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THE USE OF A DRAWING TOOL TO ASSESS THE IMPLICIT AGEISM OF STUDENTS

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Ageism has been generally defined as a prejudice people from a certain age group hold towards other age groups (Butler, 1969; 1975). Although such definitions do not restrict the use of the term to researching prejudices regarding a certain age group, currently ageism is deployed in studies concerning prejudices regarding older people and includes cognitive evaluations (negative stereotypes people might have regarding older people) as well as affective – emotional reactions towards older people, in different instances of daily life. Researchers admit the fact that some of the ageist reactions (both cognitive and emotional) could be captured by implicit measures. Implicit association tests have been used to measure subtle cues of ageism (see Levy & Banaji, 2002) and the validity of these measurements are largely discussed in the international psychological literature (see Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998; Rudman et al., 1999, for a review). Drawing could also be used as a tool to research implicit ageism, though it has been approached to a lesser extend to research on ageism (see for example Barrett & Cantwell, 2007). In the current research, we employ the drawing technique on a sample of undergraduate students from a public university (N=165) to assess their visual representations of older people. Examining the features of the drawing allows us to talk about implicit ageism and the way the drawing tool could be a valid tool to examine implicit ageism.

Key words: Implicit Ageism; Using Drawing Technique to Research Ageism; Students' ageism, Visual representation of old age

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STEREOTYPE ABOUT OLDER PEOPLE

When measuring attitudes of young or middle-aged adults towards the elderly, people showed an ambivalent stereotype consisting of both positive and negative attributes (Chasteen, Schwarz & Park, 2002). Starting from the observation that people rate different social groups on competence and warmth, Fiske and collaborators (2002) have found that older people are evaluated as rather incompetent and warm persons, often patronized for the association between lack of competence and explicit warmth. Moreover, older people are viewed as having low status and being non-competitive. Also, compared to younger people, older ones are viewed as friendlier but less ambitious, and less responsible. Regardless of their gender, older people are seen as more feminine than masculine (Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005). They are also seen as less competent in the workplace, even though there are studies showing higher competences of older workers in comparison to the younger ones (for a review see McCann & Giles, 2002).

Such an ambivalent stereotype (warm-incompetence) is to be found in general on groups with perceived frailty, as for example disabled people or house wives (see Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005). In this respect, the stereotypes of older persons are, generally speaking, more negative than those of young or middle age adults, though research studies found evidence for both negative and positive attributes in the attitudes towards elderly.

Furthermore, the above mentioned stereotype of ageing is pervasive. The ambivalent stereotype of older people being more warm than competent is found in several cultures and crosses national boundaries (Cuddy et al., 2009). It is a largely shared stereotype by people from both collectivist (e.g. East Asia countries) and individualist countries (USA and Western countries are typical examples in the literature). Researchers have expected to find such a stereotype to a lesser extent in the more collectivist countries, for example due to Confucianism in the East Asian Countries that values respect for older people and parental authority (Sung, 2001). Still, younger adults from China, Taiwan or Thailand showed even more negative attitudes towards older people than people from the USA in large scale surveys (see Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005). For example, in a cross-cultural study (Cuddy et al., 2009) on college students from Belgium, Costa Rica, Hong Kong, Japan, Israel, and South Korea, in all countries participants viewed older people as more warm than competent and in the three collectivist countries – Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea – this pattern was stronger than in the individualist countries. Thus we can talk about pan-ageism or cross cultural ageism, even though ageism was considered a Western term (Angus & Reeve, 2006; Nelson, 2011). The general mixed evaluative stereotype of older people also reflects changes in the Eastern cultures: these countries became more immersed in the Western individualistic values, more attached to capitalist value and less inclined to maintain generational reciprocity (Eyetsemitan et al., 2003).

Nevertheless ambivalent stereotypes, as the association between higher warmth and lower competence in the case of older people, are rather persistent (Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005). This mixed stereotype usually resists change; whenever an older person shows competence, he/she will automatically lose in terms of perceived warmth, so that the effort of increasing competence may backfire by decreasing evaluated warmth. Therefore we can talk about prejudices when evaluating older people: they elicit pity and sometimes pity accompanied by admiration (they are seen

as survivors of the traditional world – Cuddy & Fiske, 2002). For example, in the study conducted by Fiske and collaborators (2002) college students expressed pity as an emotion elicited by older people; pity was mentioned 79% more often in connection with older people than for other evaluated groups. Although admiration was the second emotion listed by college students in connection with old people, admiration was not accompanied by envy or contempt – which are emotions that normally accompanied the feelings of admiration.

There is evidence that older people also internalized the content of age stereotypes and we are facing a phenomenon of self-fulfilling prophecy (Scholl & Sabat, 2008). It is not only younger and middle-aged people who share their views on older people and experience pity in connection with their age group; older adults themselves have internalized this message, showing less trust in their competency in some areas typically associated with younger people (e.g.: technology – see for example Ivan & Schiau, 2016). This creates self-induced dependence and helplessness (Nussbaum et al., 2005) and can "push" older people in a cooperative and friendly role (consistent with the stereotype) to preserve a positive self-identity. For example, when interviewing older women regarding their use of Facebook (Ivan & Hebblethwaite, 2016), we revealed the fact that they tend to present themselves as grandmothers, as this was a role with a positive connotation in society.

EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT AGEISM

The term *ageism*, first systematically described by Butler (1969), basically refers to prejudice of one age group towards another age group. Ageism has been primarily used to describe prejudice and discrimination towards old people (Oswick & Rosenthal, 2001).

When discussing negative stereotype towards old people we consider the cognitive component of ageism. Similarly the affective reactions (prejudice) elicited by old people reflect the emotional component of ageism. The two components translate into behaviours (discrimination). We agree with Cuddy, Fiske and Glick (2004) that people who are perceived as friendly and warm, but less competent elicit help from others and are potentially socially excluded. Although help is a positive behaviour, in the long term it can generate dependency or resistance. Often older people refuse different charity activities or feel offended. Another type of behavioural ageism is social exclusion and neglect, as a consequence of perceived incompetency. Social exclusion takes various forms, from the exclusion of old workers on the labour market, to disregarded opinions in medical settings and overmedication, or avoidances and social isolation.

Normally, ageism has been assessed by explicit measures: self-reported evaluations in the form of scales and survey-based questionnaires. In this way people were asked to report their explicit attitudes towards older people (Krosnick, Judd & Wittenbrink, 2005). Data about people's views on older people described above are indications of their explicit attitudes. However, when measuring people's explicit attitudes, study participants become aware of their reactions towards the person/group which is the object of evaluation. This poses an important limitation, especially when there is a social norm inhibiting the expression of negative attitudes towards the target group (Rudman et al., 1999). We could wonder whether people are honest in their evaluations

and to which extent they want to disclose their attitudes (Greenwald, Nosek & Banaji, 2003). We believe that attitudes towards old people could be a typical example where measuring explicit attitudes is a limitation (see also Greenwald et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the current literature admits the value of implicit attitudes and implicit stereotypes – attitudes people are not aware they are expressing during a required task (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). In this way, implicit attitudes are defined as being out of the individual's control and un-intended: "implicit attitudes are manifest as actions or judgments that are under the control of automatically activated evaluation, without the performer's awareness of that causation" (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998: 1464). Consequently, implicit measurements are deployed to investigate implicit attitudes – measurements that activate people's attitudes without the respondent being aware of it, or able to conceal it. Studies on implicit attitudes (see Levy & Banaji, 2002 for a review) have shown that: (1) implicit attitudes influence explicit attitudes and behaviour, therefore their role is not to be neglected; (2) implicit attitudes do not overlap with explicit ones and peoples' attitudes towards target groups could differ when implicit and explicit measurements are employed. Thus researchers (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998) talk about *dissociation* between implicit and explicit attitudes; (3) implicit stereotypes are far more negative that the explicit ones, especially when there are strong societal norms against expressing negative stereotypes about certain groups.

Implicit racism and sexism are the most investigated implicit attitudes towards social groups (Ottaway, Hayden & Oakes, 2001; Cunningham, Preacher & Banaji, 2001; Nosek, Banaji & Greenwald, 2002), but implicit age stereotypes have been assessed as well (Bennett & Gaines, 2010; Levy, 2003; Levy, Ashman, Dror, 2000). The term "implicit ageism" has been used to describe the automatic use of stereotypes towards old people (Levy & Banaji, 2002). The results show the prominence of implicit ageism over the explicit ageism, meaning that implicit attitudes towards old people are far more negative than the explicit ones. Also, implicit ageism is consistent across the life span and does not show significant variation with age. This means that older people have internalized negative attitudes towards their own age group and elicit the same negative evaluations, particularly when implicit measurements are used (Greenwald & Farnham, 2000). Also, these studies show that implicit and explicit ageism are interplayed and mutually reinforced, and influence not only the way older people think or interact with other age groups, but also their health and well-being (Levy & Banaji, 2002). For example, when older people were exposed to implicit ageism (through priming), they showed changes in their manner of walking, and walked more slowly compared with the situation in which they were not exposed to implicit stereotypical clues (Chopik & Giasson, 2017). We are probably facing a level of saturation, during their life span, of the repetitive exposure to such negative cues associated with old people, to such an extent than the behaviour consistent with the stereotype is automatic and unwittingly activated.

USING DRAWING TOOLS TO EVALUATE PEOPLE'S VIEWS OF OLDER PEOPLE

When investigating implicit attitudes, researchers have used implicit measurements. In most of the cases, Implicit Association Tests (IAT) (Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998; Greenwald, & Banaji, 2017) have been used, seeking automatically elicited

attitudes, or using priming procedures to measure automatic affective reactions (see Greenwald, McGhee & Schwartz, 1998). The IAT tests comprise of a procedure in which participants involuntarily associate a target concept (e.g. being old) with an attribute dimension. In the first step, target concept discrimination occurs, or the initial discrimination – for example people are asked to distinguish between old and young faces. This initial discrimination is performed by asking participants to use, for example, their left hand for a type of answer and the right hand for the other type of answer. Then, people are asked to make rapid responses when they categorise stimuli from the two target groups (e.g. old and young people) on different bi-polar attributes (e.g. Likeable and Unlikeable) using the same procedure (their left hand for one type of answer and the right hand for the other type of answer). The response times are calculated in a computer-administered setting and the latency of responses relative to baselines are considered an indicator for implicit stereotypes. IAT starts from the assumption that respondents react faster on association which is common to them, as for example young-likeable; old-unlikeable and react slower on the association that is not mentally associated with the target group, and consequently not that common to them.

IAT procedure has also been used to assess implicit ageism. For example, in a research study conducted on university students, IAT has been used to measure their implicit attitudes towards older workers versus younger workers. The results of this particular study show that implicit attitudes towards older workers, particularly older women, were far more negative than explicit attitudes, which were to a greater degree influenced by social norms and impression management. Also, the study revealed no association between the implicit and explicit attitudes measured, providing evidence for the *dissociation* process discussed by Levy and Banaji (2002).

Although IAT is considered the most reliable and accurate procedure to measure implicit attitudes (Perugini, 2005; Greenwald et al., 2009), other indirect measurements have been implemented as well, in the attempt to reveal implicit cognitions, especially in the area of prejudice (see Greenwald & Banaji, 2017 for a review). In some cases, nonverbal cues (such as social distance and eye contact) have been used to describe people's implicit attitudes (see Word, Zanna & Cooper, 1974; Dovidio, Kawakami & Gaertner, 2002); or lost-letter technique (Milgram, 1969; Cialdini & Baumann, 1981) – aiming to investigate the tendency of people to send letters as a result of their attitudes towards different target groups/organizations.

Although the use of drawing tools is indicated in the literature as a reliable technique to study attitudes and prejudice especially in classrooms, few studies that we know about have employed drawing tools to study ageism (Barrett & Cantwell 2007; Falchikov, 1990; Lichtenstein et al., 2005). In Falchikov (1990) for example, a small group of children (N=28) aged 10 to 11 years, was asked by their teacher to draw a young man, a young woman, an old man and an old woman, with no further indications. All children performed the drawings and the items were analysed using a content analysis technique, intended for use in testing mental abilities (DAP, Draw-a Person), developed by Goodenough (1926) and refined by Harris (1961). DAP is a standardized measure, coming with instruction for administration and scoring that was adapted in the study of Falchikov (1990) to assess children's attitudes of older persons. The results show the fact that children hold negative stereotypical images of older people, particularly of older men. Loneliness, difficulty to walk (especially in the case of older men) and other signs of physical degradations were present in the children's sketches. Still, this

study does not claim to study children's implicit attitudes. The only study we know about, in which authors aim to study implicit attitudes towards old people using drawing tools, is the one conducted by Barrett & Cantwell (2007). Note that in this study the term "implicit ageism" was not used. Data collected on a relatively large sample of undergraduate students (N=183) consisted of drawings of older people. Students were asked to draw a picture of an older person, during an undergraduate course of *Aging and the Life course*, with no further indications. Subsequently, the drawings were analysed using a flexible methodology and techniques of content analysis. The data collection was not followed by interviews with the students, but the authors conducted class discussions to gain insight about the choices made when drawing an old person. The results are consistent with the ones found in the literature when studying implicit ageism: ambivalent stereotypes consisting of positive and negative attributes are found in the content of the sketches. Among the negative attributes: impairment, impotence, ugliness and isolation are the ones depicted in the students' drawings. Also older men were more negatively represented in comparison with older women – who were more often associated with positive attributes related to being a grandmother: kindness and interest in cooking. Though this research study did not compare students' implicit attitudes with their explicit attitudes towards older people, the fact that one third of the sketches showed walking problems, and that in one fourth of them the facial expression of the older people were indeterminate, could indicate that students' implicit attitudes towards older people are more negative than the ones resulting from other studies in which college students were explicitly asked about their views about older persons (see for example Cuddy, Norton & Fiske, 2005). Also, this study shows that ageism and sexism interact in the implicit views students hold about old people: older women elicited less negative implicit reactions than older men. Still, students were more inclined to draw men than to draw women when they were asked to draw an old person (see also Lichtenstein et al., 2005 – with similar findings). This in itself could be an indicator of implicit ageism, as older men elicited more negative reactions than older women.

CURRENT STUDY

In the current study, we started from the findings of Barrett & Cantwell (2007) and argue that drawing tools are valid approaches to study implicit ageism, not only in children, but also in adults.

The data presented in the current paper represents the first stage of a two-stage research project, namely a qualitative-quantitative analysis of drawings made by students and depicting old people. The second step will consist of conducting semi-structured interviews with the study participants, to understand their motivations for depicting older adults in a certain way. The results will be presented in a subsequent article.

By asking people to draw sketches, giving them few indications about the content or guidelines (e.g. what to draw), we open a window to their automatic cognitive processes and their immediate emotional reactions. The current research aims to answer the following research questions:

(RQ1) What characteristics of older people do students choose to draw, when they are openly asked to visually represent an old person?

(RQ2) Could we employ drawings to reveal implicit ageism? If so, what would be the limits and advantages of using drawings to access implicit attitudes?

We depart from the standardized procedure of DAP (Draw-a-Person), implemented by Falchikov (1990) and we did not specifically ask people to draw a young person (woman and man) and an old person (woman and man) – a situation in which respondents become aware of the evaluation process asked from them. Instead, we employed a more flexible procedure in which respondents were asked to sketch rapidly things that come to their mind, with no preoccupation about the style of the quality of the drawings. It is true that drawing tools access partially implicit ageism by conveying meaning of our stereotypes or prejudices and one can hardly say that people (especially adults) do not control their reactions and are not aware of what they draw (as in the IAT procedure). Still, drawing tools allow access to subtle cues and latent aspects of people's attitudes, and this might offer the possibility to more deeply explore their attitudes and convey their implicit nature.

Method

The study was designed to explore visual representations of old age and implicit ageism by means of analysing drawings made by Romanian undergraduate students. We used content analysis of the students' drawings of old people in order to investigate how participants picture old age, and to reveal features of implicit ageism. A mixed qualitative-quantitative approach was used to code the visual content and group the data into categories. Content analysis techniques of the drawings have been previously used to investigate stereotypes of old age (Falchikov, 1990; Levy & Banaji, 2002; Barrett & Cantwell, 2007). As documented in the existing literature, drawings could be useful in exploring implicit ageism, as participants express their thoughts about old people in an unusual manner.

Participants

A total of 165 first year undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Communication and Public Relations participated in the study. The participants were mostly women, reflecting the structure of the student body for this study program; 37 participants were men, 111 were women, and 17 students did not report their gender. The group was highly homogenous in terms of age. The mean age of participants was 19 (SD=.65).

Procedure

In a class setting, the students were asked to *draw an old person*. The students were asked to complete the task in 10 minutes. Participants were given no additional information about the characteristics of the drawing but were asked to include a title for the drawing, and to write down the sex and age for both themselves and for the old person that they drew (whether the person they drew was male of female and how old they think the person is). No other preparatory training was conducted. Students were asked to volunteer for this task and did not receive any incentive for it.

Treatment of data

A content analysis of the drawings was conducted, and the principal characteristics of all the drawings were noted. Data was coded considering several variables: height of the drawing (in centimetres), age and gender of both the drawer and the drawn old person, titles that students had suggested for their drawings, the presence of a grandfather/grandmother role – from the title, elements that indicate loneliness or difficulties, elements that indicate successful ageing, clear positive or negative attributes, facial expressions. Titles were re-coded according to the main themes emerging, using two independent coders from the research team. Inter-coder reliability was calculated (Kalpha=.84) in order to assure a good reliability of the variables.

RESULTS

Ageing and Gender

Out of the 165 drawings obtained, 83 were drawings of older men and 82 drawings of older women. There was a visible inclination for the students to draw an older person of their own gender. Out of the 37 men in the sample, 84% drew older men, while 16% drew older women. Comparably, out of the 111 women in the sample, 61% drew older women, while 39% drew older men; though the preference for drawing an older person of their own gender is prevalent in the group of women, the data also shows the female students were more inclined than the male students to depict members of the opposite sex.

The students were asked to indicate the age of the old person they were asked to draw. The indicated ages ranged from 40 to 84, with the mean age being 65.87 (SD=8.59).

Titles

The titles the students chose for their drawings we re-coded according to the main themes emerging. The categories of titles that resulted are as follows: *titles that identified the drawn person as a grandparent* (for example: "my grandfather", "a grandmother"), *titles that mentioned themes of difficulty, loneliness or frailty* (for example: "the old man with a cane", "the woman with a short leg", "loneliness", "the upset old retired man"), *titles that focused on positive aspects* (for example: "smiling little old lady", "glad granny"), *titles that showed elements of successful ageing* (for example: "age is just a number", "stylish little old lady on the bus", "fashionable old man"), *titles that focused primarily on the drawn person being old, or mentioned the passage of time, changes brought by time* etc. (for example: "changing years", "the years leave their mark", "old man"), and *titles that used diminutives* (for example: "the little old woman in the park", "little old lady") – these categories were treated as non-exclusive – for example, the title "stylish little old lady on the bus" is, at the same time, suggestive of ideas of successful ageing, and also uses a diminutive.

Table 1 – Percentages of different types of titles attributed to the drawings, by gender of the drawn person

Types of titles	Men (N=83)	Women (N=82)	Total (N=165)
Grandparent role	7%	28%	18%
Difficulty, loneliness or frailty	11%	5%	8%
Positive aspects	25%	12%	19%
Successful ageing	20%	17%	21%
Diminutives	0%	13%	7%

Diminutives were used in 7% of the total drawings, but were, in fact, only used for women. Out of the 82 drawings of women, 11 (13%) had diminutives in the title, while none of the drawings depicting men were described with diminutives. Conducting a cross-tabulation, the data revealed that, out of the 11 diminutives used to describe women, these were twice used in connection with scenarios of successful ageing (for example: "stylish little old lady on the bus"), six times connected with being a grandmother (for example: "granny out shopping"), and four times combined with positive attributes (for example: "smiling little old lady").

Identifying the drawn older person as a grandparent occurred for 18% of the drawings, and was significantly more frequent in the case of women (28%) rather than men (7%) – $t(129, df=15)= -3.61$, $p =.00$.

Titles suggestive of scenarios of successful ageing were present in 21% of all the drawings; 17% of the drawings depicting older women were found to fit in the successful ageism framework, as were 20% of the drawings showing men, but the difference is not significant.

THE HEIGHT OF THE DRAWINGS

The height of drawings ranged from 3 to 29 centimetres. Most drawings were between 11–15 centimetres (33%) and between 16–20 centimetres (and 32%); 4% were between 0–5 centimetres, 17% between 6–10 centimetres, 12% between 21–25, 2% between 26–30 centimetres. The overall mean size of all the drawings was 16.41 centimetres (SD=6.34), with no significant difference in the sizes of the old women (mean height=17.20, SD=6.45) and old men drawn (mean height=15.45, SD=6.37). However, the types of drawings ranged, students drawing one of three: a full-body depiction, only heads, or upper bodies only (full torso or part of a torso). Therefore, sizes must be analysed according to these three types of depictions.

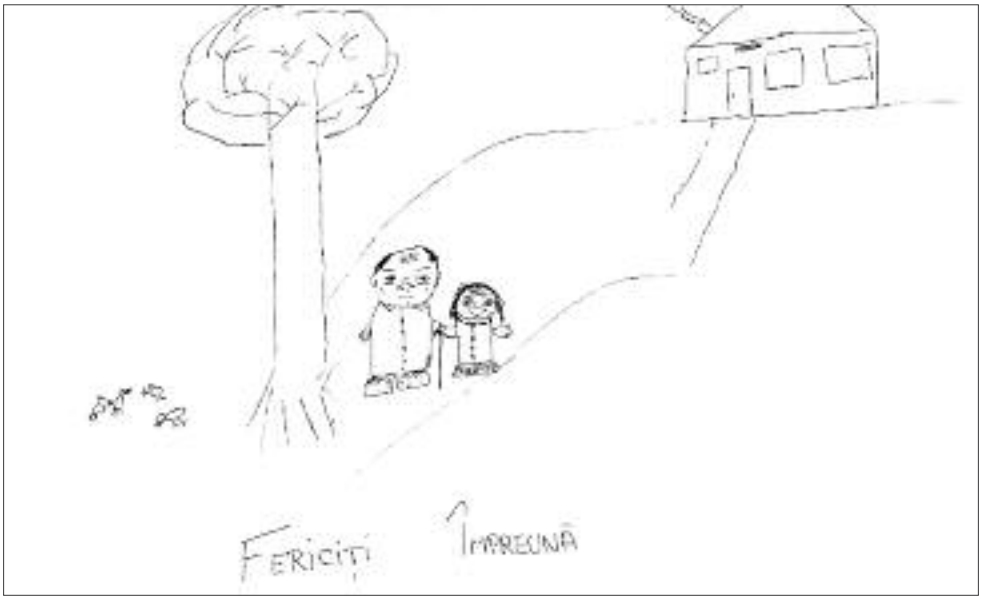
In the case of the 31 drawings that only depicted faces, 21 showed old men (mean size=14.12, SD=6.40), and 10 depicted old women (mean size=16.15, SD=4.57). Though that data suggests that, on average, the size of the old women drawn is bigger than that of the men, the difference is not statistically significant. We can only speculate about the students' decision to draw more men, rather than women, as heads only. Future studies should employ a follow-up discussion with students about their perceived reasoning behind the drawings, and the body parts they chose to depict.

In the case of drawings that only depicted upper bodies, 20 drawings were of men (mean height=16.50, SD=8.47), and 29 showed women (mean height=20.78, SD=7.36). The gender difference in height is not statistically significant.

In the case of drawings that depict the whole human figure, the distribution was equal, as was the height of the drawn old people: 42 were older men (mean height =15.61, SD=5.15) and 43 were older women (mean height=15.03, SD=5.08). The gender difference in height is not statistically significant.

There are only two drawings in which older adult couples are depicted, and in both cases the women are smaller than the men, by an average of 4.5 centimetres (Figure 1). Previous studies that have employed a drawing-based analysis have discussed the relevance of the sizes of drawn characters (see Falchikov, 1990), where figures depicted as more important are drawn bigger than others.

Figure 1. Visual representations of old age: old couple



NEGATIVE STEREOTYPES ABOUT OLD AGE

Facial Expressions

One aspect we can look at, to analyse the way older adults are presented and to seek signs of implicit ageism, is the facial expressions that the students drew for them. When looking at the presence of smiles, they were clearly more frequently present in the drawings of women – 40% of women were depicted as smiling, while only 23% of men were drawn with smiles (Table 2). This difference proved to be statistically significant – $t(158, df=15) = -2.45$, $p = .01$). The female student participants drew more smiles (33) than the male students did (19). Most drawings showed faces with neutral expressions or expressions that were difficult to decipher (71% of men and 54% of women) while negative facial expressions, such as frowns or "upside down smiles", were very infrequent (6% of men and 7% of women). These finding are in line with previous studies that employed a similar drawing-based methodology to assess student representations of older adults (Barrett & Cantwell, 2007).

Table 2 - Percentage of facial expressions of emotions displayed per gender

	Men (N=83)	Women (N=82)	Total (N=165)
Facial Expressions			
Smiling	23%	40%	32%
Neutral	71%	54%	61%
Negative (sad/angry)	6%	7%	7%

Wrinkles, Glasses and Walking Sticks

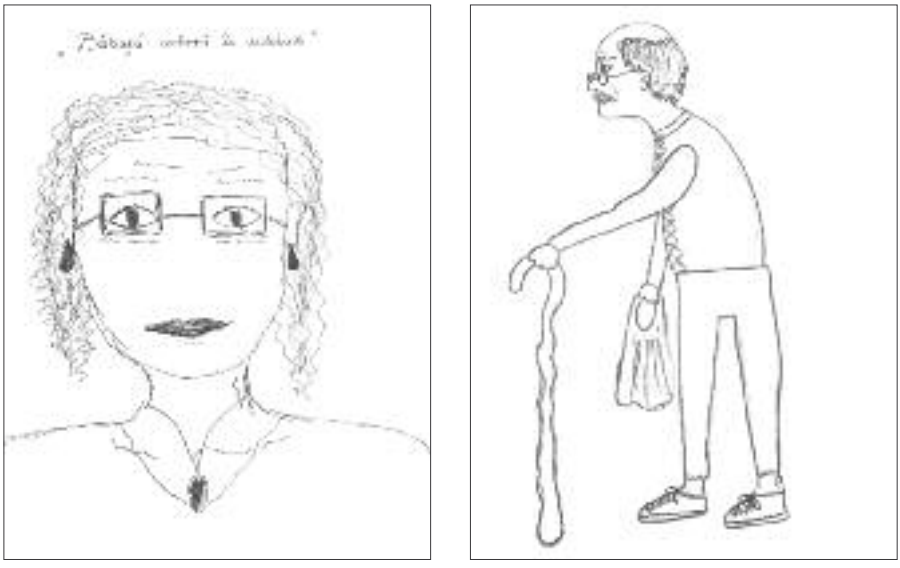
Other characteristics that emerged from the drawings and were related to stereotypical items associated with old age that suggest a deterioration of health, such as glasses, wrinkles and walking aids, canes/walking sticks (Figure 2).

Table 3 – Percentage of stereotypical attributes of old age that suggest deterioration of health

	Men (N=83)	Women (N=82)	Total (N=165)
Walking stick	36%	24%	30%
Glasses	33%	40%	36%
Wrinkles	76%	83%	79%

Wrinkles were the most frequently recurring characteristic, irrespective of age, with 79% of all drawings presenting facial wrinkles. They appeared more often in the drawings that showed women, but the gender difference was not statistically significant. A high proportion of the drawn older adults were featured wearing glasses (36%) and using walking sticks (30%). The drawings of older women contained fewer walking sticks and more glasses, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Figure 2. Visual representations of old age: wrinkles, glasses and walking sticks



Stereotypical Activities

Figure 3. Visual representations of old age: Stereotypical activities

Though statistically negligible, there were several pictures depicting men performing retirement-specific activities, such as walking in parks or large outdoor spaces. Several of the women were depicted doing grocery shopping or carrying utility-type bags (such as shopping bags, returning from the market – 13%) or in the presence of food (8%), suggesting both a nurturing side to the old women in the drawings, and a gender-specific stereotype (Figure 3). In contrast, several of the older men were drawn as smoking or drinking (5%). Only three drawings showed older adults with other people (in two of the cases, with a life partner, and once with a grandchild). There were also two drawings that showed older adults with pets – an old man walking a dog, and an old woman with a cat. The fact that the older people were, in 93% of the drawings, depicted alone, could also be indicative of the stereotype of older adults as lonely and having a reduced social network. Though not prevalent and not statistically significant, several titles mentioned loneliness or difficulties; one drawing depicted an old man visiting a loved one's grave.

Clothing, Hairstyles and Accessories

Out of all the older women with full bodies drawn, only 9% wore trousers, the rest being depicted as wearing skirts and tops (72%), and, in a few cases, dresses (19%). The women in the drawings wore 'sensible' shoes, such as nondescript flat shoes (49%), boots (12%) or trainers (5%). Only 9% of women wore high heels. For several drawings of the older women, the feet were not drawn, or were simple stick figures, which did not feature shoes.

Two predominant images of women emerge from the drawings. One is that of the traditional old woman, wearing a headscarf (12%), dressed simply, with a skirt and blouse, reminiscent of an older woman living in the countryside. This type of drawing did not feature other accessories, such as jewellery or hair adornments. Another predominant image is that of the well-groomed, slightly more stylish older woman, who wears necklaces and earrings, hair accessories such as bows, flowers, head bands or hats (15% of drawings had at least one of these features). This representation of an old woman is more likely to have her hair up in a bun (12%) or to have long hair (22%).

However, 52% of all the older women drawn had short or medium hair, which can be interpreted as indicative of an age-specific gender stereotype, reflecting the widespread belief that, as women get older, their hair should get shorter. Men were most often depicted as having short hair; only 13% of the older men had balding or receding hairlines. Facial hair, a stereotypical indicator of masculinity, was also frequently present in the case of men, 21% having a beard and 23% a moustache.

We computed a new variable that measured the total number of accessories/characteristics that each drawing contained. This variable consisted of all the accessories and items each drawn person was given, be they glasses, walking sticks, clothing items, jewellery, hats and headscarves, body piercings, shoes. Overall the drawings of older women had slightly more accessories and details (M=3, SD=2) than those of men (M=2.67, SD=2.07), but the difference did not prove to be statistically significant. Falchikov (1990) argued that a limited and frequently repeated number of characteristics depicted could suggest some degree of stereotyping.

POSITIVE STEREOTYPES ABOUT OLD AGE

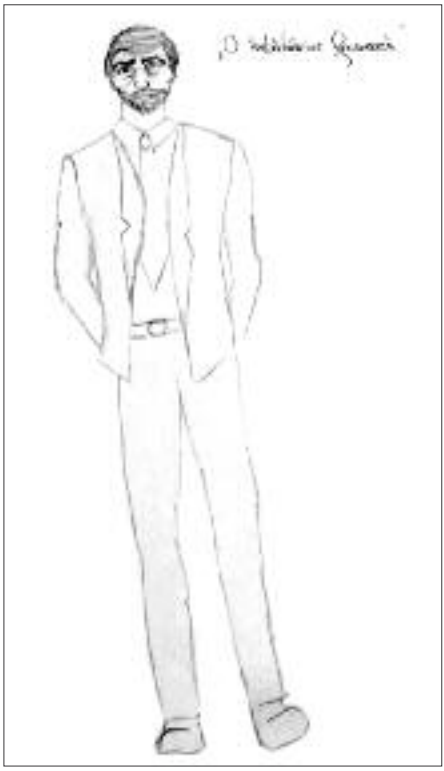


Figure 4. Visual representations of old age: Successful ageing

Positive representations of old age emerged from the drawings. Old age was pictured through positive stereotypes like kindness and being nurturing, and through elements of successful ageing. Still, some gender differences arise. Only women were represented through the idea of kindness and being nurturing, as they were pictured buying, possessing, or offering food (8%). In this case, the old age stereotype is coupled with the gender stereotype. The gender role is also visible when looking at the tendency to assign a grandparent role to the drawn person: 23 of the titles mentioned grandmothers and only 6 of them mentioned grandfathers.

In the case of successful ageing the gender differences were not significant. 21% of the titles were coded through the successful ageing theme (20% men, 17% women). Titles that were coded as suggestive of successful ageing expressed the idea that *age is just a number* and *it's possible to age nicely* (Figure 4). Although we have coded these titles as indicative of the successful ageing theme, most of them did not explicitly mention the social, health or labour dimensions. Still, the drawings that depicted the idea of travelling, being good-looking, along with smiles and optimism portray successful ageing.

DISCUSSION

In the current research, we used students' drawings to assess their implicit attitudes towards older people. Starting from Levy and Banaji's (2002) distinction between explicit and implicit ageism, we argue that drawing tools could be seen as alternative techniques to access subtle attitudinal cues, besides the Implicit Association Tests (IAT) that have been largely used to study implicit attitudes. In the following, we will summarise the main findings and relate them to other studies on ageing stereotypes using drawings. We relate particularly with the study of Barrett and Cantwell (2007), the only one we know in which participants were adults (students), as in our sample. Similarly to our study, Barrett and Cantwell (2007) explicitly claimed to research implicit attitudes, though the term "implicit ageism" was not used as such.

First, we found that students drew both old men and old women to relatively the same extent, contrary to other studies (e.g. Falchikov, 1990; Lichtenstein et al., 2005) that show that when researching implicit attitudes adults are more inclined to draw men and show more negative attitudes compared to the explicit measurements of ageing stereotypes. We also saw that students show a preference to draw a person from their own gender group. This is an interesting finding that has not being revealed by other similar studies, probably due to the fact that most of the studies using drawings were conducted on children. In the current study we found evidence for a projection mechanism: adult people tend to draw older people from their own gender group, probably as a projective self. This will probably create a more positive implicit and explicit attitude towards ageing and could be an explanation of the ambivalent ageing stereotype.

Second, similarly to Barrett and Cantwell (2007), and also to studies conducted on children, we found that old women were depicted in more positive terms compared to old men. They were often presented in a grandmother role, as friendly, serving food and showing positive emotions. Also titles associated with the drawings of older women included diminutives, and this did not happen in sketches of old men. We can interpret diminutives as a sign of a positive attitude but also as a way of infantilizing old people. As Levy and Banaji (2002) underlined, one way to fight implicit ageism is to control the infantilizing language when addressing older people. Also, similarly to other studies that have researched age stereotype, we found evidence for including physical degradation in the sketches: both in the titles and in the visual representations of older people. In other studies (e.g. Falchikov, 1990; Lichtenstein et al., 2005) difficulty to walk or baldness were signs of physical degradation, especially in drawings that included old men. We found the same, that such physical trace of old age and frailty were more present in the pictures in which old men were depicted. One possible explanation is that general implicit attitudes are far more negative in the case of older men, than for older women, as studies presented in the current paper underlined. Another explanation could be the fact that students used their own grandmothers as anchors, in sketches representing older women. Some explicitly said this in the titles: "my grandmother", but the frequency to which students have used their grandparents as anchors for their drawings remains unknown and it is one limitation of the current study. The next step in this research project will combine drawing tools with interview techniques and open discussions over the drawings, in an attempt to reveal how students' visual representations of older people change as a result of their anchors (for example, drawing an old person

in general or starting from someone real – an older adult with a significant role in their lives). In fact, there is evidence that when subjects are asked to evaluate specific older people, their explicit attitudes become more positive than when people are asked to evaluate old people in general. Our research proved that this might be the case also when people's implicit attitudes are investigated. These aspects will be considered in the next stage of the current research, in which the quantitative-qualitative mix will be replaced with semi-structured interviews, leading to less flexible coding.

Third, we found evidence for the successful age rhetoric in the students' sketches. The idea of ageing well and being responsible for your own process of ageing is dominant in Western countries, pervasive in the EU rhetoric (see Rozanova, 2010; Duduciuc, 2016) and seems to influence students' choices in drawing older adults. If indeed some of the students use projective mechanisms when drawing the sketches, the successful ageing cues could be part of an internalised successful ageing discourse: students would like to be successful older adults showing little signs of physical degradation, fashionable clothing and fit bodies. Such clues are found in the sketches presenting positive views on older age. Again, interviewing students about the meaning of their drawings could shed light over the way projective mechanisms have interfered in their choices.

Finally, we can ask ourselves whether drawing tools are valid ways to access implicit ageism. There is no doubt that drawing has a not that limited level of control of Implicit Association Tests (IAT) – in which people are not aware of their reactions to presented stimuli and have no ability to control them. Still, when drawing, we do not access the same level of control as when we formulate answers in self-reported surveys. We are less aware of subtle cues which transcend our intention to present ourselves in a positive way to others and to inhibit reactions that might be disliked by the society. Therefore when using drawing techniques we access an intermediate level of control by which we can provide evidence of people's implicit-explicit attitudes. To prove such a statement one should compare the results of different techniques (IAT, survey measures, drawings) using similar samples and the same target group and reveal the differences. This is what we intend in our further work on visual ageism (a term coined by Loos and Ivan in 2018).

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