Study on Community Living For Elderly People

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Abstract—The growing number of elderly people worldwide has created a need for better housing solutions that focus on their physical, social, and emotional well-being. This paper looks at community living as a way to meet these needs. It highlights how shared spaces, accessible design, and social interaction can help improve the quality of life for elderly individuals. By using examples and ideas from existing studies, this paper suggests ways to create supportive and inclusive environments that make aging a more positive experience.

Index Words — Community Living, Elderly Housing, Accessible Design, Social Interaction, Quality Aging, Active Aging

I. INTRODUCTION

The world's population is aging rapidly. By 2050, the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to double, reaching over 1.6 billion. This change requires new ways to think about housing and care for older adults. Many current housing models are not designed to meet the needs of elderly people, often leading to problems like isolation, dependency, and difficulty accessing essential services.

Figure 1 Gathering Space

Source:https://www.archdaily.com/941691/housing-for-the-elderly-examples-of-independence-and-community-living

Community living provides a different approach. It creates spaces where elderly people can live independently but still be part of a supportive group. These communities focus on accessibility, shared resources, and opportunities for social connection. This paper explores how community living can improve life for elderly people and suggests design ideas that support their needs.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research is based on a detailed review of academic articles and case studies from sources like ResearchGate, Taylor & Francis, and MDPI. These studies were chosen to focus on accessible design, social well-being, and housing for elderly people. Insights were drawn from these sources to develop ideas for future housing models.

III. LITERATURE STUDY

A key reason why elderly individuals opt for community living is the structured support system that addresses their day-to-day needs while allowing them to maintain independence. Studies indicate that seniors often feel isolated in traditional housing setups, especially in nuclear families where children live far away (Cacioppo & Hawkley, 2003). Community living mitigates this by offering a mix of independence and communal care. For instance, seniors have the autonomy to manage their routines but can rely on community services for meals, housekeeping, and medical support.

One of the most significant aspects of community living for seniors is the focus on holistic well-being. These environments are distinct from normal community living in several ways. While normal communities cater to a mixed-age population with limited elder-specific amenities, senior living communities are designed exclusively for aging individuals. Features like ergonomic furniture, wheelchair-accessible pathways, grab bars, and anti-skid tiles ensure safety and comfort. Moreover, the presence of peer groups and age-specific activities fosters an inclusive and supportive social environment. This distinction makes community living more suitable for addressing the unique challenges of aging.

The mental health of older adults is closely influenced by their living conditions. As people age, they often experience declines in physical abilities, cognitive function, and social connections, which can result in loneliness, depression, and anxiety. Research suggests that seniors living in environments that encourage social interaction tend to face fewer mental health challenges. Community living settings promote this engagement by offering common areas, planned activities, and opportunities to connect with others. These features help create a sense of belonging, which is essential for maintaining emotional well-being.

A. ACCESSIBLE DESIGN FOR COMFORTABLE LIVING

Accessibility is a key part of making housing suitable for elderly people. Research by Imrie and Hall (2001) shows that features like step-free entrances, wide doorways, and simple layouts make homes easier for elderly individuals to use. Such features help them live independently while reducing risks like falls or injuries.

B. SOCIAL INTERACTION IN COMMUNITY LIVING

Isolation is a common problem among elderly people, especially those living alone. Newman and Hatton-Yeo (2008) explain that community living can help by bringing people together in shared spaces. Activities like gardening, group meals, or exercise sessions give elderly residents a chance to stay active and connected.

C. HEALTHY LIVING WITH NATURE

Spending time outdoors in nature can help boost both mental well-being and physical health. Kellert et al. (2015) highlight that features like gardens, natural light, and green spaces reduce stress and make people feel happier. Adding these elements to community living spaces can create a calming and enjoyable environment for elderly residents.

D. ENERGY-EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING

Sustainable housing not only reduces costs but also benefits the environment. Mang and Reed (2012) suggest using renewable energy, efficient water systems, and eco-friendly materials to create long-lasting and resource-efficient communities for elderly people.

IV.CASE STUDY

A. SUVIDHA RETIREMENT VILLAGE, BANGALORE

Location: Nice Ring Road, Bangalore

Area: 30 acres

Suvidha Retirement Village was designed to provide a self-sufficient, serene, and nature-centric living environment for the elderly. The community focuses on creating a balance between independence and support through thoughtfully planned spaces and services. With its tranquil surroundings and proximity to urban areas, Suvidha offers elderly residents a peaceful lifestyle alongside convenient access to essential amenities.

The project includes 180 cottages designed with senior residents in mind, each measuring 925 square feet. The cottages are thoughtfully designed with single dwelling units that feature a living room, kitchenette, bedroom with an attached bathroom, and an additional room that can be used as a study, a guest room, or a compact bedroom.

Figure 2 Suvidha Retirement Village Cottages

Source: https://www.suvidha.co.in/

The architectural style incorporates locally sourced materials such as brick, terracotta, and wood, which help to regulate the internal temperature and provide a natural, eco-friendly aesthetic. Each cottage also includes unique design features, such as inverted basket false ceilings and terracotta-tiled flooring.

The village is built around a 3-acre water body and features landscaped walkways, a meditation center, and extensive greenery with over 3,000 trees. The community offers a range of facilities including housekeeping, transportation, medical services (such as primary healthcare, oxygen concentrators, and minor surgery facilities), a clubhouse, a cafeteria, a gym, a library, and beauty services. An organic

kitchen garden supplies fresh produce for meals, and the village employs an eco-friendly waste management system. Suvidha Retirement Village represents a holistic approach to elderly living by blending environmental sustainability with comprehensive healthcare and community engagement.

B. PARKSIDE RESIDENCES: BRIGADE ORCHARDS, DEVANAHALLI, BANGALORE

Location: Devanahalli, Bangalore

Area: 6.8 acres (part of a 130-acre integrated enclave)

Year Of Completion – 2018

Architects – Mindspace

Figure 3 Parkside Residences: Brigade Orchards, Devanahalli, Bangalore

Source:https://www.brigadeorchards.com/residences/parkside-homes

DESIGN FEATURES

The housing units are thoughtfully designed to meet the needs of the elderly. Apartments feature wider doorways, anti-skid flooring, and wheelchair-friendly layouts. Bathrooms are equipped with grab bars and non-slip surfaces to prevent accidents, while kitchens have low counters, slip-resistant floors, and cabinets that are easy to reach. Safety features such as gas detectors, emergency call buttons, and brightly lit areas further enhance the living experience.

HEALTHCARE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

Parkside Residences includes a dedicated Care Home that provides therapeutic care and 24/7 medical assistance. The community is staffed with trained healthcare professionals and has access to ambulance services for emergencies. Regular health check-ups and physiotherapy sessions are also available to residents, ensuring their physical well-being.

AMENITIES AND SOCIAL SPACES

The community encourages an active and social lifestyle. Recreational spaces include walking trails, landscaped gardens, and a library. Residents can engage in indoor games like billiards or participate in organized events such as cultural evenings, picnics, and hobby sessions. These activities help reduce feelings of loneliness and encourage interaction among residents.

Figure 4 Interior Space

Source:https://www.archdaily.com/901829/parkside-retirement-homes-mindspace/5b97cc5ef197cceb7600001e-parkside-retirement-homes-mindspace-photo?next_project=no

SUPPORT SERVICES AND SECURITY

Essential services like housekeeping, laundry, and regular garbage clearance make daily living hassle-free. Security is a priority, with 24/7 CCTV surveillance, trained personnel, and emergency response systems in place. Spacious elevators accommodate wheelchairs, while ergonomically designed resting spaces in hallways add to convenience.

INTEGRATION WITH THE TOWNSHIP

As part of Brigade Orchards, Parkside Residences benefits from the facilities of the larger township. These include retail outlets, a world-class sports arena, educational institutions, and healthcare facilities. The township offers a blend of modern facilities and a calm living atmosphere

C.ASHIANA RETIREMENT HOMES, CHENNAI

Locations: Chennai, Jaipur, and Bhiwadi

Area: Ranges from 10 to 20 acres

Figure 5 Front View of The Building

Source:https://housing.com/in/buy/projects/page/326614-ashiana-shubham-by-ashiana-housing-ltd-in-maraimalai-nagar

AGE-APPROPRIATE DESIGN: The homes are designed with the elderly in mind, incorporating features like wider doorways, anti-slip flooring, grab rails, and emergency call systems. The layout ensures ease of mobility and accessibility for residents with varying levels of physical ability.

LOCATION: Situated in a peaceful part of Chennai, the development is strategically placed away from the city's bustle, offering a tranquil setting while still being accessible to essential services like hospitals, shopping areas, and transport hubs.

AMENITIES: Ashiana Shubham offers a range of amenities tailored to the senior residents' needs:

A community centre for social events and activities.

Recreational areas such as gardens, walking tracks, and an indoor games room.

A healthcare centre for regular medical check-ups and emergency services.

A cafeteria serving nutritious meals.

24/7 security and surveillance, ensuring the safety of residents.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT: The community emphasizes social well-being by encouraging residents to engage in various social and recreational activities. This fosters a sense of community and helps combat loneliness, which is often a concern in later years.

REGENERATIVE DESIGN ELEMENTS: The project incorporates elements of sustainable and energy-efficient design, with natural lighting, proper ventilation, and the use of eco-friendly materials.

SUPPORT SERVICES: Ashiana Shubham also offers personalized care services, including housekeeping, assistance with daily activities, and access to doctors and nurses.

V. CONCLUSION

Community living has the potential to transform the way we care for elderly people. By focusing on accessibility, social connection, and sustainability, this model creates environments that support independence, health, and happiness. This paper has highlighted key strategies and design features that can be used to develop effective community housing for elderly residents. Further research and real-world applications of these ideas will help refine and improve this model, making it a viable solution for the growing aging population.

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