

Local Governance and Bioethics: The Challenges of Aging in Hidalgo, 1999-2024.

Gobernanza local y bioética: los retos del envejecimiento en Hidalgo, 1999-2024.

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Abstract:

In a time when economic, social, health and demographic circumstances demand renewed attention towards the most vulnerable sectors, the role of government in protecting and promoting the rights of the elderly becomes crucial. The present study is directed precisely towards this guideline. Current federal and state laws are completely examined through a qualitative methodology and a descriptive analysis. Moreover, the lines of action are derived from state-level implemented public policies. From the gerontological perspective of public policies, this analysis highlights the ethical and bioethical aspects involved in the changes in the country's population structure, emphasizing the vulnerability that age brings to the exercise of human rights and the economic conditions of older adults, as well as the significant barriers they face to achieve a dignified life through retirements or pensions. The research highlights the need for an ethical and bioethical stance for effective coordination among different levels of government and specialists in the well-being and care of senior citizens who are pivotal in constructing comprehensive and effective social programs. The findings underscore the importance of these policies in promoting well-being and guaranteeing the rights of older adults in our society.

Keywords:

Older Adults, Public Policies, Bioethics, Gerontology.

Resumen:

En una época en la que las circunstancias económicas, sociales, de salud y demográficas exigen una atención renovada hacia los sectores más vulnerables, el papel del gobierno en la protección y promoción de los derechos del adulto mayor se torna fundamental. Precisamente hacia esta directriz está encaminado el presente estudio. A través de una metodología cualitativa y un análisis descriptivo, se revisan exhaustivamente las leyes vigentes a nivel federal y estatal, así como las líneas de acción derivadas de las políticas públicas implementadas a nivel estatal. Este análisis se realiza desde la perspectiva gerontológica de las políticas públicas, que pone de relieve los aspectos éticos y bioéticos que conllevan los cambios en la estructura poblacional del país, destacando la vulnerabilidad que en razón de la edad impacta en el ejercicio de los derechos humanos y las condiciones económica de los adultos mayores así como en las barreras significativas que enfrentan para lograr una vida digna mediante jubilaciones o pensiones. La investigación pone de relieve la necesidad de una postura ética y bioética para la coordinación eficaz entre los diferentes niveles de gobierno y los especialistas en el bienestar y atención del adulto mayor, quienes son un punto medular para la construcción de programas sociales integrales y efectivos. Los hallazgos subrayan la importancia de estas políticas para promover el bienestar y garantizar los derechos de los adultos mayores en nuestra sociedad.

Palabras Clave:

Adultos mayores, Políticas públicas, Bioética, Gerontología

INTRODUCTION

Aging is the cyclical biological phase that is inevitably encouraging the cause of life expectancy worldwide. The number of senior citizens and its proportion concerning youth

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groups has increased for a long time. The State, with the support of the Government and the implementation of social programs, must establish the essential conditions for the quality of life that this stage deserves.

Aging is a comprehensive and complex concept from a biogerontology point of view. It is "the result of the accumulation of a great variety of molecular and cell damages through time, or that leads to a gradual decline in the physical and mental capacities, the greater the risk of disease is, the greater the death is" World Health Organization [15].

Nevertheless, from a gerontological point of view goes beyond just the biological, so it must be seen and addressed comprehensively at all levels of government and with the inclusion of all social actors, as declared by the United Nations in its General Assembly in December 2020, proclaiming the "Decade of Aging" (2021-2030), as "the main strategy to build a society for all ages" through the "Healthy Aging" Program which is considered as "a continuous process of optimizing opportunities to maintain and improve physical and mental health, independence and quality of life throughout life" WHO [14].

This program has five lines of action to promote healthy aging:

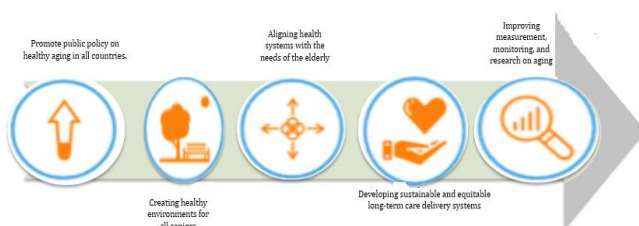


Figure 1. Action Lines to Encourage Healthy Ageing
Source: Pan American Health Organization

In this context, this paper takes lines one, three, and five as axes of analysis to provide an overview of the laws in force at the federal and state levels, as well as the lines of action resulting from the public policies implemented at the state level from gerontology, which is the science that studies old, old age, and aging. Furthermore, political ethics focuses on the study of the behavior of public employees and bioethics in aging, given that old age is the stage of life where the biological is emphasized and requires services and professionals with an empathetic and respectful attitude towards the dignity of the elderly because it is a reality that not all people age and exercise their rights in the same way, even if they share similar characteristics.

In this regard, social programs require adaptation to provide proper care for senior citizens, including the guidelines set by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) to develop

healthy aging, given the magnitude of the population growth of older people.

According to the UN, the elderly are 60 and over, based on the Statistics for the International Day of Older Persons [9] through the National Survey of Occupation and Employment New Edition (ENOENT). In 2022, 17,958,707 seventeen million nine hundred and fifty-eight thousand seven hundred and seven people aged 60 and over were living in Mexico. This number represents 14% of the total population of the country. The press release also points out that 33 out of every 100 people aged 60 and over belong to the economically active population (EAP), a trend showing a reduction in economic contribution as age advances. Of the 12,110,210 twelve million one hundred and ten thousand two hundred and ten older adults who are part of the Non-Economically Active Population (PNEA), 51% are engaged in household chores, 31% have a pension or retirement, and 2% are permanently disabled.

For Mexico, this panorama implies that it is facing not only a demographic transition but also an epidemiological transition involving an increase in chronic degenerative diseases. Consequently, higher health spending, both at the governmental and family level and individually for senior citizens.

Mexico qualifies as one of the Latin American countries with an aging population, which suggests the need for comprehensive long-term care from an ethical and bioethical standpoint since longevity implies a condition of dependence in some cases.

According to Lolas [12], we can identify three factors that have impacted the most critical aging problems and should be dealt with from the standpoint of gerontology's policy with an ethical stance. Since the human rights of senior citizens should always be at the basis of any policy, bioethics should come along with the various health challenges facing the care of older adults.

Firstly, changes in the population age structure have a connection to a longer life expectancy, which is not always associated with a good quality of life.

Secondly, changes in the family structure give way to the simultaneous coexistence of three generations of grandparents, parents, and grandchildren where the age difference between the second and the first one is close, and makes parents caregivers with double burden and in advanced ages of both generations, the dependence that some elderly come to present makes it more difficult and complex for their care when the children are also older.

Thirdly, the increased longevity of the population makes it necessary and imminent to carry out a complete transformation of health services and other institutions and agencies to meet the needs of this rapidly growing population, which requires highly

specialized services and gerontology professionals at the first level of care to lead the aging process demanded by society as a whole and not lead to the collapse of both families, and the state.

Aging in Context

The XXI century can undoubtedly be described as the century of the defining challenges of humanity. The great ravages that global warming represents for the planet have made sustainability one of the great goals to achieve. Regarding health, the pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus, whose disease is known as COVID-19, showed us that we must be prepared in all areas to face the imminent pandemics to come once again the ethical dilemmas will represent one of the principal challenges faced by the senior citizens to fight for their right to life. Additionally, for the population dynamics, today we are facing a change in the age structure of society that makes it inevitable to dimension and act from an ethical and bioethical stance on the actions to be undertaken to meet the needs of the older adult population, which are becoming more and more present.

In this sense and specifically in the State of Hidalgo, according to the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (NISG) [8]. In 2020, the percentage population, aged 60 years and over 12.4%, which correlates to approximately 382,272 older people, requires the State to promote specialized mechanisms to cover their biopsychosocial needs to improve their quality of life.

The aging process varies based on social, health, educational, cultural, and economic conditions; however, some senior citizens have tools such as pensions or retirement to cover their basic needs. On the contrary, there are cases in which they do not have the tools that allow them to live a dignified old age in optimal conditions to ensure their well-being; some of them are even abandoned or mistreated by their families, so that social lag, loneliness, and lack of income are the main problems of this sector of the population, making them a vulnerable group.

Concerning the above, it is necessary to address the concept of vulnerability, related to the fact that the elderly population also constitutes a social minority at a total disadvantage because of their age, even compared to other minorities who are fighting for their rights. In addition, according to the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences -CIOMS- (quoted in (Liedo, [11])), this term encompasses those persons who are relatively or incapable of protecting their interests due to lack of power, intelligence, education, resources, strength or other attributes necessary to defend themselves.

Therefore, as regards public policies, public policies, and vulnerable groups are essential elements, and most have focused on assisting them. As Fabio Macioce [13] says [13], it

is a conceptual basis for the political agency to oppose systems that produce marginalization and oppression. In addition to the fact that within the horizon of power, the social differentiation process creates conditions of otherness by excluding particular individuals or social groups from the spheres of economic, social, cultural, and political power in general.

Consequently, the elderly population of Hidalgo requires ethical and bioethical public policies that are cross-cutting by age, sufficient to harmonize intergenerational coexistence, and adequate social programs with personnel trained in the care of senior citizens for the correct development of this stage of life. This article seeks to demonstrate the existence of delays within the federal government and state governments for the actions implemented for this population sector and the missing elements for these to be sufficient and accurate for the specific needs of this vulnerable group.

For the elderly, sexennial contributions in normativity and public policies have been proposed.

As for the laws and regulations that protect senior citizens, over the years, there has been an increase in attention to this vulnerable group. Starting at the national level, the Chamber of Deputies [3], in the National Development Plan from 2001 to 2006, with President Vicente Fox Quesada, considered senior citizens among the most vulnerable people with indigenous people, children, and people with disabilities.

It included the second axis of the policy of social and human development: Equity in programs and equality in opportunities, although, throughout the development of the plan, there is no specific mention of the strategies to respond to the needs of this sector. The aforementioned period represented 5% of the total population of the country, approximately 4,024,004 older adults. Based on figures from (NISG) [9], considering that older adults were those 65 years of age and older.

During this six-year term, the General Law for Social Development enacted in 2004, a legal regulation aimed at regulating and coordinating Mexico's social policy, which, according to Arturo Valencia Islas [20], introduced the approach that gives power to excluded sectors. Another relevant aspect of this law was the multidimensional measurement of poverty and the constant evaluation of social programs due to the creation of the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Policy, a fundamental tool for evaluating social policy and measuring results. On the other hand, during this administration, the Contigo strategy was proposed to coordinate and operate social programs to promote integral human development and eliminate social backwardness in large population sectors.

Between 2007 and 2012, with President Felipe Calderón Hinojosa in office, the Chamber of Deputies [3], the National

Development Plan in its Axis 3. Equality of Opportunities considers older adults more specifically in its objective to reduce the marginalization and backwardness faced by vulnerable social groups (for these six years, older adults, people with disabilities, children, or adolescents at risk of homelessness) in providing equal opportunities that allow them to develop independently and fully.

The only specific mention in this plan to senior citizens is to take advantage of their experience, generating opportunities to perform productive and relevant activities in their community; from there on, only mention is made of the attention to these groups in general.

During President Calderón's administration, he implemented several relevant social programs for older adults, such as the Opportunities Human Development Program and the Program for Attention to Senior Citizens 70 years and older in rural areas. Both were under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Development. The former provided economic support for food of 345 monthly pesos, and the latter, with more specific attention. According to the Agency for Development, A. C.[7] had the objective of contributing to improving the living conditions of older adults aged 70 and over, increasing their possibility of having adequate food, access to elementary services, and greater social integration, which served 1,863,945 elderly.

In the period from 2013 to 2018, the Chamber of Deputies [3], with President Enrique Peña Nieto, older adults are a group of special attention, which in those years represented 6.2%, approximately 12,085,796 and almost half of this was in poverty (6,042,898 older adults).

During this six-year term, it proposed to expand access to social security, with public policies focused on promoting the portability of rights, offering universal support to older adults, and providing support in the event of significant loss of sources of income. The strategy of articulating policies addresses each stage of the population's life cycle. Additionally, it strengthens the protection of the rights of senior citizens, guaranteeing their quality of life in health, food, employment, housing, emotional well-being, and social security.

This president was the one who changed the "70 and over" program to the Senior Pension, where the number of older adults receiving financial support has increased since the minimum age for support had passed to 65. This program had the specific objective of "Ensuring a minimum income and social protection supports for Adults over 65 years of age who do not receive monthly income exceeding 1,092 pesos for retirement or contributory pension." (Secretariat for Social Development, 2015), and it was for all those elderly Mexican people who did not receive a pension more extensive than 1,092 pesos per month, for the concepts of retirement or contributory pension.

As for the National Development Plan currently in place (2019-2024), the Chamber of Deputies [3], with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, in turn, in its axis through rector, Leave no one behind, leave no one out, mentions that the government objective is to fight for the dignity of older adults, through social policy, under the Programme for the Welfare of Older Persons, which includes universal economic support for men and women over 68, which is justified in the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States in article 4° in paragraph 16 added in 2020, which establishes that persons over 68 sixty-eight years of age have the right to receive from the State a non-contributory pension in the terms attributed by law.

It mentions that most of them are in poverty and without access to a social protection system that allows them a dignified and full old age. For persons living in Indigenous communities and persons who have enrolled in the Register of the Pension Program for Active Older Adults as of December 2018, the minimum age for enrollment is 65. The figures show that 26 percent of senior citizens do not have a contributory pension or social program support. The program consists of financial support of 1,275 monthly pesos, delivered bi-monthly by direct deposit to the bank card of the beneficiary.

Previously, the Pension for Older Adults program provided economic support of 580 monthly pesos. Today, with the Universal Pension for Older Adults, the amount increased by 219.8%, which represents a considerable improvement in the conditions in which this social sector is located in the country, according to the newspaper *El Financiero* [6] 6 out of 10 Mexicans do not have pension protection, and 40% of the population that does have a protection system is not fully insured full pension because decision-makers have not been able to ensure dignified senescence.

Currently, the Ministry of the Interior [20], the operating rules governing support of \$3,000.00 (Three thousand pesos 00/100 M.N.) per month payable bi-monthly, according to the Budget of Expenditures of the Federation authorized for fiscal year 2024, which will update from 2025 for those persons incorporated in the Register of Beneficiaries above is mainly due to the amendment of the Social Security Act 1997, from a pension system run by the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) to the famous Afores (Retirement Fund Managers) which is a system of individual accounts of workers.

In this sense, there were other challenges to face for older people to benefit because, with the change of government and institutions, older adults had to go through new paperwork and face the bureaucracy of being a beneficiary of a social program, which meant not getting the support they needed quickly, added to the fact that many old adults no longer can carry out procedures or move themselves to where it is necessary to do

them, which could imply that some did not complete their procedures because of third parties.

Notwithstanding, the current president of the Republic, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, proposed a reform initiative to guarantee pensions of 100% of his last salary to formal workers who have worked since 1997, according to Sebastián Díaz Mora [5]. The reform consists of creating a Pension Fund for Welfare, with an initial capital of 64,619 million pesos, which will neither eliminate the Afores nor touch the resources of the workers' accounts. This fund will be constituted by the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit and will be financed with contributions from the federal government to complete these workers' pensions.

In Mexico, there are several laws aimed at the care and protection of the rights and needs of older persons. A table provides the contents of each, which can be summarized and seen. Although they involve actions aimed at senior citizens, the only parameter used to identify the needs of this population is biological age and not the aging process from a gerontological point of view, which would imply generating a model of population aging for the various old age living together throughout the country, and that they have different realities.

That is where state policies should consider the specific characteristics of its population and not fail to address within this diversity the older adults who go through a problem of progression or domestic violence. As it is currently happening in Hidalgo, nobody deals with them.

Name of the Law	Date of creation	Latest reform	Description
General Health Law	February 7, 1984	March 24, 2024	This law mentions that for the right to health protection, the elementary services referred to, among others, medical care for elderly persons in geriatric areas. It was reformed on November 29, 2019. In addition to the priority attention to people in vulnerable situations, such as older adults.
National Human Rights Commission Law	June 29, 1992	April 1, 2024	This law, which is of public order and applies throughout the national territory in the human rights field, does not have such a section on the specific rights of the elderly; however, they are present as rights-bearing persons.

Law on Retirement Savings Systems	May 23, 1996	January 24, 2024	This Law is of public order and social interest, and its purpose is to regulate the operation of the savings systems for retirement and participants provided for in this Law and the laws of social security, the Institute of the National Housing Fund for Workers, and the Institute of Security and Social Services for State Workers.
Law on the Rights of Older Adults	June 26, 2002	May 10, 2022	Law of public order, social interest, and general observance of the United Mexican States aims to guarantee the exercise of the rights of senior citizens. Moreover, it establishes the bases and provisions for its fulfillment by regulating the national public policy, the principles, and the objectives of the programs, responsibilities, and instruments in the federal public administration and the municipalities. It must observe the planning and implementation of the national public policy and the regulation of the National Institute of the Elderly.
General Law on Social Development	January 20, 2024	May 11, 2022	It mentions that every person or social group in a situation of vulnerability has the right to receive actions and support that tend to reduce their disadvantage and programs aimed at people in vulnerable conditions are a priority and of public interest.
Social Assistance Law	September 2, 2004	January 6, 2023	This law establishes the provision of legal assistance and social orientation services to senior citizens as an elementary social assistance service and that the National System for the Integral Development of the Family will be the body in charge of preserving such rights.

Figure 2. Own authorship based on the current laws related to the elderly in the United Mexican States, extracted from the Legislative Library of the Chamber of Deputies (2024).

The state level: the importance of the local

In the case of the State of Hidalgo, there is still a long way to go to enjoy their rights and meet their specific needs. It is where political ethics has a lot to do because the laws and public policies must be generated and applied for the integral welfare of this population. Considering that it is a minority that, unlike others, by its age, social class, educational level, and no political organization needs representativeness of the social subjects that have a pact in the state, that is, public servants whose obligation is to generate the legal coverage necessary to meet their needs and apply their rights. Below is a table with the laws developed in the State of Hidalgo.

Name of the Law	Date of creation	Latest reform	Description
Health Act for the State of Hidalgo	August 30, 2004	April 4, 2024	This law provides that elderly people may preferably receive health services at home or at a distance, communications following the provisions of the relevant progress and according to the availability of the budget.
Social Development Law of Hidalgo State.	December 29, 2006	April 4, 2004	It states that older adults are a vulnerable group, and those who are living in poverty will be entitled to receive support to overcome their condition of vulnerability as a priority. It also mentions first-contact medical care, equipped with functional devices, training for self-employment, support for productive projects, and development of sports, recreational, and cultural activities for older adults.
Law of Hidalgo State Family.	April 9, 2007	April 4, 2024	This law directs in its Chapter IV to the elderly where it mentions that the persons and institutions of public assistance of the State of Hidalgo under their care or protection for senior citizens must grant all the means to subtract and protect them. The action taken by the people to denounce the ill-treatment of older

			persons is granted and is anonymous for informal investigation immediately before the Public Prosecutor's Office for investigation.
Law on the Rights of Older Persons in the State of Hidalgo	April 12, 2010	April 4, 2024	It is a law of public order of social interest and general observation in the State of Hidalgo, whose aim is to protect and guarantee the rights of older people. In conditions of equality and non-discrimination, with an intersectional approach, providing them with a better quality of life, contributing to integration and participation in social development, economic, and cultural, and generating the conditions for healthy aging.
Law for the care and punishment of family violence in the State of Hidalgo	May 24, 2010	October 21, 2022	The objective of this law is to establish guidelines for the care and punishment of family violence through models of care and due application of procedures that trigger family violence in the State of Hidalgo. It focuses on groups that may be at risk from violence, such as minors and older adults.
Human Rights Law in the State of Hidalgo	December 5, 2011	January 19, 2024	It provides for priority program development in the human rights areas and combating discrimination against particularly vulnerable groups, including older persons.
Law on Private Shelters for Perpetual Adults in the State of Hidalgo.	September 2, 2013	August 18, 2023	It is a law of public order and social interest that aims to protect and provide legal certainty of services supplied, such as private shelters, for older people in the State of Hidalgo.

Figure 3. Own authorship based on the laws related to senior citizens in the State of Hidalgo, extracted from the Legislative Library of the Congress of Hidalgo [4] (2024).

Approaching from the base of the planning of public policies aimed at this vulnerable group, we have that at first it was taken as one more social group, according to the Official Newspaper

of the State of Hidalgo [17], the 1999 State Development Plan mentions the importance of defending their rights, together with those of men, women, indigenous people, children, the disabled and victims of crime. Even though it does not prioritize them as a sector requiring special attention, it does emphasize that one of the objectives of the government in office was to promote its presence in political, economic, and social life.

In the Social Development axis, the principal social assistance towards this group is the installation of houses for the elderly and, as a line of action "to implement preventive and corrective mechanisms for the protection of the human rights of children, women, the elderly, the disabled and indigenous persons to prevent discrimination, abuse, ill-treatment and acts that violate their dignity" Hidalgo State Official Newspaper [17, p. 49].

In the same axis, older persons are involved in the advancement of sports, which is aimed at all sectors of the population of Hidalgo, to generate a culture of sport as a daily activity. In this part, it is taken as a line of action to promote the development of physical, sports, and recreational activities, mainly for senior citizens and people with disabilities.

In the previous period, where the Institutional Revolutionary Party ruled, headed by Manuel Ángel Núñez Soto, one of its objectives was to guarantee broad and efficient social assistance to the population suffering from poverty, vulnerability, and social exclusion through the articulation of joint, compensatory and preventive actions for better human development and social integration of individuals, groups, families and communities in Hidalgo Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17, p. 115].

Regarding social assistance for older persons, the line of action implemented a program for vulnerable groups and older adults' care. Therefore, the Programme for the Care of Vulnerable and Elderly Groups is established and focused on this social sector. In this sense, our population sector of interest rejects the vulnerable groups. The previous situation demonstrates that in the administration of the state from 1999 to 2005, action for senior citizens is general and not specific since a comprehensive social policy was proposed promoting population programs.

For the subsequent administration, the Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17], the State Development Plan of the State of Hidalgo 2005-2011, already shows progress towards the recognition of this population sector in public actions for its attention. Starting with the fact that it changes from its narrative, in which it goes from calling older people to older adults. Based on the fact that they are already recognized as a vulnerable population, arguing that this is due to a lack of foresight and a culture in which the population does not prepare for old age and anticipates health problems in this sector, such as regular hearing loss, vision, and memory, the presence of cancer and chronic degenerative diseases, for instance, high blood pressure, arthritis, osteoporosis, among others.

In Axis 2, Quality of Life for Social Welfare, the plan refers to the evident need for social development policies to be more attentive and careful to the phenomenon of active population aging and mentions the following: "We reaffirm our commitment to the homes of the elderly. With arduous and constant work on behalf of this population sector, we will expand the coverage and quality of care in geriatrician areas. To conclude, we will promote the Law on the Protection of Older Adults and establish an institute that will meet the needs of this population group Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17, p. 37].

In this sense, the PEDH already includes a section specifically aimed at the elderly. This section is intended, in broad terms, to promote, adapt, and implement public policies for older adults that give them a better quality of life through different lines of action that encompass the full enjoyment of their rights in the economic, political, and social life of the state, providing access to health and urban conditions that allow them to travel without structural limitations.

For the year 2011, the Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17], the State Development Plan of the State of Hidalgo 2011-2016 already includes in its cross-cutting objectives the monitoring and promotion of the development of people living in situations of vulnerability, including senior citizens. Its Axis 1 of Social Development for the Welfare of Our People stresses the needs of older adults for access to conditions that allow them to live a decent life and emphasize the importance of providing them with elementary health care and food, which extend to cover the expectations of autonomy and realization.

The same axis establishes the strategies for the Integral Development of All Hidalguenses living in a situation of vulnerability. In the case of older adults, plans to raise their quality of life through programs that strengthen the generation of infrastructure and promote the training of specialized human resources in geriatrics and gerontology for their care with quality, respect, and social recognition. Moreover, it creates bases to facilitate their incorporation into productive, cultural, and recreational activities.

For its part, the State Development Plan 2016-2022, Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17], in the Government of Omar Fayad Meneses of the Institutional Revolutionary Party, the social security of persons with disabilities and older people is fundamental, since they are seen as vulnerable, which should give access to programs and actions that promote their integral development.

This State Development Plan receives through its axis 3.1 Social Development, Integral and solidarity. Its general

objective is to expand the coverage of comprehensive care for older people with quality and warmth to generate a dignified and active old age with social inclusion through strategies of strengthening the creation and operation of spaces for the gerontological care of the elderly population, expanding the coverage of gerontological care services to reinforce health and social development in old age, and impacting on the social security of older adults to improve their quality of life, taking care of them through various lines of action that contribute in a specific way.

Based on the current government of Julio Ramón Menchaca Salazar, the Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [17], the State Development Plan 2022-2028 is in force, in which the Agreement for the Welfare of the People has the Guarantee of the welfare of senior citizens. It aims to contribute to amending the quality of life of the elderly through specific care schemes such as improving the health and quality of life of older adults. Additionally, it creates development spaces for them and ensures diverse support through federal and state programs.

State development plan	Programs or Public Politics	Action Lines
1999-2005	Program for Vulnerable and Elderly Groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a program for vulnerable groups and the elderly.
2006-2011	State Program for the Elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To give priority attention to adults aged 60 and over living in vulnerable conditions through social security and welfare measures. • Create the Institute of Comprehensive Care for the Elderly. • Design media outreach campaigns and communication about the responsibility, commitment, and respect older adults deserve from citizens. • Promote the full development of older adults through programs and actions of medical assistance, recreation, culture, sport, employment, housing, and assistance. • Advance the full development of older adults through programs and actions of medical assistance, recreation, culture, sport, employment, housing, and assistance. • Strengthen the State's legal and regulatory framework so that the right of older persons to a decent life is explicitly enshrined. • Increase the State Act on Older People. • Creating public services more accessible to senior citizens. • Develop collaborative agreements to implement training programs according to

		<p>their physical and mental abilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish working groups and workshops for older adults that match interests and qualities. • To make private initiatives aware of the importance of incorporating the elderly into productive activity. • Conduct a census of adults aged 60 and over. • Manage in banking institutions the implementation of mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the processing and collection of pensions and retirements of older adults. • Develop a job exchange and promote productive programs and training courses that allow the generation of economic resources for old adults. • Provide assistance, training, and advisory support to civil organizations that serve older adults. • Sign collaboration agreements with the Ministry of Health to expand and improve services in geriatrics and gerontology. • Expand the coverage and improve the quality of health services in geriatrics and gerontology, remarkably, by providing care for people with degenerative diseases. • Encourage the development and expansion of geriatrics in health institutions. • To persuade the formation of volunteer and community social service groups to support older adults in their daily tasks, such as medical visits, cleaning their homes, and reading texts, among others. • Ensure that support programs include recreational, artistic, and cultural activities that contribute to your health and emotional balance. • Provoke the family's participation in the varied activities accomplished for the older adult. • Advertise the consolidation of Day Centers that support families in older adults' care. • Implement a comprehensive support program for older adults.
2011-2016	Program "Spaces in Movement for the Elderly in the 14 regions and three subregions of the state".	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislate to promote the full access of older adults to food, health, education, housing, sports, recreational, and cultural activities. • Institutionalize programs that promote the integration of older adults into productive or working life and receive financial compensation. • Including specialized studies in geriatrics and gerontology into

		<p>the programs of higher education institutions linked to health care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create urban and hospital infrastructure that the aging population requires according to their age and condition. • Promote linkages with private initiatives to generate opportunities for labor and productivity. • Fostering a culture of respect and recognition for older adults • Provide a nutritional pension, geriatrician care services, and elementary medicines with monthly payments to low-income or disabled elderly persons who do not enjoy the benefits of any social security system. • Support civil society groups that carry out leisure activities, health care, and inclusion in productive activities for older adults. • Promote the application of community gerontology to raise the quality of life of older adults. • Launch the Program "Spaces in Movement for the Elderly in the 14 regions and three subregions of the state. 			<p>need, promoting actions that raise their quality of life in compliance with their human rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To generate and maintain recreational, cultural, and sporting spaces that contribute to improving the quality of life of senior citizens, as well as recreational alternatives, care, and general social welfare. • Promote comprehensive support for seniors in need through federal and state programs.
2016-2022	<p>Program for the Elderly</p> <p>Project Quality of Life in Elderly People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open spaces where older people receive comprehensive care to improve their quality of life. • Regulate spaces where seniors receive comprehensive care to improve their quality of life. • Foster primary health care through mobile gerontological units. • Increase the interinstitutional management actions and the support networks available to obtain more support and employment inclusion. • Encourage the participation of older people in forums of artistic, cultural, and historical expression. • Promote interaction between children, young people, and older adults for enriching values and culture. • Planning actions that promote dignity, care, autonomy participation, and integration of older persons into different contexts. • Improve quality health prevention schemes for older adults. • Expand the coverage of economic support for older adults, strengthening their source of income. • Promote pension schemes for older adults. 			
2022-2028	Program for the Elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a comprehensive, specialized, and quality health care service to older people in 			

Figure 4. Own authorship based on the analysis of the State Development Plans of Hidalgo from 1999 to 2028.

It is essential to mention that the State Development Plans of the State of Hidalgo are legally based, according to the information provided in the latest State Development Plan of the State of Hidalgo, published in article 41 of the Official Journal on January 1st, 2023. In articles 1°, 2° section B fraction IX, 85°, 86° and 87° of the Constitution of that state. Furthermore, it is established on articles 26°, 27°, 34°, 35° and 36° of the Planning and Prospective Law of the State of Hidalgo. In addition to the articles 11° to 20° of the Law of Indigenous Rights and Culture for the State of Hidalgo, Official Newspaper of the State of Hidalgo [18].

However, concerning the above table and the drafting of the National Development Plans discussed above, a significant gap was observed in the tools and actions implemented for the care of older persons. Meanwhile, at the national level support, it is more oriented to the economic and health aspects but it still does not cover most of the needs presented by this sector at the state level, focusing more on offering public spaces for the use of older people to promote sport, culture, and their social welfare.

Social policy at the National level has grown by leaps and bounds within the last six years regarding care for older adults. The increase in economic support brought about by the Universal Welfare Pension was quite significant, so old adults receive a safe monthly income with which they can have some peace of mind and a degree of independence to develop in the biopsychosocial environment. What differentiates this program from other programs previously managed is that being universal does not discriminate older adults in the country, allowing all older people access to social protection and that 100% of their potential population represents equally their target population. Therefore, the resulting beneficiary population.

Conclusions

Nonetheless, the economic aspect is an indisputable pillar of the quality of life. It is not the only one that matters when talking about the welfare of the elderly. A crucial term to deal with any subject that is associated with dignified aging is gerontology,

which is defined as "the branch of medicine that studies the aging process of people from a biopsychosocial point of view. This science is a new way of looking at, feeling, researching, and acting on the aging process is universal, community character and its objective is to achieve the integral well-being of the elderly preserving, or improving their quality of life" [Vargas, [21].

According to the National Institute for Older Persons [10], a gerontologist is a professional who is responsible for attending to the biological, psychological, social, and cultural changes that accompany the aging process at the individual and group level, in the family, institutional and community environment, to increase the quality of life of senior citizens; gerontologists require knowledge in both the health and social sciences.

Among the activities carried out by a gerontologist include:

- 1) The promotion of a healthy lifestyle for active aging.
- 2) Prevention of health damage.
- 3) Advancement of accessibility to quality gerontological health services.
- 4) Providing support in the assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and health care of old adults, their families, as well as primary caregivers.

Accordingly, different gerontological theories address the issue of older adults' quality of life. The authors María del Refugio Acuña Gurrola, et al. [1], in their article Perception of difficulties for the participation of elderly Hidalgo in instrumental activities, point to the theory of activity, which proposes that the longer the older adult invests in productive activities, greater will be their sense of well-being and through thorough research, they showed that more than 90% of the Hidalgo population reported no difficulties about handling money; however, they did present complications in the activities of food preparation and household chores, the situation where the male gender was more affected, due to their lack of involvement in activities related to home care.

The association of experts on social programs would be essential if public policies in developing countries such as Mexico were to offer their people the tools to face social challenges, especially those exposed to the most vulnerable groups. In the case of older adults, the author Gloria Ángeles Ávila [2] mentions that gerontology should have the quality of raising awareness and mobilizing government institutions, health services, and leadership at national and international levels for the improvement of the quality of life of the population, given that it is the only professional specialized in old age that works in the first level of care.

Moreover, the authors Ortiz & Rodríguez [16] state that it is necessary to involve governmental institutions and use scientific knowledge to develop quality programs at each stage

of the population's life to be able to know -in a specific way about the topic of interest- the capacities and significant learnings of senior citizens, to empower them in the development of the necessary tools to achieve well-being.

In this sense, we see the importance of returning to the four principles of bioethics such as non-maleficence, beneficence, autonomy, and justice from the field of aging to talk about gerontological bioethics so necessary in the area of health to ensure equitable access to the many services that this population increasingly requires.

Including care services where all health professionals participate responsibly respecting the autonomy and human dignity of senior citizens accompanying them to make the best decisions for their health, accompanied by the non-military nature of not intensively infringing harm, which must be borne in mind when the right to health enshrined in the Constitution is applied, but it does not apply so far has not integrated the professional of gerontology in the first level of care and that they can decidedly through the preventive measurements to have a quality aging turn a nut to the profiles of health-disease that present the elderly.

Preventing this encounter between elders and gerontologists implies going against the principles pursued by bioethics. Therefore, it exemplifies an act of social injustice because the benefits to which this population is entitled are denied.

Therefore, gerontological ethics and bioethics must be present in the generation of age-transversal public policies to integrate the gaze of gerontology in all issues related to the elderly. Its omission is the main reason why the social policy of Hidalgo State aimed at senior citizens lacks this vision regarding attention to the specific needs of this population, thus crystallizing the Decade of healthy aging.

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