



**UNIVERSITY
OF GHANA**

CENTRE FOR AGEING STUDIES

**5TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

THEME: FACILITATING FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

ABSTRACT 1

Title: *A scoping review of nutritional status of the aged in Sub-Saharan Africa: The picture appears gloomy*

Authors: *Paul Obeng, Henneh Kwaku Kyereh, Jacob Owusu Sarfo, & Edward Wilson Ansah*

Institution: Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana

Sub-Theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

The aged population across the globe keeps increasing rapidly. At the same time, there is an increase in malnutrition among the aged, especially in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Poor nutrition may increase the mortality rate among the aged. This study assessed the nutritional status among the aged in SSA. PubMed, Google Scholar, and Cochrane Library electronic database were searched for published articles from July 2010 to 2021 using keywords like “nutritional status”, “older adults”, and “Sub-Saharan Africa” and Boolean logic. Also, a free web-based search was used to retrieve other relevant materials which assessed the nutritional status of the elderly. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses flow chart was used to appraise the research articles included in the study. Data was extracted from ten studies. The malnutrition rate was found to be 28.4% in low socio-economic status areas of SSA. Of these studies, undernutrition with prevalence ranging (3.2-30.4%) was reported by 7 studies. Three studies provided data on overweight which showed a wider range prevalence of 8.1-54.1%. Obesity was reported in more than three of the studies with quite a low rate of 2.7-14.6%. Four studies revealed an association between socioeconomic status and malnutrition, whereas five studies found poor dietary intake. Disease conditions related to malnutrition were reported in two studies. The prevalence of malnutrition was found to be relatively high among the aged. This may lead to higher morbidity and subsequent mortality resulting in an economic burden to SSA countries. Based on the findings, recommendations were made.

ABSTRACT 2

Title: *Enhancing caregiving of the elderly: Are social work values crucial?*

Authors: *Mavis Dako-Gyeke¹, Richard Baffo Kodom², & Kwamina Abekah-Carter¹*

Institutions: ¹Department of Social Work, University of Ghana; ²Faculty of Social Work, University of Manitoba

Sub-Theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

Globally, the increasing number of older people is an issue of social, economic and public health concern. While ageing in many societies is regarded as an achievement, it could also be

associated with issues related to dementia, mental health and frailty that may require caregiving. Whereas in many developed countries there are formal social care for older people, this seems to be limited in several African countries including Ghana, where the nuclear and extended families are the key providers of care. Mostly, they do so without training or support and as a result, the quality of care is often poor. This warrants the assistance of human service professionals, among them social workers. The primary mission of the social work profession is to improve human well-being and to help meet the fundamental needs of people, particularly the vulnerable and oppressed, such as the elderly. This mandate is entrenched in the social work core values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity and competence. This paper therefore argues for the need to train caregivers on the core values of social work. Furthermore, it emphasizes potential challenges that are likely to be encountered when incorporating social work values in caregiving roles, as well as possible solutions. Additionally, the paper discusses the implications of social work practice and the care for older people, which is vital as caregivers would be better positioned to provide optimal care for older people if they understand and apply social work values.

ABSTRACT 3

Title: *Falls among community-dwelling elderly in selected communities of the Ho Municipality*

Authors: *Bertha Oppong-Yeboah, Abigail Adu-Gyamfi, & Cecilia Owusu-Brayie*

Institution: Department of Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation, University of Health and Allied Sciences

Sub-Theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

The objectives of this preliminary cross-sectional survey was to describe the occurrence of falls in community-dwelling elderly in the Ho municipality and the predisposing factors for occasional and multiple falls. A composite questionnaire comprising the Older People Health Survey Questionnaire and the Physical Activity Scale for the Elderly was used to collect information on the health and physical activity status of participants and the Timed Up and Go Test was administered to assess their mobility and risk of falls. Forty-six participants were studied, and 39% of them had experienced a fall in the last 12 months. Falls were mostly among the young-old participants. There was a greater proportion of males falling than females. Majority of the fall episodes did not require medical intervention and for occasional fallers occurred when out of home. Hypertension was the commonest systemic condition reported

whiles low back pain was the commonest musculoskeletal condition reported. All multiple fallers had a fear of falling. Regression analysis showed that, a unit increase in physical activity, increased the number of falls by 1.011; a unit increase in the number of medical conditions also increased the number of falls by 0.238. Additionally, the rate of falls was 0.214 greater in people who experience fear of falling. There was insignificant relationship between their mobility and risk of falling and falls. Unsafe environments appear to be the main predisposing factor for occasional falls whiles numerous comorbidities and fear of falling are that for multiple falls.

ABSTRACT 4

Title: *Ageing with a disability: Care arrangements and support needs in contemporary Ghana*

Authors: *Augustina Naami & Abigail Adubea Mills*

Institution: Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon

Sub-theme: *Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society*

About 15 per cent (one billion) of the world's population live with disability and 80 percent of this population live in developing countries. The population of older people is increasing globally, and it is expected that in Africa, the population would increase from 69 million in 2017 to 226 million by 2050. The United Nations estimates that over 46 percent of older persons have disabilities, the majority of whom experience moderate to severe disability. Given the increasing trends of older people and their vulnerability to disability, the population of persons with disabilities could increase. Ghana is yet to develop holistic measures that could adequately address the needs of both persons with disabilities and older people as distinct groups, and uniquely for older persons with disabilities. Although the Persons with Disability Act was passed in 2006, a legislative instrument has not yet been developed to operationalize the Act, nor has the Act been harmonized to align with international laws. Persons with disabilities in Ghana face many barriers to full and equal participation in society, including stigma, discrimination, physical and information. On the part of older persons, although there is the National Ageing Policy (2010), more work is required to enforce its implementation to give older persons a better quality of life. Age-related challenges could worsen the plight of older persons with disabilities. In this paper, we will use the theory of intersectionality to demonstrate the vulnerabilities and needs of older persons with disabilities and provide recommendations to address their unmet needs.

ABSTRACT 5

Title: *Old age: A painful transition for old women accused of witchcraft in Ghana's alleged witches' camps*

Author: *Baba Iddrisu Musah*

Institution: Department of Development Management and Policy Studies, Faculty of Sustainable Development Studies, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana.

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

It is argued that old age is a sign of wisdom, and that the older one becomes, the more knowledge one acquires. This makes older people, and older women in particular a 'learning institution' for the younger generation. No wonder, in some societies, it is a privilege to get older. Ideally, old age is expected to be revered and celebrated. Unfortunately, this is not always the case for many old people, especially older women who are prone to witchcraft accusations. Shun and despise by society, and sometimes people they nurture, witchcraft accusations against old people have resulted in the creation of alleged witches camps in the Northern Region of Ghana. These camps have disproportionate representation of women, and older women in that matter, compared to men. Drawing on the experiences of selected accused persons and relevant key actors via interviews, observations, informal conversations and interactions, this research raises perplexing questions regarding why old age is a regretful transition, especially for old women in relation to witchcraft accusations. It also outlines the role of traditional justice systems in the dynamics of witchcraft accusations against older people.

ABSTRACT 6

Title: *Ageing in a changing world.*

Author: *Regina Adjoa Adjeiwaa Boateng*

Institution: Department of History and Political Studies, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

Old age is seen as part of human growth processes. Relations between the aged and the society have varied from time to time as certain factors contribute to these relations and attitudes. These relations and attitudes towards the aged turn to have effects on their personality and their health

existence. The population of older people is increasing as certain factors are influencing the rise. Also, there is a belief that attitudes towards older people specifically abuse, neglect and abandonment is also possible to rise. As the world is developing, Globalization and Urbanization among other factors play roles in the daily lives of people, and it is seen to have effect on all aspects of life not excluding the social effects and as such the need to investigate issues concerning older people. The work seeks to consider issues arising with respect to the ageing population. The changes in attitudes towards the aged, the factors that have precipitated these changes to occur as well as the effects of the changes in attitudes on the personality of the aged. Using a qualitative approach, the study focuses mainly on the change in attitudes towards older people as the world is experiencing constant development and changes, the push factors for the change, effects of the change on older people and ways through which older people could be made fit into the societies as the world develops in time.

ABSTRACT 7

Title: *The paradox of 'witch camps' in Africa: A critical examination of the relationship between culture and the wellbeing of the elderly*

Author: *Matthew Mabefam*

Institution: The University of Melbourne, Australia

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

This paper is an invitation for a conversation on the paradoxical relationship between culture and wellbeing of older persons, based on an ethnographic study of people accused of witchcraft in Africa. Witchcraft is a common cultural phenomenon in Africa, and various communities and religions prescribe rituals to identify people with witchcraft and exorcise their negative powers, which are believed to cause mishaps to other people. Older people are mostly accused of witchcraft and sometimes excluded from their natal or marital communities or even when physically present in such communities; they are socially avoided. I found these actions towards older people to negatively impact their wellbeing and situate them within an unfriendly environment that impacts the quality of their old age. I problematise and take a critical gaze on aspects of cultural practices and discourses that legitimise the ill-treatment of older persons. Theoretically, this paper contributes to the complexities of development and modernity and the location of older people in society. I conclude by making policy recommendations that could

be adopted by the government and other agencies working with older people to address the wicked problem of witchcraft accusations and social exclusion of older people.

ABSTRACT 8

Title: *Witchcraft in Northern Ghana: The mystery of old age, 'good person' and the witch*

Authors: *Saibu Mutaru & Naa Adjeley Alakija Sekyi*

Institution: Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Cape Coast

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

Among the people of Northern Ghana, as among others elsewhere in Africa, the aged, inescapably, are often the victims of truculent witchcraft accusations and witch hunts. In many instances, they vulnerably succumb to intimidations, threats, and forced confessions. Notwithstanding the historically established connection between witchcraft accusation and old age globally, the phenomenon raises spectacular curiosity and contradiction in the Ghanaian society where the notion of old age evokes positive and benign connotations of 'good person', respect, and wisdom. Studies conducted on witchcraft in Ghana reveal a society that is inundated with such paradoxical occurrences at the intersection of a culturally sanctioned gerontocratic rule. The recent witchcraft accusation and infamous killing of a 90-year old woman at Kafaba in Northern Ghana that attracted attention and made headlines in both local and international news makes a good case for this paper to revisit an old anthropological topic and to interrogate the familiar, but yet irreconcilable mystery surrounding the notions of old age, the 'good person' and the witch.

ABSTRACT 9

Title: *Gender perspectives on male immigrant healthcare assistants in Norwegian elderly care*

Authors: *Vyda Mamley Hervie & Eunice Abbey*

Institution: Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon

Sub-Theme: **Ageing in a global context: A multidisciplinary approach and age-related considerations**

Exploring gender and feminization in healthcare professions within welfare institutions is an important issue. This article explores the experiences of male immigrant healthcare assistants with racialized features in Norwegian elderly care. A key narrative theme was how notions, such as gender and categories of class reinforce structural power relationships, positioning male immigrants in elderly care as 'lacking' and/or vulnerable with respect to self-esteem. In the analysis, participants' experiences were perceived, contested, and negotiated within the themes of (a) Gender Identities: Negotiations among male immigrant healthcare assistants, and (b) The interwoven process of gender and class. Participatory parity (Fraser, 2008) and perspectives of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) were applied to explore how notions of gender and categories of class limit or reinforce power relationships. The analysis sheds light on how such notions and categories reinforce structural power relationships. Furthermore, the article argues that understanding the impact of gender on the Norwegian care sector must address how specific categories of individuals are affected and the attendant labour market challenges.

ABSTRACT 10

Title: *COVID-19 pandemic vaccine uptake, hesitancy and myths: The worldview of older Ghanaian adults*

Author: *Delali A. Dovie*

Institution: Centre for Ageing Studies, University of Ghana, Legon

Sub-Theme: **Ageing in a global context: A multidisciplinary approach and age-related considerations**

The study sought to investigate emergent COVID-19 vaccine acceptance challenge and ways of addressing them. The paper utilises phenomenological method to ascertain COVID-19 vaccine acceptance, uptake and hesitancy including the myth(s) militating against COVID-19 vaccine uptake. The findings show that vaccine uptake acceptance and hesitancy are induced by a myriad of vaccine specific attitudes, fostered by voluntary acceptance and administration protocols. Systemic challenges such as disproportionate distribution of vaccines leading to shortages in certain areas with large numbers of people, inoculators not at designated posts, inadequacy or flaws may be responsible for the inability of those who are prepared to be inoculated in the designated areas, missed inoculation timing, vaccine uptake hesitancy. Two (2) distinct vaccine uptake pathways pertain in the context of this paper. These pathways are structured around adherence and compliance with inoculation regimes in Ghana or non-compliance to the same due to diverse COVID-19 pandemic misinformation and/or myths. Five distinct myths pertaining to the coronavirus vaccine were discovered. They encompass, first preservation of older people's lives for wisdom; second, the vaccine is constituted by protein taken from deceased fetuses; third, the vaccine does not offer 100% immunity from coronavirus infection; fourth, there is the idea that inoculated persons will die in two (2) years of vaccine uptake; fifth, hearing of discouraging stories/information impedes vaccine acceptance and the associated uptake. Collectively, these precipitate among older persons feelings of powerlessness and social disintegration, which in turn promote a fear of vaccine uptake acceptance, which restricts social participation.

ABSTRACT 11

Title: *Older adulthood in Ghana: Emotions, feelings, and psychological well-being*

Author: *Paul Alhassan Issahaku*

Institution: Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada

Sub-theme: Ageing in a global context: A multidisciplinary approach and age-related considerations

This paper presents findings of a study that explored older adults' psychological well-being in Ghana. The study explored how older adults felt about living longer and about their social circumstances in old age. The psychological wellbeing perspective provided a theoretical framework to explore participants' emotions and feelings. A purposive sample of 23 participants provided data for the study. Using theory-guided concepts and intuitive reflections, data were analyzed thematically to arrive at three themes: high positive psychological functioning, low negative psychological functioning, and blended psychological well-being. High positive psychological functioning consisted of feelings of fulfillment, gratitude, and pride, among others. These positive emotions suggested that participants had hedonic well-being and autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Low negative psychological functioning reflected feelings of anxiety, confusion, and fear/fright, among others. These emotions suggested that participants were struggling with autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. With blended psychological well-being, while participants had the absence of hedonic well-being and struggled with autonomy, environmental mastery, and conflicted relations, they showed eudaimonic well-being and purpose in life. A key characteristic of the blended psychological well-being was the presence of problematic social well-being, including constrictions of social acceptance, social coherence, and social integration. These findings suggest that psychological well-being is a complex phenomenon in which positive emotions/feelings and hedonic well-being coexist with negative emotions and eudaimonic and social well-being. The findings provide a basis for policymakers and practitioners to promote older adults' psychological well-being in Ghana.

ABSTRACT 12

Title: *Sex differentials of retirement anxieties of ageing self-employed in Ghana: Implications for retirement counselling*

Authors: *Samuel A. Oteng, Esmeranda Manful, & Kofi Osei Akuoko,*

Institution: Department of Sociology and Social Work, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana.

Sub-Theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

Associated with the process of retirement transition, is anticipatory socialization and retirement adjustment. Yet, the generic focus is often on the formal sector and retiring men; disregarding retiring women in the informal sector. Using the Ghanaian ageing self-employed as a case, the study adopts an exploratory sequential design to examine the correlation between pre-retirement anxieties and gender. Emerging themes from an interview data (n=35) with over 50 years participants were validated with responses of a survey of (n=383) respondents in the Central Business District of Kumasi. Findings are indicative that gender significantly correlates with retirement anxieties of death, social disconnectedness and boredom. In conclusion, counselling intervention sessions custom-tailored for different sex roles and identities of ageing self-employed workers are recommended. This is to eliminate the sense of invisibility and loss of social value that many self-employed workers may experience as they get older.

ABSTRACT 13

Title: *Intergenerational Family Support and the Health and Well-Being of Older Adults in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Systematic Review*

Authors: *Mark A. Aviisah^{1,2}, Hinke Haisma¹ & Tobias Vogt^{1,3,4}*

Institution: ¹Population Research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, The Netherlands

²School of Public Health, University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana

³Prasanna School of Public Health, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, India

⁴Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock, Germany

Sub-theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have experienced an ageing of their population and this is projected to increase in the future. Family support is the main source of support for most older adults in SSA. Yet, compared to other world regions, relatively little is known about

intergenerational family support provided to older adults in SSA and its effects on their health and well-being. This review adds to the scientific discussion synthesizing the health and well-being effects of family support provided to older adults in SSA. A systematic literature review was conducted to identify and analyze studies that focus on the provision of family support to older adults and its effects on their health and well-being. Eight (8) databases and other sources were searched for English Language publications between January 2000 and May 2020. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) recommendations. Narrative synthesis was used to summarize the findings of the studies included. Out of 2426 records screened and 26 full-text publications retrieved and assessed, 8 studies were included in the review. The results suggest that receiving social and financial support from family as well as having frequent contact with family were positively related to better psychological well-being, self-rated health, and quality of life of older adults in SSA. Considering that SSA is rapidly ageing, African governments must promote efforts that motivate families to support older people in order to safeguard their health and well-being.

ABSTRACT 14

Title: *‘Wula Kan Nyen’: ‘How else can I survive’: Reflections on ageing in rural Ghana*

Author: *Akosua Agyemang*

**Institution: Department of Social Work/Centre for Ageing Studies, University of Ghana,
Legon.**

Sub-Theme: *Making older people’s needs and preferences count in contemporary society*

The concept of survival has gained wide acceptance as a valuable means of understanding the factors that influence people’s lives and well-being, particularly those of poor rural communities in the developing world. Elderly people living in low-income rural households in developing economies face greater challenges and difficulties in generating income than those in urban communities. In earlier days, survival of the elderly was ensured by the combined efforts of the extended family, children, churches, charitable organizations, local village communities and, in some cases, the individuals own efforts. However, with time, resources dwindled and people overstretched their capacity for philanthropy. The elderly had to intensify their efforts to sustain themselves. This paper is about how elderly people in rural Ghana negotiate their survival strategies in the face of economic difficulties and changes in the traditional Ghanaian care of the elderly.

ABSTRACT 15

Title: *Assessing perceived social support, food insecurity and nutritional status of the elderly in the Sagnarigu District of the Northern Region, Ghana.*

Authors: *Patrick W. Adam¹, Esi Colecraft¹, Gloria Otoo¹, & Francesca Dwamena²*

Institutions: ¹Department of Nutrition and Food Science. University of Ghana; ²Department of Medicine. Michigan State University. USA.

Sub-theme: **Making older people's needs and preferences count in contemporary society**

Despite a growing elderly population, there seems to be limited information on their living conditions in Ghana. With limited institutional social support services and declining extended family support systems, older Ghanaians may be vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition. We assessed social support, food insecurity and nutritional status among older persons in the Sagnarigu District of Northern Ghana. This was a cross-sectional survey of 120 randomly selected older people from three communities in the District. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data on participant's socio-demographic characteristics, food insecurity situation and perceived social support. Participant's weight and height were measured and BMI or BMA computed and used to categorize participants as underweight (BMI/BMA <18.5kgm⁻²), normal (BMI/BMA 18.5-24.9kgm⁻²), overweight or obese (BMI/BMA ≥25kgm⁻²). Descriptive statistics, bivariate associations and logistic regression for predictors of food insecurity and nutritional status were used to summarize the data. Mean age of participants was 69.5 ± 7.7yrs, 38% were young-old (60-64y), 24.2% medium-old (65-70y) and 37.5% old-old (70y+). A majority of them were females (56.7%), married (55.9%), and perceived themselves to have strong social support (58%). The prevalence of food insecurity was 61.7%, while 18.3% and 24.% of them were underweight and overweight or obese, respectively. Underweight was significantly (P= 0.006) prevalent among the old-olds and income above 250 Ghana cedis was protective against food insecurity (OR= -1.4: P= 0.029). Although the older persons had high perceived social support, they were mostly food insecure and more than one third were either underweight or overweight/obese. Cash transfers may help curb food insecurity among older people in this district.

ABSTRACT 16

Title: *Improving the wellbeing and social connectedness of the elderly in Ghana through storytelling and games*

Author: *Dede Gjamaki Tetteh*

Institution: Department of Dance Studies, University of Ghana, Legon

Sub-Theme: **Social connectedness and ageing friendly communities.**

Ghanaian traditional games such *pelee*, *namuyeleawi*, *storytelling*, and *matumatu* are dying off due to the advancement of technology and the influx of smart phones. Additionally, there is dearth of scholarly research in the use of games and storytelling as a tool for improving the general wellbeing of the elderly in Ghana. Thus, this study focuses on filling this gap by emphasizing the inherent benefits in these games and stories for the elderly. Significantly, games and storytelling are a powerful medium that could be used for improving the cognitive, physical, emotional and general well-being of the elderly because they work on the psyche of the aged. They can also be harnessed for creating the needed friendly environment for the elderly to socially connect in order to reduce their stress levels, loneliness, depression, and anxiety. Social connectedness can be an important social indicator of quality of life of the aged in terms of their wellbeing. This study employed a mixed method approach using twenty (20) elderly men and women aged between 50 years to 70 years and above from across Greater Accra Region in Ghana through 16 weeks of engaging them in some Ghanaian traditional childhood games such as *pelee*, *namuyeleawi*, *storytelling* and *matumatu*. In lieu of the inadequate proper implementation of ageing policies in Ghana, this research seeks to open complementary multi-disciplinary research in gerontology geared towards generating cost – effective tools in preventive healthcare for the elderly.

ABSTRACT 17

Title: *Social connectedness through social media platforms: Concerns of the elderly*

Authors: *Oti-Boadi¹, M, Dei, D.², & Affram, A. A³.*

Institutions: ¹Department of Psychology/Centre for Ageing Studies, University of Ghana; ²Department of Theological Studies, Valley View University, Ghana; ³Department of Health Policy, Planning, and Management, University of Ghana

Sub-Theme: **Social connectedness and ageing friendly communities.**

Social connectedness is regarded as a basic human right and plays a significant role in the well-being of the elderly. Lack of connectedness is related to higher rates of mortality and morbidity. The emergence of COVID-19 and its associated social/physical distancing has brought the importance of social connectedness for human health and well-being, especially for the elderly, into a sharp focus. Globally, the adoption of social media platforms to create connectedness has been increasing across all age-groups including older populations. However, not all older people have the capacity to use these social media platforms to connect with their significant others. Based on an inherent assumption that ageing comes with increased loneliness and isolation, it is feared that the inability to connect socially may cause ill-health among older people. This article highlights the concerns for social connectedness among older people in an era where the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wear away all elements of physical connectedness. Through a theoretical review, the study describes emerging concerns as older people attempt to establish and sustain the much-needed social connectedness through social media platforms. The study suggests functional approaches to dealing with these concerns to improve the well-being of older people.

ABSTRACT 18

Title: *Facilitating ageing-friendly communities: Some urban design considerations*

Author: *Chuks Ugochukwu*

Institution: Planning & Community Development, Dept. of Geography & Planning, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota. USA

Sub-Theme: **Social connectedness and ageing friendly communities**

The world population life expectancy continues to increase due to the vast improvement in standards of living. One of the foremost challenges for communities experiencing increases in the ageing and aged populations is mobility considerations that is inclusive and diverse for

ALL the residents, young and old, use. For the ageing and aged, mobility allows to perform daily activities necessary for living, so, a life and death issue. Thus, of particular emphasis to facilitate ageing-friendly communities in this presentation are the urban design considerations necessary to act as catalyst for building ageing-friendly communities in many developing nations such as in Sub-Sahara region. Communities that are conducive for independent living, considering increased life expectancy, and rapidly declined kingship support system that culturally was the backbone of the aged care system.

ABSTRACT 19

Title: Living arrangements and social support of older adults living in urban slums

Authors: Priscilla YA Attafua^{1, 2}, Irma HJ Everink², Aaron Abuosi³, Christa Lohrmann⁴,
Jos MGA Schols^{2, 5}

Institutions: ¹School of Nursing and Midwifery, University of Ghana, Legon-Ghana
²Department of Health Services Research and Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRI), Maastricht University, Maastricht, the Netherlands, ³Health Services Management Department, University of Ghana Business School, Legon-Ghana; ⁴Institute of Nursing Science, Medical University of Graz; ⁵Department of Family Medicine and Care and Public Health Research Institute (CAPHRI), Maastricht University, Maastricht, the Netherlands

Sub-theme: Social connectedness and ageing friendly communities

Life expectancy is on the rise globally. However, the breakdown of the extended family system currently in Africa is postulated to affect the quality of life of older adults generally. This population are more vulnerable when they find themselves living in slums because of the peculiar characteristics of slums. This community-based cross-sectional study was conducted between April and May 2020 and aimed to assess the living arrangements and social supports older adults in slums receive. A total of 397 participants took part in this study. Those who lived with their children were 17.1% of the total sample population while 2.5% lived with others which include friends and church members. Daughters were the biggest form of social support (28.7%) followed by siblings of older adults (17.4%) and then sons (16.9%). In the mean level analysis, the highest overall mean rating was found for the social relationship domain (mean= 57.77). A good QoL in the social relationships domain is an indication of

satisfaction of both males and females with personal relationships and support received. A reason for this could be that the extended family system is still playing a big role in slum settings, and children offer support to their older family members. This study shows that most older adults were living with their children and had support mainly from their daughters. Ghanaians and Africans, still prefer informal social support for older adults and female children are the ones who usually take up this mantle, the birth of females should be valued.

ABSTRACT 20

Title: *Diminishing cultural values in Ghana: Perspectives of the Akan elderly in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality*

Author: *George Oforu Oti*

Institution: Department of Social Work, University of Ghana, Legon.

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

Culture refers to the accepted way of life of a group of people in a specific society and has been associated with human civilization for many centuries. Older people are known to be custodians of culture, to ensure its transfer to the younger generation. This study explored the experiences of the Akan elderly in the Nsawam-Adoagyiri Municipality on diminishing cultural values in Ghana. Employing qualitative methods, 22 participants were purposively selected, all of whom were aged 60 years or more. Data were collected through in-depth face-to-face interviews and analysed. The findings revealed that diminishing cultural values include respect for elders, the use of community as a tool to raise children, Akan puberty rites, the extended family system, the role of elders as cultural police, and the Akan indigenous way of dressing. Factors contributing to the diminishing cultural values include adoption of western lifestyle, the influence of Christianity, and formal education. The study found that some ways in which the diminishing cultural values could be revived in Ghana are by teaching the younger generation traditional cultural values at home, carrying out education on cultural values, and traditional leaders engaging their subjects on cultural issues. The study recommends that the Ghanaian media should promote indigenous Ghanaian cultural values, stakeholders such as traditional leaders and teachers should inculcate into the younger generation Ghanaian cultural values, indigenous cultural values be included in the curricula of basic and senior high schools, and that social workers should advocate for policies that promote traditional cultural values.

ABSTRACT 21

Title: *A study on social relations quality of life of elderly people with disability in Ghana*

Authors: *Bismark Nantomah¹, Nicholas Danzima Yakubu², Elijah Yendaw³, & Joseph Obeng-Baah⁴*

Institutions: ¹Department of Integrated Social Sciences, Ghana Institute of Journalism;

²Department of Nursing, Tamale Teaching Hospital; ³Department of Governance and Development Management, Faculty of Public Policy and Governance, SD Dombo University

of Business and Integrated Development Studies, Wa, Ghana; ⁴Department of Communication Studies, Ghana Institute of Journalism

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

The social relations Quality of Life (QOL) of elderly people is adversely affected when they are challenged with some form of disability. Since disability is framed as a social construct, older people with disability are subjected to neglect and discrimination. Hence, the study examined the determinants of social relations QOL of older people with disability in selected Districts (Wa Municipality, Nadowli-Kaleo, Jirapa and Wa East Districts) in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study was quantitative and utilized researcher administered questionnaires to collect data from 810 respondents. The Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) software was used to process and analyse data. The findings revealed that males had a higher social relations QOL mean score than females. The results indicated that older people aged 60 – 69 years experienced the highest social relations QOL mean score as compared to those aged 80 years and older. The findings also showed that those who were married had the highest social relations QOL mean score and lowest among those who were separated / divorced. Moreover, those with physical disability compared to those with visual disability experienced higher social relations QOL. The study recommends that older people with disability who are females, aged 80 years and above, separated or divorced including those with visual disability should be given adequate social support by their families and should receive state support from the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, and benevolent organizations in Ghana to improve their social relations QOL.

ABSTRACT 22

Title: *Stroke characteristics of elderly persons admitted to the Stroke Unit, Korle Bu Teaching hospital*

Authors: A Akpalu^{1,2}, R Laryea, P Adjei^{1,2}, & K Nkromah¹

Institutions: ¹Stroke Unit Korle Bu Teaching Hospital ²Department of Medicine, UGMS, CHS

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

Stroke remains the second leading cause of death in the world. The main driver for increased stroke prevalence is population aging. However, best evidenced-based strategies for stroke treatment and prevention are not always followed for older patients. Furthermore, considerable gaps in knowledge exist for stroke prevention and treatment in elderly and very elderly patients. Data from the Stroke register was called for the period January 2014 to July 2021. The multidisciplinary stroke unit was set up following a Ghana Wessex partnership sponsored by THET www.wgstroke.org. Data on age sex, length of stay and mortality were collected and entered into Excel, SPSS version 20, Chi squared statistical analysis was conducted. It was found that 1089 elderly persons aged 60-104 years were admitted over the period. This accounted for 45.6% of admissions to the stroke unit. Male to female ratio of 1.2. Average length of stay 7-14 days. Stroke type of Infarctive stroke 69.5% versus Haemorrhagic 23.2% and Others 7.3% (Subarachnoid and subdural bleeds). 196 deaths occurred with a mortality rate of 17.9% with more males than females dying of stroke. The most common risk factor was hypertension. Stroke in the elderly should be given more attention as forms 45% of our admissions. Further study of the peculiarities and challenges managing stroke in the elderly deserves further evaluation.

ABSTRACT 23

Title: *Emerging issues: Older women in leadership*

Author: Carine Amo-Nyampong

Institution: M.Div., Trinity Theological Seminary, Legon

Sub-Theme: **Imagining ageing and emerging issues in a changing world**

The number of women in leadership is on the ascendancy because of the blood and sweat of pioneers. In more than a hundred years of existence, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana started ordaining women in 1977. However, women have consistently proved themselves equally great

leaders in all fields. In Ghana, the ageing community has been monitored to be sturdily growing. According to the 2010 census, the population of older people has increased by more than seven-fold since the 1960 census, rising from 213,477 in 1960 to 1,643,381 in 2010. More importantly, the proportion of female elderly population is 56 percent as compared with 44 percent of the male elderly population, an indication of higher life expectancy of the female population by 12 percent. It becomes apparent that the leadership influence of older women must be redefined. Yet, when women occupy certain key positions, it becomes news. While society is changing to accommodate better gender balance and opportunities for all, consideration must be made for women who are a larger proportion of the ageing population. Women as leaders are not necessarily supposed to be in the limelight to be recognized as leaders. On the contrary, their influence in various positions as mothers, sisters, administrators etc. is a form of leadership. Therefore, improving the general conditions of older people with particular attention on women would be profitable for the general growth of society and would drastically reduce the inhuman treatment of older people in Ghana with women being the most victimized.