

Problematic of Aging and Managing the Elderly in Africa

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Globally, the proportion of 60 and over is growing faster than any other age group. Between 1970 and 2025, the number of older people is expected to increase by about 694 millions, an increase of 223%. In 2025, the world will have about 1.2 billion people in more than 60 years. In 2050, they will be 1.2 billion, and 80% of them live in developing countries [1]. In this context, the issue of aging and the care of the elderly is a major concern in the world for the number of increasingly growing in this category of people. It starts from the perception of the elderly and their socio-cultural status. Thus, for Louis Vincent Thomas [2], in the West, the old are very numerous and are expensive. They are socially useless and even cumbersome. Hence, they are put in hospices or they remain solitary in their home; often causing suicide issue or despair. In contrast to this perception, in Africa, the aged are few and inexpensive. They are useful for special work and education of children. Therefore, they are inserted in the family and lineage where they are treated wise.

Nowadays, with the rapid renewal of technologies and ever greater productivity needs, the perception of the elderly in Africa is exceeded; it is no longer a reference, an example, unlike traditional societies. He is given the status of "old" which has a negative connotation [3]. According to De Beauvoir [4], the old man is becoming more distant from other members of society. This is explained by the fact that it is characterized by an almost total insolvency; the old no longer in working, the other active members of society are indifferent to his presence. This is more increased in African contemporary societies as indicated by the following observations:

- Unlike Western countries with hospices for the elderly, African countries do not currently have;

- Developing countries societies are changing and the scarcity of financial resources has an impact on the composition of the family (from the extended family to the nuclear family); which has resulted in some neglect or indifference to the elderly;

- The great mobility of young people, for reasons of study or work abroad, led to the neglect of the elderly to themselves.

In this context, the issue of care for aging or elderly people is a difficult problem for both governments and for the people. Consequently, how social sciences, including anthropology and sociology can contribute to the efficient management of this group of people? To respond to this question, the contribution of social sciences researchers on this issue can be exploited to rethink the problematic of managing the aging or aged person in Africa.

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