



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

# ELDERLY WOMEN AND THE SOCIETY: ADEQUACY AND COVERAGE GIVEN TO ELDERLY WOMEN BASED NEWS IN PRINT MEDIA

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### ABSTRACT

Women encounter countless problems. The problems they face start off at a very young age and ranges from being followed, looked at by strangers inappropriately, being touched or forced up by strangers, relatives, friends etc. They are also being targeted primarily because of the fact that young children are easy targets for perverts and anti-social elements. This aspect doesn't stop at them and even elder people are at the receiving end of the same kind of behaviour from various people across the society. Elderly people especially women are at the receiving end of some of the most heinous crimes that can be committed against them. One of the obvious reasons is that they like young children will not open up about their ordeals easily to the outside world. The current research study looks at the abuse faced by elderly women in the society with special reference to a case study of a professor in Rajkot who threw his ailing mother off the terrace and tried to brush it off stating that his act was not wrong. The research study looks examining the adequacy of coverage given to the above mentioned ordeal faced by an elderly women among the English dailies in Tamil Nadu.

**Key words:** Coverage, Status, Elderly Women, Society, Print Media.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### *Mistreatment of older adults*

The concept of women abuse is incomplete without the proper introduction to defining what is mistreatment of elderly people. Elder abuse was defined in the 2002 Toronto Declaration on the Global Prevention of Elder Abuse, as "...a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person." It can be of various forms: physical, psychological, emotional, sexual, and financial or simply reflect intentional or unintentional neglect (WHO, 2002). The above definition originated in 1995 through Action on Elder Abuse (Biggs & Haapala, 2010) and was adopted by a meeting of the International Expert Group on Elder Abuse from the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in Toronto in the year 2002.

#### *Vulnerable adults abuse*

The National Research Council in the year 2003 observed that the abuse faced by vulnerable adults referred to the intentional

actions that could cause harm or increase risks of a serious harm by a caregiver or a trustworthy person in a relationship and is in a position to satisfy their needs.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### *Forms of Abuse*

##### **A. Neglect**

Neglect is defined as the refusal or failure of responsible caregivers to provide a care dependent older adult with assistance in daily living tasks or essential support such as food, clothing, shelter, health and medical care. This can also include desertion of a care-dependent older adult, also called abandonment (WHO, 2002).

##### **B. Physical abuse**

Physical abuse includes actions intended to cause physical pain or injury to an older adult, such as pushing, grabbing, slapping, hitting, or assaulting with a weapon or thrown object.

##### **C. Sexual abuse**

Sexual abuse can include offensive sexual behaviours as well as physical contact of a sexual nature (WHO, 2002).

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#### D. Financial abuse and exploitation

This form of abuse describes actions of illegal or improper use of an older person's money, property or assets (MetLife, 2011).

#### Objectives of the study

- To reduce the adequacy and coverage given to the news story of an elderly women being thrown off the terrace by her son in the English dailies in Tamil Nadu.

#### METHODOLOGY

The research study adopts Qualitative Content Analysis method to examine the adequacy and coverage given to specific case study in the English dailies of Tamil Nadu by analyzing the news articles that covered this particular case.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Elder women face a multitude of problems in the society. Also, there are unspoken pain and trauma that they face mentally as they are often excluded. The exclusion for the elderly people is created due to lack of communication with their near and dear ones as more incidents or instances of social exclusion is happening mainly because of their closest relations in their own family in the form of their sons, daughter-in-law, husbands, daughter etc. The current study was undertaken with the sole objective of looking into how the coverage of a suicide case turned into a murder case thanks to the CCTV footage and a letter to the police received from unknown persons as it was very much crucial in this case study taking a totally new dimension to the story. The central case of the story happened to the suicide of an elderly woman who was presumed to have committed suicide by falling off from the terrace of her home in September 27, 2017. The Police department didn't find anything suspicious as they thought the women took the extreme step as she was unable to bear pain due to her illness. The story took a drastic turn after the Police personnel received a anonymous letter which suspected foul play. Acting on the letter as a lead, the Police started fresh interrogation on the women's son who happened to be working as a professor in a reputed institution. Upon cross examination, it was found that he had quarrel with his sister due to the rmom's illness specifically on who would take care of her. It was revealed through hospital records that the elderly women was affected badly in her legs and needed crutches to move around so the Police ruled out that it was impossible for her to jump off the

building and confirmed the same through the CCTV footage that they had their hands on and arrested the son Sandip for murdering his mother Jayshreeben Vinodbhai Nathvani on September 27, 2017. It was further revealed that Sandip did not have much remorse for his actions and said that it pained him so much to see his mother suffer and hence comitted the heinous act. There not much coverage given to this news in the leading English dailies but, it has to be noted that such acts are very much condemnable and that despite everything it is our duty to take care of the elders in our family with care and affection and refrain ourselves from such acts.

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