

INFO- 77

Primljeno/Received: 2014-02-15

UDK: 316.77:659.2:007

Authors Review/Pregledni rad

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERGENERATIONAL INTEGRATION AND COMMUNICATION ON FORMING THE VIEW ON QUALITY AGING

Mateja Berčan, Mateja Berčan
Alma Mater Europaea, Maribor, Slovenia

Abstract

Intergenerational integration is an ideal form of achieving intergenerational solidarity, which has a great deal of importance today, as ever, because of the increasing growth of the elderly population. Few things contribute as much to the fact that the elderly are able to experience their lives as something of value, as does the fact that the younger generation takes their life experiences seriously and listens to them. The young people who socialize with other generations have a more positive view on aging and gain role model for their own old age. The study is to determine the impact the older generation has on the younger, and emphasize the conscious effort for preserving and strengthening intergenerational relationships with the younger generation is one of the needs that must be satisfied for achieving quality aging.

Keywords: youth, older generation, intergenerational integration, old age, quality aging

Introduction

The driving force of societal development is constant complementation of interpersonal relations, especially between generations. The contact between the younger and the older generation is of grave importance for better evolution of the first generation. For a child to grow up to be a mature, independent, and balanced adult, that child – small as well as a teenager – needs a large investment of dedicated time, human emotions, and personal life experience from the two older generations.

No less important is the intergenerational contact for the older generation. The younger generation is full of life, effervescent, at the forefront of the development with its views, and has all the life's possibilities ahead of them. When in contact with them, the older generation relives their youth, so to be able to live their old age to the fullest and with quality, as they share and transfer their experience and wisdom to the younger generations. Thus, they maintain a positive image of self and, with that, meaning in life.

Therefore, it is necessary to pay more attention to intergenerational integration, as the aims of such integration positively influence the views

of the younger generations on aging. More importantly so, it offers ideals and examples of quality aging, self-image improvement, increase in self-confidence, and a feeling they are able to do something for their social environment and for selves. As for the older generation, they share and exchange their knowledge and experience, and consciously contribute to quality aging and care for emotional well-being. Furthermore, they expand their social networks and preserve autonomy and individuality, which are fundamental elements of quality of life.

Theoretical framework

The older generation is faced with numerous changes – adjustment to retirement, having trouble with accepting the new social status, feeling inferior and a burden to society, suddenly they are faced with excess of time, and besides all that, their circle of social contacts diminishes. Feelings of loneliness occur, as well as of remoteness and worthlessness. The younger generation on the other hand faces problems on the most important fields of life, crucial for social promotion and maturing (schooling pressure, employment), the emo-

tional problems. Determining psychological and social problems and vulnerability of the youth, a high level of self-destruction, feelings of uncertainty, guilt, and demoralized attitude towards the world and life were discovered. Most of all, it is alarming that for over one third of the youth, negative self-image, low self-respect, and depressive and even self-destructive attitude towards life are typical /1/. So, a question is to be asked how we are to avoid all these negative influences of old age, youth, and stereotypes. Bernard /2/ has suggested that intergenerational practices and programmes can be grouped according to the social issues they address: intergenerational learning, which might, for example, aim to improve educational outcomes in young people; care and support initiatives, designed to assist in resolving substance abuse problems or, on a different level, supporting older people with specific physical or mental health needs, such as dementia; and, finally, in the area of community-based initiatives, addressing such issues as environmental regeneration activities or problems of social exclusion. In that, the results of Voluntary work of high school and elementary school students program (volunteers between 15 and 19 years of age and seventh and eighth grade of elementary school) that formed in various retirement homes are very interesting. The findings show young students bring life joy and happiness to the retirement homes, helping the elderly with overcoming the feelings of loneliness, numbness, worthlessness, and concurrently allowing them to at least partly compensate for the loss of the previous social environment. More than that, the elderly transfer their rich life experiences to the youth, and therefore raise them and teach them how to live /3/. In this manner, the quality of living in old age increases among the elderly generation, and the younger generation gains examples and role models. When the elderly people do not accept their age and do not realize its specific abilities and tasks, the younger generation has no living proof that old age is a meaningful part of life as well. The meaning of life is a quality whole: if old age, with its tasks and death, is perceived as meaningless, then human life as a whole cannot be meaningful either /4/.

Majhenič /5/ explains that with help of intergenerational integration, the older generation maintains autonomy and individuality. Among them are encouraging responsibility, creativity, and personal characteristics, which are to ensure independent and autonomous life for as long as possible. The second aim of intergenerational integration is maintaining contact with families, neighborhood, peers, and especially members of the other two generations. The third goal is care for information accessibility on everything important for the older generation (different sorts and kinds of help for satisfying their material and non-material social needs and protection of their rights). The fourth is the development of the young persons' self-image, self-confidence, and the feeling they too are able to do something for their social environment and selves. The fifth goal is for the young to learn to reflect moral and ethical dimensions of interpersonal relations and social developments, to develop positive moral and ethical concepts, and to learn organizational, communicational and other social skills. Last but not least, the aim is to experience efficiency of their performance, such experience strengthens their personalities and activates them to take responsibility for their own lives. It is thought that some of the more obvious outcomes of intergenerational practice for the individuals concerned can be to foster a sense of improved self-esteem, purpose and well-being. When practice involves activities at the community level, these can have the effect of improving relations between different cultural groups, of changing perceptions about such issues as community safety and risks of crime /6/. Although many positive outcomes are anticipated from intergenerational practice, critiques have drawn attention to several factors which need to be in place before their potential can be fully achieved /7/. First, there is a general consensus that the notion of intergenerational practice itself needs more clarification in terms of the age groups considered, whether the activities included are multi- or intergenerational and whether they should encompass family interactions and relationships /8/, /9/. Intergenerational practice, then, appears as a mechanism through which to promote social solidarity both at the micro

level of individual interaction and at the broader, meso- and macro-social levels of community and society /10/.

Methodology

The study includes four participants, two of them representing the older generation and two the younger one. Representing the older generation are two retirees, aged 69 and 80 years. The younger generation is represented by two high school students, aged 17 and 19 years. Among the both generations, one respondent participates in programs for intergenerational integration, the other one does not. Similarly, one of the younger generation representatives participates in the programs and the other does not. Bernardka is from Ljubljana, retired, and aged 69 years. She very much likes to socialize with younger people, because as she says herself – the elderly understand the younger, as they have already experienced their youth, but the youth just cannot understand the older generation, as they did not yet experience old age. Pavla, aged 80 years, is from Ljubljana, too. Very vital lady but has very bad experience with her grandchildren. For years she has tried to establish positive relations with them, but admits that she did it in a very intrusive way and with excessive worry. She believes exactly that was what turned them away from establishing any kind of relationship with their grandmother. Barbara, 17 years old, from Hrastnik, believes intergenerational integration can greatly affect improvement of relationships with grandparents, for in her environment she only had disrespectful and bad examples. Barbara participates in intergenerational programs. Klemen, 18 year old from vicinity of Grosuplje, a vocational high school student, did not acknowledge intergenerational relations much up until now.

We conducted the interviews individually and anonymously, the names of the respondents are changed. Mostly, we conducted the interviews at interviewees' homes in a very pleasant and hospitable atmosphere. Some of the study participants responded very meticulously and did not lose thread of the conversation, though some of them took a different turn and

we had to ask additional questions to lead them back to the main topic.

In this study, we use qualitative analysis. With help of semi-structured interviews, we determine the views and opinions of the younger and the older generation on quality aging and the importance of intergenerational integration. We did not use a pre-prepared questionnaire, but only a basis for the interview, which is a list of story line and not of detailed questions. We prepared different conversation topics for whether the interviewees participate in the intergenerational integration programs or not. The main data of the qualitative analysis are text descriptions, whereas the study findings are processed and analyzed descriptively, without using measuring procedures. The qualitative study is a series of short, consecutive research cycles or sequences, in which problem formation is followed by data collection and analysis, then formulation of a new problem, re-collecting data, re-analyzing, etc. While researching, more and more we were refreshing and expanding our knowledge on the studied topic, especially on the views of the younger generation on quality aging, how older generation is experiencing old age, and how both, the younger and the older generation experience intergenerational integration. With their answers, we tried to determine their actual, unique attitude towards these questions. In qualitative research, we have an explanation prepared for every studied action, and all the while the study takes place, we do nothing but test each individual aspect of the explanation, refresh and deepen it, as to ultimately find a relatively probable theory /11/.

Analysis

For data analysis, we chose units from the analyzed interview, wherein we recognize the individual parts that pertain to definition and explanation of asked study questions. We chose numerous coding units, which are important for the study. With the help of a description method and coding, we qualitatively analyze the summarized data. Formation of the main concepts follows, which at the end of analysis, we link into judgments.

Experiencing quality aging

We determine how the older and the younger generations view quality aging and discover whether there are some differences in perceiving quality aging among those who participate in intergenerational integration programs and those who do not participate in such programs. Bernardka

What is your view on quality aging? How did you picture it before education? ...that I must love myself, give the body and soul what attracts you and meet people and their contents... all that helps me to discover who I am and who I want to be, who I don't want to be, who others are and take only the best from all of them.. Hmm...Oh... commendations are important, if someone listens to you – that's my sun, the fundament of life; someone with a very positive self-image and self-confidence; whom indulges in pleasures, as that's how you relax your body and soul, but you mustn't be addicted (to food, drinks, drugs, excessive exercising – you must listen to your body, and all depends on the mood and on your abilities, too).

How do you picture it after the education? ...taking care of your body (care of body and soul – as if the body is sick, the soul is, too) with exercise and healthy food; what else, besides exercise and healthy diet?...it is important to be interested in something, to be creative – whether it's socializing with other, getting into painting, writing, or visiting different institutions (of the mentally ill or children, who are neglected or abandoned), voluntary work in humanitarian organizations, reading books (usually with spiritual content)... it is very important to not let go of yourself, to not complain, because that's a person who everyone runs away from, because you drive away your children, grandchildren, and your partner...

Assigning codes: meaning of mental health, positive relations between generations, taking care of body and soul

The interviewee who did not participate in the intergenerational programs gives great meaning to taking care of the body. She realizes that in old age, a person needs to be treated integrally, to consciously take care of maintaining

and promoting health, as well as the higher human dimensions – interpersonal relations, learning and creativity, and realizing the value and meaning of past, present, and future /12/. As Bernardka says, it is important to “give the body and soul what attracts you...” and “taking care of your body with exercise and healthy food, to be interested in something, to be creative”. Her view on quality aging is that we must love ourselves, and get to know other people and their contents. She excludes the possibility of an elderly person being embittered deep down inside, gloomy, pessimistic, lonely, enjoying complaining and becoming a burden to self and others /13/. Rather, she accepts old age as positive and thus creates a positive self-image and self-confidence. So, the way we are aging truly does depend on our thoughts and actions, or said differently, on our conscious effort on how we wish to age and what we do for the quality of our lives /14/.

Pavla

What is your view on quality aging? Old age is something necessary... Are you filled with stereotypes? ...I'm not filled with stereotypes...all that say those things, they are unfair...when an older person is healthy, they are richer in life experiences, but when ill, they need help and understanding...understanding from the family and the environment...yes, mostly family. What about quality aging? To me, it means to keep my composure, if my brain works as they used to...if I'm not impaired because of disease (dementia – because of it, many older people suffer)... What means mutual understanding of the generations? Does it help with quality aging? ...if the younger generations are well raised, they will have the understanding for the needs of the elderly...that depends on the examples...especially the example of their parents' relationship with their grandparents...

Assigning codes: meaning of physical health

The interviewee, who does not participate in intergenerational programs, views old age positively, though she sees no possibility for quality aging if one is unhealthy. As she says:

"...when a person is healthy, they are richer in life experiences, but when ill, they need help and understanding". When a person is ill, they depend on others, and only a healthy person is capable of independent life. That proves that many stereotypes about old age, like all elderly people are the same, all are feeble, the elderly are rigid, uninterested in learning and are the unproductive part of society, are still present in certain segments of our society.

Barbara

What is your view on quality aging? How did you picture it before education? ...I didn't even think that old age can be qualitative, as I viewed it as when it all ends... when all you do is waiting... How do you picture it after the education? ...I discovered there are a lot of factors that increase life quality of elderly... What else? ...I learned that old age can be a beautiful and meaningful stage of life too...it's important that you know how to organize your time...and I give great meaning to relations between the elderly and the younger generations, of course they have to be on a positive level... Did your view on quality aging change in any way? Of course, I came to many realizations.

Assigning codes: awe to old age, aging can be a positive stage of life, meaning of positive relations between generations

Before participating in intergenerational programs, the interviewee assigned no greater meaning to quality aging. She viewed age as "...when it all ends, when all you do is waiting". After participating in a program for intergenerational integration she formed a positive view on aging, as she personally connected with an older person and maintained personal relationship with him, and by that, as explained by Ramovš /15/, personally prepared for quality aging.

Klemen

What is your view on quality aging? It's not possible...I mean, 100% quality aging isn't possible... if you're not capable, it's not quality...you can be active...but you're more and more tired...you wait for death... Until when

is quality aging possible? ...in this case, up until you're 70... What about the spiritual side? ...more time for thinking, spirituality, you dedicate more time to self, realize things you want to change...you discover a new view on life and try to make use of it as much as you can...every minute...

Assigning codes: physical weakness, fatalism, active use of time, meaning of spirituality

The interviewee says 100% quality aging is not possible, as the elderly are subjected to the effects of aging – are not physically or psychologically vital, which means they are unable to enjoy aging qualitatively. A taboo about old age appears, saying all older people are feeble, which is far from being entirely true as some are even more active than the youth.

Experiencing relationships between generations

We determine how the older and the younger generation view intergenerational integration.

Bernardka

What did you gain with the education for an intergenerational partner? I learn from the young ones what I should be like and what I shouldn't be like...I am very happy, pleased and joyful, I feel complete...for what I have, I'm happy...I feel complete...I don't long for what I don't have... What is it that you like in socializing with you partner? I very much like the fact that she listens to me...to my experience, my wisdoms, that she takes them in and listen to them with great zeal, and I understand what the imperfections are in the youth and try to fill them in with my experience, but without enforcing my opinion on her...and why wouldn't I help them with some problems with my experience, without enforcing my opinion, but for the younger ones to remember me when they are faced with a certain obstacle and to get over it or remember my advice, which would help them getting through...but, you know...they have so many problems, that constantly appear, so much distress they have to get over by themselves...you know...and why wouldn't I help with some of them, with my experience... Do you feel that you have

changed personally? ...yes, absolutely, I grow, I mature...and with that, I upgrade my character and my personality and with it I get younger...I feel that my mission is complete... Do you think that the intergenerational programs should offer anything else? I wouldn't change anything; the important thing to me is socializing, meeting new people...we are together to talk about current problems we don't know how to solve by ourselves and in a way that we all cooperate, all steer the conversation... What did you learn from cooperating with the younger generation? I learn all the time from the youth...they show me the face of nowadays... What do you mean by that? I'm not surrounded by people as much as I was when working...and by being around the younger ones, I am faced with their problems and questions about everyday problems that pester the youth nowadays...and I'm up to date again with what's happening...and I feel like I'm surrounded by people again...

Assigning codes: learning from younger generations, offering help to the younger generation, connecting with the younger generation, understanding the youth, mutual problem-solving

The interviewee, participating in the programs for intergenerational integration, holds a very positive view on intergenerational relations. On the account of cooperating in the programs, she discovers personality changes, which she confirms with her statement: "I am very happy, pleased and joyful, I feel complete". That means intergenerational integration completes people. It fills the feeling of loneliness that appears soon after retiring. The youth bring joy and happiness into her life and help her with overcoming the feelings of worthlessness and loneliness, what is also explained by /16/. Although, the older generation is unable to experience the aforementioned if they show no interest in socializing with the younger generations. Those who participate in programs for intergenerational integration wish to cooperate with the younger generation, wish to help with problem-solving and be an example for their aging and old age. With her statement: "I understand what the imperfections are in the

youth and try to fill them in with my experience, but without enforcing my opinion", the interviewee confirms the interest in socializing with the youth and realizes the importance of the older generation's influence on younger generations. Said fact proves how much the older generation can contribute to a decrease of the level of (self) destruction, feelings of uncertainty, guilt, and demoralized view on the world and the life /17/. Furthermore, she is interested in opinions of the younger generation on the current issues and ways of problem-solving: "...we are together to talk about current problems we don't know how to solve by ourselves and in a way that we all cooperate, all steer the conversation". That leads to a realization that the participant became aware of the influence that the older generation can have on the younger one. She knows conscious care for maintaining and strengthening intergenerational relations with the younger generation is one of the needs that needs to be fulfilled for quality aging, as Ramovš /18/ explains.

Pavla

Have you heard the term intergenerational integration before? Yes, of course... How do you picture such connection? ...it's not always possible, because you cannot expect it from both sides...look...I, with my age and my views and examples, my life when I was young is different from the life you live now...now the youth has no wish or will for the old... What do you mean by that? ...they should be willing to take time for socializing with an elderly person... Do you know about any programs that prepare people for intergenerational socializing? ...I know such trainings exist...he who lives in a family environment that supports intergenerational integration and respects the elderly, does not need such training...but those who have no such will or wish, education wouldn't help anyway... What can the elderly gain from the youth and what the youth from the elderly? The older generation teaches the younger one about survival techniques, which are sometimes easier and sometimes harder...the opinion of an elderly person depends on how they were raised by their parents...if you are used

to it, then you know how to listen to advice from your grandma and grandpa...

Assigning codes: inability of intergenerational integration, disinterestedness of the youth for socializing with the older generation, importance of role models and examples from parents, guidelines of the older generation

The first interviewee says connection between the generations is impossible, as we cannot expect mutual cooperation, because the young and the old are two very different generations, contradictory even, with different views and examples. She explains that nowadays "the youth have no wish or will for the old, they should be willing to take time for socializing with an elderly person".

The interviewee subconsciously exposes the fact she is filled with stereotypes, which she proves with "I, with my age and my views and examples", meaning she is old and has all these old views she cannot change, so the youth are to adjust to the elderly. With that, she confirms and in a way conforms to the two stereotypes of the elderly being stiff and uninterested in learning. Of course, it is not necessarily so. The elderly are prepared to accept novelties, wish to learn about things they had no time for in their youth.

She views intergenerational relations as a duty and does not realize these types of relations are voluntary and unforced and that not everything depends on the examples of the parents, as she says: "he who lives in a family environment that supports intergenerational integration and respects the elderly, does not need such training". With that answer she proves her family network is self-sufficient. She is happy in her social environment, though she does not have courage to open up to others nor does she realize that for quality aging of the elderly, their versatile activity in the community is necessary.

In that, an important role is played by integration in networks of social support, as individuals who form these networks help the elderly with everyday chores, offer financial as well as material help and emotional support, and enable social integration of the elderly into society /19/.

Barbara

What did you gain with the education for an intergenerational partner? ...I view old age more positively, especially when you prepare for it since the younger age... What does socializing mean to you? ...this socializing means a lot to me, especially as that's how I gained another example for my own old age and my own quality aging, and I have to say that you can actually see that old age can be qualitative and that in a larger extent, you yourself can contribute to it. Do you feel that you have changed personally? ...yes, for sure...I view and think about old age from a completely different point of view... I didn't think about that before...now I think about these questions consciously...I discover answers and take from it what I like the most and I think I am preparing for life step by step...and I am discovering this positive side of quality aging... Do intergenerational relations contribute to easier personal problem-solving and better acceptance and understanding of old age? ...yes, we realize that compared to the problems of the elderly, we don't have any problems...now I can understand my own problems through the problems of my partner...she helps me solve my problems...with their knowledge they contribute to development of society and have lots of experience and wisdoms they can pass on to others...they aren't introverted anymore, with which, of course, all these associations for the elderly are helping, and other institutions that offer numerous programs for elderly education.

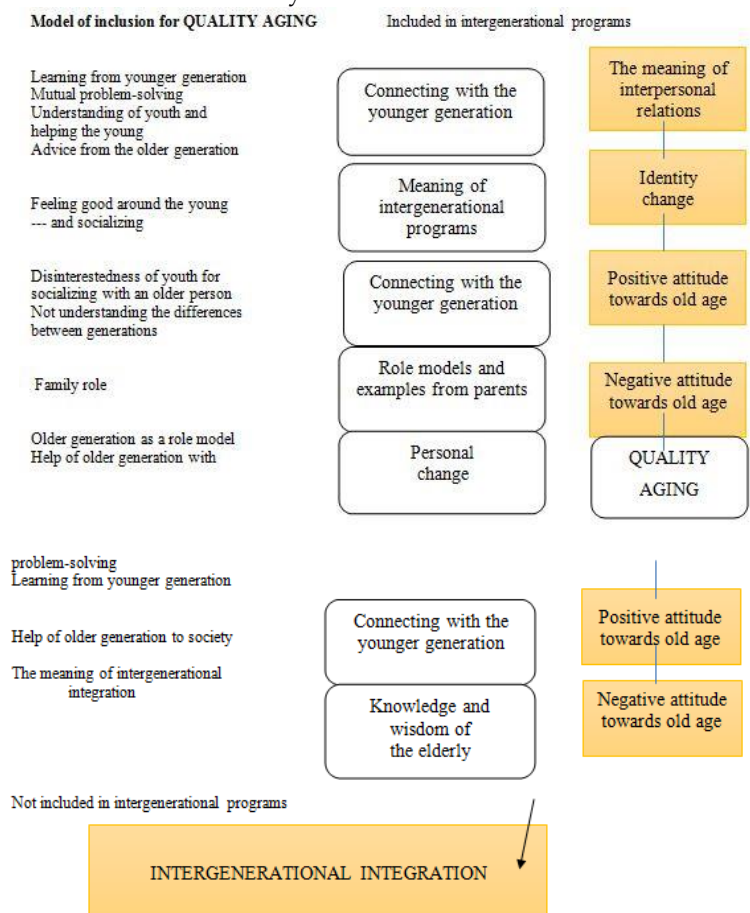
Assigning codes: preparation for quality aging, interest of the younger generation for intergenerational integration, importance of the older generation for the younger one, help of the older generation to society, importance of intergenerational programs. The younger interviewee, who is participating in intergenerational integration, is thrilled with it. She is aware of versatile changes in her personality development. With intergenerational integration, she discovers the wisdoms of the elderly, learns from their mistakes and life experiences – with that, she learns about quality aging. Besides personality changes and all the experience and wisdoms the older generation con-

tributes to the younger generation, she notices that it contributes to changes in society as well. Because of the non-conflict between generations, better integration and orientation towards development, such society can be very successful. With the answer that she believes she is "preparing for life step by step, and discovering this positive side of quality aging..." she proves intergenerational integration program helped her reach a realization that she needs to consciously prepare for quality aging.

Klemen

What about intergenerational integration? ...intergenerational integration is essential when you want to be on the ball...if such a person is willing to look from a perspective of a younger generation, you can be much more personally mature...you need to be able to adjust, need to be susceptible to generational differences...to be able to listen and understand... How do you picture intergenerational integration? Doesn't matter the age of a person, what matters is that you connect with them...might even be easier than with your

peers...maybe the older generation teaches you even more than the younger one... What can the two generations gain from one another? ...experience for the younger as well as the older generation...socializing in a different way...more interesting conversations...when you're unable to talk with your peers and can help you to find a way forward...Assigning codes: unimportance of age for intergenerational relations, example of the older generation, learning from the younger generation, meaning of the younger generation for the older one. The young interviewee who did not participate in any intergenerational integration programs is equally aware of the importance of integration between generations. He surprises with the statement that you can "connect with them...might even be easier than with your peers". More so, he believes the younger generation perceives the older one as people with experience, friends who can help them, advise them, are there for them, and are open and susceptible to the youth and their problems.



Conclusion

The elderly are in need of regular personal contact with someone who they perceive as a close one. Intergenerational groups for quality aging and personal voluntary social partnership with a lonely, older person are a post-modern form of regular contact of an elderly person with someone from the first or the second generation. Not much contributes to the elderly experiencing their lives as something of worth, as does the fact that others, especially those who are younger, take their life experience seriously and listen to them. And with that, they give meaning to their presence in the society. Nowadays, the most problems the younger generations encounter are on the most important fields of life, those important for their social development and their maturing. A high level of feelings of insecurity, guilt, and demoralized attitude towards life and the world were discovered among the youth. But, the most alarming is the fact that over a third of them have a negative self-image and low self-esteem. In search of stronger group connections outside the family and alternative authorities, the programs of intergenerational integration help the youth in finding healthy examples for their own aging and old age. Intergenerational integration is an ideal form of learning and realizing intergenerational solidarity. But the current conditions of European culture set aside the interpersonal connection between generations because of fast changes, even though intergenerational solidarity is, with growing population of the elderly, more important now than ever before. The study data show a high interest and fondness of the respondents, the younger as well as the older, towards intergenerational integration as one of the fundamentals of preparation and experiencing quality aging. The effort to ensure quality cohabitation of all generations should be oriented towards intergenerational integration, and the network of the national program of establishing intergenerational groups for quality aging and informing all the people about intergenerational learning and solidarity. In that, the younger generation obtains knowledge and wisdoms, experiences

identity change and discovers ideals and examples for quality aging. And the older generation gives meaning to life with transference of their wisdoms and realizations of life, and with helping the younger generation with problems that pester them and thus form a very positive image of self, that ultimately leads to quality aging.

Notes

- /1/ Ule M. (2001). *Zdravstveno varstvo: Socialna ranljivost mladih*. Ljubljana: Sekcija za šolstvo in visokošolsko medicino SZD.
- /2/ Bernard, M. (2006). Research, policy, practice and theory: Interrelated dimensions of a developing field. *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*.
- /3/ Postružnik A. (1999). 2. slovenski kongres prostovoljcev: Prostovoljno delo srednješolcev in osnovnošolcev – medgeneracijsko povezovanje. Ljubljana: Socialna zbornica Slovenije.
- /4/ Ramovš J. (2003). *Kakovostna starost*. Ljubljana: Inštitut Antona Trstenjaka.
- /5/ Majhenič M. (1999). 2. slovenski kongres prostovoljcev: Prostovoljno delo s starimi, za stare in skupaj z njimi. Ljubljana: Socialna zbornica Slovenije.
- /6/ Phillips J., Ajrouch K., Hillcoat-Nallemby S. (2010). *Key Concepts in Social Gerontology*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- /7/ Sanchez, M., Butts, D. M., Hatton-Yeo, A., Henkin, N. A., Jarrott, S. E., Kaplan, M. S., et al. (eds) (2007). *Intergenerational Programmes: Towards a Society for All Ages*. Available at: www.laCaixa.es/ObraSocial (accessed 24 April 2014).
- /8/ Granville, G. (2002). *A Review of Intergenerational Practice in the UK*. Stoke-on-Trent: Beth Johnson Foundation Centre for Intergenerational Practice.
- /9/ Springate, I., Atkinson, M. and Martin, K. (2008). *Intergenerational Practice: A Review of the Literature*. LGA Research Report F/SR262. Undertaken for the National Foundation for Education Research. Available at: www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/pdfs/downloadable/LIGe_report.pdf (accessed 24 April 2014).
- /10/ Phillips J., Ajrouch K., Hillcoat-Nallemby S. (2010). *Key Concepts in Social Gerontology*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- /11/ Mesec B. (1998). *Uvod v kvalitativno raziskovanje v socialnem delu*. Ljubljana: Visoka šola za socialno delo.

-
- /12/ Ramovš J. (2003). Kakovostna starost. Ljubljana: Inštitut Antona Trstenjaka.
- /13/ Ibidem
- /14/ Hojnik – Zupanc I. (1997). Dodajmo življenje letom: Priprava na upokojitev in starost. Ljubljana: Gerontološko društvo Slovenije.
- /15/ Ramovš J. (2003). Kakovostna starost. Ljubljana: Inštitut Antona Trstenjaka.
- /16/ Postružnik A. (1999). 2. slovenski kongres prostovoljcev: Prostovoljno delo srednješolcev in osnovnošolcev – medgeneracijsko povezovanje. Ljubljana: Socialna zbornica Slovenije.
- /17/ Ule M. (2001). Zdravstveno varstvo: Socialna ranljivost mladih. Ljubljana: Sekcija za šolstvo in visokošolsko medicino SZD.
- /18/ Ramovš J. (2003). Kakovostna starost. Ljubljana: Inštitut Antona Trstenjaka.
- /19/ Filipović M. (2005). Družboslovne razprave: Starostniki in njihova vpetost v sosedska omrežja. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede.

VAŽNOST MEĐUGENERACIJSKE INTEGRACIJE I KOMUNIKACIJE ZA OBLIKOVANJE MIŠLJENJA O KVALITETNOM STARENJU

Mateja Berčan, Mateja Berčan

Alma Mater Europaea, Maribor, Slovenija

Sažetak

Međugeneracijska integracija je idealan oblik ostvarivanja međugeneracijske solidarnosti, koja ima veliku važnost i danas, kao i uvijek, zbog sve većeg porasta starije populacije. Malo je stvari koje doprinose činjenici da starije osobe mogu doživljavati svoj život kao nešto vrijedno, kao i činjenicu da je mlađa generacija ozbiljno koristi svoja životna iskustva i sluša starije. Mladi ljudi koji se druže s drugim generacijama imaju pozitivniji pogled na starenje i stjeću uzor za vlastitu starost. Studija je utvrdila utjecaj stare generacije na mlađe, a naglašava se svjestan napor za očuvanje i jačanje međugeneracijskih odnosa, kao potrebe koja mora biti zadovoljena za postizanje kvalitetnog starenja.

Ključne riječi: mladi, starije generacije, međugeneracijska integracija, starost, kvalitetno starenje