

REVIEWS

## The New Dynamics of Ageing, Vol. 2

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This book is the second of two volumes of work and findings from the New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) research programme which ran over a period of ten years and was a multi-disciplinary research endeavour. The editor of the book, Alan Walker, provides an insightful introduction to the research programme which aims to understand the new dynamics of ageing and focuses on four main themes: autonomy and independence in later life; biological perspectives; nutrition in old age; and representations of old age. The programme of work covers a spectrum from biology to visual arts to humanities, and the chapters are set out by giving the context to the research, methods, findings and implications. The book sets out the five objectives of ageing and explores ageing well across the lifecourse and helps to inform a sound evidence base for policy and practice.

The first section of the book focuses on autonomy and independence, and starts with one key area of ageing and wellbeing which is under-researched: sleep.

Sara Arber and colleagues researched this important topic and the findings demonstrate how good sleep is a requirement for older people's wellbeing and ability to engage in daytime activities, whether living in their own homes or in a care home. The research entitled the SomniA project (Sleep in Ageing) significantly recognised how sleep is comparable to a good diet, physical exercise, not smoking and restricting alcohol consumption. Arber *et al.* argue that, 'A fifth health promotion message is also essential for good health and well-being, namely, sleep' (p. 17).

The section on autonomy and independence is further covered in Chapters Two to Six. The chapters explore themes that are rarely given insights or researched into including, in Chapter Four, the work by Mary Gilhooly and her peers on financial elder abuse and what barriers exist to intervening in such cases. A key finding from the work that relates to policy is that financial abuse features as secondary to other forms of abuse and that for people with dementia and declining cognitive and physical functioning, financial abuse is of growing concern (p. 66). Another area of interest to the reviewer was the chapter on the perceptions of older people on dignity in care. This again is outlined as a topic that is rarely explored yet is key to looking at how older people maintain a level of dignity and self-respect. Liz Lloyd and colleagues describe the challenges and losses that older people can

face and how older people preserve and strive to maintain a sense of identity and self-respect (p. 85).

The second section of the book (Chapters Seven and Eight) moves on to biological perspectives and give an interesting insight into topics such as cell ageing and nutrition in later life, and brings together the link between biology and psychology which is unique and insightful. Chapter Seven, by Anna Whittaker and her colleagues, looks at the impact of depression and an increased risk of infections and poor survival rates amongst patients who have had a hip fracture. The authors conclude in the findings that hip fracture patients who develop depression are more likely to have a poorer physical recovery rate (p. 123). The preceding chapters focus on the aspect of biological ageing and also bring in the notion of technology and the need for prevention in looking at the risk factors such as malnutrition. The final chapter in this section looks at the connection between migration and nutrition.

The third and fourth sections of the book move on to nutrition in later life and representations of old age. The section of the book on nutrition highlights the need for early detection and a preventative agenda which is seen as limiting the risk of malnutrition in older people. The research demonstrates how the use of technology can be used for monitoring dietary intake, as in the Novel Assessment of Nutrition and Ageing project (NANA) undertaken by Arlene Astell and colleagues (Chapter Nine, pp. 157–176). The following chapters then move into combating malnutrition in hospital settings and developing a prototype for food provision and nutritional management of older patients in hospital settings.

Key research in Chapter Eleven focuses on the interesting area of migration and nutrition in a sample of Bangladeshi women residing in Cardiff and aims to explore migration, nutrition and ageing in an intergenerational and transnational project. The findings demonstrate a need for culturally relevant health promotion, disease prevention and public health campaigns for the Bangladeshi community.

Representations of old age, the fourth and final section, is covered in Chapters Twelve to Fifteen and gives a range of how old age is perceived, with visual images and self-reflection, and has a particular focus on the role of contemporary visual art and theatre in ageing. Philip Tew and Nick Hubble, in Chapter Thirteen, note how self-reflection and personal narratives are key to 'good ageing' and how older people maintain their identity and control through these personal stories (pp. 243–262). Further chapters show the meanings that art works can have and how they may structure previous life experiences for older people; these pieces of research provide an exploration and challenge the false stereotype that creativity declines or ceases with age.

The editor, Alan Walker, provides a useful summary of the key findings outlined in this volume of NDA research programme work in the Conclusion, which helps the reader pull together the key findings and also refers the reader to the NDA website for more detailed information.

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