

INTER GENERATIONAL INTERACTION

Between the Elderly & the Youth

A PROJECT

BY

The DEPARTMENTS OF SOCIOLOGY

&

HOME ECONOMICS – CHILD DEVELOPMENT

OF

**SMT. MANIBEN M. P. SHAH WOMEN'S
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND COMMERCE**

AUTONOMOUS

SMT. PARMESHWARI DEVI GORDHANDAS GARODIA
EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX

338, R. A. KIDWAI ROAD, MATUNGA, MUMBAI - 400019

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that The Inter Generational Interaction project was undertaken by the students of the Departments of Sociology & Home Economics – Child Development under the joint aegis of Smt Maniben M P Shah Women’s College & The Trust for Human Resource Enrichment & Development in the year 2019.

Shanthi Seshadri

Co-ordinator

Dr Ravikala Kamat

Trustee

Dr Leena Raje

Principal

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my special gratitude to our Principal Dr. Leena Raje, who gave me the golden opportunity to do this wonderful project on the topic titled ‘ Inter Generational Interaction between the Elderly and the Youth ‘ which has helped me in doing a lot of research and I have come to know about so many things for which I am very thankful to her.

I would like to thank the management Seva Mandal Education Society for their constant encouragement and support over the years. I would like to thank Dr. Ravikala Kamath for her guidance and for providing exposure to our students in regards to the social issue of ageing through this project. My special thanks to Ms. Archana Patki who provided insight and expertise that greatly assisted the completion of the project.

I would also like to thank my teacher coordinators Dr. Sarita Kasaralkar, Ms. Kiran Jadhav, Dr. Rekha Shelar, Dr. Hiralal Bhosale and Dr. Swati Mohite for providing me with valuable inputs and through their cooperation, without which the project would not have seen the light of the day. I would like to thank Dr. Bhavana Dubey, the head of the department of Sociology for involving me in the project. Lastly I would like to thank my family members who supported me while I was finalising this project to complete it in the stipulated time frame.

Ms. Shanthi Seshadri

The Project Co-ordinator

About the college:

Smt MMP Shah Women's College Of Arts and Commerce ,the first in Maharashtra State to be affiliated to Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thakersey Women's University (SNDT WU) , took roots with just seven students in 1957. The present management Seva Mandal Education Society (SMES) came into being, in 1971, bringing in generous financial aid for further development with primary focus on women's empowerment.

Our efforts to improve infrastructure, course offerings and work flow paid rich dividends in 2013, when we received a grade with (GPA 3.61/4.00) in the second cycle of NAAC assessment. The college received the coveted College For Potential With Excellence in Education status in 2016. The college has received autonomous status in 2019. Today in addition to graduate programmes, P.G we offer as many as 20 value added courses, open to all students.

Our aim is to go from strength to strength in fulfilling the vision and mission of this august educational institution. Our objective is to train students to be responsible citizens with awareness raising programs and activities. Our goal is to make higher education available to women students belonging to all socio-economic strata of society.

About the NGO & Founder Trustee

Dr. Ravikala Kamat is retired professor and Head of the Department of Human Development. She has been visiting professor to IOWA University, Rutgers University and the University of Toronto. She has been an educator, research guide in the field of child development for more than three decades. She has been a master trainer for capacity building of women managers. At present, Dr. Ravikala Kamath is founder and executive trustee of TRUST FOR HUMAN RESOURCES ENRICHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT Santacruz, Mumbai. She is involved completely in the wonderful initiatives of the TRUST FOR HUMAN RESOURCES ENRICHMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, focussing on IGI sensitizing youth, a great human resource for our country.

Message From the Principal

The famous scientist Albert Einstein has rightly stated that “Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind”. Education is to think something that cannot be learned from textbooks & such projects like the IGI will facilitate this process. It will also serve to provide a small measure of happiness and delight to the elderly along with sensitising our youth.

I am passionate about students being empowered to succeed. I aim to enthuse and challenge staff and students to also be inventive and imaginative in their learning and day to day tasks. I am an avid supporter of effective and innovative professional development that encourages teachers to be reflective and to continuously examine our practice to provide quality teaching and learning for each student.

Plutarch, a Greek philosopher has rightly stated “The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled” . NGO’s like THRED have been playing a vital role in sensitizing our students regarding the problems of the elderly. I am sure our Sociology students will get a little more of learning about their role in society by caring for senior citizens. That little extra we do for our students is - "to do more than belong – participate ,to do more than believe, practice."

Education is not just a process of giving knowledge for a future job but a lifelong process which creates an understanding of moral and ethical values to guide one’s life in a right path. This makes the initiative taken by NGOs like THRED sociologically significant.

There is a need for inculcating the qualities of sharing and caring among youngsters. They need to have empathy for others, particularly the vulnerable sections of the society like the elderly. For that to happen, all stakeholders in the educational field must make relentless and dedicated efforts. By interacting with the elderly , students will experience a different sense of accomplishment and contentment as it will make a difference in the life of elderly.

In India parents do not leave their children on their own even after they turn 18 (of course there are exceptions) but children find it hard to accept the fact that there are times when parents too want to feel the love that they once showered on them. There are times when parents just want to relax and want their children to reciprocate their care. All parents want to see their children grow and be successful but no parent wants their child to treat them like an unnecessary load on their responsibilities. Every other day, we see news of parents being beaten up by their children parents and in laws being forced to do household chores, being made to live in small dungeon like rooms, their property being forcefully taken over by greedy children. Projects like THRED can play a significant role in creating awareness about the issues of senior citizens and teach the youth to have high regard and concern for them.

Dr. Leena Raje
Principal

Preface

Old age refers to ages nearing or surpassing the life expectancy of human beings and is thus the end of the human cycle. The elderly face social issues related to retirement , loneliness and ageism. The chronological age denoted by "old age " varies culturally and historically. Thus old age is a "social construct" rather than a definite "biological stage". I would like to quote the lines of Robert Brown " Grow old with me, the best is yet to be" Like the full bodied aroma of a classic wine, human beings also emanate the fragrance of wisdom and sapience as they advance in age. Age throws open the windows of knowledge, nous and perception. There are difficulties, adjustments, challenges in this stage of life and the quality of life of the aged can improve if there are sensitive youth around them. So undertaking such a project for sensitizing the youth is of significance. It makes our vision all encompassing. So, when we grow old we can wait for such windows to open. A new awakening awaits you.

We shouldn't deny ageing or defy it. We need to create awareness among the youth regarding this fact of life .

Ms. Shanthi Seshadri

Co-ordinator of the IGI project

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Student reading news paper to the elderly

Working Committees

1. Dr. Sarita Kasaralkar - Department of Home Economics- Child Development
2. Ms. Kiran Jadhav - Department of Sociology
3. Mrs. Shanthi Seshadri - Department of Sociology
4. Dr. Rekha Shelar - Department of Sociology
5. Dr. Hiralal Bhosale - Department of Sociology
6. Dr. Swati Mohite - Department of Sociology

Report of the IGI project undertaken by the Department of Sociology and the Department of Home Economics - Child Development 2019-2020

Objectives:

1. To offer senior citizens the platform for expression, recreation and healthy living with a positive outlook.
2. To encourage attitudinal and behavioural changes in the younger generation as well as in the senior citizens

Methodology:

The project began on 15th February 2019 with the Orientation of FYBA and TYBA sociology students from English and Marathi medium by Dr. Ravikala Kamath. More than 55 students attended the orientation programme. The teacher coordinators of the project were Dr. Sarita Kasaralkar, Mrs. Kiran Jadhav, Mrs. Shanthi Seshadri, Dr. Rekha Shelar, Dr. Hiralal Bhosale and Dr. Swati Mohite. They guided the students about the process of the entire project. This was followed by face to face communication of the students with senior citizens. They were asked to maintain a diary and report their learning, sharing and caring experiences with the senior citizens to the teacher coordinators.

Expected Outcomes:

1. This project will improve the understanding of the youth about the elderly.
2. It will provide an opportunity to the youth to get acquainted with the physical &/or other limitations the elderly experience.
3. The Youth will get an opportunity to provide unconditional love to the elderly.
4. It will serve to encourage interaction between the youth and elderly & thus help sensitise them too.

Final Outcomes:

1. Students formed a better understanding and developed a bond with the elderly in some cases their own grandparents.
2. Students realised that they can actually have an enjoyable time with the senior citizens.
3. Students developed a high regard for the senior citizens.
4. Since the studentts interacted with the elderly in the neighbourhood they developed an insight into the problems faced by the senior citizens today in our society.
5. Students were sensitized to the elderly population serving the purpose of the project.



Student teaching how to use a mobile to the elderly

REPORT

Before the latter part of the 20th century, the traditional support systems of the joint family, and community provided economic security for older Indians. The primary responsibility of the joint family system of multi-generational co-residence has been to protect its dependent members. This system has provided income, health-care, and personal, physical, and emotional security for all family members, including the elderly. Old age was viewed as a stage of wisdom, maturity, prestige and power, with respect accorded to elderly persons, especially to the oldest male. A variety of factors however, such as urbanization, migration, and industrialization has weakened these traditional customs and bonds. This has shrunk the social life of the elderly, imposed limitations on the societal roles and initiated the quality of life that is essential for them. As societies modernize, the status of elders decreases and they are increasingly likely to experience social exclusion. According to statistics seniors are more likely to face discrimination more often than any other age group. In both daily life (including interactions with their peers) and the media, they are mocked for having "senior moments", like lapses in memory or physical deterioration. According to World Health Organization 2 billion people will be over 60 years old by 2050 with around 80% living in developing nations like India.

In his short story "The Old Aunt" (Budhi Kaki) Munshi Premchand observed, " Old age in many ways, is the return of childhood" , It renders an individual dependent, vulnerable and worthless. After all what contributions can an old, frail, and unproductive individual make towards the family or society? The commonly held social belief potentially marginalizes old people invisibilises their life concerns and isolates them. It also justifies as well as normalizes ageist attitudes towards the elderly in family and society. Such a negative outlook seriously affects their health and wellbeing, reducing their lifespan. Consequently, the present day challenge for society is 'How can we improve the quality of life as people get older, and enhance their day to day experience? What is lost in this quasi banishment of the old from the center stage is not quantifiable not definable. That sense of sanity, those solutions cannot come out of books or computers. Breaking with them is like removing the chains linking us to a past, to a culture, to a civilization. The old are community itself, heirs to collective wisdom, with them goes whatever dignity or grace there was in the Indian family .The THRED project is sociologically significant because the Indian family system is often held high for its qualities like support and care of the elderly .Growing

numbers of older people are altering our social institutions which makes the project like IGI all the more significant in a society like ours.

The responsibility of adult children for their parent’s wellbeing is not only morally and socially recognized in India but it is a part of the legal code in many states in India.

The fundamental question to be addressed by the nation is how do we want to perceive and utilise this group of increasing population. Are they perceived as passive dependent group demanding better care and service? Or can they be considered as a rich resource of wisdom and experience forming a part of strong human resource of the country. It is time for the social science research to respond to the growing, yet unmet needs of the aged.

One such initiative is taken by the NGO THRED to create awareness among the youth regarding the problems of the elderly by encouraging them to interact with them.

After our success in the THRED project in the year 2015-2016 our principal Dr. Leena Raje decided to once again involve the Sociology students in the Intergenerational Interaction Project with an objective of sensitizing the students regarding the needs of the elderly. It was meant to familiarize them to the science of healthy and productive aging. It was decided to involve 32 English medium ,23 Marathi medium Sociology students for this project. Students were asked to conduct activities for the elderly by interacting with the elderly in a patient manner. Our teacher coordinators asked them to establish rapport with the elderly by patiently listening to their problems.

Consolidated tabulations of perceptions of youth regarding senior citizens

	Response ‘yes’	Response ‘no’
<i>Do you have any elderly member residing at home ?</i>	33	22
Are they your grandparents ? If not what is their relationship with you?	26	16
If your grandparents/elderly are living away from you, do you visit them at least once in two months?	26	25

Indicate below how many Ts (true) and how many Fs (False)

Sr. No.	Questions	True	False
1	All five senses tend to decline in old age	31	24
2	Lung capacity tends to decline in old age	49	6
3	Older people are not as strong as young people.	37	18
4	All five senses get worse as people get older.	40	15
5	About 80% of the aged say they are healthy enough to carry out most normal activities.	38	17
6	The majority of old people are unable to adapt to change	42	13
7	The majority of old people say they feel miserable most of the time.	40	15
8	The majority of old people say they are lonely	48	7
9	Older people tend to become more religious as they age.	42	13
10	The majority of old people are senile	35	20
11	It is almost impossible for the majority of old people to learn new things.	24	31
12	The majority of old people are working /would like to have some kind of work to do.	36	19
13	In general , most old people are pretty much alike.	39	16
14	Most old workers are not as good as younger workers.	30	25
15	Inactivity and lack of exercise slow down old people more than age.	46	9

Some students said that they have interacted with their grandparents for more than an hour while majority said that they spend less than an hour interacting with their grandparents. Some said that they interacted with the grandparents during the vacations when they could spend more time with them.

Out of 55 student volunteers 33 said that they have elderly member residing at home and 22 said that they did not have any elderly residing at home. When asked whether they were their grandparents 26 answered in the affirmative and 16 said no. 31 students agreed to the fact that all the senses tend to decline in old age and 24 didn't agree to it. 49 students agreed to the fact that lung capacity tends to decline in old age. 37 students felt that older people are not as strong as young people. 18 students didn't agree with it. 40 students felt that about 80% of the aged are healthy enough to carry out most normal activities. 15 students did not agree with it. Out of 55 students 42 students agreed with the fact that older people tend to become more religious as they age while 13 students didn't agree to it. 35 students felt that majority of the old people are senile while 20 students did not agree to it. They felt that the elderly have good memory. 24 students felt that it is almost impossible for the majority of old people to learn new things while 31 students did not agree with it. 36 students felt that that majority of people would like to have some kind of work to do while 19 students didn't agree with it. 39 students felt that in general most old people are pretty much alike while 16 students didn't agree with it. 30 students felt that most older workers are not as good as younger workers while 25 students did not agree with this. Out of 55 students 46 students agreed with the fact that inactivity and lack of exercise slow down old people more than age while 9 students did not agree with this.



Student teaching the elderly how to watch you tube in the mobile



Student interacting with the elderly

Activities Undertaken by the Youth with Senior Citizens

Sr. No.	Types of Activities	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1	General conversations and discussion; on language skills, culture, stories, listening to outpourings of elderly,	5	6	10	5	9	4
2	Reading Aloud: Newspapers, books, magazines stories	4	5	4	4	4	2
3	Sharing and developing specific skills	5	4	6	2	4	2
4	Teaching/facilitating use of technological gadgets:	5	6	7	5	6	3
5	Outdoor activities Shopping, Walking, Accompanying the elderly for checkups	6	6	6	3	2	4
6	Help and assistance for daily chores	5	5	6	4	7	3
7	Any other (specify)						

Some students played games with the elderly .They taught them painting .They involved them in dancing. One student accompanied the elderly to a family function.



Student learning how to make basket from the elderly



Student learning a recipe from the elderly

Table II**Learning Experiences and Benefits of the Project as reported by the students**

Types of Learning Experiences	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6
1.General Knowledge &Information: Cultural practices , Current affairs ,	6	6	7	5	6	3
2.Specific Tasks & skills Cooking new recipe, stitching, Knitting, Embroidery ,	5	6	8	6	5	3
3.Awareness & insights into the problems of the elderly:	11	9	12	6	8	6
Awareness of the outside world	6	5	6	4	8	4
Any other specify Learnt the skill of Basket making Tips to buys vegetables from the market					2	
Benefits of the project						
1.Students learnt social skills from the elderly						
2.They learnt to value relationships						

On account of this project our teacher coordinators could benefit in terms of interaction with the students on the issues of ageing which is sociologically significant .

It also helped in developing the team spirit among teacher coordinators which is crucial in the effective functioning of the department. Interacting with the senior citizens enabled the youth to develop social networks, communication skills, problem solving abilities and above all a positive attitude to ageing .

Major findings of the Thred Project

1. It has helped in understanding and embracing the similarities and differences of elderly with youth.
2. The youth have benefited in terms of enhanced socialization.
3. With more positive views of seniors , young people will be more likely to take greater care of elderly and treat them with more respect.
4. Seniors perceived mentoring to youth as offering valuable advice.
5. Such Interaction have offered elderly to learn about new technology and trends, and experience the excitement of seeing the world through a younger perspective.
6. The IGI project has made an attempt to stimulate important social connections between the elderly and the youth.
7. Such Interaction of the youth with the elderly have facilitated the youth to know about the old traditions and rituals in our society.
8. Students became aware of the problems of elderly.
9. Elderly enjoyed the company of the Youth
10. Students learnt from the elderly that there is no compensation for hard work.
11. Students learnt that they must have respect for the elderly.
12. Some students developed bonding with their grandparents.



Student listening to the outpourings of the elderly

Conclusion

Such projects can help in channelling the energies of the youth for a social cause. The wheels of time are moving we all are greying and will eventually become old and frail one day. Old age ought not to be equated with liability, decay and disutility. As such, there is an urgent need for every family to re-examine and redefine the phenomenon of ageing and remake the life experiences for the elderly amidst us. Youth involved in such programmes are less likely to fall into the trap of bad habits. IGI programme's social significance lies in the fact that they facilitate the transmission of cultural traditions values from older to the younger generation .Clearly the IGI project has created a platform for understanding the issues of senior citizens. The insights gained by the students involved in the project will go a long way in their understanding of the rights of the elderly so as to help them to lead a dignified and fulfilling life.

Enclosures-

Annexures containing the list of students who took part in the IGI Project with their contact numbers.

List of English Medium Sociology students of BA Part - I

Sr.No.	Name of the student	Contact No.
1.	Fatima Bamne	9769138236
2.	Arva Habib	7715864010
3.	Zara Khan	8369306961
4.	Sahani Reema Munir	8692055787
5.	Shaikh Heena Munavar Ali	8779440463
6.	Khan Maria Afreen Salahuddin	8291369045
7.	Mahalaxmi Devar	7718069398
8.	Muskaan Sayyed	9152110743
9.	Masurkar Saylee	9867076449
10.	Urmi B. Sadlani	9819339434
11.	Pooja Jain	8396000239
12.	Bharati .A.Kudawala	8879506901
13.	Priti.K.Sandipog	7718067012
14.	Avantika.C.Mudhang	7900098974
15.	Sumaiyya .B.Shaikh	7021147845
16.	Moghal Suzzina Ayaz	9987444878
17.	.,Sarasvati Papabatini	9867991731
18.	Kanimozhi Murugan	9137844897

19.	Mansoori Nahida	7506327442
20.	Yadav Nisha	8779479589
21.	Mallik Shaheen	8452054424

List of English Medium Sociology Students of BA Part -II

Sr.No.	Name of the student	Contact no.
1.	Sadika Parveen	8433811761
2.	Khan Farheen	9326266157
3.	Raeen Sana	8169594168
4.	Cindrella Mercy	9137148125
5.	Mariya Ramesh	8424928159
6.	Qureshi Rukhsar	9892928728
7.	Shaikh Zarina	7506872945
8.	Sarah Ansari	8879015981
9.	Shaikh Neha	9082071116
10.	Arjuman Shaikh	8169894485
11.	Shaikh Ahtsham	9702672146

List of Marathi Medium students BA Part -I

Sr.No	Name of the Student	Contact no.
1.	Ruchita Pawar	8779081146
2.	Anjali Raut	8928515026
3.	Nutan Patil	8691823441
4.	Geeta Gawade	9699907769
5.	Afreen Pinjari	8369458840
6.	Sneha Tandel	8104468262
7.	Dipti Jadhav	7900192805
8.	Vaishali Thorat	8850867142
9.	Rani Bhalerao	8286153648
10.	Nirmiti Jadhav	7506534331
11.	Gayatri Chopadekar	7758957813
12.	Tanvi Jadhav	7506651268
13.	Akanksha Desai	8433781790
14.	Sayali Shinde	8433762200
15.	Aarati Mane	7039617246
16.	Aparna Awad	9082870136

17	Divya Padwal	986759591
18	Komal Unavane	9004912054
19	Rupali Patil	9137496744
20	Siddhi Chikana	9619743271
21	Trushna Patil	9326643182
22	Ujwala Jadhav	7039782329
23	Amruta Patari	7039339340

Felicitation Programme of the IGI project.



The felicitation programme of the IGI project commenced with a welcome address by the Principal of college Dr. Leena Rajee. She welcomed Dr. Ravikala Kamath the executive head of the THRED project, chief guest M/S Amruta Lovekar, noted Gerontologist working for Tulsi Trust Graceful Living and all the teachers and the students from the department of Sociology and the department of Home Economics-Child Development. This was followed by the Introduction of Dr. Ravikala Kamath by Dr. Swati Mohite. This was followed by the speech by Dr. Ravi Kala Kamat who explained the concept of THRED and its functioning to the students. This was followed by sharing of experiences by our students. Some students expressed that they had pulsating encounters with senior citizens. Dr. Rekha Shelar gave a brief summary

of the project conducted at the college level .She stated that some students said that they are not living in



the Joint family so were reluctant to do the project. But she motivated them by guiding them about how they should interact with the elderly in their neighborhood .In the process they got completely involved in the project. One sociology Student from TYBA from English medium stated that she benefited immensely on account of her interaction with the elderly citizen in her native village. She would take them for a walk , teach them how to operate the mobile .She would enjoy watching movies with the senior citizens. She said she also learnt how to cut betal nut from the senior citizen.She also learnt to make a woollen bag from her aunt. Another student Sara stated that she would download old Hindi films like Mehboob ki Mehendi and Ganga Jamuna and show her grandmother .She was very happy to watch the films.











Another student Sadhika was eager to share her experiences.

Another student from SYBA Fatima Bamne while sharing her experiences stated that senior citizen today was an underutilised asset. She stated that the youth instead of spending time with the mobile should spend some time interacting with the senior citizens. She stated that she played Zumba with the senior citizen apart from teaching her how to download films in the mobile. This was followed by introduction of the chief guest M/S Amruta Lovekar noted Gerentologist .She recited a poem in Hindi which highlighted the need for humanitarian attitude of the youth towards the elderly.She narrated the story in Hindi which emphasized the need for caring for the elderly. It was a story about parents who were setting a bad example for their children In this story the father of a son leaves his father in a old age home. While leaving him he wanted to give a blanket to his father .The son observes that his father has given only half blanket to his grandfather. He asks for another half of the blanket.Father then asks his son what he will be doing with the another half of the blanket.The son says that he will preserve it and when his father grows old he too will leave him in the oldage home and give him the blanket. By narrating this story she was trying to emphasise

that there is an urgent need for social integration of the aged. This was followed by the distribution of certificates to the students and teacher coordinators who worked for the IGI project .

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THE END
