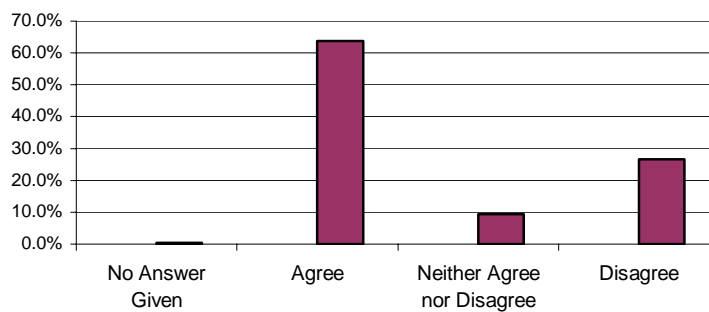
Transport provision can be a crucial aspect in determining the quality of life that people enjoy and can be even more so with elderly people. Asked what they thought of current transport arrangements for the elderly, 68% of all respondents agreed that they were adequate, while almost one quarter of all respondents disagreed. As before, it is worth noting that there was no significant difference between age groups. (Table e5)

Television and Radio can play a big part in the lives of the elderly by providing an important link with the outside world as well as entertainment and information. However to be totally effective there needs to be a programming schedule that meets the requirements of all members of society. With this in mind we see that 61.5% of all respondents agreed that the television and radio programmes for the elderly were adequate. However, it should be noted that a large proportion of respondents were either undecided or in disagreement, indicating that there is perhaps some further work to be done on programming schedules so that they meet the needs of the elderly. (Table 31)

Staying with the theme of entertainment and leisure opportunities, we see that some 68% of respondents thought that the leisure facilities currently provided for the elderly were adequate. (Table e7)

The age of retirement is an issue that is very much in the public arena at present. An issue that would sit alongside that of retirement age is whether or not those persons aged over 60 years old who are willing to continue working should be given the opportunity to do so. Chart E2 shows that 64% of all respondents agreed that this should be the case. (Table e8)

**Chart E2 Persons Aged Over 60 Years Old  
Should Work If They Wish To**



63.5% of all respondents agreed that elderly people are better off today than before, with some 15% of respondents undecided. This left some 21% of respondents who disagreed that the elderly are better off today than ever before. However, for those respondents aged 60 years old or above, 27% disagreed that the elderly were better off today while the percentage of respondents in agreement is correspondingly lower at 57%.  
*(Table e8, Table e, Table e10)*

## Tables Section E

### The Situation of the Elderly

**Table e1**

		No.	%
It Is Only Natural That the Family Should Take Care Of Their Elders	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	1180	98.3%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	1.3%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e2**

		No.	%
The Basic Retirement Pension is Adequate For The Day To Day Living Requirements Of The Elderly	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Strongly Agree	32	2.7%
	Agree	81	6.8%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	54	4.5%
	Disagree	521	43.4%
	Strongly Disagree	508	42.3%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e3**

		No.	%
Current Social Services For the Elderly, Whether Provided By Government, NGOs or Others, Are Adequate	No Answer Given	5	.4%
	Agree	542	45.2%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	204	17.0%
	Disagree	449	37.4%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e4**

		No.	%
Current Health Services For the Elderly Are Adequate	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	653	54.4%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	110	9.2%
	Disagree	433	36.1%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e5**

		No.	%
Current Transport Arrangements For the Elderly Are Adequate	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	814	67.8%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	95	7.9%
	Disagree	287	23.9%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e6**

		No.	%
Television And Radio Programmes Provided For the Elderly Are Adequate	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	738	61.5%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	224	18.7%
	Disagree	234	19.5%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e7**

		No.	%
Leisure Facilities For Elderly People Provided By The Government Or Socio-Cultural Associations Are Adequate	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	813	67.8%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	164	13.7%
	Disagree	219	18.3%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e8**

		No.	%
Those Elderly People Who Are Willing To Keep On Working Should Be Given The Opportunity To Do So	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	766	63.8%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	112	9.3%
	Disagree	318	26.5%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table e9**

		No.	%
Elderly People Are Better Off Today Than Elderly People Were Before	No Answer Given	4	.3%
	Agree	761	63.4%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	183	15.3%
	Disagree	252	21.0%
Group Total		1200	100.0%



**Table e10**

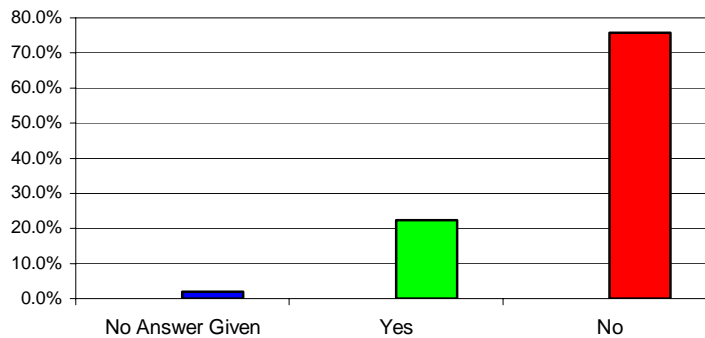
		No.	%
Elderly People Are Better Off Today Than Elderly People Were Before	No Answer Given	1	.4%
	Agree	160	56.7%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	46	16.3%
	Disagree	75	26.6%
Group Total		282	100.0%

## Section F Issues of Retirement

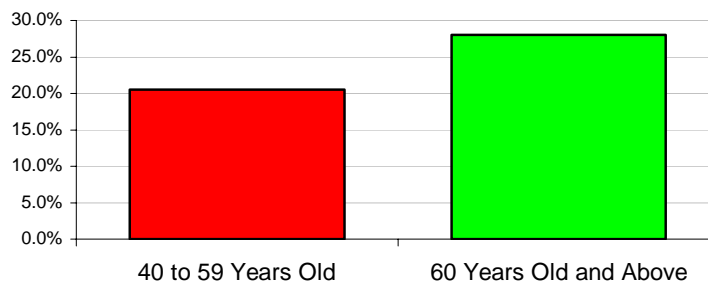
### Retirement Age

Respondents were asked the question as to whether or not, in their own opinion, the age of retirement should be increased, and in Chart F1 we see that 76% of all respondents disagreed. However, when we look more closely at the result disaggregated by age group, Chart F2 indicates that there is a higher rate of agreement that the age of retirement should be increased among those respondents aged 60 years or above, 28%, than those aged 40 to 59 years old, 22%. (*Table f1, Table f2*)

**Chart F1 Should Retirement Age Be Increased**

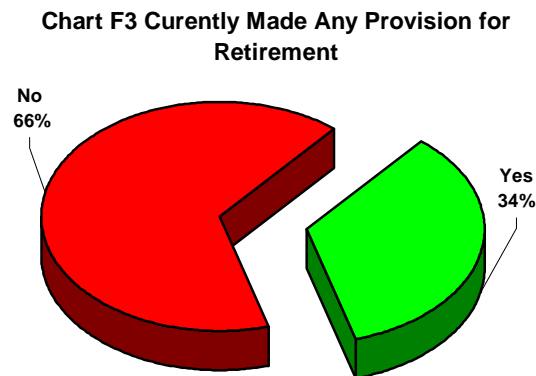


**Chart F2 Agree That Retirement Age  
Should Be Increased  
by Age Group**



## Provisions for Retirement

Respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old were asked if they had made any provisions for their retirement and just over one third of respondents, 34%, said that they had indeed made some sort of provision. However, Chart F3 clearly indicates the large percentage of respondents from this age group, 66%, who said that, up to now, they had not made any provisions for their retirement. (Table f3)



Concentrating on those respondents of the lower age group who said that *they had* made some form of provision for their retirement, the most common *sole* provision made was to have Regular Savings in the Bank, at 26%, while 19% had an Insurance Scheme. Some 12% had both Regular Savings and an Insurance Scheme as provision for their retirement and 44% had a mixture of provisions that involved a Private Pension Plan, including 7% who had a Private Pension Plan as their sole provision, (Table f4)

Turning our attention to the 66% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 Years old who said that up till now they had made *no* form of provision for their retirement. The first issue raised is to why they had not made any private provision. In response, we see that 53% said that it was because they cannot afford it and a further 21% said that they have not yet considered it, irrespective of whether or not they would be able to afford it. Some others indicated that they cannot afford to do so because they have commitments elsewhere, such as with construction costs or with education costs for their children. In all, a lack of disposable income appears to be a major contributor to the low percentage of respondents who had taken up private provision for their retirement, while many were also procrastinating, believing this to be something only to be considered in one's later years.

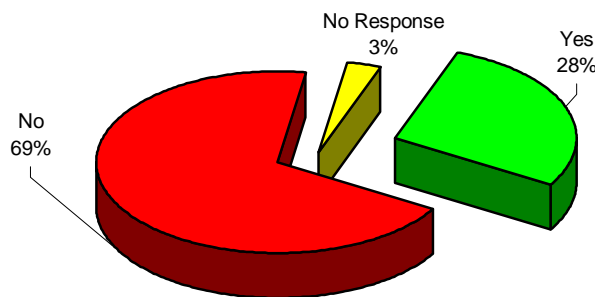
(Table f5)

When asked as to whether they thought that the state pension would provide for all their financial needs after retirement, Chart F4 shows that some 69% of those respondents who had made no private provision for retirement disagreed that this would be the case.

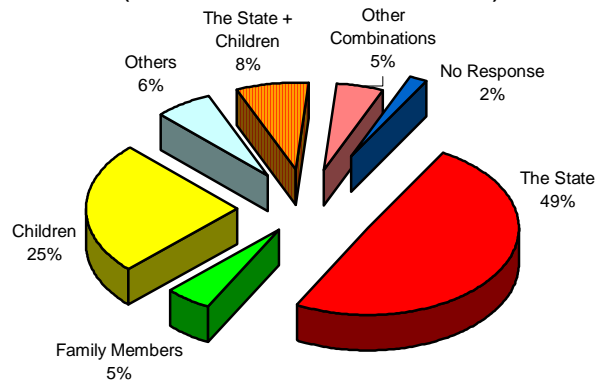
(Table f6)

Of this same group of respondents, we see in Chart F5 that 50% stated that they thought that it would be the State on whom they will perhaps have to rely on financially when they retire. A further 8% stated they thought it would be a combination of the State and their Children, meaning that 58% of respondents aged 40 to 59 years old who had made no private provision for their retirement expected some kind of provision from the State. Some 29% thought that it would be solely their children on whom they would have to rely for financial help after retirement. (Table f7)

**Chart F4 Think That State Pension Will Provide For All Retirement Needs  
(40 - 59 No Provisions for Retirement Made)**



**Chart F5 On Whom Will Depend After Retirement  
(40 - 59 No Provisions for Retirement Made)**



### **Living Arrangements after Retirement**

Of those respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old, 55% said that they would prefer to live alone or with their spouse after they are retired while a further 32% said that they would prefer to live with their children; 5% said that they would prefer to live with other family members. Almost 4% chose a mixture of being alone, with spouse or with children. Only 2% stated that they would prefer to live with other retired people in a shared home. This should be viewed in line with what was said in the FGDs about the desirability of Care Homes and the opinions offered later of the suitability of Care Homes for elderly people. (*Table f8*)

## Tables Section F

### Issues of Retirement

**Table f1**

		No.	%
In Your Opinion Should The Retirement Age Be Increased Or Not	No Answer Given	24	2.0%
	Yes	267	22.3%
	No	909	75.8%
Group Total		1200	100.0%

**Table f2**

		Age Groups				Group Total	
		40 to 59 Years Old		60 Years Old and Above		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
In Your Opinion Should The Retirement Age Be Increased Or Not	No Answer Given	18	2.0%	6	2.1%	24	2.0%
	Yes	188	20.5%	79	28.0%	267	22.3%
	No	712	77.6%	197	69.9%	909	75.8%
Group Total		918	100.0%	282	100.0%	1200	100.0%

**Table f3**

		No.	%
Currently Made Any Financial Provisions For Retirement	Yes	315	34.4%
	No	600	65.6%
Group Total		915	100.0%

**Table f4**

		No.	%
What Provisions Made For Retirement	Private Pension Plan	23	7.3%
	Investment Plan in Bank	2	.6%
	Property Investment	4	1.3%
	Regular Savings In Bank	81	25.7%
	Insurance Scheme	61	19.4%
	Other	53	16.8%
	Private Pension Plan + Regular Savings	28	8.9%
	Private Pension Plan + Insurance Scheme	11	3.5%
	Regular Savings + Insurance Scheme	38	12.1%
	Private Pension Plan + Regular Savings + Insurance Scheme	14	4.4%
Group Total		315	100.0%

**Table f5**

		No.	%
Reasons For Not Making Provision	Not Enough Money	313	52.9%
	Have Not Considered It	124	20.9%
	Not Working	30	5.1%
	Concentrate On Children's Education	27	4.6%
	Concentrate on Construction of House	9	1.5%
	Other	89	15.0%
Group Total		592	100.0%

**Table f6**

		No.	%
Think That State Pension Will Provide For All Retirement Needs	Yes	170	28%
	No	412	69%
	No response	18	3%
Group Total		600	100%

**Table f7**

		No.	%
On Whom Will Perhaps Have To Rely For Financial Help After Retirement	The State	300	50%
	Family Members	27	5%
	Children	148	25%
	Others	37	6%
	The State + Children	48	8%
	Other Combinations	30	5%
	No Response	10	2%
Group Total		600	100%

**Table f8**

		No.	%
When You Retire What Do You Think Will Be Your Preferred Living Arrangement	Alone or With Spouse	503	55%
	With Children	294	32%
	With Other Family Members	45	5%
	With Other Retired People In A Shared Home	21	2%
	In A Care Home With Professional Staff	8	1%
	Alone / With Spouse / With Children	33	4%
	Other Options	3	0%
	No response	11	1%
Group Total		918	100%

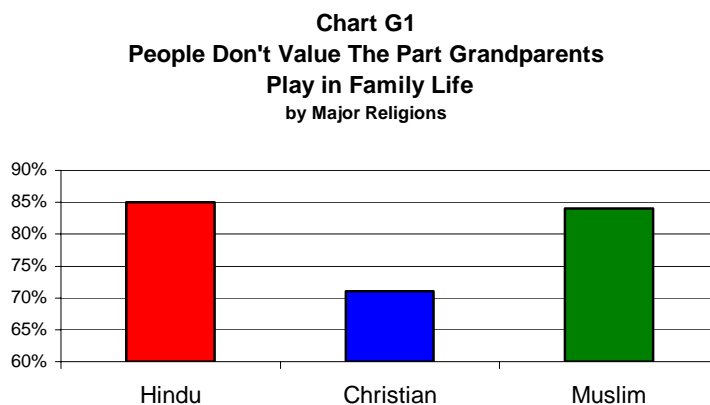


## Section G

### The Role of the Elderly

The role of the elderly in the family is an issue that was at the very heart of the study. In the FGDs the point was made that there is often a confusion about whether elders are *integrated* in the family, or *utilized* by the family when needed.

Of those respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old, 80% agreed with the statement “people today don’t place enough value on the part grandparents play in family life”. Chart G1 shows that when viewed by religion those respondents from a Christian background were less likely than either Muslim or Hindu Respondents to agree with the statement. (Table g1, Table g2)



However, when asked their opinion of the statement that “grandparents have little to teach grandchildren today”, 48% of these same respondents aged 40 to 59 years old agreed with this further premise. Concentrating on just those respondents who had previously stated that they agreed that people today don’t place enough value on the part grandparents play in family life, 53% of them went on to agree that grandparents have little to teach grandchildren today. In this instance, respondents from a Christian background were more likely to disagree with the statement than those from a Hindu or Muslim background. Some 84% of this group also goes on to agree that “grandparents should be closely involved in deciding how their grandchildren are brought up”! This is a similar result to the 82% of all respondents aged 40 to 59 years old that agreed with this particular statement. (Table g3, Table g4, Table g5, Table g6, Table g7)

Some 71% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed that “many people today do not appreciate the help that grandparents give” and half of the respondents of this age group agreed that “grandparents tend to interfere too much with the way their grandchildren are brought up. But, again, we see a probable confusion in thinking, because, targeting only those respondents who said that they agreed that people today don’t place enough value on the part grandparents play in family life, 53% of them also

agreed with the statement that grandparents tend to interfere too much with the way their grandchildren are brought up! (*Table g8, Table g9*)

Notwithstanding the relatively high number of respondents who felt that grandparents tend to interfere too much with the way children are brought up, in response to the next question, 91% agreed with the statement that with so many working mothers, families increasingly need grandparents to help. (*Table g10*)

What needs further investigation is the matching of some people's needs for the assistance of the grandparents with their desire to fully involve the grandparents as integrated members of the family.

42% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years of age agreed that efforts should be made to attract the elderly back into the workforce. (*Table g11, Table g12, Table g13*)

Many of these issues were raised in the FGDs, in particular, the duality of the desire for grandparents to assist wherever possible, thereby offering a role to play within the family unit which assists in the full integration of the elder in the family group, and the feeling of being exploited and being seen as a ready made helper, particularly with childcare. The seeming confusion that is presented by the varied responses to this set of questions may indicate that the younger people themselves are confused about the role of grandparents and that, while on the one hand they would like to integrate the grandparents more by given them a role to play, on the other hand sometimes their opinions or approach are seen as an intrusion and, subsequently, the root of resentment.

### **Opinion of Difficulties Faced by Older Persons**

Some 93% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed with the premise that older people living on their own face economic hardship and 87% agreed that they face personal mobility difficulties. A similarly high percentage, 86%, agreed that older people living on their own face transport difficulties while 93% agreed that older people living on their own face loneliness. (*Table g14, Table g15, Table g16, Table g17*)

Turning to leisure opportunities, 79% of respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old agreed with the statement that older persons living on their own face a lack of leisure options. It is worth reminding ourselves at this point that in the FGDs the cost of leisure was an issue and that it was felt that the financial constraints experienced by many older persons prevented them from fully appreciating the leisure opportunities on offer.

On issues of security, 93% agreed with the premise that older persons living on their own face a lack of physical security. (*Table g18, Table g19*)

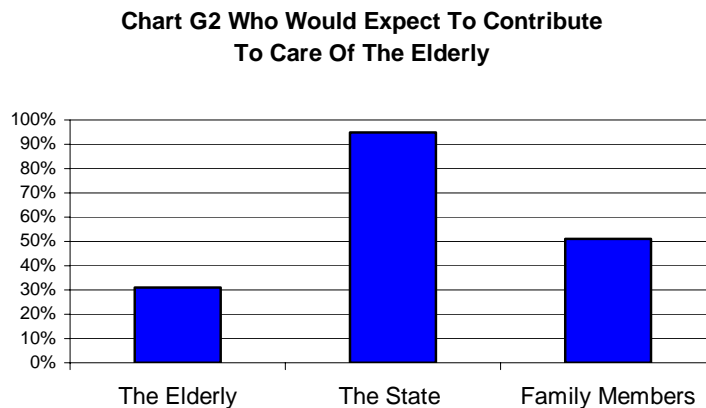
Some 82% of this lower age group of respondents agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of the sense of belonging to the family, and 76% agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of a role to play within the family. (*Table g20, Table 21*)

Just under three quarters of this group of respondents, 74%, agreed that older people living on their own face a loss of importance to society. (Table 22)

### Care of Older Persons

Just under half of all respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old, 48%, said that *if* they looked after an elderly parent or grandparent they would expect some form of financial contribution. (Table g23)

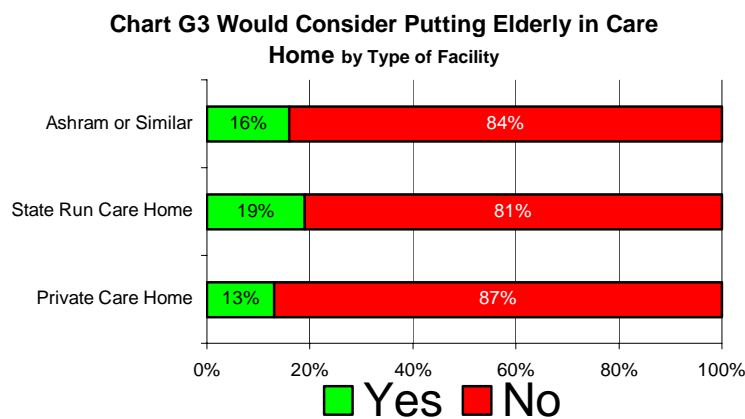
In Chart G2 we see that of this 48% who would expect some form of contribution towards caring for elderly parents or grandparents, less than one third, 31%, said that they would expect a contribution from the elderly themselves, while just over half, 51%, would expect other family members to contribute. However, a massive 95% of this group of respondents would expect some form of contribution from the State. Yet again there is a perceived reliance on the State that is prevalent in the public consciousness. (Table g24)



According to the opinions stated, very few respondents aged 40 to 59 years old would consider putting elderly family members into caring environments. In Chart G3 it is clear that just 13% said that they would consider placing elderly relatives in a *private* care home, 19% said that they would consider placing elderly relatives in a *state run* care home, and 16% said that they would consider placing elderly relatives in an ashram, hospice or other similar place.

In the FGDs it was quite forcefully projected that for many participants being placed in any form of residential care home would be damaging to their dignity. It seems that care homes are viewed in a very negative light by all participants in the study and that, as an option for caring for elders they are very far down the list of preferred methods. (Table g25)

However, having noted the high number of respondents who said that it was their responsibility to look after the elderly and that they would not consider putting them into care facilities 83% of respondents aged 40 to 59 years old stated that they did not have any person aged over 60 years of age living with them in their household, (*Table g26*)



This also reflects the views of just those who had stated that they would not consider a care facility for the elderly. Targeting just this group of respondents within the younger age group, that is only those aged 40 to 59 years old who gave a negative response to all three questions on whether they would consider putting their parents in care, some 82% did not have any person aged over 60 years living in their household. (*Table g27*)

This may indicate several things, among which we may include the inference that what one says should be done and what one does in reality do not necessarily amount to the same thing.

However, it should be noted that 20% of this group of respondents did say that they care for an elderly person who lives elsewhere. Of this particular group of respondents, 69% looked after one elderly person who lived elsewhere while the remaining 31% looked after two or more. (*Table g28, Table g29*)

But before going too deeply into the results for this particular group it might be better to look at how many respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old in general look after elderly persons.

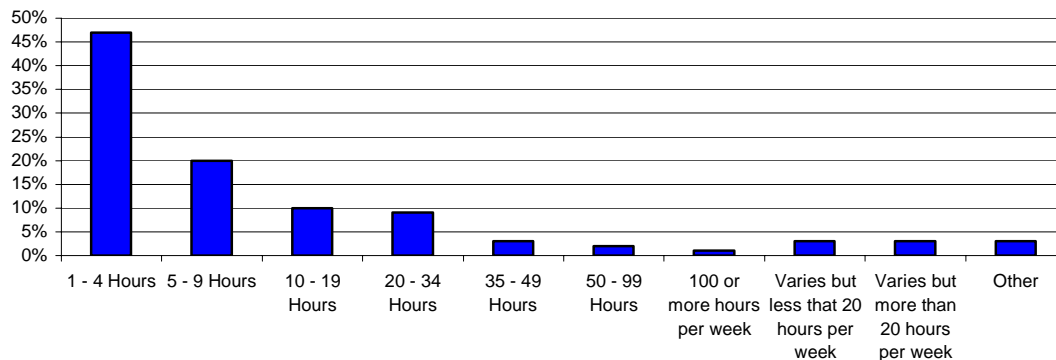
19% of respondents of the younger age group say that they help to look after elderly persons living elsewhere. (*Table g31*)

Of those respondents of this age group who have older persons living in the household with them, 63% stated that in some way they help to look after the elderly persons living with them. Of this group of respondents, 26% spend between 10 and 19 hours per week giving care to elderly persons living in the same household, while a further 20% spend between 20 & 34 hours. If we include the 11% of respondents that stated that they offered care for variable periods but always more than 20 hours per week we see that of those respondents offering care to elderly persons living in the same household, 31% spend more than 20 hours offering this care. Some 14% of respondents in this situation state they gave care for between 39 and 99 hours per week. (Table g32, Table g33)

Of those respondents aged between 40 and 59 years old who provided some care for elderly persons living elsewhere, 47% said that the number of hours they spent each week providing this care was between 1 and 4 hours, while a further 20% stated that it was between 5 and 9 hours per week.

This means that greater than two thirds of carers offering care to elderly persons outside the household, 67%, offer that care for less than 10 hours per week. For those respondents who cared for elderly persons living in the same household the corresponding percentage was 20%. (Table g34,)

**Chart G4 How Long Per Week Offer Care of Elderly Outside Of Household**



Of those respondents caring for elderly persons in the same household some 75% said that they would be able to take a break for a couple of days while somebody else took over the care provision. For those respondents who care for elderly persons living elsewhere the percentage that could take a break for a couple of days was as high as 90%. (Table g35, Table g36)

Tables  
**Section G**  
**The Role of the Elderly**

**Table g1**

		No.	%
People Today Don't Place Enough Value On The Part Grandparents Play in Family Life	Agree	735	80%
	Disagree	124	14%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	57	6%
Group Total		916	100%

**Table g2**

		Religion							
		Hindu		Christian		Muslim		None Stated	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
People Today Don't Place Enough Value On The Part Grandparents Play in Family Life (By Religion)	Agree	402	85%	196	71%	137	84%	0	0%
	Disagree	50	11%	51	18%	22	13%	1	100%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	23	5%	29	11%	5	3%	0	0%
Group Total		475	100%	276	100%	164	100%	1	100%

**Table g3**

		No.	%
Grandparents Have Little To Teach Grandchildren Today	Agree	432	48%
	Disagree	421	46%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	56	6%
Group Total		909	100%

**Table g4**

		No.	%
Grandparents Have Little To Teach Grandchildren Today (Selected Respondents)	Agree	390	53%
	Disagree	294	40%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	47	6%
Group Total		731	100%

**Table g5**

		Religion					
		Hindu		Christian		Muslim	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Grandparents Have Little To Teach Grandchildren Today (By Religion)	Agree	220	55%	96	49%	74	54%
	Disagree	155	39%	89	45%	50	37%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	24	6%	11	6%	12	9%
Group Total		399	100%	196	100%	136	100%

**Table g6**

		No.	%
Grandparents Should Be Closely Involved In Deciding How Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up (Selected Respondents)	Agree	614	84%
	Disagree	78	11%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	41	6%
Group Total		733	100%

**Table g7**

		No.	%
Grandparents Should Be Closely Involved In Deciding How Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up	Agree	745	82%
	Disagree	107	12%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	59	6%
Group Total		911	100%

**Table g8**

		No.	%
Many People Today Do Not Appreciate The Help That Grandparents Give	Agree	643	71%
	Disagree	182	20%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	83	9%
Group Total		908	100%

**Table g9**

		No.	%
Grandparents Tend To Interfere Too Much With The Way Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up	Agree	455	50%
	Disagree	313	35%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	139	15%
Group Total		907	100%

**Table g10**

		No.	%
Grandparents Tend To Interfere Too Much With The Way Their Grandchildren Are Brought Up (Selected Respondents)	Agree	387	53%
	Disagree	233	32%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	108	15%
Group Total		728	100%

**Table g11**

		No.	%
With So Many Working Mothers, Families Need Grandparents To Help More and More	Agree	827	91%
	Disagree	47	5%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	39	4%
Group Total		913	100%

**Table g12**

		No.	%
Efforts Should Be Made To Attract The Elderly Back Into The Workforce	Agree	384	42%
	Disagree	425	46%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	105	11%
Group Total		914	100%



**Table g13**

		No.	%
Efforts Should Be Made To Attract The Elderly Back Into The Workforce (Selected Respondents)	Agree	350	42%
	Disagree	380	46%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	95	12%
Group Total		825	100%

**Table g14**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face Economic Hardship	Agree	854	93%
	Disagree	25	3%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	35	4%
Group Total		914	100%

**Table g15**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face Personal Mobility Difficulties	Agree	790	87%
	Disagree	29	3%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	89	10%
Group Total		908	100%

**Table g16**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face Transport Difficulties	Agree	779	86%
	Disagree	74	8%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	53	6%
Group Total		906	100%

**Table g17**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face Loneliness	Agree	845	93%
	Disagree	37	4%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	27	3%
Group Total		909	100%

**Table g18**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face A Lack Of Leisure Options	Agree	711	79%
	Disagree	108	12%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	86	10%
Group Total		905	100%

**Table g19**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face A Lack Of Physical Security	Agree	843	93%
	Disagree	41	5%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	22	2%
Group Total		906	100%

**Table g20**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face A Loss Of The Sense Of Belonging To The Family	Agree	738	82%
	Disagree	88	10%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	74	8%
Group Total		900	100%

**Table g21**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face A Loss Of A Role To Play Within The Family	Agree	691	76%
	Disagree	143	16%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	75	8%
Group Total		909	100%

**Table g22**

		No.	%
Older People Living On Their Own Face A Loss Of Importance To Society	Agree	674	74%
	Disagree	155	17%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	80	9%
Group Total		909	100%

**Table g23**

		No.	%
Would Expect Financial Contribution Towards Care Of Parent or Grandparents	Yes	439	48%
	No	474	52%
Group Total		913	100%

**Table g24**

		No.	%
Would Expect Elderly To Contribute	Yes	135	31%
	No	301	69%
Group Total		436	100%
Would Expect The State To Contribute	Yes	414	95%
	No	20	5%
Group Total		434	100%
Would Expect Family Members To Contribute	Yes	220	51%
	No	214	49%
Group Total		434	100%

**Table g25**

		No.	%
Would Consider Placing Elderly Relatives In A Private Care Home	Yes	118	13%
	No	795	87%
Group Total		913	100%
Would Consider Placing Elderly Relatives In A State Run Care Home	Yes	174	19%
	No	738	81%
Group Total		912	100%
Would Consider Placing Elderly Relatives In An Ashram, Hospice Or Other Similar Place	Yes	146	16%
	No	761	84%
Group Total		907	100%

**Table g26**

		No.	%
Anyone Over 60 Years Old Living With Respondent	Yes	157	17%
	No	748	83%
Group Total		905	100%

**Table g27**

		No.	%
Anyone Over 60 Years Old Living With Respondent (Selected Respondents)	Yes	129	18%
	No	583	82%
Group Total		712	100%

**Table g28**

		No.	%
Do You Help To Look After Elderly Persons Living Elsewhere	Yes	142	20%
	No	572	80%
Group Total		714	100%

**Table g29**

		No.	%
If You Help To Look After Elderly Persons Living Elsewhere, How Many	One	94	69%
	Two or more	42	31%
Group Total		136	100%

**Table g30**

		No.	%
Anyone Over 60 Years Old Living With Respondent	Yes	157	17%
	No	748	83%
Group Total		905	100%

**Table g31**

		No.	%
Do You Help To Look After Elderly Persons Living Elsewhere	Yes	176	19%
	No	735	81%
Group Total		911	100%

**Table g32**

		No.	%
Do You Help To Look After Elderly Persons Living With You (Selected Respondents)	Yes	98	63%
	No	57	37%
Group Total		155	100%

**Table g33**

		No.	%
How Long Do You Spend Each Week Looking After Or Helping Elderly People (in same household)	1 - 4 Hours	7	8%
	5 - 9 Hours	11	12%
	10 - 19 Hours	24	26%
	20 - 34 Hours	19	20%
	35 - 49 Hours	6	6%
	50 - 99 Hours	7	8%
	100 or more hours per week	6	6%
	Varies but less than 20 hours per week	2	2%
	Varies but more than 20 hours per week	10	11%
	Other	1	1%
Group Total		93	100%

**Table g34**

		No.	%
How Long Do You Spend Each Week Looking After Or Helping Elderly People (outside of household)	1 - 4 Hours	81	47%
	5 - 9 Hours	35	20%
	10 - 19 Hours	18	10%
	20 - 34 Hours	15	9%
	35 - 49 Hours	5	3%
	50 - 99 Hours	3	2%
	100 or more hours per week	1	1%
	Varies but less than 20 hours per week	5	3%
	Varies but more than 20 hours per week	5	3%
	Other	5	3%
Group Total		173	100%

**Table g35**

		No.	%
If You Wanted A Break From Caring For A Couple Of Days Would Someone Else Have To Do The Caring	Yes	65	75%
	No	22	25%
Group Total		87	100%

**Table g36**

		No.	%
If You Wanted A Break From Caring For A Couple Of Days Would Someone Else Have To Do The Caring	Yes	149	90%
	No	17	10%
Group Total		166	100%

## **Section H**

### **The Elderly**

In this section the attention turns particularly to those respondents who were aged 60 years old or above. At the outset, the point is made that a deep analysis of the following issues by key variables such as ethnicity, educational background, marital status, personal income background, etc has not revealed any significant differences. In some cases, differential experiences of ageing with respect to gender have been noted and these have been highlighted in the analysis.

To refresh our memories we saw in the section on Demographics that, of the 1, 200 individuals sampled, 24%, some 282 respondents, were aged 60 years old or above.

Firstly, we can look afresh at the personal monthly income distribution of this age group, this time by the sex of the respondent. Some 59% of those respondents aged 60 years old or above had a monthly income of less than Rs 3, 000, including those who had no personal income. At the other end of the scale the respondents from this age group were marginally represented in the upper income categories with just 5% having a monthly income Rs 10, 001 or above. The table also shows very clearly the income gap between men and women in this age group. Some 54% of Women of this age category had an income of Rs 2, 000 or less compared to 14% of Men. However, it should be noted that this would include those women who regarded themselves as housewives, regardless of whether or not they had previously worked. Women are over-represented in the inferior income categories and, consequently, under-represented in the higher levels. About 80% of women aged 60 years old or above had a monthly income of Rs 3, 000 or less compared to 36% of men.

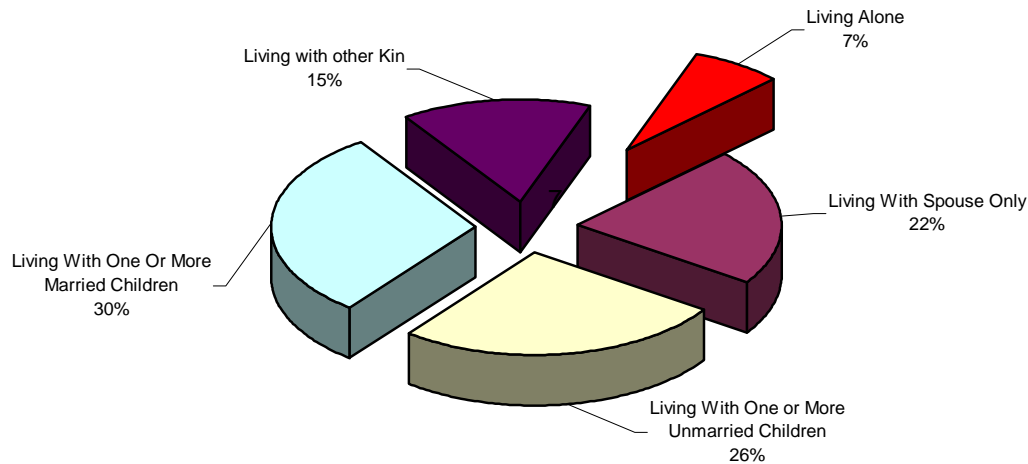
*(Table h1)*

#### **Living arrangements of the Elderly**

Chart H1 shows the living arrangements of the respondents aged 60 years old and above. A sizeable majority of elderly respondents, some 56%, lived with one or more children, either married and/or unmarried, 22% lived with their spouse only and 15% with other kin.

Just 7 % of those respondents aged 60 years old or above stated that they lived alone. Of those living alone, 65% were Female, although this is to be expected, as women will often form the majority in variables associated with older members of the population due to their superior longevity. 53% of those aged over 60 years old living alone were aged 60-65 years old. *(Table h2, Table h3)*

**Chart H1**  
**Living Arrangements of Those Aged 60 Years Old or Above**



In contradiction to some of the remarks made in the Focus Group Discussions the overwhelming majority of respondents aged 60 years old and above, 90 %, including those who live alone despite having children, considered their relationship with their children to be “close”, with 67% considering it “very close”. This is not to say that there was no evidence of disharmony but that just a minor percentage of this group of respondents offered up complaints about the status of any relationship with their children. When we consider only those over 60 years old who lived alone the percentage of those who felt that their relationship with their children was “close” is 80%, some 55% considering it “very close”.

*(Table h4, Table h5)*

### **Attitudes of the Elderly Towards Becoming Old**

One set of questions included in the study focused on meanings given by the respondents aged 60 years old and above towards the experience of old age.

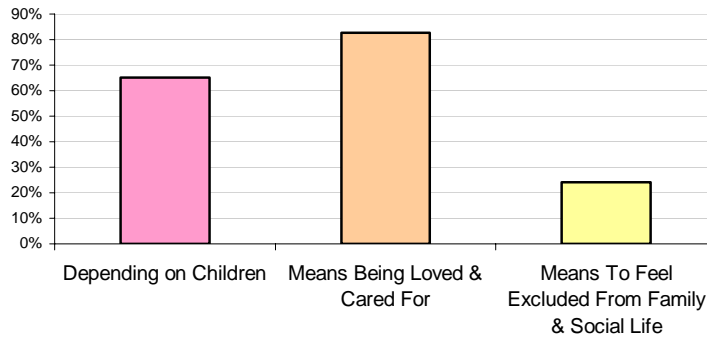
Some 65% of respondents, agreed that, in general, becoming old means “depending on children”. Some 83% of older respondents agreed that becoming old means “being loved and cared for even more”, and, correspondingly, just 24% of older respondents agreed with the premise that, in general, becoming old means to “feel excluded from family and social life”.

However, this is a significant figure as it means that close to one quarter of respondents aged 60 years old or over feel that becoming old carries with it exclusion from family and social life.



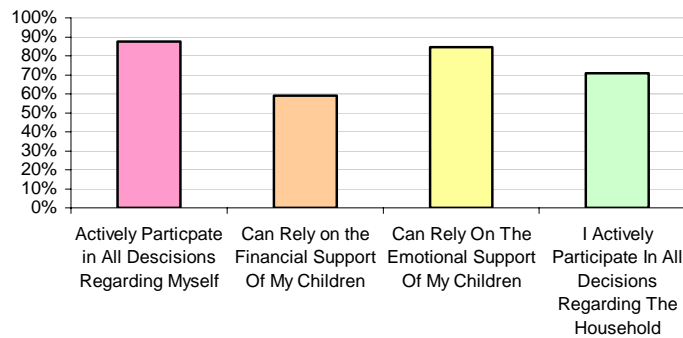
Here we should remind ourselves of the results of the previous section where respondents from the younger age group showed confusing attitudes towards the role of elders, particularly grandparents. Hidden in that confusion could be the seeds of the feelings of exclusion expressed by this group of older respondents.

**Chart H2 What Being Old Means**



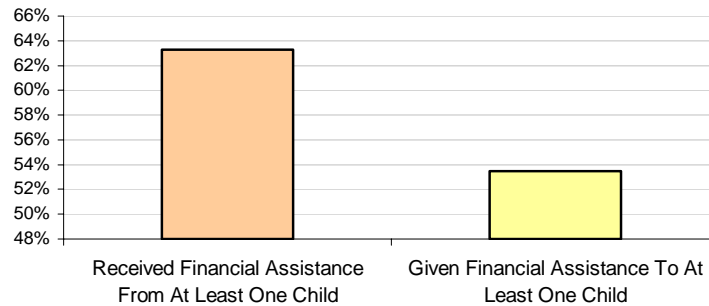
While 88% stated that they “actively participate in all decisions regarding themselves” we note that fewer, 71%, felt that they actively participated in “all decisions regarding the household”. This may indicate that they may not feel fully integrated *in the family* as in decision making fewer respondents felt fully involved.

**Chart H3 Decisions & Support**



It is interesting to note that a greater percentage of respondents aged 60 years old or over, 85 %, felt that they could rely on the *emotional* support of their children than the 59% of this age group who felt that they could rely on the *financial* support of their children. (Table h6)

**Chart H4 Received or Given Financial Assistance  
(previous 6 Months)**



Of the 25% who agreed that becoming old leads to exclusion from family and social life, we see that they were predominantly female, at 66%, in the 60-65 age group, 60%, and with little or no education, 78%. Over half of this group was also widowed, 53%, and in the lower personal income brackets. (*Table h7*)

The results to a set of questions which attempted to explore how far there was any exchange of assistance in cash or kind, mainly food, between the elderly and their children or other family members over the last 6 months shows that there is more of a likelihood that this exchange occurs between parents and their children rather than between elders and other family members. (*Table h8*)

Over one quarter of respondents aged 60 years old or over, 26%, stated that they had often received financial assistance from at least one child over the previous six months, while 20% said that they had occasionally done so while about 18% had rarely received such assistance. Overall, about two thirds of respondents from the older age group had *ever* received at least some financial support from at least one child in the previous six months. Women respondents were more likely to have received financial assistance than men.

Almost twice as many older respondents often received food from non co-resident children than those who gave food to their non co-resident children. A similar point can be made for financial assistance. Over the past 6 months, 25% had often received financial support from at least one child while only 12% had given such assistance. (*Table h8*)

In general the figures obtained provide a picture of elders who are still very much self-reliant with a minority that either frequently or always need help.

### **Cross-generational social interaction**

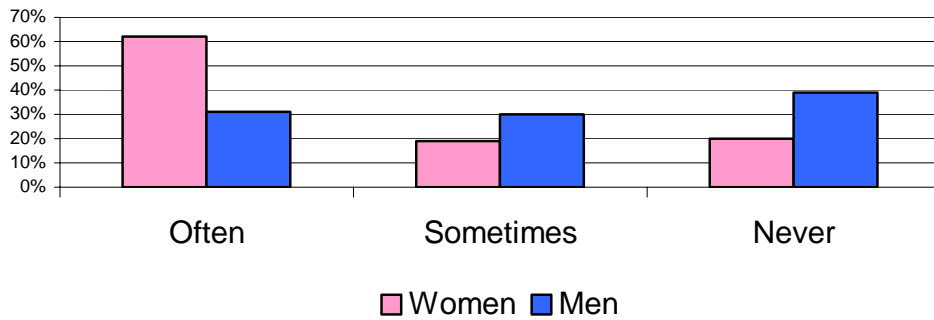
Those respondents aged 60 years old or over who had co-resident children were also asked to answer how regularly cross-generational social interaction took place between themselves and their children. Of this group 74% stated that they had *often* had meals together with their co-resident children with a further 21% *sometimes* having meals together. Only a small percentage, 5%, *never* had meals together.

Some 90% said that they participate in family outings with co-resident children, 49% doing so often. A large majority, 96%, said that they often discussed family events, 59% doing so often and 79% stated that they often conduct casual conversation, 19% doing so sometimes.

One generally held assumption, that the responsibility for childcare nowadays often resides with grandparents, is found not to be necessarily the case. This opinion was also mentioned in the FGDs. Over half of respondents aged over 60 years old with co-resident children, 53%, look after grandchildren, including 36% who do so often and 17% who do so occasionally. Some 44.5% of this group of respondents stated that they never take this responsibility. (*Table h9*)

Some 72% of respondents with co-resident children said that they assist in housework, 49% doing so often. Chart H5 shows that, by gender it can be found that women respondents were more likely to assist in housework than men. (*Table h10*)

**Chart H5 Participation in Housework  
(Over 60s living with co-resident children) by Sex**



### **Perceived Dependency On Others**

Over three quarters of respondents aged 60 years old or over, 77%, stated that they never needed help in either personal care or with physical activities. However, when it came to assistance with paperwork or financial matters, 62% of this group of respondents said that they needed some form of help, 23% stating that they always needed it. Some 52.5% of respondents 60 years old or above stated that they do need other practical help, 22.5% saying that it was *always* necessary and 14% that it was *frequently* necessary. As to assistance with taking medicines, 34% of older respondents said that they needed some assistance with this activity. It is perhaps safe to assume that it is for these types of activities that older people would feel the need to call on family members. Accordingly, they would find it easier to achieve that assistance were they to be living in the same family home or household.

*(Table h11)*

We now turn to activities outside of the home, of which one of the most important is shopping. Shopping, as an activity, has two major functions; one, obviously, is to purchase the items necessary for day to day living, while another, less obvious function, is to act as a form of leisure, or, more importantly, as a social activity, one which, for some people, may be one of the easiest and most essential ways of maintaining social contact.

Some 49% of those respondents aged 60 years old or over said that they sometimes needed help with shopping, 20% stating that they always did. As to other outdoor leisure activities, 47% of respondents from this age group stated that they sometimes needed help, 19% of them saying that it was always necessary.

In Mauritius gardening may not be such an issue as it may be in other countries, but still 30% of respondents in the older age group stated that they needed assistance with it. Maintaining the house in which one lives is also a crucial activity and 37% of older respondents said that they needed help with it, including 14% who stated that they always needed help with this particular activity.

Many of the above activities might necessitate some degree of traveling and we see that 44% of respondents aged 60 years old or over stated that they needed help with traveling at least some of the time, including 19% who said that they always needed help with this. *(Table h12)*

## **Difficulties faced by the elderly**

Given the predominance of the elderly in the lower personal income brackets, it perhaps comes as no surprise to see that slightly more than half, 51% stated that not having enough money to live on was a big problem for them.

Loneliness is often promoted as an aspect of old age that is to be expected. However, we see that a large majority of the elderly, 84%, did not consider loneliness to be a serious problem including nearly half of the respondents, 48%, who stated that it was not a problem at all for them. Some 15% saw it as a big problem

It can also be said that the elderly felt secure as only 16% stated that personal security was a serious problem for them. Having previously investigated the assistance that some older respondents felt they needed with various activities, we see that less than half of the older age group, 43%, felt that depending on other people is not a problem at all. For 25% of this age group it was regarded as a big problem. However, the main worry seemed to be about deteriorating health and we see that half of the respondents of this age group felt that health was a big problem and that just 17% feel that it was not a problem at all.

*(Table h13)*

Of those who said that not having enough money to live on was a big problem, one third, 33%, stated that they had *ever* tried to get help with this problem. Of those respondents who felt that having health problems was a major concern some 71% said that they had at some point tried to get help for this, while exactly half of those who felt that being dependant on others was a big problem had *ever* sought help for this dependence.

*(Table h14, Table h15, Table h16)*

## **Shopping**

We previously noted the importance of shopping as a social activity and in delving deeper we see that almost half of the respondents aged 60 years old or over, 49%, had some difficulty in getting out to go shopping. Similarly, 48% of older respondents said that they had difficulty in going out on social visits, 20% saying that they were unable to do so at all. *(Table h17, Table h18)*

Some 75% of respondents aged 60 years old or above said that they do not consider it a problem to know how to get the services needed while one quarter of them, 25%, found it a major problem. When asked if they knew of any organization in the community they could turn to for help only 18% said that they did know of an organisation.

*(Table h19, Table h20, Table h21)*

## **Elderly and Employment**

Some 6% of those respondents aged 60 years old or above stated that they would like a full time job while a further 8% would like a part time job. In fact, 5% said that they already had a full time job and 3% said that they currently worked part time. 46% of the older group of respondents felt that they were not able to work. (*Table h21*)

## **Worries of the Elderly**

Physical health appears to be the most important cause of worry for the elderly with 86% of respondents aged 60 years old or above expressing some degree of worry about their physical health, including 59% who were *very worried*. As to their mental health, 49% expressed some concern, with 21% *very worried*. Having seen the very low regard respondents had shown for care homes, 45% of this age group expressed some concern that they may be confined to an institution at some point in their old age. Some 29% were *very worried* indicating that for many this eventuality was a real fear. We also once again see the concerns expressed about the dependency that old people might have on other people, with 66% of the older age group being worried about this, and 38% being *very worried*. Being a victim of crime is not the top of the worry list for respondents with 51% not worried at all about this. (*Table h22*)

## **Level of satisfaction of elders with their lives**

Of the group of respondents aged 60 years old or over, 71% were satisfied with their lives while 17% stated that they were unsatisfied. (*Table h23*)

This relatively high level of satisfaction is hard to interpret given that we have previously seen that, materially, older persons are not well off, face heavy demands and expectations on their services for little perceived reward, see a lack of elderly-friendly policies and feel that financial and welfare services are lacking.

The satisfaction expressed may well be in emotional terms in that they feel that their relationship with their children is positive and that, for many, they feel fully integrated within their family.

### **Elderly-friendly Policies**

On potential policy initiatives that directly concern the welfare of elders, there is a very high rate of agreement with the need to implement all of the suggested policies. Some of the most important initiatives agreed with are that there “needs to be the development of an effective public education programme on ageing”, 94%, and that “people who construct additional rooms to accommodate elderly relatives should be given tax concessions”, 92%. In addition, 81% of older respondents agreed “there needs to be the development of elderly friendly housing”. On the social aspect, 97% of older respondents agreed that a “strong network of eldercare services can enable older persons to live with their families”, while only 1 respondent of the older age group failed to agree with the statement that the government needs to “develop a broad base of support services for carers”. (*Table h24*)



## Table Section H The Elderly

**Table h1**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No	%
		No	%	No	%		
Personal Monthly Income Category of Respondent	No Personal Income	1	.8%	2	1.3%	3	1.1%
	Less than Rs2, 000	18	13.5%	79	53.0%	97	34.4%
	Rs2, 001 - Rs3, 000	29	21.8%	38	25.5%	67	23.8%
	Rs3, 001 - Rs4, 000	14	10.5%	18	12.1%	32	11.3%
	Rs4, 001 - Rs5, 000	19	14.3%	5	3.4%	24	8.5%
	Rs5, 001 - Rs10, 000	40	30.1%	5	3.4%	45	16.0%
	Rs10, 001 - Rs15, 000	7	5.3%	1	.7%	8	2.8%
	Rs15, 001 - Rs20, 000	3	2.3%	1	.7%	4	1.4%
	Rs20, 001 - Rs25, 000	1	.8%			1	.4%
Rs25, 001 - Rs30, 000	1	.8%			1	.4%	
Group Total		133	100.0%	149	100.0%	282	100.0%

**Table h2**

		No.	%
Current Living Arrangements Of Respondent	Living Alone	20	7%
	Living With Spouse Only	61	22%
	Living With One or More Unmarried Children	74	26%
	Living With One Or More Married Children	84	30%
	Other	42	15%
Group Total		281	100%

**Table h3**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No	%
		No	%	No	%		
Elders Living Alone by Age & Sex	60-65	2	50.0%	9	56.3%	11	55.0%
	66-70	0	0.0%	1	6.3%	1	5.0%
	71-75	1	25.0%	2	12.5%	3	15.0%
	76-80	1	25.0%	4	25.0%	5	25.0%
Group Total		4	100.0%	16	100.0%	20	100.0%

**Table h4**

		No.	%
How Close A Relationship Would You Say You Have With Your Children	Very Close	190	67.4%
	Close	63	22.3%
	Not Too Close	8	2.8%
	Not Close At All	1	.4%
	Not Applicable (No Children)	12	4.3%
	Total	274	97.2%
	No Response	8	2.8%
Total		282	100.0%

**Table h5**

		No.	%
How Close A Relationship Would You Say You Have With Your Children (Respondents Living Alone)	Very Close	11	55.0%
	Close	5	25.0%
	Not Close At All	1	5.0%
	Not Applicable (No Children)	2	10.0%
	Total	19	95.0%
	No Response	1	5.0%
Total		20	100.0%

**Table h6**

		No	%
In General, Becoming Old Means Depending On Children	Agree	182	65.2%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	5.7%
	Disagree	78	28.0%
	Not Applicable	3	1.1%
Group Total		279	100.0%
In General, Becoming Old Means Being Loved And Cared After Even More	Agree	232	82.6%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	30	10.7%
	Disagree	19	6.8%
Group Total		281	100.0%
In General, Becoming Old Means To Feel Excluded From Family And Social Life	Agree	68	24.2%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	30	10.7%
	Disagree	180	64.1%
	Not Applicable	3	1.1%
Group Total		281	100.0%
I Actively Participate In All Decisions Regarding The Household	Agree	198	70.7%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	31	11.1%
	Disagree	45	16.1%
	Not Applicable	6	2.1%
Group Total		280	100.0%
I Actively Participate In All Decisions Regarding Myself	Agree	244	87.5%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	16	5.7%
	Disagree	19	6.8%
Group Total		279	100.0%
I Can Rely On The Financial Support Of My Children	Agree	166	59.1%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	27	9.6%
	Disagree	75	26.7%
	Not Applicable	13	4.6%
Group Total		281	100.0%
I Can Rely On The Emotional Support Of My Children	Agree	237	84.6%
	Neither Agree nor Disagree	14	5.0%
	Disagree	17	6.1%
	Not Applicable	12	4.3%
Group Total		280	100.0%

**Table h7**

		In General, Becoming Old Means To Feel Excluded From Family And Social Life	
		Agree	
		No	%
Sex of Respondent	Male	23	33.8%
	Female	45	66.2%
Group Total		68	100.0%
Age category	60-65	41	60.3%
	66-70	12	17.6%
	71-75	9	13.2%
	76-80	6	8.8%
Group Total		68	100.0%
Personal Monthly Income Category of Respondent	Less than Rs2, 000	22	32.4%
	Rs2, 001 - Rs3, 000	17	25.0%
	Rs3, 001 - Rs4, 000	14	20.6%
	Rs4, 001 - Rs5, 000	3	4.4%
	Rs5, 001 - Rs10, 000	12	17.6%
Group Total		68	100.0%
Marital Status	Single	4	5.9%
	Married	25	36.8%
	Divorced or Separated	3	4.4%
	Widowed	36	52.9%
Group Total		68	100.0%
Education	No Formal Education	30	44.1%
	Incomplete Primary Education	23	33.8%
	Passed CPE / Std.VI	9	13.2%
	SC / Equivalent	5	7.4%
	A Level / Equivalent	1	1.5%
Group Total		68	100.0%

**Table h8**

		No	%
Over The Past 6 Months How Regularly Have You Received Any Financial Assistance From At Least One Child	Often	72	25.6%
	Occasionally	56	19.9%
	Rarely	50	17.8%
	Never	88	31.3%
	Not Applicable	15	5.3%
Group Total		281	100.0%
Over The Past 6 Months How Regularly Have You Given Any Financial Assistance To At Least One Child	Often	35	12.4%
	Occasionally	55	19.5%
	Rarely	61	21.6%
	Never	117	41.5%
	Not Applicable	14	5.0%
Group Total		282	100.0%
Over The Past 6 Months Have You Received Money From Any Other Family Members	Often	13	4.6%
	Occasionally	29	10.4%
	Rarely	41	14.6%
	Never	191	68.2%
	Not Applicable	6	2.1%
Group Total		280	100.0%
Over The Past 6 Months Have You Given Money To Any Other Family Members	Often	6	2.1%
	Occasionally	30	10.6%
	Rarely	33	11.7%
	Never	206	73.0%
	Not Applicable	7	2.5%
Group Total		282	100.0%
Over The Past 6 Months Have You Received Any Food From Non Co-Resident Children	Often	61	21.7%
	Occasionally	52	18.5%
	Rarely	45	16.0%
	Never	98	34.9%
	Not Applicable	25	8.9%
Group Total		281	100.0%
Over The Past 6 Months Have You Given Any Food To Non Co-Resident Children	Often	29	10.4%
	Occasionally	50	17.9%
	Rarely	42	15.0%
	Never	134	47.9%
	Not Applicable	25	8.9%
Group Total		280	100.0%

**Table h9**

		No	%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Have Meals Together	Often	117	73.6%
	Sometimes	34	21.4%
	Never	8	5.0%
Group Total		159	100.0%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Participate In Family Outings	Often	77	48.7%
	Sometimes	65	41.1%
	Never	16	10.1%
Group Total		158	100.0%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Discuss Family Events	Often	93	58.5%
	Sometimes	60	37.7%
	Never	6	3.8%
Group Total		159	100.0%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Conduct Casual Conversation	Often	124	78.5%
	Sometimes	30	19.0%
	Never	4	2.5%
Group Total		158	100.0%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Look After Grand Children	Often	53	36.3%
	Sometimes	25	17.1%
	Never	65	44.5%
	Not Applicable	3	2.1%
Group Total		146	100.0%
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Assist In Housework	Often	78	48.8%
	Sometimes	37	23.1%
	Never	45	28.1%
Group Total		160	100.0%

**Table h10**

		Sex of Respondent				Group Total	
		Male		Female		No.	%
		No.	%	No.	%		
If You Have Co-Resident Children How Often Do You Assist In Housework (by Sex)	Often	21	31%	56	62%	77	49%
	Sometimes	20	30%	17	19%	37	23%
	Never	26	39%	18	20%	44	28%
Group Total		67	100%	91	100%	158	100%

**Table h11**

		No	%
Do You Need Help In Personal Care	Never Need Help	216	76.6%
	Sometimes Need Help	29	10.3%
	Frequently Need Help	14	5.0%
	Always Need Help	23	8.2%
Group Total		282	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Physical Activities	Never Need Help	214	77.0%
	Sometimes Need Help	32	11.5%
	Frequently Need Help	16	5.8%
	Always Need Help	16	5.8%
Group Total		278	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Paperwork Or Financial Matters	Never Need Help	101	36.3%
	Sometimes Need Help	62	22.3%
	Frequently Need Help	46	16.5%
	Always Need Help	64	23.0%
	Don't Know	5	1.8%
Group Total		278	100.0%
Do You Need Other Practical Help	Never Need Help	129	46.1%
	Sometimes Need Help	45	16.1%
	Frequently Need Help	39	13.9%
	Always Need Help	63	22.5%
	Don't Know	4	1.4%
Group Total		280	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Taking Medicines	Never Need Help	185	66.3%
	Sometimes Need Help	34	12.2%
	Frequently Need Help	21	7.5%
	Always Need Help	39	14.0%
Group Total		279	100.0%

**Table h12**

		No	%
Do You Need Help With Shopping	Never Need Help	139	49.8%
	Sometimes Need Help	51	18.3%
	Frequently Need Help	30	10.8%
	Always Need Help	55	19.7%
	Don't Know	4	1.4%
Group Total		279	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Gardening	Never Need Help	149	58.2%
	Sometimes Need Help	25	9.8%
	Frequently Need Help	21	8.2%
	Always Need Help	31	12.1%
	Don't Know	30	11.7%
Group Total		256	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Household Repairs	Never Need Help	134	51.1%
	Sometimes Need Help	35	13.4%
	Frequently Need Help	27	10.3%
	Always Need Help	36	13.7%
	Don't Know	30	11.5%
Group Total		262	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Outdoor Leisure Activities	Never Need Help	140	50.7%
	Sometimes Need Help	56	20.3%
	Frequently Need Help	22	8.0%
	Always Need Help	52	18.8%
	Don't Know	6	2.2%
Group Total		276	100.0%
Do You Need Help With Traveling	Never Need Help	141	50.9%
	Sometimes Need Help	49	17.7%
	Frequently Need Help	20	7.2%
	Always Need Help	53	19.1%
	Don't Know	14	5.1%
Group Total		277	100.0%



**Table h13**

		No	%
Is Not Having Enough Money To Live On A Serious Problem For You	Yes, Its A Big Problem	145	51.4%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	87	30.9%
	Its Not A Problem At All	48	17.0%
	Don't Know	2	.7%
Group Total		282	100.0%
Is Loneliness Or Not Having Enough Friends A Serious Problem For You	Yes, Its A Big Problem	42	14.9%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	102	36.3%
	Its Not A Problem At All	136	48.4%
	Don't Know	1	.4%
Group Total		281	100.0%
Do You Feel You Feel You Have Health Problems	Yes, Its A Big Problem	139	49.5%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	94	33.5%
	Its Not A Problem At All	47	16.7%
	Don't Know	1	.4%
Group Total		281	100.0%
Do You Feel That You Have To Depend Too Much On Other People	Yes, Its A Big Problem	70	24.9%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	86	30.6%
	Its Not A Problem At All	120	42.7%
	Don't Know	5	1.8%
Group Total		281	100.0%
Is Having To Take Care Of A Sick Spouse Or Relative A Serious Problem For You	Yes, Its A Big Problem	39	14.3%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	61	22.3%
	Its Not A Problem At All	145	53.1%
	Don't Know	28	10.3%
Group Total		273	100.0%
Is Personal Security A Serious Problem For You	Yes, Its A Big Problem	45	16.1%
	No, Its Not A Big Problem	110	39.3%
	Its Not A Problem At All	119	42.5%
	Don't Know	6	2.1%
Group Total		280	100.0%

**Table h14**

		No.	%
Have You Ever Tried To Get Help With Not Having Enough Money To Live On	Yes	48	33.3%
	No	96	66.7%
Group Total		144	100.0%

**Table h15**

		No.	%
Have You Ever Tried To Get Help With Having Medical Problems	Yes	97	70.8%
	No	40	29.2%
Group Total		137	100.0%

**Table h16**

		No.	%
Have You Ever Tried To Get Help With Having To Depend Too Much On Other People	Yes	35	50.0%
	No	35	50.0%
Group Total		70	100.0%

**Table h17**

		No.	%
Do You Get Out Of The House To Go Shopping As Often As You Would Like To	Yes, I Get Out Whenever I Want To	142	50.4%
	No, Not Very Often	76	27.0%
	No, I Can't Go Shopping At All	61	21.6%
	Don't Know	3	1.1%
Group Total		282	100.0%

**Table h18**

		No.	%
Do You Get Out Of The House To Go On Visits As Often As You Would Like To	Yes, I Get Out Whenever I Want To	142	51.6%
	No, Not Very Often	78	28.4%
	No, I Can't Get Out At All	54	19.6%
	Don't Know	1	.4%
Group Total		275	100.0%

**Table h19**

		No	%
Is It A Problem for You To Know How To Get The Services You Need	It Is A Major Problem	71	25.4%
	It Is Not A Major Problem	129	46.2%
	It Is Not A Problem At All	79	28.3%
Group Total		279	100.0%

**Table h20**

		No.	%
Do You Know Of Any Organization In Your Community Which You Could Turn To For Help If You Needed It	Yes	49	17.6%
	No	150	53.8%
	Don't Know	80	28.7%
Group Total		279	100.0%

**Table h21**

		No.	%
Do You Know Of Any Organization In Your Community Which You Could Turn To For Help If You Needed It	Yes	6	8.5%
	No	42	59.2%
	Don't Know	23	32.4%
Group Total		71	100.0%

**Table h22**

		No.	%
Would You Like To Have A Paying Job Now, Either Full Time Or Part Time	Yes, Would Like A Full Time Job	17	6.1%
	Yes Would Like A Part Time Job	23	8.2%
	No Would Not Like A Job	85	30.5%
	I Am Not Able To Work	129	46.2%
	Not Sure	4	1.4%
	I Already Have A Full Time Paying Job	13	4.7%
	I Already Have A Part Time Paying Job	8	2.9%
Group Total		279	100.0%

**Table h23**

		No	%
How Worried Are You Of Having To Depend On Other People	Very Worried	106	38.0%
	Not Too Worried	78	28.0%
	Not Worried At All	89	31.9%
	Don't Know	6	2.2%
Group Total		279	100.0%
How Worried Are You Of Being Confined To An Institution	Very Worried	80	28.7%
	Not Too Worried	46	16.5%
	Not Worried At All	141	50.5%
	Don't Know	12	4.3%
Group Total		279	100.0%
How Worried Are You Of Being Lonely An Without Friends	Very Worried	54	19.4%
	Not Too Worried	78	28.1%
	Not Worried At All	143	51.4%
	Don't Know	3	1.1%
Group Total		278	100.0%
How Worried Are You Of Being A Of Victim Of Crime	Very Worried	53	19.1%
	Not Too Worried	83	29.9%
	Not Worried At All	141	50.7%
	Don't Know	1	.4%
Group Total		278	100.0%
How Worried Are You Of Losing Your Mental Health	Very Worried	58	20.7%
	Not Too Worried	79	28.2%
	Not Worried At All	124	44.3%
	Don't Know	19	6.8%
Group Total		280	100.0%
How Worried Are You Of Being In Poor Physical Health	Very Worried	164	58.8%
	Not Too Worried	75	26.9%
	Not Worried At All	35	12.5%
	Don't Know	5	1.8%
Group Total		279	100.0%

**Table h24**

		No.	%
How Satisfied Are You With Your Life These Days	Satisfied	201	71.3%
	Neither Satisfied Or Unsatisfied	32	11.3%
	Unsatisfied	49	17.4%
Group Total		282	100.0%

**Table h25**

		No	%
An Effective Public Education Programme On Ageing Must Be Developed	Agree	263	93.9%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	13	4.6%
	Disagree	4	1.4%
Group Total		280	100.0%
Families Should Take The Responsibility Of Caring for Their Older Members	Agree	271	97.5%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	6	2.2%
	Disagree	1	.4%
Group Total		278	100.0%
A Strong Network Of Eldercare Services Can Enable Older Persons to Live With Their Families	Agree	270	96.8%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	8	2.9%
	Disagree	1	.4%
Group Total		279	100.0%
Government Needs To Develop A Broad Base Of Support Services For Carers	Agree	277	99.6%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	1	.4%
Group Total		278	100.0%
There Needs To Be The Development Of Elderly Friendly Housing	Agree	227	81.4%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	36	12.9%
	Disagree	16	5.7%
Group Total		279	100.0%
The Existing Public Transport System Needs To Be Improved To Cater For Both The Frail And Fit	Agree	268	96.1%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	10	3.6%
	Disagree	1	.4%
Group Total		279	100.0%
People Who Construct Additional Rooms to Accommodate Elderly Relatives Should Be Given Tax Concessions	Agree	255	91.7%
	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	22	7.9%
	Disagree	1	.4%
Group Total		278	100.0%

## Conclusion

As was its intention, this study uncovered some important attitudes towards the integration of the elderly in the family. One of the main aspects was the attitude of the majority of the respondents to the accommodation and care options available to older persons.

It was quite striking that a large proportion of the population put little faith in care homes as an option for old age. This is an important issue, as it should be taken on board when any assessment is made of the future care and accommodation needs of the elderly and any when proposals for addressing those needs are made. However, there was a high proportion of agreement with the idea of giving tax concessions for those persons who constructed some kind of accommodation for older persons as an extension to the family home. The results of this topic alone warrant further consideration as they indicate quite clearly how local people feel it would be best to address issues of the accommodation and care of the elderly in Mauritius.

Many older persons complained of feeling isolated *within* the family, and there were indications that feelings of isolation or integration are not necessarily determined by geographical proximity.

At the time of the implementation of the study most men and women under the age of 60 years old in Mauritius were likely to be employed. Consequently, classical ideas of how a family should operate have adapted in order to meet the demands of the new style of living. Nevertheless, although the family has adopted a nuclear structure, often to meet the demands of the work and family balance dictated by modern life, there appears to remain a desire to maintain the older generation as an integral part of the family. However, it should be noted that there is sometimes an ulterior motive involved, such as the availability of a grandparent for childcare, and it is perhaps significant that more older respondents felt fully involved in family decisions that concerned them than felt involved in general family decision making.

As to retirement, more of those respondents already retired felt that the age of retirement could be increased than those yet to retire, but not in numbers significant enough to say that this is a definite trend. Some retired people do feel the need to be more active but it is not clear from the results whether any motivation for continued employment was psychologically or financially driven.

For those respondents under 60 years old, retirement is a period for which some have made provisions, but for many of those not yet retired it is not something that they consider vital. One reason given for not having made any provision for retirement was a shortage of income while many also chose to procrastinate believing that the issue could be addressed at a later date. However, there may well be a need to put the message across that financial investments need time to accrue benefits and that procrastination may mean a lack of adequate income after retirement. These findings take on a greater air of

importance when it is considered that this group of respondents will be those enjoying retirement as the dependency ratio increases.

Perhaps the most significant aspect is the number of respondents over 40 but under 60 years old that have made no provision yet themselves but make it clear that they expect to rely on the State for financial provision after retirement; notwithstanding their belief that any State provision alone will not be enough. This, clearly, is an issue that has strong social policy implications.

One factor to consider is that many of the older respondents had strong memories of older family systems where the heads of families had greater control over the activities of the younger generation. Perhaps nowadays, with the predominance of nuclear families and the empowerment of individuals, particularly women, many of those currently retired feel that the respect they expected to receive as an elder is, in fact, lacking. It has to be recognized that the structure of the society has changed, and continues to change. It is also important to recognize that within the findings lays an indication that respect has not disappeared but has altered.

Finally it can be seen that there is a general willingness to keep the elderly integrated within the family. The results clearly show that, for many, informing people of the issues of retirement and care for the elderly are crucial. Given the obvious distaste for care homes displayed any provisions made for the elderly need to focus on maintaining the personal independence of older persons and encouraging ways and means of assisting families to maintain close contact with senior citizens.