A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION:
The Social and Spatial Production of the Aged Identity in the Changing Landscapes of Care Environments

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ABSTRACT

The discourse on ageing and its concomitant issues have to be examined from a broader perspective of life course developments rather than just focusing on the experience of ageing as the final stage of life. Empirical observations have to be supplemented with the qualitative approaches in order to capture the breadth and depth of the processes and experience of ageing with regards to care practices and environments. This essay contains a range of issues pertaining to the social production of knowledge and identity of the aged. These issues are inter-related and will continue to have a bearing on the ongoing developments in the area of care practices and environment for the elderly community.

This essay explores the variables operative from within and without in terms of the socio-cultural location, self-identities, and the self-defined social roles of the elderly individual. These variables are actively involved in constructing the Aged Identity or Identities either in fostering notions of empowerment and independence or in reinforcing entrenched stereotypes and ideology that serve to frustrate improvements to care systems.

Finally in conceptualising environmental design criteria and considerations that blur the boundaries between housing, health and care services which is necessary for such environments to operate with greater accountability to the elderly individual. To argue that the often ignored and misrepresented Aged Identity is a critical dimension to the planning and provision of care practices and environments. And essentially, to dispel the myth of 'dependent' elderly person.

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