

Older Persons versus Witchcraft Vis-A-Viz Dementia under the Spark of Life Philosophy Lens

Anderson Simfukwe*

Executive Director, Spark of Life International Master Practitioner, Zambia

Explanation

With the world's population ageing exponentially, older people world over will be and are victims of witchcraft accusations coupled with the impending Dementias that affect older people as they reach advanced age in life. This is mainly in the African context which oftentimes accuses its older people as witches and wizards.

In the African context there is an intersection of old age and witchcraft that needs urgent clarity and comprehension as the vice continues to affect older people even subjective to uncouth and brutal murdering of innocent older people allegedly accused of practicing witchcraft. The litmus test employed to hypothetically arrive at witches and wizards is ancient and archaic not to be trusted in this age and era.

In Zambia, the number of older people murdered on witchcraft accusations continues to increase exponentially and these deaths are merely treated as statistics even when the country has a witchcraft Act Chapter 90 of the Laws of Zambia that incriminate perpetrators of such offences. The political will to incriminate such offenders is under public scrutiny as the judicial lens fails to set precedence on such cases.

Older people are mainly associated with witchcraft practicing due to the fact that as people age their mental capability is compromised due to various brain health conditions that include Alzheimer's disease and other forms of Dementias. It is at this point that older people are found wanting as a result of communication breakdown with the witch finders. The witch finders target wealthy older men and women who are unable to defend themselves during interrogation and DEMENTIA is at the centre of such witchcraft accusations and the witch finders take advantage of the people living with Alzheimer's disease and other brain disorders to accuse them of practicing witchcraft. The accused are subjected to all forms of abuse including brutal killing in cold blood.

The situation on the ground is worsening each and every day that passes as news break of murdered older people in the communities and perpetrators are nowhere near the justice system to face prosecution as enshrined in the Witchcraft Law of Zambia. The pieces of legislation are enough to incriminate, however, there is no enforcement to that effect. The Law enforcement agencies are always quick to mention that perpetrators will be brought to book, but no such arrests and consequent prosecutions are reported. This scenario has aggravated the vice further to higher levels.

It is in light of the above context that Alzheimer's disease and Related Dementias in Zambia ADDIZ through its support groups dotted around the country continues to sensitize people on the need to demystify Dementia and understand that older age is not associated with witchcraft practicing and there is no empirical evidence to support such allegations. ADDIZ conducts awareness and sensitization walks, Dementia Friends and Spark of Life Sessions to demystify the myth that older people are witches and wizards in the communities. The Spark of Life Philosophy speaks well with older people living DEMENTIA and ignites as well as uplifts the Spark of Life in older people. The Philosophy has proved to be an effective tool in uplifting the lives of people living

with Alzheimer's disease and other brain disorders in the communities.

During this month of August, Zambia joins the rest of world to commemorate Global Spark of Life Month and ADDIZ is equal to the task by conducting various activities that include Awareness and Sensitization Walks to inform, educate and engage people in the care of older people living with DEMENTIA in the communities across the country.

ADDIZ is hugely indebted to Dementia Care International for the support rendered to Mary Mutambo and Anderson Simfukwe during the Spark of Life International Master Practitioner Training in Perth WA and indeed the skill set that we both acquired are paying dividends back home in Zambia and people are gradually acknowledging older people's effort and are caring for them through the Spark of Life Philosophy. The Philosophy acts as a bridge to narrow the gaps and lacunas in older persons caregiving in all set ups including in conventional and home-based as it holistically embrace all forms of care at all levels of care through its personal centre care approach. For the past six years, ADDIZ has been employing the Spark of Life Philosophy which has been replicated in other sectors including health and education sectors. And the Spark of Life Philosophy has sufficiently responded to the needs of older people living with Alzheimer's disease and other brain disorders in the communities.

ADDIZ organized a "Kick out Dementia Football Tournament" as part of Dementia Awareness through sports on 13-14 August 2022 with support from our local business community who came together to raise cash prize to the Winner of the tournament. And Chinji Football Club emerged victorious and walked away with \$150 cash prize. Before the commencement of the ball game spectacular were sensitized about dementia care education.

To grace the occasion was the Area Councillor who in his key note speech touched on the role of the families to take care of their older parents and sounded warning to people taking law into their own hands by abusing and murdering older people on witchcraft accusations that long arm of the law will soon catch up with them. He shared with audience the importance of keeping and caring for their older ones in the communities. He further urged the communities to work hand in hand with ADDIZ and other line government ministries to curb older people abuse.

***Corresponding author:** Anderson Simfukwe, Executive Director, Spark of Life International Master Practitioner, Zambia, E-mail: andersimfu@yahoo.com

Received: 1-May-2023, Manuscript No: dementia-23-94959; **Editor assigned:** 4-May-2023; Pre QC No: dementia-23-94959 (PQ), **Reviewed:** 17-May-2023; QC No: dementia-23-94959; **Revised:** 24-May-2023; Manuscript No: dementia-23-94959 (R), **Published:** 30-May-2023, DOI: 10.4172/dementia.1000153

Citation: Simfukwe A (2023) Older Persons versus Witchcraft Vis-A-Viz Dementia under the Spark of Life Philosophy Lens. J Dement 7: 153.

Copyright: © 2023 Simfukwe A. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.