

**Old Age and Society: An Analysis of *Falim* and *Home* from a
Gerontological Perspective**

First Degree Programme
in
English Language and Literature under CBCS System

Year 2023-2024

**Old Age and Society: An Analysis of *Falim* and *Home* from a
Gerontological Perspective**

**Dissertation submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature**

Name of the Candidates with Candidate Code:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. Akhil.K | 13021132032 |
| 2. Devi Priya C | 13021132014 |
| 3. Diya Dileep | 13021132074 |
| 4. Gayathri.H.B | 13021132047 |
| 5. Mubindas M | 13021132057 |

Course Code: EN 1645

Sree Narayana College, Kollam

2023-2024

Acknowledgement

We thank all the faculty members of the Department of English, Sree Narayana College, Kollam for helping us complete this dissertation. We express our sincere gratitude to Ms. Radhika B, Head of the Department of English, for her guidance and supervision. We also thank our classmates, library staff, and the college authorities for their kind cooperation.

1. Akhil.K
2. Devi Priya.C
3. Diya Dileep
4. Gayathri.H.B
5. Mubindas.M

Certificate

This is to certify that the project/dissertation titled “**Old Age and Society: An Analysis of *Faliny* and *Home* from a Gerontological Perspective**” is a record of studies carried out by Akhil.K, Devi Priya C, Diya Dileep, Gayathri.H.B, Mubindas.M at the Department of English, Sree Narayana College, Kollam under my guidance and submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment for the Degree Programme in English Language and Literature under CBCS system.



Ms.Radhika B.
Head & Assistant Professor
Department of English
Sree Narayana College,
Kollam



Ms.Radhika B.
Assistant Professor
Department of English
Sree Narayana College,
Kollam

April 2024

Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**Old Age and Society: An Analysis of *Falimy* and *Home* from a Gerontological Perspective**” is a record of research work carried out by us at the Postgraduate and Research Department of English, Sree Narayana College, Kollam under the guidance of Ms.Radhika B. and submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, First Degree Programme in English Language and literature under CBCS system.

1. Akhil.K
2. Devi Priya C
3. Diya Dileep
4. Gayathri.H.B
5. Mubindas.M

Kollam

April 2024

Department of English

S N College, Kollam

Content

	Page No.
Preface	
Chapter One : Introduction	1 - 7
Chapter Two : Unveiling the gerontological viewpoint in <i>Falimy and Home.</i>	8 - 24
Chapter Three: Conclusion	25 - 29
Work cited	30 - 31

Preface

The project entitled “Old Age and Society: An Analysis of *Falimy* and *Home* from a Gerontological Perspective” focuses on gerontology and how issues related to old age is portrayed in the two movies. The increase in the elderly population has paved the way for identifying the problems and challenges faced by elderly people. An analysis of *Falimy* and *Home* from a gerontological perspective aims to explore the representation of gerontological elements in Malayalam cinema.

This research work is divided into three chapters. The first chapter discusses the concept of aging, gerontology, and the issues faced by older adults, as well as the portrayal of these elements in literature and cinema. The second chapter provides a detailed analysis of the two movies, *Falimy* and *Home*, from a gerontological perspective and discusses the various issues faced by older people. It also emphasizes the importance of support and care for senior citizens for their mental and physical well-being. The third chapter discusses ways and suggestions to improve the conditions of older adults.

The project sheds light on the issues faced by older adults and emphasizes the importance of taking proper actions to help them. By examining films, it is understood that movies play an important role in portraying the condition of elderly people and how it can impact the audience. The project aims to contribute to emphasizing the main emotional issues of older adults and the role of friends and family in their lives.

Chapter One

Introduction

The world is dramatically witnessing an increase in the number of older people and currently it homes 600 million elderly people above 60 years .This is emerging as a major demographic trend in the worldwide which is often referred to as the “graying of the planet”. Moreover, by the year 2050, it is expected that 21 % of the world’s population is to be 60 years old or above and in less than 50 years, one in six persons will be over 60. The pace of population ageing is much faster than in the past and it is the result of improved public health system, sanitation and development. Most of the world’s senior citizens live in the developing countries. Even in the under developed countries not only the number of older people but also the rate of life expectancy is increasing. The growth of older population is influencing the lives of individuals as well as the social institutions like family, health care, workplace, education and so on.

According to World Health Organization, ageing is defined as “the process of progressive change in the biological, psychological and social structure of individuals” (Sowers 3). Ageing is a lifelong process that begins in the time of early adulthood which leads to the degradation of structural as well as functional elements of the body such as cells, organs, etc. However, society always pretends to limit aging as a process that occurs only in a person’s older years. Even though aging is not a process that leads to illness, it makes humans more susceptible to diseases than a younger adult. Hence, aging is not an illness but a condition. During the later adulthood persons are more likely to suffer from diseases that are associated with old age such as diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, memory loss and etc. So they need

proper medical care as well as emotional and mental support from the part of family, friends, relatives and neighbours. Gender also affects the way in which people age. All over the world, women live longer than men. The life expectancy of females differ from developed countries to developing countries and as they live longer than men they are affected more by the age old diseases.

The branch of study that deals with the process of growing old is known as 'gerontology'. It is a multidisciplinary area of study that deals with the psychological, cognitive and biological aspects of aging. The word was coined by the 19th century biologist Ilya Ilyich Mechikov in 1903 from the Greek words 'geron' that means 'old man' and 'logia' which means 'study of'. V. Korenchevsky is considered as the father of gerontology. This field is set apart from geriatrics which is a branch of medicine that is concerned with the prevention and management of diseases in the old age. Gerontologists are from diverse fields including medicine, nursing, psychology, psychiatry, anthropology and so on. The field is dedicated to helping the older adults to overcome the challenges in the old age and to have a better long life. Throughout the world irrespective of culture, elder persons are placed in a stage where they are only allowed or expected to enlighten their families and to pass the social values. Researchers states that they can also provide financial support, engage in child care, help in making decisions and provide emotional support to their family. But in reality, nearly all of the families considered them as burdens. In India, respecting older persons was a part of the tradition and culture. They had a special place in the family where their thoughts and ideas were given importance. They were loved, cared and respected by the society. Younger persons were influenced from the elders from their own homes, workplace, neighborhoods and society. However, over the years there is a gradual degradation in the level of respect from the side of the young and the society

in general. Offering a seat in the bus or having good gestures towards them are now considered as signs of respect. This condition leads them as the victims of abuse or neglect in the present society.

Irrespective of the societal and cultural differences of different countries of the world, there appears some common elements to the gerontological practices. Elder abuse or maltreatment is the most important element among this and it is found almost in all world countries. Elder abuse is expected to continue to increase, particularly as many countries experience rapidly aging population. Elder abuse or maltreatment is the harmful behavior towards the elderly by the caregivers who they loves, cares and depends on. This harmful behaviour can cause mental, psychological distress to the older persons which will lead to depression, loneliness and other sufferings. Elder abuse is in different forms such as physical, sexual, psychological, financial abuse. Physical abuse includes any kind of behaviour that results in physical discomfort, pain and injury. Behaviours such as slapping, kicking, cutting are included as the examples of physical abuse. Sexual abuse includes nonconsensual sexual contacts like unwanted touching, rape. Psychological abuse which is also referred as emotional or verbal abuse includes acts like humiliation, name calling and intimidation that creates mental distress, isolation and fear of violence in the elderly. Financial or material abuse consists of illegal, purposeful and inappropriate use of financial resources or material properties of the elder persons. The use of property or money of elderly without their consent or will belongs to the financial abuse. Neglect also creates severe problems to them. It includes the act of failure of providing the necessities like food, water, clothing, medicine and comfort. In many countries traditional family setups are being broke due to the declining size of family, death of caregivers, lack of love between the generations of a family, urbanization and etc. These are the main

factors that influence the maltreatment of older persons. In India, the dynamics of families are also affected by the migration of younger ones in search of a good source of living. This results in the emotional distress of the elderly who had a traditional view on the family system. Sometimes the dissatisfaction of emotional needs hurt them and this voluntarily leads to the relocation of the elderly to the old age homes. Increasing individualism in the youths creates a situation where the older people cannot rely on their children to look after them. The increase in the number of old age homes is the best example for it. In western countries, the condition of older persons are almost similar and slightly differ due to the cultural difference.

In order to overcome the challenges in the old age, many countries provide social services to the elderly through the health and economic services network. Pension is the most important financial service that plays in the stability of the economic condition of the countries as well as the security of the elder population. Even though long-term care for the elderly has been a challenge across the globe, many countries like Germany and Japan already have long term care programmes and many Asian governments including Japan, Hong Kong are starting to increase the long term care services. Some countries have also adopted filial support legislation to help the senior citizens. Many international organizations are formed to help, support and improve the condition of older persons in the world such as International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics, International Federation on Ageing and Alzheimer's disease International and so on. The United Nations General Assembly also declared 2021-2030 as the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing which seeks to reduce health inequities and improve the lives of older people through primary health services and changing the way we think, feel and act towards age and ageism.

Gerontology examines how people age physically, mentally and emotionally. It explores how society and culture influence our perceptions of aging. It considers the roles, expectations and stereotypes associated with older adults. It also focuses on the physical and mental health of older adults, including issues like caregiving and quality of life. It also looks at how aging is experienced in various settings, such as family, community and long term care facilities. It examines the impact of these environments on older adult's well-being.

In literature, stories of age do not give us proper answer to the questions about the process of aging or not directly illustrate the gerontological concepts. However, as literature is the mirror of society there are many literary works about the aging condition or with the old characters which can give comfort, inspiration and peace to the readers. Many critics argue that the theme of aging is not a new trend in literature because the elements of old age is already presented through the characters like *King Lear* by Shakespeare, Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens and so on and this literary heritage has paved the way for establishing a strong relationship between literature and gerontology that is known by the term 'literary gerontology'. One prominent theme discussed in literary gerontology is the concept of identity and self discovering in old age. The field has spread its wideness by taking role in fiction, autobiography, memoir, poetry, drama and performance. *The Notebook* (1996) by Nicholas Sparks is a best example of literary gerontology which is a beloved romance novel that tells the story of Noah and Allie, an elderly couple reflecting on their past and the enduring power of love. It beautifully captures joys and challenges of ageing and power of memories. *The Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out The Window and Disappeared* (2009) is another novel by Jonas Jonasson which tells the story of a

centenarian Allan Karlsson who escapes from his nursing home and embarks on a series of adventures.

Theatre is another fruitful context where aging and old people are taking participation both as audience as well as the characters. Hence Gerontological theatre combines the art of theatre with the study of aging and older adults. One of the oldest surviving plays that featured older men and women in prominent roles was Aeschylus's *The Persians*. The New Comedy of Menander is a genre that developed performative stereotypes and the treatment of age is polarized into the young and old. Here white hair and beard are used for representing one generation while dark hair and no beards are used for the other. In the beginning period, European theatres focused on the age of the individual actors to portray the age old characters. The protagonist of Shakespeare's *King Lear* which is still a central text in theatrical culture on aging was originally played by Richard Burbage then in his late thirties while Thomas Betterton played *Hamlet* when he was in his sixties. In 1960s, a movement called 'Theatre for Ageing' began to gain recognition in the United States. One of the pioneers in gerontological theatre is Dr. Gene Cohen, a psychiatrist and researcher. Gerontological theatre continues to be a growing field that fosters intergenerational connection and challenges against stereotypes. *The Gin Game* (1977) by D. Coburn, *Driving Miss Daisy* (1987) by Alfred Uhry and *The Father* (2012) by Florian Zeller are the best examples of plays that explored the theme of aging and older adults.

Movies have long become a large part of the vast societal mirror in which people can see themselves. They are a popular form of entertainment and can encompass various genres, such as drama, comedy, action, romance, and more. Films

typically involve a combination of acting, cinematography, directing, editing, and sound design to create a narrative that engages and captivates the audience. They can be enjoyed in theaters, on television, or through various streaming platforms. Films have the power to evoke emotions, spark imagination, and provide a window into different cultures, experiences, and perspectives. Films often portray the complexities of real life aging issues, showing how they are apparently handled outside of and around the law or legal issues. As ageism is the prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes based on age and is a pan-cultural phenomenon it is important to explore the filmic representation of older persons globally. One thing that matters is that the filmic portrayals of older persons differ across regions. Many contemporary movies about the theme of aging focuses on love stories of the old characters. *The Mother* (2003) by Rodger Michell and *Something's Gotta Give* (2003) by Nancy Meyers are such movies that broke the stereotypical plot lines. In *The Mother*, the widowed mother, May, falls in love with young Daren who is her daughter's lover. In *Something's Gotta Love*, the dramatist Erica falls in love with a playboy who was previously her daughter's lover. In Hollywood, movies about aging focused more on the themes like intergenerational relationships, family bonds, companionship and the wisdom that comes with age. Recent Malayalam movies like *Home* (2021) by Rojin Thomas and *Falim* (2023) by Nithish Sahadev are the best representation of social and cultural traumas of senior citizens.

Chapter Two

Unveiling the Gerontological Viewpoint in *Falimy* and *Home*

Global aging, also known as population aging is a global phenomenon that occurs in all parts of the world. With the rise of older population, gerontology is emerging as an important branch of study in the present social scenario which focuses on the social relationships and participation of elderly people along with the cognitive and biological aspects of aging and it paved the way for protecting the needs of individuals. Film is the most important popular media that illustrates the lives of older adults and it has profound impact on the understanding of gerontology, which is the study of aging and its effects on individuals and society. Films have the incredible ability to connect with the audience on a personal level. Whether it is through relatable characters or thought-provoking themes, films can evoke powerful emotions and leave a lasting impact.

Movies have a unique way of capturing the essence of aging and shedding light on the experiences of older adults. They can provide a window into the challenges, joys and complexities of elderly people which allows the society to gain a deeper understanding of the aging process. One of the most significant contributions of movies to gerontology is their ability to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about ageing. Films can break down the ageist beliefs of the society and promote a more positive and inclusive view of aging by portraying older adults as vibrant, multi-dimensional characters. Films demonstrate the importance of staying physically, mentally and socially engaged in the old ages. Gerontological movies often delve into themes exploring character's reflections on their lives, past decisions and the legacy they live behind. These films frequently try to depict the dynamics of relationships

between the older adults, their families and friends and addresses the physical and mental health issues faced by the elderly. Movies also explore themes such as retirement, intergenerational relationships, caregiving and end of life issues as well as the need of pursuing their passions and maintaining strong social connections, it serves as a powerful reminder that age should never be a barrier to living a vibrant and engaged life.

In Mollywood, there are number of movies that dealt with the theme of gerontology and these movies can advocate the people to understand the physical and mental difficulties that senior citizens face. *Oru Minnaminuginte Nuruguvettam* (1987), directed by Bharatan, narrates the story of an old couple, Ravunni Nair and Saraswathi Amma, who adopt a girl named Maya with great devotion. However, they tragically lose both Maya and her son. The movie showcases the couple's deep desire for children and the void and loneliness they experience after losing Maya, their adopted daughter, and her son. *Moonnam Pakkam* (1988), written and directed by Padmarajan, starring Thilakan and Jayaram in the lead roles, tells the story of Thampi, a retired old man who lives in isolation in a village. He is excited for his grandson Pachu's return, but his happiness is short-lived as his grandson tragically passes away. This event deeply affects Thampi. During the 'bali' ceremony for Pachu, Thampi, along with the balichoru, commits suicide by submitting himself to the sea. The movie explores themes such as the isolation and longing for love experienced by older adults. *Oru Cheru Punchiri* (2000), written and directed by M.T.Vasudevan Nair, is a heartwarming film that beautifully portrays the love and bond between Kurup and Ammalukutty. The film portrays an older couple who continues to cherish their love and independence, even in their old age and they resisted the pressure to sell their ancestral property and to live with their children in the city. *Oru Mudhasi Gadha*

(2016) is a film written and directed by Anthany Joseph which depicts the story of an old grandmother with repressive behavior and her daughter-in-law's mother, who helps to change her behavior by fulfilling her bucket list. Together, they start a group for elderly and abandoned people to fulfill their wishes. The movie explores the significance of pursuing dreams for older adults, improving their mental health, and enhancing their relationships with those around them.

Some of the recent Malayalam movies that discuss issues related to the elderly are *Falimy* and *Home*, but what sets these films apart from the former ones is that they do not directly depict the difficulties faced by older adults or focus on gerontology. At first glance, these two films may seem like comedy family movies. However, upon closer observation, it becomes evident that they do showcase elements of gerontology and address the issues faced by older adults. These two films have deeper meanings beyond what meets the eye.

Falimy is a 2023 Indian Malayalam language comedy-drama film written and directed by Nithish Sahadev and produced by Lakshmi Warrior, Ganesh Menon and Amal Paulson. The movie stars Basil Joseph, Jagadish and Manju Pillai in lead roles. *Falimy* is a classic comedy movie which shows a family of self-centered individuals and the issues of older persons in a light-hearted way. The movie is based on a journey to fulfill the grandfather's wish of a pilgrimage, partly to find distraction from their personal problems. Through the journey, the film portrays a family that finally comes together.

The movie tells the story of Anoop, a dubbing artist who lives in Trivandrum with his family. The dysfunctional middle-class family consists of Anoop's father Chandran, mother Rema, younger brother Abhijith and grandfather Janardhanan. The

members of the family is not very close and has their own struggles. Janardhanan, the eldest member of the family, always wishes to visit Varanasi. Throughout the film, he tries to go there, but he is always caught by his family members whenever he attempts to go alone. The movie itself starts with Janardhanan's journey to the railway station, where he is caught by his younger grandson. Although he deeply wishes to go to Kashi, he loves his family a lot. This is evident from the wire sculpture of the five family members that he made after his return from the station. It shows his love for his family and the unity he desires in his kinship. Even though his relatives restrict his efforts to go to Kashi out of concern, they do not offer him emotional support or try to understand the intensity of his aspirations. So, he strongly believes that no one in the family will accompany him on the journey and tries to go there alone. "Friends are critical for intimacy and exchange of confidences, especially when compared to relatives other than marital partners and after major role transitions such as widowhood or retirements"(Hooyman 182). Even though he experiences a decline in friendship and emotional connection with his family members, he has a true friend in his neighborhood who is in his peer age group. As people of the same age can connect with each other, his friend is the only one who understands his aspirations and encourages him to achieve his dream. They share a strong emotional connection and have a brotherly relationship. All their conversations revolve around Janardhanan's attempts to go to Kashi and his failures in doing so.

Janardhanan is also a relief to his friend because he is in a wheelchair due to his health issues and is neglected by his family members. He jokingly asks Janardhanan to bring him some snacks from the railway station next time when Janardhanan gets caught by his family. But deep down, it shows that Janardhanan is his friend's only connection with the outside world. It shows the importance of social

connections and the desire to stay engaged despite the limitations that come with age. It also portrays the feeling of being neglected by family members which unfortunately can be a common experience for some older individuals. “Friendship quality is found to be related to psychological wellbeing and happiness” (Hooyman 182). Their friendship is the only factor that helps them to deal with their stressful life situations.

Even though Janardhanan does not have a connection with his son, his grandson Anoop cares for him. On the other hand, Chandran seems to know very little about his father. In the beginning of the movie, it is clear that Chandran did not show much concern or sincerity when asking his father about his attempts to go to Kashi. He even thought about making some money by canceling the train ticket. But Anoop cares him and promises him that he will accompany him to Varanasi after his marriage. “The grandparent – grandchildren relationship can be a source of informal social support for both generations” (Hooyman 179). Although Janardhanan does not has grandsons as his emotional Support, they try to make him happy.

Father Chandran is an unemployed person who used to own a printing press but now spends his days drinking with his friend Chacko and watching TV. He is isolated in the family and considered a failure by society and his family. He intentionally keeps his distance from his relatives and does not try to know anything about the family. He is not even aware of his father’s departure from the house while he is present. Over the course of aging, the previous role of an older adult is often lost, and new roles are assumed. This can negatively affect a person’s self-esteem. This is evident in the case of Chandran. He is a representative of many older adults in society who could not connect with his family members because of his failure in his business

and develops negative emotions towards himself due to the lack of income, loss of importance in the family, feeling unwanted, and a sense of inadequacy around his family.

Like his father, Chandran also did not have an emotional connection and support from his family. His only friend is Chacko, with whom he spends his whole day drinking and sitting in front of his press. The movie explores the issues of old age, such as isolation, lack of emotional connection, and communication through the character Chandran. Chandran only seems happy during his conversation with Chacko and he shares all his worries and insecurities with him.

Even though his family has a huge financial crisis, he is not ready to sell his press to pay off the debts. Even most of Chandran's and Chacko's meetings took place in the inactive press. Chandran's emotional attachment to the press shows how much it meant to him and how it symbolized his hopes and dreams. Unfortunately, this behavior has had a negative impact on his relationship with his sons, especially Anoop. It seems like Chandran's focus on the press and his own aspirations have caused him to neglect his family and their needs.

Chandran and Anoop have a feud relation and they only communicate through insults. Anoop is desperate about his father's behavior towards the family and thinks that he is responsible for the financial burden. So most of the time, he never values him and always engages in conflicts with him due to clashes of egos and the belief that he and his mother are the only breadwinners.

Rema is the mother of the family who struggles with the behavior of the men of different ages. She is the bridge that connects the family together. She is working in a digital press in her middle age to take care of the family and became one of the main

breadwinner. She knows everything about the family. She is a mother who still takes care of her children and also helps the grandfather and is a part of a growing category of caregivers. She can be included in the sandwich generation because of combating responsibilities of parental and childcare. As Hooyman opines

Women in the middle maybe juggling extensive family responsibilities along the employment and their own age-related transitions. Women in middle generation are also centrally involved in maintaining family communication and cohesion across generations, even if they are not directly involved in caregiving (201).

This is evident in the case of Rema, who is a busy bee, juggling her job, household chores, and taking care of her grandfather and children. Rema is well-informed about the family and has the inside scoop on the grandfather's departure. She is also the one who wants her son to get married and make the necessary arrangements. But like every older woman she does not have a peer group person to share her worries and issues because her family members are preoccupied with their own problems. She does not have an emotional support system from her family. It shows the loneliness and isolation of older women in our society who did not have any form of relief in their own family also.

During the arrangement of Anoop's engagement it is clear that most of the efforts are being made by Rema, not Chandran. It seems like Chandran has not really taken on the responsibility of being a father and making decisions about his son's wedding. Instead, he tries to get money from his wife by cleaning the house with the help of his friend, Chacko. This shows the lack of responsibility and a weak connection with his family. During the journey to the engagement, Janardhanan has a

conversation with his friend and they end up having a little disagreement because his friend did not come to the function. But later, his friend promises to attend the wedding and even wants to take a photo. Janardhanan promises to get a color photo for him. This shows the strength of their friendship and the fact that they discuss everything that is happening in their lives.

Later Anoop's marriage is called off due to the disruption of Robin, a guy who used to stalk Anagha, the bride. Eventhough Chandran has issues with his son, he filed a complaint at the police station. During this time, inorder to distract from their personal problems, the family decided to take Janardhanan to Varanasi. Chandran initially hesitated to join them, but he eventually decides to join them. He even talks to Chacko about his financial issues and asks for some money to keep for himself. This shows that Chandran has a sense of pride and does not want to rely completely on his son, but at the same time, it also shows the trust and connection he has with Chacko.

After their decision to go to Varanasi, Janardhanan bids farewell to his friend. He is happy for Janardhanan but also emotional because he wishes he could go to Varanasi too. Unfortunately, due to his disability and lack of family support, he could not fulfill his dream. Even when Janardhanan calls him to join the journey, he refuses it as a joke. This portrays the helplessness that some disabled older adults face when they have to sacrifice their dreams due to their circumstances.

On the way to Varanasi, the dysfunctional family experiences a series of unexpected events that lead to continuous quarrels, constant complaints, and harsh exchanges of words. Throughout this journey, there is a visible distance between Anoop and Chandran. They never agree with each others suggestions and decisions.

Rema is the one who stands between them and manages their ill treatment of each other. This showcases the strained relationships within the family.

The news of the death of Janardhanan's friend is a shock to Janardhanan and he cries. "With a friend's death, older adults lose a part that can never be recaptured with anyone else" (Hooyman 269). This is every evident from the reaction of Janardhanan who lost a friend who was always there for him. After this incident, he became very silent, processing the loss. As the story progresses, Janardhanan goes missing from the hotel in Varanasi, and the family starts searching for him. Despite their dysfunctional nature, as suggested by the deliberate spelling mistake in the title '*Falimy*', the family becomes very tense and worried in the absence of their grandfather. While searching for Janardhanan, the family is taken to the police station by the police officer who was at the checkpoint. At the station, the Sub-Inspector asks Chandran to call his son to confirm their identity as a true family. However, they discover that Anoop did not even save his father's name in his contacts, and again it shows the emotional distance between them. Then as usual Rema is the one who saves the day by showing their family photo as ID proof and manages to escape from trouble. Later on, the family meets Pramod, a Malayali settled in Varanasi, who promises to help them find their grandfather. They spend many days in the city searching for him and come to realize that without him, the family feels incomplete. One day, Pramod takes them to a place where many Malayali's live, but he makes a mistake and asks another old man to pack his bags and join the family. It turns out that he's not the real Janardhanan, but an old man who has been neglected by his own family and has settled in Varanasi. Initially reluctant, he eventually agrees to meet the family and becomes very excited. But he is heartbroken when he realized that the family waiting downstairs is not really his. Through this character, the film illustrates

the issue of neglect which is a form of elder abuse and its impact on the persons. His family deliberately or unintentionally failed to provide the necessities such as food, support and medication and social contact. His desire to get love and support as well as to reconcile with his family becomes a painful image in the film.

As the search to find Janardhanan progresses, one night Anoop and Chandran got an opportunity to open up with each other. A frustrated and saddened Anoop by his father's attitude explodes and complains about the distance his father has made between the family members. He also argues that his grandfather's unwillingness to return to the family was due to the lack of love and peace within the family. Chandran also opens his heart and reveals that he has made necessary arrangements to sell the press and it could be used to solve the economic crises of the family. From there Anoop and Chandran rekindled their relationship and Anoop starts addressing Chandran as 'Achan/father' in public. Later Anoop learns from two people that Janarthanan has died and his body is buried on the banks of the Ganga. This incident brings the family closer together, and even Anoop starts getting closer to Chandran without any hesitation. Then Chandran performs Janardhanan's death rituals in Varanasi and he wishes to be reborn as his own father's son in the next birth as well.

In between the rituals, Chacko calls Anoop to inform that Janardhanan is back home and is upset about his friend's death. This sudden revelation brings moments of humour because Chandran has shaved his hair and moustache to do the rituals. As millions of pilgrims visit Varanasi in order to purify themselves by bathing in the holy river Ganga, Chandran also undergo a metamorphosis. He purified himself from the mindset of a father who even took the opportunity of cleaning his own house to get

the monetary benefits during the time of Anoop's wedding arrangements to a father who took his son's mistake in a light hearted way.

The transformation of Chandran is influenced by many reasons. Meeting with the abandoned old man in the hotel and the belief of his father's death are some among them. After these incidents, he realized the position of his father in his mind. So when he came to know that Janardhanan is alive, nothing else mattered to him. Later the family return home and learn that Janardhanan has departed to the railway station with his friend's cremains. They meet him on the train and he is surprised to know that the family stood together when they saw Pappu Pandey again, who slapped Abhijith before. Later Janardhanan decides to continue his journey alone with his friend's cremains to fulfill his old age aspirations. The film comes to an end with the note that age is not a factor for one's ardent passion and aspiration.

Overall the film portrays a dysfunctional family and the issues faced by the senior citizens in such a family with the elements of comedy and emotional moments.

The film *Home* is an Indian Malayalam language drama film written and directed by Rojin Thomas and produced by Vijay Babu. The movie stars Indrans, Manju Pillai, Sreenadh Bhasi and Naslen in the lead roles. The film won the national film award for best feature film in Malayalam in 2023. The film received widespread critical attention for its story, cinematography and social relevance. The performance of the lead cast especially that of Indrans and Manju Pillai were critically acclaimed.

The film is about Oliver Twist, a middle-aged man who is neglected by his children. The movie showcases his struggles to connect with them, especially through a smartphone. His family includes his Appachan, his wife Kuttியamma, and his two children, Antony and Charles. The movie vividly portrays the technological gap

between generations and its impact on older people. Just like the title *Home* implies a place where a sense of belonging is felt, the movie explores the life of a family and the influence of technology on relationships.

Oliver Twist is a technologically challenged middle-aged man and a mild-mannered father. He helps his wife around the house by fixing broken things and tending to the garden. He is an innocent man who loves his family members from the bottom of his heart. However, his father does suffer from some old age issues, like dementia. “Ageing per se may lead to dementia which is characterised by memory disorders, personality changes, impaired reasoning, unreasonable anger, forgetting recent things, while remembering past things” (Tuli 84). He walks with the help of a walker and needs assistance with everything, including cleaning up after himself. He also experiences urinary incontinence.

Despite having siblings, Oliver is the son who takes care of his father and helps him with everything. They share a strong emotional father-son relationship. The name ‘Oliver Twist’ was given to him by his father, who used to be an English typewriter in his adult days. Even though Oliver takes care of his father, he also faces some age-related health issues and sometimes struggles to understand his father’s English speeches. The family tends to neglect his memory loss issues, which creates a communication gap between them. In India, despite the noisy environments, neighbors, and relatives, many senior citizens feel lonely, and the grandfather is one among them.

Oliver is a techo – illiterate man in the modern world who has fallen behind in the age of smartphones and Social media and always felt a kind of emotional detachment from his sons and longs for love from them. He desperately wants but

literally struggles to connect with his sons who are constantly spending time on their phones. “Whether or not an older person is married or part of an intimate partnership affects his or her socioeconomic status, physical and psychological well-being, and the nature of care that is readily available in case of illness” (Hooyman 169). This is evident in the case of Oliver, who is silently supported and comforted by his wife Kuttியamma. He remains happy regardless of their children's negligence because of his wife's support. Another source of emotional support for him is Suryan, his best friend who has been with him since childhood. Suryan is the friend who has always stood by him.

Oliver Twist's elder son, Anthony, is a director who has only made one film and is currently going through a struggling period. However, Anthony has nomophobia and gets easily distracted from his work by constant notifications from various social media apps. He is also anxious about his impending marriage to his girlfriend, Priya. After a long time, Anthony comes back home in hopes of getting rid of his creative block. Oliver is happy to see his son and is excited to know more about him. He avoids conversing with his father and immerses himself in the world of social media platforms. “Many seniors feel disrespected and neglected when adult children are too busy on their smartphones and social media even in a family get together. The families personal time spent with the seniors gets markedly reduced” (Tuli 32). This is true in the case of Oliver and this prompts him to upgrade to a smartphone to better communicate with his sons. The intensity of the brothers' mobile addiction is evident in Charles' reply to Kuttியamma when she inquired about their habit of constantly checking the refrigerator.

He says, 'It's a habit, just like checking the phone all the time'. This indirectly suggests that the brothers, especially Anthony, have time for social media but not for their parents. On the other hand, Kuttiyamma isn't worried about the technological divide and just wants her son to get married and live peacefully. She's a typical housewife, a retired nurse who is loving, yet strong-willed, strict, and short-tempered. She's always busy with household chores and is shown doing them most of the time in the film. She's the perfect wife and mother, but no one in the family actually pays attention to her. Charles is very insensitive to her bad leg and doesn't even consider it when he makes her climb two flights of stairs just because he's too lazy to get up from bed and switch off the fan. Although it may sound funny, the family is actually ignoring her and not paying attention to her minor health problems. Her situation is romanticized by the patriarchal attitude in the family. She is the representation of many homemakers in the society whose frequent complaints of their health issues like knee aches, back pains are unattended and whose children could not care less about their roles in the home.

The best gift that a family can give to their members is love. All generations of a family need an atmosphere of love, care and support. In the case of Oliver, he also desires for all of this. He also feels that his son Anthony is giving more importance and respect to his coming father-in-law. Anthony's father-in-law, Joseph is a successful man in all means and also received many rewards and achievements in his profession. Now, Joseph is in his way to publish his autobiography on his birthday and Anthony agreed to Priya that he will make a surprise video for his birthday. Actually, Oliver is not a person who gets jealous about the interaction between his son and Joseph. In fact he is very happy and proud of his son's efforts to make the video which will later make Joseph happy. But the incident that pissed off Oliver is when

Anthony started to compare him with his father-in-law during a conversation about Joseph's autobiography. Anthony also states that his father will not be able to write such as autobiography like Joseph. Because in Anthony's point of view, Oliver is an unsuccessful video cassette owner who didnot achieve anything remarkable in his life and who ended in gardening in the old age. Later, Oliver remembers an extraordinary event in his life and is very excited. During the midnight itself, he called Suriyan to talk about it for which Suriyan gave a friendly scolding for disturbing his sleep. The laughter he had after the phone call shows the friendship between them and its deepness. Although Oliver tries to talk about the incident to Anthony many times but ends in vain.

In the meanwhile, Oliver buys a smartphone to connect with his sons and asked Charles to teach him about the working of social media apps and other facilities. He notes down everything he learns about, in his diary. Even though he has upgraded to smartphone he feels that he is still neglected and disrespected by Anthony and his son is giving more respect and time to Joseph. In a scene, Oliver is sitting inside a restaurant separated from his relatives, is looking at a young girl child who is also alienated from her family members who use mobile phones. "Digital technology and social media do make you feel "Heard" and "Seen", however, it is not a substitute for companions and friends" (Tuli 33). This is evident in the scene. The situation of both the child and Oliver is same, both are neglected and alienated from the family.

Later Anthony goes to pitch his script with the superstar Vishal along with his father and he sees that Vishal has taken a liking to Oliver instead of him and politely dismisses the script as boring and unrelatable. After coming home, Anthony blames Vishal for not hearing his story properly. Unfortunately Oliver accidentally recorded a

live video on Facebook and Anthony gets a lot of hate from Internet. Anthony is very upset and seems to be desperate about his career. This badly affected Oliver who feels guilty about his unawareness and losses sleep over destroying his son's career. During this time, Suryan who is forced to meet a psychologist because of his anxiety is accompanied by Oliver. Oliver, who was unable to sleep at the time, also attended one of the section. During the counseling sections, Oliver gets the opportunity to open up and had the space to talk about his insecurities and worries that he couldn't even get in his house. He also joins the Tai chi classes. But when his interaction with psychologist is discovered by his relatives through Joseph, he is heavily criticized for doing so and Anthony even considered this act of his father as a shameful thing in front of his girlfriend's family. This shows the stigma that exists in our society about mental health which will adversely affect old ages. "The family members in particular and society in general should learn/understand not to stigmatize such psychosocial problems" (Tuli 83). But Oliver never cared about the attitude of the family and continues to attend the sections and eventually learns the usage of smartphone with the help of psychologist's attender. Through the counseling sections, the film made clear that Oliver was a successful video cassette shop owner and was cheated by one of his friends who was like a brother to him. This incident shattered him and results as an unsuccessful person in business. Then Oliver bought a typewriter to his father when he recognized that his father feels lonely and sleepless at nights.

On Joseph's birthday Oliver along with his family comes to the party. Joseph's mother is seen for the first time who is living away from her family and she too is a woman who did not get much contact and support from peer group. She then relates the story behind the cover photo of the book. It is the same story that Oliver had shared with Anthony. This sudden revelation changed the perspective of Anthony. The

book is a symbol of difference between his father and Joseph. Throughout the film, Anthony thinks that Joseph is a man who has done extraordinary things to whom he turns to for advice, who he impressed of his technological knowledge. But things turned out and Anthony finds out the very course of Joseph's life and his autobiography is Oliver. The revelation ended with a smile between the father and the son. Later at home Anthony and Oliver became very close and the son gives a warm kiss to his father. "Physical touch – for example, holding hands or hugging – when it mutually desired can be highly satisfying not only for elders but for people of all ages. Appropriate physical touch conveys genuine human warmth and affection" (Hooyman 177). Antony finally realized his true self and decided to show his best self on social media. He is influenced by his father's good deeds and comes close to his family. Then he revealed the truth to Joseph's family and Joseph's mother comes to Oliver's home for thanking him and Suriyan for saving his son. At that time, she is the one who recognizes the English speech of Appachan is the lines from the novel *Oliver Twist*. This shows the understanding of peer group people and it becomes a heart touching scene in the film.

The movie ends with a scene where the families reconciliation is reflected on the family picture of Oliver, which shows that the Oliver's good deeds is uniting the family. The movie ends with a note that there is no substitute for family and the soul of lasting relationships such as care, kindness, compassion and resilience should be restored.

Chapter Three

Conclusion

Population aging is an increase in the proportion of elderly people in a population and is a global phenomenon occurring at different rates in developed and developing countries. As the population ages, there is an increasing need to understand and address the challenges and needs of older adults. Gerontology is an important field in this context which is the study of aging and its effects on individuals. The main focus of gerontologists is to understand the physical, mental and social aspects of aging in order to improve the wellbeing and quality of life for older adults.

The two films show that as a person ages, the normal functioning of the body can be affected by many diseases like diabetes, Alzheimer's, cancer, dementia and so on and the mental health of people is also affected. Culture is an important factor that influences the way in which the psychological or mental well-being of citizens are treated. In the Western countries, nearly all of the senior adults are not fully dependent on their families. Even though they are not financially sound and have to do jobs for their living, they have the freedom to do things they want and have no restrictions from their relatives. In the Western countries, people are independent and are more focused on personal goals. They considered their old age as new beginnings and opportunities. But the condition is very different in Eastern countries including India. The senior citizens are dependent people who are aware of the expectations and norms of the society. They are depending on their families for financial and emotional support. Their financial resources are limited after retirement and may face crisis in

getting facilities like food or shelter. Their mental health is highly influenced by the attitudes and behaviors of their loved ones.

In India, as in many other developing countries, the responsibility to take care of elders is deeply rooted in our tradition and cultures. It is considered as a responsibility and a way to show respect and gratitude for their wisdom and guidance. Many families in India have a strong support system where multiple generations live together or nearby, allowing for easier caregiving. But they are now increasingly being viewed as shying away from the role of caring for elders and are being held responsible for the perpetuating elder abuse, neglect and violence. Also there's a trend in these days for young people to move abroad in search of better opportunities. This can leave the middle generation with the responsibility of taking care of their grandparents. The middle generation people could also have their own health issues and problems. This can be a challenging task when there aren't many people around to help out.

Movies are the perfect popular media which portrays the situations of older adults and the issues they faced in the family as well as in the society. In the film *Falimy* the negligence towards the aspirations of senior adults as well as the generational gap between the people can be found. The film shows the incredible dream of the grandfather to go pilgrimage to Varanasi which is restricted by his family members. The family is not ready to allow him to go for a journey alone in the name of concern and at the same time they are not ready to understand his old age dreams. Pursuing aspirations in later adulthood is an important thing for old age people. It gives them a sense of purpose, fulfillment, and keeps both their minds and bodies active. The family is failed to understand the intensity of dream which can provide a

sense of accomplishment in his life. The movie also depicts the isolation of Chandran, the father, who lacks emotional connection with his family. He is a neglected person who has an emotional distance relationship with his family with whom he is living under the same roof.

The movie emphasizes the importance of open conversations between senior citizens and their relatives. It is crucial for building strong relationships and promoting emotional well-being. Regular communication helps older people feel connected, loved, and included in their family's lives. It fosters a sense of belonging and understanding, which can be a support system during challenging times. Both generations should actively respect and take the initiative to speak out. In the movie, it is through an open conversation that the issues between Chandran and Anoop are resolved. It is a powerful reminder of the positive impact of communication in strengthening relationship.

The movies also depicts the issues of abandonment from the side of families. Neglect can have serious consequences on the mental and well-being of older people and the abandoned elders may feel life purposeless and useless. So it is important to take active steps from the side of families to help the older adults to feel included as well as loved.

The movie, *Home*, also shows the negative impact of overuse of social media of the younger generations on the older adults. The old man Oliver and his struggles to connect with his sons is the main plot of the film. Overuse of social media can sometimes lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation of older adults who may crave more quality time and attention from their young family members. Also the older adults may feel disconnected or neglected when they youth are constantly engrossed

in their phones instead of actively participating in the family conversations. This will lead to a sense of generational divide and hinge at the development of strong intergenerational relationships. The film also shows the negative impact of comparing oneself to others through the character Oliver. His son always gives more importance to his father-in-law and compares him to his own father. Constant comparison can have negative effects on older adults, leading to feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and even depression. They may question their own worth and achievements based on what they perceive others to have accomplished. This can lower their self-esteem and prevent them from being themselves. It's important for people around older adults to avoid comparing and instead help them feel happy and valued in their own lives.

Both the movies portray the negligence faced by older women in society. Housewife Kuttiyamma and working Rema are never cared for adequately by their families. They also do not have friends or people from their peer group like the men do in these films. These women also deserve care and attention from their families. So it is important for families to understand the needs and challenges that senior women face and provide the support they need.

Both the movies show the crucial roles of friends and family in providing emotional support to senior citizens. Friends and families can create a safe space for the elderly to express their feelings, fears, and concerns. Having people who care about them can make a huge difference in their mental health. Regular communication and quality time together can help seniors feel connected and valued. Maintaining a balanced diet and a good sleep routine also contribute to overall health. It is important to help older adults engage in activities that keep their minds active, like reading and pursuing hobbies. Encouraging stress management techniques such

as deep breathing exercises, meditation, or engaging in relaxing activities can also be beneficial. By participating in these activities, we can help maintain the mental and physical wellbeing of older adults. Encourage them to focus on positive thoughts and engage in activities that bring them joy and happiness. A positive mindset can contribute to good mental well-being. Encourage them to regularly visit healthcare professionals for check-ups and necessary medical treatments. Regular check-ups are important for early detection and prevention of health issues. Remind older adults to drink enough water to stay hydrated. Proper hydration is essential for overall health and well-being. Encourage senior citizens to participate in social activities such as clubs or groups. This can help reduce feelings of loneliness and promote mental health. Help them find purpose in their lives by engaging in activities that align with their interests, values, or talents. Suggest activities like memory games, Sudoku, and crossword puzzles to keep the brain sharp and improve cognitive abilities. Through these activities, the mental and physical health of older adults can be maintained.

Works Cited

- Falcus, Saras. *Literature and Ageing. The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology*, ed.by Julia Twig and Wendy Martin. London : Routledge, 2015, pp 53-55.
- Hooyman, R.Nancy. , Kevin Y.Kawamoto, K.Asuman Kiyak .*Aging Matters : An Introduction to Social Gerontology*. New York : Pearson, 2015, pp 2, 169182, 201, 269.
- Jain, U.C. *Elders Abuse : Outcome of Changing Family Dynamics. Indian Journal of Gerontology* ed.by K.L.Sharama . Jaipur : Aalekh Publishers , 2008, Vol.2 Nos.3&4 ,pp 447-449.
- John, Neetha. *Imperfect at Home: What the Malayalam Film gets Wrong about Gender Dynamics*. The News Minute, 09 Sep 2021, <https://www.thenewsminute.com/kerala/imperfect-home-what-malayalamfilm-gets-wrong-about-gender-dynamics-155059>
- Latha, K.S. *Elder Abuse and Neglect : A Review. Indian Journal of Gerontology* ed. by K.L.Sharama . Jaipur : Aalekh Publishers , 2008, Vol.2 Nos.3&4 , pp 467-470.
- Miriam, Bernard. , Munro ,Lucy. *Theatre and Aging. The Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology*, ed.by Julia Twig and Wendy Martin. London : Routledge, 2015, pp 61-65.
- Sahadev, Nithish. *Falimy*. Cheers Entertainments Sooper Dooper Films, Disney +Hotstar, 2023.

Scheidt, Rick J. ,Kivnick, Helen Q. *Filming "Successful Aging"*, *The Gerontologist* , Volume 55, Issue 1, Feb 2015, pp 169-170, <https://academic.oup.com/gerontologist/article/55/1/169/575865>

Shankardass, Mala Kapur. *Critical Understanding of Prevalence of Elder Abuse and the Combating Strategies with Specific Reference to India. Indian Journal of Gerontology* ed.by K.L.Sharama. Jaipur : Aalekh Publishers, 2008, Vol.2 Nos.3&4, pp 422-430.

Sowers, Karen M., Rowe, William S. *Global Aging. Handbook of Gerontology: Evidence Based Approaches to Theory, Practice, and Policy*, ed.by James A. Blackburn and Catherine N.Dulmus. New Jersey: John Wiley & Son's, Inc, 2007, pp 3-14.

Swinnen, Aagje. *Ageing in Film .Routledge Handbook of Cultural Gerontology*, ed.by Julia Twig and Wendy Martin. London : Routledge, 2015, pp 69-70.

Thomas, Rojin .*Home*. Friday Film House, Amazon Prime Video, 2021.

Tuli, S.M , Neena.Bhasin , Puniya Bhasin. *Guidelines for Ageing with Health, Grace, and Dignity*. 2nd ed. New Delhi : Jaypee Brothers Medical, 2021, pp 29-35, 83-85.