Social Interaction Anxiety Among Senior Citizens In Elderly Care Residence In Nepal

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ABSTRACT

This thesis, titled Social Interaction Anxiety Among Senior Citizens in Elderly Care Residences in Nepal*, investigates the levels of social interaction anxiety experienced by elderly individuals residing in old age homes in Bhaktapur. The research was conducted across two facilities: Shree DyomaJagat Old Age Home and Om Old Age Home and Manavsewa Ashram, with a total of 51 participants involved in the study.Data collection was carried out using the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) in a Likert scale format, followed by open-ended questions to gather more detailed insights. The findings revealed that the old age homes had a beneficial impact on the residents. The SIAS scores were below the cutoff level, indicating lower levels of anxiety. Additionally, the residents reported a stronger sense of community and improved social interactions within the old age homes. These results suggest that such facilities provide a supportive environment that helps reduce social interaction anxiety and enhances the overall quality of life for elderly residents.*

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant positive impact of old age homes on reducing social interaction anxiety among elderly residents in Bhaktapur. The findings demonstrate that residents experience lower levels of anxiety and benefit from a strengthened sense of community and improved social interactions within these facilities. These results underscore the importance of creating supportive environments in old age homes to enhance the emotional well-being of elderly individual.

Key Words: Social Interaction Anxiety,Senior Citizens,Old Age Homes, Elderly Care Residences, Gerontology

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Social interaction and connection are essential for the well-being of older adults residing in senior care facilities (Suk-Young Kang, 2021).The need for meaningful social interaction and connection does not diminish with age, and it is important for senior care residence to provide a supportive environment for their residents. Understanding the unique challenges that the elderly face in social situations and implementing strategies to address these issues is crucial in promoting their overall well-being.(Park et al., 2010).As our society undergoes demographic shifts, with an increasing proportion of elderly individuals, the care and well-being of senior citizens become paramount concerns. Among the challenges faced by the elderly population, social interaction anxiety emerges as a significant issue, particularly within the context of senior care residences. The transition to residential care facilities often brings about changes in

social dynamics, leading to feelings of isolation and discomfort among residents, thereby impacting their overall quality of life. (Lever & Guerts, 2016)

Elderly citizen may be better able to adjust their behavior to social situations and cope with their social difficulties, which could have a positive effect on feeling more comfortable in social situations and a negative effect on feelings of anxiety. (Lever & Guerts, 2016) However, reduced social anxiety can also be associated with a decrement in awareness or concern about social situations, which may not necessarily be the case for older adults with autism spectrum disorder as their empathic concern and theory of mind do not decline. (Lever & Guerts, 2016)

Alternatively, older adults may have accepted their difficulties in social situations and, therefore, show less preoccupation and anxiety. (Lever & Guerts, 2016)

As individuals progress through the various phases of old age, their experiences and challenges evolve (Shuo Ding, 2023). This is particularly true when it comes to social interaction anxiety, which can become a significant concern for older adults residing in senior care facilities.

Social anxiety has been found to be less prevalent in older adults compared to younger populations, but it is still a pertinent issue that merits attention. (Erla Gretarsdottir, 2004)

In the early retirement phase, elderly individuals may still be relatively active and healthy but could begin to experience physical and cognitive changes, such as mild memory loss or difficulty with multitasking. These changes may influence their confidence in

social interactions, potentially leading to anxiety in group settings. Similarly, in the middle-aged elderly phase, where further declines in physical and cognitive functioning are common, individuals may face increased difficulty with mobility and memory loss (Dong Choon & Seung, 2013). These challenges could exacerbate feelings of social interaction anxiety, as they may perceive themselves as less capable or competent in social situations. Moreover, in the advanced elderly phase, characterized by significant physical and cognitive decline, individuals may experience heightened social interaction anxiety due to a loss of mobility and increased dependency on others for daily tasks (Dong Choon & Seung, 2013)Thus, understanding the progression of aging and its impact on social interaction anxiety is crucial for developing targeted interventions to support the psychosocial well-being of elderly individuals in senior care residence.

Senior care residence serves as residences for seniors who may have limited social networks or familial support. While these facilities offer various amenities and services to cater to the needs of residents, addressing social interaction anxiety remains a critical aspect of holistic elderly care. Many elderly individuals experience apprehension or fear in social settings, which can hinder their ability to engage with peers, participate in activities, and form meaningful relationships within the community of the old age home.

Senior care residence: These are residential facilities primarily designed for senior citizens who are still relatively independent and can manage their daily activities with minimal assistance. Senior care residence typically provide accommodation, meals, social

activities, and basic medical care. Residents usually have some degree of independence and are not in need of extensive medical attention or specialized care.

As the world ages, the experiences of older adults are gaining increasing attention, particularly in the context of senior care facilities where many reside. In these communal living environments, social interaction and connection are not just beneficial—they are essential for the well-being of elderly individuals. Social bonds contribute significantly to mental, emotional, and physical health, providing a lifeline that can combat feelings of loneliness and isolation (Suk-Young Kang, 2021). In cultures like Nepal's, where family and community traditionally play a central role in the lives of the elderly, the shift toward senior care residences raises important questions about how social dynamics change in these new settings.

In Bhaktapur, Nepal, a growing number of older adults are seeking refuge in senior care facilities, driven by various factors such as urban migration, evolving family structures, and the need for specialized support that may not be readily available at home. While these facilities offer essential services and a safe environment, they also present unique challenges, particularly concerning social interaction. It has often been assumed that as people age, they experience heightened social interaction anxiety due to health declines and reduced mobility. However, my research uncovers a different narrative—one where many elderly residents, rather than feeling anxious, exhibit a remarkable level of comfort and engagement in their social interactions.

This unexpected finding sheds light on the resilience and adaptability of older adults. Many residents have cultivated effective coping strategies that enable them to navigate the complexities of communal living with confidence. Factors such as life experience, acceptance of their current social roles, and the supportive atmosphere fostered by caregivers and peers play a pivotal role in this positive adjustment. Within these senior care facilities, meaningful connections are formed, allowing residents to build friendships and create a sense of belonging, which in turn diminishes feelings of isolation.

As I delve deeper into this research, my goal is to explore the rich tapestry of social experiences within senior care residences in Bhaktapur. Understanding the interplay between cultural expectations, individual backgrounds, and community dynamics is crucial for developing tailored interventions that enhance the social well-being of residents. This exploration is especially relevant in Nepal, where the cultural landscape is evolving, and traditional values around aging and community are being redefined.

Ultimately, this study aims to highlight the voices and experiences of elderly individuals in senior care settings, showcasing their strengths and the potential for meaningful social engagement. By recognizing the importance of fostering supportive environments, we can work towards creating spaces where older adults feel valued, connected, and empowered to thrive in their later years. In doing so, we not only enhance their quality of life but also honor the rich cultural heritage that shapes their experiences of aging.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Social interaction anxiety among elderly residents in senior care facilities remains a largely overlooked and underexplored issue. While social interaction plays a vital role in the mental and emotional well-being of older adults, limited research has been conducted to understand the factors that reduce or exacerbate this anxiety in care settings. The absence of focused studies restricts the ability of caregivers and social workers to implement strategies that promote meaningful social engagement and enhance the quality of life for seniors.

In the context of Bhaktapur, where senior care facilities are gradually increasing to meet the needs of an aging population, the lack of evidence-based knowledge on this subject is particularly concerning. Without a deeper understanding of the factors that influence social interaction anxiety, it is difficult to create supportive environments that foster social comfort and connection among elderly residents.

This research, therefore, seeks to address the gap by identifying the factors contributing to social interaction anxiety in senior care facilities and exploring effective practices that reduce anxiety and promote social well-being. Such insights will help inform strategies to improve the quality of life for elderly residents and strengthen the role of senior care facilities in supporting the social and emotional needs of their residents.

1.3 Research Questions

i. What are the indicators of social interaction anxiety among senior citizens residing in senior care residences?

ii. How do elderly residents in elderly care residence experience social interaction anxiety, and what are the factors contributing to their anxiety in social settings?

1.4 Objectives

i. To explore the indicators of social interaction anxiety among senior citizens residing in senior care residence

ii. To analyze the factors contributing to social interaction anxiety among elderly residents.

The research explores the indicators and contributing factors of social interaction anxiety among senior citizens residing in elderly care residences. It seeks to identify specific signs of anxiety, such as hesitancy in group activities, discomfort during one-on-one interactions, and difficulty in expressing themselves. The study also aims to analyze contributing factors, including peer dynamics, confidence levels in social settings, and the influence of the institutional environment. By addressing these issues, the research aims to provide insights into the social experiences of elderly residents and the factors that shape their interactions within care facilities.

1.5 Research Methodology

The research design chosen for this study was exploratory due to the limited investigation of the topic up to that point. Employing a

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sequential mixed methods approach, the study aimed to combine quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a holistic understanding of social interaction anxiety among senior citizens. This meant the researcher first collected quantitative data, followed by the collection of qualitative data to complement and enrich the findings.

Initially, the researcher used the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) to gather quantitative data on social interaction anxiety. This standardized questionnaire helped quantify the levels of anxiety experienced by participants in different social situations.

Following this quantitative phase, the researcher delved into qualitative data collection methods. This involved conducting interviews, open-ended discussions, to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of social interaction anxiety in more depth.

By combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the study aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of social interaction anxiety.

2 Data Analysis And Interpretation

2.1 Indicators Of Social Interaction Anxiety Among Senior Citizens

Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) is a tool designed to assess anxiety related to social interactions. Here's a breakdown of how the SIAS scale is typically used and analyzed.

The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS) was used to assess the presence of social interaction anxiety among senior citizens in elderly care residences. The results were predominantly positive, indicating that most participants experienced low levels of anxiety in social settings. The data showed that while there were occasional hesitations in specific situations, such as speaking with authority figures or initiating conversations, the majority of participants demonstrated comfort and ease in their interactions. These findings highlight the supportive role of elderly care homes in fostering social connections and reducing anxiety among residents.

- **Detailed Interpretations**

I get nervous if I have to speak with someone in authority.

Interpretation: With a minimum score of 0 and a maximum of 3, this suggests that while some participants feel no nervousness, others feel significant anxiety (3) when interacting with authority figures. The standard deviation of 0.757 indicates moderate variability, showing that this nervousness is a common experience, but some individuals handle it better than others.

I have difficulty making eye contact with others.

The scores range from 0 to 2, suggesting that most participants do not struggle significantly with eye contact (0), but a portion do (2). The standard deviation of 0.623 indicates that while

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there is some discomfort, the majority feel relatively okay, reflecting a less intense social anxiety.

I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings.

Similar to the previous statements, the range from 0 to 3 indicates a variety of responses regarding personal discussions. A standard deviation of 0.721 indicates that there is a notable level of anxiety regarding this issue for some individuals, while others are able to discuss personal topics without feeling uncomfortable.

I find it difficult to mix comfortably with the people I work with.

Again, with scores ranging from 0 to 3, many participants feel tension (1-3) when engaging with colleagues. The moderate standard deviation (0.707) suggests a common discomfort, reflecting workplace dynamics that can be challenging for many.

I find it easy to make friends my own age.

Interpretation: This statement shows a range of scores from 1 to 4, indicating that while some find it easy (4), others struggle (1). The standard deviation of 0.730 suggests that the ability to make friends varies widely among participants, revealing differing social skills or comfort levels within peer groups.

I tense up if I meet an acquaintance in the street.

With a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 2, this reflects that many participants do not feel tense

(0) when encountering acquaintances, but some do (2). The lower standard deviation (0.568) suggests that while there's some tension, most people handle casual encounters without much anxiety.

When mixing socially, I am uncomfortable.

The scores range from 0 to 2, indicating discomfort is prevalent but not universal. The standard deviation of 0.551 shows that while discomfort exists, it's not extremely varied, suggesting that many participants experience similar levels of unease in social situations.

I feel tense if I am alone with just one other person.

This indicates a common experience of tension in one-on-one interactions, with scores between 0 and 2. The standard deviation of 0.744 indicates that there are different comfort levels in these settings, with some finding it very challenging.

I am at ease meeting people at parties, etc.

The scores range from 1 to 3, suggesting that while some participants feel relatively at ease (3), others feel only somewhat comfortable (1). The standard deviation of 0.614 reflects a moderate diversity in comfort levels at social gatherings, with many still feeling anxious.

I have difficulty talking with other people.

The range of scores from 0 to 2 shows that most participants do face some difficulty (1-2), but a few manage well (0). The standard deviation of 0.674 indicates a moderate level of discomfort,

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highlighting a common struggle in initiating conversations.

I find it easy to think of things to talk about.

With scores ranging from 1 to 4, this statement indicates that some participants feel very confident (4) while others feel less so (1). The higher standard deviation (0.809) suggests significant variability, with a broad range of conversational comfort among individuals.

I worry about expressing myself in case I appear awkward.

The maximum score of 4 indicates that some participants have significant worries about self-expression, with a standard deviation of 0.973 showing a high level of concern that varies widely among the group.

I find it difficult to disagree with another's point of view.

The range from 0 to 2 shows that many struggle to express disagreement, suggesting discomfort in assertiveness. The standard deviation of 0.695 indicates a moderate variation in this experience, with some feeling more capable than others.

I have difficulty talking to persons of the opposite sex.

The scores range from 0 to 2, suggesting that many participants find interactions with attractive individuals challenging. The lower standard deviation (0.528) indicates that this anxiety is fairly consistent among those who experience it.

I find myself worrying that I won't know what to say in social situations.

With scores ranging from 0 to 2, this shows that many participants share this concern, reflecting common anxiety in social contexts. The standard deviation of 0.544 indicates a relatively uniform experience of worry.

I am nervous mixing with people I don't know well.

Scores range from 0 to 2, indicating that while some feel no nervousness (0), others do (1-2). The standard deviation of 0.503 suggests that nervousness in unfamiliar settings is a shared experience among participants.

I feel I'll say something embarrassing when talking.

A range from 0 to 2 indicates that this worry is common but not universal. The standard deviation of 0.543 reflects a consistent level of concern among those who do feel anxious about potential embarrassment.

When mixing in a group, I find myself worrying I will be ignored.

With a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 1, this indicates that most participants do worry about being overlooked, but with lower intensity. The standard deviation of 0.488 shows that responses cluster closely around low anxiety.

I am tense mixing in a group.

The scores range from 0 to 1, indicating that many participants feel at least some tension, but it is not extreme. The standard deviation of

0.505 indicates a relatively consistent experience of tension in group settings.

I am unsure whether to greet someone I know only slightly.

With scores between 1 and 2, this suggests a general tendency towards hesitance in greeting acquaintances, reflecting social caution. The standard deviation of 0.469 indicates that there is not much variability in this uncertainty.

Overall Insights

Overall, the data suggest that the participants generally experience a notable degree of social anxiety, with many reporting difficulties across various social situations. The variability in responses highlights that while some participants may handle social interactions with relative ease, a significant portion struggles with discomfort, nervousness, and self-doubt.

This quantitative analysis can guide further exploration into the specific factors contributing to social anxiety, and it highlights areas where support or interventions may be beneficial. Understanding these patterns can help in developing targeted strategies to assist individuals in managing their social interactions more effectively.

2.2 Key Factors Supporting Social Interaction Among Elderly Residents In Senior Care Residences

2.2.1 Increased Social Interactions

Respondents in the old age homes reported a remarkable increase in their social interactions after transitioning from a solitary lifestyle to communal living. For many residents who had previously lived alone, the move to an old age home has marked a significant improvement in their social lives. The environment in these homes fosters frequent interactions with both peers and caregivers, offering a stark contrast to the isolation they experienced before. This enhanced social engagement is viewed as a highly positive development. It provides residents with invaluable opportunities to form new friendships, participate in communal activities, and integrate into a vibrant social community. The shift from isolation to regular social interaction has had a profoundly beneficial impact on their emotional well-being, contributing to a more fulfilling and connected lifestyle.

2.2.2 Support for Physically Challenged Residents

Residents with physical challenges have highlighted the significant benefits they experience from having a room partner and access to dedicated, supportive staff. For those with mobility issues or other physical limitations, the presence of a roommate and the attentive care provided by the staff have been crucial in reducing feelings of anxiety and enhancing their overall quality of life. **R3 (26)** stated, *"The staff ensures that everyone, especially those who need extra help, can join in activities, which is very important,"* emphasizing the inclusivity fostered by the staff's efforts.

The companionship of a room partner not only provides emotional support but also offers practical assistance with daily activities,

making life more manageable and less stressful. **R12 (23)** added, *"It's heartwarming to see everyone being included, regardless of their physical limitations, and my roommate helps me too,"* reflecting the sense of community that benefits all residents. Additionally, **R25**, who experienced illness and wounds, noted that the care he received in the home greatly aided his recovery, underscoring the importance of supportive care in such environments. The supportive nature of the staff plays a key role in addressing any additional needs or concerns that arise. This comprehensive support contributes to a more secure, comfortable, and fulfilling living environment for these residents, ensuring they feel cared for and integrated into the community

2.2.3 Emotional Healing through Shared Experiences

Residents in senior care residences engage in activities such as bhajan sessions and communal television watching, which play a pivotal role in the emotional healing process for individuals in old age homes. These gatherings serve not only as entertainment but also as essential platforms for connection and support among individuals who have often faced isolation. Bhajan sessions provide residents with a chance to engage in spiritual practices that resonate with their cultural backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging and collective identity. The act of singing together can be cathartic, helping residents release pent-up emotions and find solace in shared spirituality.

2.2.4 Cultural Integration Challenges and Solutions

In Bhaktapur, where Newar culture predominates, the presence of a larger number of non-Newar residents in old age homes initially posed challenges in making friends and communicating effectively. The cultural and linguistic differences created barriers to social integration for these individuals. However, the inclusive and accommodating nature of the old age home environment played a crucial role in addressing these challenges. Residents like **R12** noted, *"At first, it was hard for us to connect, but the staff really helped us to communicate better with each other."* This highlights how essential support is in bridging cultural gaps.

The staff and fellow residents were sensitive to these cultural differences, which helped ease the integration process. Caregivers fluent in both Nepali and Newariprovided essential translation support, facilitating communication and understanding among residents. One caretaker stated, *"We work hard to connect the residents, creating a bridge between different cultures so they can find common ground."* This linguistic assistance not only broke down communication barriers but also fostered connections between the diverse cultural groups.

Despite the initial difficulties, the supportive community environment allowed for more seamless social interactions and nurtured a sense of belonging among non-Newar residents. This adaptation process underscores the importance of cultural sensitivity and support in facilitating social inclusion for all residents, highlighting the need for a culturally aware approach to ensure that everyone feels integrated and valued.

2.2.5 Enhanced Community Engagement and Activities

Residents expressed that frequent celebrations and community activities significantly enhance their sense of involvement and overall well-being. The old age home organizes various events, including birthdays, anniversaries, and cultural festivals, contributing to a lively and engaging atmosphere. These celebrations provide residents with opportunities to partake in joyous occasions, fostering a sense of appreciation and belonging within the communal life.

2.2.6 The Impact of Community Engagement on Reducing Social Anxiety in Old Age Homes

In old age homes, interactions with visitors play a crucial role in helping residents feel less anxious and more connected. Many elderly people initially experience feelings of isolation and anxiety due to a lack of social contact. However, the supportive community in these homes helps reduce these feelings by encouraging regular social interactions. Residents are able to form new relationships, join in activities, and interact with caregivers and visitors, which makes them feel more comfortable and confident.

Activities such as bhajan sessions, watching TV together, and celebrating cultural events create a sense of belonging and purpose. These moments help residents feel valued and part of a community. Visits from guests, like students, bring joy and pride, as they show genuine interest in the residents' stories. One resident shared, "When young students like you come, we feel happy," highlighting the positive impact of these visits. In the end, the sense of community in old age homes plays a vital role in reducing isolation and anxiety, improving the emotional and social well-being of residents. To continue supporting their happiness, it's essential to make sure that everyone feels included and valued, no matter their background or challenges. By fostering these meaningful connections, old age homes can greatly improve the quality of life for their residents.

2.3 Cultural Influences on Social Interaction in Senior Care Residence

In Nepal, a nation grounded in Eastern philosophy and collectivist traditions, older adults in senior care homes experience notably positive and fulfilling social interactions. Eastern philosophy emphasizes interconnectedness, harmony, and the importance of social bonds within a community (Naik & Ueland, 2008). In this collectivist context, people prioritize family ties, group belonging, and shared responsibility, which deeply shapes social experiences and the well-being of older adults. This cultural framework contrasts with Western, individualistic societies, where independence and self-reliance are emphasized, often leading to higher levels of social anxiety and isolation among older adults in care settings.

Research suggests that the perception of quality of life and the factors that influence it are heavily shaped by one's social and cultural context (Saha, Basu, & Pandit, 2021). Effective policies developed for the overall well-being of the elderly need to be designed with an understanding of the perspectives of the elderly

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themselves. In the South Asian context, despite the growing need for research on various aspects influencing the well-being of their elderly, studies on their perceived quality of life are still a comparatively less explored area of research.

Research conducted in Nepal reveals that older adults in communal care settings benefit significantly from the collective support and community focus inherent in the culture. In these environments, seniors report higher levels of satisfaction and social well-being, as they remain closely connected to others and feel supported in their daily lives. This reflects the impact of Nepal's collectivist culture, where the value placed on togetherness and mutual care creates a socially nurturing environment that enhances the mental and emotional health of senior resident

2.4 Social Dynamics in Bhaktapur's Senior Care Homes.

In Bhaktapur, Nepal, the social dynamics within senior care homes reflect the area's deep-rooted collectivist traditions and cultural values. Unlike individualistic societies, where independence and self-sufficiency are highly prioritized, the social fabric of Bhaktapuremphasizes community, interdependence, and shared responsibility. These values foster a sense of belonging and mutual support among elderly residents, who are encouraged to actively engage in communal activities and relationships.

Senior care homes in Bhaktapur host a diverse population, comprising both Newar and non-Newar residents and staff. This blend of cultural backgrounds enriches the communal atmosphere, as residents share unique traditions, customs, and stories from their various regions. The interaction between Newar and non-Newar individuals fosters mutual respect and understanding, allowing for the exchange of cultural practices that enhance the social experience of all residents.

Research indicates that seniors in Bhaktapur's communal care settings report higher levels of satisfaction and emotional well-being. The inclusive environment allows residents to remain connected, feel valued, and maintain a strong sense of social identity. Daily interactions and shared experiences become a source of comfort and resilience, reinforcing cultural beliefs about the importance of community bonds and collective care.

The presence of both Newar and non-Newar staff further contributes to the supportive environment in these care homes. Staff members play a crucial role in facilitating social engagement and ensuring that the diverse needs of residents are met. This cultural competency helps create a nurturing atmosphere that promotes social interaction and well-being among all residents.

Overall, the social structure within Bhaktapur's senior care homes demonstrates the impact of Nepal's collectivist culture on the well-being of elderly individuals. This supportive environment appears to alleviate the loneliness and social anxiety often documented in elderly care settings in more individualistic societies, highlighting the role of cultural values in shaping positive social experiences for seniors.

2.5 Conclusion

Communal living in old age homes has a profound impact on the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of residents. The transition from isolation to an integrated community life significantly enhances the quality of life for elderly individuals, as evidenced by both quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study. This research highlights the transformative potential of communal living, particularly in the context of Nepal, where cultural values emphasize respect and care for seniors.

An important aspect of this study is the observation that many residents scored below the cut-off score for social interaction anxiety on the Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (SIAS). This finding suggests that the communal environment effectively alleviates feelings of apprehension and anxiety that often accompany social interactions in later life. The absence of significant social interaction anxiety among residents points to the positive influence of a supportive community on their emotional well-being.

The supportive nature of the community, characterized by frequent social engagement, attentive care for physically challenged individuals, shared cultural practices, and the recognition received through academic interactions, collectively contributes to a fulfilling and enriched later life. These elements emphasize the importance of fostering an inclusive, culturally sensitive atmosphere where all residents feel valued and integrated, regardless of their background.

The observed improvements in residents' well-being underscore the critical role of social support and community engagement in enhancing the quality of life for the elderly. By prioritizing these components, old age homes can create environments that not only address the diverse needs of residents but also empower them to thrive in their later years. The lack of significant social interaction anxiety serves as a testament to the successful implementation of these communal living principles, indicating a pathway for enhancing the experiences of elderly individuals in similar settings.

2.6 Recommendations for Supporting Old Age Homes in Nepal

Based on the findings of this study, several key recommendations can help improve the lives of elderly residents in old age homes. First, creating more opportunities for social interaction is essential. This could involve organizing regular activities that encourage residents to communicate and bond with one another, which can help reduce feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Caregiver training is another important aspect. It is crucial that caregivers receive training that focuses on understanding the emotional and psychological needs of elderly residents, especially around anxiety and stress, to provide a more compassionate and supportive environment. Bringing the community closer to the residents can also make a huge difference. Simple acts like organizing community events or inviting local groups to interact with the elderly can help them feel more connected and less isolated. Building a stronger support system is equally important, with access to counseling, support groups, and regular health check-ups to ensure residents' emotional well-being is taken care of. Additionally, further research into how different activities and social factors affect the

elderly's health could lead to better care practices. In terms of policy and infrastructure, making sure old age homes are physically accessible, comfortable, and conducive to socializing will go a long way in creating a more positive environment. Lastly, it's essential to adopt a more holistic approach to care, addressing not just the physical but also the emotional and social needs of the elderly to improve their overall quality of life.

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