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Psychological and social impact of blindness in the daily-life of the people affected at Parakou (Benin Republic)

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Purpose: To study the psychosocial effects of blindness among the people affected in order to improve their quality of life.

Method: We had undertaken a cross-sectional study, descriptive and analytical that consisted on a prospective collection of data of 224 recruited cases in an exhaustive way in the service of ophthalmology of the CHD-B and to the CPSAP. This study had proceeded from March 3rd to June 30th, 2014.

Results: The sex ratio was of 2.03. The mean age was of 34.5 ± 12.66 years. Students were more represented (33.93%), followed by the workmen (16.06%) and the housewives (12.95%). The rate of binocular blindness was of 46.88%. The leading causes of blindness were: The cataract (36.74%), the glaucoma (19.70%), the retinochoroiditis (10.23%) and the corneal opacities (7.58%). The majority of the patients (72.52%) had recourse to modern medicine. Daily 79.05% of the people affected by binocular blindness present a feeling of dependence and 42.03% feel useless. The abandonment by the husband was observed among 11 patients. Blindness constitutes a handicap in the life of 89.52% of these patients because of stigmatization (94.68%), the loss of autonomy for the least acts (60.95%), the loss of their employs (40%). For 75.44% of the patients, blindness was natural on the other hand 9.38% thought that it was about a bad spelling and 8.93% due to witchcrafts. The faith in God (98.65%), the help by family (91.89%) and that of the spouse (64%) were the principal means which helped the patients to deal well with this blindness.

Conclusion: Blindness with obvious psychosocial repercussions over the life of affected persons, because it affects their autonomy and quality of life. It is urge to promote a better organization of the medical system in taking in account as well the psychosocial concerned as the readjustment.

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