Through the eyes of theory: The need for a comprehensive eldercare policy for Nigeria

Ohiro Oni-Eseleh

Adelphi University School of Social Work

New York**. USA**

ABSTRACT

Many prior ways of explaining human conditions no longer hold relevance across the world because, thanks to myriad innovations, the human experience has evolved in ways that had previously been unimaginable. With that has come significant progress for people and nations on one hand and significant suffering for even a greater number of people on the other. In Nigeria, the latter group is awash with older persons. Without a comprehensive policy that specifically focuses on the needs of older people in the country, Nigeria's older citizens experience significant distress. Considering that modernization, disengagement and social exchange theories have been some of the important theories that continue to advance knowledge in the field of aging, this article explores Nigerian society and the status of older persons in the society within the context of these theories. This article also recommends institutional theory as the approach for developing a comprehensive eldercare policy for the country.

INTRODUCTION

There were 205 million people aged 60 years or over throughout the world in 1950 (United Nations 2013). By 2000, that number had increased about three times to 606 million and is expected to be around 1.2 billion in 2025 and 2 billion by 2050 (Evans, 2010). Nigerians aged 60 and above constitute 6 percent of the country's entire population (Okoye, 2007; Fapohunda, 2013) of almost 200 million people and make up the poorest group in Nigerian society. Nigeria is Africa's most populous country and currently has the highest population of older people on the Continent (Kinsella & Velkoff, 2001). Nigeria is also Africa's richest nation and, with its vast resources, the country is well placed to be able to develop, implement and fund a policy aimed at helping the country's elderly and thereby reducing caregiver stress among family members.

Older persons have historically held a special place in Nigerian culture as custodians of tradition and society's wise and steady counselors. Therefore, they customarily command a high degree of respect because of the general acknowledgment of their traditional role and their accomplishments in society. Against this background, one would expect that Nigeria's governments would ensure that the country's older citizens live comfortably when they become too old to engage in the hassles of work and stressful living. The absence of a national policy on aging and the fact that successive Nigerian governments have come and gone without developing any comprehensive policy aimed at addressing the plight of older persons would suggest otherwise.

This gap also tends to cause significant problems for older people and their families, not the least of which is that it complicates the care giving challenges that older persons and their families face daily (Ajomale, 2007). In addition, incidence of caregiver stress is increasing in

Nigeria (Okumagba, 2013) and the help of government is essential to successfully addressing this growing problem.   People are living longer in Nigeria, as in most other countries, which means that the needs of older people may be increasing. Therefore, it is imperative that Nigeria's leaders develop a comprehensive policy to address the plight of older persons before the current problem becomes unmanageable.

Although the primary focus of this article is Nigeria's older persons, defined here as people who are 60 years old and above, there is a secondary group also affected and requiring of attention as well. The latter group comprises of adult caregivers who must contend not only with the responsibility of caring for an elderly family member but also with balancing the challenges of handling their own personal responsibilities, raising their own families and pursuing their career choices.

Nigeria needs a comprehensive national policy that would lay out a set of guidelines for addressing among other things the ethical care of older persons, the maintenance of financial and food security, access to healthcare, and recreation. Such a policy should be an important task of government, since the traditional system of elder care is no longer as effective as it had been in the past. As a result, except for those who have adult children and other relatives that are financially secure, older persons in Nigeria often require help that they have nobody to provide for them. They are often poor, lonely and lacking in necessities. To rectify this situation, Nigeria ought to establish a safety net for older persons, similar to the Social Security system in the United States and most developed nations. This would be very significant in alleviating poverty among the elderly in Nigeria and at the same time reduce the burden of care that their caregiving adult children currently carry. In the absence of a social safety net and a national policy for older persons, relatives must in many cases also be responsible for all of the financial and care needs of their elderly family members.

Historically, all caregiving in Nigeria, as in all of Africa and most traditional societies, has been the responsibility of family members. As the Nigerian economy and society have increasingly modernized and expanded, the ability of the family system to handle the caregiver role effectively has diminished due to several factors. First, the extended family system, which was always a solid staple in Nigerian society, has weakened due to the kinds of challenges that attend economic and social transformations. Second, modernization and national success brought about new and tremendous employment opportunities for young people willing to migrate to big cities. Migrating to cities often means leaving elderly parents behind in smaller towns or villages. Taking up new and sometimes rewarding opportunities in big cities does not absolve adult children of their role as primary caregivers to their aging parents. Instead, it often means that their care giving responsibilities become reduced to sending money home to their parents and making occasional visits, mostly during festive periods, but not being physically present for the rest of the year to play the caregiver role that was traditionally theirs. The argument by Goldstein & Beall (1981; 1982) that modernization can have significant impact even on people in rural areas is instructive and places this development in perspective.

Third, when caregivers get married and begin to grow their own nuclear families, the demands on their finances increase, making it more difficult for many of them to continue to provide the same level of support to their parents as they did while they were single. In some

cases, all financial support to older parents cease as their adult children struggle to meet their own responsibilities in an increasingly expensive economy. Fourth, every economic growth tends to add more people to the country's middle and/or wealthy class while leaving several others behind. Nigeria is not an exception to this rule. Most Nigerian families have not benefited from the country's economic successes and for those families it is very difficult to meet the care needs of the older persons (Okoye, 2007). The resulting financial constraints make caregiving even more difficult for those adult children that have not experienced significant financial successes.

MODERNIZATION THEORY

Modernization theory describes and explains the transformational processes that traditional societies undergo to become modern societies. In other words, its primary focus is on ways in which pre-modern societies become modern. That is a five-stage process that starts with the traditional or primitive stage, followed by the stage at which a society's size increases and it comes to terms with the realization that it needs to develop more efficient ways to increase agricultural productivity. In the third stage, which is considered the "take-off stage", societies are directed less by tradition and more by modern economic processes. Societies experience continued economic growth and significant transformations in the fourth stage, while the fifth and final stage is characterized by mass consumption as new industries take over the economy and relegate agriculture to a position of less importance.

Armer & Katsillis (2001) identified some assumptions of modernization theory. According to them, the theory assumes that societies develop through a series of evolutionary stages that are based on different degrees and patterns of social differentiation and compatible structural component that are able to maintain society. All developing societies start out from a pre-modern stage of evolution; then they undergo economic growth and take on the social, economic and political features of Western Europe and North American societies, which are the models of modernized societies. To modernize, societies must import Western technology and replace their traditional structural and cultural features because the latter are incompatible with development.

Certainly, the term "modern" in this theory refers to Westernization, since the standards of modernity have historically been determined by Western cultures. Therefore, this theory is fundamentally about the ways in which undeveloped and underdeveloped societies become westernized through processes of economic growth and change in their social, political and cultural structures. Experience from history informs us that industrialization produces technological evolutions, increased levels of education and employment, transportation, and various forms of economic transformations. It is therefore easy to understand why proponents of this theory regard industrialization as the symbol of modernization, and as a model that the rest of the world should follow to be considered modern.

Cogwill & Holmes (1972) were the first to apply modernization theory to explaining aging and the plight of older persons. They suggested that modernization had a negative effect on the elderly of any society that undergoes the process of modernization. They explained that the status of older people in a society declines as modernization increases (Goldstein & Beall, 1981; Cogwill & Holmes, 1972). For example, older people are left behind as technology advances and younger people who can keep up with the pace of technological changes take their place in the workforce.

As people get older and advances occur in the occupations where they are engaged, the feeling of being unwanted grows around the employed elderly and younger people are employed to fill new positions brought about by the occupational advances. This often leads to retirement for many old people even before they feel that they are ready to retire.

Strengths and limitations of modernization theory

Modernization theory makes it possible to speculate and make projections on the process of development. Therefore, it is possible to speculate on the direction and shape that social and political transformations will take as a society modernizes. Furthermore, modernization theory can provide a guide for the development of a national policy on a matter of concern. For example, if one were to develop a national policy on aging in Nigeria, one could study the countries that have undergone similar social and economic transformations, and how the elderly were affected, and then develop a policy that is consistent with what the said country did in response.

Modernization theory seems to suggest that the process of modernization occurs in a linear direction, but this is hardly the case for most countries. Historically, several countries have had obstacles, slip-ups, and even conflict, derailing their process of modernization and leading to redesigns and re-starts that take them in different directions from where they were heading. This theory also assumes that all people, values, institutions and societies are similar to those in the industrialized West, regardless of where they are located. Therefore, their human experience and their processes of development would follow the route taken by prior countries that travelled the road of industrialization and are now modern societies. This is not how the world is designed or how it operates.

Furthermore, this theory seems to assume that tradition is an obstacle to modernization. The emphasis on the relegation of tradition to what it considers to be the features of modernization, and its suggestion that tradition is not a feature of modernized societies, magnifies this claim. South Korea, China and Japan are good examples of how this theory errs in its claims. Despite advances in economic development and overall modernization, these countries continue to maintain their traditional values. The fact that they have been able to develop while maintaining their traditional cultures stands in opposition to the idea that real development and modernization cannot occur without following the Western template. Finally, in assuming that so-called traditional societies are underdeveloped and incapable of modernizing as they are, this theory is Eurocentric at best and does not take into consideration the cultural standards of the countries that are deemed underdeveloped.

Relevance to the status of Nigeria's older persons

At the center of modernization theory is the assumption that when a society undergoes the process of modernization, institutional structures and individual activities become more specialized as many societal changes occur. In the social realm, modern societies are more urbanized and literate, health care is accessible, the society is secularized and kinship ties are weaker while the nuclear family system becomes increasingly emphasized. Certainly, this is a description of Western societies, but it is no longer true of those societies alone. Nigeria has an adult literacy rate of 61% (United Nations, 2020), which is quite low for a country of Nigeria's

sociopolitical and economic stature, but it has been in the upswing and is 10% higher than it was in 2008.

At only 43% (Menizibeya, 2011), access to health care is very low and kinship ties are weaker than they were previously, while the nuclear family now receives greater emphasis than the extended family system, which was previously the case. In addition, Nigeria has become Africa's top technology hub. Yet, these developments cannot be attributed to any claim that the country is now modernized based on the standards that modernization theory describes. This reality exposes one of the weaknesses of the theory, which is that it does not explain why things are the way they are in non-European countries, nor does it explain what those societies have to do to become modernized. It does not even provide a measure to explain at what state a non-Western society can be considered modernized.

In the political realm, traditional sources of authority lose their power as bureaucratic and democratic institutions rise. This has certainly been true of Nigeria where tradition has largely lost sway to new sources of authority in the political and economic spheres. Instead, much of the authority to determine how the society is shaped, governed and maintained now lies in the hands of the politicians and wealthy class. While it may appear to some that this is a function of modernization, it is also plausible that this is due to Nigeria's embrace of Western democratic ideals and new economic models that have created new categories of influential citizens. Add to these the increasingly high embrace of Western religious practices that are oftentimes at variance with African traditional practices and those sources of authority.

Modernization theory also assumes that cultural shifts occur as social mobility increases and status relations become based on meritocracy rather than such factors as nepotism, age and gender. This assumption is flawed because it suggests that nepotism, age and gender discrimination exist only in pre-modern societies but not in the Western countries that the theory holds up as models of modernization. Such a suggestion is inaccurate.

DISENGAGEMENT THEORY

Formulated by Elaine Cumming and Warren Earl Henry, disengagement theory was one of the first theories of aging developed by social scientists. The theory seeks to explain how and why older adults disengage from society and assumes that such disengagement is a natural course of aging. The theory also assumes that disengagement in old age is a mutual occurrence between the elderly and society. In other words, while the older individual is withdrawing from society, society is also withdrawing from the individual. The result is decreased interaction between the aging person and others in the social system to which he/she belongs. Older people who are better adjusted to the process of disengagement are able to find activities that keep them engaged, but those that are unable to find such often disengage with more difficulty. Therefore, Cumming and Henry (1961) recommended that, prior to old age and retirement, people should plan activities that will occupy them when they reach that stage in life.

Cumming and Henry (1961) provided some postulates to explain the disengagement process: first, death is a natural course of life and human abilities tend to deteriorate naturally with aging. This will happen to everybody, and every person will experience the process of

disengagement, including losing ties to others in his or her society. Second, people who have fewer varieties of interactions to begin with have an easier disengagement process because the tangling effects imposed by social interactions do not encumber them.

Third, the disengagement process is different for men and women because society ascribes gender roles to men and women. To men is ascribed the central role of work and women's two roles are marriage and family nurturing. These are the roles that they would be most likely to disengage from in old age. Fourth, the process of industrialization and modernization is such that, through education, the young acquire skills that prepare them to assume authority and step in to fill the positions held by the elderly as the latter lose their skills and/or retire. This will happen because modern societies place significant emphasis on growth and achievement (Cumming and Henry, 1961; Cumming, Dean, Newell & McCaffrey, 1960). Therefore, modern societies require their work to be done efficiently, but older persons are not able to perform at the high level of functioning that is required. To maintain the functionality of social systems at the desired level requires some mechanism for systematically disengaging older persons from major life roles critical to social system maintenance. Fifth, both the individual and society are usually ready to disengage at the time that disengagement occurs. Finally, disengagement theory is independent of culture, but the form it takes is bound by culture.

Strengths and limitations of disengagement theory

Disengagement theory's clear framework for interpreting the aging process can be understood and viewed with some acceptance even by some critics of the theory. The theory can also provide a good basis for empirical research and can be used to study many actions exhibited by, or affecting, older persons. Finally, disengagement theory can be used as the basis for creating policy and/or developing programs expected to affect the lives of older persons. For example, if one understands and accepts the premise of this theory, then one can also understand the need for activities in old age and then develop policies and/or programs to help the elderly cope more effectively in that period of their lives.

Disengagement theory suggests that aging and associated experiences follow a linear process, which is not the case. It is also devoid of cultural considerations. This is very important considering the fact that the aging process does not follow the same pattern in all cultures. Third, the disengagement approach has also been criticized for ignoring the impact of socioeconomic status on aging experiences. Certainly, wealthy people stand a better chance of affording a lifestyle that keeps them engaged in society much beyond times when older poor people would be expected to have disengaged. Finally, this theory is archaic in light of current aging trends. In many countries, including Nigeria, people are healthier, live longer and have more financial means than they did previously. Therefore, aging for those people do not often follow the disengagement process that this theory highlights. Many even continue to work in business and politics and maintain their social lives well into their retirement years.

Relevance to the status of older persons in Nigeria

In terms of its applicability to Nigeria, disengagement theory is weakened by the significant

knowledge gap that it leaves. For example, by negating cultural considerations, the theory implies that the disengagement trend is the same for all people regardless of culture. It suggests that all people, regardless of culture or nationality, reach a point in their lives where they begin to make forward or backward shifts in terms of their social engagement from society. To accept this as a universal experience is to suggest that there are no environmental factors that make aging easier for some individuals than it does for others or for some groups versus others and for older persons in some countries than older people in other countries do. In reality, aging tends to occur among one's people in traditional and even modern African societies. Most people in Nigeria retire and return to the rural towns and villages that they call home after they retire from careers in cities. The question that this raises is whether the process of disengagement would be different for such people if they remained in the cities where they worked, or if disengagement follows the same trend in cities as it does in rural areas.

In Nigeria, which is undergoing many of the economic, social and political transformational processes outlined by this theory, employees are required to retire if they are 60 years old or have been employed for 25 years, whichever comes first. Upon retirement from the labor force, or whatever business they were involved in, older persons lose income, prestige and the status that they derived from being productive members of society. However, their bond to the traditional towns and villages that they call home remain and the communities do not disengage from them. Instead, they very often remain engaged as active members of those communities long into old age. The exception would be those who never had those social bonds in the first place.

Social Exchange Theory of Aging

Developed by Homans (1961), social exchange theory focuses on explaining how certain factors influence patterns of interaction and relationships between individuals. The theory posits that if one person in a relationship has a lower capacity to reward the other person in the relationship, then the one with less exchange resources is assumed to be the more dependent in the relationship. Applied to elder care, the suggestion is that relationships between a caregiver and care recipient depend on the capacity of both to mutually reward one another with something of value (Emerson, 1972). The relationship between parents and their children are viewed in this context. Parents provide for their children and the children reward their parents by maintaining good behavior and performing their assigned tasks responsibly. With time, the positions become reversed as their parents age, leave the labor force and become dependent on their adult children. The course and nature of exchange relationships may be influenced by such factors as the resources available to one or both individuals, socioeconomic status, health status, culture and the quality of the relationship between the caregiver and care recipient. Dowd (1980), who was among the first to use the exchange theory in social gerontology, makes the point that aging impacts exchange relationships in the sense that in old age the negotiating power of the older individual diminishes as the exchange resources available to him/her reduces. At the same time, the younger person's status in the exchange relationship increases as his/her resources now exceed those available to the older person. In other words, the power associated with access to resources declines with age, placing the older person in the unenviable position of negotiating from weakness.

Strengths and limitations of social exchange theory

Social exchange theory provides a framework for understanding why adult children would feel that they have an obligation to care for their elderly parents who raised them. In addition, it gives credibility to the idea of close family relationships in the sense that it highlights the activities (exchanges) that constantly happen between family members working together. Finally, this theory encourages responsible behavior. For example, people do not have to be told to take care of their elderly parents who raised them. Having had some sort of exchange relationships in which they were dependent on their parents through the years, adult children know that it is their responsibility to care for their parents when the latter become old.

The limitations of exchange theory include the fact that, although much of the emphasis is on what is gained or lost in negotiating the exchange process, those are not testable actions since it is not possible to test the motivations behind such exchanges. This theory also presents human beings as people whose engagement in social interactions (even between parents and their children) are always products of calculations based on gain, or expected gain. In other words, this theory reduces human relationships to economic considerations. By focusing completely on the exchanges that it claims, this theory ignores the role of emotion in human relationships, whereas emotions play a significant role in interpersonal relationships (Lawler & Thye, 1999).

Relevance to the status of older persons in Nigeria

Social exchange theory has significant relevance to Nigerian society and culture where adult children are expected to provide care for their aging parents. Although economic circumstances have made this responsibility increasingly difficult for young people, it remains a Nigerian cultural expectation. Of all of the theories already discussed, social exchange theory provides the best way to understand the nature of the relationships between Nigerians and their aging parents and why a Nigerian adult may feel unaccomplished if his conscience and/or other people in his society determine his caregiving toward his/her parents to be deficient.

Proposal

While every theory discussed above has strong relevance for understanding the circumstances of older persons in Nigeria, none of them is specific enough to provide guidance for anyone seeking to develop a comprehensive elder care policy to address the status of older persons in the country. Despite its socioeconomic and technological advances, Nigeria is a country where tradition still holds a paramount place. Family relationships and much of societal structure are grounded in a long history of norms, customs and expectations. It is therefore important that any attempt to develop a comprehensive policy to address the problems associated with elder care also include a consideration of the traditions and customs that explain phenomena in that society. Theories that focus mainly on industrialized Western societies are not adequate for this task. For this reason, institutional theory, defined by Kraft & Furlong (2007) as a method of policy-making that focuses mainly on the formal and legal aspects of government structures, would be an appropriate theoretical approach for such task.

In a country like Nigeria where much of the power is in the hands of government, there could be strong value in adopting institutional theory as the framework for developing a comprehensive policy to address the status of older persons. This theory considers the processes by which structures, including schemes, rules, norms, and routines, become established as authoritative guidelines for social behavior. It also supports the position that organizations that desire to be efficient must strive to conform to the rules and belief systems prevailing in the environment in which they operate. For Nigeria, this would mean that rules and organizations established to address issues relating to the status of older persons would be reflective of the Nigerian environment rather than adopting and conforming to sets of beliefs and systems that are foreign to Nigerian culture and society.

While there is no universal agreement on what an institution is, Peters (2000) identified some approaches to understanding the concept – normative, rational choice, historical and empirical institutionalism. These could also be an effective guide for developing a policy based on institutional theory. The *normative approach* assumes that the way in which people function within institutions is dictated by the norms of the institutions rather than by their desire to maximize their individual conveniences. Therefore, this approach hinges on the idea that institutions are significant warehouses of social value. To that end, individuals in an institution will place the interests of the institution above their personal interests and will work selflessly to accomplish the goals of the institution. *Rational choice institutionalism* perceives of institutions as "arrangements of rules and incentives" (p.3) and people who interact with institutions respond to the basic components of the structure and do not change their personal norms.

Historical institutionalism (HI) assumes that the beginning of an institution (or policy) is important for its eventual success. Therefore, if this theory is to be employed, it is important to ensure that the right people and systems with the appropriate expertise are assembled from the beginning to minimize the chances of false starts and ensure that the proposed policy is designed and built on a solid foundation. *Empirical institutionalism* is interested in determining what changes resulted from the implementation of a specific policy and what differences exist between one institution and another. This requires some honesty, forward planning and expertise. Policy planners should be honest enough to know and acknowledge what they do not know, have the ability to build some assessment tools into their policy designs and have the expertise to understand noticeable changes and make adjustments to the policy as needed. In developing a major workable policy such as the one being proposed, structure matters. To create a national policy that addresses the status of older people in Nigeria, it is important to ensure that the potential outcome is a program that has formal structures. Structures provide guidance and expectations both for the recipients of service and for the institution tasked with the responsibility of implementing the policy. Some people might argue that Nigerians are set in their ways and would resist change, and some others might argue that powerful interests would stand in the way of change. While this argument may be consistent with the age-old belief that humans are generally resistant to change, some obvious inconsistencies become known when this argument is considered within the context of Nigerian culture. First, the argument is inconsistent with history. Nigerians have never been known as people that would resist a program intended for their benefit, even if it were one that was obviously flawed. Institutional theory argues that structure is important because

it enables regularity of behavior in people. That claim is certainly supported by Nigeria's historical experience.

Second, institutional theory suggests that people's behaviors will change in response to the assortment of opportunities and constraints presented by a structure that does not seek to affect their values and traditions (Peters, 2000). Nigerian political history suggests that this would likely be the case. Since independence in 1960, Nigerians have often responded with remarkable results to the few governments that provided clear leadership and demanded behavior change. Third, institutional theory has the potential to create a coherent system that can be managed effectively, regardless of changes in social and political systems. Finally, this theory ensures that the traditions of a society are considered and factored into the planning efforts if a lasting program is to be built. With its traditions that require the consideration of technocrats, researchers and policy makers, this reality makes the Nigerian situation being addressed here a suitable subject for the application of institutional theory.

Strengths and weaknesses of institutional theory

This theory has many advantages that make it appropriate for addressing the status of older people in Nigeria. First, it is a theory that easily lends itself to empirical studies. Therefore, it is possible to obtain evaluative data to assess what aspects of the policy would (are) effective and what would (are) ineffective. It is also able to identify and consider ideas that may have been ignored but which are at the core of behavior and social action. In addition, it allows for a consideration of people's habitual actions. It is also adaptable to varying situations.

The fact that this theory makes allowance for considering the norms and traditions of people in a society is also a significant strength that makes it relevant and a good choice to apply to the Nigerian situation. This theory also allows changes to occur in a progressive fashion rather than in one fell swoop that may be too overwhelming for people and the system to handle. This theory also makes allowance for the difficulty and unpredictability of the change process and ensures that a policy or institution has a built-in system to handle such difficulties when they occur (Peters (2000). One weakness of institutional theory is that it requires rational actors to develop and implement the change effort. The chances of that happening cannot always be guaranteed, but this can be planned for. In addition, the theory requires high-level expertise in multiple areas of policy development and implementation to make the application of the theory efficient. With competent and determined leadership in Nigeria, such expertise can be developed.

CONCLUSION

While the claim here is not that institutional theory would solve all problems and lead to a perfect plan, this article makes two claims. First, that modernization, disengagement and exchange theories provide good framework for understanding aspects of the Nigerian problem addressed her and provide a direction to attain understanding of the need for a comprehensive policy to address the status of older Nigerians. Second, that institutional theory provides the best approach for developing the comprehensive policy that this article proposes.

Certainly, several variables are responsible for the absence of a national elder care policy

in Nigeria. These include financial and human resources, the degree of support available to the caregiver, the demographic characteristics of the care recipients, the health and functional abilities of the caregiver and care recipient, and the absence of a government policy or assistance directed at the welfare of the elderly. It also helps to have the human resources to engage in planning and implementing such a plan. A family with a caregiver that has adequate financial resources is likely to be able to afford paid efficient care for its family member without financial support from the government. On the other hand, a family that is lacking in financial resources will be more likely to struggle concerning meeting the needs of the care recipient. What a comprehensive elder care policy would do would be to muster and manage these variable into building a care approach from which older Nigerians would benefit

References

Ajomale, O. (2007). Country report: Aging in Nigeria-current state, social and economic implications. Research Committee 11 Sociology of Aging of the International Sociological Association (ISA) www.rc11-sociology-of-aging.org/ Retrieved on November 29, 2020

Armer & Katsillis (2001). Encyclopedia of Sociology: Modernization Theory. New York: Macmillan Reference.

Cogwill, D. O. & Holmes, L.D. (1972). (Eds.). Aging and Modernization. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts

Cumming, E. & Henry, W.E. (1961). Growing Old: The Process of Disengagement. New York: Basic Books.

Cumming, E., Dean, L.R., Newell, D.S. & McCaffrey, I. (1960). Disengagement: A tentative theory of aging. *Sociometry*, 23(1), 23-35. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.

Dowd, J. J. (1980). Stratification among the Aged. Belmont, Ca: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

Emerson, R. M. (1972). Exchange Theory. In J. Berger et al., (eds.), Sociological Theory in Progress. Boston: Houghton and Mifflin.

Evans, J. (2008). Eye care for older people. *Community Eye Health*. 21(66), 21–23.

Fapohunda, T.M. (2013). The Pension System and Retirement Planning in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*. 4(2), 25-34.

Goldstein, M. C. & Beall, C.M. (1981). Modernization and aging in the third and fourth world: Views from the rural hinterland in Nepal. *Human Organization.* 40(1), 40-55

Goldstein, M. C. & Beall, C. M. (1982). Indirect Modernization and the Status of the Elderly in a Rural Third World Setting. *Journal of Gerontology*, 37(6), 743–748, https://doi.org/10.1093/geronj/37.6.743

Homans, G.C. (1961). Human behavior: Its elementary forms. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Kinsella, K. & Velkoff, V.A. (2001). An Aging World: 2001. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institutes of Health National Institute on Aging.

Kraft, M.E. & Furlong, S.R. (2007). Public policy: Politics, analysis and alternatives. 2nd Ed.,

Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.

Lawler, E. J. & Thye, S. R. (1999). "Bringing Emotions into Social Exchange Theory." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 25, 217-44.

Menizibeya, O.W. (2011). The Nigerian health care system: Need for integrating adequate medical intelligence and surveillance systems. *Journal of Pharmacy and Bioallied Sciences.* 3(4), 470–478. doi: 10.4103/0975-7406.90100

Okoye, U. O. (2007). Community-Based care for homebound elderly persons in Nigeria: A policy option. *International Journal of Innovative Research in Science, Engineering and Technology*, 2(12), 7086-7091.

Okumagba, P. O. (2011). Family Support for the Elderly in Delta State of Nigeria. *Stud Home Comm Sci,* 5(1), 21-27.

Peters, B.G. (2000). Institutional theory: Problems and prospects. Vienna: Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS).

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2013). World Population Ageing. New York: United Nations.

United Nations Statistics Division (2020). Economic and social statistics on the countries and territories of the world, with particular reference to children's well-being. http://data.un.org/Data.aspx?q=Nigeria+literacy&d=SOWC&f=inID%3a74%3bcrID%3a 292. Retrieved on November 29, 2020