



JULY 2018 . VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

CFAS *News*

CENTRE FOR AGEING STUDIES (CFAS), UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

A portrait of Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann, a woman with dark hair pulled back, smiling warmly. She is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored patterned dress with a large circular motif on the front, a white blazer, and a multi-strand necklace. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

Congrats

Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann

IN THIS ISSUE

- ❖ Congratulatory message (Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann)
- ❖ Retirement Planning: a mechanism for combating age reduction
- ❖ Events
- ❖ Ageing in Ghana:
- ❖ Robbing Peter to pay Paul
- ❖ Nutritional tits bits
- ❖ CFAS fun corner
- ❖ Event gallery
- ❖ Opening of the Centre's new office space

Hello!

Greetings and a warm welcome to the second issue of the CFAS newsletter; a quarterly publication that includes information highlighting issues on ageing. The CFAS newsletter is a medium for the ageing community and the general public to share information. We hope that you enjoy reading each issue of our newsletter. This publication is for you! If you have any letters, articles, opinions and news items, you may send them personally to the: Editor, cfas@ug.edu.gh

CFAS @ 2

Over the next few decades, the Centre for Ageing Studies will train individuals to better understand and appreciate the ageing process. The Centre's community outreach training programmes will also train as many caregivers as willing to handle their clients professionally devoid of depression for both parties. As the Centre marks its second year of existence, we are proud to share some of our achievements:

The Centre is running its 3rd dance and fitness programme for the elderly with about 120 participants; The Centre has acquired an office building from where affairs would be run;

The Centre's academic programmes have been fully drafted;

The Centre's second international conference will be held in October, 2018.

❖ "...Winner, 2018
Golden Torch Award for
International Academic
Leadership."

Congratulatory message

- Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann



Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann, chairperson for the Centre's conference committee and a senior lecturer at the department of biomedical engineering, was awarded the 2018 Golden Torch Award for International Academic Leadership. She is the first female to receive this award since its inception in 1975. She continues to contribute immensely to the Centre's activities.

Congratulations Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann. We are proud to have you as a part of the Centre for Ageing Studies.

❖ *“the impression is that, formal sector workers save more than informal sector workers...”*

Retirement Planning: A mechanism for combating age reduction

- Delali A. Dovie

Age reduction denotes the act of cutting down the chronological age. It is expressed in two dimensions namely age reduction on paper and in bodily forms. Essentially, age reduction on paper especially in the formal labour market is undertaken to elongate the length of employment in given workplaces. The causes of age reduction may entail prestige attached to given positions in work organisations in society, poor time and poor resource management. This situation has implications for the lack of preparedness of the indulgers for retirement. Hence, the tendency to seek a delay in embarking on the retirement transition. The effects of age reduction encompass opportunities to make more money; low government spending on retirement packages; more income earned by individuals and a host of others. Age reduction also yields “social and economic acceptance”.

I argue that age reduction can be avoided and therefore combated through diverse means including planning adequately for retirement. Planning for retirement on the part of the individual is imperative for a variety of reasons including the weakening of the extended family system, increased life expectancy, lack of formal social support infrastructure, adjusting comfortably to post-retirement life and ageing-well.

It is worth noting that planning may be segregated into three distinct categories-short, medium and long terms. The short-term plans include cash-in-hand, susu, savings as well as emergency savings. These short-term measures are those plans that can easily and urgently be used in addressing interim challenges, which may either be replaced or not. From the point of view of formal and informal sector workers, these plans may create the impression that formal sector workers save more than informal sector ones, yet this may not be a given.

The medium-term plans comprise T-bills, credit union membership, bonds, sika plan, susu, cooperative membership among several others. These have the propensity to extensively be both preserved and conserved for financial security in retirement life. Susu in this context is patronised by workers

The causes of age reduction may entail prestige attached to given positions in work organisations in society, poor time and poor resource management.

❖ *“Age reduction is not an immunity to the process of ageing but the portrayal of old age as a shameful loss of youthfulness”*

from both sides of the economic scale, albeit formal or informal, although it is more tilted towards the latter than the former based on work-based systems.

The long-term plans may encompass direct financial products/assets such as pension contribution, Epack, life insurance, funeral policy; commodities such as gold, physical assets namely houses including health products and healthcare plans, and education. With regard to physical assets some workers acquire plots of land in readiness for the construction of houses whereas others acquire houses. These set of plans may denote the extent of preparedness and attention retirement planning receives from workers, yet these plans may not be adequate per the kind of retirement lifestyle anticipated individually as well as the length of time to be spent in retirement with longevity in sight.

These plans notwithstanding, the nature of these measures makes it practically impossible to delineate them from ordinary daily living measures. Clearly, the institution of these plans may be executed somewhat differently by both formal and informal sector workers for retirement including the diversification of the same. This may imply two things, either the latter lack the requisite knowledge of the existence of and access to financial and related products or that they lack adequate financial resources towards undertaking them including financial resources in aid of retirement preparation or business, the provision of basic needs and the dilemma thereof. Collectively, these plan yield income, health, housing, social network and leisure/paid work beyond pensions. Essentially, adequate income during retirement is an important factor that influences many individuals when choosing an age to retire. Further, research has shown that finances are the strongest single predictor of the decision to retire and that people are more likely to leave the workforce if they can financially afford to retire than if they cannot.

Age reduction is not an immunity to the process of ageing but the portrayal of old age as a shameful loss of youthfulness. This article argues that planning for retirement may be the best alternative strategy from an economic outcome dimension in combating age reduction. Age reduction could also be remedied through the phenomenon of awareness creation and/or re-socialisation, adherence to core values such as truthfulness to the self and the nation applies.

Events

❖ *“the fitness programme assesses the coordination, concentration and flexibility of participants”*

Dance & Fitness Programme

The Centre organised its second dance and fitness programme from February 15, 2018 to March 23, 2018 at the School of Performing Arts. The programme was aimed at promoting healthy ageing through dance and games for people 50 years and above. The sessions constituted exercises to stretch out their muscles and dance elements which assessed the coordination, concentration and flexibility of participants.

The next fitness programme is scheduled to start in June.



Participants at the end of the Dance and fitness programme



A section of participants engaged in a European dance at the third dance and fitness programme

Events

- ❖ *“ageing is an inevitable process in the human life which should not be viewed as poverty or a disease”*

Spirituality And Ageing

On April 18, 2018, the Centre organised its third colloquium at the Faculty of Law, University of Ghana on the theme: “Spirituality and Ageing”. The presentation by Prof. Elizabeth Amoah was focused on acceptance of old age and preparation towards it. She explained that ageing is an inevitable process in the human life which should not be viewed as poverty or a disease. She concluded that preparation towards old life is ideal and should involve all aspects of physical, spiritual and mental well-being.

The Centre’s colloquium series is announced on the Centre’s website.



Professor Elizabeth Amoah presenting on Spirituality and Ageing. Dr. Akosua Agyemang, Professor Abena Oduro, Professor Samuel Agyei-Mensah, Provost, College of Humanities



A section of participants at the Colloquium

Events

❖ “ I an 50years old and my twin is 62: Age reduction among public sector workers; Benefits and Challenges”

Panel Discussion



Panellists from left: Dr. Akosua Agyemang, Dr. Collins Agyemang-Badu, Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete- Nyampong, Dr. Akye Essuman, Dr. Priscilla Twumasi Baffour

The Centre’s Panel discussion organised on May 30, 2018, was on the theme; “I am 50 years old but my twin is 62”: Age reduction among public sector workers: Benefits and challenges. The Chairperson, Rev. Dr. Ayete-Nyampong, together with the speakers (Dr. Priscilla Tumasi Baffour, Mr. Collins Agyemang, Dr. Akousa Agyemang, and Dr. Akye Essuman) addressed the Religious, Medical, Economic, Psychological and Social aspects of age reduction and its benefits and challenges on the Ghanaian elderly. They explained that people reduce their ages in order to serve for a longer time before pension, however, their work outputs decline at a point and find it difficult to contend with technological advancements which affects productivity. Normal physical and mental changes that occur as one ages were discussed. It was concluded that the human functional, biological and physical age suffers when we reduce our chronological age and stay in active service.



Participants at the Panel Discussion organised at the Law Faculty Auditorium, UG

Ageing In Ghana: 'ROBBING PETER TO PAY PAUL'?

- Evans A. Adu-Gyamfi

It was in the early morning of Tuesday, February 16 2016, that I found myself in the presence of that noble Presbyterian minister, Rev. Dr. Samuel Ayete-Nyampong in his office at the Church House, Kuku Hill, Osu. What was my mission? Quite a simple one it was. Rev. Dr. Ayete-Nyampong, Clerk of General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Ghana, is one renowned scholar in the area of pastoral gerontology. My visit was, therefore, to seek his expert advice on my intentions then to express a viewpoint; one which turned out as "Pastoral Care for the Aged in Charismatic Churches in Ghana".

Anytime I look back on that albeit brief discussion, I tend to have one or another reason to remain grateful to Papa, as he is sometimes referred to.

Of the lots, paramount is a copy of one of his books he gave to me as a gift entitled Ageing in Contemporary Ghana. In his introduction, in the book, Dr. Ayete-Nyampong clearly states a fact that, perhaps, best describes what I have in mind at this moment:

"In present day Ghana, much emphasis on government policy is being placed on children, youth and education. This is a laudable step to develop and prepare leaders of the next generation. But if these policies side line leaders of the past generations who sacrificed their lives, time and resources to make our present nation a better and peaceful place to live, then we are indeed adopting the 'robbing Peter to pay Paul' approach which is unacceptable".

On that premise, I further ask: Isn't it clear that the 'Old Peters' are being robbed to pay the 'younger Pauls'? Do you want evidence? Just consider the happenings in our soon-gone-by-history which involved some top management members of Ghana's Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT). Just think about it!

In the midst of it all, I am of the view, however, that we must work to keep hope alive. Not for the sake of the old folks. Truly speaking, it's not about THEM. Rather, it's about US. Yes. You and I. Those of us who think we are young and strong today. Remember, that if the Lord wills, by tomorrow we shall become old too. And therefore, it is that nature dictates; hence no one escapes. You cannot, neither do I dare.

So, how can the situation be salvaged? Must or can all be done by government... through 'just' policies and enactment of laws and more laws? Well...maybe yes. But also, a big NO! Do you need me to explain myself here? In any case, what or who is "the government"? This takes me to my question, actually what I consider the thrust of my reflection today. It begs to ask: That what can you and I do in our own "small" ways in order to collectively create a safer system that enables the average Ghanaian to have that assurance of living and ageing here at home in an appreciable degree of comfort and dignity?

Is it not said, that little drops of water do make a mighty ocean? It takes your drop of good thought about the elderly combined with mine of reaching out to them in love to bring the change we all need or needed as soon as yesterday.

Our elders matter. Yes they do! It is for this reason, no mean an organisation than the United Nations earmarked October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons. Today, in Accra, I'm celebrating two older persons I know by offering to drive them from their home to church. Can it be as easy as that? Yes. Draw inspiration from me. What are you to do, to celebrate with the world the senior citizens in your family, church or community? Please act; no matter how little it may seem to you. Remember the robbers of ageing in Ghana I mentioned earlier? I hope and pray you do not decide to become one of them by your actions or inactions on the subject of ageing.

The Writer

Evans A. Adu-Gyamfi is the Founder of Great-Age Global, an organisation that seeks to promote the welfare of elder members of society by harnessing the potential of youth power. He is a member of the Ghana Writers Association and the author of the book *A Toast to Fatherhood: Sons and Daughters Appreciating the Fatherly Role*.

Contact:

+233 (0) 246 48 0040
adugyamfi.evans1@gmail.com

Good Nutrition *for the* *elderly*

Good nutrition combined with regular physical activity ensures healthy ageing and improves functional independence in older people. Below are some simple guidelines to ensure wellness in old age.

- Food intake should be balanced with physical activity. A more active lifestyle demands more food. Examining your meal portion size is very important, if you are someone who is less active then it would be important to consume smaller portions of meals.
- Ensure that each meal you take has carbohydrate: bread, rice, pasta, potato, or cereal. It is important to choose high fibre options whenever possible.
- Aim for five servings of fruits & vegetables each day. These are rich in important nutrients for a healthy life. These can be fresh, frozen, tinned, or dried. It is also very important to have a mixture of different coloured fruits and vegetables each day such as apples, oranges, bananas, spinach, cabbage, carrots, sweet potato, broccoli, cauliflower, peppers, sweet corn etc.
- Protein is an important nutrient that helps to build new cells and also gives healthy muscles. Good sources of protein include lean meat, poultry and fish. Salmon, sardines, trout, fresh tuna and

kippers are filled with omega 3 fats which are good for the heart. Consuming beans, eggs and nuts is a simple way of boosting the protein in your diet

- Bones can be kept healthy by having three portions of low-fat dairy foods (e.g. milk, yoghurt, or cheese) each day. Dairy foods with added calcium and vitamin D are even better options in terms of a healthy bone.
- Choose heart-healthy fats: fat is essential in our food however, a non-healthy fat choice consequently deteriorates health status not only for the elderly.
- Stay hydrated. More fluids should be consumed (e.g. water, juice, milk); at least 8 glasses a day should be taken.

Nutritional needs do not significantly change as an individual ages, but you should reduce your sodium, saturated fat and caloric intake slightly while ensuring that you get adequate calcium, vitamin B-12, vitamin D and fiber.

The best way to ensure active and healthy ageing is combining an active lifestyle with a healthy diet!

CFAS Fun Corner

PUZZLE

D E M E N T I A A N N E S A E M A
F A M I L Y H E A D E E C D I O N
L O N E L I N E S S G H T F U L D
E I O E S P K O F C L T G O I Q R
G L R L T E C V T O E C G P R I O
A G E I S M S E S E C N K A B C P
T R E N R X O T B F T G S U K O A
H E S E I H V E N E R A B L E N U
E G M S C E P R O B I T Y E C S S
R A T S A A N A Y B G T S H F E E
I R D D L G O N P B O F I T Q R R
N I Z E I E P R S E N S I T I V E
G O I S N I P E N S I O N L W A N
S U R E C N E R E V E R F R A T L
W S C I S G S R S N X E R H A I U
G R A N D C H I L D R E N G B V Q
M E N O P A U S E O L D I Q K E A

VETERAN
GRAND CHILDREN
ANDROPAUSE
CONSERVATIVE
PROBITY
MAGNIFICENT

VENERABLE
AGEISM
MENOPAUSE
FAMILY HEAD
LONELINESS
RESPONSIBLE

GREGARIOUS
DEMENTIA
AGEING
GATHERING
NEGLECT

SENSITIVE
PENSION
INSIGHTFUL
REVERENCE
OLD

From the Editorial Team

Dear Readers!

We are pleased to keep you informed on the activities of the Centre for Ageing Studies. Our quarterly newsletters aim to address concerns of the rapidly growing ageing population, including health, retirement issues and stereotypes, and to stimulate collaborative programmes and research in this area.

Do subscribe to the CFAS newsletter to receive updates on our activities, articles and projects. You may also log on to the Centre's website, cfas@ug.edu.gh for the newsletter.

The October issue will introduce the projects and various outreach the Centre is involved with, as well as the committees and stakeholders behind them.

We welcome articles (ageing studies related), questions and suggestions for our next issue!



@cfas_ug



Centre for Ageing Studies



cfas.ug.edu.gh

Gallery



For membership, collaboration or to sponsor
any of our activities, you may contact the
Director at cfas@ug.edu.gh

EDITORIAL TEAM

Dr. Elsie Effah Kaufmann (Biomedical Engineering)

Delali A. Dovie (Sociology)

Ganette Apeadu-Baah (Centre for Ageing Studies)

For submissions, questions, comments or queries, send email via

[**cfas@ug.edu.gh**](mailto:cfas@ug.edu.gh)


or Contact;


+233 242 633 358

+233 279 861 319

Follow us on;

 [@cfas_ug](https://twitter.com/cfas_ug)

 [Centre for Ageing Studies](https://www.facebook.com/CentreforAgeingStudies)

 cfas.ug.edu.gh