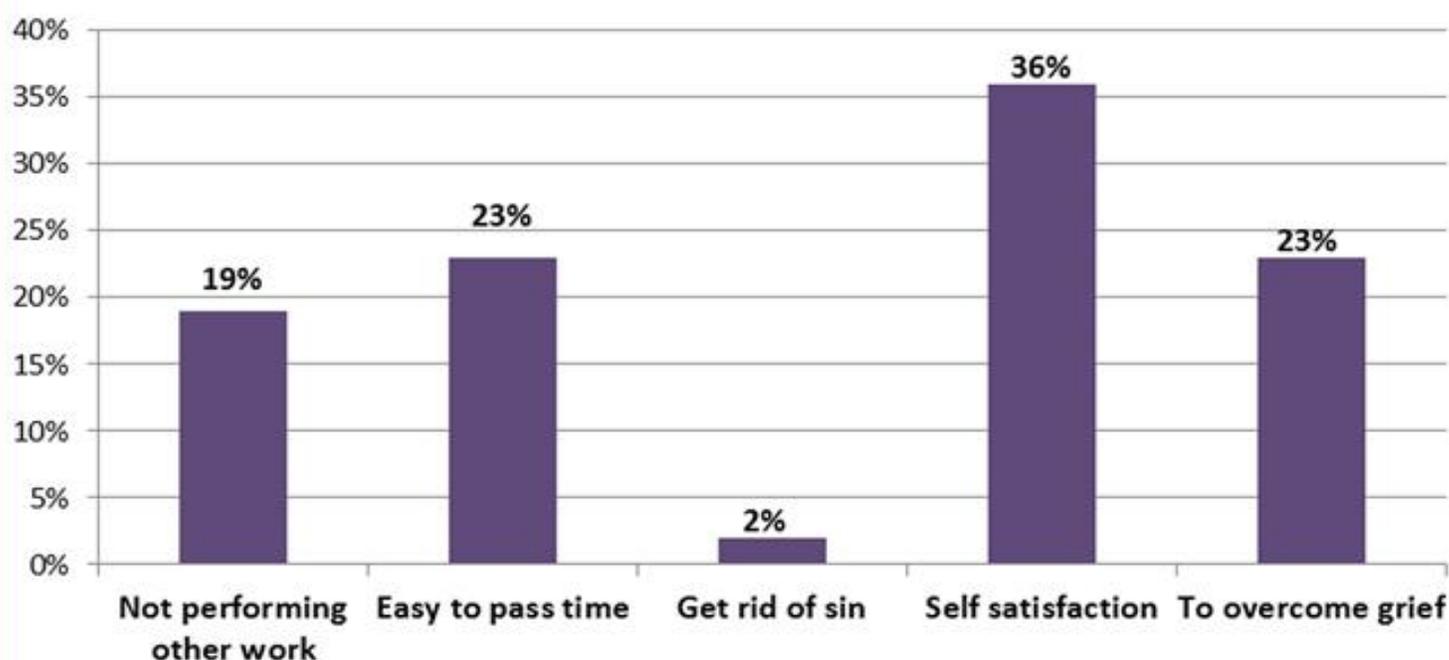


Determinants of Religious Activities in the Elderly: A Case Study of Age 60 plus Hindus of Kapan VDC, Kathmandu

Reasons for Elder's Interests in Religion



Researcher

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Supported by:



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AGEING NEPAL

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Religion and the Life Course

Religion is defined as the belief in a God or Gods and the activities related to it. It is the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power, especially a personal God or Gods (Oxford 2012). Its extended definition varies depending on the perspective or the context in which it is referred. Clifford Geertz (1973) proposed religion as the subject of a cultural system while Talal Asad (1982) considered religion as a part of anthropological studies. However, the common factors that refer to religion are personal belief about something supernatural or a God and the activities performed as the expression of the relationship between the two. Culture or tradition is developed when such activities are taken as a standard norm of behavior for all individuals of a group who together accept such behavior as part of their common identity. Hinduism recognizes four stages of the life course: studentship, householder, retirement, Sanyas, or ascetic. The third stage or the retirement life is prescribed for the elders by the religion or culture when children grow up to take the leadership of the household. At this stage, the role of older people in the family affairs that is expected diminishes as a social norm. Also, normally older people are expected to be free to contemplate the meaning of life, death and rebirth, and be more involved in religious activities.

Grace Davie and John Vincent in 1998 studied the place of religion in the life course of people, and found that older people are more religious than the young. This conclusion was also supported by the findings of Jacobs and Worcester who did a survey in 1990 among Christians for Ipsos Moris, a leading global research company of UK. The survey found that 67 percent of those aged between 15 and 34 years believe in God, compared to 87 percent of those 55 years or older. Similarly only 55 percent of the younger age group believe in heaven as opposed to 65 percent of the older. In Britain as in most of Western Europe, a religiously and morally conservative majority among the retired becomes a religiously conservative minority in the 18 to 24 age-group (Davie & Vincent, 1998).

Religion has long been regarded as a taboo topic in psychology and gerontology. However, evidence of high levels of religious involvement among many older persons suggests

the need for inquiry about the origins, structures, functions, and outcomes of a wide variety of emotions, cognitive processes, and behaviors in later life. In addition, a number of well-designed, carefully controlled studies of health and well-being have demonstrated the salutary effects of older adults' religiosity (McFadden, 1995, 1996). This research has laid the foundation for investigations of the complex mechanisms that produce the apparently protective effects of religiosity. Also, recognition of the highly differentiated nature of religion points toward the possibility of studies of its effects on maladaptive feelings, beliefs, and behaviors. Religion is a multidimensional construct articulated through a vast diversity of expressions. Researchers interested in investigating religion and aging need to be aware of the many forms of religion, and religiosity in regards to their differential effects on psychological phenomena. Also, because increasing numbers of persons identify themselves not as religious in a traditional sense, but rather as spiritual in their orientation to life, gerontologists need to expand their horizons of interest to include meditative practices and ritual expressions that are not associated with major world religions.

In addition to becoming familiar with the many recent publications on religion and aging, gerontologists would be well served by learning more about the renewed vigor in both research and theory in the psychology of religion. Books by Paloutzian (1966) and Wulff (1991) as well as articles published in the *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* represent excellent resources. Information can also be obtained through the Internet (<http://www.gasou.edu/psychweb/psyrelig/psyrelig.htm>).

One development in the psychology of religion with implications for the study of adult development and aging is the growing interest in the use of attachment theory as a conceptual framework for understanding adults' images of God, meditative practices, responses to stress, and social behaviors (Kirkpatrick, 1992). The emotions associated with social support in religious settings, public religious participation, and private religious practice may be affected by attachment processes with important implications for observed outcomes such as health and well-being. Attachment theory also suggests possibilities for research on the origins of emotion, biases in personality, and the ways these shape patterns of religious participation and practice. Conversely, life span developmental research can reveal the long-term effects of early religious training on emotion experience and beliefs about emotion.

Because religious beliefs and behaviors have the power to moderate emotion, many religious persons turn to religion as a resource in coping. Research indicates that many older persons employ religious coping in response to illness, the deaths of loved ones, and anticipation of their own deaths. Pargament's studies of religious coping have revealed its complexities in terms of the types of problems addressed, the strategies employed, and the effectiveness of various ways of utilizing religious resources. Pargament noted that for some people in certain circumstances, religious coping processes may produce deleterious effects by encouraging people to impose their values on others, employ rigid and ineffective responses to stress, and view their suffering as a deserved punishment (Pargament & Park, 1996; Pargament, Van Haitsma, & Ensing, 1995).

Pargament's studies of coping point to a number of issues related to the cognitive processes employed by religious persons. Religion can shape the cognitive appraisal of stressful situations as well as the appraisal of personal resources available to respond to stress. In addition, religion influences attribution processes activated by situations that threaten a sense of meaning, control, and self-esteem (Spilka, Hood, & Gorsuch, 1985). Another area of research on the cognitive psychology of aging that invites consideration of religion's effects is the emerging study of social cognition (Blanchard-Fields & Abeles, 1996). Psychologists interested in social cognitive processes and the construction of beliefs about others, the self, and every day events could investigate how religion functions as a source of social knowledge.

Research on age and cohort-related effects upon moral reasoning also benefits from the inclusion of consideration of religion. For example, one study found that older adults who were more religiously orthodox and who engaged in little religious reflection showed less complex reasoning about moral and religious dilemmas (Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer & Roth, 1992). Psychologists of religion have become increasingly interested in the relation of religious fundamentalism and right-wing authoritarianism to prejudice (Hunsberger, 1995); these studies need to be expanded to include older persons, as suggested by Kastenbaum's (1993) description of "encrusted elders" who perpetuate patterns of racial discrimination.

On the other hand, a religious orientation that embraces openness to change, questions, and even doubt can promote altruistic behavior, as noted in the research of Batson and his colleagues (Batson, Schoenrade, & Ventis, 1993). Because most of these studies have been conducted with younger adults, research on the effects of older persons' religious attitudes on

their interpersonal behavior is needed. Recent indications of the possibilities for relativistic, post formal operational thought in later life (Sinnott, 1994) should be examined in light of research demonstrating older adults' prosaically behavior (e.g., Midlarsky & Hannah, 1989). Sinnott has written that research on post formal cognitive processes may also provide insight into spirituality as expressed through unitative states of consciousness, awareness of multiple realities, and elder wisdom.

These are just a few suggestions of how key issues can be reframed if religion is considered both as a dependent and an independent variable in the study of adult developmental processes. Perhaps as a sign of its own maturity, psychology appears to be more tolerant of considering the many complexities that arise in the design and interpretation of research that includes "the religion variable". In addition, practitioners are beginning to investigate the ways religion can function as a resource for individual and community well-being (Maton & Wells, 1995). Because so many older persons turn to religion and religious institutions in times of need, gerontologists have become aware of possibilities for creative alliances with the religious community.

The direct and indirect effects of religion on emotion, cognition, and behavior merit continued attention from researchers and practitioners. If they can overcome their own anxieties about the "anti-tenure factor" (Sherrill & Larson, 1994) and concerns about introducing religious issues into psychotherapy (Ventis, 1995), they will discover new avenues for empirical investigation and mental health intervention.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The elderly populations are the most important people of our society. The elderly are a product of many years of experience. They are a source of indigenous knowledge and skills. But in our society the issue of old age is hidden. There are certain organizations which are working for the elderly, which includes providing services for them. There has been research done in regards to the elderly population. The main theme of this research is to find out why the elderly population is involved in more religious activities, and why religious interests increase in old age. The research studies the interests of the elderly population and is beneficial for those people who are interested in studying the religious activities that the elderly are interested in. This study can provide information for further research on religious involvement and interest of the elderly

population. The findings of the study may benefit the NGOs and INGOs who are working towards making a better, friendly and favorable environment for elderly.

1.3 Objectives

Broad Objective

- To study the religious interests and involvement among the elderly population.

Specific Objectives

- To study the religious interest of the elderly living in Kapan V.D.C of Kathmandu district.
- To study the reason behind involvement of the elderly of Kapan VDC, Kathmandu district in religious activities.

1.4 Research Questions

- Why are the elderly more interested in religious activities?
- What are the key factors behind involvement of the elderly in religious activities?

1.5 Limitations of the Study

Since interest is highly individualized, the consistent result of the research may not be achieved if replicated. Different people have different interests and will; the study is limited to the people who are above 60 years of age, people in Kapan VDC of Kathmandu Valley, and the results cannot be generalized to the other parts of the country.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review will be conducted to provide a conceptual framework from which to plan and organize the research and interpret results. The literature review will entail obtaining recent and relevant literature and the presenting this material in a qualitative manner.

2.1 Religion

Religion is a collection of cultural systems, belief systems, and worldviews that relate humanity to spirituality, and sometimes to moral values. Many religions have narrative symbols, tradition, and sacred histories that are intended to give meaning of life, or to explain the origin of life or the universe. They tend to derive morality, ethics, religious laws or a preferred lifestyle from their ideas about the cosmos and human nature (En.wikipedia.org /wiki/religion).

There is a common belief that the older you get, the more religious you become. However, the reality depends a lot on personal choice and the intensity of faith and experiences. Why one individual chooses to be a believer while another does not, depends on a multitude of factors. Let's dive deeper into this subject and find out why people become more religious with age.

What may seem as religiosity to many, may translate into spirituality for others. There is no specific demarcation between the two concepts, and they are often used interchangeably. Studies have shown that older people are comparatively more religious than today's younger generation. However, this does not conclude or allude that people become more religious as they age. There are always exceptions, which include people who are atheists or agnostic, and who will continue to remain so for the rest of their lives. Everything happens for a reason, and similarly a not so spiritual person may seek divine solace due to a transition in his or her life. There are several factors that need to be considered as to why people become more religious with age. Let's reflect upon these aspects in more detail.

2.2 Old Age and Religion Incompatibility with Modernity

Older adults often find it very hard to relate to the ideologies dominant of today's generation. Things are forever changing; there is less empathy and an increasing sense of despair among people. Very few are able to cope and blend with ease. There are internal conflicts that constantly badger people's conscience, making them averse, critical, and withdrawn against the collected human action. Older people especially are hit the hardest, as they become outdated and less in demand, because of the present generation's ever-shrinking family values. Children and grandchildren do not give parents their deserved due respect, care, and affection. They simply do not have the time for such so-called trivial things. Parents feel left out, lonely, and vulnerable. In such a situation, they seek the company of religion and the hope that they will find like-minded companions to share their pain with. Prayer helps heal them and encourages them to cheer and become stronger as individuals.

2.3 Prayer Represents their Inherent Upbringing

Not all aged people become religious. There is not a specific age fixed to an individual's belief in God. A person's faith depends a lot on their upbringing and whether religion was an integral part of their lives when they were growing up. In which case, such individuals are bound to continue with this legacy throughout their lives. The only exception to this is if they undergo severe trauma and loss, and thus lose faith in worship. Similarly, people who had no such upbringing in earlier years, may realize the lack of this positive influence in their lives, and seek religious healing, as they age.

2.4 Personal Loss and Grievances

The loss of a loved one, or the death of spouse or a child, can make people seek solace and refuge through prayer. Prayer has a soothing effect on our hearts and makes us regain hope, when it seems as if all hope is lost. Age related disabilities and health problems make individuals want to join church groups and other religious gatherings. Here, they find the sense of bonhomie among the other members of the community. They find people they can associate and connect with, which gives them the chance to develop strong ties of support and compassion. However, there are also cases where religious people tend to lose faith as they grow older, having witnessed and undergone personal loss and trauma. They feel angry and dejected for the

treatment sent upon them by the divine. In such cases, the individual lives in a constant state of suffering, for being punished even though they lived their lives in a pious manner. They often lose faith and withdraw deeper into their own solitude.

2.5 Fear of Death and the After Life

Since death is inevitable and unstoppable, aging redefines our perspective towards religion. People who believe in the afterlife constantly worry about their religiosity within this lifetime. They worry about their past, present, and future deeds, as well as the sins they have committed in their past. Transforming into an ardent believer gives people the impetus to cleanse themselves of their wrongdoings. The acceptance of this inevitability allows older people to live the rest of their lives in grace and positivity.

2.6 Greater Faith with Educational Empowerment

As per a study conducted by sociologist Philip Schwadel of the University of Nebraska - Lincoln, it has been deduced that people become more spiritual when they gain greater educational empowerment. In such a scenario, people tend to develop a deeper understanding of what spirituality means to them. They perceive it to be a higher power, which need not specifically refer to God per se. According to the study, educated people are more likely to read the Bible and other holy scriptures, and are more likely to have a rather cosmopolitan approach to faith. They strongly believe that you do not have to be religious to be spiritual. Educated people often question traditional aspects of faith and approve of a more flexible approach for expressing their beliefs.

2.7 Greater Social Inequality Leads to Greater Religiosity

People who have inadequate incomes and have to undergo continuous strife to make ends meet are often the ones who seek the healing influence of prayer. They pray with the hope that they too will be redeemed of this suffering and given their due for their hard work. Studies show that people are less religious in countries where all the social and economic aspirations of the people are met. While in countries where there are severe demarcations between the rich and the poor, the level of religiosity hikes up, among the comparatively poorer section of the society. Therefore, when the economic security and expectations of the people are balanced and satiated,

the level of faith declines. The reason for this phenomenon is because they do not feel the need to pray to a higher power when everything needed for existence is within their ambit of control. Countries that suffer from escalating rates of unemployment, hunger, political turmoil, war, terrorism, debt, and corruption, also see a distinct rise in the number of believers among their citizens.

2.8 Greater Social Standing and Community Contribution

With age, the aspirations of an individual undergo a transformation. They become more mature and thus have more realistic expectations from life. Older people are more community conscious and are more likely to do good deeds that will contribute towards the benefit of society as a whole. They are more likely to participate in political activities that will bring development. They also have personal goals which harbor the desire to be respected by their immediate social setting. Older people are more likely to join prayer groups and participate in social and community service, which will encourage their younger counterparts to participate and inculcate the spirit of social service.

There is another theory to this assumption, which states that people become more conservative and religious as and when there is rapid development and progress in ideologies. However, many may altogether disagree with this statement. Faith as a whole is a matter of personal choice, and cannot and must not be enforced upon others. This may perhaps be another reason why the younger generation has very few takers to religiosity, and prefer being more agnostic and spiritual in their outlook (Mohan, 2011).

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter covers the sample, sampling study area and variables, data collection methods and procedure of the study. The present study is aimed to explore the elderly's involvement and interest in religious activities.

3.1 Study Area

The study area was New Sadle which is an old-age home in a village of Kapan V.D.C.

Respondents' Gender

Sex	Number of respondents
Male	25
Female	25
Total	50

Table 3.1 shows the distribution of respondents on the basis of sex.

3.2 Sample Size

The sample consists of 25 male and 25female respondents, whom were selected for the study.

3.3 Sampling

Purposive sampling procedure was used.

3.4 Variables

Independent Variables: Age and Sex

Dependent Variable: Religious interest

3.5 Data Collection Tool and Technique

As a data collection tool, a questionnaire and home visit were used; this was developed at the time of the study. First, the respondent was requested for the cooperation of elderly to conduct the study. Since the study had to be conducted on a person who was 60 years of age or older, the data was collected and the participants were given information about the study and its importance. The question was set and accessible to the elderly population, for the pretest the questionnaire was finalized. The questionnaire consisted of 20 questions which focused on the important feelings of elderly people towards religious interests and involvement. The answer was recorded while interviewed. They were asked to respond openly and to sincerely provide a response to the researcher. The responses were kept confidential. After they had completed answering the questionnaire they were thanked for their cooperation, valuable time, and information they had provided.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter includes the presentation and interpretation of the data of the study. The following explores the religious interest and involvement of the 50 elderly respondents: 25 males and 25 females from the Kapan V.D.C. Kathmandu.

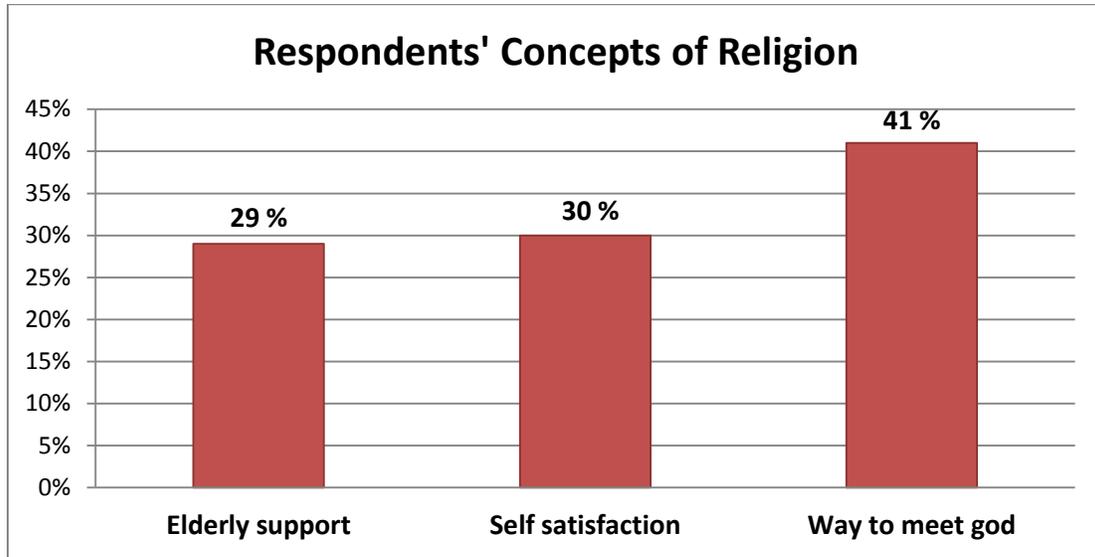


Figure 4.1 shows the respondent's views on religion as an experience and concept.

Respondent's use of Leisure Time

Leisure time Activities	Responses	Percentage
Performing religious songs	30	32%
Chatting with friends	31	33%
Collecting worshipping goods	18	19%
Visit temple	16	17%
Total	95	100%

Table 4.1 shows the respondents' views on how they spend their leisure time. Here a minority of the respondents spend their leisure time visiting temples or other religious places. The majority of the respondents spend their free time chatting with friends.

From the results, we know that chatting with friends is one of the needs of the elderly population. Chatting with friends allows the elderly to forget their grief and sadness. According to the elderly it is the best method for passing time. Beside this the elderly spend their leisure time performing religious songs and collecting worshipping goods. This table presents the idea that the elderly spend their free time chatting as well as performing some religious activities.

Religious Activities Respondents Partake in the Most

Religious Activities	Responses	Percentage
Worshipping	21	36%
Fasting	20	34%
Charity	17	29%
Total	58	100%

Table 4.2 shows the religious activities respondents reported they partake in the most. The majority of the respondents reported worshipping (36%) the most. The activity participated in the least was charity (29%).

From this result we know that in Nepalese content elderly take religious as worshipping. The important thing is that each family member be provided a better chance to fulfill their religious wish. We should take positively the will and interest of elderly. It also shows that the result of which one religious activity they are involved in. Among 50 respondents, 36 % respondents identify worshipping. They believed that worshipping is the easy way to meet God. They also believe that worshipping helps to make them more delightful and fresher. Similarly 29% respondents identify being involved in charity. Charity means to pay some money or goods for needy people, support social, organizations, support temple etc. They believe that some of their own income must be used to support religious activities. Charity is helpful for some kind other needs, rather than worshipping and fasting, charity is very good method to convey religious activities.

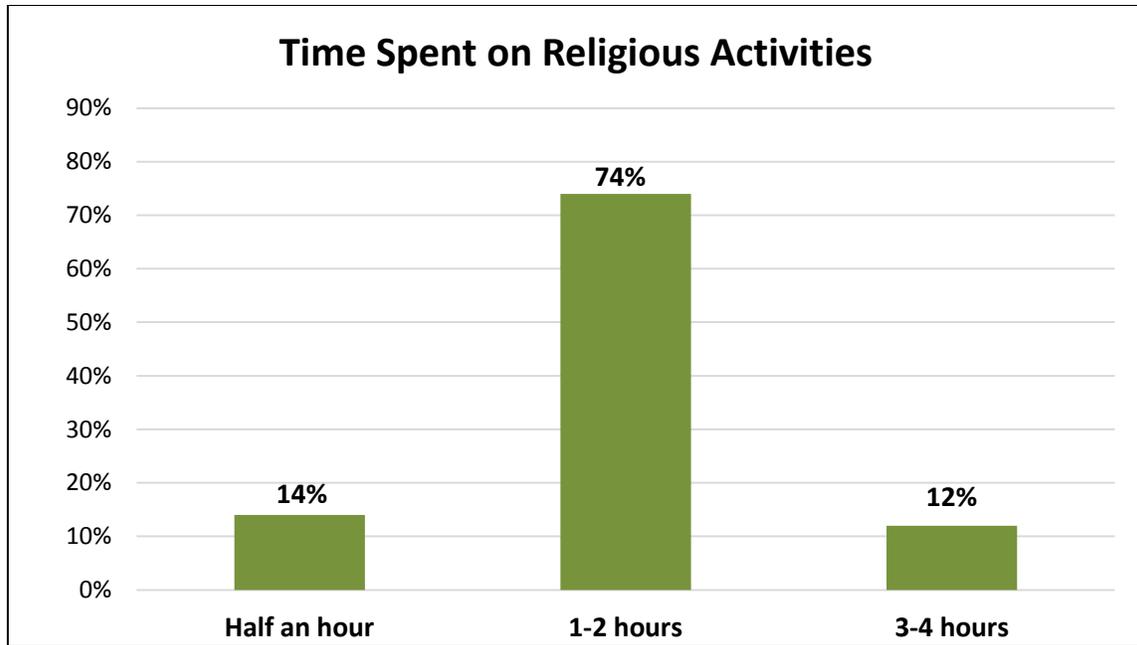


Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of respondents according to how much time they spend on religious activities per day. According to the respondents, 74% spend 1-2 hours on religious activities; 14% spend 30 minutes on religious activity; 12 % spend 3-4 hours on religious activities per day. By this figure we know that 1-2 hours is perfect and sufficient for senior citizen to perform their religious activities.

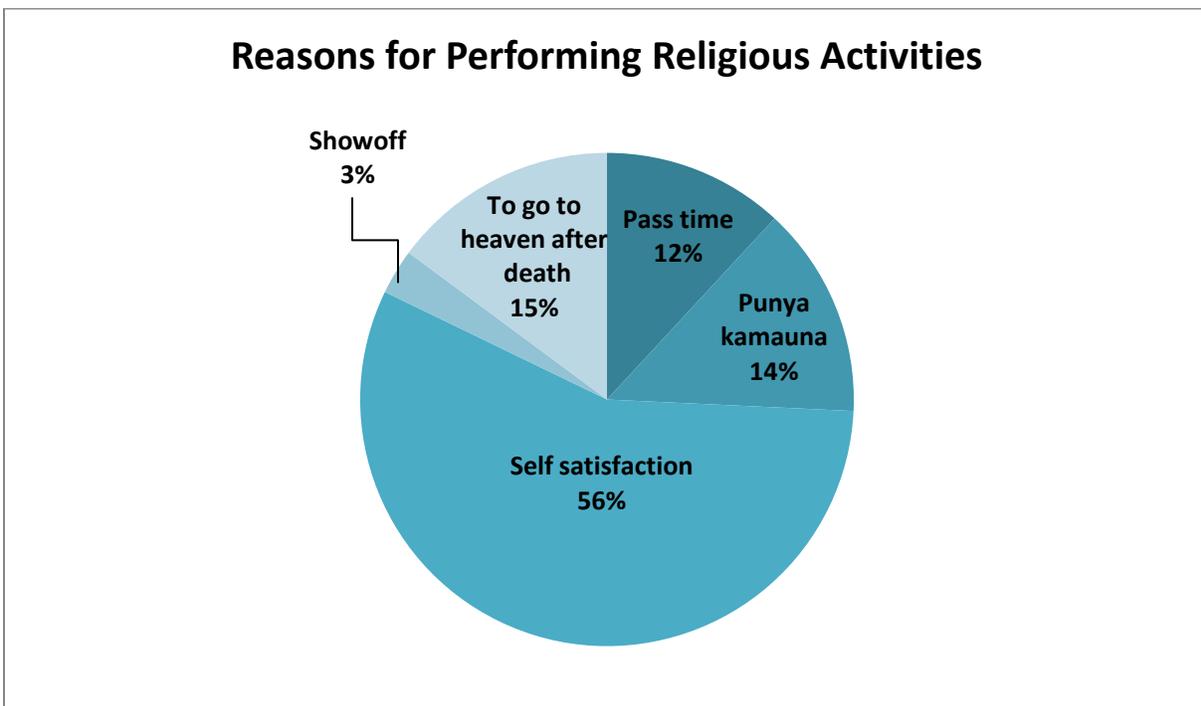


Figure 4.3 shows the reasons respondents perform religious activities. The elderly were asked what purposes they perform religious activities for. 56% of the respondents said they perform religious activities for the purpose of self-satisfaction, 15% said they would like to perform religious activities so they will go to heaven after death, 14% said that they perform religious activities for the purpose of punya kamauna (to ride off), 12% perform religious activities to time pass, and 3% said they perform religious activities to show off.

Respondents’ Current Religious Involvement vs. Past Involvement

Religious Involvement Compared to the Past	Responses	Percentage
Similar	2	4%
Somewhat high	26	49%
Growing higher	25	47%
Total	55	100%

Table 4.3 shows the result of the respondent’s present involvement on religious activities in comparison to when they were younger. It appears that the level of religious interest increased with age.

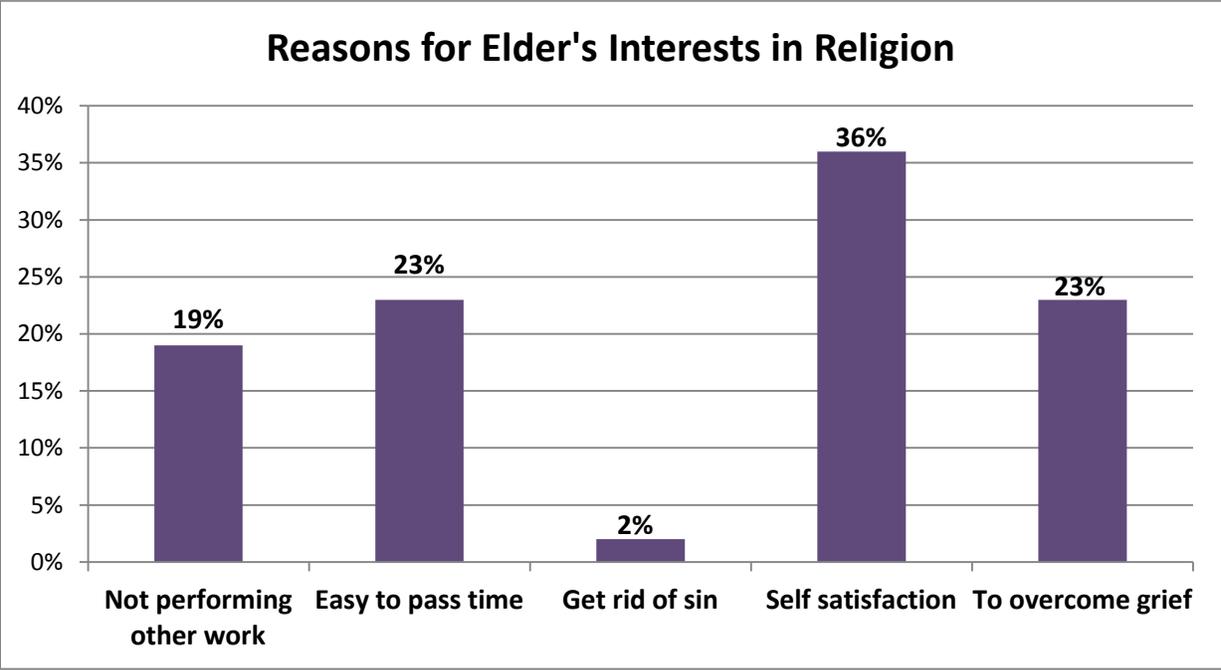


Figure 4.4 shows why elders have an interest in practicing religion, especially in the advancement of age. 36% of the respondents are involved in religious activities to gain self-satisfaction, 23% perform activities to pass time and to overcome grief, 19% practice because they are not performing other work properly, and 2% practice to get rid of sin.

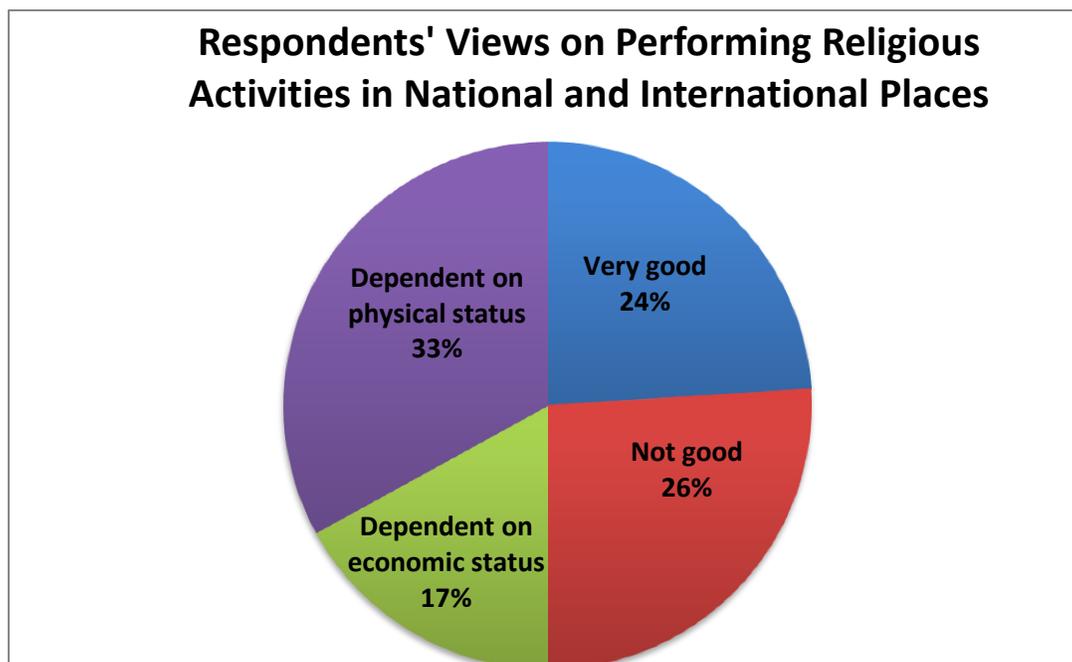


Figure 4.5 shows the elders' views on performance of religious activities in national and international places. 33% of the respondents felt it depends on physical status, 26% felt it was not good, 24% felt it was very good, 17% felt it was based on economic status. The majority of the elders perceive that if physical structure has strong people can perform religious activities easily as well as visit national and international religious places.

Respondents views of Family Member Support for Performing Religious Activities

Perceived Family Member Support	Frequency	Percentage
Enough	17	33%
Nobody cares	11	22%
Sometimes	14	27%
It depends on time and economic status	9	18%
Total	51	100%

Table 4.4 shows the respondents' views of family members who take care of them and provide financial support for their performance of religious activities. 33% of the respondents feel they have enough family support, 27% feel they have support sometimes, 22% feel that no one cares, and 18% feel that it depends on time and economic status.

How Respondents Fulfill Their Own Wishes if Family Members Cannot Help

Method for Fulfilling Own Wishes	Frequency	Percentage
Spend old age allowance or saved amount	30	58%
Sharing with friends	8	15%
Keep quiet	4	8%
Emotional blackmailing	10	19%
Total	52	100%

Table 4.5 represents how the elderly fulfill their wishes to perform religious activities if family members cannot help. 58% of respondents spend old age allowance or saved amount, 19% fulfill wishes through emotional blackmail, 15% report sharing with friends, and 8% do not share their wishes and remain silent.

Places Respondents Perform Religious Activities

Places to Perform Religious Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Temple	36	50%
House	18	25%
Religious place(pati pawa)	3	4%
Social organization	15	21%
Total	72	100%

Table 4.6 shows the places where respondents prefer to practice religion. This is also depicted in Figure 4.6

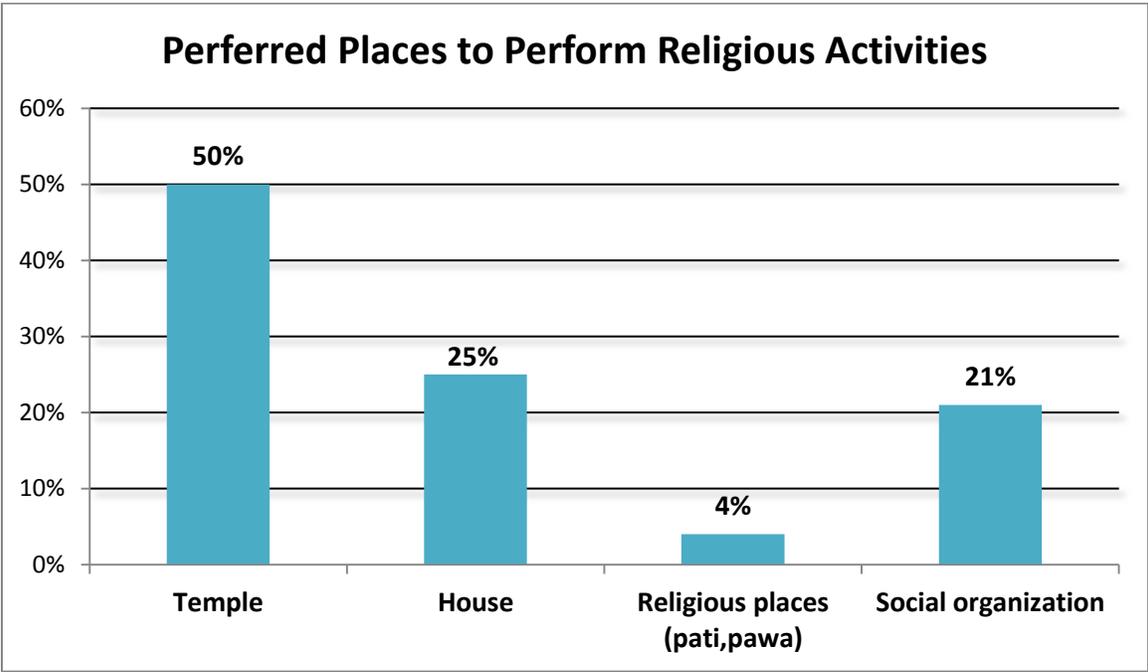


Figure 4.6 shows that 50% of the respondents prefer to practice in a temple, 25% practice in a house, 21% prefer a social organization, and 4% prefer religious places.

Respondent’s Views on their Friends’ Involvement in Religious Activities

Number of friends performing religious activities	Frequency	Percentage
Most of them	20	36%
Some	19	33%
No one	8	14%
It depends on time and wishes	9	16%
Total	56	100%

Table 4.7 represents the views of elders’ belief of friends’ involvement in religious activities. 36% of the respondents believe that most of their friends perform religious activities, 33% believe that some of their friends practice, 16% feel that their friends’ practice depends on time and wishes, and 14% believe that none of their friends practice.

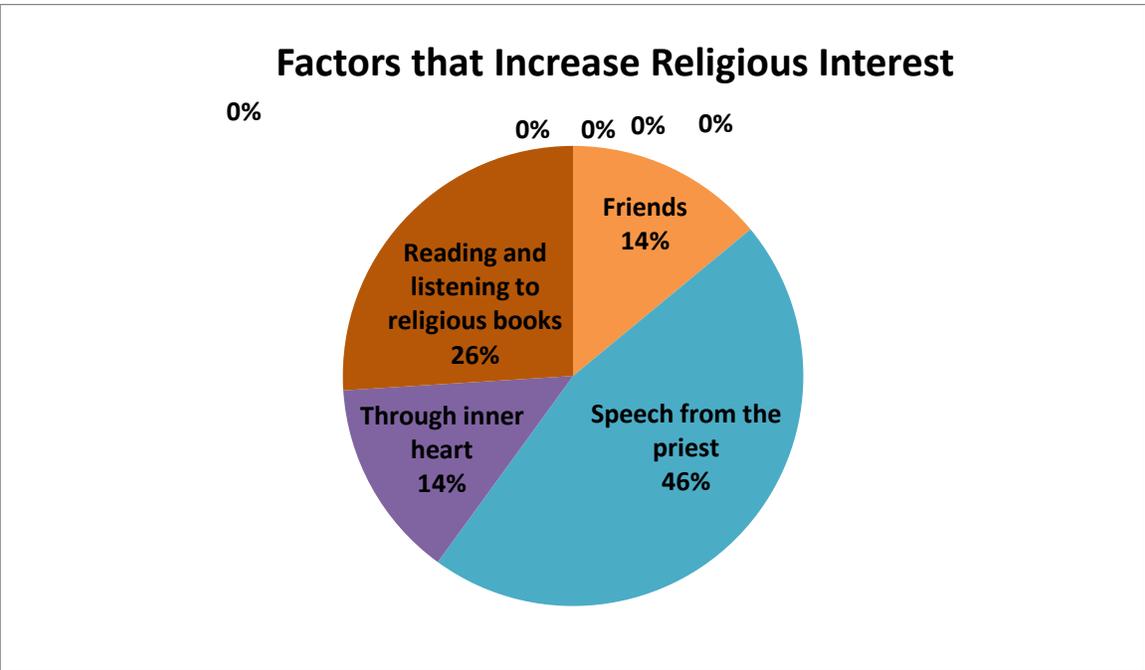


Figure 4.7 shows the factors that influence the respondents’ interest in religion. 46% elderly believe that speech from the priest will increase religious interest, 26% believe that reading and

listening to religious books increase interest, 14% believe it comes through the inner heart, and 14% believe their friends increase their religious interest.

Respondent’s Desire to have Family Members Involved in Religious Activities

Should Family Members Perform Religious Activities?	Responses	Percentage
Yes	17	33%
No	11	22%
It depends on their time	14	27%
It depends on their wishes	9	18%
Total	51	100%

Table 4.8 represents the elders’ desire to have their family members involved in religious activities with them. 33% of the respondents stated yes, 27% felt it depended on the family members’ time, 22% said no, and 18% felt it depended on the family members’ wishes.

The Time of the Day Respondents Like to Perform Religious Activities

Time of the Day	Responses	Percentage
Early in the morning	31	57%
Day time	2	4%
Evening time	5	9%
Anytime	16	30%
Total	54	100%

Table 4.9 represents what time of day the elders like to perform religious activities. 57% of the respondents prefer the morning, 30% prefer to practice at any time, 9% prefer evening, and 4% prefer to practice in the daytime. This is also depicted in Figure 4.8.

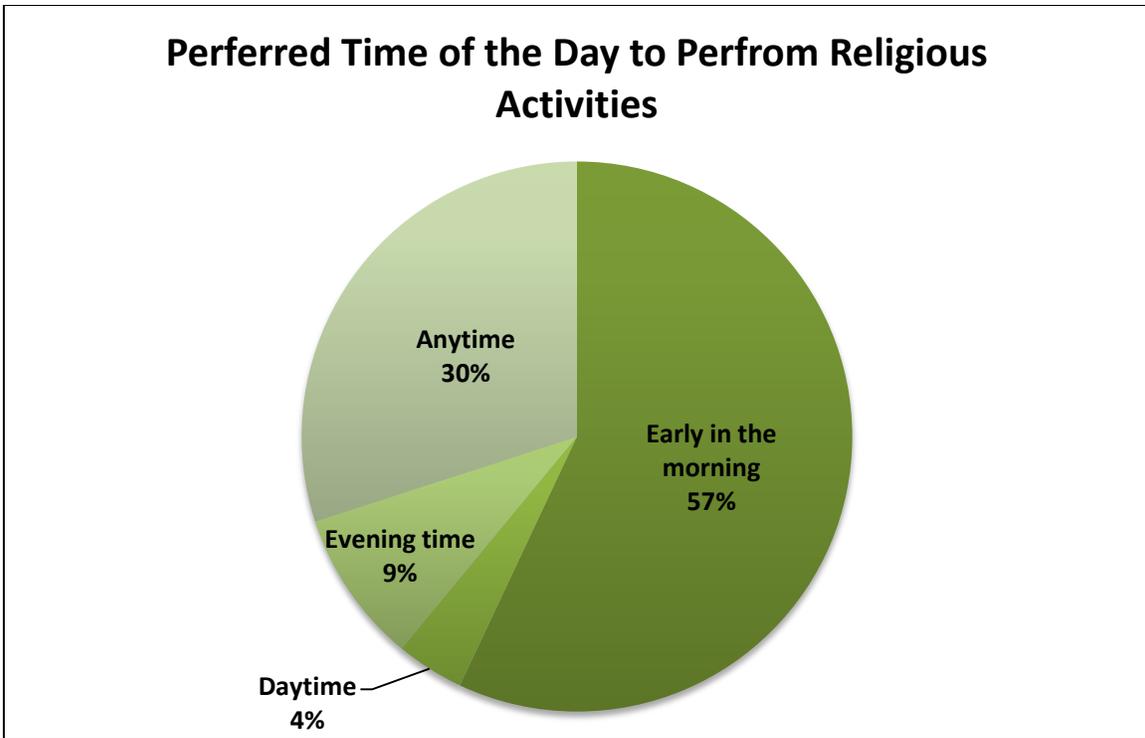


Figure 4.8 shows identical results as Table 4.9

The Age at which People Become more Involved in Religious Activities

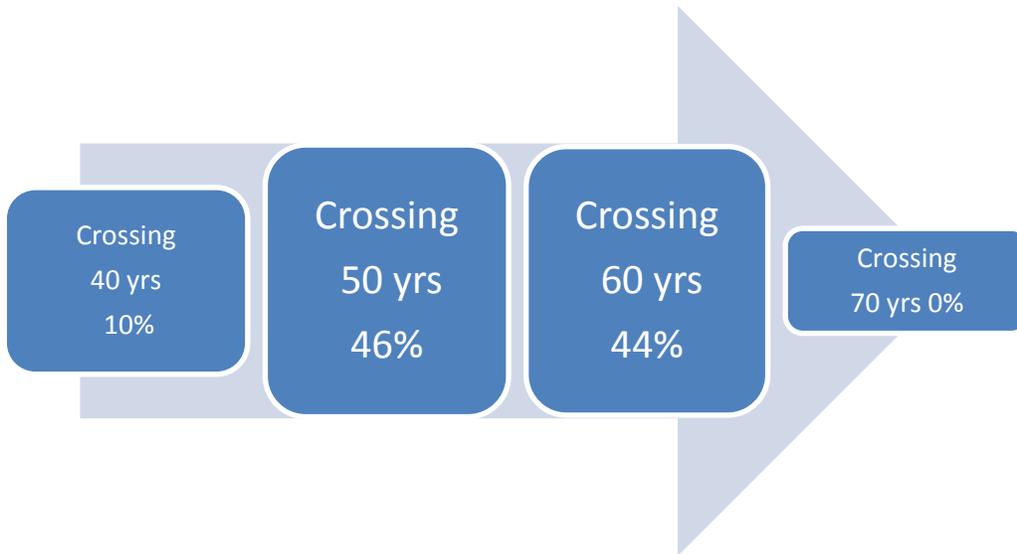


Figure 4.9 presents the opinion of respondents and their religious interests as they increase in age. 46% of the respondents indicated that their religious interest was increasing as they were crossing age 50, 44% indicated an increase at crossing age 60, and 10% felt interest increased at age 40.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The study was conducted with an objective to assess the relation between age and religious activities. It was conducted in Kathmandu district Kapan VDC word no 8 and 9. Hence the respondents were 50 elderly people, which is 100% of the total elderly in the VDC. Data collection was done through face to face interview and questionnaire of the individual respondents based on pre-tested questionnaire. It was found that majority of respondents were of the age group 60 to 90 years, with most of them belonging to Brahmin, Chhetri Tamang and Newar ethnic groups. The respondents were interested in working face to face with the interviewers and filling out the questionnaires.

Effects of religious involvement and interest can be seen in various aspect of elderly people's life. Religious involvement effects their personnel behavior, life style, daily activities and also social life. Every respondent viewed that they were becoming more kind, sociable, and friendly due to involvement of religious activity; they present the view that religion plays a positive role in their life.

Most of the elderly involved in religious activities at the age crossing 60(44%). They identified the main reason they practice was self-satisfaction (56%). Involvement in religious activity made them feel happy and active. Many of the elderly indicated that practicing religious activity was a way to meet god (41%).

Speech from a priest was the main factor identified by the elderly (46%) as the activity that increases their involvement. A majority of elderly reported that they have very good family support and if a family member cannot help them, they said that they spend own old age allowance or saved money to practice.

Most of the elderly believed that religion is different from person to person it is not necessary to define one aspect and one way; it depends people's perception and sensation. The majority of the elderly like to perform religious activity at the time early in the morning (57%), and they like the place at temple to perform religious activity. It is the one of the Nepali culture and tradition. People visit different temples and religious places to perform religious activities.

Many elderly also indicated that if they have leisure time they spend chatting with friends about religion and religious books.

The majority of respondents also agreed that the relationship between religion, culture and old age was positive; these three components depend on each other.

5.2 Conclusion

The study was conducted to discern the relationship between religion and old age people of in Kapan VDC Kathmandu district. It has been thought that almost every person who cross 60 years is interested in the subject of religion. The results of this study indicate that those crossing the ages of 50 to 60 have the highest percentage of interest in religious activities.

Elderly in the Kapan area appear to be very involved in religious activity. They frequently visit different religious places and temples because they live at near the Kathmandu city and they can easily use transportation facilities. Most of the elderly have enough family support and good friendship circle.

5.3 Recommendations

The results of the study indicate that as a person ages, their interest and performance of religious activity increase. The relation between increase in age, religion and culture has been positive. From this research it appears that the interest of increasing religious interest is a natural process of elderly. Family members should support elderly people in religious desires as they love and take care of them. The family member should respect to their feelings of taking part in religious activities and support the elders in their religious and cultural activities.

The community members should also construct temples (pati, pauwas) to maintain friendly religious environmental among elderly and the coming generations. This activity can make a huge change in the old age people who are not cared for or are dominated by their family members. Such elderly friendly religious places can help this age group to share their happiness and sadness with each other.

The government should maintain good rights and laws regarding the elderly. Their rights should not be violated. Government should make a friendly environment among elderly people. Opportunities for communication should be provided to the young and the old, as both groups

have contributions to share. Old age allowance should also be increased to help the elderly and their economic status; especially those who are not supported by family members.

Determinants of Religious Activities in the Elderly: A Case Study of Age 60 plus Hindus of Kapan VDC, Kathmandu

Data source: Field survey 2012

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