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Sub-theme 3.5 How to Enable “Productive Ageing”? Policy Options” titled:

Advantages and Hindrances for older persons who consider moving to new homes in older age

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Abstract:

This paper focuses on the options that are available for older persons and their respective society to rethink housing and urban planning to better fit the needs and aspirations of older people. In addition, the paper also addresses the psycho-social challenges that older people and their environment face as they advance with age and need to cope with losses such as finding new ways to make friends and acquaintances to avoid isolation and unhappiness.

Keywords

Ageing, older people, social capital, social anomie, bonds and bridges, co-housing, sociometry, psycho-social architecture

Introduction:

The theme of living in old age is complex and must be given high priority in the future. It is not sustainable if an important part of society is left behind. We must succeed in enabling older

people to live independently with a sense of contentment in their four walls and in a familiar living environment for as long as possible. If not, they should have an alternative new environment without undue constraints or disregard to their Human Rights.

A) Need to refit the architectural housing conditions of elderly persons.

It would be desirable if older people could stay in their familiar environment. However, this requires investments in the building stock and the district infrastructure.

Yet studies show that single-family homes in peri-urban areas are less age-friendly than multi-family homes or smaller apartments in city centers. In peri-urban areas, a high proportion of single-family homes are often poorly developed buildings and physical connectivity is often inadequate.

Once continued living in oversized family homes is no longer feasible, older persons might prefer to move to smaller two-three room apartments rather than be told to move to a retirement or nursing home. Yet such transition might not be open to older persons who do not enjoy a relatively well-off pension scheme to allow for such choices. This is particularly true for older people living in rural or remote territories. Will they be left to their own device at the end of their life journey?

This paper focuses on the older population who might be relocated either voluntarily or mandatorily. It aims to explore various scenarios that could unfold when an increasing number of societies and communities are ageing. The question of the availability of smaller, age-appropriate apartments will become pertinent. It would be physically unfeasible for communities to endlessly increase the housing stock for the younger generation while the older generation might over appropriate the existing spaces that have been evacuated by their children who demand separate and independent living spaces. Question therefore arises as to whether there are available homes in sufficient numbers for the age group of 65-year and older and whether as a whole the use of land and housing stock is done in most sustainable manner in already land strapped urban areas.

Moving to a smaller premise could be in most cases financially attractive since it can result in lower living costs compared to paying the higher amount of the rent for a larger apartment. While the older persons enjoy a much longer life span, their financial resources tend to be insufficient to cover the essentials of their personal upkeep. This may affect their health and

psychological wellbeing if there are no children to support them. Finding interesting ways to reduce costs without sacrificing too much of daily convenience and social connectivity are important consideration for the older people's housing issue.

Often housing policies have not taken into consideration the needs of the ageing population who need a smaller apartment yet with a reasonable degree of autonomy and sense of control. Financial incentives or the adaptation of regulations and zoning plans can be incentives for individuals or investors to refit older buildings to the requirements of age-appropriate and obstacle-free housing. However, this comes at costs that are often unaffordable to many older persons.

How to create suitable environments for the older people to *thrive* without isolating or alienating them from the larger society requires careful thought. Planning for mixed/diverse but age friendly community needs to start early so that older persons would not be forced to live in new communities where psycho-social and cultural wellbeing is not commensurable to the physical environment and easier access to public services.

Leaving this issue concerning housing for the older persons to be resolved by market forces will not be optimal for a public administration striving to serve the whole of society. Attending only to the needs and wishes of the wealthy minority will unwittingly intensify the intergenerational conflict as a result.

In many major cities, employment opportunities are more abundant, wages and salaries are higher, schooling is of better quality, but housing already poses a huge challenge for the younger generation. Equitable housing policies are necessary with an intergenerational lens. However, they often do not exist or only focus on the affordable housing needs of younger families while ignoring that of the older generation. Instead a more responsive housing policy needs to address all population groups and intervene when sub-optimal arrangements are in place. Failing this intermediation, governance function of the government should be considered unmet.

B) Need to re-think and re-design the psycho-social architecture of older persons having moved to small new homes in urban centers.

Whether moving by their own decision or being obliged to move by local authorities, it is of paramount importance to consider the role of spatial arrangements and human relations to help the newly transferred persons to reorganize their lives comfortably and in a socially sustainable

manner. After all, age does not diminish a person's desire to belong and to be connected in a meaningful way.

A good new housing environment means that measures are taken to make the older persons feel at home in the new physical environment and find ways to maintain existing social networks while creating new ones. In many cases, this also means maintaining older persons' friendly neighborhood for shopping, entertainment, homely eateries and health care centers.
With growing age, older persons inevitably lose friends and get more distant when their children move out of the parents' home to their own premises. Urban renewal projects in the vicinity of their home often come with implicit social costs; since new buildings often means that the past inhabitants are driven out of their home and neighborhood. Both forms of losses result in a shrinking of the older person's psychological living space and engendering a sense of isolation, loneliness and abandonment.

Familiar physical environment and existing social networks usually enjoys a higher priority for older persons than the financial savings or better physical access to one's own home. A careful cost and benefit analysis might prove that a move to an obstacle-free and age-appropriate new home would be beneficial in the longer term especially after age 80 or older in the developed world. Yet, such a move could be a hard decision to make without being induced by major disruption such as health problems or financial difficulties. Like transplanting trees, older persons often need to be well supported for such a major transition to a new home.

To reconfigure the psycho-social living space of older people, it is of paramount importance to apply the basic knowledge of social theories like Social Anomie (Durkheim 1966), Sociometry (Moreno), and Social Capital (Putnam, 2000).

Designing physical and psycho-social environments requires well integrated and coherent policies for urban planning which ensure optimal housing for the young and the older persons. At the same time, urban planners need to broaden their field of competence and add adequate psycho-social architecture for the older persons while ensuring optimal living solutions on an inter-generational level. Architects and urban planners must also cooperate with social science experts to engage in inter-disciplinary cooperation.

C) Theoretical background to understand the need for reconfiguring housing for older people

Three established social theories offer norm-based interpretation needed to understand the changing needs of older people as they grow into older age. As population age, the individuals surrounding them die or leave their social sphere. As a result, the remaining older population may suffer from a range of emotions such as loneliness, fear, sadness and depression (citation). It is of paramount importance to help older people replenish their social network and find new friends and close partners. To understand better this difficult transition, the social theories presented below are useful for urban planners, architects and the respective older people's children and relatives.

1. Social Anomie: A brief history

"Anomie is a sociological term meaning 'personal feeling of a lack of norms; or put differently, a feeling of normlessness". It was popularized by French sociologist Emile Durkheim in his influential book Suicide (1897). During the time of industrialization, large numbers of people moved to cities for jobs, which led to a loss of familiar background and cultural practices. As farmers moved to cities in search of work, they were unable to find jobs which led to moral corruption or maladaptive behaviour, such as stealing, prostitution, etc. Durkheim would attribute these occurrences to the presence of anomie in the adjusting population.

Relating to social norms, For Durkheim, anomie arises from a mismatch between personal or group standards and wider social standards, or from the lack of a social ethic, which produces moral deregulation and an absence of legitimate aspirations. Though anomie is commonly associated with low regulation, Durkheim postulated that overly rigid (e.g. totalitarian) societies would also produce anomic individuals. He states this in his book *Suicide,* by explaining that,

> "…there is a type of suicide the opposite of anomic suicide… It is the suicide deriving from excessive regulation, that of persons with futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline…we might call it *fatalistic suicide."*

When certain conditions exist, the environment precipitates the emergence of anomie. For example, when rules fall apart, and people are void of social norms to adhere to, social anomie emerges. These occurrences of anomie, sometimes leading to suicide, also happens during times of economic hardships when the environment possesses feelings of powerlessness, helplessness, and hopelessness. He believed that anomie was possible not only during times of hardship, but during times of economic fortune as well. To him, anomie was possible "[whenever] a

significant discrepancy between the ideological theories and values commonly professed and what was actually achievable in everyday life." In his book, *Suicide,* he explains that,

> "if…. industrial or financial crisis increase suicides, this is not because they cause poverty, since crises of poverty have the same result; it is because they are crises, that is, disturbances of the collective order. *Every disturbance of equilibrium is an impulse to voluntary death* (Italic added). Whenever serious readjustments take place in the social order, whether or not due to a sudden growth or to an unexpected catastrophe, men are more inclined to self-destruction" (1966, p 246)

For Durkheim, the social (and not individual) causes of suicide, are characterized by an absence or diminution of standards or values (referred to as normlessness), and an associated feeling of alienation and purposelessness.

If an individual has no social structure to participate in, people will cut corners to survive. Therefore, it can be said that social anomie leads to deviant behaviour. Robert K. Merton also adopted the idea of *anomie* to develop his Strain Theory, defining it as the discrepancy between common social goals and the legitimate means to attain those goals (Murton, 1938). In other words, an individual suffering from *anomie* would strive to attain the common goals of a specific society yet would not be able to reach these goals legitimately because of the structural limitations in society. As a result, the individual would exhibit deviant behaviour.

Application:

Older people moving to new homes or housing compounds might experience social anomie feeling alone, left out, isolated and unable to find out how they could be integrated into the new housing environment.

2. Social Capital- A brief history

In 1916, the term << social capital >> first used by educationist and social reformer Lyda J. Hanifan, is most recognized in "a story of achievement" published in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (*Farr, 2004). Social capital can be defined as the good will, the community spirit, the compassion and the social exchange from which a social unit is made up. In the 1950s, Hungarian born Canadian sociologist, John Seeley used the term with reference to membership of clubs and societies among career-oriented, suburban population

(Flacks 2008). In order to discover how a society functions, the ingredients of a society must be explored and considered.

In the 1980s, a breakthrough by Pierre Bourdieu defined social capital as "… the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition…" (Bourdieu, 1986 p. 248). He postulated social capital as being, "…made up of social obligations ('connections') which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility (Bourdieu, 1986 p. 243)."

In 1988, James S. Coleman used the term social capital in consideration with game theory. He put emphasis on the word *capital* in the economic dimension; "companies within market economy use social capital in order to minimize the cost of transactions; social capital is a link in the chain of added-value" (Coleman, 1988). Emphases are also on resources, availability of networks, and how they are institutionalized. He identified social capital as being a tool used to sell products and maintain clients. Coleman stated that "[social capital] is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors--whether persons or corporate actors--within the structure." (Coleman 1988)

The 1998 World Bank's Social Capital initiative aimed to measure social capital and to assess its significance for regional cooperation and development partnerships (Grootaert, 1998). It also strove to strengthen the methodological and empirical foundations for measuring social capital through case studies and comparative studies involving 20 countries. The preliminary conclusion of empirical studies is that social capital has both positive and negative effects in different areas. Positive affects occur in the areas of preventing violence, health and quality of life, economic development, and good governance. Negative effects include, norms developing that are opposite the rules of state and can threaten its very being (e.g. Mafia, Klu-Klux Klan).

If present, social capital may lead to better quality of life and better health. According to C. Offe S. Fuchs, social capital is comprised of engagement, trust, and attention, with trust being the key aspect (2002). Through social capital, the question arises of how you get people to trust each other in circumstances where previous conflict(s) have occurred between them.

Application.

Building, maintaining and regaining trust – if trust was lost--are essential building blocks to create a vibrant and inclusive social fabric. Older people moving into new homes and housing

communities have to be helped to create positive social capital through mutually beneficial interactions with their new co-housing neighbours.

Typology of Networks

Two types of networks are involved in social capital, they are formal and informal. Formal networks have three different aspects, primary, secondary, and tertiary. Primary network refers to immediate family and kin, while secondary network refers to chamber of commerce, friendship, and society. Finally, tertiary network refers to work associations, trade unions, firms, and labour unions.

On the other hand, informal networks prevail in all formalised social arrangements or organisations. Informal networks are what social capital focuses on and are the invisible portion of society that is seen as a privilege or social advantage to belong to. Because membership is considered a privilege, members of these groups do not want to share their connections or practices. Such exclusion characteristic necessitates the need to find ways for regrouping in order to integrate individuals into an existing structure, rather than having a one versus all situation. Informal networks are also comprised of a primary, secondary, and tertiary level. The primary is focused on friends, clans, secondary is on the neighbourhood of the individual, and tertiary is focused on open events or creation of temporary grouping; all possible areas of intervening. These informal networks could be the entry points to integrate older people moving into new homes or collective co-housing estates.

Bonds and Bridges (Links)

There are different types of ‘bonds’ or ‘bridges’, that can either be used positively to build up a community or group with similar interests, or work to cause harm as a result of their tight bonds. To better illustrate this idea, consider the network theory. In this case, links to different actors creates bonds and can be used as credits to keep members together. These links can sometimes lead to strong networks with a negative impact, such as the mafia.

People who can bridge bonding groups are key to social capital. However, some instances occur in which an actor or an individual is a part of two groups, which reduces the trust of each group towards this particular individual. It raises questions regarding the loyalty of the member, as well as whether the individual is still a part of the group. This in turn may create dysfunctionality within the group.

Attempts at Operationalisation of Social Capital

Putnam (2000) adopted a micro-sociological approach to operationalisation, which focuses on various networks. There is a distinction made between the following dimensions: formal versus informal, extended versus limited, inward versus outward, and bridge building versus bonding. In formal versus informal social capital dichotomy, formal can be defined as belonging to an institution and informal as belonging to networks. It can be looked at as associations with memberships versus meetings with friends.

Extended versus limited social capital has to do with the frequency and exclusivity of contact versus engaging in fleeting acquaintances only. Inward versus outward-oriented social capital illustrates the difference between serving the members and protecting public assets. Finally, there is bridge-building versus bonding social capital, in which groups with different persuasions oppose groups with similar persuasions.

In his book, *Bowling Alone,* Putnam refutes the idea of the United States as being a social melting pot and instead presents the idea that the USA is turning into segregated sub-communities. Integration is then disintegrating in that instead of the cultures of various communities integrating with each other, the communities are becoming more isolated based on culture and ethnicity and becoming focused within themselves.

What is Social Capital? A conclusion

According to Putnam's comprehensive empirical analysis, social capital is a blend of various factors comprising of the following factors: degree of inclusion in the community, public commitment (as expressed for example in participating in voting), active participation in community life and voluntary life (an example being institutions, which are an enormously important aspect of the social fabric in some countries such as Switzerland), informal society activities (e.g. visiting friends), degree of trust (which can be divided into inter-personal trust- i.e. trust in ones colleagues) and general trust (i.e. confidence in political institutions and figures).

In post-modern societies, problems exist with the social capital formation in groups such as the virtual community. The virtual community lacks actual physical, emotional support in which little to no bonding occurs. This can lead to a lack of mutual commitment or empathy in relationships, meaning that one can walk away whenever it is convenient. Because participants

in social exchanges are physically and emotionally separated from the events or happenings being observed over the internet. Another social problem is the lack of bonding with co-workers, which is often seen as an issue specific to young professionals who are working in difficult circumstances due to the wide use of internet and social media. Lack of in-situ social capital development can lead to low rapport in dealing with work stress at a deeper psychological level. This could also be a common issue for older people moving to new homes. Instead of creating a sharing community with older persons or young tenants of a joint housing unit, intimacy might be reserved for the "home" community and networks of the older persons' personal family members. Relationships then can be only transactional and insufficient to provide the emotional benefits needed to create a consistent sense of neighbourhood.

Application:

The cause of concern is the issues of trust in individuals. This issue raises questions such as how does one gain and keep trust? When is trust lost? Etc. In relationships and social communities involving situations calling for trust, if an individual is unable to trust, they, in turn, cannot be trusted. Trust therefore must be recognized as a mutual relationship. There is also the challenge of how to help and enable victims regain trust. When moving to new homes or collective housing units, older people need to understand the importance of gaining and maintaining trust through active steps of integration.

Sociometry:

Jacob Levy Moreno coined the term *sociometry* and conducted the first long-range sociometric study from 1932-38 at the New York State Training School for Girls in Hudson, New York (Hoffman, Chris, 2000). As part of this study, Moreno used sociometric techniques to assign residents to various residential cottages. He found that assignments on the basis of sociometry substantially reduced the number of runaways from the facility. (Moreno, 1953).

A useful working definition of sociometry is that it is a methodology for tracking the energy vectors of interpersonal relationships in a group. It shows the patterns of how individuals associate with each other when acting as a group toward a specified end or goal (Criswell in Moreno, 1960, p. 140). Moreno himself defined sociometry as "the mathematical study of psychological properties of populations, the experimental technique of and the results obtained by application of quantitative methods" (Moreno, 1953, pp. 15-16).

Sociometry is based on the fact that people make choices in interpersonal relationships. Whenever people gather, they make choices--where to sit or stand; choices about who is

perceived as friendly and who not, who is central to the group, who is rejected,

Who is isolated. As Moreno says, “Choices are fundamental facts in all ongoing human relations, choices of people and choices of things. It is immaterial whether the motivations are known to the chooser or not; it is immaterial whether [the choices] are inarticulate or highly expressive, whether rational or irrational. They do not require any special justification as long as they are spontaneous and true to the self of the chooser. They are facts of the first existential order.” (Moreno, 1953, p. 720).

Application:

With time and age, older people inevitably loose persons close to them be they spouses, childhood friends, professional partners or other important others. Replacing lost ones with new friends and acquaintances is crucial be again embedded in a larger social network consisting of supportive and emotional ties. It is hence important to create new forms of belonging and not to end up in isolation deprived of care and human attention.

Role Theory

Role theory is a branch of social psychology that considers most of everyday activities to be the enactment of socially defined roles and related scripts. Roles such as mother, father, leader, teacher, subordinates, man, woman have a set of rules, norms, expectations, behaviours, rights and duties that the “player” has to face and fulfil. This theory posits the predictability of individual’s role behaviour which is prescribed by specific contexts, social positions and other factors.

Jacob Moreno (1889-1974) was a major contributor to the development of role theory and its application to education and psychotherapy. “Moreno viewed each person as a composite of the roles he or she plays. When Moreno discussed roles, he referred to a culturally recognized and agreed upon cluster of behaviours. What Moreno also noticed is that each role has both collective (shared) and private (individual) components. (Stenberg, 2000, pp 5). “The collective component of the role is comprised of the aspects of the role that are similar to the ways others play it….The private component of the role is comprised of the aspects of the role which the person plays in ways that are different from how others play the role."(Sternberg, 2000, p. 118-119)

When individuals approve a social role, i.e., they consider the role “legitimate” and “constructive”, they will incur costs to conform to role norms, and will also incur costs to punish

those who violate role norms. Changed conditions can render a social role outdated or illegitimate, in which case social pressures are likely to lead to role change ("Role Theory").

Moreno spoke of how children learn to assume various social or cultural roles by experimentation through role playing, role rehearsal, to role taking and role integration. Each older person moving to a new home or co-housing unit should be supported in growing out of the "victim" role and its related sense of helplessness, alienation and in many cases suppressed rage.

The concept underlying this approach is the recognition that "man is a role player, that every individual is characterised by a certain range of roles which dominate his behaviour, and that every culture is characterised by a certain set of roles which it imposes…" (Moreno, 1961)

Application

For older persons, the reconstruction of individual and collective lives involves rebuilding relationships and social networks thereby creating positive social capital with others living in their proximity.

By being able to let go of roles linked to "being the victim of old age", older people eventually reclaim their previously acquired role repertoire and engage with their environment in a productive manner. The challenge of the architect of housing for older people is to design environment which allow for constructive interactions and support the transition of older people from being a victim to being again a resourceful and self-reliant citizen assuming of course that the older persons in physically still fit and not in need of intensive care.

In regard to social capital, resources need to be redeveloped within a community of older people involving all of its actors and stakeholders. Aid workers who have constructive and positive impact need to facilitate and initiate the accumulation of social capital. Without minimum social capital, aid workers cannot mobilise communities' energy and trust to in their own effort of building homes--old and new.

C) Housing which provide opportunities for older people to strengthen their social capital and gain support they need to face the challenges of older age.

Staying at home if an older person can physically manage the environment, financial costs and a sense of isolation depends on external provisions of food and medicine which can be problematic especially if an older person living alone has not planned a transition to having to be moved to an intensive care facility if his health suddenly deteriorates.

What follows are descriptions of pro-active alternative housing arrangements of co-housing or cooperative housing facilities for older people still in good health to be integrate into a new social setting providing security and social well-being.

As told by Ellen Smit and Annelies Wester of Het Nieuwe Instituut, the oldest form of collective housing for the elderly is the almshouse (Smit et al). In many towns from the thirteenth century almshouses were built for the elderly and other vulnerable members of society such as widows and unmarried persons. Most were founded by the church, the city council or wealthy citizens. Residents had their own rooms and shared communal facilities such as the kitchen, dining room and washrooms. In the twentieth century, collective housing for the elderly took various forms with different names: old-age homes, care homes, rest homes, hospices etc.

The essence of this type of provision is the combination of accommodation and care. The homes were intended for elderly people capable of living relatively independently but who required a limited amount of home help or care. Prior to the Second World War many of these facilities were differentiated in terms of faith, social class, gender and profession, and were funded by these particular groups. After the war, with the advent of the welfare state and the introduction, in 1956, of the state pension (Algemene Ouderdomswet), care for the elderly became a spearhead of the new social policy. It was the beginning of a construction explosion in which the combination of accommodation and care developed into a distinct typology. In this period, we see the emergence of complexes for the elderly consisting of studios and one-bedroom apartments, a nursing home, a wing for resident personnel and sometimes also a small hospital.

In these types of homes, the relationship between private space (the president's own accommodation) and communal spaces (such as dining and recreation area) varied, reflecting changing perspectives on social contact, privacy and economic viability.

Co-housing, or co-living, arrangements aim to mix private and shared living spaces in a way that meets the need for both privacy and a sense of community and support. Housing cooperatives in Germany also called "Baugruppen" (groups building homes) forms a model is a prominent international example of active cross-generational housing (Lloyd Alter, 2017).

Research conducted by Australian journalists Chris Riedy et al. found that co-housing is well established internationally as a housing option (2017). Despite huge diversity in the size, density and design of co-housing, there are some common characteristics:

First, the future residents are typically involved in the design process to ensure the final building meets their needs. Second, the design includes some mix of private dwellings and shared spaces and encourages community interaction. Shared spaces can be as minimal as a garden or laundry, or as extensive as a common kitchen, lounge and guest facilities. Third, residents are usually actively involved in the governance of the property.

Riedy identified three different co-housing options that look particularly promising for seniors in Sydney, but could also be attractive housing solutions in other countries.

1. Deliberative development, where the building designer actively enables participation by Future residents in the design of a multi-unit building that they will eventually live in. While not aimed specifically at seniors, this model has great potential to deliver co-housing for seniors.
2. Co-operative tenancy, where residents form a housing co-operative to manage their tenancy of a building. This model is particularly attractive for private tenants, who are especially vulnerable to financial problems and social isolation.
3. Small-scale co-housing, where an existing single dwelling is renovated to accommodate one to three dwellings. This model is appealing as a way of downsizing or assisting children with their own housing challenges.

Jon Stevens writes about the Appeal of Resident Controlled Housing for older people stating that resident-controlled housing for older people can take a variety of forms; it can offer a range of tenures and it can be developed in different ways (2013). In some schemes, this involves the future residents being involved in the design and development of the housing, in others, it is about managing the housing once the residents move in (2013). Whatever forms such housing takes, the residents seem to value similar things, according to research carried out by CDS Co-operatives·

His researched showed that the important factors are:

- *Being in control, retaining independence and feeling secure*
- *Active and self-sufficient communities*
- *Mutual care and support*
- *Responsive and cost-effective management arrangements*
- *Enhanced well-being and reduced dependence*

He further lists the following options for older people interested in moving into a new and supportive housing namely *Housing Co-operatives for Older People*

Housing co-operatives - that is housing developments that are owned and or managed collectively by their residents - have been around in one form or another for almost 200 years. However, co-operative housing remains a minority tenure in the UK; unlike in Europe where it comprises around 10% of all housing.

The vast majority of housing co-operatives in this country can be described as 'tenant- ownership co-operatives' that provide social rented housing for their members. Such co-operatives collectively own the housing and their tenants/members pay a social rent to the co-op to cover costs. The members collectively control the co-op managements and its finances. Nearly all co-operatives of this kind were developed over a period of 20 years from the 1970's to the early 1990's - using the same grant funding arrangements as housing associations - and most of them provide a mix of accommodation for families, couples and single people.

Conclusions

This paper sheds light on the complexities and challenges of older persons and how communities and societies need to adjust their physical and social environments to fit the phenomenon of an aging society. The author introduced insights and theoretical concepts developed by social scientists such as Durkheim and Merton's theory of Anomie, Moreno's theory of Sociometry and Putnam's theory of Social Capital. These theories postulate that if planners, architects and social workers could choose an approach that integrates the aging population into society and design policies of cross-generational integration and cohesion, they can help older people avoid becoming victims of isolation and social anomie.

In order to avoid social anomie, housing policies and strategies for senior citizens must avoid major disturbances to the established equilibrium and collective living rhythms of the ageing population and instead draw on established social theory to facilitate an accommodation and integration of the older people into a more inclusive and participatory social environment. Applying these social policies can help create and maintain a bridge between the older persons past life rhythms and habits and the new and more interactive and integrative life styles in more collective forms of housing.

Social capital and social anomie are related to each other. Social anomie means absence of positive social capital, lack of being part of a social network, shrinking social roles and regressing into isolation. Acquiring and maintaining social capital helps to build trust which in turn helps older people remain active part of a social community. A smooth transition from retirement into a new housing community could also help older people avoid falling into the trap of feeling victimized. Instead, in a supportive and interactive housing environment, older people can gain a sense of empowerment where they feel resourceful and being an important contributing member of society.

A beneficial transition could be a move to a cooperative housing environment which will stimulate older persons' sense of agency. Though it is understandable that older people like to preserve an environment in which they spent many years of their life, they must have the physical and psychological capacity to do so. Older persons should also have the courage to understand that their physical and psychological autonomy will not last for ever and that they will sooner or later become dependent on getting support from others. It should be part of aging to anticipate the challenges of aging described in previous chapters and to explore the benefits of moving into co-shared or cooperative and intergenerational housing units. Such new co-housing units could provide older people a sense of co-determination and acceptance of interdependence which is a natural state of living but can be forgotten if self-reliance is over-emphasized during adulthood. Integrating into new and shared housing environments will further equip older people with the tools to age in dignity.

Population ageing is becoming increasingly relevant today for many countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Societies need to design sustainable plans to help the older population to age with respect and dignity without infringement of their human rights. There is a need for smaller and more accessible housing especially for individuals 65 years and older, who may desire to move from a larger apartment to a smaller and more accessible apartment in proximity to other residents rather than remain isolated in remote rural areas or suburban housing units. Integrated,

inclusive and inter-generational housing policies can be a gateway to an equitable and intergenerational living for the old and young generations. Such a more integrated housing is more sustainable in terms of societal living and should be planed while taking into consideration the varying levels of mobility, autonomy and control of the older population.

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