

Bridging Knowledge Gaps on Brain Health, Aging, and Dementia: Perspectives of Primary School Children and Teachers in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia

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Primary school students and teachers in northwest Ethiopia have substantial knowledge gaps and misconceptions about brain health, aging, and dementia, highlighting the need for age-appropriate brain health education, teacher training, and community engagement to improve dementia literacy and reduce stigma.

INTRODUCTION	METHODS	RESULTS	CONCLUSIONS	REFERENCES
Early education on brain health, aging, and dementia is critical for promoting lifelong cognitive well-being and reducing stigma associated with dementia^{1,2}. However, evidence on primary school students' and teachers' understanding of these topics remains limited in low-income settings, including Ethiopia. This study explored knowledge and perceptions of the brain, brain health, aging, and dementia among primary school students and teachers in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia.	A qualitative study was conducted in October 2025 among primary school students (n=9) and teachers (n=5) using in-depth interviews. Data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns in participants' conceptualizations of the brain, brain health, aging, and dementia, as well as sources of information, prevailing misconceptions, and perceived educational needs.	Seven overarching themes and ten subthemes emerged. Brain health knowledge was limited among both students and teachers. Aging was often viewed as normal forgetfulness and physical decline. Dementia awareness was low, with common misconceptions and stigma. Information sources were fragmented, highlighting educational gaps. Participants expressed strong interest in school-based brain health education.	The study revealed that substantial knowledge gaps and misconceptions about brain health, aging, and dementia exist among primary school students and teachers. Integrating age-appropriate brain health education into schools may improve dementia literacy, reduce stigma, and promote lifelong brain health..	1. Bach AM, Peeler M, Caunca M, Olusanya BO, Rosendale N, Gano D. Brain health equity and the influence of social determinants across the life cycle. Semin Fetal Neonatal Med. 2024 Nov;29(2–3):101553. 2. Lövdén M, Fratiglioni L, Glymour MM, Lindenberg U, Tucker-Drob EM. Education and Cognitive Functioning Across the Life Span. Psychol Sci Public Interest. 2020 Aug;21(1):6–41. CONTACT  Muluken Azage Yenesew Email: muluken.yenesew@gbhi.org ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION AAIC>26