

HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER ADULTS: ADDRESSING SILENT VIOLENCE AND PROMOTING DIGNITY

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Abstract

Context: Although human rights are widely discussed today, the violation of the fundamental rights of older adults remains a concerning and often invisible reality. Protecting the dignity of this population goes beyond the absence of physical abuse, psychological harm, or neglect, encompassing respect for essential rights such as health, justice, accessibility, freedom of choice, and autonomy. **Objective:** This study aims to reflect on forms of silent violence against older adults and to propose strategies for promoting their dignity, considering the social, ethical, and political impacts of such practices in the aging process. **Methods:** This is a bibliographic study based on the critical analysis of books, scientific articles, journals, and digital materials, focusing on everyday practices that, although normalized, subtly violate the human rights of this population. **Results:** The analysis shows that violence may be expressed through direct and visible acts or manifest silently, through subtle attitudes often disguised as care and protection, but which impose a submissive and dependent lifestyle based solely on age. Practices such as the former legal imposition of the marital property regime in marriages and stable unions involving older adults, infantilization through role reversal, control over household management, clothing choices, place of residence, and leisure activities exemplify this type of violence, as they restrict autonomy and strip older adults of their identity. The lack of critical reflection on such practices contributes to their perpetuation and hinders the recognition of their harmful effects. **Implications:** Confronting silent violence is essential to building a culture that values aging with dignity, ensuring physical and mental well-being, autonomy, and full access to fundamental human rights. Therefore, the strengthening of public policies, educational initiatives, and intergenerational strategies is proposed to promote respect, inclusion, and the recognition of the uniqueness of older adults.

Keywords: Aged; Human Rights; Elder Abuse.