
EFFECTS OF INTERGENERATIONAL INTERACTION ON AGING

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The world population pyramid has changed shape. However, this does not mean that societies have changed their negative concept of old age. Our study proposes an intergenerational service-learning program with 179 university students and 101 slightly depressed elderly people. The results show that the elderly people who interacted improved in well-being. Those interacting with the young people tended to lower their stereotyped perception of themselves, while the others tended to augment it. The young people tended to moderate their stereotypes of the elderly with or without interaction.

There have always been elderly people, but what is new today is that they now form the largest sector of the population in industrialized societies. However, elderly people are not preparing themselves for their longer lives, nor are we receiving any information about the aging process in our homes, schools, or communities in general (McGuire, Klein, & Couper, 2005).

Nowadays, society tends to exclude the elderly. They are considered incompetent and are denied any responsibilities. This is far removed from previous societies in which, given their experience, the eldest members enjoyed a much higher status. They were

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