

## The Quality of Life of the Aged in Ghana: A Study on the Socio-Demographic Determinants

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### ABSTRACT

The African Policy Framework and Plan of Action for the aged which was derived from the 1982 UN Plan of Action on aging was aimed at enhancing the livelihoods of the elderly in Africa. However, several decades into the policy, many African countries suffer weak to non-existent welfare systems that affect the living conditions of its aged. In Ghana, this menace is evident by the rising numbers of the aged persons living and begging for alms under inhumane conditions on the streets. In some communities, elderly women are branded witches and held in witch/prayer camps, denied food and water for several days. The objective of the study was to determine the quality of life of the aged, considering: access to healthcare, mobility-assistance, active participation in social activities, access to income/financial support and the nature of caregivers available to them. Qualitative data was obtained through focus group discussions and personal interviews with purposely selected aged persons as well as with key informants from three cities in Ghana. The study outcome showed that the quality-of-life of the aged in Ghana is highly dependent on the cultural beliefs of the resident community of the aged person, kinds of family systems, nature of previous employment, urbanization, religious beliefs and the economic capacity of their children or caregivers. The relevance of this study is to provide in-depth knowledge about the determinants that influence the living circumstances of the aged in Ghana which would enable policymakers to implement pragmatic policies and programs to ameliorate their living conditions.

**Key Words:** Socio-Demographic Determinants; Quality-of-Life; Living-conditions of the aged, Aged-persons in Ghana,