



# **THE SUBJECTIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MIDDLE AGE AND AGING**

**Gautam Makwana**

Research Scholar Ph.D (Social Work), School of Social Sciences, Department of Social Work, Mizoram University (A Central University) Aizawl 796004, Mizoram, India E mail: gautam\_makwana@hotmail.com

## **ABSTRACT**

Middle Age and Aging is a collection of behavioral scientists' research on aging, focusing on social and psychological adaptations for individuals in their second half of life. It highlights age-status, age-sex roles, psychological changes, social-psychological theories, attitudes towards health, family roles, work, retirement, leisure, and cultural settings. The suggestion suggests studying middle age as a distinct life stage with distinctive characteristics, drawing social science attention to its adaptability and plasticity, focusing on context, culture, biological growth, and individual development. Middle age, a social concept influenced by life expectancy growth, has significantly altered human life, including sexuality, gender roles, and life phases, necessitating the creation of an analytical category.

**Keywords:** biopsychosocial, sociohistorical, life course, anticipation, intrapsychic,

## **INTRODUCTION**

This work explores the process of aging, focusing on the development of personal identity through physical, social, and psychological changes, proposing a theoretical 'middle age' object (Kovadloff, 2008, p. 215). The debate over middle age begins with the expectation of life and longevity. This work uses chronological age between 40 and 59 years as a cut-off criterion, considering social and historical contexts and the impact of social and cultural structures (Muchinick, 2006).

The study suggests that people in middle age can anticipate their own old age, a concept part of the study of old age and aging. It aims to analyze how these anticipations impact the present, enable self-discovery, or project towards their own old age.

## **MIDDLE AGE**

Middle age is a controversial issue influenced by life expectancy and traditional organizational parameters. Traditional definitions of middle age focus on education, work, and retirement, neglecting social and historical contexts. Factors such as work requirements, retirement age, and employment styles impact life course styles. The perspective on middle age in Uruguay is closely linked to the world of work, generating trajectories with a strong matrix content. Global economic cycles have configured and reconfigured social ages, with middle age being a category of analysis due to increasing life expectancy in modern society (Barran, 1992). The concept of 'middle age' refers to a stage beyond education, employment, and marriage, linked to the decline in procreation age and disconnected from species reproduction processes.

Middle age is a period when most people have started families, achieved subsistence, and raised children. In modern societies, men between 30 and 60 years old hold 80% of decision-making positions, supporting the capitalism-patriarchy alliance. The definition of 'middle age' is complex due to sociohistorical context, global economy, demographic changes, and cultural changes. A rigorous conceptualization of this age is needed due to the media's vulgarized use. The media form, based on age as a chronological criterion, allows for the study of the interrelationship of all biopsychosocial processes within it (Salvarezza, 2011, p. 50).

This emphasizes the dynamic nature of aging, recognizing that people age throughout their lives, and that biological and social factors act as receptors for time. It suggests that aging is timeless, despite its physical and social manifestations (Zarebski, 2011, p. 7). The aging process, a natural part of life, involves the decline of organs and is considered the 'life course' It is a dimension, course, and normative that orders human life, promoting continuity and change (Muchinick, 2006). Problematize human life by examining the aging process and incorporating continuity into the vital fabric, acknowledging the permanent changes that shape identity and subjectivity, while also considering the social dimension of human life

Personal history links changes in circumstances to continuity, establishing a dynamic interrelation between past, present, and future, even as new interpretations are forged (Yuni, 2011, p. 56). The stage of aging awareness and changes in vital patterns, such as child growth and parent aging, are two major themes. Individuals experiencing this stage experience increased interiority, altered perception of time, personalization of death, and transcendence, characterized by worry, caregiving, and attention to aging (Neugarten, 1999; Salvarezza, 2011).



Intrapsychic expression of life transitions, events, and changes in adulthood is linked to experiences, attitudes, needs, and values. Middle age reveals unique characteristics determined by change factors. The modern concept of marked life due to advancing age is irrelevant as age does not have an explanatory or descriptive factor. Classifying life by stages is less important than what happens during that time. Aging poses a threat in identifying societal gaze references related to the body and social utility.

The same biography in a career: Psychological conditions built throughout life serve as 'antidotes' to mitigate the challenges faced during aging (Zarebski 2011). The author suggests that aging is a proposal for change from continuity, allowing individuals to face frustrations and self-questioning while living a life of representational wealth and complexity. (Zarebski, 2011). In middle age, individuals face the complexity of the human world, requiring diversification of ideals and support. They must accept incompleteness and creativity to construct their own subjectivity. Identity is constructed through unique biography, incorporating continuity to feel one and strengthen personal identity. Identities are never singular but constructed through discourses, practices, and positions (Hall, 1996, p. 18).

The trajectory concept adjusts expectations and possibilities as knowledge, forming a field of effective possibilities. Habitus reforms future practices by conditioning individual choices and introducing social practices as strategies, forming a system of incorporated schemes (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 478). The generation of past practices, both individual and collective, based on historical principles ensures the active presence of past experiences. Future perception depends on form, objectives, place in production, and material conditions. Body learning is not possessed knowledge but is visible through demeanor, speech, walking, and feeling (Capdevielle, 2011, p. 36).

Identity is a complex concept that reflects, characterizes, recognizes, and distinguishes individuals, as each individual modifies and is modified (Ludi, 2005, p. 121). Identity is shaped by various contexts, involving changes, subversions, agitation, disagreement, and transformations in physical, social, and existential aspects. "Triggers impact assimilation and confrontation between the same and different, affecting how individuals perceive reality and form a known map" (Iacub, 2011, p. 91).

Identity is the construction of perception schemes, with education playing a crucial role in shaping evaluations and preferences. This hierarchy is socially defined by a habitus, which confronts the changing image of oneself from an old body. The aging process creates expectations and anticipations, with the habitus functioning as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions.

## **THE ANTICIPATION OF AGING**

Understanding old age and aging involves understanding the human being as a biological, cultural, psychological, and social unit. Human life develops in history, shaping a situated body over time. Chronological age accounts for years lived, while biological age considers the vital trajectory of life. Both understandings correlate with aging, with biological age potentially transforming years into good years. Humans have a genetic bond that programming aging through a biological clock, leading to negative changes in advanced age, often making people feel they no longer contribute or have fulfilled their roles.

As people age, they often feel rejected and resentful, leading to health issues and negative perceptions of their age due to primary socialization that views growing older as a hindrance and a sign of death. People are not prepared for proper aging, making it difficult to establish an age for old age, which is a social construction influenced by biological and psychological factors (Rodríguez, 2006).

The feeling of old is gradual and based on subtle changes in personal biography. Aging leads to modifications in biological functions, resulting in functional losses and feelings of acceptance or resignation. Old age is influenced by biological, social, and cultural factors, affecting material conditions and quality of life. Understanding the complexity of the environment is crucial for managing these vulnerabilities (Muchnik, 2006, p. 68). Studies show people generally adapt to middle-life challenges, but the 'mid-life crisis' may indicate disturbed aging. The life course perspective helps understand how individuals configure biographies based on individual and contextual events (Elder et al., 2003).

The life course approach challenges traditional analysis of individual-society relationships by integrating theoretical and methodological divisions, highlighting the interdependence of human lives and shared relationships, highlighting sociohistorical influences (Elder, 2002). This proposal challenges the growth-decline dichotomy by acknowledging that human lives involve both losses and profits, as individuals perform socially defined tasks throughout their time (Elder, 1998, p. 22)

The proposal suggests that middle age is a stage in a person's life where decisions are made based on life trajectory events and sociohistorical situations, triggering changes in other areas. The life course concept views aging as a social process involving dynamic change, personal biographies, and representations of time passage (Lalive D'Epina, 2005; Salvarezza, 2011).



## CONCLUSION

The concept of aging, viewing biography as part of a life course, allows individuals to project themselves about aging themselves. This work on middle age focuses on the idea that individuals build their life course through decisions influenced by their environment. It assumes that people are capable of making choices within a structure of opportunities and constraints arising from historical circumstances and social factors. Middle age is a crucial stage where individuals make decisions about their future, including employment, care perspectives, and interpersonal relationships, enabling a projection of life (Elder, 2001).

## CONTRIBUTION OF THE AUTHORS

The Authors had full access to all of the information in this research study, which has been studied and approved the final manuscript. The author is sole responsible for the conceptualization, design of the study, review of related literature and discussion.

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## DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares that there is no competing interests.

## ETHICS APPROVAL

Applicable

## CONSENT TO PARTICIPANTS

Not Required

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