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# A STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES AMONG INSTITUTIONALIZED OLDER ADULTS IN SRI LANKA

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**Abstract - Major challenge that most of the countries of the modern world face today is not the rapid growing of the elderly population but planning active retirement life for them. Great attention should be focused on designing and introducing leisure time activities to elders as the active aging highly depends on the activities they engage in the old age. Carefully planned leisure activities would immensely contribute towards quality of life of the elders. Leisure activities promote both physical and mental health of the adults by reducing stress and improving cognitive abilities. This study is focused on the leisure time activities of institutionalized older adults, the barriers preventing them from participating in leisure activities and their preference. This study reveals guidelines for designing and introducing appropriate leisure activities for institutionalized adults who are with limited mobility.**

*Key words-* leisure activities, adults, aging

## I. INTRODUCTION

Aging is a universal phenomenon that every living organism has to go through. As human beings become old, physical and mental abilities begin to decline. Their social role and network gradually shrinks and many other age related changes occur. Elderly population is a quite different group with diversity of capacities, interests and strengths. Carefully planned and appropriately applied leisure activities can assist the elderly to regain their life interests and rebuild their self - esteem.

Leisure activity plays a vital role in promoting well – being of the senior citizens which contribute to quality of life. For older adult as well as people at all ages engaging in leisure time activities fulfil varies aspects of life. Among the important benefits of recreation for the senior population is increased

health and fitness, as well as opportunities for socializing, for using skills and talents developed throughout their lifetime, and for learning new skills. These activities are very useful to them as they can spend their leisure time and enjoy by doing interesting tasks. (International Journal of Humanities and Social Science 19(4):2279-837 · January 2014 )

People engage in leisure activities in their free time according to their daily routine. Those activities are not task oriented and do not involve activities of daily living like sleeping cleaning and cooking. People around the world engage in reading, swimming, walking/hiking, cycling, Meditation, traveling, painting, listening to music and thousands of fun creating activities as leisure activities.

It was proven that leisure activities contribute to reduce the stress level of the people. Medical researchers explain the fact that people who are engaged in leisure activities are happier than those people who are not.

Leisure has often been defined as a quality of experience or as free time. Free time is time spent away from business, work, job hunting, domestic chores, and education, as well as necessary activities such as eating and sleeping. Situations International proposes that leisure does not evolve from free time, and free-time is an illusory concept that is rarely fully "free"; economic and social forces appropriate free time from the individual and sell it back to them as the commodity known as "leisure". (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leisure>)

Leisure activities help people to forget stressful factors of their life like family responsibilities, workload and personal targets. Some leisure activities which are social based, bring participants together who have same interest and sometimes it makes friends. Some leisure activities like painting, sculpting, and cultivation bring economic benefits to a person.



“Free time activity is essential for senior citizens but spending their free time in a meaningful is more important. Prior research has provided evidence that leisure activity involvement is associated with a reduced risk of disease and chronic illnesses. Grove & Spier (1999), improved physical strength and functions. Skelton et al. (1995).

Leisure activities should be simple and interesting. Even a very simple activity can stimulate physical and mental health of the person. Thus Activity is an essential part of our life. Activities are very important when person become old and have more free time to engage in after retirement. Although there is no age barrier to engage in, some older people may think that they are too old for participating for activities. In actual fact, participating in some meaningful leisure activities can generate lots of benefits to them.

The first and most important benefit provided by activities is the physical health. Some aged people chose to rest rather than being engaged in activities due to bad health condition. However it is proven that dancing, swimming, cycling and walking contribute in improving mobility of a person and also coordination and cardiopulmonary function. Cognitive functions are improved by playing chess, jig – saw puzzle, computer games as they give exercises to brain. Studies have shown that serious involvement in leisure activities leads to improved health and psychological well-being among older adults. Nets et al. (2005, 2008).

New activities always allow people to learn new things and their capabilities can be identified. Some elders do not like to take part in activities as they have unnecessary fear of working with unfamiliar things. If they can practice those things they could gain more confidence over new experiences and their anxiety could be reduced. The self – care maintain ability of a person who engage in activities like exercise, medication and yoga is higher than the others. Also those activities boost their confidence.

There should be a way to express emotions of the older person as most of the time they are unseen and unheard. That feeling brings them unhappiness caused in low self-esteem. In fact activities including going out for a walk, listening music, watching TV can help elder people to express their emotions relieving the stress and anxiety. Engaging in enjoyable and meaningful leisure activities can help in coping with stress and disabilities, decrease levels of depression and loneliness, reduce insomnia, improve the aging adjustment process, enhance social networking, prevent cognitive decline, and reduce the risk of dementia Bennett (2002,); Wang et al. (2002); Scarmeas & Stern (2003); Warr et al. (2004); Dupuis (2008);

Endeshaw & Yoo (2016); Mannell & Snelgrove (2012). When we choose a leisure activity for a person, especially for a senior citizen it should be an activity that he can enjoy. The essence of activity at free – time for elderly should be therapeutic, enhance quality of life, arrest mental decline maintain self –esteem and enable friendship Hutchinson & Marshall (2000). Apart from that physical requirements for the activity should be taken into consideration. Elders are suffering from various types of physical disabilities there more relaxing traits would be good for that person. Some activities require different cognitive skills - perception, attention, Memory and Logical reasoning. Thus playing chess would be good for an elderly one with good memory while cross word puzzle is good for an elderly who is capable at logical reasoning. But it is inappropriate for an elder with poor memory. Further the elders who have vision impairment and hearing impairment watching TV, Radio listening may not be appropriate, but reading newspapers would be good activity to spend their free time. It should not forget the fact that except the elders who have serious mental conditions, an elderly whose physical condition is deteriorating can have appropriate activities after consulting a physician.

Leisure & Aging it has been well established that spending time in leisure activities is positively associated with physical health, life satisfaction, and psychological wellbeing for the elderly. Gibson & Singleton (2012). It was obvious that most of the institutionalized adults confined to the premises and they only perform their daily living activities.

The most significant benefit of leisure activity for elders confined to the homes is that it fights against the social isolation. Social isolation may occur due to various situations. Social isolation is a state of complete or near-complete lack of contact between an individual and society. It differs from loneliness, which reflects temporary and involuntary lack of contact with other humans in the world. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_isolation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_isolation))

This situation prevails among elders in homes as the social contact is very low. Leisure activities offer elders the opportunity to interact with others. Social interaction is the best combat against the social isolation. Isolation produces negative impact on older lives, mental decline and physical quality. Some elders are reluctant to participate in leisure activities as they think they cannot get on with others. Participation in group activities open avenues to expand their social network. It is essential to identify all possible activities that appropriate for institutionalized older adults in Sri Lanka and promote those activities at any cost.

## II. METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study was to understand the leisure time activity of senior citizens in adult homes and to find out motivation factors for them to participate in leisure activities. The specific objectives of the study are

1. To find the ways elders spending free time on weekdays, weekends, religious days and special celebrated days
2. To identify the factor limit the participation for leisure time activities
3. To understand the possibility of introducing new leisure time activities with special attention to bed ridden older adults

The data collected on the basis of semi structured interview, among 195 older adults between 60 years – 82 years. The questionnaire was focused on their choices of spending leisure time activities at the elder's home. The interviews could not complete at one round due to the various situations of the elders. The sample was selected from 3 elderly homes, in western province Sri Lanka. Two homes run under local government and other one was funded by a charity board. 96 respondents were taken from home 1, 50 from home 2 and 49 from home 3. Elders who do not have sound mental health, deep hearing impairments and serious difficulties in speech were excluded. There were 25 bed ridden older adults, they were also included in the research considering importance of their opinion in introducing activities for immobile persons.

### III. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The research was conducted in 2018, throughout the year. The respondents were adults who receive residential care more than three years in that particular home. The sample was categorized to 3 groups according to their age. (figure1)

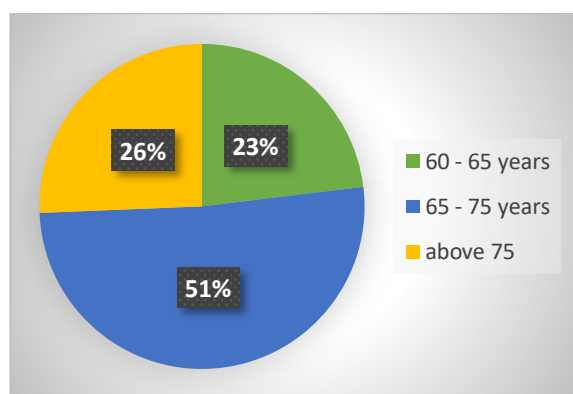


Fig. 1. Age group of the respondents

60% of them have lived in rural areas before they coming to the elderly homes. They were mainly from the districts of Kaluthara, Kurunegala and Kandy. Rest of them were from various other districts of the country. It was noticed that no

respondents from the districts of Jaffna and Batticaloa. 5% of the sample did not reveal about their previous living area. From the sample, 58 % of respondents were women while 42% of them were male. Great portion of the respondents were (72%) widows, 12% of them were married, 2% of them were divorced while 14% of the sample never married (figure 2). 92 % of married elders had at least more than one children.

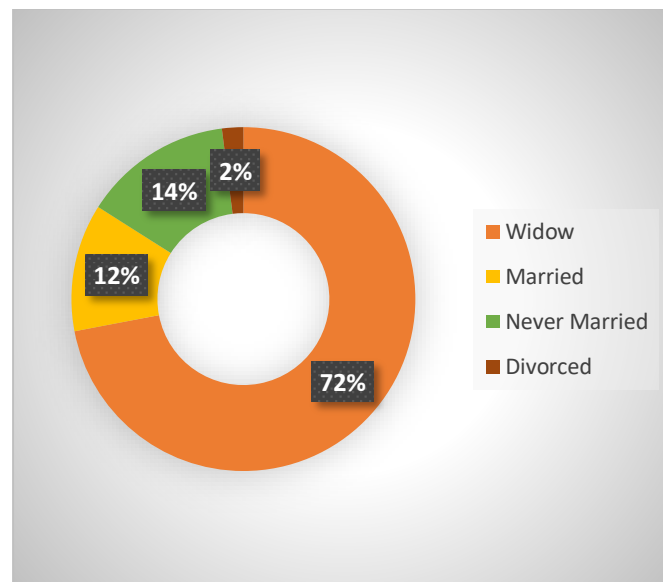


Fig. 2. Marital Status of the respondents

Their education background was varied, more than three fourth of the respondents (78%) had completed basic education up to grade 08, 11% up to ordinary levels and 5% of them were university graduates. 25% of the sample had been employed in government sector, 15% in private sector and rest of the have depended on self-earning and 5% have never engaged in income generating activity. According to their assessment of their financial level they stated 38% as good, 10 % average and 52 % poor.

The medical records supported the fact that all most all the respondents are suffering from various types of illness - diabetics, arthritis, Parkinson, heart disease, dementia and gastrotestinal issues. However it was the opinion of 62 adults out of total sample (n= 195) that their health condition was satisfactory, 75 stated that it was not satisfactory and rest recognized it as age related issues rather than a health condition. (Figure 3)

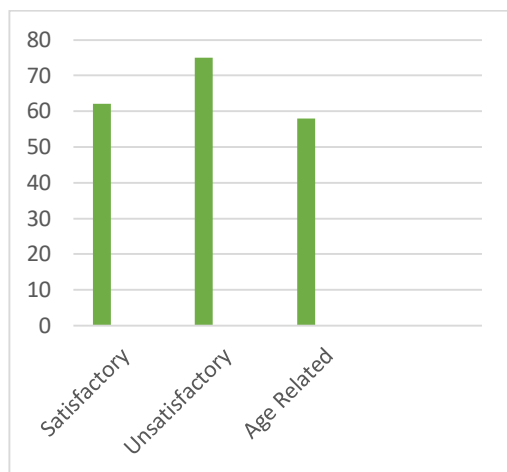


Fig. 3. Attitudes towards health condition

#### IV. Results

A significant number of older adults (n= 180) stated that they have a large amount of free time to spend on leisure time activities on daily basis. 58 % of them had more than 08 hours for leisure per day .3/4 th of older adults had 6 -8 hours of free time to engage in activities. Only a small portion stated that they have less than 4 hours to engage in leisure time activities

According to the elderly homes (3) leisure time activities were varied. (Figure 4). That variation is based on the number of staff, the attitudes of the staff on leisure time activities and available resources. Also physical setting of the home has contributed significantly. Following activities are identified as leisure time activities enjoyed by them.

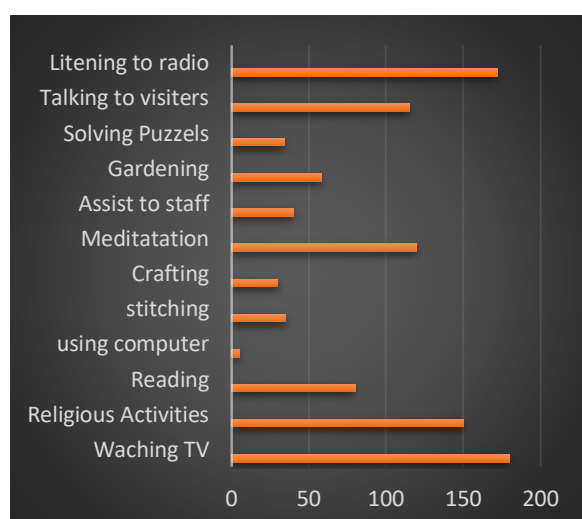


Fig. 4. Participation for leisure activities

The most loved and common leisure time activity was watching Television. 92.3 % of the respondents like to watch TV even during day time. They spent

an average of 4 hours watching television a day. 88 % of them like to spend their free time on radio including bed ridden older adults (12.8 % of the sample). 52% of them have attend cultural events and pilgrimages organized by the institution. However it was not identified as a leisure activity by the respondents. 99% of the surveyed individuals stated that they have never gone to the cinema after coming to the elderly home. Only few older adults used computers and they spend 3 - 4 hours daily on it, mainly to access social media.

There were no significant difference of the spending time on leisure activities between the week days and week end. The opportunities for activities are always same, however they can expect visitors more on weekends who come to the elders home for arms giving in celebration of birthdays, death anniversaries etc. On poya days, 81% of respondents surveyed, participate on religious activities 4 - 5 hours where it was less than 1 hour on ordinary day. Sundays 90% of the Christian participants (n=21) spend their free time in church, and half of them enjoy the company of church crowd. The rest of the adults do not want to spend their time in church due to the fear of meeting known people. They want to escape from the sympathy of the public, cause to humiliation.

Majority of the surveyed respondents declared that they go away for a pilgrimage at least once a year and that was remarkable as they have opportunity to travel and sightseeing. When elders are at outside of their elderly home they were more likely to go to cinema, stage plays and music concert although these types of activities are still unavailable for them.

More than half of the respondents liked to walk in the garden especially in the evening and those who complains of pains in feet liked to sit in the benches of the garden. This was very remarkable in one home, as it was adjoining to a children's playground. In that home the older adults who are confined to wheel chairs, like to spend their leisure time in the home garden. Their leisure activity preference was determined by their desire to company, intimacy and improve relationship with the outside world.

Interestingly, attending cultural or religious event are not listed among the most popular forms of activities done in the free time. The reason may be lack of such practices or it may be due to non - adaptation of cultural or religious activities to the needs and wishes of the particular group.



### **Barriers for older adults to participate for leisure time activities**

The factors prevent older adults participating for activities during their free time were identified;

#### **Non availability of programmes**

A significant portion of the respondents (64%) stated that there are no new leisure time activities or programmes to participate during their free time. The available activities are very traditional like reading and religious activities. If authority can introduce new activities, older adults are willing to participate in as they feel very bored most of the time. The main culprit for sleepy behaviour of the elders after lunch is non-availability of activities as 87% of respondents declared.

#### **Financial restrictions**

The information collected by key informants reveal that non availability of financial resources constrains the management from organizing and providing various types of leisure time activities for residents. All the key informants agreed that the main focus of the management is to provide food and medicine to older adults with available financial allocation. The elderly homes runs under the local governments are financially stable as annual allocation is receiving but the other home depends on private funds and public donations. That home is in a struggle to provide basics to residents due to inflation rate of the country and unlimited health demand of residents. Therefore it is impossible for them to implement new activities or provide material/equipment for older adults.

#### **Fear for falls**

A significant ratio of the respondent has fear of falls in doing exercises or walking. 87% of them have experienced such incidents. Older adults who are using walking aids for safely refused to walk in the outside as they have fear of forthcoming fall hazard. They casted their votes for sitting in chair and do exercises.

#### **Physical disabilities**

When consider about outdoor activities, 49% of the respondents declared their objections to participate due to physical disabilities. In Actual fact, they were not fully aware of the benefits of outdoor activities. Mainly vision impairments, pain in joints, swollen legs and fingers, numbness, backaches and physical imbalance are the factors that refrain them from participate in outside activities.

#### **Lack of interest**

It was observed that 28.9 % of older adults surveyed had no interest of engaging in activity at their free

time, their wish was to be in the bed and relax even during the day time. This was very common among bedridden participants (n=25). The belief that they will not improve their condition had led them to despair. Shattered hopes, isolation, mood changes and attitudes had contribute lot in non - adaptation to the available activities of home. It was very hard to motivate them according to the key informants.

#### **Lack of human resources**

The care takers of the elderly homes stated that they would like to introduce activities to the older adults and engage in those activities with them as well. The obstruction was there were no sufficient human resource for that purpose. The care taker senior ratio was 1:10. In actual fact there was no resting time for a caretaker and it was obvious that they could not complete their daily routine some times. The homes like to well come volunteers who can come and conduct activity sessions for older adults regularly however that has not been fully realized yet.

#### **Lack of care giving skills**

The ability to engage the older adults in leisure time activities depends greatly on the skill and the training of the care givers. In this study it was found that only 12% of the care givers had received proper job training. However there was not a single care taker has been exposed to overseas training after recruitment. Most of the care givers are not creative and elder's recreational opportunities are challenged by them sometimes.

#### **Discouragement from friends**

It is worth stressing the fact that a significant amount of the respondents do not engage in any kind of activity because of they do not have companionship or they are discouraged by their mates. One adult who was a professional dancer and drummer, have great desire to conduct a dancing class for the elders at home but he had been greatly criticized and discouraged by the residents. Also it was noted that some elders are trying to influence others for not participating activities.

### **Preferable leisure time activities**

The study explored the preference of leisure time activities by the older adults. The preference depends on their hobbies, knowledge and capabilities. Their response has not been confined to the list of activities that they participating at the moment.

#### **Reading**

Older adults explained that reading is a fantastic leisure time activity which gives knowledge, update the news around the world and keep their brains



engaged. Majority of them stated that reading improve memory, delay cognitive decline and reduce stress. Out of elderly homes studied, two homes have internal libraries. Therefore access to read magazines, novels, religious books is existing. The elders of the other home read Sunday papers throughout the week and they exchange their personnel collection of books with friends.

#### Birthday parties

Those who have been exposed to social media, suggested that it is very joyful if any celebrity decide to celebrate their birthdays with them – not in the form of arms giving but as the form of a party. 76% of them wanted to wear birthday hats and sing the birthday song. Also to decorate the home with party decorations. 86% of the sample would like to go outside place to celebrate the birthday followed by a dinner. It should not necessary be a private event for the residents but that can be opened to the family, relatives and the friends of the celebrity.

#### Camping

37 % of the surveyed older adults identified camping is very interesting activity. They have been exposed to a video clip on senior camping activity. They love all the activities showed in that video clip - fishing, cooking, fi ring, singing and eating under the shining stars. They suggested that those who are confined to the wheel chairs also can enjoy those activities performed by the participants in the video clip.

#### Story Telling

110 respondents stated that story telling is a very good activity for those who have severe vision impairment. A staff member or an adult who is capable enough to be the narrator, can perform the activity. Out of them 54% would like to listen humours stories which can make them laugh. The others prefer to listen religious stories like Jathaka Katha (Buddhist religious stories) and bible stories irrespective of their religion. Great portion of elders like to listen stories related to Sri Lankan history which are full of patriotism.

#### Music and Dance

91% of the older adults stated that the most preferable activity is participating in Music related things. Sing a long sessions and calypso sessions were loved by them mostly. They enjoy active participation – singing and playing rather than listening to music. Dancing according to music is also very popular activity that gives them immense happiness and relaxation. They revealed music and dancing are amazing that contribute heavily to change mood and promote overall wellbeing.

#### Animals

Many residents like to have a pet specially a dog. They consider pet as great social companions and they have had pets in their lives and ready to welcome an animal friend with open arms. One resident is used to sit on a bench of the garden and watch people moving around with their dogs in the evening. Small portion of animal lovers selected cats as their pet as cats are less bothering.

#### Exercise

Most of the adult would like to engage in regular exercise programme and they are educated on the health benefits of the exercise. They explained they like to do something as simple as walking in the garden as it help them to stay active and strong. The older adults (17%) were reluctant to accept exercise is a good leisure time activity for them as they are immobile the difficulties to move their bodies due to physical pain. They are unaware of the exercises that even bed ridden person can do.

#### Education activities

Respondents identified two types of activities related to Education – teaching and learning. Majority of the (64%) older adults like to learn a Language (English and Tamil) and Astrology. 52 % marked their interest in learning handicraft. Among the older adults surveyed 1/10<sup>th</sup> like to teach English language to their mates and the staff members of the home. Those respondents are from English speaking backgrounds and they emphasised the value of the acquiring English knowledge at any age.

#### Spending time with visitors /Volunteers

Almost every senior perks up in the presence of children. That brings happiness and reduce the stress. Most of the time visitors come to those homes to offer food or other items, are not spending much time with them. However the volunteers and the students of one education institute who practice their internship, reported very close relationship with older adults. They have enough time to listen them, care them and they are very capable of understanding the needs of a person older adults stated. 88% of the sample like to share their thoughts with the volunteers as they are empathetic. They feel much relaxed after talking to them.

#### Shopping

The most significant factor was 84% of the female older adults were like to spend their time on shopping although they have financial difficulties. One adult stated that “when I was working those days I used to go for shopping, sometimes I do not buy a piece of cloth, but I really enjoying looking at goods, bargaining with shoppers. Happiness is not



always purchasing something but making effort to purchase.”

## V. DISCUSSION

Changes occur during the process of the ageing in physical, social and psychological arena significantly decide the need and motivation relate to various aspects of elders life – also relevant to active leisure. Research findings and literature world-wide show the importance of focusing on that issue. Among the factors determining the preference of leisure time activities of senior citizens this study includes demographic factors – age , sex , health: Psychological factors – perception, emotions, motivations , personality, Attitudes: Cultural factors – religion, beliefs , faith, values: Social Factors – education, companionship, communication: Economic factors – income , expenses, grants, source of funding and geographical location of the elderly home. It was identified by the researcher that there is a great need of further studies in this field to introduce new social activities to elderly homes in Sri Lanka. Also care givers should be provided with necessary trainings. Findings of such studies have proven that more than 50% of senior citizens are aware about the benefits of exercise but only a small portion of them engage in physical activity on regular basis. Limited social and physical activities for institutionalized senior citizens in Sri Lanka compared to western countries or Europe, are often results in physically inactive adults. That situation is always mistakenly identify by the management of elderly homes as the physical laziness of the older adults. But it was due to the insufficient number of trained staff, their negative attitudes and the attitudes of the residents, habits, values and pattern relating to their active leisure.

However it is proven that if an adult is not very mobile, there may be exercises that can improve their physical strength and regain their ability to move. No matter they are sitting, standing or walk with an assistance they can still receive physical and psychological benefits from the exercises. For immobile person, chair exercises or chair yoga routines are appropriate. Also exercise routines which can be done with a walking aid with the assurance of stability.

In analysing the responses of the senior citizens taking their age into consideration, it is possible to assume that a positive tendency has been showcased by the respondents to lead active life. This was obvious in the young old (60 -65 years). The number of respondents of that group who accept they do not like to engage in any type of physical activity was very low (3%). This is due to the fact that, this generation was bone between 1960 – 1965 called baby boomers. When they are reaching age their attitudes, values knowledge and beliefs are

remarkably different from other generations. For that generation retirement is the beginning of life. For a person who led a busy life, can utilize the leisure time for hobbies, recreational activities and to learn new things that they could not do before mainly because of time factor. However it was observed that they were provided with very limited options especially modern leisure activities such as internet based activities and social media access. The Attitudes, systems of values, entertainment, fun, recreation and enjoyment of old – old group (above 80 years) were very limited and traditional too.

Major point which should be taken into consideration when designing and introducing leisure time activities for senior citizens in residential homes, is the availability of resources and capacity of the staff. Significance of leisure time activities for senior citizens under residential care is differ from the older adults at their own home. Senior citizens with their own family members have numerous opportunities as well as ways to manage their free time. Their routine, pattern of living are varied in weekends, public holidays and during school vacations. Most of the time they get the opportunities to travel far and stay in outside hotels sometimes overseas travels which never realized with senior citizens who are institutionalized. The findings of this study show that they are spending their time during weekends, holidays same as usual reading papers, watching TV for long hours. This is most likely because they have provided with limited choices.

According to the preference list, the reading was the most popular leisure activity among senior citizens and it has been continuing as a habit for generations. However home based adults in Sri Lanka still reading physical books, Magazines. The research findings suggests e – reading, listening to audio books would be more effective for the people with vision impairment of who look for novelties. Organizing a book club among members with the help of donators is another way for older adults to enjoy and socializing.

For emotional balance getting in touch with aesthetic and creative side is another brilliant idea to spend leisure time. Studies have found creative activities help adult to battle against chronic illness and that also reduce negative emotions which improve health condition of the person. Music, Drama and Art therapies are nowadays becoming popular in Sri Lanka, although none of the senior member in study sample has enjoyed such experience. Drawing, Colouring and painting could be easily introduced considering mind involvement and strive to nerves system through finger tips. In European Countries creating scrap books, making



cooking recipe books, cross stitch exhibitions have been introduced to elder's home as fun projects.

Great attention should be paid to the fact that the adults who are confined to the home territories are longing to spend at least a little time in outside which may contribute to boost their mood. In the mildest of their limited mobility, a senior person can sit in the wheel chair near window or near fence to breathe fresh air or to observe the everyday activity of the world.

Watching TV was the most time spent leisure time activity of the older adults (approximately 32 hours per week) Although it cannot be accepted as a healthy activity, it can cater their intellectual needs of the adults if they are provided with the programmes as documentaries, explorations and inventions. Majority of the respondents wanted to watch musical programmes as they bring happiness to their monotonous lives they said. However, the televisions of the homes were confined to a certain religious channel and most of the respondents were mealy looking at the TV while telecasting the programmes. The interest and the difference of the individuals should be identified by the management and should choose variety of TV programmes for adults accordingly.

All most all the senior citizens participated for the study had the issue of law self –esteem and that was the key factor obstructing their social mobilization. This factor restrict their physical activities. The negative public image of senior citizens created by Sri Lankan media which treat them as “heavy – old baggage” highly contributes towards low self -esteem. Promotion of youth which has become the main focus of the mass media unnecessarily, arouses in senior citizen feeling of shame, discarded caused by their old appearance prevent them from moving with the society. Advertising campaigns of various age related products (Milk power, food supplementary, insurance schemes etc.) which exaggerate stereotypes old people aggravates this situation. Although they are over 60, they can still give something back to the society. Various programmes should be implemented by the government sector to stay them engaged and to provide the feeling of worth and accomplishment.

The results of the research confirm that the preference of the leisure time activity of senior citizen in elderly homes determined by the rhythm of their life. Their life before they coming to the home influence greatly in selecting an activity to spend their leisure time. However their preference is not seriously concerning and implementing often. Their preference of leisure time activities are influenced by various groups of individuals.

- Staff members: the management who make financial decisions (purchasing, allocations, expenditure)
- Care takers who assist, introduce, encourage elders in participation, monitor and observe difficulties
- Volunteers: provide financial and technical support to carry out programmes
- Donors: provide financial assistance, raw materials and equipment
- Physicians: make decisions and recommendations on activities which older adults should engage.

## VI. CONCLUSION

When planning and introducing leisure time activities to senior citizens, attention should be focused on following areas;

- Elders at homes would like to maintain good relationship with other members of the home and the staff as well. The activities will help them to utilize their free time fully and bring each other very close.
- Institutionalized elders are at high risk of loneliness and social isolation. Engaging them in and activity would be the best solution to avoid negative impact.
- Before they come to the home they have managed their time in their own way than professionally active people do.
- They prefer to occupy in various activities in the mornings, evenings and weekends.
- The staff should be trained to conduct high quality new programmes during leisure time.
- Leisure time activities should be included in daily routine hence it cannot be ignored either by staff or the elderly.
- Activities should address physical, social, psychological and intellectual needs of the person.
- New trends of technology and communication should be utilize when planning activities. Elders may have issues in using modern technologies (internet, mobile phones, and computers) or reading user manuals of new equipment. They should be assisted with due understanding and empathy.
- Infrastructure and resources should be provided while introducing new activities to elders.
- The elderly person should be assisted and monitored till he becomes familiar with the new activity.
- Elders should be listened, their interest should be considered when selecting activities for them.



- It should not forget that “one size fits for all” is not applicable, as elderly cannot adapt all the activities implemented or available at homes due to sensory impairment, memory problems and disability.

Caretaking plans and daily routines that address the specific needs and preference of the older adults in leisure time activities successfully, will undoubtedly produce more satisfaction to the elders which in turn can motivate them more actively in their life.

#### VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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