

Abstract

Ageing is a biological process determined by genes and influenced by the environment. "Growing old", is a social process¹. Growing is determined by attitudes, expectations, culture and the traditions of society, and hence ageing is a moral, economic and social issue.

The Caribbean including Jamaica, has the oldest elderly population among the countries of the developing world².

The world is experiencing an epidemiological transition, people are living longer, there is a decline in death rates, a decline in infertility rates and migration. As a result the population is ageing globally. There is a dilemma of how best to care for and provide proper housing facilities for our elderly, especially those 60 years old and over.

This study involves fifty (50) elderly persons 60 years and over. Twenty-five (25) of these individuals reside in August Town and the other twenty-five (25) are from Mona Heights in St. Andrew. All individuals interviewed are living in their own homes (rented or owned).

A questionnaire and an observation guide were developed to access the demographic condition, housing facilities, social, physical and the financial status of the group. Findings revealed that the elderly 60 years and older were still very functional and did not need much care from their caregivers. The findings suggest that elderly persons continue to live in families to which they contribute in several ways.