62 - PERCEPTION OF THE ELDERLY ABOUT HUMAN AGING AND SELF-CARE

MARIA DO SOCORRO DE SOUSA ESTRELA GUEDES1
THAÍS HENRIQUES MACHADO2
EDIENNE ROSÂNGELA SARMENTO DINIZ3
MARIA DO LIVRAMENTO NEVES SILVA4
TÂNIA MARIA ESTRELA GADELHA MAIA5
1. Specialist, Manuel Gonçalves de Abrantes District Hospital – Sousa (PB), Brazil.
2. Enfermeira, Integrated Colleges of Patos - FIP - Patos (PB), Brazil.
3. Master's Degree Student, Federal University of Paraíba – UFPB – João Pessoa (PB), Brazil.
4. Master's Degree Student, Federal University of Paraíba – UFPB – João Pessoa (PB), Brazil.
5. Specialist, Federal University of Campina Grande – UFCG – Cajazeiras (PB), Brazil.
lmsgenf@hotmail.com,

1 INTRODUCTION

Population aging is a process that is in expansion in last decades, causing significant changes in the demographic profile of the country, with social, cultural and epidemiologic effects. According to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO, 1992), “human aging is recognized as one of the most important changes in the structure of world population”. This modification of the age profile has grown significantly in Paraíba, in Brazil, and in the world, a fact which needs to be evaluated not only by the governmental spheres, but also by the society as a whole. The prevision of demographers is that in 2025, Brazil will have the sixth position in number of elderly people in the world (PAHO, 2005). Questions about this theme are complex and require very diverse knowledge, especially by the professionals who work directly with elderly people.

These challenges originated by the aging of Brazilian population have been reflected in the economic, cultural and social context, influencing the epidemiologic profile of chronic diseases, which may cause disabilities and dependencies. From this context, the following question emerges: “What is the perception of elderly people about the aging process and the promotion of self-care?”

The relevance of this research is justified because the investigation field is built through an area of social life of the elderly, in a way that it is a tool capable of contributing with health professionals, families and seniors, in order to help in decision making in relation to the planning of care. Furthermore, its results can be subsides to the proposition of possible actions which aim to improve the quality of life of the elderly, involving professors and students of the investigation field.

Before the discourse, the present study aims to know the perception of the elderly about the process of human aging and self-care.

METHODS

It is an exploratory-descriptive study, with quantitative approach. It was developed at Odilon Lopes Living Center, which is situated in the municipality of Pombal-PB. The research subjects were 13 elderly people, men and women that live there and are according to the following inclusion criteria: age equal or over to 60 years; being properly registered at Odilon Lopes Living Center; to have cognitive ability to answer the questionnaire; and accepting freely participate of the research by signing the Statement of Consent. The data were collected by means of interviews, conducted by the researchers in December, 2009, with predicted time of 20 minutes for each interview.

The socio-demographic data of the subjects were described in a quantitative way, from a database built on an Excel 2010 spreadsheet. After, they were statistically treated by means of SPSS software, version 17.0. The description was presented by the absolute and percentage frequency, and the results in form of table. The subjective questions were quantitatively analyzed using the Analysis of the Collective Subject Discourse (CSD), proposed by Lefévre and Lefévre (2005).

During the development of the research, the principles of the Code of Ethics of Professional Nursing – Resolution 311/2007 of the Federal Council of Nursing, regarding the preparation of scientific papers, laid on Chapter Four – Responsibilities and Duties, and Prohibitions (COFEN, 2007), as well as the established in the Resolution196/96 of the National Health Council (BRASIL, 2002). The project was analyzed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Faculdade Integrada de Patos College, in accordance with Opinion n. 0433/2009.

RESULTS E DISCUSSIONS

13 questionnaires answered by the participants were analyzed.

Table 1 – Distribution of identification data, according to the variables of the study

Variables	Specifications	n	%
Sex			
	Masculine	06	46
	Feminine	07	54
Age Group			
	60 - 70	05	38
	71 - 80	04	31
	Over 81	04	31
Scholarity			
	Illiterate	09	69
	Elementary School	04	31
Familiar Income			
	1 minimum wage	12	92
	2 minimum wages	1	8
Occupation			
	Retired	11	84
	Pensioners	01	08
	Retired and pensioner	01	08
Σ		13	100

Source: Direct, 2009.

The data evidence almost homogeneity when the sex of the interviewees is analyzed. There is a small percentage of

8% for men, showing a predominance of women. This fact is justified, once, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (2008), women live 76.5 years on average while men live only 69. In relation to the age group, the biggest concentration is between 65 and 69 years. Moreover, the level of scholarity was practically inexistent, with n=9 (69%) composed by illiterate people. According to the interviewees, this fact occurred because of the lack of opportunities to access school. They devoted themselves from their youth to 60 years to work activities to support their families. The only source of income comes from retirements and pensions, which are not sufficient to buy medicines and supply the needs of their homes. Because of this situation, many elderly people have extra-activities, working in the informal market to complement the familiar income. This corroborates with Carvalho Filho, Papaléo Netto and Garcia (2006), who affirm that a good part of the elderly keep economically active, although in most of cases they execute low-paid jobs, with no job guarantees adequate for the age.

The study shows that 85% of the elderly have some chronic disease. They mention: Hypertension n=07 (54%); Diabetes n=01 (08%); Depression n=03 (23%); Osteoporosis (08%); and Parkinson's disease n=01 (08%). This finding corroborates with the affirmation of Ramos and Neto (2005), which mention that the presence of diseases, especially the chronic ones, attack most of the elderly, and the own age is the main risk factor. Growing old with no disease is more an exception than a rule. However, it is known that it is possible to live with health problems, if they are controlled by an adequate assistance.

Table 2 – Characterization of the interviewees according to the development of self-care practices.

Variables	n	%
Do you always go to physician?	13	100
Do you eat well?	09	69,2
Do you eat little?	04	30,8
Do you perform physical activity?	-	-
Are you part of some social group?	-	-

Source: direct, 2009.

All interviewees informed that they make the control of chronic diseases with physician and nurse by means of Health Family Strategy (HFS). In relation to alimentation, most of them affirmed that they have healthy eating habits, attitude that is one of the essential pillars to the aging process with quality of life. Brazil (2007) affirms that the maintenance of a healthy alimentation is one of the fundamental recommendations to the prevention and control of many chronic diseases. Especially because, during the aging process, the human body changes and these changes, directly or indirectly, can affect the adequate ingestion of food, as well as change the level of absorption of some nutrients that are important to the maintenance of health. In sequence, none of the participants affirmed they practice physical activities, a worrying fact, once there are many studies about the benefits of regular physical activity. Spirduso (2005) affirms that these habits avoid diseases. Also, they contribute to the maintenance of independence, reducing the risk of cardiovascular diseases, as well as the constant practice of physical activities favors the disposition of the elderly in the participation of social activity.

The analysis of the subjective questions of the study was based on the technique of the Collective Subject Discourse by Lefévre and Lefévre (2005)

Central Idea – 1	**CSD - 1**
Presence and absence of dependence and autonomy	*"Because of the age, dependence from others, with no force to work, not be healthy and cannot resolve my things".*
	CSD - 2
	"Because I still do many things, I don't know, I am ok and I feel nothing"

Table 1 – central Idea and Collective Subject Discourse in answer to the question: What is the perception of the elderly about their aging? Pombal -PB, 2009.

When the interviewees answered the question: "Do you feel old?", it was considered a positive aspect because n=09 (69%) of the elderly feel old, and only n=04 (31%) do not agree with their aging. Based on relates of the interviewees, it is possible to affirm that most of them recognize their aging. A similar study done by Duarte and Diogo (2005) affirms the importance of the elderly in accept their aging naturally and to cohabit well with their limitations as well as to valorize their lived experiences, accepting the aging as part of life cycle of people, since birth to death, becoming a reference for all the family.

According to the results presented on Table 1, some elderly expressed their perception about aging in a negative way, associating it to factors related to functional dependence, and this dependence is understood as a consequence of aging. This way, it is observed the presence of "new ageism", defended by Kalish (1979) that diagnosed a new kind of prejudice which presents an image of aging based on dependence, disability and absence of political power (CACHIONI, 2002).

Nevertheless, this discourse was not hegemonic: many elderly did not demonstrate this same perception. They confirmed the affirmation of Uchoa; Firmo and Lima-Costa (2002), when they defend that aging is lived of different ways, by each person, generation and society. The fact of some interviewees do not feel old is justified because they do not have dependences in the functional capacity and they express themselves as autonomous in relation to decision-making. Barros (2003) presented in his study a similar finding when he made a reading of the feminine aging in Brazilian Southeast, where elderly women narrated a routine that affirms autonomy, the capacity of make choices that give them pleasure and sense. In this same perspective, Rosa; Keinert and Louvison (2008) describe the aging process as a consequence of the passage of time or as a chronological process in which an individual becomes older. Another significant point is the difficult of the elderly in recognize themselves as elderly, due to the social stigma that associates aging to decadence rather than valorize it as a synonym of wisdom and experience (BRITTO DA MOTA, 1998).

Central Idea – 2	**CSDs**
Morphophysiological changes	*"Wrinkles, fatigue, many things, some things, all because of age and white hair"*

Table 2 – Central Idea and Collective Subject Discourse in answer to the question: Do you think that something changed in your body with the aging process? What? Pombal -PB, 2010.

In relation to body changes provoked by the aging process, the CSDs reveal that anatomic and physiologic changes due to it characterize changes inherent to age. These physiological modifications mentioned by the interviewees, such as white hair, wrinkles and reduction of functional capacity are unequivocal indicators of the aging process (NERI, 2001). But they are also part of a process of identity constructions which are dependent of body images, and the preoccupation with the maintenance of this is stimulated by the capitalist society, which worships youth, beauty and power. In the speeches, it is perceived that the wrinkled bodies of the interviewees correspond to the narcissistic ideal of the somatic culture described by Ortega (2006), which, in fact, ratifies that these changes may provoke in the individual the need for transformation related to the process of lived valuing experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

The research permits to comprehend the perception of the elderly about Human Aging and Self-Care from the symbology of valorization and credibility of the representations of this heterogeneous group. Among the members, 85% said they have chronic diseases, predominating arterial hypertension. As positive aspects, they were identified the control of these diseases with accompaniment at HFS, and the adoption of healthy eating habits adequate to their needs. On the other hand, the non-adhesion to the practice of physical activities by the elderly was evidenced, predominating sedentary lifestyle.

Most of the group demonstrates perception about old age, expressing limitations and attributes which are characteristics of age. Also, it was noted a veiled prejudice in the acceptation of transformations in their bodies. However, the participants consider themselves happy and well cared.

It is evident the need for future studies that search for scientific subsides, favoring the development of actions destined to the awareness of the elderly about the natural process of aging and the necessity of searching for strategies that stimulate their potentialities in the intention to favor a healthy aging.

REFERENCES

BARROS, M. M. L. Velhice na contemporaneidade. In: PEIXOTO, C. E. (org.). Família e envelhecimento. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 2004. p.13-23.

BRASIL. Ministério da saúde: Conselho Nacional de Saúde. Diretrizes e Normas Regulamentadoras de Pesquisa Envolvendo Seres Humanos: Resolução 196/96. Brasília: Ministério da Saúde, 2002.

_____. Ministério da Saúde. Redes Estaduais de Atenção à Saúde do Idoso: guia operacional e Portarias. Brasília: MS, 2002.

_____. Agencia Nacional de Saúde Suplementar. Promoção da Saúde e Prevenção de risco e doenças na saúde suplementar: manual técnico. 2. ed. rev. e atual. Rio de Janeiro: ANS, 2007. Disponível em: < http://bvsms.saude.gov.br/bvs/publicacoes/promocao_saude_prevencao_riscos_doencas.pdf>. Acesso em: 18 set. 2011.

BRITTO DA MOTTA, A. "Chegando pra idade". In: BARROS, M. M. L. (org.). Velhice ou terceira idade?. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1998. p. 223-35.

COFEN – Conselho Federal de Enfermagem. Código de Ética dos Profissionais de Enfermagem. Resolução COFEN 311/2007. Disponível em: http://www.portalcofen.gov.br/2007/materiais.asp?ArticleID=7323&sectionID=37. Acesso em: 03/10/2007.

CACHIONI, M. Formação profissional, motivos e crenças relativas à velhice e ao desenvolvimento pessoal entre professores de Universidades da Terceira Idade. 2002. 302f. Tese (Programa de Pós-Graduação em Gerontologia, Faculdade de Educação) – Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Faculdade de Educação. Campinas, 2002.

CARVALHO FILHO, E. T.; PAPALÉO NETTO, M.; GARCIA, Y. M. Biologia e Teorias do Envelhecimento. In: CARVALHO FILHO, E. T.; PAPALÉO NETTO, M. Geriatria: fundamentos, clínicas e terapêutica. 2 ed. São Paulo: Atheneu, 2006.

DUARTE, Y. A. O.; DIOGO, M. J. D. Atendimento domiciliar: um enfoque gerontológico. São Paulo: Atheneu, 2005.

IBGE. Síntese de Indicadores Sociais: Educação melhora, mas ainda apresenta desafios. Brasília, 2008. Disponível em: < http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/presidencia/noticias/noticia_visualiza.php?id_noticia=1233&>. Acesso em: 18 set. 2011.

LEFÈVRE, F; LEFÈVRE, A.M.C. Discurso do sujeito coletivo: um novo enfoque em pesquisa qualitativa (desdobramentos). 2. ed. rev. e ampl. Caxias do Sul, RS: EDUCS, 2005.

NERI, A. L. O fruto dá sementes: processos de amadurecimento e envelhecimento. In: NERI, A. L. (Org). Maturidade e velhice: trajetórias individuais e socioculturais. Campinas: Papirus; 2001. p. 11-52.

Organización Panamericana de la Salud. La salud de los ancianos: una preocupación de todos.

Washington: OPS, 1992. n. 3.

ORTEGA, F. O Corpo Incerto: corporeidade, tecnologias médicas e cultura contemporânea. Rio de Janeiro: Garamond, 2008.

RAMOS, L. R.; NETO, J. T. Geriatria e Gerontologia: guia de medicina ambulatorial e hospitalar.1 ed. São Paulo: Marole, 2005.

ROSA, T. E. DA C.; KEINERT, M. M.; LOUVISON, M. C. P. Envelhecimento & Saúde. Boletim do Instituto de Saúde. São Paulo, 2008. n. 47. Disponível em: < http://www.isaude.sp.gov.br/smartsitephp/media/isaude/file/47-idoso.pdf>. Acesso em: 18 set. 2011.

SPIRDUSO, W. W. Dimensões Físicas do Envelhecimento. Barueri: Manole, 2005.

UCHÔA, E.; FIRMO, J. O. A.; LIMA-COSTA, M. F. F. Envelhecimento e saúde: experiência e construção cultural. In: MINAYO, M. C. S.; COIMBRA Jr., C. E. A. (Org). Antropologia, Saúde e Envelhecimento. Rio de Janeiro: Fiocruz, 2002. p. 25-35.

World Health Organization. Envelhecimento ativo: uma política de saúde / World Health Organization; tradução Suzana Gontijo. – Brasília: Organização Pan-Americana da Saúde, 2005. 60p.

PERCEPTION OF THE ELDERLY ABOUT HUMAN AGING AND SELF-CARE

ABSTRACT

The growing population aging is generating a set of significant changes in the demographic, socio-economic and epidemiological profiles of our country. This way, there is the necessity of development of efficient policies that are capable to promote a better quality of life to this age group. Objective: to know the perception of the elderly about the human aging process and self-care. Methods: it is an exploratory-descriptive study of quantitative approach, which was developed at Odilon Lopes Living Center – Pombal – PB. The subject researchers were 13 elderly who were according to the inclusion criteria. The data were collected by means of interview performed by the researchers in December, 2009. The interviews were analyzed quantitatively, using the analysis technique of Collective Subject Discourse (LEFÉVRE and LEFÉVRE, 2005). All the ethic principles in the

Resolution 196/96 of the National Health Council (BRASIL, 2002) were considered. The project was analyzed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Faculdades Integradas de Patos College, according to Opinion n.0433/2009. Results and Discussions: In relation to the characteristics of subjects, the predominance was the feminine sex, situated in the age group from 65 to 69 years, illiterate, whose source of income is retirements and pensions. It evidenced the prevalence of chronic diseases (85%), most with arterial hypertension (54%). The study also showed the control done by HFS professionals and the maintenance of healthy eating habits, although they were not adept of physical activity. 69% of the elderly have perception about aging due to the description made by them about the morphophysiological changes of body. Conclusion: It is emphasized the importance of educating the elderly about the natural aging process and the necessity of searching for strategies that promote a healthy aging.

PERCEPTION DE L'ÁGÉ SUR LE VIEILLISSEMENT HUMAIN ET L'AUTO-SOIN

RÉSUMÉ

Le croissant vieillissement de la population entraîne un ensemble de modifications significatives dans le profil démographique, socioéconomique et épidémiologique dans notre pays. C'est , donc, urgent développer des Politiques efficaces et capables de promouvoir une meilleure qualité de vie pour ce groupe d'âge. Objectif: connaître la perception des personnes âgées sur le processus de vieillissement humain et l'auto-soin. Méthodes: Il s'agit d'une étude explorative-descriptive de nature qualitative, réalisée au Centre de Convivialité Odilon Lopes à Pombal- Paraíba. Les sujets de la recherche ont été constitués par 13 personnes âgées choisies parmi des critères d'inclusion. Les données ont été prises à partir d'un interview réalisé par les chercheurs, en décembre 2009 et analysées, qualitativement, par la technique d'Analyse de Discours du Sujet Collectif (Lefèvre). Tous les príncipes éthiques décrits dans le décret ------du Conseil National de Santé (Brésil – 2002) ont été considérés. Le projet a été analysé et admis par le Comité d'Éthique en Recherche de la Faculté intégrée des Patos selon l'avis Nº 0433/2009. Résultats et Discussions: quant aux caractéristiques des sujets on a constaté la prédominance du genre féminin entre 65 et 69 ans, illétrés, rétraités et pensionnaires. 85% atteints de maladies chroniques soit 54% de hypertension, d'après contrôle réalisé par la ESF, ayant de bonnes habitudes alimentaires, cependant sans activité physique; 69% des personnes âgées se rendent compte de la vieillesse et décrivent les changements morphophysiologiques subis par le corps. Conclusion: on met en évidence l'importance de sensibiliser la personne âgée sur le processus naturel de vieillissement et la nécessité de trouver des stratégies qui puissent promouvoir um “vieillir salutaire.”

DESCRIPTEURS: vieillissement; auto-soin; perception.

PERCEPCIONES DE LOS ADULTOS MAYORES EN EL ENVEJECIMIENTO HUMANO Y EL CUIDADO DEL AUTOMÓVIL

RESUMEN

El creciente envejecimiento de la población está provocando una serie de cambios significativos en las características demográficas, socioeconómicas y epidemiológicas de nuestro país. Con el fin de que surge de la necesidad de desarrollar políticas que promuevan la eficiencia y una mejor calidad de vida de este grupo de edad. Objetivo: Conocer la percepción de las personas mayores en el proceso de envejecimiento humano y el autocuidado. Métodos: Se realizó un estudio exploratorio-descriptivo, cualitativo, realizado en el Centro Familiar de Odilon Lopes - Pombal-PB. Los sujetos consistió en 13 estudiantes que cumplieron con los criterios de inclusión. Los datos fueron recolectados mediante el método de la entrevista, llevada a cabo por los investigadores durante el mes de diciembre de 2009. Estos se analizaron cualitativamente mediante el análisis de la Discurso del Sujeto Colectivo (Lefevre y Lefevre, 2005). Se consideraron todos los principios éticos consagrados en la Resolución 196/96 del Consejo Nacional de Salud (Brasil, 2002). El proyecto fue revisado y aprobado por el Comité de Ética de la Facultades Integrado de Patos, dictamen N º0433/2009. Resultados y Discusión: Características de los sujetos, hubo un predominio del sexo femenino, que se encuentra entre las edades de 65 y 69 años, analfabeta, y como una fuente de ingresos de las pensiones. , La prevalencia (85%) de las enfermedades crónicas, la mayoría de la hipertensión (54%), los profesionales de la enfermedad de la gestión realizado por el FSE y el mantenimiento de hábitos de alimentación saludable, pero no son fans de la actividad física. (69%) de las personas mayores tienen la percepción de la vejez, para que morfofisiológicos describir los cambios experimentados por el cuerpo. Conclusión: Destacamos la importancia de educar a los ancianos sobre el proceso natural del envejecimiento y la necesidad de buscar estrategias que promuevan un envejecimiento saludable.

PALABRAS CLAVE: envejecimento; cuidado personal; la percepción.

PERCEPÇÃO DO IDOSO SOBRE O ENVELHECIMENTO HUMANO E O AUTO CUIDADO

RESUMO

O crescente envelhecimento populacional vem acarretando um conjunto de alterações significativas no perfil demográfico, sócio-econômico e epidemiológico do nosso país. De forma que emerge a necessidade do desenvolvimento de Políticas eficientes e capazes de promover uma melhor qualidade de vida para esse segmento etário. Objetivo: conhecer a percepção do idoso sobre o processo de envelhecimento humano e o autocuidado. Métodos: trata-se de um estudo exploratório-descritivo, de natureza qualitativa, realizado no Centro de Convivência Odilon Lopes - Pombal- PB. Os sujeitos da pesquisa constituíram-se de 13 idosos que atenderam aos critérios de inclusão. Os dados foram coletados através do método de entrevista, realizada pelas pesquisadoras, durante o mês de dezembro de 2009. Sendo estas analisadas qualitativamente utilizando-se a técnica de Análise do Discurso do Sujeito Coletivo (LEFÉVRE e LEFÉVRE, 2005). Foram considerados todos os princípios éticos contemplados na Resolução 196/96, do Conselho Nacional de Saúde (BRASIL, 2002). O projeto foi analisado e aprovado pelo Comitê de Ética em Pesquisa da Faculdades Integradas de Patos, conforme parecer nº 0433/2009. Resultados e Discussões: Quanto às características dos sujeitos, encontrou-se predominância do gênero feminino, situados na faixa etária entre 65 e 69 anos, analfabetos, tendo como fonte de renda aposentadorias e pensões. Evidenciou-se a prevalência de (85%) de doenças crônicas, sendo a maioria hipertensão arterial (54%), referindo controle realizado por profissionais da ESF e manutenção de hábitos alimentares saudáveis, porém não são adeptos de atividade física. (69%) dos idosos têm percepção da velhice de forma que descrevem as alterações morfofisiológicas sofridas pelo corpo. Conclusão: Enfatiza-se a importância de conscientizar o idoso sobre o processo natural de envelhecimento e da necessidade de buscar estratégias que promovam um envelhecer saudável.

DESCRITORES: envelhecimento; auto cuidado; percepção.