

Mitigating ageism through intergenerational practices: Lessons from a Portuguese co-constructed local intervention

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Abstract

The demographic shift's impact on urban utilization, construction, and adaptation has already garnered the attention of city planners. Nevertheless, this relatively 'new interest' is significantly shaped by ageism—a pervasive and negative view of ageing. In 2011, Alcântara, a parish council in Lisbon, was among the city's most aged parishes. Drawing upon a critical gerontology perspective and adopting a co-constructed action research method, this article aims to analyse how intergenerational contact is related to ageism. By triangulating data from surveys, interviews, and field notes collected during an intergenerational project between two social responses — the Senior University and the Family Support Component — in Alcântara, we analyse the outcomes of the intergenerational initiative. We explored the impact, identified the obstacles, and examined situations where ageism was either reproduced or challenged. The participants throughout the project commonly shared perspectives of othering and a narrow interpretation of activeness. The concept of physical decline as an inevitable aspect of ageing was also a recurring theme identified across various phases of the project. This belief had concrete limiting implications on the co-construction of activities. Co-construction proved to be a valuable tool, not only for engaging participants in deconstructing ageist stereotypes, but also for highlighting the pervasiveness and negative influence of ageism. We also emphasised the crucial role of the facilitator in maintaining an anti-ageist stance throughout the process.

Keywords: ageism, intergenerational practices, co-construction

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1. Introduction

Old age in Portugal is still characterized by low education, digital exclusion, low income, and poverty, to which are added situations of economic dependence and aid, poor housing conditions, food, health care and risk of involuntary isolation (Ferreira *et al.*, 2013)¹. All these factors contribute to a lower quality of life for older people, making it essential to reflect on the different intersections between these characteristics, which demonstrate the existence of different socioeconomic profiles of the elderly person, determining factors that are favourable to social exclusion and discrimination (Holman & Walker, 2021).

In 2011, Alcântara, a parish council in Lisbon, was among the most aged parishes in the city, with an ageing index² of 245.4 (compared to 182.8 in the city of Lisbon). It was pointed out as one of the parishes in the city where the proportion of people over 65 was higher, presenting a similarly high Longevity Index (INE, 2011). However, it should be noted that this trend has been decreasing as shown by the results of the 2021 Census, in which Alcântara has an ageing index of 188.33 compared to 149.40 in Lisbon (INE, 2021). The results of the 2021 census show the prevalence of elderly people in the parish of Alcântara, with a large expression of older women, noting a high number of widowed women (291) (INE, 2021). On the other hand, the longevity index³ also highlights the ageing trend in recent years, with an increase from 45.7 in Lisbon (2011), to 53.9 in 2021 and 56,6 in Alcântara (2021).

The impact of this demographic shift on urban utilization, construction, and adaptation has already captured the attention of city planners (Buffel & Phillipson, 2018). However, this relatively 'new interest' is heavily influenced by a prevailing stereotypical perception of ageing and older people, one that is predominantly centred on chronological age (Staudinger, 2015) the healthcare sector and confined to a mere checklist of problems to be addressed (author). Urbanists and city planners, like most individuals, often avoid contemplating the diverse experiences of ageing. Deep down, we recognize that as we age, our societal status tends to diminish, and our visibility, particularly for women, decreases (Segal, 2023).

This pervasive and negative understanding of ageing is called "ageism". Ageism involves stereotyping and discriminating against individuals based on their age (Ayalon & Tesch-Römer, 2018), it obviously affects different age groups, and the unprecedented nature of the demographic change above mentioned reinforces the need to reflect on ways of promoting solidarity between generations, respect for the dignity and human rights. Ageism not only influences our treatment of older individuals but also shapes our own perceptions of ageing. This form of discrimination can significantly impede the potential contributions of older individuals in areas such as work and community involvement. Moreover, ageism poses a serious threat to our health and well-being, imposing a significant burden on societies. Consequently, the World Health Organization (WHO) has been tasked with developing a global campaign to combat ageism. Among the strategies proven effective in addressing ageism are interventions for intergenerational contact, policy and law changes, and educational interventions (World Health Organization, 2023).

While intergenerational activities are not a new concept —as we will explore in detail shortly— few aim to mitigate ageism using a co-construction approach that involves both older adults and children simultaneously. The use of co-construction methods in ageing research has also become a key feature of age-friendly initiatives. The Interaction Design Foundation (2025) provide us a definition for co-creation: 'the practice of collaborating with other stakeholders to guide the design process'. Typically, workshops facilitated before the activities, participants with different roles offer diverse insights expressing which activities they would like to do. This participation provides empowerment to participants, keeping motivation resulting in lessen dropouts and higher participation rates (Jo, 2018; Iliano *et al.*, 2022).

Employing the perspective of critical gerontology — which not only recognizes ageing as a socially constructed aspect, but also takes into account the significant influences of the life course, familial ties, and gerontological research itself (Baars *et al.*, 2016) — and action research — which

¹ In 2021, about 400,000 people over 65 lived alone.

² Ratio of population between the number of people aged 65 and over and the number of people aged 0-14.

³ Ratio of the older population to the elderly population, usually defined as the ratio of the number of people aged 75 or over to the number of people aged 65 or over.

is characterised by the formulation of new collective knowledge in a given area through planning, action, observation and reflection (Klein, 2012; Koshy, 2005) — this article concentrates on analysing data collected from an intergenerational project collaboratively developed by participants from two social responses in Alcântara: (i) the Senior University and (ii) the Family Support Component. The central research question posed is: How does intergenerational contact influence ageism?

1.1 Background and related work

Portugal has focused its action on policies to promote active ageing, based on pillars present in the most recent National Strategy for Active and Healthy Ageing 2017-2025 (Proposta do Grupo de Trabalho Interministerial, 2017): health promotion, increased social participation and involvement, and the development of contexts that ensure safety and support for vulnerability. This strategy was later complemented by an Action Plan published in 2024 (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, 2024). Internationally, new approaches to ageing, like the global initiative “Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030),” reflect the relevance of the topic for public policies, from which ageism cannot be dissociated (WHO, 2020).

However, according to the most recent Eurobarometer survey on various forms of discrimination within the European Union, 52 percent of the Portuguese population referred to the existence of age discrimination in their country. Worth mentioning that this figure is notably higher than the European average of 40 percent (*Special Eurobarometer 493: Discrimination in the EU (Including LGBTI) - Data Europa EU*, 2019)).

In the World Report on Ageism, the WHO formulates strategies as well as recommended actions to combat the reduction of ageism in its different forms. The essential strategies in this fight include the formulation of policies and laws that can reduce ageism at any age; educational interventions in various contexts and levels of schooling; and intergenerational contact interventions that encourage interaction between different generations to reduce prejudice (Organização Pan-Americana da Saúde, 2022).

There is no official definition for Intergenerational Programmes (IP), however, in 1999 UNESCO defined them as ‘vehicles for the continuous and intentional exchange of resources and learning between older and younger generations for individual and social benefits’ (Kaplan, 2001). Intergenerational contact gained importance in 2012 with the development of actions, programmes and projects along the lines of intergenerationality, marking this year as the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (EYASG), with the promotion of the ‘vitality and dignity of all through better opportunities for active ageing and solidarity between generations.’ (European Commission, 2012). The importance of training younger generations in geriatric care and support services for older people was reinforced in 2016 with the relaunch of the ‘European Innovation Partnership for Healthy Active Ageing’. In 2017, some European partners agreed to set up a working group which, among other issues, aims to bring generations closer together (Soares, 2018).

In Portugal, several initiatives are already creating intergenerational spaces and moments in various ways. The “Vovóteca” program, for example, implemented in 2009 in the municipality of Famalicão, seeks to create spaces where older people can share traditional games, songs, and toys. It included debates, workshops, exhibitions, and shows (Avô, 2009). Similarly, the “Recipes with Smiles” project seeks to build spaces for sharing through the exchange of learning in the area of cooking (O’Hara, 2014). Those initiatives are particularly relevant in the context of creative cities models (Costa et al., 2008) and the emergence of creative tourism (Duxbury, 2019).

Another significant trend within the active ageing agenda is the shift towards co-constructed methodologies. This approach involves the direct participation of older individuals in the conception, development, implementation, and evaluation of policies aimed at their own age group. There are various degrees to which older individuals can be involved, ranging from partial integration at different stages of the process to full-fledged participation in all stages. Some documented benefits of a co-research strategy include recognition of older people’s skills and networks, development of trust with interviewees, and the creation of a bridge between working life and retirement (Buffel & James, 2019). To the best of our knowledge, there are yet no reports of co-constructed intergenerational projects specifically designed to combat ageism.

1.2 Aims

The overall aim of this paper was to examine how does intergenerational contact influence ageism. To achieve this goal we sought to (i) analyse the meanings that participants attribute to old-age and ageing throughout their participation on the Intergenerational Project; (ii) the experiences of discrimination and the spreading of ageist practices and behaviours; and (iii) identify situations/elements that break down or reproduce prejudices against older people during the intergenerational sessions, as well as collect some clues about the impact of the intergenerational project on ageist prejudice towards older people. The underlying hypothesis is that using age as a criterion for classifying people is not entirely reliable and that older individuals often internalize prejudices against themselves, which can, in turn, limit their ability to express their needs and contributions.

2. Methods

2.1 Design, setting and participants

The action-research inherent in this Project Work had as its starting point the elaboration of an intergenerational project, based on the theory and review of other initiatives, considering the positive points and obstacles associated with them. The intergenerational project sought to overcome these obstacles, focusing on the opinions of the participants themselves and putting them at the centre of the decision. A constant adaptation of the project was sought, taking into account information resulting from observations throughout the sessions.

The project “Intergenerationality and social responses: Mitigating ageism through intergenerational practices” is characterised by the meeting of the only age-stratified groups organized by Alcântara Parish, students from the Family Support Component (CAF) and students from the Alcântara Senior University (ASU), over the course of a month and a half, once a week. The project sought to promote intergenerational contact, distinguishing itself from other initiatives by its regular and intensive nature, putting the participants at the centre of the planning by allowing them to decide together what they want to do.

Recruitment was carried out in the Alcântara parish through direct contact with the person responsible for the Senior University and the Family Support Component of the parish schools. The group of older people was recruited through direct contact by the Senior University manager with ASU students, asking about their interest and willingness to participate in a first clarification session about the intergenerational project. The initial goal was to gather 6 participants from each age group, which would allow for the formation of a group of 12 people for intergenerational activities. However, more people were contacted to prevent possible absences and dropouts. In the first session, 12 ASU students attended, signed the informed consent form, and took the survey. In the same way, consent forms were distributed to the guardians of children members of the CAF, obtaining a total of 6 authorizations.

The intergenerational activities took place over a month and a half in the first half of 2023, corresponding to 7 sessions once a week at a time determined in conjunction with those responsible for the ASU and CAF. It is worth noting that participation also differed between the two groups. While the ASU students participated in activity sessions, filled out survey questionnaires, and attended focus groups, the children were only present during activity sessions. Given that the sessions took place over a month and a half, and that participation was intended to have a low threshold, attendance at the intergenerational activities fluctuated over time — mostly due to last-minute scheduling conflicts or minor illness episodes. The survey questionnaire was completed by 11 ASU students, but the first focus group included 9 students. For the intergenerational activities, an average of 8 participants attended each session consistently (see Table 1).

Regarding the older participants, a particular characteristic of this group is that it was composed exclusively of women, even though men were contacted to participate in the project. This composition is linked to various factors. One of them is the gender distribution at ASU, where out of 250 students, only about 50 are men. These men are less active within the University itself and have previously shown reluctance to participate in intergenerational activities.

The ASU female students who stayed through the intergenerational sessions were between 63 and 88 years old, with an approximated average age of 74⁴. Their education levels ranged from 7th grade to higher education. Six children participated — two males and four females — who were in 3rd and 4th grade classes in primary school, aged between 8 and 10 years.

Table 1. Schematic organization of the Project

Stage / Participants	Activity
1/11 older people	1 st session: Introduction to the project, Consent Form, Survey, Q&A
2/9 older people	2 nd session: Focus group
3/ older people + children	7 intergenerational activities 1. Co creation workshop 2. History and memory 3. Reading group 4. Dramatic Expression 5. Artistic Expression 6. Gymnastic 7. Farewell, chat, dance and snack
4/8 older people	3 rd session: Follow-up survey, 2 nd Focus group, debriefing

Table 2. Schematic description of the activities

1. Co creation workshops	A collaborative workshop to discuss ideas for activities they would like to carry out together
2. History and memory	An activity for sharing photographs and memories of UAS participants, encouraging children to reflect on ageing and generational differences
3. Reading group	Participants brought books from home for a reading session. They read stories in pairs, with older participants assisting the children with reading and also reading stories to them
4. Dramatic Expression	Short plays and exercises of dramatic expression carried out by an older participant who had been a children's theatre teacher.
5. Artistic Expression	Participants made portraits of each other, and we discussed the most important elements when they drew each other. The exercise allowed us to see which physical features were valued by the younger and older participants
6. Gymnastic	Outdoor children's games provided an opportunity to observe participants growing closer and becoming more supportive of one another, adapting the games to suit each person's abilities
7. Farewell, chat, dance and snack	Share a snack together while discussing their thoughts on the activities

⁴ Two participants did not provide their year of birth

2.2 Measures

For the collection and analysis of data, a combination of different data, both qualitative and quantitative, were chosen: (a) surveys; (b) audio transcriptions; and (c) notes from observations made during the activities. The application of the questionnaire survey to the group of older people, essentially functioned as a preparation instrument for the discussion facilitated in the focus groups, gathering data that would support the qualitative analysis, and a collection of sociodemographic data of the participants. In this sense, its application was established as an opportunity to collect individual opinions and experiences (aims i and ii) and introduce the subject to the older participants. The repetition of the same questionnaire survey after the intergenerational activities, aims to analyse possible changes in the responses of the older participants after the activity sessions. In addition to closed-ended and direct-answer questions, the questionnaire included an agreement scale on some statements based on stereotypes about age and ageing, addressing themes such as discrimination, health, social relationships, loneliness, and mental health (see Questionnaire A.3).

The first focus group complemented some of the topics addressed in the questionnaire survey, allowing for a more in-depth analysis. The discussion regarding the theme of ageism focused on the meanings attributed to ageing and age (aim i); experiences of discrimination (aim ii); identification of disseminators of ageist practices and behaviours (aim ii and iii) and obstacles to mitigating ageism and drivers of change (aim iii). Lastly, the concept of intergenerationally was introduced by presenting the intergenerational project (Focus group 1 discussion guide A.4.). The last focus group aimed to collect individual experiences related to the intergenerational meetings, proceeding with a general evaluation of the project and the co-construction activities model (aim iv), and considering moments of challenge or reinforcement of prejudice (aim iii) (Focus group 2 discussion guide A.5.). Observation, as a research method used for data collection throughout the intergenerational sessions, sought to identify the circulation of stereotypes and expectations, with situations of reinforcement and challenge of prejudice (aim iii) and to analyse the meanings of both groups in relation to age and ageing (aim i). In the first session, a brief presentation of the participants from the older people's group was planned. However, the participants took over and began the presentation sharing of life stories and life experiences, as this was collectively evaluated as a meaningful bond-forging moment another session was scheduled for the focus group, taking into account the availability and agreement of all those present.

The observations, recorded after each activity session, were organized into notes in a field diary format, including a list of participants' attendances, an explanation of the activities, and notes of all relevant situations and behaviours to answer the general objective. The observations allowed for the analysis of intragroup and intergroup interactions, bringing together the ASU participants and the CAF children who obtained parental consent to participate. Finally, it is worth mentioning that selected quotes and final tables were translated from Portuguese to English by the authors.

2.3 Analysis strategy

Content analysis was chosen as the analysis strategy. Given our objectives and the expected sample size, the survey data were analysed in an essentially descriptive fashion. Focus group data, collected through voice recording, were transcribed, and later analysed using the MAXQDA version 2022. Observable non-verbal details were included as notes. The initial coding created aimed to cover the main themes addressed in each of the discussions, corresponding to the defined objectives. We subsequently developed subcodes throughout systematic readings, to seek patterns and emerging themes.

We used triangulation as the main analytic strategy for reporting the data. Despite the existence of different views on the use of triangulation, the choice of inter-method (Santos et al., 2020) triangulation is justified by the possibility of developing a more in-depth analysis of the project, to collect more comprehensive information about impacts, obstacles, and difficulties, reflecting on the construction of potential alterations throughout the research and at the end. The triangulation combined field diary entries, focus group analysis, and survey data. A preliminary version of the results was also presented to the participants during the final session.

Having in mind the broad scope and limited resources available for this project, our data collection and analysis emphasised older participants voices. Despite the focus on older persons, children’s perspectives were also crucial during the co-construction stages, and their perspectives were also collected via field notes. This data is presented to provide a better context.

2.4 Ethics

The project strictly followed ethical procedures, securing approval from the ISCTE-IUL Ethics Council (reference 37_2023). Participation was voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time. Consent from adults was obtained through signed forms, while children’s participation was approved via assent and parental consent. The children’s assent involved presenting the project, its main ideas and objectives, followed by assessing their interest and willingness to participate.

During planning, the ASU head agreed to exclude psychologically vulnerable individuals. To protect the older participants’ anonymity, data was encoded with acronyms, age, and gender identifiers, and any revealing speech was omitted. A debriefing session was held post-project, emphasizing the study’s theme and goals, and providing contact information for further inquiries.

The project aimed to combat ageism, taking care to avoid reinforcing ageist stereotypes. This was addressed by introducing the concept at the recruitment stage and at the start of each workshop. Participants used the term “elderly”, which is not typically used in this analysis, instead preferring “older people”. The WHO guide warns against overgeneralizing or stigmatizing the elderly, as it can mistakenly associate them with dependence and frailty, which may not reflect their actual circumstances.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Meanings attributed to old-age and ageing throughout the project

The notion of “activeness” was a common theme during the discussions about meaning, stereotypes and expectations about ageing and old age. Very often this concept was claimed both as characteristic of old-age and to reaffirm the participants’ own detachment from this group, considering themselves “active despite their age”.

As summarized in Table 3, the idea of activity was an important frame for the participant’s reasoning about ageing and old age. It related both to physical capacity, and social participation, with concrete implications on the expectations regarding not only life as an older person, but also what would be expected from the intergeracional activities.

Table 3. Meanings participants attribute to ageing

Stereotypes and Meanings	Expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·As people age, they tend to reduce their social network · Decline of active life with retirement ·Older people have more difficulty moving* · Older people are more fragile and prone to injury* · Adults do not play* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · More loneliness with advancing age · Retirement accentuates loneliness · Activities with less movement* · Activities without children's games*

Note: *Also attributed by the children

Several stereotypes, expectations and attributed meaning were shared by children, who regarded older people as more fragile, less agile and unusual participants in playful activities. They therefore

expected the intervention would entail activities with less movement and without games typically played by children.

The belief in physical decline as an inevitable characteristic of ageing is a meaning identified throughout the various phases of the project, illustrated by some moments observed during the intergenerational activities. Henchoz *et al.*, (2008) study the relationship between perceptions of health and health conditions in old age, linking stereotypes about old age that influence what older people think they can or cannot do. There was fear about the activities that would be carried out. The older participants were reluctant to play games that involved 'a lot of movement', fearing injuries and falls, which could be interpreted as a reflection of their perceptions of their ability to perform certain activities. These fears were also related to expectations about the children's preferences in choosing activities, expressed in the first sessions.

In the first focus group, other themes related to ageing emerged, such as retirement, loneliness, and the reinforcement of ageism with advancing age. Retirement, in specific, was pointed as an important landmark, as it marked 'the end of active life', at least in terms of paid work. One of the participants spoke about the impact of retirement in her life and the perceptions she had about ageing, showing a reinforcement of self-directed ageism:

'(...) when I retired... then a person starts to become more aware. You stop having an active life and then you start having a different life. It's a brutal change. Then it's the wrinkles, it's the white hair... And then, that change... well, in the beginning, I think... I found it hard to accept.' (MF74F)

For example, as older participants, who also faced limitations such as reduced mobility:

'You can't let yourself go down, you have to move forward... because that will contribute to you living longer with health, joy, disposition and don't let yourself be beaten.' (MF74F)

'The first time I travelled by plane was... I was already here at the University...' (BR85F)

Ayalon & Tesch-Römer (2018) present the changes associated with retirement, often related to a decrease in social networks and relationships, linked to an increase in social isolation, loneliness and situations of depression, reinforcing self-directed ageism, as reported by the participants, but also interpersonal ageism.

Participants most disagreed with the theme of loneliness and social decline with age in the questionnaire survey. They did not view loneliness and reduced social interaction as inherent aspects of aging. This is tied to their activity levels and new perspectives on aging, influenced by their involvement in the Senior University. They strongly disagreed with the statement: 'Loneliness is just something that happens when people get old', with 72% disagreement in the first survey and 71% in the second. Regarding the statement 'I suppose that, as I get older, I will spend less time with friends and family', the trend is consistent, with 50% agreeing in the first survey, and 71% in the second (Figure A.2).

Loneliness and social isolation are characteristics associated with ageing, as changes in the lives of older people make them more susceptible to being alone (Berg-Weger & Morley, 2020). There are some factors that can be potentiators of social isolation, such as advanced age, physical or mental illnesses, very common in advanced ages, and living alone. Marital status, contact with family, rupture with work activity and decline in daily dynamics are factors that potentiate feelings of loneliness in the elderly (Paúl, 2012).

The group of participants in the intergenerational project had some characteristics associated with the probability of suffering from loneliness and social isolation: female gender, advanced age, widowhood and living alone. On the other hand, group characteristics identified by Cohen-Mansfield *et al.* (2016), such as higher education (7th grade of schooling to professional and higher education courses) and quality of social relationships, are factors associated with a lower probability of social isolation and loneliness.

The survey answers provide us with another perspective on participants' perceptions of age. When asked about their feelings regarding their own age, no respondent reported feeling older or much

older than their actual age. Interestingly, during the first workshop, the majority of participants (72%) reported feeling younger or much younger. However, this majority shifted slightly when the survey was repeated during the second workshop. It is worth noting that the total number of participants decreased, while the number who reported feeling ‘exactly the age I am’ remained the same (Figure 2). In line with the previously raised hypothesis, these results also indicate that chronological age not only poses challenges as a criterion for classifying people but also that resistance to identifying oneself with an older age may suggest the presence of ageism and self-directed ageism.

Table 4. How do you feel about your age? WS 1 and WS2 | % (n)

	Much younger	Younger	Exactly the age I have	Older	Much older
WS 1	36 (4)	36 (4)	27 (3)	-	-
WS 2	14 (1)	43 (3)	43 (3)	-	-

The survey also presented a set of phrases about expectations about ageing and old age, asking older participants to express their agreement or disagreement. The questions covered topics related to health, social participation, and mental health (Figure A.2).

Results showed a strong consensus (partially or completely agreeing) with the idea that health deterioration is unavoidable as people age. For example, a large majority (82%, combining those who agreed completely and partially) agreed with the statement that energy levels decrease slightly with each year. Interestingly, this perspective received even stronger support from participants who answered the survey again at the end of the intervention. Regarding social relations, specifically time spent with family and loneliness, participants expected ageing to lead to less time with family and friends and increased feelings of loneliness.

For mental health topics, participants strongly rejected the ideas that mental decline is inevitable, and that depression is a normal part of aging. Over 60% of participants in both rounds considered these statements false or completely false. However, participants showed a weaker disagreement with the idea that forgetfulness and difficulty remembering names are consequences of ageing. Finally, an important finding was the strong rejection of the statement that people need to lower their expectations for health as they age (Figure A.2).

The observations and group reflections, throughout the intergenerational activities, also contributed to the analysis of the meanings that children attribute to ageing and age. During the initial stages of the co-construction intervention, the children’s suggestions in terms of activities were in line with the stereotypes and expectations they associated with older people, they also suggested activities that they had already carried out in other intergenerational contexts, provided punctually by the Parish Council. The perception of older people as “grandparents” and “niece” coincides with the participants’ behaviour as caregivers, showing to give in to the preferences of the youngest.

For example, there were few suggestions for activities that involved a lot of movement, such as gymnastics, games that required movement or dancing. In the group discussion, the children argued that it would be more complicated for the older participants, obtaining agreement from some of them, which is why they were not very popular activities. Only two participants who practice “Walking Football”, an activity provided by the Senior University, showed interest in physical exercise activities. In this sense, the suggestions were supported by the expectations of both age groups in relation to each other, reflected in activities with little movement and less “childish” games.

On the other hand, it is important to point out that older people also expressed expectations regarding the behaviour of children, expecting them to be noisy and disorderly, which were the meanings they attributed to the younger group. The ASU group feared that the younger participants would want to run and play games that involved movement, showing fear with the expectations they had regarding the children’s preferences. This had implications for the co-construction aim that we will discuss later.

The presented observations corroborate conclusions of other authors such as Cuddy & Fiske (2002), demonstrating that older people are often perceived as fragile, which is associated with the belief of physical decline and health status with advancing age. One of the stereotypes analysed throughout the sessions “older people don't play”, identified by both age groups, is associated with the meanings attributed to ageing, there is the expectation that with age, and reaching adulthood, people stop playing. Walsh (2019) reinforces this conclusion, according to which adults associate the idea of playing with a feeling of shame and embarrassment, needing a justification to do so. On the other hand, in this context, the idea of playing, in addition to being poorly suited to the age of the participants, is associated with movement, since it is considered dangerous for the older members of the group. Some children and ASU students considered that the decline in energy levels and muscle wear and tear, characteristic of age, could make some games dangerous. In this sense, the stereotype that older people don't play is justified by the idea of movement associated with “playing”, which is dangerous for older people. In addition, the stereotype was associated with the idea of what is appropriate for each age, and in this case, playing was not a suitable activity for an adult.

Wheeler & Petty (2001) identify the activation of stereotypes by individuals themselves and by others as capable of influencing the behaviours of stereotyped groups, where individuals tend to reinforce their self-perceptions based on stereotypes, behaving in accordance with expectations. The fear of participating in games, situations outside their comfort zone, was reinforced by the children's expectations, leading to the reproduction of the stereotype.

3.2 Experiences of ageism

Most participants claim never to have been victims of ageist discrimination or practices, identifying examples they witnessed. In the focus group, stories related to observed ageist situations, but seldom experienced, were also shared:

‘I have seen these situations, of the youngest jumping the queue and even pushing. Or going ahead and sitting down, not making it easier for the older ones. Not with me, it didn't happen to me, but I've seen it happening to people several times, even someone with a crutch, and I called attention to it.’ (IP88F);

‘(...) I've see an old man with crutches, he got to the door and said ‘Who will help me get down?’. Nobody helped him. I got up, I was further back, to help the man. I was filled with a desire... My desire was to go up to them and ask if they were deaf.’ (MA72F).

Most of the shared experiences, besides being situations they witnessed, occur in public transportation:

‘These things about sitting on transport I see a lot of that, the lack of attention and the way they respond and even look. The way they talk, look.’ (IP88F).

The survey's initial set of questions sought to gather information about individual experiences of ageist discrimination among the older participants, which were later supplemented in the discussion facilitated in the first focus group. In the first completion of the survey, 64% of participants stated they had never been victims of ageist discrimination or practices, a trend that remained in the second survey carried out at the end (71%) (Figure A.1). In the focus groups, more situations were noted where participants claimed to have witnessed ageist discrimination, than participants who had been discriminated against or mistreated. Regarding the first completion, the option “I don't know” was selected once, which may reflect a lack of awareness about the subject, a fact that was observed and supplemented in the focus group.

The few reported experiences of discrimination can be justified by the participants' activity levels, which influence self-perceptions regarding age, but also the probability of suffering from discrimination. Vauclair *et al.* (2016) establish a positive relationship between the activity levels of older people and their propensity to suffer discrimination and ill-treatment, which would justify the few experiences of discrimination reported in this group.

The only situations of discrimination reported in the first person, in the first focus group, occurred in the workplace:

'I felt that in my job. I felt it because I had been there for 27 years in the same place, I had always been there. (...) But the last few years were horrible. I felt completely like I was an object (...) I was already being followed by psychiatrists, I was already being accompanied and I continued to suffer the same discrimination. Even with the management! Even with the management. Once, to my face, she told me that she didn't know what to do with me.' (VL70F).

Various investigations have analysed behaviours and attitudes towards older people in the workplace, which are predominantly negative (Chou & Choi, 2011; Harris *et al.*, 2018). The feelings described by the participants hint to perceptions of incompetence associated with older people, which lead to their social exclusion in certain social contexts (Cuddy *et al.*, 2005). Older people are pressured into retirement, as they are no longer considered competent enough, exhibiting behaviours as described by another participant who talks about the last years of work before retirement:

'I was not really needed there, they put me at the reception (...) and besides the fact that I could not contact anyone, not be with anyone, I was also mistreated by her, because she was very rough with me' (MHU76F).

In addition to the analysis of experiences of discrimination, we sought to identify elements that spread ageist practices and behaviours. For this purpose, participants were asked about their knowledge of ageist prejudice, starting the discussion with a clarification of the term and reflection. Initially, participants had some doubts about the concept, which were clarified by the following intervention:

'At the time, it seems to me that it is prejudice about age. (...) Calling us old and oldies, 'you're out of the box', you're... 'You've been here a long time'. That's it.' (BR85F).

In the participants' opinion, older people are the ones who suffer the most from this prejudice, but they are also responsible for many of the ageist behaviours they are victims of. As previously mentioned under ethics, the term "elderly", was a constant tool to distance the participants from a group they did not want to be affiliated to, as known as "othering":

'(...) I would like to go to nursing homes to see the elderly, it was one of the things that would also give me a lot of gratification. But I think this was enriching in every sense.' (VL70F).

'I have been dealing with very old people. A friend of mine died recently at 100 years old. 100 years and 5 months. And we accompanied him a lot (...) always helped with what he needed, even lately, going with him to the bank, going with him to the doctor, picking him up when he was discharged from the hospital, I was the one who went to get him, without it being anything to us.' (VL70F).

It is worth mentioning that the participants also consider that young people contribute to the spread and reinforcement of ageism:

'I was saying that young people, most of them nowadays have no respect for older people. It doesn't count, it doesn't matter.' (MHU76F).

Technology was also identified as a factor that reinforces this generational distancing, this distancing being sustained by different uses and mastery of it:

'For me, young people are increasingly distanced from the elderly because they cannot understand the technology that exists now at this moment. There are many people who don't know how to take care of their cell phone, there are others that... the children... they go to the internet, look teach me this or... 'look I'm going', or 'let me finish this game', 'Oh I don't know', 'Wait I'll tell you something'. And the wait... waited.' (MA72F).

These findings are in line with other studies that refer to the "artificial categorization of age groups", perceiving them as homogeneous, and leading to the progressive distancing of generations, which, in turn, contributes to ageist perceptions (Garstka *et al.*, 2004; Marques, 2016; Snape & Redman, 2003).

3.3 Challenging or disseminating prejudices against older people during the intergenerational sessions

In order to identify situations and elements that could break down or reproduce (Garstka et al., 2004; Marques, 2016; Snape & Redman, 2003) prejudices against older people during the intergenerational sessions, the following question was posed to participants in the first focus group: 'What do you find most difficult about interacting with younger people?'

In their responses, participants referred mostly to young people or teenagers somehow reproducing the artificial categorization previously mentioned, and, at the same time, completely ignoring an important "age group". The participants identified technology, along with a lack of empathy from younger generations, and changes in lifestyle, as factors contributing to the distancing between generations:

'I think young people have less patience for grandparents or parents because they spend the day in front of the computer.' (MF74F).

At this point, it is important to have in mind that the issue of technology is relevant to all ages, since it represents the family disconnection discussed earlier. Young people are often perceived as self-centred individuals, disconnected from their families and irresponsible, which, as with older people, influences their behaviour by internalizing negative perceptions (Telzer et al., 2022). On the other hand, regarding the development of technologies, it is also important to acknowledge the existence of differences in usage and unequal understanding of technology by younger and older people (Pew Research Center, 2005).

Empathy and family awareness are identified as factors that break down prejudice, bringing generations closer together:

'School should alert parents or raise awareness of these projects. So that there is more participation from children, and parents recognize that it is an added value for them and their children.' (MA72F)

'Because if parents have the right information, they will think that it is good for their children too, I am sure.' (SP71F)

During the intergenerational activities, the situations/elements that broke or reproduced prejudices were often associated with whether there was reproduction of stereotypes and expectations about what it means to be older and to age. Throughout the intergenerational sessions, we were able to identify the circulation of stereotypes, among both age groups, related to the meanings of ageing, visible in the types of interaction and how the groups organized and interacted. While the reproduction of stereotypes is the confirmation of expectations associated with ageist prejudice, when the attitudes did not meet expectations, there was a break in the group elements' ageist perceptions.

One of the most common stereotypes, "older adults don't play", offers a revealing glimpse into the complexities of aging. In a specific situation involving a game, a child reinforces the stereotype by suggesting they shouldn't bother an older participant: "She's old, she can't stand up." Unfortunately, after this comment, the participant remained seated, seemingly validating the child's assumption. This observation supports (Wheeler & Petty, 2001) findings on stereotype activation, where expressed expectations can influence behaviour. In other words, the cycle continues when older participants themselves resist games requiring movement, choosing to remain seated and believing they're "too old to play."

The existence of mutual stereotypes (also from older participants towards younger) similarly structured the expectations of each age group in relation to the intergenerational project and the role that each group plays. Expectations were identified regarding activities, participants, and behaviours. From the beginning of the intergenerational meetings, a desire to please the children was observed among the older participants, placing them at the centre of the intergenerational project. This desire is visible in some moments of the dynamics, as is the case with the collaborative workshop in which a participant wrote in her activity suggestions:

'Whatever they ask for.' (MA72F).

This also serves as an important indication supporting the initial hypothesis that internalized prejudices, or self-directed ageism, may lead older individuals to feel less relevant or significant in these interactions. It reflects a broader cultural perspective in which children and their future are overly valued — often at the expense of recognizing the needs and contributions of older individuals — reinforcing a form of structural ageism.

Another observation providing understanding over older people's desire to please the children was the fact that many participants often gave in to their wishes, reinforcing this observation with the questions they asked directly at the end of the sessions: 'Do you think they liked it? Do you think we're doing everything right?'. This fact made it a bit difficult to stimulate the debate in the collaborative workshop, as the participants gave in to almost all the children's requests for activities and ideas.

'(...) if we are there to interact with them, we have to do things that they like and that they appreciate and that they collaborate, isn't it?' (BR85F).

This sentence, from a participant in the last focus group, illustrates the generalized perception regarding the purpose of the project and their role as participants. Thus, the intention to please the children is justified in this sentence. From the older participants' perspective, the project was for the children, and their role was to please them, which does not coincide with the original intention of the project, which was everyone's equal participation, creating the opportunity to express their likes and preferences.

There were also expectations regarding the activities to be carried out in the group, based on stereotypes associated with the meanings attributed to what it is "to be a child" or "to be an older person/adult", both from one group and from another. As previously reported, there were few suggestions for activities such as gymnastics, games that required a lot of effort, or dance. In the debate, the children argued that it would be more complicated for the older participants, and since the majority agreed, these activities ended up being little suggested.

The very way the activities were organized, when left to the group's discretion, ended up structured around the idea that the project and activities were for the children, placing older people in a role of accompanying the younger ones' learning and experiences. The most illustrative example of this observation was the drama activity. The activity was organized together with one of the ASU students who was a children's drama teacher, sharing some dramatic texts they could act out together. However, the characters that were part of the dramatic text were played by the children in the group, with the expectation that they would perform the enactment as a show for the older people. This reinforced the idea that the purpose of the activity was to entertain older people, emphasizing the separation of roles between the groups, based on assumptions about what each could do. These roles were further highlighted when older people are called to perform the dramatic texts standing up. Only the former drama teacher was available.

The reproduction of stereotypes by some participants proved to be a barrier to breaking prejudice at times. The role of the activity facilitator was very important in these moments, acting as facilitator to break some prejudices by challenging stereotypes through an intergenerational education component. The activity of sharing photos and childhood stories triggered conversations about the ASU participants' childhoods. The moments of reflection and discussion of ideas throughout the sessions allowed the group to come closer together, understanding the common points that bring them closer and that distance them.

Some activities did not necessarily reinforce ageist perceptions, but confirmed expectations, as was the case of the previously mentioned dramatic expression activity. The reading activity met exactly the expectations of what both generations could do together. In this sense, these were activities that consolidated the groups' approach, creating the opportunity to interact in a more individualized way, with the reading of books in pairs. On the other hand, the help of older people in reading comforted and brought the children closer.

Ageist perceptions and self-perceptions were challenged when both groups did something that was not in line with the expectations they had for each other. This was the case with the gymnastics activity, in which all present ASU participants took place in. Although at the beginning of the activity some showed reluctance by remaining seated, all the group members eventually participated. Another observation of this activity, which was essential for the deconstruction of stereotypes and

prejudices both on the part of the children and the self-perceptions of older people, was the fact that all participants ran during the game, challenging themselves and surprising the children:

'The children did not see us as older people, so in that game, they were playing with us as if we were their age.' (MA72F).

Throughout the activity, there was a concern for everyone's well-being, reflecting the group's approach over the sessions and the desire to create conditions for everyone to participate. This desire is visible in the organization and adaptation of game rules like the game of the handkerchief. The game of the handkerchief, traditionally played in a circle with people sitting on the floor, was adapted to be played standing up, since it would be difficult for the older participants to get up quickly and start running. This decision resulted from a mutual recognition of the children's wishes and limitations/difficulties of the older participants. The adaptation of the activities allowed everyone to participate and opened up space for participants to challenge themselves, facilitating the breaking of prejudice that leads to challenging perceptions.

Throughout the intergenerational sessions, the older participants showed a desire to share objects, such as books and photographs, and to offer gifts to the children. These objects and actions were identified as facilitators of the approach between groups. Some examples of things that were shared and offered were chocolates, puzzles, carnival masks, and books, and while these actions were identified as situations/elements that contributed to the group's approach, they do not signify the breaking of prejudice.

3.4 Limitations

Our research project faced limitations due to the scale and diversity of the participant group. While there was a notable age range of 25 years among the older participants, the exclusive presence of women is a significant caveat that demands cautious interpretation of our findings. Similarly, our group did not include individuals (either younger or older) with special needs; however, we noticed that literacy levels could pose a significant barrier, especially when a printed survey was used.

Due to the recruitment design, we were also unable to achieve the same level of age diversity among younger participants as we did for the older groups. In fact, age diversity among younger participants was even more limited, as it did not include infants, teenagers, or young adults.

Another important consideration, particularly for the survey data, concerns the participants who dropped out of the entire intergenerational project. Our field notes don't reveal specific reasons or a profile for those who left early. However, this dropout rate did not affect our intended use of the survey data, nor did it significantly influence the focus group discussions or project activities.

Finally, it's worth reiterating that various aspects of the project were influenced by an underlying assumption that the older adult group had a responsibility to please the younger one. This dynamic, evident from co-constructing activities to group interactions and project evaluation, could be interpreted as a limitation to the full potential of such interventions in the future.

4. Conclusions

The fight against ageism must be considered a cornerstone in the development of actions aimed at improving the lives of older people, their families, and communities. Negative attitudes towards older people and the ageing process can intensify the proliferation of discriminatory practices and stereotypes in various contexts. These attitudes not only affect interpersonal relationships but also influence the construction of institutional policies and practices.

We aimed to explore the influence of intergenerational contact on ageism within the framework of a co-created intervention. This involved analysing the meanings participants attributed to old age and the ageing process, their experiences with discrimination, and identifying situations or elements that either challenge or perpetuate such prejudices.

Co-creation revealed to be a useful tool not only for engaging participants in the deconstruction of ageist stereotypes but also to bring to light ageism pervasiveness and negative influence. Our research showed that intergenerational interventions are fundamental factors in reducing stereotypes and negative perceptions between generations, allowing participants to reflect together about various characteristics associated with ageing. On the other hand, the project highlighted common interests between people of different ages, reinforcing the possibility of uniting social responses activities aimed at different ages, in the Alcantara Parish, allowing them to exchange knowledge and learn together.

This intervention also pinpointed activities that provided excellent opportunities to challenge age-related stereotypes. These activities included sharing photos, participating in walking football, and producing a play. They can thus be added to a list of recommended activities for future similar interventions. However, we found that ageism is highlighted through this process, underscoring the essential role of the facilitator in such intervention. Facilitators can guide the conversation and challenge ageist viewpoints, aiding in the construction of a more diverse and inclusive perspective on ageing.

In conclusion, co-created intergenerational contact is a powerful tool in the fight against ageism. It fosters understanding, challenges stereotypes, and promotes inclusive practices, thereby creating a more equitable society for individuals of all ages. In light of the dominance of negative stereotypes about ageing and old-age, an anti-ageist stance should be adopted throughout.

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Appendix

Figure A.1. About ageism % (n)

	Sim	Não
Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your age?*	27 (3)	64 (7)
Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your age? (WS2)	29 (2)	71 (5)
Have you ever seen someone being discriminated against because they are older?	64 (7)	36 (4)
Have you ever seen someone being discriminated against because they are older? (WS2)	71 (5)	29 (2)
Have you ever felt mistreated because of your age?	18 (2)	82 (9)
Have you ever felt mistreated because of your age? (WS2)	14 (1)	86 (6)
Have you ever felt like you were disrespected just because of your age?	18 (2)	82 (9)
Have you ever felt like you were disrespected just because of your age? (WS2)	14 (1)	86 (6)

* Don't know = 9 (1)

Figure A.2. Expectations about ageing and old-age % (n)

	Completely true	Partially true	Partially false	Completely false
When people grown old, they need to lower their expectations about how healthy they can be.*	-	18 (2)	27 (3)	36 (4)
When people grown old, they need to lower their expectations about how healthy they can be (WS2)	14 (1)	-	43 (3)	43 (3)
Having more pain and suffering is part of ageing.	9 (1)	55 (6)	-	36 (4)
Having more pain and suffering is part of ageing (WS2)	14 (1)	86 (6)	-	-
The human body is like a car. When it ages, it wears out.	27 (3)	36 (4)	27 (3)	9 (1)
The human body is like a car. When it ages, it wears out. (WS2)	14 (1)	43 (3)	14 (1)	29 (2)
Every year people age, their energy levels decrease a little more.	27 (3)	55 (6)	9 (1)	9 (1)
Every year people age, their energy levels decrease a little more (WS2)	57 (4)	29 (2)	14 (1)	-
I suppose that as I get older, I will spend less time with friends and family **	9 (1)	36 (4)	27 (3)	18 (2)
I suppose that as I get older, I will spend less time with friends and family (WS2)	-	71 (5)	14 (1)	14 (1)
Loneliness is just something that happens as people age.	-	27 (3)	36 (4)	36 (4)
Loneliness is just something that happens as people age. (WS2)	-	29 (2)	14 (1)	57 (4)
As people age, they worry more.**	55 (6)	27 (3)	9 (1)	-
As people age, they worry more. (WS2)	14 (1)	57 (4)	14 (1)	14 (1)
It's normal to be depressed when you're old.**	-	27 (3)	27 (3)	36 (4)
It's normal to be depressed when you're old. (WS2)	14 (1)	14 (1)	29 (2)	43 (3)
I suppose that as I get older, I will become more forgetful.	36 (4)	36 (4)	27 (3)	-
I suppose that as I get older, I will become more forgetful. (WS2)	14 (1)	57 (4)	14 (1)	14 (1)
Having difficulty remembering names is part of ageing.	18 (2)	45 (5)	27 (3)	9 (1)
Having difficulty remembering names is part of ageing. (WS2)	14 (1)	71 (5)	14 (1)	-
Forgetfulness is a natural consequence of ageing.	9 (1)	45 (5)	36 (4)	9 (1)
Forgetfulness is a natural consequence of ageing (WS2)	29 (2)	43 (3)	29 (2)	-
It's impossible to escape the mental slowdown that happens with ageing.	18 (2)	27 (3)	45 (5)	9 (1)
It's impossible to escape the mental slowdown that happens with ageing (WS2)	14 (1)	14 (1)	57 (4)	14 (1)

* Missing values = 2 ** Missing values = 1

Questionnaire A.3.

Inquérito por questionário

NOME:

ANO NASCIMENTO:

GÉNERO:

ESCOLARIDADE COMPLETA:

1. Como se sente em relação à sua idade?

Indique numa escala de 1 a 5, sendo o nível 1 "sinto-me bastante mais novo" e o nível 5 "sinto-me bastante mais velho".

Mais novo	Exatamente da idade que tenho			Mais velho
1	2	3	4	5

1. Alguma vez se sentiu discriminado/a pela sua idade?

Sim

Não

Não sei

2. Alguma vez viu alguém ser discriminado por ter mais idade?

Sim

Não

Não sei

3. Alguma vez se sentiu maltratado pela sua idade?

Sim

Não

Não sei

4. Alguma vez sentiu que lhe faltaram ao respeito apenas pela sua idade?

Sim

Não

Não sei

7. Por favor, selecione a opção de resposta que melhor corresponde a como se sente relativamente às seguintes afirmações

Completamente verdadeira Parcialmente verdadeira Parcialmente falsa Completamente falsa

Quando as pessoas envelhecem precisam de reduzir as suas expectativas sobre o quão saudáveis podem ser.

Ter mais dores e sofrimento faz parte do envelhecimento.

O corpo humano é como um carro: Quando envelhece, fica desgastado.

A cada ano que as pessoas envelhecem, os seus níveis de energia descem um pouco mais.

Suponho que à medida que for envelhecendo, passarei menos tempo com amigos e familiares.

A solidão é apenas algo que acontece quando as pessoas envelhecem.

À medida que as pessoas envelhecem, preocupam-se mais.

É normal estar deprimido quando se é velho.

Suponho que à medida que for envelhecendo me tornarei mais esquecido/a.

Ter dificuldade em lembrar nomes é algo que faz parte do envelhecimento.

O esquecimento é uma consequência natural do envelhecimento.

É impossível escapar à desaceleração mental que acontece com o envelhecimento.

Focus group 1 discussion guide A.4.

Focus Group:

Tema: “Projeto de Intervenção: Mitigar o idadismo por meio de práticas intergeracionais”

Tema em discussão no Focus Group: Estereótipos e Preconceitos: Atitudes Idadistas.

- 1- Idade que temos VS Idade que sentimos;
- 2- Discriminação nas suas várias formas;
- 3- Exclusão;
- 4- Saúde;
- 5- Vitalidade ou Energia;
- 6- Isolamento e solidão;
- 7- Ansiedade;
- 8- Mente;
- 9- Doenças mentais;

Regras:

- As intervenções terão de ser feitas à vez, esperando que outro participante acabe para intervir. Deste a conversa será mais fluída e organizada permitindo a exposição de ideias sem interrupção, e a gravação ficará mais clara.

-Irão ser colocadas algumas questões relativamente aos temas presentes no questionário.

-Não existem respostas certas ou erradas. O importante é cada um expor o seu ponto de vista, experiências pessoais e opiniões ou apreciações.

-O focus group será orientado pelo moderador, estimulando a participação de todo o grupo. Haverá sempre pessoas mais participativas que outras e é necessário integrar todos os membros do grupo na discussão.

-Pode suceder-se o confronto de algumas perspetivas opostas, não sendo necessário que todos concordemos. Devemos respeitar a opinião e ideias de todos, essa diversidade é essencial.

-A nossa discussão irá ser gravada. Vocês já deram o vosso consentimento em relação a isso no formulário, mas vou perguntar novamente se é okay. (indicar onde irei colocar os gravadores.)

- 1- Breve apresentação dos participantes;

Para começar, muito simples, o que acharam deste questionário?

- 2- Questão introdutória: O questionário que acabaram de preencher, refere-se ao tema do idadismo que, como já entenderam, é um conceito central nesta pesquisa. O que é sabem ou o que entendem por este conceito?

O idadismo preconceito com base na idade que se reflete em atitudes e práticas negativas generalizadas em relação aos indivíduos.

Segundo a OMS, refere-se a estereótipos (forma como pensamos), preconceitos (como nos sentimos em relação a algo), e discriminação (como agimos), em relação aos outros e para nós próprios com base na idade.

- 3- Idadismo: Quem é que acham que é afetado pelo preconceito com base na idade?

(Acham que as crianças e/ou os jovens também podem ser afetados por este preconceito?)

- De que forma?

- Exemplos?

4- Experiência Pessoal Conseguem dar-me exemplos de situações e práticas idadistas? Podem ser pessoais ou outras que se lembrem e queiram partilhar.

Na vossa opinião, quais são os problemas que advém destas situações que acabamos de relatar?

5- Idadismo—Pessoas mais velhas

Em relação às pessoas mais velhas, de que forma isto vos afeta?

Acham que as pessoas mais velhas conseguem ser idadistas?

Porque que é que isso é um problema?

Já alguma vez deixou de fazer alguma coisa porque achou que não era adequado à sua idade?

6- Questões do Questionário

O questionário aborda diversas questões (Ir buscar as questões que ainda não foram trabalhadas).

7- Conclusões

Tentar capturar experiências das perguntas anteriores. Um dos objetivos do projeto é... intergeracionalidade

O objetivo é intergeracionalidade. O que é que impede isso?

O que é acham mais difícil em ter contacto com os mais novos?

Focus group 2 discussion guide A.5.

FOCUS GROUP 2

Vamos fazer uma discussão à semelhança da que fizemos no início do projeto, mas agora que o projeto está a terminar, vamos falar acerca dos encontros intergeracionais nos quais vocês participaram. O objetivo desta discussão é perceber o que correu bem ou mal e o que poderíamos ter feito melhor. E sobretudo perceber qual foi o impacto do projeto na forma como encaram a vossa idade e o envelhecimento. Este é o objetivo principal do meu trabalho. O idadismo, preconceito em relação à idade, é uma forma de discriminação muito comum que pode ocorrer de forma muito óbvia ou de formas mais subtis. Algo que ainda não está muito estudado é o idadismo auto-dirigido, ou seja, quando temos ideias distorcidas acerca de nós mesmos.

A nossa conversa será estruturada em alguns tópicos principais que eu vou enunciando à medida que formos avançando. É importante tentar ouvir todos e evitar conversas paralelas. É claro que por vezes eu irei interromper e irei fazer um ronda pelas pessoas que estão menos participativas para todos participarmos.

Como estava no consentimento que vocês assinaram no início das atividades, eu irei gravar a nossa conversa para efeitos de análise para o meu trabalho. No final irei entregar um documento que tem algumas informações acerca do trabalho, contactos e também alguns artigos caso estejam interessadas em saber mais acerca deste tema.

1. Modelo de atividades

1.1- As nossas atividades foram planificadas com base nas sugestões que foram feitas na nossa primeira reunião intergeracional, para que todos pudessem participar e escolher aquilo que queriam fazer, expressando os seus gostos e preferências. Qual a vossa opinião relativamente a este modelo de construção das atividades em conjunto?

1.2- Eram estas as atividades que esperavam? (Rever quais foram).

1.3- No decorrer das atividades houve alguma que vos fizesse sentir desconforto físico, ou que achassem pouco adequada, ou até que se tenham sentido mais inibidas de participar?

2. Idadismo, preconceitos e estereótipos

As atividades procuraram reunir duas faixas etárias bastante diferentes, desafiando perceções que ambas têm em relação ao que é ser uma pessoa mais velha.

2.1- Considera que mudou a forma como encara a velhice e o envelhecimento, pessoalmente e na sociedade?

2.2- Sentiram que saíram da vossa zona de conforto no que toca às brincadeiras e conversas que tiveram com as crianças?

2.3- E em relação às crianças tinham algumas ideias preconcebidas acerca do seu comportamento e da sua forma de ser e de estar, que foram alteradas após o convívio?

2.4- Em algum momento sentiram preconceito em relação à vossa idade por parte das crianças ou entre vocês? E estereótipos? (Dar alguns exemplos se necessário).

3- Intergeneracionalidade

3.1- Depararam-se com obstáculos ou situações mais complicadas ao longo das atividades? Seja entre vocês ou com as crianças?

3.2- Na vossa opinião quais os pontos positivos dos encontros que decorreram? E os negativos?

3.3- Com o objetivo de melhorar este modelo de atividades intergeracionais, o que acham que é mais importante para a construção e dinamização destas atividades?

3.4- Consideram iniciativas como esta importantes? Porquê?

3.5- O que é que aprenderam com esta experiência e que impacto teve na vossa vida?