

**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

**QUALITY OF LIFE OF ELDERLY EAST INDIAN IMMIGRANTS**

**by**

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**A THESIS**

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DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK**

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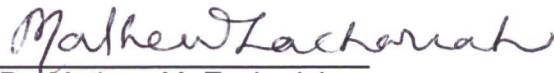
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## ABSTRACT

Providing the elderly with a means of comfort has been an important aspect South Asian (i.e. East Indian) culture. In traditional India it is normal for the offspring to live with their elderly and provide their elders a respected position within the extended family. But in Canada this position is reversed when elderly East Indian immigrants often live with their children. This reverse living circumstance in Canada has created a problem for elderly immigrants. As a result, some elderly are not provided the comforts generally accorded to them through traditional customs. Instead they are forced into living arrangements that are undignified and unworthy of their status in East Indian culture, subjecting them to a poor quality of life in Canada.

This study describes the findings from a survey that examines the quality of life of elderly East Indian immigrants. More specifically the study examined the extent to which social isolation has affected the elderly East Indian immigrants' quality of life in Canadian Society.

The study surveyed 70 elderly East Indian immigrants between the ages of 55 years and 84 years who had immigrated to Canada within the last 15 years. The results indicated that an inverse relationship exists between social isolation and life satisfaction for the population surveyed. The intervening variables of friends, living arrangements, changes made to culture, and feelings about their family in general contributed to this inverse relationship. This study also profiles other aspects of elderly East Indian immigrants familial lives and makes some recommendations for improving the elderly immigrants quality of life.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all elderly East Indian Immigrants to Canada who as a result of immigration and change in living circumstances have experienced a change in their quality of life. It is hoped that this thesis will bring to light some difficulties experienced by this silent and helpless immigrant group whose problems should be a concern for all of us.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Rationale for Study**

The rationale to embark upon this study came from my belief, partly derived from my personal experience after my elderly immigrant parents came to reside with me. During the period of adjustment to a new culture, immigrants appear to face many problems, other than basic problems (loss of culture, language, home environment etc.) that are unique to one's culture of origin. Some of the problems faced by new immigrants have been addressed by their host societies, but there are many yet to be studied. The exploration of this subject is useful to my understanding of some crucial issues, and of the moral and professional obligation of social workers in helping elderly members of immigrant families.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

It is generally well known that after a few years of establishing themselves many East Indian immigrants usually sponsor their elderly parents to join them in Canada. In this study, elderly people whose origins are in South Asia are identified as East Indians Immigrants, since that is the term familiar to people in Canadian Social Work. For many immigrant parents who immigrate to Canada the first few years of life in Canada is a wonderful experience. However, following a few years of the 'good life' in their new environment, reality transcends, and many end socially isolated, confined perhaps to the role of baby sitters for their grandchildren. It is not that baby sitting was not part of their role in India but the lack of extended family contact in Canada limits their opportunities

to fully experience other roles of importance. This is apparent from the interviews I conducted with seniors in the East Indian community. As time progresses, their grandchildren soon attend school and as a result most of these seniors are left alone at home; most do find adequate leisure time pursuits.

On the other hand, there are probably a number of Elderly East Indian Immigrants (E.E.I.I.) who fail to develop adequate leisure time pursuits. For these individuals, feelings of social isolation deepen, thereby contributing to a poor quality of life.

Cultural barriers, such as language, and the demands of Canadian cultural norms can prohibit one's access to the mainstream of Canadian society. Communication can be a real problem because many East Indian immigrants cannot speak each other's dialect. India is a country of 16 official languages and hundreds of different dialects. To add to their adaptation woes, extended family ties that were once part of their everyday lives no longer exist. The adult child's smaller nuclear family also decreases the number of social interactions that for years had been a part of their daily lives. This is compounded because few of their relatives (extended family) reside in their geographic vicinity. The necessity for both parents of their children's nuclear family to work outside the home further diminishes their opportunities to experience the familiar interactions that would be common place in their homeland. In addition the absence of any adult family members at home during the day virtually isolates these elderly immigrants, contributing to chronic boredom and severe frustrations over time.

The frustrations experienced by East Indian seniors are often internalized and rarely shared with their children because of cultural customs prohibiting their expression. Therefore these seniors may end up with serious psychological problems and could be mistakenly labelled as senile seniors.

The belief systems (such as arranging marriages for their offspring) that may have been embedded in their religion, folklore, and ethnic culture that once supported their structures and institutions, are no longer supported by present Canadian society. The older individual's traditional values also may not fit in the Canadian mosaic and they may develop psychosocial problems and return to their homeland. The numbers (that one hears through word of mouth) that leave Canada can attest to this fact.

Following referral by their children to out patient clinics and hospitals, many are labelled under various forms of senile dementia. Few take any steps other than prescribed drugs to relieve their anxiety. Many fear the possibility of being institutionalized because of their beliefs and cultural norms. To be institutionalized in India for psychological reasons often means being ostracized from the rest of society, labelled, and a stigma attached to one's family.

Upon discussion with several East Indian physicians, family care givers, and nurses in the Calgary area who deal with these people, one is left with the impression that they have found it difficult to deal with this ethnic population. This is because few seniors accept the Canadian norm of telling agency personal about their personal concerns. As a result a few are treated for their actual problems with a prescription for drugs from a

physician. When the problem may be one of social isolation associated with lower satisfaction with life and a consequent decrease in quality of life by lack of adjustment to a new environment.

From the conversations held with East Indian professionals in Calgary, and my personal experience with this population, I believe there exists a gap in knowledge about the psychosocial issues that plague this population.

### Study Purpose

The purpose of the study is to establish an understanding of those factors that affect the quality of life for the elderly East Indian immigrant. More specifically the intent of this study is to examine the extent to which social isolation affects life satisfaction of elderly East Indian immigrants, in relation to their integration into Canadian society.

The study is premised on the assumption that social isolation of elderly East Indians can affect the life satisfaction thereby restricting their overall quality of life.

The overall variable relationships suggested in this study can be modelled as follows:

**Social Isolation ---> Life satisfaction ---> Quality of Life**

The research question: Is life satisfaction dependent on social isolation of elderly East Indian immigrants?

### Hypothesis

Therefore it is hypothesized that: If one is socially isolated it would mean that one is less satisfied with life. i.e. If social isolation is high, life satisfaction is low. As social isolation increases so would social adjustment problems resulting in a poor quality of life, or as social isolation decreases social adjustment problems would diminish, resulting in greater social integration and enjoyment of a higher quality of life.

### Relevance

A study to examine the quality of life in the elderly East Indian immigrant population will greatly enhance social work interpersonal practice with one ethnic minority population. For many administrators of social agencies that provide services to this population, a study like this will help provide cost effective services by dealing with some of these senior's illnesses which are largely the result of social isolation problems leading to depression and other mental illnesses.

Quite often admitting staff in hospitals and social agencies spend a considerable amount of time with senior immigrants who do not understand the helping system of this new country. Frequently they are misunderstood and do not receive culturally sensitive care from hospital staff. Hospitals for example seldom keep records on ethnicity and therefore do not consider patients cultural needs.

The information provided here also can be useful at various stages of the intervention sequence such as counselling, assessment, referral and treatment. The research is also important as it will examine factors that protect immigrants from social



isolation in a new environment and provide some understanding on the factors that impinge on the quality of life for elderly East Indian immigrants.

The adjustment difficulties of immigrants in a new society concern health professionals, social planners, health care providers, community and government agencies. Excessive social stress can result from the immigrant's social isolation, cultural conflicts, poor social integration and assimilation, role changes, and low socio economic status. For the elderly East Indian immigrant, the social stress could lead to a high prevalence of ill health and psychological impairment that may require intervention. The present research hopes to obtain crucial information on the needs and problems of the elderly East Indian immigrant as they strive to integrate into their new society.

The research is also important as it will examine factors that protect immigrants from psychological distress and social isolation, and will help to specify many stress mediating factors that contribute to successful adaptation.

#### Researchability

The problem exists within the empirical domain and can be researched. The variables of social isolation and family support can be compared against scores on a life satisfaction scale and verified to see if they have significance for the population identified. The results obtained from a study like this also can be used in reducing the difficulties experienced by the elderly East Indian immigrant population. The results, in a limited way, can be used to apply to other ethnic elderly immigrant populations who exhibit similar life style issues.

### Feasibility

Looking at the time and resources that were available to accomplish this study the following should be noted.

**Time:** The elderly East Indian immigrant population that was the focus of the research were located through the help of the Presidents of the India Canada Seniors Association and the Canada Overseas Seniors Association of Calgary. The collection of data was done between the February and May 1991.

**Financial considerations:** The cooperation of the people for the study did require some expenditure from the researcher. These costs were for travel for the interviewer and refreshments for interviewees. There was no use of high cost equipment. The researcher conducted some interviews in the senior's residences. Some of these questionnaires (which were self administered) were handed to the presidents of the association for distribution to those who were interested in being part of the survey. There were no salaries paid and data analysis was done by the researcher alone, in other words, no research assistantship was used.

**Difficulties:** Occasionally appointments set for interviews were not kept by respondents. It was difficult to interview seniors by telephone when their adult children were at home. Many seniors were reluctant to speak during these periods over the phone. On one occasion an interview in the home done with a senior had to use the interpretation services of a family member who was open about the difficulties experienced by the elderly. During interviews seniors often went off on a tangent talking about other issues and it was difficult at times to put them on track regarding the questions to be answered.

### Potential Ethical Issues.

A letter of introduction given to the respondents mentioned that participation in the survey was voluntary and that anonymity would be maintained. Each individual's consent was obtained before the interviewing process. A general summary of the results was made available to the participants where requested. The research was conducted within the guidelines of the ethics committee of The University of Calgary.

### Variables

This study examines the relationship between the variables of social isolation and life satisfaction. Each variable is examined from the following perspectives. First the conceptual definition of the variable is discussed, then the variable is operationally defined, and finally a measurement for the variable is selected. Each measurement scale selected is examined in respect to its reliability and validity.

### Plan for Remainder of Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter Two is a review of the literature on social isolation and life satisfaction that is relevant to this study. This chapter also includes a definition of social isolation and life satisfaction. Chapter Three outlines the methodology used in the study. First it examines how these variables have been operationalized then it looks at measurement issues and examines the reliability and validity of the scales used. This chapter also looks at sampling methods and the design of the study. Chapter Four presents the findings. Chapter Five, the final chapter outlines the overall conclusions and discusses the implications for social work practice.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Adjustment and Adaptation

Immigration implies that adjustment and consequent adaptation lead to integration into the cultural fabric of the host society ( Burnam, Hough, Karno, Escobar, & Telles 1987). Although the problems of resettling in another country are substantial, Indra (1983) claims that there is little documentation on the impact of immigration on the older person's physical, social and emotional levels of functioning. The literature on relocation among the elderly provides some evidence of the potential impact of geographic mobility and how those who immigrate in their latter years may be rendered vulnerable. These studies portray relocation as a threatening event that may manifest itself in undesirable physical, emotional and social consequences. These adverse consequences of relocation have also been investigated in terms of negatively influencing health and levels of functioning.

Several researchers have reported that extensive environmental change can result in the behavioral psychological and physical deterioration in elderly (Aldrich & Mendkoff, 1963; Bourestrom & Tars, 1974; Kastelar, Gray & Carruth, 1968; Killian, 1970; Miller & Lieberman, 1965).

The occurrence of a significant life event results in change and adaptation by the individual. One point of view is that the change and adaptation required makes the life event stressful. Seyle (1956) suggested that any type of environmental change, either

pleasant or unpleasant, requiring the individual to adapt, can produce a specific stress response. There is, however, increasing evidence that relocation is not necessarily a negative stress phenomenon. Relocation to a new environment may increase life satisfaction and functioning especially for those who are able to cope with the change (Gutman & Hubert, 1976; Zweig & Csank, 1975).

Research by Cobb (1976) and House (1981) found that supportive social relations facilitate adjustment to difficult environmental transitions and stressful life events. The availability of emotional support and social interaction with kin are particularly regarded as beneficial in serving as a 'buffer' against negative outcomes from the major transition to old age. It is notable that much of the literature focuses on intergenerational relationships due to the special significance that children and grand children are believed to hold in the lives of aging individuals (Sussman, 1976; Troll, Miller, Atchley, 1979; & Atchely & Miller (1980). In essence families remain the most important support system for older people.

#### Life Satisfaction

Shulman (1975), in a general study of individual relationships using an aged mix sample, found that relationships are an important contributing factor to an individual's life satisfaction. Kahn (1979) and Kahn & Antonucci (1980) also attest to the significance of social relations for well being in the elderly and that social networks are especially important resources for older adults, (Dunkel-Schetter and Wortman, 1981; Plisuk and Minkler, 1980; Tobin and Neugarten, 1961).

Conner, Powers & Bultena (1979) found that social interaction with immediate family members, siblings and relatives enhance life satisfaction in the elderly. Weeks & Cuellar (1981) examined the helping social networks of older people in Black, Hispanic, Pilipino, Gaumanian, Samoan, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, American Indian and native born non minority groups. They found that immigrants are more likely than native born people to have family members to turn to in times of needs. They found this especially true for Asian immigrants where filial relationships tend to be strongest. Revicki & Mitchell (1986) in studying the factor of social support in 210 elderly found that the dimensions of social support have unique qualities and exhibit different relationships with life satisfaction. Adams (1971) examined the correlates of satisfaction among the elderly and found that social relations have consistently demonstrated a positive relationship with life satisfaction.

Larson (1978) in his review of thirty years of research on subjective well being in older Americans identified the relationship between social interaction and well being. For actual tabulations of the frequency of informal activities such as visiting with friends and neighbours, a positive association to well being was found (Edwards & Klemmack 1973; Lemon, Bengtson & Peterson 1972; Pihlbad & Adams 1972; Smith and Lipman 1972).

### Social Isolation

Social isolation or loneliness has been described as "a situation experienced by the participant as one when there is an unpleasant or inadmissible lack of (quality of) certain social relationships" (De Jong-Gierveld, 1987, p.119-128). This description also

characterizes situations in which the number and the nature of desired relationships are smaller and less intimate than wished for.

There are many research studies on the concept of loneliness (Perlmann and Pelau, 1981; De Jong- Giervald, 1987); some of these studies have correlated loneliness with the number of available relationships (Cutrona & Peplau, 1979; Fischer & Phillips, 1982; Rubenstein & Shaver, 1980). Research on age and loneliness in general shows that loneliness increases with age and that all else being equal, older people are at risk of greater isolation (Fischer & Phillips, 1982).

Dolakia, Zachariah, & Mcneill (1987) in a study of 100 South Asians elderly immigrants found that 73% of the immigrants experienced loneliness as a result of missing their friends in the new environment.

Goode (1963) suggested that migration increased social isolation and destroyed the extended kin network. This idea was popularized a few years later by Vance Packard's book, A Nation of Strangers (1972). Indeed, Arling (1976, p.67) has noted that the problem of social isolation has been an area of continuous inquiry in social gerontology, and Field (1972) has suggested that migration of older people themselves leads to disintegration of the social life of older people.

Chappel and Badger (1989) examined 10 common indicators of social isolation and found that the combined indicators of living alone and being unmarried as well as single indicators of having no companions or having no confidants were related to bivariate

levels of both measures of well being. Okun & Stock, Haring and Witter (1984) found that social activity is positively and significantly related to well being.

Further, since older people are less geographically mobile than younger people, aging may increase isolation through the selective migration of family members. Migration therefore is a two edged sword (Weeks & Cuellar; 1983). Not only may it affect isolation of those who are left behind, but it may lead to at least temporary isolation of immigrants themselves. It is then often the case that older people who have migrated are more socially isolated than other older people.

From the above it is quite evident that being an elderly immigrant and not having appropriate social interaction contacts with family, extended family or friends in the community in the new environment can lead to isolation and compromise in one's quality of life. The literature cited above reflects some of the issues faced by the elderly East Indian immigrant population, in respect to their integration into the mainstream of Canadian society or replacing the extended family with appropriate services.

#### Conceptual Definition of Quality of Life

Quality of Life ' in the literature is referred to as " the good life " over the individual's life span (Snider, 1980; Lawton, 1983; Edwards & Klemmack, 1983). The good life is perceived quality of life as the set of evaluations that a person makes about each major domain of his or her life. Although no attempt has been made to develop a taxonomy or a theoretical rationale for the choice of domains, there is reasonably good consensus



that 12 to 16 domains cover the aspects of life that are most salient to most people. Some of these domains are health, socio-economic status, marital status, happiness, behaviour, activity and social interaction, morale, residential quality, age, occupation and income.

The domain of health is a fundamental contributor to quality of life. The gerontological literature suggests that the amount of life satisfaction with a domain of life is a strong determinant of psychological well being (Liang, Dvorkin, Khana, Mazian, 1980). Psychological well being has also been shown to be related to perceived quality of life in almost every domain (Lawton, 1978). Lawton, (1982a) defines the behavioral domain as " the theoretical upper limit of capacity of the individual to function in the areas of biological health, sensation and perception, motor behaviour, and cognition" (p.38). These constructs, however are not directly measurable. For example Performance on intelligence test of time taken to solve a problem are behavioral indicators of intelligence.

For the purpose of this study 'quality of life' or 'the good life' is considered to reflect psychological well being, perceived quality of life in Canada, behavioral competence to define desirable personal qualities, of the individual and appropriate adaptive behaviour to the new environment. This would include several domains that would reflect life satisfaction in various areas of life in a new environment.

### Conceptual Definition of Social Isolation

The literature overwhelmingly highlights the problem of social isolation and its associated symptoms, effects and consequences for elderly people. The concept itself, however, is not clearly defined. However, most authors imply that social isolation means to have few contacts with family, friends and the community ( Weiss, 1973; Cox, 1972; Bottomley, 1980).

Weiss (1973, p.145) states that the move to a new neighbourhood or new region of the country could cause social isolation due to the absence of established contacts. Weiss fails to note, that migration to a new country also could compound the problem. The literature cites that migration intensifies the problem of social isolation (Bradshaw, 1984). This is primarily due to the difficulties arising from language barriers and the differences in cultural and social background (Bottomley, 1980; Dholakia, Zachariah & Mcneill 1987, Weeks, 1983). Hence the focus will be on immigration as it exacerbates social isolation.

For the purpose of this study social isolation is defined as the condition whereby one has very few contacts with his or her personal support networks (including extended family) and the emotional support derived from these contacts is limited. Additionally, one does not have the knowledge of existing community services to turn to for support. The term 'support networks ' will refer to the following:

- a. Familial support networks, include spouse, children, grandchildren and relatives.
- b. Social support networks, including friends, acquaintances, and neighbours.

- c. Community support networks, including community services, physicians and religious heads.

### Ethnicity in Relation to Social Isolation

Weeks (1983) suggests that although immigration seems to exert an overall low level of influence on isolation, ethnicity independently appears to exert a greater influence. Language and culture can cause social isolation of new migrants. In a broad sense, the concept of ethnicity includes differences in race, religion, language, cultural, traditions, and national origin. More specifically, ethnicity implies belonging to a particular group and being linked to it by common hereditary and cultural traditions.

Ethnicity also can be defined as a group's perception of itself as unique based on cultural symbols and values. Common to the ethnic group is a shared feeling of 'peoplehood', and a common sense of past and future.

Ethnicity may be defined as a characteristic of a population who are of the same or different nationalities/ races, but bound together by a common history, geography, customs, and way of life. East Indians in this context will be defined as:

- a. People who share the family values and beliefs of Indian society.
- b. People who consider religion as an essential component of culture, be they followers of Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity or Islam.
- c. People who share ethnic identity by common stories, artistic depictions, dramatization or rituals.
- d. People who can speak or understand a common language.

### Social Isolation as it Relates to Family Support

Much of the gerontological literature on family support provides considerable support to the fact that family members play a crucial role in the well being of the elderly. Varying cultural patterns place different emphases on the obligations of children toward parents and on the nature of the parent-child relationship ( Guttman, 1979; Ikels, 1980). In India, as in most Asian societies, the pattern of family help is qualitatively different from the norms in urbanized North America. The duty of children to their parents is regarded as unconditional and absolute regardless of the objective worthiness of their parents. There are of course many expectations to this ideal expectation.

Family support for elders arises from filial piety. Because older migrants who are frequently followers of children they continue to foster close family ties. In this sense family support should be viewed as:

- a. Support of spouse, children, and In-laws resident in the family.
- b. The emotional support in fulfilling their change in role in the nuclear family brought about by migration to Canada.
- c. The extended family social support of relatives in their immediate geographic vicinity.
- d. Financial support to carry on social activities to maintain the quality of life similar to the home environment. The availability of funds for transportation to churches, temples or mosques to attend religious ceremonies and outings with their peer groups.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter will present the different ways that social isolation and quality of life have been operationalized in the literature. The method of data collection, sampling and the rationale employed in the choice of the study design is also discussed. The different views expressed in the literature is now presented.

#### Operationalization of Quality of Life

A great deal of research has been done over the past 30 years on life satisfaction, and contentment of people over 60 years. These studies are unified by their parallel objective of assessing the general affective experience of older persons in terms of a positive continuum. This research study hopes to establish certain relationships between measures of this positive-negative affective dimension and the exigencies of elderly life situations.

Poor health, low income, and lack of social interaction, among other things are clearly related to lower expressed satisfaction with life, lower morale, and lower contentment. Further, these negative situational conditions, particularly low income, appear to be related to a greater vulnerability to the impact of other negative life situation exigencies. This study will deal with this positive -negative affective dimension referred to as 'subjective well- being'. Subjective well being can indicate that life satisfaction is being achieved thereby pointing to a high 'quality of life'.

A variety of approaches have been taken to measuring the domain of subjective well being for older people. Research on this area began with attempts to assess people's adjustment (Havighurst, 1957). These early measures defined well being in terms of adjustment within specified domains of a person's life, such as work, health, and religion.

The concept of " well being " offers a broad perspective for assessing the adversities faced by the immigrant. This research hopes to explore how elderly East Indian immigrants perceive and assess their subjective and objective life conditions in the following domains: living situation, family relations, social relations, leisure activities, finance, personal safety and health. Therefore the definition for this study will use both the subjective measure and an external measure to infer quality of life.

The Life Satisfaction Index (LSI-Z) questionnaire developed by Neugarten, Havighurst and Tobin (1961) and revised by Adams, Woods, Wylie, Sheafor (1969) provides a good operationalization measure of life satisfaction for the elderly immigrant. Further discussion on why it was chosen follows in the next chapter of the study. External measures for quality of life will be supported through the completion of the questionnaire as indicated in Appendix-111.

### Operationalization of Social Isolation

The general tendency in gerontological research into social isolation is to separately define social isolation and possible psychological correlates of that isolation, namely, emotional isolation, loneliness and decreased well-being. The concept is frequently operationalized either as no contact generally or no contact with particular types of

others, such as family members. Townsend (1957) based his operationalization on meaningful contact, or more than a causal meeting, with family and community. Tec and Granick (1960) based their measure on a 3- point scale, including: no contact with relatives, no living children, being unemployed for 10 years or more, and living alone.

Coe, Wolinsky, Miller, & Prendergast (1985) defined isolates as persons who have no family in the metropolitan area. Lowenthal (1976) referred to isolates as those having only causal contacts, or no contacts with others for a two week period before the interview. Weeks and Cuellar (1983) defined isolation in terms of degree of contact with family and friends. From the literature cited above one can see that although social isolation has been an area of continuous inquiry several different methods have been employed to measure social isolation.

Loneliness is a problem for many elderly people in different societies. Understanding the condition of loneliness in the elderly has been impeded by its hidden nature and lack of conceptual clarity.

Loneliness is a distressing problem for many people especially among the elderly who are subjected to a change of living environment. The link between loneliness, immigration and serious individual and social problems and difficulties will be explored with the use of the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Peplau, & Ferguson, 1978). The 20-item scale has high internal consistency and has shown to be an adequate measure of loneliness as a distinct psychological experience (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980).

Intergenerational aspects of the acculturation experience will be assessed by a number of specific items relating to living or not living with family that have or do not have grandchildren, respect for the elderly, social areas of concern with respect to family life through the external set of questions as indicated in Appendix-111. This will then provide a measurement of social isolation in the elderly East Indian population.

#### Measurement of Quality of Life.

Quality of life has been equated with well being and has been measured by life satisfaction indices, (Larson, 1978; Conner, Powers, Edward and Bultena, 1979; Weeks & Cuellar, 1981; Okun, Stock, Haring, & Witter, 1984). However, insufficient attention has been given to the development of psychometrically valid and reliable instruments that measure life satisfaction. This has been mainly due to the lack of clarity of the concept of life satisfaction. Although several authors ( Taylor, 1977; Rosow, 1977; Nydeggar, 1977) have given serious consideration to the clarification of these concepts, clearly, most researchers working in this area have addressed it only on the most superficial level. The resultant situation has left the conceptualization of these concepts, on both the nominal and operational level, in an elusive state.

Among all the elements of an older person's life situation, the domain of health is the most strongly related to well being. Most studies show that the domain of health is a fundamental contributor to quality of life. Health has a positive association with socio economic status (Kunter, Franschel, Togo,& Langner, 1956) and employment (Marden & Burnight, 1969).



For the purpose of this study ' quality of life' or ' the good life' is considered to reflect psychological well being, integration in the mainstream of Canadian society, perceived quality of life in Canada, behavioral competence to define desirable personal qualities of the individual and appropriate adaptive behaviour to the new environment.

This research will explore how the elderly East Indian immigrants perceive and assess their subjective and objective life conditions in the following areas: living situation, family relations, social relations, leisure activities, finance, personal safety and health. The assessment of quality of life will be accomplished by completing the above mentioned self-rating scale Life Satisfaction Index.

This rating scale uses the individual's own evaluations as the point of reference and is somewhat independent of the level of activity or social participation. In other words it looks at an individual's level of satisfaction with life at different time periods.

The Life Satisfaction scores provide a good measure of psychological well being and provides indicators of adjustment and successful aging, or more generally indicators of mental health ( Stones & Kozma, 1980).

This scale appears easy to administer to older populations and therefore will be appropriate to use with the elderly East Indian population, although, Woods, Wylie, and Sheafor (1969) indicated that the scale was more successful for use with men than with women.

### Reliability of the Life Satisfaction Index

In order for an instrument to be helpful in research one must use a fairly reliable instrument. Internal consistency of an instrument should be at least .80 or of higher consistency. Wood, Wylie, and Sheafor (1969) reported that the Kunder - Richardson 20 reliability for the LSI- Z was .79. Adams (1969) evaluated the reliability of this test. The D values indicated that all items except item 11 fell within the acceptable range from 20% to 80%. Therefore it is reliable as a measure and has been used by several researchers.

### Validity of the Life Satisfaction Index

Several cross validation studies support this measure as valid (Neugarten, Havighurst and Tobin, 1961; Wood, Wylie, & Sheafor, 1969, & Lohmann, 1977). Correlations of these measures with other indicators of life satisfaction ranged from .38 to .88.

Several research studies have used the LSI-Z instrument, (Larson, 1978; Conner, Powers, Edward and Bultena, 1979; Okun et al.1984; Revicki & Mitchell, 1986). I therefore believed this scale would serve me as a good measure for this research study, and would provide a good indication of quality of life of E.E.I. immigrants.

### Other Measures for Life Satisfaction.

There are other single item indicators of life satisfaction and happiness, that could have been chosen to determine quality of life in the elderly immigrant. Strieb's (1956) single item question asks; ' On the whole, how satisfied are you with your way of life today? ' Rose's (1955) question asks, 'In general, how satisfied are you with your life ?'

Single item measures are not good indicators of life satisfaction for the elderly immigrant, because they are global measures of life satisfaction and have utility only in analyzing large samples of the population. Even so, their use in large sample studies have shown them to elicit responses that have been skewed towards high satisfaction.

The Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale (Thompson, Strieb, and Kosa 1966) was considered for this study. This scale was developed in the context of a large research effort conducted at Cornell University to examine occupational retirement. Little use of this scale has resulted in little information on its reliability and none on its validity. Therefore this scale would not serve as an adequate measure for the study proposed.

#### Measurement of Social Isolation

Although social isolation has been an area of continuous inquiry (Arling 1967), several different methods have been employed to measure social isolation. One method to study social isolation would be to record the number of hours a person spends by himself or by the number of contacts made with friends. However the weakness of this method may not tell us if the contacts which had to be made to the frail elderly were due to prevailing health conditions or initiated for the purpose of social friendly contact. Therefore they would not indicate social isolation. We would need more specific indicators of the problem.

#### Reliability of the Loneliness Scale

The revised UCLA loneliness scale has high internal consistency (with an alpha of .94) and has shown to be an adequate measure of loneliness as a distinct psychological experience (Russell, Peplau, & Cutrona, 1980).

### Validity of the Loneliness Scale

The revised UCLA scale has good concurrent validity correlating with several mood and personality measures (eg. , the Beck Depression Inventory and the Texas Social Behaviour Inventory), and particularly with a self labelling loneliness index. In addition, people, who were more lonely on the revised UCLA scale, reported more limited social activities and relationships and more emotions theoretically linked to loneliness. Finally, results showed the scale to be unaffected by social desirability response set as measured by the Marlowe - Crowne Social Desirability Inventory. Therefore I believed this scale was as an appropriate tool to measure social isolation.

### Data Collection

Most of the data for this research study was obtained by interviewing and by completion of a self administered questionnaire by East Indian seniors (55 years and over) who had immigrated to Calgary in the last 14 years. A total of 30 interviews were conducted from the sample population, in addition 40 survey questionnaires were completed by respondents.

Sample sizes were selected from lists of names provided by local ethnic associations to reflect proportionate numbers in the populations to arrive at a good reflection of the population being studied. Sampling was developed by use of the "snowball" technique and respondents were selected from these lists. This technique has been used by others (Beckman, 1981; Weeks & Cuellar, 1981; Kuo & Sai, 1986) in obtaining samples for surveys in which the target population are smaller groups from

which responses are difficult to solicit. With this technique members of a community are tapped and asked to identify others in the community.

Respondents were screened on their willingness to voluntarily participate in the study. Respondents were then followed up with a telephone contact to arrange an interview. The face to face interviews were conducted in the homes of the respondents or in appropriate facilities made available by community agencies or associations.

### Sampling

Seventy individuals were sampled, 40 of whom did not speak English and 30 who spoke English. From the 40 that did not speak English three respondents were interviewed. For these three respondents a community member served as a voluntary interpreter. For the remaining 37 who did not speak English, the interview questionnaire was translated into the Punjabi language, the language of the majority of the respondents. In sum a total of 32 males and 38 females were sampled.

As the total population list of all elderly immigrants was not available it was not possible to sample respondents on a truly random basis. Besides as this is a difficult target group to get willing respondents from, it was decided to draw the sample from as many sources as possible and limit the number of respondents from a particular area of the city. By doing so it was anticipated that the sample would be reasonably representative of the population being researched. The India Canada Association and

the Overseas Seniors Association served as a resources in identifying appropriate clients for the survey.

During February and March 1991, a concentrated effort was made by the researcher to contact proposed sources of respondents to acquaint them with the survey and the need for referrals. Letters were sent out and visits were made during routine meetings of these agencies. From these contacts approximately 80 possible subjects were obtained by the latter part of April, 1991. It became evident early in the study that sampling was going to be more difficult than anticipated. Elderly groups in general were not a productive source of subjects. This is not because they were unwilling to participate but because many elderly felt that it was a breach of privacy to forward names of senior friends. Some elderly people flatly denied that there was a need for such a survey. Efforts were made to attend monthly senior meetings and speak about the importance of such a study. It was only after these presentations and answering to their queries that seniors felt confident about the study and began to say that they would be willing to participate in the study.

#### Controlling for the Sampling Process

It was discovered in the early stages of the study that the majority of elderly East Indian immigrants in Calgary belonged to the Punjabi community. Therefore it was necessary to draw a slightly larger sample from the Punjabi community so as to avoid

any possible bias in the sampling process. From the various community presidents it is estimated that there were approximately 900 elderly immigrants who might have immigrated in the last 15 years. Therefore a ratio proportionate to the total population of at least 10% was required to be representative of the population. One other problem that was identified was that few elderly Punjabi females attended monthly community meetings, and there were more Punjabi males who could bias the sample of Punjabi respondents. Therefore it was necessary to maintain the representativeness of the gender sampling ratio. A Punjabi speaking social worker helped in identifying the appropriate number of elderly Punjabi females in the community. This proportional difference between males and females were also evident in the non Punjabi speaking groups, but was not to the same degree.

### Design

In selecting a research design that would be best suited for this study, one must first look at the relationships and the key concepts of the study. This study attempts to examine the relationships between social isolation and life satisfaction and see if this subsequently suggests a quality of life for elderly East Indian immigrants.

That is if X occurs then Y will probably result.

i.e. if Social isolation -----> Life satisfaction

i.e. if one is socially isolated then there is less chance of one being satisfied with life and if one is not socially isolated there is greater chance of one enjoying a quality of life.

The research study is not testing a particular phenomena or hypothesis that has been tested over a period of time. In explanatory designs that are best used in confirmatory research where the area under study is well developed, theories abound, and a testable hypothesis can be formulated on the basis of previous work. The arrival of elderly East Indian immigrants into Canada is a recent phenomenon that has mostly occurred in the last 15 years. Only a few studies exist on this population. As a result no theories exist in relation to the social isolation of elderly East Indian immigrants and their quality of life in Canadian society. The area of study is only to examine a relationship between the variables of social isolation and social adjustment. Therefore the study is more of an exploratory study and it is sensible to use a descriptive design (Grinnell, 1988).

There are four types of designs that one could select a the design for such a study. 1. Posttest only one group design, 2. Posttest only multigroup designs, 3. Posttest only comparison group designs, and 4. Pretest-posttest one group designs (Grinnell, 1988).

In examining the four descriptive designs, and selecting the posttest only design consideration was given to several factors. The rationale for selecting the posttest only design is now provided.

#### Rationale for the Choice of Design

1. The area of study is not well developed so no theories have been put forward. Therefore the study is not an explanatory study. It is an exploratory study. Hence a descriptive design i.e., X O is chosen. (Post test only)



2. The X O design is simple and reflects the principle of parsimony, a principle that has been suggested by Grinnell (1988) in the selection of a research design.
3. Given the resources and time available to complete my research study this design is practical in exploring the relationships (social isolation and life satisfaction) thereby achieving the objectives of the study.
4. This research design is capable of answering the research question that the study is seeking to answer. i.e. Is life satisfaction dependent on social isolation of elderly East Indian immigrants?

#### Advantages of the XO Design

The posttest only design is simple and practical to conduct. The resources required to describe and explore the relationships between the variables do not require a large amount of time and funds.

#### Disadvantages of the XO Design

1. As pointed out by Boring (1954) and Stouffer (1949) among other such designs have lack of control as to be of almost no scientific value, in that it is not a true experimental design.
2. The limitations of this design make it difficult to generalize to other immigrant groups.
3. According to Campbell & Stanley (1963) this design if taken with the implicit 'common knowledge' comparisons has the most of the weakness of all experimental designs.

### Practical Problems in Implementing this Design

1. The issue of language may be an issue in the interpretation of questions on the standardized questionnaire, which is part of the research design.
2. The effects of testing the elderly East Indian population may have reactive effects to the loneliness and life satisfaction questionnaire.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

In an exploratory study there is always a possibility of getting many directional answers or no answers. During the course of this study the researcher felt that seniors liked to be interviewed and voice their concerns as this was an opportunity for them to express their feelings. Many of these concerns were narrated to the researcher that provided a wide spectrum to the present study and helped the researcher find out certain facts. Thus to substantiate the arguments, relevant comments from the respondents are included where appropriate. This study is an exploratory study, therefore based on trends observed and verified through correlational analysis many sub questions were developed to attain the objectives of the study.

The research resulted in a comprehensive data base containing demographics of subjective and objective measurements about quality of life and assessments on social isolation. The research in many ways replicated previous findings relating to quality of life, loneliness and general well being of the elderly immigrant. An analysis of the data was completed by using the SPSS- PC statistical package, Norusis (1988). The analysis included the use of a one way analysis and t-test where appropriate to test certain

questions that were generated in the study. The main question of the study was subjected to a regression analysis for descriptive purposes only and not for inference of relationships or for testing hypotheses. In conclusion, this chapter has provided conflicting views of how quality of life and social isolation has been operationalized and measured. A discussion of the rationale for the study design had also been discussed. The findings of the study are presented in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS**

This section of the study will present the most interesting and significant trends that became apparent during the process of data analysis, such as patterns of relationships based around the main research question of the study. These patterns of relationships were identified after correlation tests were conducted on all the variables of the study. Further investigations of these relationships were conducted by use of one way analysis and t-tests. Subsequently sub questions were developed that were used to support the arguments for the main research question of the study.

Study question: Socially isolated elderly East Indian Immigrants are more likely to experience a low life satisfaction and consequently a lower quality of life than those who are less isolated.

The results for the main research question will be discussed after the patterns that emerged in the findings have been discussed. From the patterns that were obtained in the findings sub questions were developed. These sub questions are now discussed.

Question 1. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' feelings about their family in general and their social isolation?

Question 2. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' feelings about their family in general and their life satisfaction?

Question 3. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' living arrangements and their social isolation?

Question 4. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' living arrangements and their life satisfaction?

Question 5. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' satisfaction with changes made to the new culture and their social isolation?

Question 6. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' satisfaction with changes made to the new culture and their life satisfaction?

Question 7. Are there no significant differences between the time elderly East Indian immigrants spend in the home and their social isolation?

Question 8. Are there no significant differences between the time elderly East Indian immigrants spend in the home and their life satisfaction?

Question 9. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants in having friends and their social isolation?

Question 10. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants in having friends and their life satisfaction?

Question 11. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' gender and their social isolation?

Question 12. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' gender and their life satisfaction?

Question 13. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants going out of their house and their social isolation?

Question 14: Are there no significant differences between elderly immigrant's social isolation and life satisfaction?

The sub-questions were the supporting questions that linked the variables of social isolation and life satisfaction to the main question of the study (Question 14). The full framework of the study consisted of 41 variables and 2 standardized tests. The key variables social isolation and life satisfaction were measured using standardized tests, all of which are listed in Appendix -1. Social isolation was measured using the UCLA Loneliness scale and life satisfaction was measured using the revised Life Satisfaction Index.

To better understand the information resulting from social isolation and life satisfaction of elderly East Indian immigrants, it is necessary to have some background information about the respondents who were interviewed for this study. Background information will be explored briefly and reference will be made to the demographics where related to the themes and emerging sub questions.

### Demographics

A total of 70 elderly immigrants of East Indian origin were sampled who had immigrated to Canada between 1975 and 1989. The majority 15 or (21%) had immigrated in 1985.

Many of the immigrants 63 or (90%) were sponsored immigrants to Canada. From the response received 4 or (6%) indicated that they had come as independent immigrants and 3 or (4%) came to Canada as refugees.

Most immigrants were married 53 or (76%) compared to 14 or (20%) who were widowed and 2 or (3%) who said that they were never married. Only 1 or (1%) indicated that they were divorced.

The findings showed that the total sample comprised of 38 or (54%) females and 32 or (46%) males. The findings indicated that 65 or (93%) of the respondents had their children in Calgary.

The respondents indicated that 62 or (89%) resided with their children only 8 or (11%) did not reside with their children. This shows that most sponsored immigrants that came to Calgary lived with their children. The study used two standardized tests. A brief description of the test and what it means is now presented.

### Tests

Two standardized test were administered. The UCLA Loneliness scale and the Life Satisfaction Index as discussed in Chapter 3. High scores on the life satisfaction scale indicate a high life satisfaction and low scores on the life satisfaction scale indicate lower satisfaction with life. Correspondingly high scores on the loneliness scale indicate greater loneliness and low scores on the loneliness scale indicate lesser loneliness. There is no

cutting score for these scales. The maximum scores that were obtained were twenty-six on the LSI-Z scale and seventy six for the UCLA loneliness scale. The results of the standardized test UCLA scale and the LSI--Z scores are now presented.

#### Scores on Social Isolation

The results indicated that the respondents had a mean social isolation score of 52.10 with a mode of 58.00. The social isolation scores ranged from a minimum of 23 to a maximum score of 76. These high scores indicate that a significant number of elderly are socially isolated.

#### Scores on Life Satisfaction

The results indicated that the respondents had a mean score of 9.65 on the Life Satisfaction Index and a mode of 6.00. The scores ranged from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 20. These results indicate that on the average elderly E.I.I.had an average score of 9.65 and were not satisfied with life.

Comparative studies for LSI in a Kansas study by Wood, Wylie & Sheafor (1969) indicated a score of 11.6 out of a possible score of 26. The mean loneliness score on the UCLA reported by Russell, Peplau and Cutrona (1980) was 37.06. This shows that the E.E.I. immigrants mean life satisfaction score of 9.65 is close to the Kansas study although it is still below the mean score of 11.6. However E.E.I. immigrants social isolation score on the UCLA scale of 52.10 was much higher than the mean score of 37.06 reported by Russell et al.(1980). The results of the findings will now be discussed in light of the emerging questions related to the main question of the study.

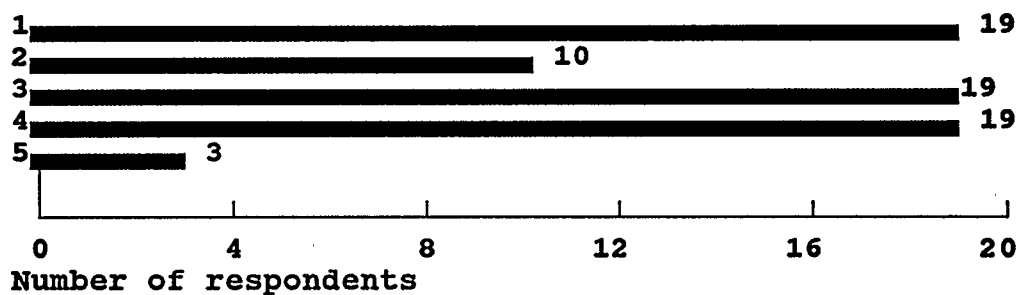


Question 1. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' feelings about their family in general and their social isolation?

Social isolation and feelings of family in general

Feelings generated by E.E.I. immigrants about their families can be influenced by several factors in the new environment. 1. milieu of family environment, 2. physical living arrangements, 3. the role provided to the elderly within the nuclear family structure and the household structure (number of members living in the family). These factors can influence their socialization patterns and provide an indication of their social isolation. In order to get an understanding of E.E.I. feelings about their family in general five categories were used: Unhappy, dissatisfied, mixed, satisfied and pleased.

Figure 1. Feelings about family in general



**Note..1=Unhappy, 2=dissatisfied, 3=mixed, 4=satisfied, 5=pleased.**

The results indicated 19 or (27%) were unhappy, 10 or (14%) were dissatisfied, 19 or (27%) had mixed feelings, 19 or (27%) were satisfied and only 3 or (4%) were pleased. The responses were equally divided into 3 categories (unhappy, mixed, satisfied). In order to see if the responses between social isolation and respondent's feelings about

their family had any significance a one way analysis was conducted. Results of the one way analysis are indicated in table 1.

Table-1

Results of one way analysis of social isolation by feeling of family in general

Sum of Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	4504.1	1126.0	9.297	.0000
Within Groups	65	7872.1	121.11		
Total	69	12376			

From the one way analysis indicated in table 1 we can see that significant relationships exists ( F Prob=.0000) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  significance level. ( $P < .05$  significance level used as convention for this study). This means that there is a significant difference between the respondents' feelings in general about their family and their social isolation. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrants' feelings about their family in general and their social isolation can be rejected. What this means is that there is a significant relationship between feelings about E.E.I. immigrants and their family and their social isolation.

Examination of the significant relationships identified in table 1 are further shown by groups of respondents in table-2 to show that a difference in level of respondents' social isolation and feelings of family exist.

Table-2

Results of one-way analysis between social isolation  
and feelings of family in general by groups of respondents.

Mean	Group	4	3	5	1	2
44.3684	Grp 4					
46.3684	Grp 3					
48.0000	Grp 5					
59.3684	Grp 1			*	*	
65.1000	Grp 2			*	*	

Note.1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.

\*  $P < .05$

The above significance shows that:

1. Respondents who are unhappy (Group 1) differ significantly from respondents who were satisfied (Group 4) and respondents who had mixed feelings (Group 3) about their family in general.
2. Respondents who were dissatisfied (Group 2) differ from respondents who were satisfied and had mixed feelings about their family in general.

These results from table-2 indicate that low social isolation scores are related to higher satisfaction of families in general and high social isolation scores are related to dissatisfaction with the family in general, which confirms our main hypothesis.

In addition we can also conclude from the one way analysis with an  $F\text{-Prob.} = .0000$  which is  $P < .05$  indicates that we can reject the null hypothesis that there are no differences between family feelings in general and social isolation and accept the alternative that there is a significant relationship between social isolation and feelings of the family in general.

Question 2. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' feelings about their family in general and their life satisfaction?

Elderly East Indian immigrants are an integral part of East Indian families. By and large the feelings indicated by them about their families can be an indication of the general life satisfaction levels about their family. When they are not feeling satisfied about their family in general they are more likely to voice their frustrations about their family in private. A comment made by one respondent, indicates his level of frustration:

'In Canada, on one hand, I am provided with food and shelter. However, several conditions in the family restrict my freedom, to enjoy life as I please.'

In order to see if there were differences between life satisfaction scores and feelings about their family in general a one way analysis was conducted. The results of the one way analysis are indicated in table-3.

Table-3

Results of oneway analysis between life satisfaction and feelings of family in general

Sum of source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	990.9	247.73	13.45	.0000
Within Groups	64	1178.7	18.41		
Total	68	2169.6			

From the one way analysis indicated in table-3 we can see that significant differences exist ( F- Prob=.0000) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  significance level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrants feelings about their family in general and their life satisfaction can be rejected. What this means is that a significant relationship between the respondent's feelings in general about their family and their life satisfaction exist. Table-4 shows that a difference in level of respondent's life satisfaction and feelings of family exists.

Table-4

One-way analysis between life satisfaction and feelings of family in general by group of respondents.

Mean	Group	2	1	3	4	5
4.4000	Grp 2					
5.8421	Grp 1					
12.4211	Grp 3	*	*			
12.5000	Grp 4	*	*			
16.6667	Grp 5	*	*			

Note.1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.  
\*  $P < .05$

The above significance indicates that:

1. People who are unhappy (Group 1) differ significantly in their life satisfaction from people who have mixed feelings (Group 3) satisfied (Group 4) and pleased (Group 5) about their family in general.
2. People who are dissatisfied (Group 2) differ from people that had mixed feelings (Group 3), satisfied (Group 4) and pleased ( Group 5) about their family in general.

Respondents who were dissatisfied indicated a mean life satisfaction score of 4.40 on the life satisfaction index and respondents who were pleased indicated a mean score of 16.66. This shows that negative feelings about families correlates to low life satisfaction and positive feelings about family indicate higher life satisfaction.

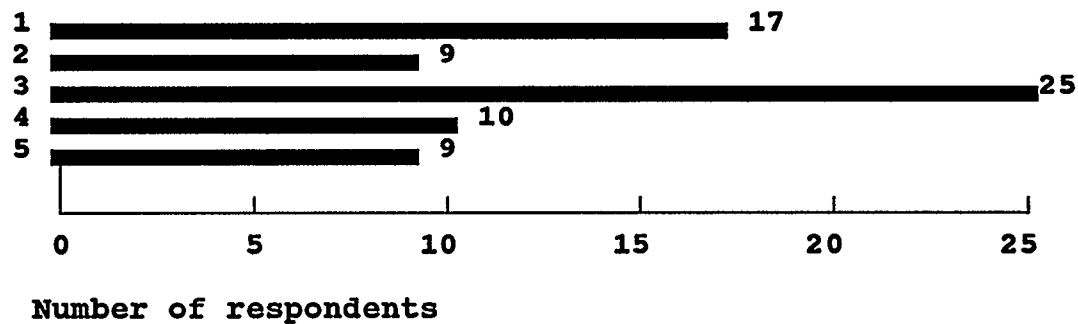
Thus we can conclude from the one-way analysis with an  $F\text{-Prob.} = .0000$  which is  $P < .05$  indicates that we can reject the null hypothesis between family feelings in general and life satisfaction and accept the alternative and say that there is a significant statistical relationship between life satisfaction and feelings of the family in general.

Question 3. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' living arrangements and their social isolation?

Living arrangements meant geographic space in which family resided and the environment of residence. Living arrangements can indicate conditions where one is socially isolated. To obtain a feeling of the respondent's living arrangements, respondents were asked to rate their living arrangements on a scale of 1 to 5. Categories for responses were: 1. unhappy 2. dissatisfied 3. mixed 4. satisfied and 5. pleased.

The results show that 17 or (24%) were unhappy, 9 or (13%) were dissatisfied, 10 or (14%) were satisfied and 9 or (13%) were pleased. Most of the respondents 25 or (36%) had mixed feelings about their living arrangements. This is shown in the following bar chart.

Figure 2. Feelings about living arrangements



Note..1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.

According to the respondents who lived with their in-laws, living arrangements provided to them were not conducive to enjoy a quality of life. Many respondents during interviews which were conducted away from the home felt they were restricted in their freedom to do things at home as they pleased. Hence many expressed dissatisfaction about their living arrangements at home. Some of the respondents said living arrangements hampered conditions to prepare meals of their choice, and lack of alternate T.V. sets in the home prevented them watching shows of their choice. As cited by one respondent:

'How do you expect me to watch football or hockey games? I'm a person who knows nothing about the game, and who had an interest in cricket in his past life'.

In order to check if there were differences between living arrangements and social isolation a one way analysis of social isolation with living arrangements was conducted. The results are as presented in the table-5.

Table 5

One-way analysis between social isolation and living arrangements

Sum of source	D.F.	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	4639.0	1159.7	9.7432	.0000
Within Groups	65	7737.2	119.03		
Total	69	12376			

From the one way analysis indicated in table-5 we can see that significant differences exist ( F- Prob= .0000) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  significance level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrant's living arrangements and their social isolation can be rejected. A significant relationship between the respondents living arrangements and their social isolation exists. Significant relationships identified in table-6 are further shown by groups of respondents in table-6 to show that a difference in level of respondent's living arrangements and social isolation exist.

Table-6

One-way analysis between social isolation and living arrangements by groups of respondents

Mean	Group	5	4	3	1	2
36.3333	Grp 5					
45.3000	Grp 4					
51.6800	Grp 3	*				
59.4118	Grp 1	*	*			
62.7778	Grp 2	*	*	*		

(\*)  $P < .05$

Note.1=Unhappy, 2=dissatisfied, 3=mixed, 4=satisfied, 5=pleased.



The one way analysis shows that people who were unhappy (Group 1) were different from those who were mixed (Group 4) or pleased (Group 5). Those who were dissatisfied (Group 2) were also different from those who were mixed (group 3) satisfied (group 4) and pleased (Group 5).

Low social isolation mean scores (36.33) were indicated by those who were pleased with their families and high social isolation scores (62.77) were indicated by those who were dissatisfied about their living arrangements.

Hence we can conclude from the one-way analysis (with a  $F\text{-Prob.} = .0000$   $P < .05$ ) we can reject the null hypothesis between social isolation and living arrangements and accept the alternative and say that there is a statistically significant relationship between social isolation and feelings about living arrangements.

Question 4. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' living arrangements and their life satisfaction?

#### Life satisfaction and Living Arrangements

Life satisfaction of elderly East Indian immigrants can be affected by their living arrangements. In order to see if differences between living arrangements and their life satisfaction exist, a one way analysis of life satisfaction with living arrangements was conducted. The results are as presented in the table-7.

Table -7

One-way analysis between life satisfaction and living arrangements

Sum of source	D.F	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	868.04	217.01	10.67	.0000
Within Groups	64	1301.6	20.33		
Total	68	2169.6			

From the one-way analysis indicated in table-7, we can see that there is a significant difference (F-Prob=.0000) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrant's living arrangements and their life satisfaction can be rejected. What this means is that there is a significant relationship between the living arrangements and E.E.I. immigrants life satisfaction. These relationships are shown by level of group responses indicated in table-8.

Table-8

One-way analysis between life satisfaction and living arrangementsby groups of respondents

Mean	Group	2	1	4	3	5
5.1111	Grp 2					
5.8235	Grp 1					
10.8889	Grp 4	*	*			
11.1600	Grp 3	*	*			
16.0000	Grp 5	*	*		*	

(\*)  $P < .05$

Note.1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.

From table-8 we can see that people who were unhappy (group 1) and dissatisfied (group 2) were different from those who were satisfied (group 4). People who were

unhappy (group 1) and dissatisfied (group 2) were different from those who had mixed feelings (group 3) about their living arrangements.

People who were mixed (group 1) unhappy (group 2) and dissatisfied (group 3) were different from those who seemed pleased (group 5) about their living arrangements. This then shows that there is significant difference between groups of respondents at the .05 level.

Table -8 also indicates that respondents who are unhappy and dissatisfied have low scores on the life satisfaction index (5.11) and those with high life satisfaction indexes (16.00) are those who are pleased about their living arrangements. Thus we can conclude from the results of the one-way analysis (an F-Prob. = .0000 which is  $P < .05$ ) we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative that there is significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrant's feelings about their living arrangements and life satisfaction.

Question 5. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' changes made to the new culture and their social isolation?

#### Changes made to Culture

In the process of adjustment to new situations and environments one has two distinct, but related, tasks or changes to make: on one hand to respond to the requirements of the external situation; and on the other hand to respond to one's feelings about that situation. These two tasks are not necessarily dealt with simultaneously, but

the overall patterns tend to fall into two phases: one acute phase in which energy is directed at minimizing the impact of the stress and a reorganization phase in which the new reality is faced and accepted.

In the acute period, which is the immediate period after arrival, the immigrant may deny his/her feelings while attention is directed to practical matters; in the reorganization phase a gradual return to normal functioning and to the achievement of a new equilibrium with new feelings are integrated into the individual's life and self image.

Changes made to a new environment is difficult and every step of the way demands solutions to problems. Changes made to the new culture assumes adjustments made to external situations. For many young immigrants these changes provides a new learning of rules of the environment. However for elderly immigrants who have already developed structured patterns of living, changes can be difficult to make.

Positive changes made to self in a new culture means greater satisfaction in living and smoother functioning in which the elderly immigrant's diverse psychological activities are more or less in harmony with one another.

Negative changes on the other hand can mean social isolation. In order to see if elderly East Indian immigrants showed any differences in changes made to culture, a one way analysis was conducted. Results of the one way analysis are indicated in table-9.

Table-9

Results of one way analysis of social isolation by changes to culture

Sum of source	D.F	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	2548.4	637.10	4.213	.0043
Within Groups	65	9827.8	151.19		
Total	69	12376			

From the one-way analysis in table-9 we can see that significant relationships exist ( F- Prob=.0043) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  significance level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrants changes to culture and their social isolation can be rejected. Hence there is a significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrant's changes made to culture and social isolation. These relationships are shown by level of groups of respondents in table-10.

Table-10

Oneway analysis between social isolation and changes made to culture

by groups of respondents.

Mean	Group	5	4	3	1	2
37.8000	Grp 5					
49.6667	Grp 4					
51.0571	Grp 3					
61.0000	Grp 1	*				
62.3750	Grp 2	*				

(\*)  $P < .05$

Note.1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.

The above table indicates that:

1. People who were unhappy ( group 1 ) differ from people who are pleased.
2. People who were dissatisfied ( group 2 ) differ from people who are pleased.

The results indicate that people who are unhappy had high social isolation mean scores and lower scores indicated satisfaction to the changes made to culture which confirms our hypothesis.

Thus we can conclude from the results of the one-way analysis (an F-Prob. = .0043 where  $P < .05$ ) we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative and say that there is a significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrant's changes made to culture and their social isolation.

Question 6. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants' changes made to the new culture and their life satisfaction?

There a number of factors which can be determinants to changes to culture and impact ones life satisfaction (eg. ways of thinking). Life style changes made to in the new culture can be indicated by changes made to the environment. In order to access these changes four categories of responses were identified. 1. change in dress 2. food habits 3. entertainment 4. recreation.

The results indicated that 8 or (11%) of the respondents accepted change in dress customs easily compared to 9 or (13%) who did not find a problem in making a change

in their food habits. The greatest majority of respondents 47 or (67%) felt few life style changes in entertainment (T.V. viewing) and only 6 or (9%) identified they had difficulty in making recreational changes( playing cards, reading,etc.). Changes to culture may also be impacted by changes made to ways of thinking.

### Ways of thinking

If one has changed his/her way of thinking, adjustment and adaptation to a new culture can bring about life satisfaction. The respondents were asked to respond to changes in their ways of thinking in five different categories, 1. to some extent 2. to little extent 3. extensive 4. to a great extent and 5. to no extent. Very few 2 or (21%) indicated that they had not changed their ways of thinking. Combining the categories (2. extensive and 3. to a great extent) it can be seen that 40 or (57%) had changed their ways of thinking extensively.

However, it appears from the results that although a large number identified changes to their ways of thinking, it may be an over-representation of the statement from the information gathered in the interviews. To a large extent many respondents conveyed a feeling of old habits. It is therefore felt that a more realistic result to changes in ways of thinking may have been indicated by those who responded to categories two and three earlier.

In order to identify any differences between life satisfaction and changes made to the new culture a one way analysis was conducted. The results are indicated in table-11.

Table-11

Results of one-way analysis of life satisfaction by changes to culture

Sum of source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	410.67	102.66	3.7356	.0086
Within Groups	64	1758.9	27.484		
Total	68	2169.6			

From the one-way analysis indicated in table-11 we can see that significant relationships exist ( $F \text{ Prob} = .008$ ) between pairs of means at the  $P < .05$  significance level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no differences between E.E.I. immigrant's changes made to culture and life satisfaction can be rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between elderly East Indian immigrants' changes made to the culture and their life satisfaction. These relationships are shown by groups of respondents in table-12.

Table-12

One-way analysis between social isolation and changes made to culture by groups of respondents.

Mean	Group	2	1	3	4	5
5.7500	Grp 2					
6.5714	Grp 1					
9.3824	Grp 3					
12.0667	Grp 4	*				
14.8000	Grp 5	*				

(\*)  $P < .05$

Note. 1 = Unhappy, 2 = dissatisfied, 3 = mixed, 4 = satisfied, 5 = pleased.



From table -12 it can be seen that people who were dissatisfied differed from people who were satisfied and pleased. People who had higher mean life satisfaction scores (14.80) were pleased with life than those who had low life satisfaction scores (5.75) and were happy and confirms our hypothesis of higher scores on the life satisfaction scale indicating greater life satisfaction.

Thus we can conclude from the results of the one-way analysis (an F-Prob. = .0086 where  $P < .05$ ) we can reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative and say that there is a significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrants' changes made to culture and their life satisfaction.

Question 7. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants time they spend in the home and their social isolation?

In order to get an indication of how respondents spent their time at home they were asked to categorize their responses into five categories. 1. unhappy 2. dissatisfied 3. mixed 4.satisfied and 5. pleased.

The results indicated that 20 or (29%) were unhappy, 8 or (10%) were dissatisfied, 21 or (30%) were mixed, 15 or (21%) were satisfied and 6 or (9%) were pleased about the time they spent at home.

The findings seem to suggest that the combination of living arrangements and feelings of time spent at home were not something that the respondents seemed to enjoy. It appears that a large number of respondents had mixed feelings which suggest that they were not sure whether to divulge their feelings or not.

In order to see if there were differences in between time spent in the home and their social isolation a one-way analysis was conducted. The results of the one way analysis are indicated in table-13.

Table-13

Results of one-way analysis between time spent at home and social isolation

Sum of source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	4401.6	1100.4	8.9691	.0000
Within Groups	65	7974.6	122.68		
Total	69	12376.			

From Table-13 we can see that an F-Ratio of 8.96 and 4 degrees of freedom is significant at the  $P < .0000$  level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no significant differences between the time spent in the home and their social isolation can be rejected.

Hence there is a significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrants' time spent in the home in respect to their social isolation.

Question 8. Are there no significant differences between the time elderly East Indian immigrants spend in the home and their life satisfaction?

In order to see if there were differences in between time spent in the home and their life satisfaction a one way analysis was conducted. The results of the one-way analysis are indicated in table-14.

Table-14

Results of one-way analysis between time spent at home and life satisfaction

Sum of source	D.F	Sum of Square	Mean Square	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	770.55	192.63	8.8120	.0000
Within Groups	64	1399.0	21.86		
Total	68	2169.6			

From table-14 we can see that an F-Ratio of 8.81 and 4 degrees of freedom is significant at the  $P < .0000$  level. This means that there was significant difference between the respondents' time spent in the home and their life satisfaction. Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant differences between the time spent in the home and their life satisfaction can be rejected. What this means is that there is a relationship between E.E.I. immigrants' time spent at home and their life satisfaction.

Question 9. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants in having friends and their social isolation?

One of the most feared aspects of aging is the loss of interaction with friends and relatives. These losses in old age can lead to social isolation. Supportive social networks can help reduce the social isolation, and can be an important resource for older adults especially in a new environment.

Having friends for elderly East Indian immigrants in the new environment was not a problem. The results indicated that 50 or (71%) of the respondents had friends in Calgary and only 19 or (27%) of the respondents did not have friends. The results also indicated that 32 or (46%) lived in close proximity to their friends and 37 or (53%) had friends who lived at a distance from them. In order to see if there were significant differences between E.E.I. immigrants having friends and their social isolation a t-test was conducted. The results of the t-test are as shown in table-15.

Table-15

Results of t-test of independent samples of friends by social isolation.

Independent samples of FRIENDS in Calgary

Group 1: FRIENDS EQ 1

Group 2: FRIENDS EQ 2

t-test for: SOISOLAT Index of Social Isolation

		Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
	Group 1	50	48.3400	12.920	1.827
	Group 2	20	61.5000	9.523	2.129

		Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate		
F	2-Tail	t	Degrees of	2-Tail	t	Degrees of	2-Tail
Value	Prob.	Value	Freedom	Prob.	Value	Freedom	Prob.
1.84	.147	-4.12	68	.000	-4.69	47.33	.000

Note. 1=friends, 2=no friends.

From the t-test as shown in table-15 it can be seen that the F-Value (1.84) is not close to 1; therefore we use the separate variance estimate. A two-tailed probability of .000 indicates that the observed significance is small. Therefore it is unlikely that there are no differences between having friends and their social isolation. It is unlikely this sample came from a population in which there is no difference. Since the observed significance is less than  $P < .05$  we can reject the hypothesis that there are no significant differences between having friends and social isolation.

Question 10. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants in having friends and their life satisfaction?

Supportive networks such as friends in old age can help reduce social isolation and increase one's overall life satisfaction. Therefore friends can play an important role in the lives of elderly immigrants. In order to see if there were significant differences between E.E.I. immigrants having friends and their social isolation a t-test was conducted. The results are indicated in table-16.

Table-16

Results of t-test of independent samples of friends by life satisfaction.

Independent samples of FRIENDS in Calgary

Group 1: FRIENDS EQ 1                      Group 2: FRIENDS EQ 2

t-test for: LIFESTAT Life satisfaction Index

		Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1		49	10.8163	5.732	.819
Group 2		20	6.8000	4.372	.978

		Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate		
F	2-Tail Value Prob.	t Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Prob.	t Value	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Prob.
1.72	.198	2.81	67	.006	3.15	46.04	.003

Note. 1=friends, 2=no friends.

From the t-test as shown in table-16 it can be seen that the F-Value (1.72) is not close to 1; therefore we use the separate variance estimate. A two tailed probability of .003 indicates that the observed significance is small. Therefore it is unlikely that there are no differences between having friends and their life satisfaction. It is unlikely this

sample came from a population in which there is no difference. Since the observed significance is less than  $P < .05$  we can reject the hypothesis that there are no significant differences between having friends and life satisfaction.

Question 11. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants gender and their social isolation?

Gender plays a major role in the lives of East Indian families. Many of the roles in the family for East Indians is determined by gender. The allocation of roles by gender could affect their socialization patterns. In order to see if there were any differences between their gender and their socialization patterns a t-test was conducted. The results of the t-test are indicated in table-17.

Table-17

Results of t-test of independent samples of groups by sex.

Independent samples of SEX

Group 1: SEX EQ 1 (Male)                      Group 2: SEX EQ 2 (Female)

t-test for: SOISOLAT Index of Social Isolation

		Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Group 1		32	47.0938	13.539	2.393
Group 2		38	56.3158	11.873	1.926

		Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate		
F	2-Tail Value	t	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Prob.	t	Degrees of Freedom	2-Tail Prob.
1.30	.442	-3.04	68	.003	-3.00	62.27	.004

From the t-test as shown in table-17 it can be seen that the F-Value (1.30) is close to 1; therefore we can use the pooled variance estimate. A two tailed probability of .003 indicates that the observed significance is small. Therefore it is unlikely that males have the same social isolation index as females. It is unlikely this sample came from a population in which there is no difference.

Since the observed significance is less than  $P < .05$  we can reject the hypothesis that there are no significant differences between males and females in regards to their social isolation.

Question 12. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants gender and their life satisfaction?

As many of the roles in families in East Indian families are allocated by gender it is possible then that their life satisfaction patterns can be also affected by gender. To determine the extent which life satisfaction is affected by gender a t-test was conducted. The results are indicated in table-18.



Table-18

T-test of sex by life satisfaction

Independent samples of SEX

Group 1: SEX EQ 1 (Male)

Group 2: SEX EQ 2 (Female)

t-test for: LIFESTAT Life satisfaction Index

		Number of Cases	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
	Group 1	31	11.0968	5.996	1.077
	Group 2	38	8.4737	5.129	.832

		Pooled Variance Estimate			Separate Variance Estimate		
F	2-Tail	t	Degrees of	2-Tail	t	Degrees of	2-Tail
Value	Prob.	Value	Freedom	Prob.	Value	Freedom	Prob.
1.37	.364	1.96	67	.054	1.93	59.36	.059

From the t-test as shown in table-18 it can be seen that the F-Value (1.37) is close to 1, therefore we can use the pooled variance estimate. A two-tailed probability of .054 indicates that the observed significance is small. Therefore it is unlikely that males have the same social isolation index as females. It is unlikely this sample came from a population in which there is no difference. Since the observed significance is almost equal to  $P < .05$  we can reject the hypothesis that there are no significant differences between males and females in regards to their social isolation.

Question 13. Are there no significant differences between elderly East Indian immigrants between going out of their house and their social isolation?

One indicator of social isolation can be the number of times a person leaves the confines of his house to venture out in the community. From the results of the study it

was indicated that many of the immigrants left their homes at least once a week. It was not possible to know if these outings played a role in reducing their social isolation. Hence a one way analysis was conducted to see if there were significant differences between the elderly immigrant's frequency of going out of the house and their social isolation. The results of the one way analysis is shown in table-19.

Table-19

One way analysis of frequency of outings from the house by social isolation

Sum of source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between	4	747.87	186.96	1.0451	.3909
Within Groups	65	11628	178.89		
Total	69	12376			

From table-19, we can see that an F-Prob of .39 and 4 degrees of freedom is not significant at the  $P < .05$  level. Thus the hypothesis that there is no significant differences between the time spent in the home and their social isolation cannot be rejected.

This means that there was no significant difference between the respondents' time spent out of the home and their social isolation. In other words it means that even though E.E.I. immigrants frequently leave the confines of their homes, this is not an indication that of their social isolation.



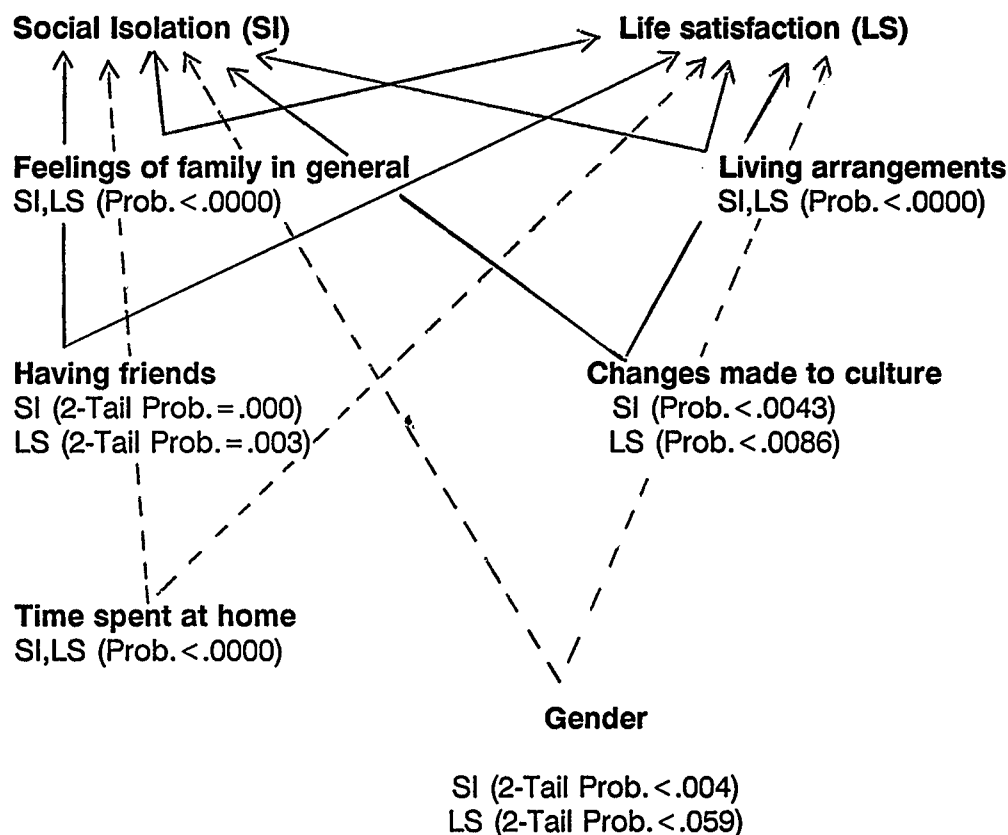
## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION**

The main purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between social isolation and life satisfaction of elderly East Indian immigrants; to see if as E.E.I. immigrant's social isolation increased they would be less socially adjusted and hence enjoy a lesser quality of life, or as social isolation decreased E.E.I. immigrants would be more socially adjusted and more socially integrated and thus enjoy a higher quality of life.

The results of the analysis suggest that there is a relationship between social isolation and life satisfaction. This was supported by sub questions developed in the study. The sub questions suggested significant relationships both with social isolation and life satisfaction. Sub questions 1 & 2 (feelings of family in general), Sub questions 3 & 4 (living arrangements), sub questions 5 & 6 (changes made to culture), sub questions 7 & 8 (time spent in the home), sub questions 9 & 10 (having friends), and sub questions 11 & 12 (gender) suggested a three way relationship with social isolation and life satisfaction further supporting the main study question 14.

These relationships supported the main study question. They are shown in the model of relationships indicated in the figure 4.

Figure 4. Model of relationships between social isolation and life satisfaction

Having friends can reduce one's social isolation and positively affect one's life satisfaction. Being chosen by a friend indicates to an elderly individual that he/she possess desirable qualities causing other people to choose him/her over alternative relations. This in turn may enhance ones life satisfaction. This study shows that a significant relationship with friends ( $P = <.003$ ) can affect ones overall life satisfaction. This supports the position of Dolakia, Zachariah & McNeill (1987), Lee & Ishi (1987), Lemon, Begston & Peterson (1972) that having friends can positively affect ones socialization patterns thereby overall increasing ones quality of life.

Living arrangements of elderly East Indian immigrants also identified significant relationships ( $P < .0000$ ) with social isolation. Weeks and Cuellar (1981) controlled for different living arrangements and identified it could affect the role of family members. Although the study did not control for living arrangements in relation to social isolation this study indicates that there is a possible link between living arrangements and social isolation where family members play a vital role.

This study supports House (1981) views that supportive social relations facilitate adjustment to new environmental situations, thereby increasing ones overall quality of life. This study is also in keeping with Lawton (1983) findings that an objective environment such as a physical environment, number of family members and the social environment can influence ones quality of life.

The sub questions also suggested that there was a significant relationship between E.E.I. immigrants changes made to culture ( $P = < .0043$ ) in relation to their social isolation, and life satisfaction. Immigration for many elderly East Indian immigrants must have been a stressful situation. Supportive social relations such as friends suggested by (Cobb, 1976) could facilitate this stressful process.

The gender of E.E.I. immigrants suggested a significant relationship ( $P < .004$ ) with social isolation and ( $P < .05$ ) with life satisfaction. So was time spent at home ( $P < .05$ ) both for social isolation and life satisfaction.

It appeared that E.E.I. immigrants had strong feelings ( $P < .0000$ ) about their family in general in relation to their social isolation and life satisfaction. Feelings about family were correlated with finance ( $P = .217$ ) living with children ( $P = .260$ ), emotional status ( $P = .445$ ) and members in family ( $P = .703$ ). It was observed that weak relationships existed ( $P > .05$ ). This suggests that other reasons may be related to their social isolation that requires future investigation.

The analysis showed that there were many factors related to social isolation and life satisfaction that support the main question of the study. Contrary to expectations language ( $P = .669$ ), transportation ( $P = .559$ ) or the loss of the extended family ( $P = .325$ ) were not significantly related to either social isolation or life satisfaction.

The results showed that the frequency with which an elderly East Indian immigrant goes out of the house has no relationship to social isolation, but it is possible the nature of contact/acquaintance that can make a difference in their social isolation. Although religion plays a major part in the lives of elderly East Indian immigrants a correlation of religion with life satisfaction showed that this was not a significant factor.

This study has identified that social isolation of elderly East Indian immigrants that affect their life satisfaction has its primary cause in the family. In other words the creation of living conditions provided to the elderly and the changes in culture have significantly altered their life satisfaction, thus causing them to be socially isolated. This is supported by the opinions they presented about satisfaction with life now as compared to life before

immigrating to Canada. The results indicated that many immigrants felt a decline in their life satisfaction after immigration.

Finally one must remember that the study was more of an exploratory nature which has used secondary analysis to generate sub questions only to examine the nature of the relationships, not to test them. This secondary analysis was used to search through a wide range of independent variables to determine which of them might be associated with a particular dependent variable, so that such an association could merit further theoretical development at the explanatory level of research. The study did not purport to have verified the hypothesis it had put forward, it just said that based on the research question a relationship was hypothesized. An explanatory study on the other hand assess whether the relationships hold up when other intervening variables are controlled. This study did not control for any intervening variable. In this sense the study was more on a fishing expedition to identify relationships. One must also come to grasp the meaning of statistical significance. Simply put the probability of finding a relationship by chance (normally at  $P < .05$ ) need not have any theoretical or practical meaning. Finding a difference that is statistically significant in a small sample of E.E.I. immigrants does not mean that the difference is large, nor does it mean that the differences are important from a research point of view.

In short, this study has identified relationships for postulations for future study, and the statistical significance identified between variables should not be interpreted as if it were a verified hypothesis. Had the study purported to have verified the relationships it put forward it would have committed a grave violation of research logic.



Before closing this chapter, I would like to review certain limitations on this study. Firstly the study sample of 70 respondents is small; so any "conclusions" made from such data must necessarily be treated as tentative. Secondly the study sample was not drawn from any rigour of systematic sampling procedure. By using a snowball method of sampling and obtaining information from only those that were willing to participate in the study for the common cause of good for future elderly East Indian immigrants this may have biased the results somewhat.

Other non-participating elderly East Indian immigrants might have had quite different responses when their self esteem was at stake to divulge information about their living situation. Thus the analysis presented must be viewed with these reservations in mind. Finally, due to the humanistic and microscopic nature of this study, some questions about the larger structural context of family situations were not looked into. For example the de facto family living arrangements of all those who were surveyed could not be investigated. Whether such family conditions could be accounted for in their social isolation patterns or life satisfaction factors is another unanswered question. Hopefully future research will overcome these limitations and provide us with more comprehensive knowledge on the subject.

### Conclusion

This study investigated the relationship between social isolation and life satisfaction, experienced by E.E.I. immigrants. The main focus of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between social isolation and life satisfaction of E.E.I. immigrants. It

was hypothesized that as social isolation of E.E.I. immigrants increased life satisfaction would decrease thereby resulting in a poor quality of life.

The main question of this study has been answered in the following manner. The variables of feelings of family in general, time spent at home, having friends, changes made to culture, living arrangements and gender suggested a three way relationship to both social isolation and life satisfaction. An analysis of additional variables such as language, finance, and transportation although was a problem for some did not infer any significant relationships with E.E.I. immigrants social isolation or life satisfaction. These findings then are in contrast to those E.E.I. immigrants who said that instrumental issues were the highest predictions of social isolation, while affective issues had less impact. It may be that those who believe instrumental issues are key to their social isolation experience other problems with their living arrangements.

Despite the limitations of the methodology of this study the analysis has shown clear evidence that cannot be ignored. Social work practioners should be aware of the role of ethnicity and recognize the potential linkage between E.E.I. immigrants' social isolation and their life satisfaction which may have its primary cause in the family. In other words the living arrangements of E.E.I. immigrants, feeling generated about their family and time spent in the family may have significant effects on their life satisfaction that can impinge on their quality of life.

Therefore it is clear from this study that facilitating appropriate resources for families of E.E.I. immigrants and educating them about alternatives will empower them to help themselves to enjoy a quality of life.

### Implications for Social Work

Having the opportunity to interview elderly East Indian immigrants was a valuable and deeply enriching experience. I have great respect for the strength of these elderly immigrant's ability to cope and adapt to new social environments under tremendous stress. Many of these immigrants carried on their roles in the family with no particular thought of their stresses and difficulties.

For the elderly the process of adjustment is a two way process: the person and society are reciprocally related, they are in mutual relationship. This is to say that individual efforts in adjustment are important but society also has a role to play.

A favourable host society is one that will make it possible for each immigrant's basic needs to be met, will permit and encourage the movement of its immigrants in the direction of optimum social adjustment. Such a society will provide many acceptable educational, social and occupational options for all immigrants.

To define the degree to which every immigrant is socially isolated is not an easy task, and questions such as the following should be asked: how much he/she is bothered by social isolation in the new environment; to what degree is he/she fighting

social isolation in his/her familial circumstance and how is he/she accepting the new social norms or enjoying a quality of life.

### Social Worker's Role

Social workers who see immigrants or provide counselling have an important and active role to play in helping elderly immigrants. A social worker must be aware of his/her own belief system and cultural biases. The lack of self awareness prevents the social worker from bridging the cultural barriers between oneself and one's clients. Because culture differs in norms and values, the particular occurrence, form, meaning of a situation vary from one culture to another. It is possible that the same behaviour, which is considered desirable for one culture is not acceptable in another culture. The social worker must keep in mind that each client is a unique person and cannot be viewed as a stereotype. Cultural uniqueness should be an alternative mode for interpreting minority group's behaviour. The culture of the client has first to be understood, free from prejudicial stereotypes, myths and assumptions: then the worker can adequately address the problems and concerns of the client.

Commonly, the professional approach to problems of immigrants, formulates them as problems of 'cultural shock' and the problems are viewed as problems of adjustment. This study has identified that the problems may lie in living arrangements provided to the elderly. As a result social workers should investigate other reasons that may lie in the family of residence.

### Approaches to Practice

In working with elderly immigrants the social worker could apply one of the following traditional approaches making sure that they are tailored to particular individual needs.

The Psychosocial Approach is the view of the human being translated into a perspective which emphasizes the need to maintain a dual focus on psychological and social man. This approach was emphasized by Richmond (1917) as the dual perspective of social casework which is useful with some immigrants in certain circumstances. It offers the social worker the opportunity to look at immigrant's problems in the context of their culture, while integrating the problem into the Canadian context. Immigrants experience a dual feelings about various traditions when confronted with the culture of the majority culture. Particular attention is given to the effects of discrimination in spheres such as housing, schooling, etc.

The Problem Solving Framework (Perlman, 1957) suggests that all human life as a problem solving process. The difficulties in coping with problems are based on lack of care, ability in the case of elderly immigrants or motivation. To deal effectively with problems such as social isolation, the immigrant needs to know and be able to access certain social activities within the community. Confronted with excessive stress due to lack of finance the elderly immigrant functions poorly. Social workers should be aware that in order to strengthen an immigrant's routine functioning role and restore competence in elderly immigrants, a knowledge of the current living situation provides the necessary fact for the solving process to be activated (Perlman, H.,1957). Therefore

social workers, in working with immigrants, should provide resources so as to allow an elderly immigrant to perform his/her routine functions.

The Task Centred Approach, which was first formulated by Reid and Epstein (1972), stresses the importance of attention to problems in terms defined by clients. This approach requires the practitioner to centre attention on those problems that he/she is able to change for the elderly immigrants and not focus on remote historical origins of a problem.

The Systems Approach as presented by Pincus and Minahan (1973) defines social work practice as "goal oriented planned social change". This perspective uses the two basic concepts: resources and interaction between people and the social environment, helps to identify four areas of concern to social work: the absence of needed resources the absence of linkages between people and resource systems, or between resource systems; and problematic individual internal problems.

All the above mentioned approaches to social work practice indicate that their assumptions are not in contradiction with an understanding of cultural, class or ethnic diversity of immigrants. All these approaches with immigrants should adhere to the basic social values: the dignity of the individual, the right to self determination and the need for adequate standard of living. Relevant social work intervention needs to identify the immigrant's coping patterns with culturally relevant social services.

### Values and Principles in Working with Immigrants

In working with immigrants social workers must recognize the primary importance of ethnicity for each particular immigrant. The denial of ethnicity may provide the opportunity for the social worker to maintain negative myths, stereotypes, and assumptions associated with ethnicity and prohibit the worker from recognizing his/her own prejudices, as well as preventing the worker from developing an effective relationship with his/her clients. The worker also has to maintain a non judgemental attitude and recognize the client's rights to self determination. Finally confidentiality is an important principle in working with immigrants since recent immigrants to a new environment can be suspicious and reluctant to reveal confidential material.

The results of the study were presented to the organizations that assisted in the provision of data collection process. The respective community leaders are now in the process of developing appropriate support groups for these elderly immigrants and have recognized the study as important in planning for the future.

### Recommendations

1. Provision of community services within every neighbourhood (within walking distance) will encourage seniors to go out on their own. Have groups of ethnic seniors run these services. This will provide seniors with a place where they can go and meet other seniors of their community, which will help break the cycle of social isolation from them being confined to their homes.
2. Encourage the employment of elderly ethnic minorities where appropriate employment is available so that the elderly minority is visible in mainstream society.

This will provide encouragement to other socially isolated elderly to integrate within the community.

3. Provide increased use of language interpreters for elderly of ethnic minorities at subway stations, shopping malls and recreation sites.
4. Educate seniors, and families with seniors, on available home support services.
5. Ethno-specific groups should develop a counselling committee, whereby seniors experiencing family conflict, can be referred for counselling.
6. Provide ethno-specific programs for families to encourage conflict resolution.
7. Produce educational materials directed at families with elderly members.
8. Ethnic senior's associations should encourage their senior members to speak out about their living conditions, where living circumstances are not favourable to a quality of life. They should in conjunction with social services departments seek other feasible alternative dwelling sites in the community.
9. Families where elderly people reside and provide services (such as baby sitting services for their adult children) should be aware of the financial needs of their elders and provide appropriate financial compensation for their services. This finance will assist seniors who lack other finances to venture out in the community on their own thereby preventing their social isolation.



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## **APPENDIX-1**

### **Letter of Introduction**

Every year Canada welcomes many new individuals who immigrate in order to resettle and join their immediate family. In 1990 the largest number of immigrants to Canada arrived from Asia. From these immigrants, many elderly immigrants from India were sponsored by their children in Canada. Presently, there is little that is known about the consequences of immigration and integration of elderly East Indian immigrants in Canadian society.

The purpose of this study is to obtain information about the elderly immigrant's subjective and objective living situations, family relations, social relations, leisure activities, finances, health and life satisfaction.

More specifically the intent of this study is to examine the extent to which social isolation affects the social adjustment of elderly East Indian immigrants, in relation to their integration into Canadian society. The study is premised on the assumption that social adjustment of elderly East Indians leads to their integration into the mainstream of Canadian society, thereby enhancing their overall quality of life.

Your cooperation is requested in completion of this questionnaire that looks at what your life is like, and how you feel about things. There are no right and wrong answers, so please take your time in completing this questionnaire. If the questionnaire is filled up by two members of the family (for example husband and wife) kindly complete it without comparing responses. Following completion of this questionnaire a brief telephone interview will be conducted. Please write your name in pencil along with your phone number. This will be deleted later.

Please note all responses are confidential and as a researcher I am bound by the university's ethical guidelines to maintain confidentiality. Responses to the survey will be kept confidential, and used for research purposes only. Responses are solicited from seniors 55 years and over.

An early response would be highly appreciated. Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Mr. Francis Murzello  
015 Rundle Hall  
University of Calgary  
2500 University Drive,  
Calgary, Alberta.

**APPENDIX-11****CONSENT FORM****QUALITY OF LIFE OF ELDERLY EAST INDIAN IMMIGRANTS**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand that the purpose of this research is to request information regarding the quality of life, of Elderly East Indian Immigrants in Canada. I understand that I will be asked to give personal information to an interviewer. I hereby agree to do so on the following conditions:

(a) I may decline to answer any questions if I do so wish.

(b) I may terminate the interview and withdraw from the study at any time. No attempt to persuade me to continue will be made.

(c) All information I give will be kept confidential and data will be used for research purposes alone.

I accept that the researcher is not liable for any consequences affecting me arising from my participation in this study. I also understand that this study will involve approximately one (1) hour of my time and that I will receive no remuneration for my participation.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX-111****SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. In which year did you immigrate to Canada

2. Are you a

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Sponsored immigrant .....   | 1 |
| Independent immigrant ..... | 2 |
| Refugee .....               | 3 |

3. Are you currently

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Married .....       | 1 |
| Widowed .....       | 2 |
| Divorced .....      | 3 |
| Separated .....     | 4 |
| Never married ..... | 5 |

**Here are some questions that refer to socialization.**

**Please identify the most appropriate response.**

4. Are your children in Calgary?

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Yes ..... | 1 |
| No .....  | 2 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are you living with them?

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Yes ..... | 1 |
| No .....  | 2 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which of the following most accurately describes your living circumstances?

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Apartment .....                     | 1 |
| Single home .....                   | 2 |
| Condominium .....                   | 3 |
| Government subsidized housing ..... | 4 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. How do you feel about your living arrangements?

Unhappy .....	1
Dissatisfied .....	2
Mixed .....	3
Satisfied .....	4
Pleased .....	5

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

## 8. How do you feel about the time you spend there?

Unhappy .....	1
Dissatisfied .....	2
Mixed .....	3
Satisfied .....	4
Pleased .....	5

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. How many members are there in your family, that live with you?

## 10. Do you have relatives in Calgary?

Yes .....	1
No .....	2

11. How often do you talk to other members of your family  
(not including the relatives you live with).

At least once a day .....	1
Once a week .....	2
Once a month .....	3
Not at all .....	4

## 12. Are they close to you?

Yes .....	1
No .....	2

13. How often do you visit them?

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Once a day .....           | 1 |
| Once a week .....          | 2 |
| Once a month .....         | 3 |
| Once in three months ..... | 4 |
| Not at all .....           | 5 |

14. How often do they visit you?

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Once a day .....           | 1 |
| Once a week .....          | 2 |
| Once a month .....         | 3 |
| Once in three months ..... | 4 |
| Not at all .....           | 5 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

15. How often do you go out of the house on your own ?

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Once a day .....           | 1 |
| Once a week .....          | 2 |
| Once a month .....         | 3 |
| Once in three months ..... | 4 |
| Not at all .....           | 5 |

16. Do you have friends in Calgary?

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Yes ..... | 1 |
| No .....  | 2 |

17. Are your friends close to you?

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Yes ..... | 1 |
| No .....  | 2 |

**I am now going to ask you some questions which reflect Quality of Life.**

18. Taking all things together how would you describe your life  
as before coming to Canada.

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Exciting .....       | 1 |
| Pretty routine ..... | 2 |
| Dull .....           | 3 |
| No opinion .....     | 4 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

19. How would you describe your life in Canada as now

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Exciting .....       | 1 |
| Pretty routine ..... | 2 |
| Dull .....           | 3 |
| No opinion .....     | 4 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

20. What would you classify your general health as

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Excellent .....   | 1 |
| Good .....        | 2 |
| Fair .....        | 3 |
| Poor .....        | 4 |
| Do not know ..... | 5 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

21. How do you feel about your emotional being?

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Excellent .....   | 1 |
| Good .....        | 2 |
| Fair .....        | 3 |
| Poor .....        | 4 |
| Do not know ..... | 5 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

22. How do you feel about your family in general?

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Unhappy . . . . .      | 1 |
| Dissatisfied . . . . . | 2 |
| Mixed . . . . .        | 3 |
| Satisfied . . . . .    | 4 |
| Pleased . . . . .      | 5 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

23. How important was religion in your life, when you were growing up?

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Very important . . . . .     | 1 |
| Fairly important . . . . .   | 2 |
| Somewhat important . . . . . | 3 |
| Fairly unimportant . . . . . | 4 |
| Not important . . . . .      | 5 |

24. How important is religion in your life now?

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Very important . . . . .     | 1 |
| Fairly important . . . . .   | 2 |
| Somewhat important . . . . . | 3 |
| Fairly unimportant . . . . . | 4 |
| Not important . . . . .      | 5 |

25. How do you feel about the satisfaction you get from religion now?

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| Unhappy . . . . .      | 1 |
| Dissatisfied . . . . . | 2 |
| Mixed . . . . .        | 3 |
| Satisfied . . . . .    | 4 |
| Pleased . . . . .      | 5 |

26. How important has language been in socialization with others  
(not family living with)

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Very important . . . . .     | 1 |
| Fairly important . . . . .   | 2 |
| Somewhat important . . . . . | 3 |
| Fairly unimportant . . . . . | 4 |
| Not important . . . . .      | 5 |

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

27. Has finance been a major factor in adjustment to the new country?

- To some extent ..... 1
- To little extent ..... 2
- Extensive ..... 3
- To a great extent ..... 4
- To no extent ..... 5

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

28. To what extent transportation has been an issue?

- To some extent ..... 1
- To little extent ..... 2
- Extensive ..... 3
- To a great extent ..... 4
- To no extent ..... 5

29. Has your way of thinking changed since you arrived in Canada?

- To some extent ..... 1
- To little extent ..... 2
- Extensive ..... 3
- To a great extent ..... 4
- To no extent ..... 5

30. How satisfied are you with the changes you have made to the new culture and Canada?

- Unhappy ..... 1
- Dissatisfied ..... 2
- Mixed ..... 3
- Satisfied ..... 4
- Pleased ..... 5

Comment \_\_\_\_\_

31. What life style have you accepted easily?

- Change in dress ..... 1
- Food habits ..... 2
- Entertainment (T.V.) ..... 3
- Recreation (playing cards,reading etc. .... 4

32. How important has the loss of extended family been for you?

- |                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Very important . . . . .     | 1 |
| Fairly important . . . . .   | 2 |
| Somewhat important . . . . . | 3 |
| Fairly unimportant . . . . . | 4 |
| Not important . . . . .      | 5 |

33. In the past year did you have any major changes to your lifestyle  
eg.due sickness,accident,family etc.

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Yes . . . . . | 1 |
| No . . . . .  | 2 |

#### Questionnaire-demographic information

34. In which year were you born?

Month \_\_\_\_\_  
Day \_\_\_\_\_  
Year \_\_\_\_\_

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 35. Circle : Male . . . . . | 1 |
| Female . . . . .            | 2 |

I am now going to present you with some statements. I would like you to respond to each statement if you agree with them or not.\*

	AGREE	DISAGREE
1. As you grow older, things seem better than you thought they would be.	_____	_____
2. You have got more of the breaks in life than most of the people I know.	_____	_____
3. This is the dreariest time of your life	_____	_____
4. You are just as happy now as when you were younger.	_____	_____
5. These are the best years of your life.	_____	_____
6. Most of the things you do are boring or monotonous.	_____	_____
7. The things you do are as interesting to you as they ever were.	_____	_____
8. As you look back on your life you are satisfied.	_____	_____
9. You have made plans for things you will be doing in a month or year from now.	_____	_____
10. When you think back over your life, you did not get most of the important things you wanted.	_____	_____
11. Compared to other people, you get down in the dumps too often.	_____	_____
12. You have got pretty much what you expected out of life.	_____	_____
13. In spite of what people say the lot of the average person is getting worse not better.	_____	_____

\* Life Satisfaction Index-Z . Measures for Clinical Practice by Kevin Coracoran (1987)



We are almost finished with the interview. I just have a few more questions. I am now going to ask you some questions about the way you feel about certain things. I would like you to respond to my questions (\*) by answering:

1 = never

2 = rarely

3 = sometimes

4 = often.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You feel in tune with people around you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. You feel you lack companionship.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. You feel there is no one you can turn to for help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. You do not feel alone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. You feel part of a group of friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. You have a lot in common with people around you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. You are no longer close to anyone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Your interest and ideas are not shared by those around you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. You are an outgoing person.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. There are people you feel close to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. You feel left out.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Your social relationships are superficial.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. No one really knows you well.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. You feel isolated from others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. You can find companionship whenever you want it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. There are people who really understand you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. You are unhappy that you are withdrawn.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. People are around you but not with you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. There are people you can talk to.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. There are people you can turn to.

\* Revised UCLA Loneliness scale . Measures for Clinical Practice by Kevin Corcoran (1987)