

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SURVIVAL STRATEGIES USED BY THE AGED IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS: A CASE OF CHONGWE AND LUSAKA DISTRICTS.

BY

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DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to senior citizens in Zambia and to the late professor Martin .M. Kamwengo.

There is a fountain of wisdom from the encyclopedic knowledge and experience that senior citizens have gathered throughout their lives.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation represents my own work; that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at the University of Zambia or at any other University.

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APPROVAL

The University of Zambia approves this dissertation by Hendrix Chama Chanda as a fulfilling part of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Education (Adult Education).

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to compare the survival strategies that the aged used in the rural and urban areas, specifically in Chongwe and Lusaka districts. The objectives of the study were: to investigate the types of survival strategies the aged used to sustain their lives in the rural and urban areas; to determine whether or not the survival strategies the aged used addressed their financial and material needs; to identify similarities and differences in survival strategies used by the aged in rural and urban areas; and to find out whether or not extended families played a role in supporting and taking care of the aged in rural and urban areas.

The study comprised 97 senior citizens who were purposively selected from Chongwe and Lusaka districts. 84 senior citizens were subjected to a structured interview, while 13 participated in the two focus group discussions. Therefore, structured interview guides and two focus group discussions were used to collect data in Chongwe and Lusaka districts. Data from focus group discussions was analyzed qualitatively. However, depending on the questions and the responses from the respondents, similar responses from structured interviews were coded into themes. This approach allowed the researcher to analyze most of the data from structured interviews quantitatively by using a computer programme called Statistical Package for Social Statistics version 14.

The study established that several types of survival strategies were used by the aged in rural and urban areas. The findings revealed that senior citizens in Chongwe and Lusaka districts were trades men and women. Others depended on their extended family members for support and care. This was the case for majority respondents from Chongwe district compared to their counterparts in Lusaka. There were a number of senior citizens who were also assisted financially and materially by local churches, charitable organizations and well wishers within and outside their communities.

The study further revealed that survival strategies that were used by the aged in the two districts were such that they did not address all their financial and material needs. Although majority senior citizens were business men and women, their businesses, according to the findings, were not capital intensive, hence less lucrative. Consequently, majority senior citizens in the two districts resorted to eating once or twice in a day in order to conserve food for subsequent days. The situation was exacerbated further in Lusaka, as opposed to

Chongwe, because senior citizens there had a lot of dependents. As a result and except for a few, most of the aged scraped a living on less than a dollar per day in the two districts.

It was also revealed that there existed minor differences in survival strategies the aged used in Chongwe and Lusaka districts. The differences were mostly in quantity and not in the quality or types of strategies. For instance, it was established that majority senior citizens in Chongwe depended on their extended family members as compared to their counterparts in Lusaka. In contrast, majority of the aged in Lusaka were trades men and women as opposed to those in Chongwe. Nevertheless, most of the strategies that were employed in the two districts were similar.

The study further established that majority senior citizens in Chongwe expressed satisfaction with the help they received from extended family members as opposed to their counterparts in Lusaka. The findings indicated that majority senior citizens in Lusaka lived on their own as heads of their family households. On the other hand, most of the aged in Chongwe lived with other family members as dependents.

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