

THE INTERGENERATIONAL STUDY: BECAUSE RELATIONSHIPS WITH GRANDPARENTS MAY HELP TO CHALLENGE AGEISM

L. Gimenez-Llort, P. Ramirez-Boix

Department of Psychiatry and Forensic Medicine, Institute of Neuroscience, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain

Ageism, stereotyping of and discrimination against individuals or groups because of their age, is stronger against older people. Despite family role and positive intergenerational relationships with grandparents, there's an important lack of social empathy with 'the other old people' and the set of beliefs, attitudes, norms, and values (mostly negative) are reinforced by social attitudes. 'The Intergenerational Study' (2008-2010) is aimed to 1) Characterize the 'beliefs' about old people and the aging process and 2) Determine the basis of 'the positive link' with grandparents which may help minimize ageism towards the elderly. The questionnaires were administered to the general population in Barcelona (ages from 12 to 100 year-old). Thereafter, university students from 14 Spanish universities, from USA and Nigeria also enrolled in (English version in the last cases). This was thanks to the unestimable contribution of Susan Masino (Trinity College, Hartford, Conn, USA), Efosa Oghagbon and Mikhail Olanyika Buhari (University of Ilorin, Nigeria), Fernando Picatoste & Carles Gil (UAB), Francisco Alcañ (UOC), Agnès Gruart (UPO), Francisco Centeno (UNEX), Teresa Giralt (UPV/EHU), Mónica de la Fuente (UCM) and M^x Carmen Vale (USC). The preliminary results reveal a temporal evolution of the concept of ageism. More important, the questionnaire induces young people to do a reflective and auto-critic analysis of their own families' intergenerational relationships and to realize about the lack of empathy with other old people. These first results of this study have been very positive in challenge ageism. We are still looking for financial support.