



Scuola universitaria professionale
della Svizzera italiana



Discussioni intorno al concetto di active ageing: origini, misurazioni e traiettorie di sviluppo da una prospettiva critica e di genere

Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana
20 dicembre 2022 | 10.30

L'evento inizierà a breve

Ai sensi dell'art. 13 del Regolamento (UE) 2016/679 si comunica che l'evento sarà registrato, e che al termine dell'evento, al fine di renderne fruibili i contenuti ai terzi anche in momenti successivi, la registrazione audio-video può essere resa disponibile su uno o canali social del progetto e/o degli enti capofila e partner.



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SUPSI



PROGRAMMA

10.30-11:00 SALUTI E INTRODUZIONE

Stefano Cavalli [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

Emanuela Sala [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

11.00-11:30 DALLA CONCETTUALIZZAZIONE ALLA OPERATIVIZZAZIONE DEL CONCETTO DI ACTIVE AGEING

Daniele Zaccaria [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

Stefano Cereghetti [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

11.30-12:00 ACTIVE AGEING & GENDER

Federica Cretazzo [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

12:00-12:30 UNA DISCUSSIONE CRITICA DEL CONCETTO DI ACTIVE AGEING DALLA PROSPETTIVA DELL'INCLUSIONE SOCIALE

Emma Garavaglia [Politecnico di Milano]

12:30-14:00 LUNCH BREAK

14.00-14:30 IS INTERNET USE A PROTECTIVE FACTOR AGAINST THE RISK OF OLD-AGE LONELINESS DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK?

Federica Cretazzo [Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca]

14:30-15:00 IL PROGETTO AGE-INT

Elia Pusterla [Scuola Universitaria Professionale della Svizzera Italiana]

15:00-15:30 DISCUSSIONE ORGANIZZATIVA ACTIVE-IT





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Emma Garavaglia

**Una discussion critica del concetto di active ageing
dalla prospettiva dell'inclusione sociale**



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From disengagement to activity

“It appeared that, under the rubric of ‘active ageing’ a **new identity for later life** had emerged and had been recognized at the highest of international levels. This new settlement held the promise of **continued fluidity of lifestyle choice** and a multiplicity of social contributions that could be made. **Dependency and disengagement, as the defining characteristics of ageing and retirement had been excised**, in line with contemporary gerontological thinking” [Moulaert, Biggs 2012:29].

Aim

- Reflecting on **neoliberal framing of old age activation – which is at the core of its link to inequality** – by drawing upon the key contributions of Critical Gerontology

Activity theory

According to activity theory “it is **better to be active than to be inactive**; to maintain the pattern characteristic of middle age rather than to move to new patterns of old age” [Havighurst Neugarten, Tobin 1968: 161].

Activity theory and active ageing paradigm

“The new policy on active ageing, in turn, benefits from both the widespread human desire to be considered active and successful on the one hand (Biggs, 2004: 96) and an academic heritage that proves as “a forerunner of productive ageing” (Moody, 2001: 181) on the other” [van Dyk 2014:95].

Points of criticism

Activity theory is based on a rather loose concept of activity (Katz, 1996: 127) and it is characterized by a too optimistic and individualistic perspective →

it disregards structural impediments to active continuity & neglect hardship and grievance in old age.

Points of criticism

- Through an emphasis on activity and productivity, a **positive image of older age is always connected with activity and health** as indicators.
- This poses the questions of what counts as an activity, especially, as active ageing discourse mainly emphasises **actions valuable for the general society**.
- The prevalence of paid work.

Points of criticism

“There is not merely a general potential to influence the ageing process in a “positive” way, but an individual responsibility to do so (Davey & Glasgow, 2006)” [van Dyk 2014:94].

- The value for society comes with the **responsibility and imperative for the individual to do their best in older age**: a necessity to challenge population ageing consequences.

The government of old age

“[...] their autonomy is regulated through **a new set of social obligations bounded by neoliberal rationality** [Laliberte Rudman, 2006:197].

Political economy of old age

The active-ageing-paradigm as a **fundamental re-negotiation of old age within its wider social, economic and political context**, characterized by marketization, internationalization and welfare state change.

Political economy of old age

“Exploitation is not the exception but the rule, deeply rooted in the concept itself” (Estes et al., 2003: 74f.).

Points of criticism

- The imperative of active ageing **takes for granted financial, social, and health resources.**

A new form of ageism?

“Holstein and Minkler diagnose a “new ageism” that “replaces an earlier generalized dread of ageing with a **more specific fear of ageing with a disability**” (Holstein & Minkler, 2003: 793). Elderly who are dependent on care or suffer from dementia or severe chronic disease **are as marginalized and stereotyped as ever, probably even more so: In times of plasticity, activation and individualization, retirees who are not ageing successfully are the “failed ones”,** those who have not worked hard enough on themselves, discovering themselves as being “transformed into passive objects” (Biggs & Powell, 2001: 96) [van Dyk 2014:96].

A new form of ageism?

- **Anti-discrimination has to be unconditional**, not based on “doing” but on “being” (ibid.: 429)
- Risk of **age-imperialism**

Old age is different

Back to human development:

- **Mature identity** (Biggs)
- **Gerotranscendence** (Tornstam)

The affirmation of differences:

- Feminist gerontologists (Andrews, Calasanti)
- “[...]‘old’ carries positive content rather than stigma as disease, mortality, or the absence of value. **Only then will old people no longer need to be ‘exceptional’ or spend their time ‘staying young’ to be acceptable; only then will they be free to be frail, or flabby, or have wrinkles — to be old, in all its diversity [Calasanti, 2003: 215].**

Old age is different (?)

“It is far less patronizing, far less self-righteous and far less ageist, to state that: [...] **they are pretty ordinary**. They have lived long lives and survived many experiences” [Bytheway, 1995: 128].

Thank you for your attention!

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