


COEXISTENCE GROUPS FOR THE ELDERLY AND SOCIABILITY: A STUDY OF THE CENTRO ASSOCIATIVO RENASCER IN THE CITY OF JOÃO NEIVA/ES¹

Received on: April 18, 2023

Passed on: May 31, 2024

License: 

*Cesar Felipe Cumim do Nascimento*²

Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES)

Vitória – ES – Brazil

<https://orcid.org/0009-0001-0157-6533>

*Ivan Marcelo Gomes*³

Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES)

Vitória – ES – Brazil

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0311-9651>

ABSTRACT: The present work is a study that analyzes the processes of sociability that take place in a coexistence group for the elderly in the city of João Neiva, in Espírito Santo (ES). For this, we appropriated the concept of sociability developed by the German philosopher Georg Simmel and also the concept of “piece” by the anthropologist José Guilherme Cantor Magnani, extending this conception to the Centro Associativo Renascer (CEAR), where relations of tensions were observed, but mainly from a strong sense of belonging that sustains a sociability network among the locals.

KEYWORDS: Sociability. Elderly. Leisure activities.

GRUPOS DE CONVIVÊNCIA PARA IDOSOS E SOCIABILIDADES: UM ESTUDO DO CENTRO ASSOCIATIVO RENASCER NA CIDADE DE JOÃO NEIVA/ES

RESUMO: O presente trabalho trata-se de um estudo que analisa os processos de sociabilidade que acontecem em um grupo de convivência para idosos na cidade de João Neiva, no Espírito Santo (ES). Para isso, apropriamo-nos do conceito de sociabilidade desenvolvido pelo filósofo alemão Georg Simmel e do conceito de “pedaço” do antropólogo José Guilherme Cantor Magnani, estendendo essa concepção

¹ Research supported and financed by the Espírito Santo Research and Innovation Support Foundation – FAPES.

² Teaching License in Physical Education from Escola Superior São Francisco de Assis (2015), Bachelor’s Degree in Physical Education from Escola Superior São Francisco de Assis (2016) and Master’s Degree in Physical Education from Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (2019).

³ Bachelor’s Degree in Physical Education from Universidade Estadual de Maringá (1994), Master’s Degree in Sociology from Universidade Federal de Pernambuco (2000) and Ph.D. in Human Sciences from Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (2008). Effective professor at the Center for Physical Education and Sports at Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo. Professor of the Postgraduate Program in Physical Education (PPGEF/CEFD/UFES).

ao Centro Associativo Renascer (CEAR), onde foram observadas relações de tensões, mas principalmente de um forte sentimento de pertencimento que sustenta uma rede de sociabilidade entre os frequentadores do local.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Sociabilidade. Idosos. Atividades de lazer.

Introduction

Brazil is facing a demographic and epidemiological transition characterized by an increase in life expectancy and a decrease in birth rates (OLIVEIRA; FEITOSA; FERREIRA, 2012). In the year of 2017, the National Household Sample Survey (PNAD) estimated that the elderly population in Brazil exceeded 30 million people (IBGE, 2017).

Despite being a natural stage of life, aging can be analyzed in different ways. Among them, it is possible to identify two main approaches: one that understands aging as a decline; and another that understands it as a stage of life of autonomy and integration (SILVEIRA; STIGGER, 2007).

Although there is this distinction between conceptions about aging, we must consider that it is a complex process. In short, it is safe to say that aging encompasses biological, chronological, psychological and social dimensions, being a heterogeneous experience that can be positive or negative, depending on the economic and sociocultural conditions of each individual.

Depending on the social context of which the subject is part, over time, sociability interactions gradually decrease and, given this reality, social groups become a tool to maintain or rebuild the elderly's sociability network (ZIMERMAN, 2000).

In this regard, we understand social groups as spaces that provide opportunities for sociability, especially for people over 60 years old. These places are also known as

clubs or groups for the elderly and even as community centers (OLIVEIRA; CABRAL, 2004).

Some studies point out that the main reasons for the search for Coexistence Groups was the attempt by individuals to get rid of loneliness and increase self-esteem (BULSING et al., 2007), participate in leisure programs to increase social participation, as well as how to expand friendships (FENALTI; SCHWARTZ, 2003; GOMES; PINTO, 2007). Not to mention that “medical recommendation” (PENNA; SANTO, 2006) was also highlighted as one of the motivators.

Among the reasons mentioned for looking for social groups, the literature also shows that, in general, there are two large groups of people who seek to join this type of association: a portion of individuals seek improvements in terms of their physical appearance, while the other group seeks improvements in the social aspect.

With regard to demand based on organic aspects, it appears that the main reasons for demand are: maintaining health (PENNA; SANTO, 2006); alleviate pain (GOMES; PINTO, 2007); improve health (FENALTI; SCHWARTZ, 2003) and quality of life (DEGÁSPARI; SCHWARTZ, 2005); medical indication; and maintain biopsychosocial balance (PENNA; SANTO, 2006), as well as increase life expectancy (FENALTI; SCHWARTZ, 2003; GOMES; PINTO, 2007).

On the other hand, the main reasons pointed out by the second group are: the search for meetings for seniors, understanding them as a leisure opportunity (GOMES; PINTO, 2006), acquiring knowledge, friendships, a new meaning in life, occupying free time and have leisure (SOUZA, 2004); getting rid of loneliness and increasing self-esteem (BULSING et al., 2007); increasing social participation and expanding friendships (FENALTI; SCHWARTZ, 2003; GOMES; PINTO, 2007; DEGÁSPARI; SCHWARTZ, 2005; PEREIRA; PEREIRA; MORELLI, 2006; SOUZA, 2004;

OLIVEIRA; CABRAL, 2004). Therefore, it is possible to observe that leisure time is essential for elderly people to achieve improvement goals linked to their social lives.

In this regard, focusing on analyzing the socialization processes that take place at this stage of life, this research investigated a specific context: the Centro Associativo Renascer (CEAR). Founded on February 25, 1994, CEAR, or just “Renascer”, is a non-profit entity located in the municipality of João Neiva, in the countryside of the state of Espírito Santo⁴, and its main activity is bingo and forró for elderly people in the city.

Meetings to carry out activities take place twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. On Tuesdays, they are held to play bingo, while on Thursdays the elderly get together to dance forró. Occasionally, CEAR is open on Sundays to offer forró, when groups of senior citizens from other municipalities travel to Renascer.

Interested in the dynamics that take place there, we got closer to the place and the people who manage the space. Later, we attended the daily activities of CEAR, participating in bingos and forrós. After a few months following the activities carried out in that location and, in order to have a better understanding of the relationships that occurred there, we adopted the concept of sociability developed by the German philosopher Georg Simmel (1983). At first, however, it is essential to understand how Simmel analyzes society and the individual. For the German philosopher, society is basically formed by individuals interacting with each other:

Erotic instincts, objective interests, religious impulses, objectives of defense, attack, play, conquest, help, indoctrination and countless others cause human beings to enter, with others, into a relationship of coexistence, of acting with reference to the other, with each other and against each other, in a state of correlation with others. This means that it has an effect on others and also suffers effects from them. These interactions mean that the individual bearers

⁴ In 2010, the city had the third best IDHM (Municipal Human Development Index) in the State, with life expectancy as its best indicator. Therefore, it appears that the municipality, as is the case in the rest of the country, is gradually aging.

of those impulses and purposes form a unity – more precisely, a ‘society’ (SIMMEL, 2006, p. 59-60).

Playful associations, or social relationships, occur mainly during leisure time, denoting the importance that social groups for the elderly have for their attendees, as is the case at CEAR. In this investigative context, the study began with the objective of analyzing the sociability relationships that occurred at CEAR during the leisure moments of the population that frequents it, as well as the leisure practices that take place there.

Methodological Strategies

As this is a paper that sought to investigate and understand the relationships that take place in a group designed to develop activities for elderly people, the research has a qualitative approach (MINAYO, 2009). In 2017, we had access to the place where the activities are carried out and were able to begin our observations and notes. Therefore, the research, with regard to its objectives, is classified as descriptive (MICHEL, 2015).

Therefore, to better describe, characterize and expand the understanding of CEAR, it was necessary to access the official documents that govern the functioning of the institution. In addition, we assumed that our insertion in the field would provide us with elements that would allow us to have a deeper understanding of the research locus, as well as the subjects who frequent the space. Thus, for data collection, we adopted methodological strategies identified with field research (MICHEL, 2015).

Furthermore, we immediately understood that simply observing would not help us to be part of the group, so we used participant observation as a strategy for obtaining data (MICHEL, 2015). In this regard, as it is a field research with participant observation, we become part of the daily life of CEAR, observing, playing bingo,

dancing forró and recording, through images, videos and writings, what relationships are established by those subjects. The period in which we were inserted in the research field covers December 2017 to December 2018, always on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. and between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., respectively.

During our insertion process in the researched environment, in addition to collecting information through informal conversations and other records, at a given moment, some subjects were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. As a participation criterion, individuals who had the highest frequency, whether in bingo or forró, were selected, as well as those who participated in both activities. The subjects' participation was due to adherence, that is, although they were invited, the individual had the freedom to accept or not participate in the research.

Not to mention that the research used the following resources as research instruments: field diary, image recording, voice recording and semi-structured interviews (MATTOS, 2011). The semi-structured interview, in general, had open questions that addressed the reasons why the participants started attending CEAR, as well as the reasons that made them continue attending it. Furthermore, we seek to understand the desires of that public in relation to the activities developed in the space, in addition to understanding some issues related to the peculiar behaviors of the users of that location.

The interviewees chose to carry out the conversations in their own homes, as, according to them, this would make them more comfortable. Totally, eight subjects were interviewed, five of whom are associate members and the other three are associate members who make up the board. Furthermore, of the eight interviewees, six were female and two were male, aged between 56 and 86 years old.

Finally, it should be noted that, to preserve the identity of the research participants, all names used in this work are fictitious, not presenting any similarity or approximation with the names and/or surnames of the people in the group.

After data production, the analysis category was created, which we called: “The piece of CEAR”, which deals with the social relationships that take place at the location and which will be discussed below.

The Piece of Cear

During the time we were in the field, I was able to observe that the Centro Associativo Renascer is configured as a predominantly female leisure space and this was one of the questions addressed during the interviews. Furthermore, during data production, especially during interviews, we also came to understand it as a reference point for meetings between friends to be held.

In a study that sought to investigate the leisure activities that Brazilians of different age groups carried out on weekends, Gonçalves, Peçanha and Raimundo (2017) identified that Brazilian women preferred to carry out social activities, while the male public, predominantly, I opted for physical-sporting activities. This preference of the male public for activities such as gymnastics and sports could explain, in part, the predominance of the female public in CEAR.

In a study carried out in the city of São Paulo, however, which sought to identify the reasons why a group of elderly women joined activities aimed at their age group, it was found that

The motivations for practicing physical activities involve the daily interaction made possible by new relationships of colleagues and even friendships formed throughout the activities and the search for well-being, new knowledge and the prospect of improving quality of life through the bonds established and shared experiences. In some way, all the reports were similar, certainly due to the similarity of their trajectories and because they were all

women marked by poverty and lack of opportunities throughout their lives (RODRIGUES; FERNANDES, 2016, p. 21).

Some of these characteristics, such as the lack of opportunities throughout life and scarcity of financial resources, are in line with the profiles of those interviewed in the field. When giving voice to research participants, however, interviewees were asked about the possible reasons for female predominance. Nonetheless, in general, there was no consensus. For the interviewees,

Well, now you got me. In fact, there was a day when we went to bingo and there was only one man there – who has already passed – but I can't tell you why. In forró too, there are more women than men, I think it's because men die earlier [laughs]. I don't know, I've noticed that, but I don't know why not (NICOLE, 82 years old).

You know, men, I think they feel sorry for spending money, and men are actually safer. The man doesn't have that patience to play. There are few men there, and the men who used to be there also died. If I were to tell you about the men who went to forró and have already died, there are more than 20 who used to attend, who played bingo there for us, they died. That's why I think it failed, because no people came in to replace those people (INÁCIA, 76 years old).

It's because men don't like to go, to spend money. Some say they don't want to spend it because the money they spend on bingo, they do other things, because they can't spend the money on bingo (EDUARDA, 85 years old).

Regarding the observation that the space is dominated by female audiences, we were able to confirm, during the observations, the fact that more women frequent Renascer when compared to men, whether for bingo or forró, reinforcing the female predominance in the place. This aspect can also be observed in the board of directors, which, although chaired by a man, has other positions held by women who, in addition to working in the organization, are also looking for a place to carry out their leisure activities.

In this regard, by configuring a public leisure space, aimed at the elderly, CEAR enables sociable relationships among the people who frequent it, meaning that many continue to frequent the space so as not to lose contact with their colleagues. In general, public leisure spaces, such as squares, parks and others, are places that

privilege social relationships. As stated by Leite (2011, p. 159), “squares, streets, gardens and parks, in their multiple functions, constitute the core of the system of free spaces in cities, and in them sociability cannot be relegated to a secondary level”. Therefore, public leisure spaces are places where interaction between individuals occurs, that is, where sociability relationships take place. According to Silva *et al.* (2012, p. 184), “the motivational factors for visiting public leisure spaces are related to the search for healthy habits and social interaction”.

In addition to the reasons cited by attendees for staying at Renascer, during the interviews, we received the response that “maintaining social contact with others” was the main justification cited for members to continue attending CEAR.

In one of his studies, Iwanowicz (2000, p. 119) points out that, upon retiring and being removed from work, the elderly “[...] lose not only broad social ties, but also the main social reason for their existence, which is the process of maintaining relationships with the social and material environment”. The author also states that elderly people in this situation seek activities called “leisure” in an attempt to recover their social role.

In the same line, Zago and Silva (p. 66, 2003) point out that “[...] retirement took time away from colleagues and left empty time to be filled. The old man begins to feel useless, as he no longer has productive value for capitalist society.” However, opposing this conception of the elderly as unproductive beings,

Beauvoir (1990)⁵ talks about experiences in countries such as England, Sweden, the United States and France that seek to encourage elderly people to join associations so as not to allow themselves to be dominated by loneliness and depression. These groups provide conditions, according to the author, for people to have an active and often productive social life. The purpose of these groups is not to produce something profitable in the sense of obtaining a financial income, but to obtain satisfaction through certain activities such as dance, theater, travel, crafts or even learning a new profession or a new language that makes people happy. that the person feels

⁵ BEAUVOIR, Simone de. **A Velhice**. Rio de Janeiro, Editora Nova Fronteira, 1990.

growing, even if apparently it seems that these activities have no meaning and applicability at this point in life (SANTOS; VAZ, 2008, p. 339).

According to Inácia (76 years old), one of the reasons for not stopping going to Renascer “[...] is loneliness itself. I have nowhere to go. I spend the whole week alone, when there’s a party there we go there to have fun, to distract ourselves. There’s bingo on Tuesday and we go there to have fun, right, because I’m already alone too much.” In the same direction and, corroborating the previous user's speech, Nicole (81 years old) states that

My purpose is to go out, so I don’t get stuck inside my house. A while ago I realized that I wasn't feeling very well [...] And I was always raised with a lot of people and now that I'm alone and, at my age, I think I need to leave, sometimes I even I like staying at home, but I need to go out (NICOLE, 81 years old).

It is possible to observe that CEAR is a space where there is the possibility of interacting and talking with others, with one of the purposes being to mitigate the feeling of isolation, stimulating social relationships between its visitors (SILVA *et al.*, 2012).

According Santos and Vaz (2008),

Being a senior citizen is a phase of life marked by several stereotypes such as passivity, unproductivity, asexuality, organic and psychic degeneration, in addition to disconnection with the future and alienation. Among them, social isolation is one of those that most affects the well-being of elderly individuals and contradicts their need for socialization and intergenerational coexistence (SANTOS; VAZ, 2008, p. 335).

According to the aforementioned authors, although loneliness and social isolation are often treated as synonyms, these phenomena need to be observed differently. While loneliness is approached as the feeling of being separated from others, social isolation corresponds to physical separation.

[Some people] are forced into a situation of loneliness by being removed from their work environment, their place of residence and also by the death of relatives and friends. Loneliness would therefore be the result of a series of factors such as isolation and losses resulting from the passage of time. Situations of social isolation facilitate the occurrence of anguish of loneliness

that leads to depressive and regressive states, somatic illnesses and even death when the detachment becomes too accentuated (SANTOS; VAZ, 2008, p. 335-336).

From this same perspective, Zago and Silva (2003) point out that

The social fabric represents a primordial element in the conservation of their health, both physical and mental, since social isolation causes the appearance of anguish and loneliness, which are so common in the elderly, due to having been cut off and separated from others and define their well-being. situation of “being alone” or “abandonment” (ZAGO; SILVA, 2003, p. 71).

Thus, in an attempt to avoid social isolation and, consequently, loneliness, many elderly people seek community centers, as is the case at Renascer, highlighting the importance of this space for the population of the municipality and, above all, for those who frequent it. older. “These groups provide a regular commitment, which not only occupies a period of time, but also fills the void of the feeling of loneliness that in old age, when frequent, brings damage to physical and mental health” (SANTOS; VAZ, 2008, p. 340).

When they are at CEAR, the interviewees described feeling good, happy, joyful, as they narrate below.

I feel happy, because I stay here alone all week. Just like my daughter-in-law, she came down here, did that little treat, but there are times when she spends the whole week without coming home. I talk more with my ex-husband than with my daughter-in-law and my two granddaughters. When I go [to Renascer] I feel good, it seems like the world opens up to us, because I like to talk, I like to be in a place where I can talk, telling jokes, talking nonsense to others, I love it, I like it (INÁCIA, 76 years old).

[...] I think this is ‘living in health’ for people who are already elderly like me and others who are older. Because people my age, the same age or younger than me, feel good being in a place like this, because there you meet someone you know, you meet another, you meet another, there you talk, you sit and talk, you chat a chat, there you laugh, you joke. That thing is distracting our minds, taking those bad thoughts out of our heads [...] (MICHELE, 82 years old).

Ah, I feel calm, I feel comfortable. The space is large, it is open, it is ventilated. Not to mention that there’s that vegetation next door, those trees. So, I am just fine. My house is small and it’s very hot. Have you ever thought about me staying indoors watching television and sitting? The person sitting becomes sedentary, right? And like that, I go there, I play, it’s fun for me (DIEGO, 56 years old).

I feel good, I like it. I like it because they treat me well and I treat others well. But I get along with everyone, there's not one [person] I'm on bad terms with, none. I've been there for 20 years. And people come from Vitoria, people come from Coqueiral. If you only see... [...] I have photographs of my friends and they all hugged me and kissed me... they didn't know what to do with me, it's good, right?! (EDUARDA, 85 years old).

The statements above symbolize some of the feelings that people have and maintain in relation to CEAR. In these speeches, it is possible to notice elements that lead us to infer that the space is pleasant and is configured as a place where people have the possibility of interacting with others, talking and having fun together with their friends, moving away from feelings like loneliness. Thus, following Magnani (2003, p. 7), CEAR can be understood as a 'piece' whose visitors demonstrate “[...] loyalties, shared codes, belonging; the recurrence of its use pointed to a wealth of meanings [...]”, becoming a welcoming space for the people who are part of the area.

In addition to strengthening existing friendship bonds, it is also possible to note that, during the activities carried out at the location, there is the possibility of new friendships being created (STIGGER; SILVEIRA, 2004), as mentioned by a participant.

I like to play bingo, I like to dance, I like to talk to my colleagues, I talk a lot to my colleagues, strange people come from Vitória, and in just one visit they become familiar with me, they know everyone right away, they ask me things and I tell them, I say: João Neiva's old age is beautiful (EDUARDA, 85 years old).

As pointed out by Magnani that, however, to be part of it, there are some criteria to be followed:

[...] it was not enough to pass by this place or even frequent it with some regularity to 'be part of the place'; it was necessary to be situated in a peculiar network of relationships that combines ties of kinship, neighborhood, origin, bonds defined by participation in community and sporting activities, etc. (MAGNANI, 2003, p. 7).

In this regard, CEAR is configured as a place that, despite being open to new participants, is mainly composed of people who have older ties of friendship, in which a broader “[...] sociability is developed than that based on family ties, but more dense, significant and stable than the formal and individualized relationships imposed by

society [...]” (MAGNANI, 2006, p. 116). This does not prevent new people from joining the group, as long as they start to frequent the place regularly.

In addition to the feeling of belonging and the desire to maintain contact with others, a second justification given by people who still continue to attend CEAR was the proximity of the space to their residence. In a study that sought to understand the reasons for using public leisure spaces, Silva et al. (2012, p. 180) identified that “[...] one of the reasons for visiting leisure spaces is related to the convenience subcategory. Among the motivational factors, the proximity of the interviewees’ homes in both spaces was considered”. Also, according to the authors, “contact with nature, the proximity of visitors’ homes, the characteristics and safety of these spaces are also considered motivational factors” (SILVA, et al., 2012, p. 184). This can be observed in the statements of CEAR attendees when they report that

[...] I'm not one to hang out at one person's house or another's house and to go to my brothers' house I need to take a taxi, and a taxi charges around BRL10, BRL20 reais. So I don't go to anyone's house and when there is [activity] at Renascer, which is nearby, I go (INÁCIA, 76 years old).

Due to the [difficulty in] getting around and I don't have money to pay for a taxi to go far away, and since it's close here I go there because of that (DIEGO, 56 years old).

One of the positive points of CEAR is that it is located in the city center. The street is flat and paved, so there is no need to climb hills to access it. As it is a small city, most of the neighborhoods are connected to the center, thus facilitating the access of a large part of the public that still frequents the space. No structures were observed in the facilities, however, that would facilitate accessibility for people with disabilities, whether visual or physical.

According to Silva *et al.* (2012, p. 172), public leisure spaces “[...] can be significant for their visitors, due to the benefits they provide. However, they need to be supported by an organized infrastructure, which allows for interest in use by visitors.”

On the other hand, Marcellino (2006) highlights that, due to the destruction of specific public leisure spaces, as well as violence, residential spaces/homes have been used as non-specific leisure equipment:

Violence and lack of security are highlighted as factors that impede people's choice of leisure, contributing to them being held hostage in their own homes, increasing the already very high number of individuals who have their main 'equipment' at home. leisure (MARCELLINO, 2006, p. 74).

It is worth noting that, during the time we were in the research field, we did not observe signs of violence or depredation. However, the infrastructure of CEAR required renovations and improvements and this possibly caused some people to lose interest in the activities carried out there.

Thus, for groups with greater purchasing power, the solution is to migrate to semi-public leisure spaces, while those with lower purchasing power, unable to pay to have access to private leisure spaces, continue using the spaces they have. access. As pointed out by Marcellino (2006, p. 78), “[...] the private sector has already been creating new leisure spaces in the urban environment. But in a peripheral country like Brazil, the vast majority of the population does not have the financial means to enjoy paid leisure equipment.”

In the same direction, Andrade, Jayme and Almeida (2009) understand that

[Groups with greater purchasing power] adopted more vigilant behavior in public spaces and favored semi-public spaces. Groups with lower purchasing power continue to frequent traditional public spaces, such as those in the city center, and spaces close to their homes, which are generally poorly maintained by the public authorities and abandoned even by the police, a fact that often turns them into a hotspot of drug consumption and trafficking, especially at night. During the day, they continue to host sociability typical of popular neighborhoods, such as meetings between neighbors, whether young people, children or adults (ANDRADE; JAYME; ALMEIA, 2009, p. 132).

Thus, visitors who use CEAR and cannot pay to use other spaces are at the mercy of the possibilities offered by the municipal public authorities. Although violence

was never mentioned by those interviewed as a factor that prevented the practice of activities offered in the space, the infrastructure, in turn, was the target of criticism.

According to members, CEAR's infrastructure does not meet the needs of the public served, making this aspect a demotivator and one of the factors that caused the number of visitors to decrease significantly. Thus, a large part of the people who were previously served by CEAR and who had a car and/or financial conditions that allowed them to look for other leisure spaces started to frequent those located in neighboring municipalities. In this regard, those who did not have such conditions remained frequenting the available spaces close to their residence.

In general, the remaining patrons reported that the floor is not suitable for dancing, the environment is not air-conditioned and the building needs small renovations to better meet the demand of members. The lack of these improvements contributed to many elderly people no longer participating in the activities of CEAR and starting to seek out senior groups based in other municipalities. Michele (82 years old) summarizes this situation well when she tells us that

People from here started going there [neighboring municipality] because it's really good, because there's air conditioning, there's everything. And here, in our Renascer, if it rains we get all wet because the roof needs to be changed, the floor needs to be changed, the floor is smooth, it's a smooth cement floor and it's all cracked, all cracked. So there is no improvement there because no one helps. The money does not come to offer lunch or improvements for Renascer. So, Renascer is left in the dust. It's not completely abandoned because the current president goes there every day. (MICHELE, 82 years old).

In a study that sought to investigate the reasons why some elderly people stopped participating in Coexistence Groups (GCs), Moura and Souza (2015, p. 1052) found that “the majority of graduates cited family issues, followed by health problems”. In addition to these reasons, changes in the organization of the GCs, such as the end of the dance and change of cultural animator, caused the elderly to leave the group. The findings of this study, such as the end of the dance, for example, are in line with the

reality experienced in CEAR, and can help us reflect on the reasons why some elderly people started to seek other social groups.

Another aspect cited by participants was how CEAR was in the past. Thus, when asked about how Renascer worked in its early years, a participant said that

It used to be very lively, people participated more, but they didn't have to pay. When they started charging, people stopped coming. Because before it was like that, it was a stereo that someone would put on some CDs and we would dance. Then they invented 'the player' [musician] and then they started charging to be able to pay the player. But before, when everything was free, when we didn't pay anything, it was very exciting, but when they started charging people they got discouraged. I'll tell you something, if you say you have to pay, almost no one will go, because if you have to pay, almost no one will come to avoid paying (NICOLE, 81 years old).

In agreement with the previous user, Eduarda tells us that

CEAR was very good, it started with a lot of people and then grew. If I say that Renascer was bad, I would be lying to you. Every end of the month there was lunch, there was forró every Thursday with lots of people and there was also a snack on Tuesdays. One day it was cake, the next it was bread, there was savory cake, soda... so it was very good, really good, there was no shortage of things and there were a lot of people. Then it started decreasing, decreasing and decreasing until there was almost no one left, I felt like Renascer was dying (EDUARDA, 85 years old).

Thus, it is possible to see that older visitors, who have followed the changes that have occurred over time, like to remember and compare what the place was like with what it has become. However, when asked why the group did not feedback, which caused and still causes great difficulties, especially in the development of activities, the participants were unable to respond.

As previously mentioned, after the forró on Thursday was suspended, the regulars who still went to CEAR aspired for this activity to return as soon as possible. In the meantime, some elderly people may have sought other community centers to satisfy their desires and found in these spaces a structure that captivated them, alleviating the need for them to return to Renascer.

In addition to the desire for improvements to the physical space, some of the attendees of CEAR had other concerns regarding the space, as well as the desire for new

activities to be developed at the institution. During the interviews, when asked about what activities could be carried out at Renascer in addition to those already developed, the interviewees told us that

There could be a lecture, right? A lecture would also be very good... About all the things they talk about the elderly, about the care they have to take with their health... Because you know, they are all gluttons, and sometimes they don't eat as they should. [...] Everyone who goes to Renascer is retired, they go with their money. I mean, if you make a meal, like when we used to, if we made a light or diet meal they wouldn't like it, you know? They like to eat well and sometimes they can't, right (SEBASTIANA, 76 years old).

Speeches. They could offer speeches, invite people to give a talk. A meeting, when someone important came here to the city, they would go to Renascer for a meeting. About the elderly, you know, older people go there, so it's for the elderly. I mean, give people more information. There's bingo, there's forró, we also have a personal trainer who helps us at the gym, the space there is good, there's Monday morning, Monday afternoon, Tuesday morning, Wednesday morning, Wednesday afternoon. People go to exercise there, only elderly people. So that's already there, so if you set a day a month to arrive and talk about things to people [guide], I think that's important (DIEGO, 56 years old).

Although the academy is located within the physical space belonging to CEAR, we did not analyze the relationships that took place in that space, thus assuming that this is one of the limitations of this work (although this was not part of our investigative context). However, we do not intend to hide the existence of the academy in this research, as, in some statements, the interviewees pointed out to us that the academy is also an important space in the composition of CEAR.

In short, some Renascer attendees craved and lacked guidance on their health, nutritional recommendations and, in the case of those who attended the gym, directions for practicing physical exercise. There were also those who did not look forward to the addition of any other activity, but rather to maintaining those that were already established (in this case, bingo and forró), as can be seen in the following statements.

For me, just the forró was already good. It was already a good size, because I didn't feel like looking for more activities or courses to take. And another is that I don't have enough reading, you know, I don't have enough reading for anything. In a course you have to know how to read, and other things. So for me, all that's missing there is forró (INÁCIA, 76 years old).

These activities that they have there, just bingo and forró, are already good enough for us... But that's for me, I don't know about the others... They have another opinion, right (MICHELE, 82 years old).

I wish there was a dance on Thursday too, we would dance straight away, right?! Thursday and Sunday straight (EDUARDA, 85 years old).

In Renascer I didn't want anything. Just forró was fine, but the forró [on Thursday] started and ended because they said there were only four people dancing, so that's right, right. If there was only forró and bingo, it would be fine (NICOLE, 81 years old).

Based on these statements, it is possible to infer that part of the public that attends CEAR, although there is a limited amount of activities offered to them, has a strong bond and identification with forró and bingo, to the point of not wanting to implement other practices, diverging from the group that yearns for new activities. Thus, we noticed that there is no consensus on the implementation of new activities or maintenance of existing activities. Part of the group understands that bingo and forró are already sufficient, while other members are looking forward to diversifying the activities offered, thus generating tensions and disputes between groups.

Final Considerations

This paper had as purpose to discuss the sociability relationships that took place in a space intended to develop leisure activities for the elderly, CEAR. When preparing this work, from our insertion in the field to the production of data, it was possible to understand Renascer as an extremely rich place, both in terms of the sociability networks that are built at each meeting, and in terms of the importance of that space for people who still have it as the only place to have fun and meet their friends.

Although the municipality that hosts CEAR monitors the aging phenomenon experienced by the country, during the observations, we were able to observe a small number of people who attended the site. Furthermore, there was not a large turnover of

attendees, which, for the research, can be considered a good thing, since we were able to interact and interview a loyal audience at Renascer, who followed the institution's trajectory from the beginning to the present day. On the other hand, this small turnover can be considered bad for CEAR as an institution, because, in addition to maintaining a loyal audience, it is interesting that new people start to frequent the place, as well as that the activities carried out can reach as many people as possible, so that Renascer has the capacity to maintain itself with its own resources and does not depend exclusively on public authorities, which, according to those interviewed, has not been very present in recent years.

Attempts to justify the evasion of the elderly audience at Renascer are very diverse, ranging from the death of older attendees to the non-adherence of new members due to the current infrastructure conditions of the place. When interacting with the public of CEAR, however, especially with those responsible for organizing the dynamics developed in the space, we were able to realize that there is a deficiency in terms of publicizing the events/activities held at the location, causing the role of publicity and search for new members to be the responsibility of the members themselves.

At first, we had the view that we were in a place where there were no disagreements or conflicts and where everything occurred peacefully. However, this perception was reconstructed as we participated in the meetings. The place, which was previously idealized as harmonious and peaceful, gave way to a place where there were disputes between groups, tensions and small conflicts that, in most cases, were resolved between the participants themselves. In some situations, there was a need for intervention by the board, in order to resolve impasses and continue activities. However,

despite relations that were not always peaceful, everyone who went to CEAR sought to take advantage of the activities due to the networks established there.

REFERENCES

ANDRADE, Luciana Teixeira de; JAYME, Juliana Gonzaga; ALMEIDA, Rachel de Castro. Espaços públicos: novas sociabilidades, novos controles. **Cadernos Metrópole**, n.21, p. 131-153, 2009.

BULSING, Francine Letiele; OLIVEIRA, Kênia Fernandes de; ROSA, Luana Maria Kilian da, FONSECA, Lunara da; AREOSA, Sílvia Virginia Coutinho. A influência dos grupos de convivência sobre a auto-estima das mulheres idosas do município de Santa Cruz do Sul-RS. **Revista Brasileira de Ciências do Envelhecimento Humano**, v.4, n.1, p.11-17, 2007.

DEGÁSPARI, Jossett Campagna de; SCHWARTZ, Gisele Maria. O idoso e a ressignificação emocional do lazer. **Psicologia: Teoria e Pesquisa**, v.21, n.1, p.69-76, 2005.

FENALTI, Rita de Cássia de Souza; SCHWARTZ, Gisele Maria. Universidade aberta à terceira idade e a perspectiva de ressignificação do lazer. **Revista Paulista de Educação Física**, v.17, n.2, p.131-141, 2003.

GOMES, Christianne Luce; PINTO, Gabriela Baranowski. O lazer na velhice: Reflexão sobre as experiências de um grupo de idosos. **Kairós**, v.9, n.2, p.113-133, 2006.

GOMES, Christianne Luce; PINTO, Gabriela Baranowski. Pesquisando o lazer de um grupo de idosos no Brasil. **LÉCTURAS: Revista Digital (Buenos Aires)**, v.11, n.106, 2007.

GONÇALVES, Natália de Souza; PEÇANHA, Bruna Eliza Previatello; RAIMUNDO, Sidnei. A cartografia e sua aplicação nos estudos de lazer: algumas possibilidades do lazer do brasileiro. In: STOPPA, Edmur Antônio. ISAYAMA, Hélder Ferreira, (Org.). **Lazer no Brasil: representações e concretizações das vivências cotidianas**. Campinas, SP: Autores Associados, 2017.

IBGE - INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE GEOGRAFIA E ESTATÍSTICA. **Agência de notícias**. 2017. Available at: <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/agencia-noticias/2012-agenciadenoticias/noticias/20980-numero-de-idosos-cresce-18-em-5-anos-e-ultrapassa-30-milhoes-em-2017>. Accessed on: March 27, 2019.

IWANOWICZ, Josefa Bárbara. O lazer do idoso e o desenvolvimento prossocial. In: BRUHNS, Heloísa Turini (Org.). **Temas sobre lazer**. São Paulo: Autores Associados, 2000.

LEITE, Maria Angela Faggin Pereira. Um sistema de espaços livres para São Paulo. **Estudos Avançados**, São Paulo, v. 25, n. 71, p.159-174, 2011.

MAGNANI, José Guilherme Cantor. **Festa no pedaço: cultura popular e lazer na cidade**. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 2006. 166p.

MAGNANI, José Guilherme Cantor. Rua, símbolo e suporte da experiência urbana. **Os Urbanitas: Revista Digital de Antropologia Urbana**. São Paulo, v. 1, n. October 0, 2003. Available at: http://nau.fflch.usp.br/sites/nau.fflch.usp.br/files/upload/paginas/rua_simbolo%20e%20suporte%20da%20experiencia%20-%20magnani.pdf. Accessed on: July 07, 2018.

MATTOS, Carmem Lúcia Guimarães. A abordagem etnográfica na investigação científica. *In*: MATTOS, Carmem Lúcia Guimarães, e CASTRO, Paula Almeida de, (Orgs.). **Etnografia e educação: conceitos e usos** [online]. Campina Grande: EDUEPB, 2011. p. 49-83.

MARCELLINO, Nelson Carvalho. O lazer e os espaços na cidade. *In*: ISAYAMA, Hélder Ferreira; LINHALES, Meily Assbú (Org.). **Sobre lazer e política: maneiras de ver, maneiras de fazer**. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2006. 165 p.

MICHEL, Maria Helena. **Metodologia e pesquisa científica em ciências sociais: um guia prático para acompanhamento da disciplina e elaboração de trabalhos monográficos**. 3. ed. São Paulo: Atlas, 2015.

MINAYO, Maria Cecília de Souza (Org.); DESLANDES, S. F; GOMES, R. **Pesquisa Social: teoria, método e criatividade**. 28. ed. Petrópolis, RJ: Vozes, 2009.

MOURA, Aline Oliveira Dias; SOUZA, Luciana Karine de. Grupos de convivência para idosos: participantes, egressos e desinteressados. **Estudos e Pesquisas em Psicologia**. Rio de Janeiro. v. 15, n. 3, p. 1045-1060, 2015.

OLIVEIRA, Braulio Nogueira de, FEITOSA, Wellington Gomes, FERREIRA, Heraldo Simões. Análise da percepção dos idosos integrantes de grupo de práticas na atenção primária aspectos motivacionais e o fazer multiprofissional. **Motrivivência**, ano XXIV, n. 38, p. 149-158 jun./2012.

OLIVEIRA, Maria da Guia de; CABRAL, Benedita Edina. O lazer nos grupos de convivência para idosos: prática renovada de sociabilidade. *In*: ENCONTRO LATINO-AMERICANO DE INICIAÇÃO CIENTÍFICA, 7., E ENCONTRO AMERICANO DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO, 4., 2004, São José dos Campos. **Anais...** São José dos Campos: Universidade do Vale do Paraíba, 2004, p. 1632-1638. Available at: http://www.inicepg.univap.br/cd/INIC_2004/trabalhos/epg/pdf/EPG7-7certo.pdf. Accessed on: June 02, 2019.

PENNA, Fabíola Braz; SANTO, Fátima Helena do Espírito. O movimento das emoções na vida dos idosos: um estudo com um grupo da terceira idade. **Revista Eletrônica de Enfermagem**, v.8, n.1, p.17-24, 2006.

PEREIRA, Larissa Almeida; PEREIRA, Alexandre Vinicius da Silva; MORELLI, Grazielle. A importância do lazer da terceira idade: um estudo de caso em Ribeirão Preto. **LÉCTURAS: Revista Digital (Buenos Aires)**, v.98, 2006.

RODRIGUES, Juliana Pedreschi. FERNANDES, Charles Augusto Moreira. Lazer e sociabilidade: sobre as memórias e motivações de idosos participantes de uma

experiência de educação não formal na zona leste da cidade de São Paulo. **Licere**, Belo Horizonte, v.19, n.4, dez/2016.

SANTOS, Geraldine Alves dos; VAZ, Cícero Emídio. Grupos da terceira idade, interação e participação social. In: ZANELLA, Andréia V. *et al.* (Orgs.). **Psicologia e práticas sociais [online]**. Rio de Janeiro: Centro Edelstein de Pesquisas Sociais, 2008. p. 333-346. Available at: <http://books.scielo.org/id/886qz/pdf/zanella-9788599662878-31.pdf>. Accessed on: January 4, 2019.

SILVA, Emília Amélia Pinto Costa da, *et al.* Sociedade, cultura e saúde: motivação na utilização de espaço público de lazer. **Movimento**, Porto Alegre, v. 18, n. 1, p. 171-188, jan/mar de 2012.

SILVEIRA, Raquel da; STIGGER, Marco Paulo. Espaço de Jogo – Espaço de Envelhecimento: sociabilidade lúdica na Sociedade Esportiva Recanto da Alegria. **Rev. Bras. Cienc. Esporte**, Campinas, v. 29, n. I, p. 177-192, set. 2007.

SIMMEL, Georg. **Questões fundamentais da sociologia: indivíduo e sociedade** [tradução, Pedro Caldas]. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2006.

SIMMEL, Georg. Sociabilidade: um exemplo de sociologia pura ou formal. In: MORAES, E. (Org.) **Sociologia**. São Paulo: Ática, 1983. p. 165-181.

SOUZA, Luciana Karine de. Velho amigo, amigo velho: Amizade na velhice. In: Odair Perugini de Castro (Org.). **Envelhecer: revisitando o corpo**. Sapucaia do Sul: Notadez, 2004. p. 69-86.

STIGGER, Marco Paulo; SILVEIRA, Raquel da. A prática da "bocha" na SOERAL: entre o jogo e o esporte. **Movimento**, Porto Alegre, v. 10, n. 2, p. 37-53, maio/agosto de 2004.

ZAGO, Adriano Volnei; SILVA, Aline Soares da. **A Terceira Idade**, São Paulo, v. 14, n.28, p.54-73, set. 2003.

ZIMERMANN, Guitte. **Velhice: aspectos biopsicossociais**. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2000. 232p.

Address of the Authors:

Cesar Felipe Cumim do Nascimento
Email address: cesarfelipe@hotmail.com

Ivan Marcelo Gomes
Email address: ivangomes@hotmail.com