

## **Abstract**

Abuse of elderly people is a form of family violence, which has existed for years; although available data signify that much abuse goes unrecognized and is hidden from public awareness. Abuse of elderly people may take various forms including physical harm, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, financial or material exploitation, and intentional or unintentional neglect. Studies indicate that change and modernization have exacerbated the undermining of the roles, status and the welfare of elderly people who are increasingly becoming socially isolated and psychologically depleted. Elderly people in Emuhaya District may not be devoid of elderly abuse. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on the extent and impact of this phenomenon. Thus, this study was designed to examine the social context of abuse of the elderly people in Emuhaya District. Specifically, the study sought to determine the prevalence of elderly people abuse in the district; examine different forms of abuse of elderly people; examine the social contexts under which abuse occurs and to analyze the attitude of the community towards the elderly people in the district. It was conducted within the context of social exclusion and disengagement theories and the concept of stress of the caregiver. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect data. From a population of 11,127 elderly people aged 65 years and above, Yamane's (1967) formula was used to sample 386 respondents. The findings of the study reveal that 81.1% of the elderly experience single or multiple abuses. This abuse is attributed to economical, physical, cultural, social and psychological factors. Results revealed that different groups of people have different attitudes towards the elderly and ageing. Generally, the social context of ageing determines the attitude toward ageing and the elderly. Since poverty appeared to be the main pointer to elderly abuse, it was recommended that a good economic environment should be provided so that the elderly remain economically productive, thus maintaining and enhancing the positive attitude of the youth towards the elderly. In addition, a coordinated community response to elderly people abuse is imperative. This will include institutionalized policies coordinated by all levels of the community including healthcare providers, community-based elderly abuse advocacy groups, elderly welfare and protective service agencies and the civil and criminal justice systems.