DEMENTIA AWARENESS AMONG HEALTH PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS IN GHANA

RESULTS FROM A CROSS-SECTIONAL SURVEY

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Alzheimer’s Ghana
Age-specific prevalence of Alzheimer’s in Africa

Fig. 2: Age-specific prevalence of Alzheimer’s in Africa [data set: George-Carey et al. 2012]
Dementia awareness among urban community members.

20.2% have heard about dementia.

[Data set: standardized survey conducted by Spittel et al. 2014-2015 in Ghana and 2014 in Namibia; n=1,647]
Circular flow of missing awareness.

- LACKING AWARENESS
- EXCLUSION
- STIGMA
What do we know about the awareness and knowledge of dementia among health professional students in Ghana?
The study consisted of a **descriptive and explorative** design in a **cross-sectional survey**.

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**Tab. 1: Characteristics of respondents**  
(n=554)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex (n=552)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>75,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>24,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=531)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.8 (± 3.02)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class (n=554)</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>30,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nurse assistance</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>29,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Physician assistance</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>24,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study year</td>
<td>Beginners (1. half of study time)</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>51,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=554)</td>
<td>Advancers (2. half of study time)</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>48,4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Awareness of dementia (AoD) among health professional students.

- **Beginners**: 73% (n=205) for Ø AoD, 27% (n=76) for AoD
- **Advancers**: 6% (n=17) for Ø AoD, 94% (n=247) for AoD

FET: p<.001
Awareness of dementia (AoD) among students from one nursing college …

a. Nurse assistance students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ø AoD</th>
<th>AoD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginners</td>
<td>71 %</td>
<td>29 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancers</td>
<td>6 %</td>
<td>94 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ²: p<.001

b. Nursing students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ø AoD</th>
<th>AoD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beginners</td>
<td>75 %</td>
<td>25 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancers</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ²: p<.001
Awareness of dementia among advanced nursing students from …

a. University  
(n=51)  
86 % (n=44)

b. Nursing college  
(n=47)  
100 % (n=47)
Knowledge of dementia (KoD) among health professional students.
Knowledge of dementia among health professional students.

- Disease of older age
- Can also effect younger
- Normal process of ageing
- Others
Knowledge of dementia (KoD) within affected families.

Families without dementia history

- 49% (n=192)

Families with dementia history

- 27% (n=34)

χ^2: p<.001

[0]
Dementia *known as a disease of older age within families with dementia history.*

Families without dementia history

Families with dementia history

Yes

No

[PROZENTSATZ](n=[WERT])

[PROZENTSATZ](n=[WERT])

[PROZENTSATZ](n=[WERT])

[PROZENTSATZ](n=[WERT])
Peoples' behaviours linked to witchcraft.

- Seeing dead family members: 48%
- Being aggressive: 30%
- Memory problems: 19%
- Disorientation: 16%
- Forgetting things: 15%
- Problems with language: 14%
Peoples behaviours linked to witchcraft.
Witchcraft belief is a curse on Africa
Jean La Fontaine

Kristy Bamu was killed because his sister thought him a witch. In Africa, Christianity has only added to the toxicity of such beliefs.

The case of Eric Bikubi and Magalle Bamu that has just ended at the Old Bailey has drawn public attention to one form of diversity that is not celebrated in London. The spotlight has settled on ideas of witchcraft that seem to have been the motivating force behind the savage attacks on young Kristy Bamu that finally deposited him, semi-conscious in a bath of water where he drowned.

Kindoki, the Lingala word for witchcraft, is one of hundreds of words denoting spiritual evil in the hundreds of African languages spoken wherever Africans live. It has no special primacy over other such terms and may not even be understood outside a handful of states in west central Africa. However, beliefs in witchcraft are widespread - in town or countryside, and are also in present in Europe.
 ✓ **Advanced students** – **future health professionals** – *get aware of dementia, but detailed knowledge lacks.*

‼ Raising detailed knowledge of all forms of dementia‼
Beginner students – the younger generation – are hardly aware and knowledgeable of dementia.

!! Involving the younger generation !!
Acknowledgement.

Alzheimer’s and Related Disorders Association of Ghana


Alzheimer’s and Dementia Namibia

Interviewing people in Namibia who had experience with witchcraft.