

Aging in Place and Local Government Practices: The Case of Istanbul

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ABSTRACT

Aging in place refers to aging by living in the habitual environment for as long as possible. The urbanization process indirectly makes it difficult for the elderly to age in place. For the continuity of aging in place in urban areas, it is necessary to determine the negative effects of this process for the elderly. In order for aging in place to take place, local governments need to share some of the responsibilities of the family towards the elderly. In this study, it is aimed to reveal what kind of contribution the district local government services make to the aging process in Istanbul. Using the phenomenology qualitative research design, one of the qualitative research designs, 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted with local government actors. The data were analyzed using the descriptive analysis technique. It can be said that the sharing of some responsibilities of the family towards the elderly through local governments' services for the elderly contributes positively to the aging process in place. In this study, it has been concluded that local governments can have a critical role in supporting some of the basic needs of the elderly living alone or staying with their families and relatives. It can be said that the activities of local governments in cities, such as personal care and health services for the elderly, and hot meal delivery to homes, will facilitate aging in place. These services will help the elderly to age without being cut off from their social and physical environments. The provision of services for the elderly by reliable sources can help the elderly to age peacefully and healthily. In this context, the services that local governments with a public dimension will provide to the elderly in cooperation with the elderly and their families will make the elderly feel safer and happier. Depending on the disadvantages caused by the aging process, a significant part of the responsibilities of elderly care undertaken by family members in the traditional sense should be shared by local governments.

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