

The gener@tions project: an educational initiative surrounding aging among brazilian students

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Abstract – Negative attitudes toward ageing and old age are often formed during childhood. This study aimed to examine changes in children's attitudes toward older adults following participation in the Gener@tions Project, a gerontology initiative developed in a public school in Brazil involving school students, undergraduate gerontology students, and older adults from a University of the Third Age (U3A). A mixed-method, quasi-experimental study without a control group was conducted with 118 Year 6 students. Data collection included a sociodemographic questionnaire, pre- and post-intervention assessments using the Todaro Scale for Children's Attitudes Toward Older People, and qualitative analysis of activity-related materials. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated changes in the total score ($z = -2.882$, $p = 0.004$) and in the Cognition domain ($z = -2.443$, $p = 0.015$). Mean scores increased most in the Social Relationship domain. Qualitative content analysis generated 307 codes organized into two analytical categories, highlighting reflections on ageing, recognition of the diversity of older adults, and positive intergenerational interactions. These findings suggest that educational initiatives combining content on ageing with intergenerational interaction may be associated with changes in children's attitudes toward older adults in school contexts.

Keywords: Aged. Attitude. Education. Educational Gerontology. Intergenerational relationships.

O projeto gener@ções: uma iniciativa educacional sobre o envelhecimento entre estudantes brasileiros

Resumo – Atitudes negativas em relação ao envelhecimento e à velhice são frequentemente formadas durante a infância. Este estudo teve como objetivo analisar as mudanças nas atitudes de crianças em relação às pessoas idosas após a participação no Projeto Gener@ções, uma iniciativa em Gerontologia desenvolvida em uma escola pública brasileira envolvendo estudantes, graduandos em Gerontologia e pessoas idosas de uma Universidade Aberta à Terceira Idade. Foi realizado um estudo de métodos mistos, com delineamento quase experimental e sem grupo controle, envolvendo 118 estudantes do 6º ano do ensino fundamental. A coleta de dados incluiu questionário sociodemográfico, avaliações pré e pós-intervenção por

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meio da Escala Todaro para Avaliação das Atitudes de Crianças em Relação às Pessoas Idosas e análise qualitativa dos materiais produzidos durante as atividades. O teste de postos sinalizados de Wilcoxon indicou mudanças no escore total ($z = -2,882$; $p = 0,004$) e no domínio Cognição ($z = -2,443$; $p = 0,015$). O maior aumento dos escores médios foi observado no domínio Relação Social. A análise qualitativa de conteúdo gerou 307 códigos organizados em duas categorias analíticas, destacando reflexões sobre o envelhecimento, o reconhecimento da diversidade das pessoas idosas e interações intergeracionais positivas. Esses achados sugerem que iniciativas educacionais que combinam conteúdos sobre envelhecimento e interação intergeracional podem estar associadas a mudanças nas atitudes de crianças em relação às pessoas idosas no contexto escolar.

Palavras-chave: Atitude. Educação. Educação em Gerontologia. Idoso. Relações intergeracionais.

El proyecto gener@ciones: una iniciativa educativa sobre el envejecimiento entre estudiantes brasileños

Resumen – Las actitudes negativas hacia el envejecimiento y la vejez suelen formarse durante la infancia. Este estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar los cambios en las actitudes de niños hacia las personas mayores tras su participación en el Proyecto Gener@ciones, una iniciativa de Gerontología desarrollada en una escuela pública brasileña que involucró a estudiantes de educación básica, estudiantes de grado en Gerontología y personas mayores de una Universidad Abierta para la Tercera Edad. Se realizó un estudio de métodos mixtos, con diseño cuasiexperimental y sin grupo control, en el que participaron 118 estudiantes de sexto año de educación primaria. La recopilación de datos incluyó un cuestionario sociodemográfico, evaluaciones previas y posteriores a la intervención mediante la Escala de Todaro para la Evaluación de las Actitudes de los Niños hacia las Personas Mayores y un análisis cualitativo de los materiales producidos durante las actividades. La prueba de rangos señalados de Wilcoxon indicó cambios en el puntaje total ($z = -2,882$; $p = 0,004$) y en el dominio Cognición ($z = -2,443$; $p = 0,015$). El mayor incremento de las puntuaciones medias se observó en el dominio Relaciones Sociales. El análisis cualitativo de contenido generó 307 códigos organizados en dos categorías analíticas, destacando reflexiones sobre el envejecimiento, el reconocimiento de la diversidad de las personas mayores y las interacciones intergeneracionales positivas. Estos hallazgos sugieren que las iniciativas educativas que combinan contenidos sobre el envejecimiento con la interacción intergeneracional pueden estar asociadas con cambios en las actitudes de los niños hacia las personas mayores en el contexto escolar.

Palabras clave: Actitud. Ancianos. Educación. Gerontología Educativa. Relaciones intergeneracionales.

Introduction

Brazil, like many countries, is undergoing a demographic transition characterized by declining fertility rates and increased life expectancy. This process has led to growth in the older population, which currently represents 15.1% of the total population, corresponding to approximately 32 million individuals aged 60 years and over (IBGE, 2022). This demographic shift highlights the need to strengthen public policies, particularly in education, given the importance of fostering intergenerational

respect and reducing age-related stereotypes. Educational strategies that promote structured intergenerational contact have been associated with more positive attitudes toward older adults and reductions in ageist stereotypes (dos Anjos *et al.*, 2022; Apriceno; Levy, 2023).

Despite international (United Nations, 2003) and national guidelines (Brazil, 2004; Ministry of Education [MEC], 2019) emphasizing the importance of ageing education and intergenerational relationships, the topic remains insufficiently addressed in school curricula. The limited integration of ageing into pedagogical planning restricts opportunities to promote life-course perspectives and intergenerational learning within formal education (Albuquerque; Cachioni, 2013; Pulgatti *et al.*, 2025).

Against this background, the present study examines the Gener@tions Project as an educational initiative aimed at introducing ageing-related themes into the school context. The project involved lower secondary school students, undergraduate gerontology students, and older adults from a University of the Third Age (U3A), engaging them in structured intergenerational activities. The study specifically aimed to analyze changes in students' attitudes toward older adults following participation in the initiative.

Theoretical background

In the context of demographic change, education on and about ageing has been recognized as a strategy to promote more informed perspectives across the life course and to reduce age-related stereotypes. By incorporating themes such as old age, ageing, and the social roles of older adults, educational initiatives can foster awareness, challenge misconceptions, and promote more positive attitudes toward older adults.

Since its first formal reference at the First National Conference on Ageing in the United States (Towley, 1952), education on ageing has been conceived as a means of encouraging recognition of older adults' contributions, fostering intergenerational contact, and supporting the development of inclusive social perspectives. This perspective was expanded by subsequent contributions, such as McGuire, Klein, and Couper (2005), who highlighted the use of age-representative narratives in children's literature to encourage reflection on ageing and life trajectories.

Empirical research has supported the implementation of structured educational practices in this field. Studies by Peterson (1976) and Glendenning (1989) emphasized the integration of ageing-related content into educational settings, whereas more recent approaches, such as the Positive Education about Aging and Contact Experiences (PEACE) model proposed by Levy (2018), combine educational content with intergenerational encounters to reduce age-based stereotypes and promote well-being. Consistent with the PEACE model, empirical studies have shown that educational interventions integrating ageing-related content with positive intergenerational experiences are associated with more positive attitudes toward older adults among children and adolescents (dos Anjos *et al.*, 2022; Domènech-Abella *et al.*, 2022).

The role of educational settings is also supported by recent evidence showing that teachers' knowledge, attitudes, and stereotypes toward older adults may influence how ageing-related topics are addressed in schools and that targeted teacher training can improve preparedness to teach these topics (Avci *et al.*, 2025; Pulgatti *et al.*, 2025). Research indicates that children and adolescents often hold stereotyped views of older adults, frequently emphasizing physical decline and dependence, supporting the

implementation of educational interventions on ageing (dos Anjos *et al.*, 2022; Apriceno; Levy, 2023).

Intervention studies have shown that educational programs incorporating intergenerational experiences are associated with changes in attitudes toward older adults (Todaro, 2017). In the Brazilian context, studies by de Bezerra *et al.* (2024) and Todaro and Cachioni (2022) described the use of pedagogical strategies, including drawing, storytelling, and active listening, to encourage reflection on ageing and examine social representations of older adults. Schools provide a setting for education on ageing by enabling structured interactions between generations. These activities create opportunities for students to develop less stereotyped perceptions of older adults while reflecting on the life course. Within this framework, intergenerational educational initiatives are expected to influence students' perceptions of older adults by promoting less stereotyped and more positive attitudes.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

This was a mixed-methods intervention study using a quasi-experimental design without a control group. The study examined changes in students' attitudes toward older adults following participation in an intergenerational educational initiative. The intervention was conducted as part of the Gener@tions Project during the second half of 2019. Although the data were collected before the COVID-19 pandemic and the launch of the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) (WHO, 2020), the study addresses issues that remain relevant. Population aging, ageism, and intergenerational relationships continue to be priorities for public health and education, supporting the implementation of educational initiatives that promote understanding of aging across the life course.

Setting and Participants

All students enrolled in the four Year 6 classes (6A, 6B, 6C, and 6D) of the participating public school during the second semester of 2019 were invited to participate in the study. Students were included after informed consent was obtained from a parent or legal guardian, and assent was provided by the student, in accordance with the requirements approved by the Research Ethics Committee. For the quantitative analyses, only students who completed the pre- and post-intervention assessments were included, allowing paired comparisons of the outcome measures.

All individuals enrolled in the USP 60+ Program at the School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities, University of São Paulo (EACH-USP), were invited to take part in the intergenerational activities of the Gener@tions Project. Twelve older adults accepted the invitation and comprised the study sample. Eligibility criteria included being 60 years of age or older, being enrolled in the USP 60+ Program, and being available to attend the intervention sessions. No participant withdrew during the intervention period.

Ethics approval

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the School of Arts, Sciences and Humanities, University of São Paulo (process number: 3.711.679; CAAE: 22843319.0.0000.5390). All procedures were conducted in accordance with relevant ethical guidelines.

Research Team

The research team comprised faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students in Gerontology, scholarship recipients, and older adult collaborators from the USP 60+ Program. Approximately 40 undergraduate students enrolled in the

bachelor's degree program in Gerontology participated in the intervention, with support from graduate students and faculty members. The team was responsible for designing, organizing, and implementing the educational activities, as well as conducting data collection. Undergraduate and graduate students served as facilitators of the intergenerational sessions, working directly with schoolchildren and older adult participants throughout the intervention.

Educational Initiative

The educational initiative comprised 17 weekly sessions conducted between August and December 2019, each lasting approximately three hours. Before each session, planning meetings were held with faculty members, undergraduate and graduate students to discuss gerontological content, define the educational activities, and organize the teaching strategies. The planned activities were subsequently implemented in the participating classrooms through intergenerational sessions involving schoolchildren, undergraduate facilitators, and older adults from the USP 60+ Program. The educational content was organized around five thematic areas in gerontology and delivered through interactive activities developed by the undergraduate students under faculty supervision, with the participation of the older adults.

Pedagogical activities and themes

The pedagogical activities developed as part of the Gener@tions Project were organized into five gerontology-related themes, each associated with specific classroom activities. These themes were defined based on educational dimensions of aging and were intended to promote reflection on the life course, intergenerational interaction, and attitudes toward older adults (Box 1).

Box 1: Themes developed with the students

Theme	Educational Activity
Human Development and Aging – I'm Young, but I Will Grow Older Objective: To understand human development as a continuous process throughout the life course.	Every Stage of Life Matters
Longevity and the Diversity of Aging – There Are Many Different Older Adults in the World Objective: To understand population aging and the diversity of aging experiences.	We Are All Different
Intergenerational Learning and Solidarity – We Can Do Many Fun Things Together Objective: To promote learning and interaction between generations.	Living and Learning Together
Healthy Aging – When I Grow Older, I Will Be... Objective: To encourage reflection on the aging process and healthy aging.	Aging in an Older Brazil
Aging and Innovation – Let's Make a Difference Objective: To develop intergenerational projects addressing issues related to aging.	We Are All Part of This World

Note: Prepared by the authors

The activities were carried out by groups comprising undergraduate and graduate students in Gerontology and older adults participating in the U3A program. Each group was responsible for developing and facilitating activities related to a specific theme for the sixth-grade classes (A, B, C, and D), based on prior planning sessions.

The methodologies included interactive workshops, narrative-based activities, hands-on activities, the development of collective materials, drawings representing family contexts, role-playing, and guided discussions. One of the main outputs was an

illustrated album created by students, depicting their families and different stages of the life course. The sessions also included opportunities for dialogue and active listening, during which older adults shared their experiences and participated in group discussions with the students.

The activities were informed by theoretical models of education on and about aging (Peterson, 1976; Glendenning, 2001) and by the Positive Education about Aging and Contact Experiences (PEACE) model proposed by Levy (2018), which combines educational content with intergenerational contact to reduce age-related stereotypes and promote attitudes toward older adults.

Data Collection and Measures

Sociodemographic questionnaire: A structured questionnaire was used to collect information on participants' sex (male/female), age, household composition (number of adults and student), identification of the oldest household member, age group of the oldest household member, and patterns of contact with older adults (type and frequency of interaction).

Todaro Scale for Attitudes Toward Older Adults: Students' attitudes toward older adults were assessed using the Todaro Scale for the Assessment of Children's Attitudes Toward Older People (Todaro, 2017). The instrument consists of 14 bipolar items based on the prompt "*Older people are...*", with response options representing positive, negative, or neutral perceptions. The items are organized into four domains: (1) Cognition, which assesses perceptions of cognitive abilities (e.g., *wise-foolish, clear-confused*); (2) Agency, which assesses perceptions of autonomy and health (e.g., *cheerful-sad, healthy-ill*); (3) Social Relationship, which assesses emotional bonds and social acceptance (e.g., *good-humored-bad-tempered, valued-mistreated*); and (4) Persona, which assesses general social image (e.g., *nice-annoying, kind-angry*). The instrument assesses attitudes toward older adults rather than knowledge about aging or broader concepts related to the aging process. Domain scores were calculated as the mean of the corresponding items, and the overall score was calculated as the mean of all 14 items. Higher mean scores indicate more positive attitudes toward older adults. The scale was administered before and after the educational initiative to examine changes in students' attitudes toward older adults.

Qualitative Data Sources

Qualitative data consisted of narrative recordings produced during the activities and descriptive reports prepared by undergraduate students after each session. The recordings captured the narratives and interactions that occurred during the intergenerational activities, whereas the reports documented the activities, interactions, and observations from each session. The analysis followed the principles of thematic content analysis proposed by Bardin (2011) and was supported by ATLAS.ti software. The analytical process included familiarization with data, coding, category development, and interpretation. The qualitative analysis was conducted to identify themes related to participants' experiences and interactions during the educational activities and to provide context for the quantitative findings.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including means, medians, ranges (minimum–maximum), and frequency distributions. Because the data were not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were applied. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to compare pre- and post-intervention scores. Analyses were performed using Stata Statistical Software (v.18), with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Qualitative data were analyzed using ATLAS.ti software following the principles of thematic content analysis proposed by Bardin (2011). The analytical process included familiarization with data, coding, category development, and interpretation. Two analytical categories were identified: (1) Introduction of Gerontological Themes (subcategory: concepts related to aging); and (2) Pedagogical Practices (subcategories: teaching methods and educational resources). Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately and integrated during the interpretation of the findings. The qualitative findings were used to provide context for the quantitative results.

Results and discussion

Sample characteristics and intergenerational contact

The sample consisted of 118 students (61 males and 57 females), aged 11 to 13 years, from four Year 6 classes. Reported interaction with grandparents within the household was more frequent among students from Year 6D (72.7%), while cohabitation with an older adult was more prevalent among students from Years 6A and 6B. Across all classes, activities such as playing, outings, storytelling, and teaching were reported less frequently than cohabitation (Table 1). This suggests that living with or being close to an older adult does not necessarily imply meaningful intergenerational exchange in everyday life.

Table 1. Demographic and family characteristics of the Year 6 participant students of the Generations Project (N=118).

Variables	6A (n = 31)	6B (n = 33)	6C (n = 31)	6D (n = 23)
Sex [n = 118]				
Male	18 (58.1)	16 (48.5)	14 (45.2)	13 (56.5)
Female	13 (41.9)	17 (51.5)	17 (54.8)	10 (43.5)
Age, median (min-max) [n = 117]	12 (11–13)	12 (11–13)	12 (11–13)	12 (11–13)
Adults living in the household, n (%) [n = 117]				
1–2	18 (58.1)	22 (66.7)	17 (54.8)	9 (40.9)
≥3	13 (41.9)	11 (33.3)	14 (45.2)	13 (59.1)
Student living in the household, n (%) [n = 117]				
0	6 (19.4)	5 (15.2)	1 (3.2)	4 (18.2)
1–2	17 (54.8)	22 (66.7)	20 (64.5)	12 (54.5)
≥3	8 (25.8)	6 (18.2)	10 (32.3)	6 (27.3)
Relationship of the oldest household member to the student, n (%) [n = 117]				
Parent	21 (67.7)	21 (63.6)	14 (45.2)	16 (72.7)
Grandparent	6 (19.3)	11 (33.3)	14 (45.2)	4 (18.2)
Other family member	4 (12.9)	1 (3.0)	3 (9.7)	2 (9.1)
Age of the oldest household member, n (%) [n = 116]				
20–39 years	13 (41.9)	14 (42.4)	11 (36.7)	12 (54.5)
40–59 years	12 (38.7)	12 (36.4)	16 (53.3)	9 (40.9)
≥60 years	6 (19.4)	7 (21.2)	3 (10.0)	1 (4.5)

Note: Data are presented as n (%). Numbers in square brackets indicate the total number of valid responses for each variable. Percentages were calculated based on the number of valid responses within each class. Missing data were excluded from the denominators.

Changes in attitudes toward older adults

The analysis of the Todaro Scale pre- and post-tests showed changes in students' attitudes toward older adults. These findings were associated with more

positive overall attitudes toward older adults, particularly in the Cognition and Social Relationship domains, indicating a shift toward less stereotyped and more differentiated perceptions of older adults.

In the pre-test, the Cognition domain presented the highest mean values among all domains. Within this domain, the item "clear/confused" showed the highest mean, while "valued/mistreated" presented the lowest mean (mean = 1.20; SD = 0.44). This pattern suggests that students initially perceived older adults more positively in cognitive terms, while aspects related to social valuation were less favorable.

In the post-test, the item "attentive/distracted" showed the highest mean, whereas "valued/mistreated" and "wise/foolish" presented the lowest mean values (both with mean = 1.40; SD = 0.60). Higher mean scores were observed for the overall scale and for the Cognition and Social Relationship domains, whereas little variation was found in the Agency domain and a slight decrease was observed in the Persona domain. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated significant changes in the overall score ($z = -2.882$, $p = 0.004$) and in the Cognition domain ($z = -2.443$, $p = 0.015$). These findings are consistent with evidence suggesting that educational activities combined with intergenerational contact are associated with more positive attitudes toward older adults among children and adolescents (Peters *et al.*, 2021; Tsiloi *et al.*, 2024).

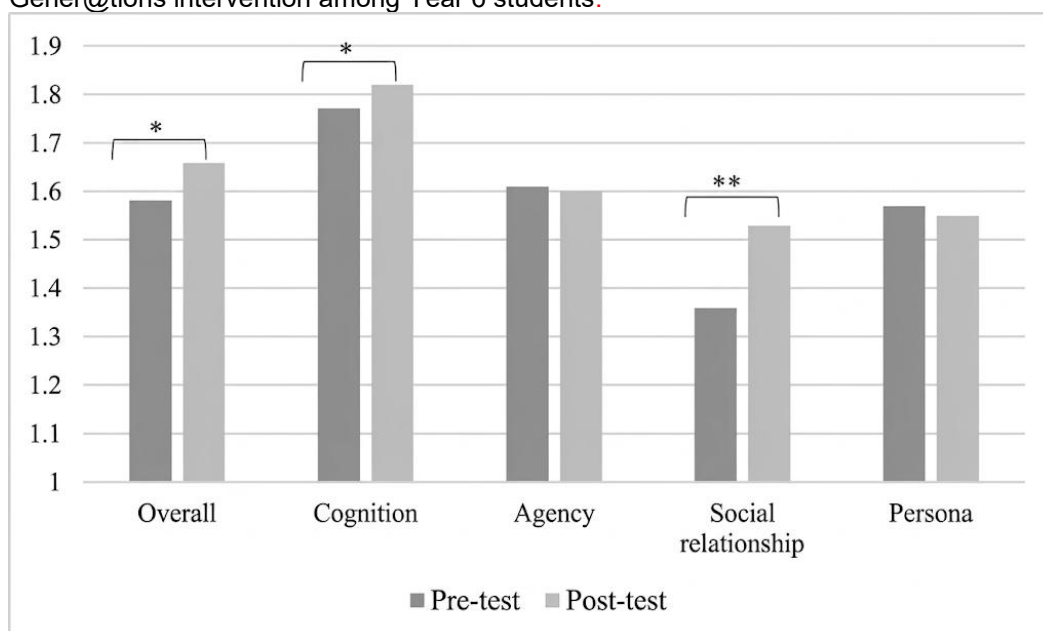
The Social Relationship domain showed the largest increase in mean score, followed by the Cognition domain, whereas little variation was observed in the Agency domain and a slight decrease was found in the Persona domain (Table 2; Figure 1). These findings suggest changes primarily in students' cognitive and relational perceptions of older adults. Facilitators' reports described greater openness to interacting with older adults and reflections on ageing during the educational activities, providing context for the quantitative findings. Similar findings have been reported in systematic reviews showing that educational programmes incorporating intergenerational contact are associated with more positive attitudes toward older adults and reduced age-related stereotypes (Peters *et al.*, 2021; Apriceno; Levy, 2023; Sanchez Sánchez; Montero García, 2025).

Table 2: Changes in attitudes toward older adults among Year 6 students before and after the Gener@tions intervention

Item	Pre-test Mean (SD)	Post-test Mean (SD)	Difference	Wilcoxon <i>z</i>	<i>p</i> value	Domain
Wise/Foolish	1.38 (0.50)	1.40 (0.60)	+0.02	-0.447	0.655	Cognition
Good-humoured/Bad-tempered	1.58 (0.60)	1.69 (0.64)	+0.11	-1.853	0.064	Social relationship
Recognized/Ignored	1.34 (0.57)	1.50 (0.63)	+0.16	-2.918	0.004	Social relationship
Cheerful/Sad	1.38 (0.47)	1.39 (0.51)	+0.01	0.577	0.564	Agency
Valued/Mistreated	1.20 (0.44)	1.40 (0.60)	+0.20	-2.409	0.016	Social relationship
Nice/Annoying	1.58 (0.60)	1.51 (0.62)	-0.07	1.476	0.140	Persona
Healthy/Ill	1.83 (0.65)	1.82 (0.71)	-0.01	-0.245	0.807	Agency
Kind/Angry	1.57 (0.60)	1.61 (0.63)	+0.04	-0.397	0.691	Persona
Generous/Close-fisted	1.57 (0.62)	1.54 (0.70)	-0.03	0.303	0.762	Persona
Clear/Confused	1.78 (0.71)	1.94 (0.80)	+0.16	-1.235	0.217	Cognition
Secure/Insecure	1.50 (0.67)	1.72 (0.77)	+0.22	-0.500	0.617	Cognition
Attentive/Distracted	1.70 (0.74)	1.95 (0.82)	+0.25	0.212	0.832	Cognition
Fast/Slow	1.58 (0.67)	1.73 (0.71)	+0.15	1.054	0.292	Cognition
Creative/Uncreative	1.56 (0.65)	1.67 (0.72)	+0.11	-2.015	0.044	Cognition

Note: Values are presented as mean (SD). Difference = post-test mean – pre-test mean. Pre- and post-test scores were compared using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. Statistically significant differences are shown in bold ($p < 0.05$)

Figure 1: Mean overall and domain-specific scores on the Todaro Scale before and after the Gener@tions intervention among Year 6 students.



Note: Higher scores indicate more positive attitudes toward older adults.

Statistical comparisons were performed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. $p < 0.05$ (*); $p < 0.01$ (**).

Qualitative results: themes, practices, and intergenerational meanings

The thematic analysis of the 20 group reports produced by undergraduate students identified two analytical categories: (1) introduction of gerontological themes and (2) pedagogical practices. Across these categories, 307 coded occurrences related to gerontological themes, pedagogical practices and intergenerational interactions were identified. The most frequent terms were “older people” and “aging”, followed by “old age”, “old”, and “intergenerationally” (Table 3).

These lexical patterns indicate that ageing-related concepts were incorporated into the reports. The frequent use of terms such as “aging”, “cycle of life”, “heterogeneity” and “longevity” suggests that the educational activities addressed ageing as a life-course process (Lytle, 2025; Burnes *et al.*, 2019).

Table 3: Most frequent words in the project's group reports

Words/concepts developed	Frequency*	%*
Older people	20	100%
Aging	20	100%
Old age	17	85%
Old	13	65%
Intergenerationally	10	50%
Cycle of life	7	35%
Longevity	7	35%
Heterogeneity	9	45%

Note: Prepared using the ATLAS.ti software.

The category “*introduction of gerontological themes*” included concepts related to the life course, heterogeneity of ageing, and longevity. The reports described educational activities using visual metaphors, narratives shared by older participants, and illustrated materials produced by students. They also described educational

objectives related to reflecting on one's own ageing process, discussing active ageing, and examining students' previous assumptions about old age.

These elements suggest that the educational activities addressed ageing as a process occurring throughout the life course and discussed variability in later life. This interpretation is consistent with studies conducted in Brazilian school settings that examined representations of ageing (Todaro, 2017; Todaro; Cachioni, 2022; Gvozdz; Dellaroza, 2012).

The category “*pedagogical practices*” included discussion circles, dramatizations, symbolic activities, sensory materials, and creative workshops. Discussion circles were the most frequently reported pedagogical strategy. The reports also documented interactions between students and older participants, including exchanges of cultural experiences and everyday knowledge. The activity records included statements such as “*old age allows one to teach, but also to learn*” and “*old age can be active*”, indicating that older participants discussed ageing in relation to learning, participation, and experience.

These findings provide context for the quantitative results, particularly the changes observed in the Cognition and Social Relationship domains of the Todaro Scale. They are also consistent with studies reporting associations between intergenerational educational activities and attitudes toward older adults (Peters *et al.*, 2021; Apriceno; Levy, 2023; Sánchez Sánchez; Montero García, 2025).

The educational activities described in the reports are consistent with the PEACE model proposed by Levy (2018), which combines education about ageing with positive intergenerational contact to address age-related stereotypes. In the present study, workshops, discussion circles, and performative activities were used as educational strategies aligned with this framework. The participation of undergraduate students as facilitators also reflects the educational dimension of the project, consistent with the principles of educational gerontology described by Peterson (1976) and Glendenning (2001).

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study was conducted in a single public school in São Paulo, which may limit the transferability of the results to other educational and sociocultural contexts. Second, the absence of a control group restricts the ability to attribute observed changes exclusively to the educational initiative, as other contextual factors may have influenced the outcomes. Third, the quantitative assessment relied on an attitudinal measure focused on perceptions of older adults and did not directly assess knowledge about ageing or constructs such as empathy. As such, interpretations should be limited to changes in attitudes rather than broader cognitive or affective dimensions. Fourth, the qualitative analysis was based on descriptive reports produced by undergraduate students and recordings of the activities, which may be subject to reporting bias and reflect the perspectives of facilitators rather than exclusively those of the participating student. Finally, the data were collected in 2019, prior to recent global developments related to population ageing and intergenerational relations. Although the topic remains highly relevant, the temporal context should be considered when interpreting the findings.

Despite these limitations, the study provides evidence suggesting the potential of educational initiatives that combine structured content with intergenerational interaction to engage students with ageing-related themes in school settings

Final considerations

The present study contributes to the Brazilian literature on gerontological education in primary and secondary school settings by examining an intergenerational educational initiative that integrates children's learning, the participation of older adults, and the practical training of undergraduate students in Gerontology.

The findings indicated changes in students' attitudes toward older adults following the intervention. Higher scores were observed for the overall scale and for the Cognition and Social Relationship domains, whereas little variation was found in the Agency domain and a slight decrease was observed in the Persona domain. These findings suggest that combining educational content on aging with intergenerational interaction may be associated with changes in children's perceptions of older adults in school contexts. The findings also support the inclusion of aging as a transversal theme within school curricula, in alignment with the goals of the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030). Future research should include larger and more diverse samples, longitudinal designs, and the involvement of families and educators to examine how attitudes toward aging develop across the life course

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