

## **The Associations of Popular Culture for Elderly People**

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**Abstract:** The present work presents the theoretical framework about the old age and aging, provoking the cultural consumption of the elderly. From this, we seek theoretical references that involve culture, in the bias of popular culture for local development. This is because it is believed that knowing the local culture is important to stimulate the growth of the region, as well as instigate the people who belong or not to that locality to know the cultural practices. The target audience in this work involves the elderly.

**Keywords:** Elderly; popular culture; local development.

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### **1. Introduction**

This paper seeks to present the attributions of popular culture to the elderly. Like other groups in society, these too have been following a fast-paced process in contemporary times, both in economic, social, political and cultural factors. It is considered here that society is marked by inequalities, but the right to culture belongs to everyone. When the elderly public is present in the cultural attributions, they develop the sense of belonging in relation to the society of which they are part.

The growth of the elderly population, encouraged by advances in quality of life and also in technologies and investments in health, makes it necessary to rethink the social issues surrounding this population. Notable is the rise in the number of older people; According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the tendency is for an exponential increase in the proportion of elderly people in society. It is predicted that in Brazil, in the year 2060, one in three individuals will be at least 60 years old (IBGE, 2015).

The new image of aging is conditioned by a dynamic and progressive process, resulting from the action of time. For Areosa (2008) the elderly person of contemporary times is showing signs of innovation in their behavior. Thus, one sees the desire to live new experiences and enjoy the possibilities offered by society. In Masi's (2000) speech, culture is a dimension of the social process, of the life of a society. It is nothing more than the result of what has been practiced in human life, consolidated in a historical construction, which rests on the pillars of freedom and inequality.

It can be said that culture is symbolic; it develops and goes from generation to generation (Mais, 2000). Popular culture is seen as important for local development as it reinforces that of inhabited space. Thus, it is considered important to seek not only to understand the participation of the innovative individual, but to see him as someone who has a tradition (CANCLINI, 2007).

Thus, this article aims to think about the attributions of popular culture for the development of the elderly in contemporary times. The next title briefly discusses the concept of culture and popular culture, based on the bibliographical references studied. The third part of this work brings the concept of aging and its repercussions on Brazilian society. Then, there is a brief discussion about the cultural consumption of this public and its possible implications on their quality of life. The final considerations bring some brief conclusions about the theoretical review presented here.

### **2. The Context of Popular Culture**

Culture is understood here as a concept that is the result of the human activity of each individual in society. It manifests and strengthens in the material and immaterial creations of people as they seek to meet their needs and adapt to the environment - also adapting the environment to themselves. It is created and transformed over time as an individual acts on nature (LAGO; ROTTA, 2017).

This sphere of human activity can also be seen as the process by which people make sense of their existence and all the things they have contact with: nature and its coexistence relations. The human being has the capacity to produce culture at the same time as it is produced by it. It involves inter subjective mechanisms that chain will, intelligence, memory, among others. As stated by Schmidt (2001, p.29),

[...] culture is a common view of reality, a shared perspective, a general agreement on what is true, right and valid. Human beings acquire their beliefs through interaction, and their truths, moral principles, values, and goals are largely socially created. The true importance of culture lies in the social construction of reality.

For Guerra e Silva (2012) culture is a polysemic term, presenting several meanings for the different authors and actors who discuss the theme. Anthropologists claim that culture is the whole of an individual's ways of living, encompassing all the material and immaterial expressions of a population.

Defining culture broadly and as an ontological constitutive element of the societies, regions, collectivities that produce them and which are produced in them, considering something that would be outside the sphere of instrumental rationality. Only in terms of the definition of cultural policies, referring to that specific way of talking about culture, relative to models of organization of the production, circulation and consumption of works of art in general; The classification, conservation and intergenerational transmission of heritage defined by experts as artistic and cultural heritage is that culture could be touched as something to be planned, organized, implemented. (WAR; SILVA 2012, p.198).

Even before contextualizing popular culture, it takes Miranda (2000) to highlight that culture is a symbol system used by individuals to organize and regulate thought. Over the years and going through the various disciplines that dealt with the cultural theme, divisions were created in the study of this broad subject. Among them, there is the popular culture. This is important because it is linked to expressions of cultural identities.

The terms "traditional popular culture" or "popular cultures", and more recently "intangible heritage", are used instead of "folklore" in most programs and actions to avoid conservative interpretations and views that term historically acquired. In these shifts of meaning, the transformations and updates on the notions of popular culture and intangible heritage maintain approximations that often allow them to be interchangeable in public policy discourses due to their own orientations and the guiding discursive field of UNESCO (BEZERRA; BARBALHO, 2015, pp. 72 - 73).

Therefore, this theme has gained the interest of spheres of public power - by encouraging the maintenance of culture - and the private - in seeking to promote cultural consumption. Therefore, it also involves public space through cultural policy projects for the strengthening and development of the site. As Canclini puts it (1989, p. 29):

[...] si entendemos por cultura (más que el mundo de los libros y las belas artes) el conjunto de procesos simbólicos a través de los cuales se comprende, reproduce y transforma la estructura social... Lo que debiéramos investigar centralmente para conocer las relaciones entre cultura transnacional y culturas populares es de qué modo los cambios políticos-económicos se combinan con la reformulación de las políticas culturales para promover una nueva cultura política, un nuevo sentido de la vida social.

Already Bezerra and Barbalho (2015) present that cultural policy defines judgments and perceptions in a field of coping, because the state's action in promoting popular cultures does not necessarily coincide with what has been built from the perspective of each group political, social and cultural. In times of change across the global landscape, it is clear that the process of globalization works to homogenize culture - especially through consumption. At the same time, expressions of cultural and identity diversity are being reborn (ORTIZ, 2015).

In capitalism, the perspectives of popular culture rely on a conjuncture of innovation, without losing their characterization. Popular culture is understood as an interesting research phenomenon, as its valorization is linked to the social imaginary, which, in turn, reflects social representations (CANCLINI, 2007). Still for the

same author, it can be recognized and estimated in many ways. As an example, one can cite the dimension of symbols through communication and affectivity, and affection is the main peculiarity of cultural appreciation.

For Canclini (2007), popular cultures can be both favorable and hybrid. In modern development, traditional cultures are transformed, incorporating new elements. They may not be fully incorporated into State action, integrating other spheres, such as trade circuits involving crafts, music and tourism. Canclini (2007) also points out that popular art is not a collection of objects, much less a subordinate ideology. An identity of popular culture cannot be sought without considering its interconnections with other cultures. The same individual can participate in several cultural circuits. Chartier (1995, p.179) presents his understanding of this concept, highlighting two moments of approach and interpretation:

The first, in order to abolish all forms of cultural ethnocentrism, conceives popular culture as a coherent and autonomous symbolic system, which functions according to a logic that is absolutely alien and irreducible to that of literate culture. The second, concerned with remembering the existence of the relations of domination that organize the social world, perceives popular culture in its dependencies and needs in relation to the culture of the dominant. So we have, on the one hand, a popular culture that constitutes a world apart, self-contained, independent, and on the other, a popular culture wholly defined by its distance from the cultural legitimacy of which it is deprived.

As noted in Canclini (2007), none of these ways of approaching the theme from these perspectives needs to be avoided. In the implicit characterization of categorization of a popular culture, Chartier (1995, p. 190) points out that

[...]this category leads us to perceive the culture that it designates as as autonomous as distant cultures and as situated symmetrically in relation to the dominant, literate, elitist culture with which it forms a pair. These two complementary illusions must be dispelled. On the one hand, popular cultures are always inscribed in an order of cultural legitimacy that imposes on them a representation of their own dependence.

In Miranda's (2000) speech, popular culture can and should assist in local development. Thus, there must be a recognition of the culture and its local peculiarities, aiming at strengthening the communities. The economy can change culture and become a possibility for ideas for new investment projections. This interference with popular culture may undercut it, but it may also act as an incentive for its development, widening access audiences.

The next title seeks to discuss the characteristics of the aging process and the concept of the elderly in the current economic and socio-political configuration. Cultural consumption aimed at the elderly public is presented as a possibility of integrating this portion of society with expressions of popular culture in their community, creating bonds and influencing their quality of life.

### **3. The Aging Process and Cultural Consumption**

Over the years there has been a great advance in science; This is gradually enabling a new and encompassing horizon for the lines of human longevity. The increased life expectancy of the Brazilian and world population is leading society to better analyze and think about the whole context that encompasses the approaches of the most diverse factors of aging.

This is part of the development of human life, being a variable process according to different cultures, historical periods, social classes, gender, lifestyle, ethnicity, profession, among other situations. It is thus necessary to consider the new demands that emerge in the scenario of an aging country with high levels of social vulnerability. Brazil goes through this process having as its field a heterogeneous scenario, marked by regional differences (LIMA, 2010).

With the growth of the elderly population, the country looks back at this public. It should be noted that the population pyramid, previously, was composed of a larger number of young people and is changing this profile, showing the aging of the Brazilian population. Within the Brazilian reality, the states where this growth is most significant are in the South and Southeast. For Netto (2002), in the year 2025 it is estimated that Brazil may be the sixth country in the world with the largest number of elderly people. As exposed by Neto and Monteiro (2008, p. 13), it is understood that aging is a period that

[...] cannot be seen as an end of life, but as a stage with its own characteristics and values and a new way of looking at the world, because citizenship is built by all individuals and is only possible when everyone has rights. and equal duties.

Silva (2009) points out that in addition to concerns about physical image, it is relevant that the elderly feel willing and / or happy to perform activities that contribute to their psychic development. Aging cannot thus coincide with the isolation and breaking of social and cultural ties. Silva (2009, pp. 46-47) highlights that:

Participating in activities scheduled to be developed in groups makes the elderly belong to a space in which its members are characterized by the desire to actively grow old, using their free time. Those elderly people seeking groups for their interaction remain socially active, self-esteeming, intellectually productive, with a large network of friends seeking to relate and interact. Thus showing conditions to discover oneself as an agent of changes in old age.

Zimmerman (2000) says that aging is a relative occurrence in the life process - along with childhood, adolescence and maturity - and is marked by specific biopsychosocial changes. These are related to the passing of the years and involve a new perception of the world and of acting in the community. It also corroborates that: "The key to good living is learning to live with these limitations. [...] is to understand, accept and strive to reduce these problems with physical exercise, walking, [...] memory exercises, good habits "(ZIMERMAN 2000, p. 23).

It is a challenge for contemporary society to rethink population aging, which has presented a panorama of changes both in cultural factors and in actions in different social fields. Thus, it is also necessary to think about the relations between this process and culture, also regarding the cultural consumption of the elderly population.

Masi (2000) says that it is possible to think about the right of the elderly to culture as a consumer of cultural goods. The meaning of consumer in a consumer society is understood as actions taken by people in situations of purchase and consumption of products and / or services. In this way, we study how individuals, groups or organizations buy, use and provide services to satisfy their needs and wants. In the sense of a consumer citizen, the author highlights the importance of being consumed with a look directed at ideological principles. As stated by Guerra e Silva (2012, p. 200), culture:

[...] describes shared similarities between people within a physical or emotional territory that make them experience a sense of unity and belonging that often unfolds into desires for cultivation and intergenerational transmission.

For the elderly, good cultural consumption can benefit them in many ways. With the greater availability of free time - considering retirement here - this population may feel more stimulated to citizen participation and involvement with society, provided that physical accessibility is assured. Therefore, it is considered important to offer affordable cultural products that are aligned with the conditions and restrictions of the elderly. Thus, it is possible that they benefit and increase their cultural consumption (MASI, 2000).

According to Acevedo (1998), physical accessibility for the elderly to make use of cultural places is fundamental. Among the cultural facilities, it highlights: the cinema, the theater, the parks and other leisure centers. The greater presence of older people in public places is, in fact, a behavioral change. This population has developed a more adventurous thinking, with the desire to live and cultivate moments. This is a reflection of a new concept of the elderly present in contemporary times. Thus, one sees a more active and participative old age, more attentive to their rights. Among these is the right to leisure which, as Masi (2000, p. 8) points out, allows for a better quality of life:

[...] the future belongs to those who know how to break free from the traditional idea of work as obligation or duty and can bet on a mix of activities in which work will be confused with free time, study and gambling. , finally with the "creative idleness".

Leisure may be associated with the consumption of cultural goods. However, this consumption is often not considered considering the possibilities and needs of the elderly population. Access to popular culture demonstrations can develop their sense of belonging to the community around them. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to ensure that older people can enjoy and contribute to cultural richness.

### Final Considerations

As seen, the aging process is complex. In contemporary times, the elderly are increasingly active and participative. The needs are changing and vary according to the cultural, social and economic characteristics of each group. The involvement of the elderly in expressions of popular culture can contribute to the development of affective bonds. In addition, knowledge of cultural diversity contributes to expand the cognitive capacities of this population.

Thus, popular culture can contribute to the development of a better quality of life for this population. In addition, it can strengthen communities, contributing to broaden the visibility of diversity and economically fostering their reproduction and transformation. Ensuring the participation of older people in this process is interesting for this population, but also for the economic interests involved.

In Chartier's (1995) speech, popular culture is understood as a plural, multifaceted and constantly moving process, since it is created and recreated daily. It is also a space of dispute, where the relations of social forces and power are reproduced. Ensuring plural access to their expressions is a way of reducing social inequalities. Therefore, it is important to think about the ways of access of the elderly population, which can not only consume, but also contribute to ensuring the continuity of cultural diversity.

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