

Adjustment in Later Life

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ABSTRACT There is today, an ever-growing number of old people in the Nigerian Society. The present study is an attempt to explore the relationship between aging and adjustment. The measure of adjustment considered are: attitudes to past life and to reminiscence; attitudes to the present modern day Nigerian society and attitudes to death and dying. The study is based on data obtained from 200 elderly people in Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria. Ife was stratified into ten of its eleven traditional and modern quarters and 20 respondents from each quarter were selected through snow balling sampling technique. Interviews were conducted by myself and Adisa Lateef, a Graduate Assistant in the department of Sociology/Anthropology, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. We adopted 'back-translation' to solve the problem of lexical equivalence. The main findings are as follows: (a) a greater majority reminiscences that they had a better life in the past than now; (b) although majority viewed the present day Nigeria as not favourably comparable with the past they still prefer to live in the present day Nigerian society; and (c) only an insignificant few expressed fear towards death and dying. One can therefore conclude that aging is not a particularly problematic period of life of elderly Nigerians.