

Elderly Victimization

Violence is one of the extreme forms of harming the population, which can have serious consequences. This problem is particularly alarming when it concerns the elderly population. At the same time, elderly victimization rates are lower than those for other age groups. This statistic is not surprising since it is necessary to consider several factors that affect it. Hence, one of them is that the elderly represents a smaller group of the population. Research indicates that “more than 56 million adults ages 65 and older live in the United States, accounting for about 16.9% of the nation’s population” (“Population - Adults ages 65+ in United States,” para. 1). Another aspect is that the elderly people may be the least desirable victims due to factors such as financial conditions (Morgan & Mason, 2014). However, it is worth noting that many older adults, unlike other age groups, are easier victims. This is due to personal characteristics, such as trustfulness and ease of persuasion, which are often used by abusers.

When there is a case of violence against the elderly, it is necessary to examine several special considerations that must be made by those working with these victims. Firstly, it is vital to identify what kind of violence a person was exposed to since such forms as physical and sexual violence can leave a deep imprint on both the physical and psychological state. It is essential to be able to identify the signs indicating this kind of harmful misconduct.

Older people are exposed to financial deception, which implies rubbing into their confidence in order to get the greatest benefit. However, this is a more harmless form of violence, where the most serious manifestation is robberies, during which people not only lose money, but can also get serious physical injuries. People can face “financial neglect which occurs when an older adult’s financial responsibilities such as paying rent or mortgage, medical expenses or insurance, utility bills, or property taxes, are ignored” (National Institute on Aging, n.d., para. 15). There are many

different strategies and programs that are designed considering personal and age characteristics that should be studied by specialists to help elderly victims.

Abuse and victimization of the elderly are characterized by unique features. Henceforth, in addition to sexual and physical violence, this form of victimization manifests itself in such actions as neglect, confinement, willful deprivation, and emotional abuse (National Council on Aging, 2021). The main difference is that it often remains unspoken due to the reluctance of older people to experience additional stress (Woods, 2015). Moreover, such forms as deception, confinement, and willful deprivation are more common than others.

At the same time, elderly victims should not be treated differently from other crime victims. This is due to the fact that they also experience solid emotional shocks, which can cause such disorders as anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic syndrome. Critical cases requiring special attention are those in which elderly victims are harmed by family members or caregivers. Therefore, social service workers and law enforcement should develop unique approaches to limit this problem. The involvement of the latter is due to the fact that law enforcement officers are those people that are the first to come to the crime scene and communicate with victims. Social workers are the next instance that works with victims in cooperation with other facilities.

References

- Morgan, R. E., & Mason, B. J. (2014). Crimes against the elderly, 2003-2013. *Bureau of Justice Statistics*. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/content/pub/pdf/cae0313.pdf>
- National Council on Aging. (2021). *Get the facts on elder abuse*. <https://www.ncoa.org/article/get-the-facts-on-elder-abuse>
- National Institute on Aging. (n.d.). *Elder abuse*. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/elder-abuse#money>
- Population - Adults ages 65+ in United States*. (n.d.). America's Health Rankings. https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/senior/measure/pct_65plus/state/ALL
- Woods, T. I. (2015). *First response to victims of crime: A guidebook for law enforcement officers*. Scholar's Choice.