

Status of memories of aged persons (AP) in Cameroon urban areas, a cross-sectional study

Gustave Mabiama, Edwige Laure Nzie and Veronique Priscille Nguimbamba

The University of Douala, Cameroon

In Africa, in general and in Cameroon in particular, the problem of preservation of memories among the aged persons (AP) remains a worrying phenomenon. The large majority of the older people find it difficult to preserve their memory; leading to the forgetfulness of events, actions, moments or important people of their lives. This situation has consequences on the experience of APs as well as their medical, nutritional and psychosocial care. The aim of this study is to assess the state of memories among AP in urban areas in Cameroon. A questionnaire containing sociodemographic characteristics, recall and description of certain former events was administered to 384 AP (age ≥ 60 years) consenting, residing in urban areas in Cameroon. The allowed error was 5% and a confidence level was 95%. The data collected was

analyzed by the SPSS 20.0 and the statistical analyses show that 63% of APs are women and 52% preferentially use short-term memory. This one seems used more to allow AP to perform common activities of daily life. The family environment (38%) and a healthy lifestyle (29%) seem to be the best "medicines" for the preservation of memories. Alcohol abuse (33%), which causes fatigue, high blood pressure, sleep disorders and concentration problems, significantly disturbs memories in AP. Only 26% of APs are able to remember a life story and describe it faithfully. The memories of the urban elderly in Cameroon seem to be strongly altered in an environment where he/she is considered as a library of the tradition.

mabio2003@yahoo.fr