

**“The University of the Third Age: coming out of obscurity”**

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**Abstract:** One of the most important breakthroughs of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is the increase of life expectancy that provides ample time between retirement and the inevitable end. Gerontologists at first and Education scholars later realized the potential education holds to facilitate active aging. Gradually, researchers sought strategies to expand and improve learning opportunities. This particular concern has been the stimulus of the present article, which presents a practical implementation of the design and the function of educational programs for third age population, the University of the Third Age (U3A). A qualitative survey has been conducted on a sample population of participants in the educational activities of the University of the Third Age, which has recently been founded in Athens. Given that in Greece, there is no official strategy for Third Age Education, while academic interest is extremely limited, the stimulation of the research interest is expected to supply the designers of the relevant educational policy with useful data which would accrue in the development of more reliable actions.

**Keywords:** Education, Third Age, educational model, University of Third Age.

## **Introduction**

Academic literature is brimming with essays which conclude that there is a strong necessity for continuing education in a more mature age. The elderly themselves state in all the surveys and in every possible way that they invest a lot to the educational programs provided, even to those which don't exactly meet their needs. Nevertheless, the element which perplexes planning is the nature of the trainees. Despite the lack of agreement on what the distinctiveness of third age as educational audience consists in, it is widely acknowledged that their educational needs call for specific attention. The question here is: a) which type of education will be highly efficacious for these mature students and b) will it cover their needs? Answers to these matters are eagerly provided by theoreticians from the fields of Education and Gerontology, suggesting models which, apart from their theoretical background, are often accompanied by practical instructions on designing educational programs. These models will form the theoretical tool for probing the research questions set in the present study as regards the University of the Third Age in Greece.

## **1. Theoretical Models of the Third Age Education**

### **1.1. The Model of Expressive and Instrumental Education**

Starting from the idea that any educational program for the elderly should meet their needs, Havighurst (1976) distinguished between instrumental and expressive categories of learning. The former refers to “learning activities designed for effective mastery of old-age challenges and includes education on such topics as health, income, legal affairs, and adjusting to changing relationships with others”; the latter activities seek to “increase the enjoyment of life, serve to expand horizons, provide fairly immediate gratification, or facilitate opportunities for self-expression” (i.e. (hobby and craft instruction, travel experiences, music or art appreciation, and literature study) (Hiemstra,1976,p.228).In short, education activities are designed to help people cope with practical difficulties, probably restore some natural skills, discover new interests and connect with other people through participatory activities (Havighurst, 1976). If Havighurst’s model offers a basic distinction of the types of educational activities, the next theory originating from the field of Psychology, comes in with new suggestions for a more efficient educational atmosphere.

### **1.2. The Perceptual—Humanistic Model**

Another significant approach which responds to the second research question is the Perceptual-Humanistic Model. According to Perceptual Theory, developed by Combs and Snygg and emerged in the context of Humanistic Psychology, "all behavior, without exception, is completely determined by, and pertinent to, the perceptual field of the behaving organism" (1959, p. 20) which “consists of one's universe, including one's attitudes, needs, and perceptions of the events taking place and one's "self" as it is experienced at the time of action” (Wass & West 1977, p. 411). Consequently, the elderly who naturally carry many experiences and have multiple needs, approach the learning opportunities with fixed and predetermined perceptions concerning learning, their own learning abilities and, more generally, anything related to their presence in the program.

When programs for the Third Age are designed, the perceptions of the trainees as well as of the educators are a decisive factor for their development. That is why emphasis should be given to individual features and not to the democratic features of the trainees such as gender or educational background. The trainers must focus on the individual particularities, on how each old person perceives learning and not on the achievement of pre-defined objectives. Finally, learning becomes substantial when it has a specific meaning and value for the trainee which, in turn, paves the way to their personal development and self-actualization (Wass & West, 1977). However and despite putting students center-stage the model does seek their multifaceted empowerment as the next model does.

### 1.3. The Empowerment Model

Empowerment is the key theoretical point Critical educational gerontology raises, as through it the transformation of individuals and societies can be achieved. Meanwhile, it constitutes a useful evaluative criterion of the extent a program on offer can meet the needs of the Third Age.

Many recognize the imperative nature of empowerment not only in the field of Third Age Education but also in every form of service offered to the particular group (Thurz et al, 1993 as cited in Cusack, 2000, p.62). As time goes by, the term tends to be used abusively, it is doubted by some theorists, while it has remained at a purely theoretical level, without practical or substantial implications for a frame of action (Cusack, 2000).

Cusack (2000) managed to connect the theory of “empowerment” with practical implementation and designed a model ultimately aiming at the mental, intellectual and physical empowerment of the parties involved. The main principle of the suggested model is the active role of the elderly themselves both in the identification of the educational needs and in the implementation of the program.

Initially, and for the elderly to become emancipated, they may start get involved in defining their needs. Cusack (1995, p.309) suggests that “the model for empowering seniors as leaders in lifelong learning encompassed (a) an approach to research as emancipatory education; (b) a collaborative approach to program development, and (c) reciprocal learning experiences that reflect principles of empowering pedagogy”. In this context, the researcher collaborates with the trainees as an equal, taking into account their individual and collective experiences and s/he attempts to comprehend not only their needs and ambitions but also their worries regarding the social reality they experience (Cusack, 1995, 2000).

Furthermore, the trainers have to encourage the elderly to undertake responsibility in decision making and program realization. The trainees are able to get actively involved in the activities, but in order to assume a leading role, suitable preparation is necessary. Frequently, elderly trainers, even those that have spent their professional life as teachers, show minimum empathy to their peers, impose their authority and power and don't seek to empower their students (Cusack, 2000). This is the reason why a special training for the “guide—trainee” is needed, so as to realize the principles of emancipatory education and develop the following features:

- “Comprehend that the participants are the experts and the teacher is the guide,
- Be a good listener, with a lot of patience and control over the most talkative members of the group,
- Provide everybody with the opportunity to participate in the conversation; the shy, the quiet, the one who needs extra encouragement,
- Get feedback from the group and adapt each session accordingly,

- Respect the contribution of the elderly and the wisdom they have accumulated over the years,
- Raise questions and concern so as to change behaviours which block the influx of new information,
- Believe in the abilities of each individual and the possibility for further development,
- Use humour effectively,
- Never underestimate what the elderly can offer; there is no limit to what they know and what they can do (Cusack, 2000 p. 64-65)”.

Knowles (1984 as cited in Cusack, 1995, p.310) was the first to pinpoint the need for the adult trainer to function more as a facilitator, providing the trainees with the ability to become more responsibly involved in their learning, to diagnose their needs, to specify their learning objectives and generally to function in a collaborative atmosphere. Nevertheless, the fact that the current participants have been raised in the conditions of traditional education, may eventually not allow them to function as self-guided. Consequently, the educator/trainer must function with more sensibility both in treating the participants and motivating their active participation (Cusack, 1995). Cusack’s remarks can direct the designers of educational activities so as to offer a multilevel empowerment to the participants. However, the model followed can offer a wider foundation of successful educational opportunities.

#### **1.4. Harry (Rick) Moody Model**

The second question may be more fully answered mainly by Moody’s (1976) Model who delved into the nature of old age and of the elderly students, as well as the role of education at this age from a philosophical point of view. He considered questions such as the following: “is aging a separate stage of life or the continuation of adulthood?” or else “why should the elderly be trained?”. The answers to such types of questions are of decisive importance, because they affect the assessment of needs, the teaching methods, the content and the evaluation of the programs.

Initially, it is clarified that the educational programs for the Third Age reflect four models of dealing with the education of elderly. The first “arises from negative attitudes toward aging generated by modern industrial society, with its rejection of education for older people” (Moody 1976, p.1) and their marginalization not only because of their alleged unproductivity, but, mainly, because they are seen as reminders of death. In the second model -social services- and under the influence of the political liberalism and of the welfare state, a protection grid for the elderly has been developed. In this frame, education coincides with entertainment or “keeping them busy” (ibid, p.5). Consequently, old age is considered a period of recreation, unsuitable for engaging in serious activities, while mature individuals are thought to be of reduced potential. In the third model, that of participation, the desideratum is

the increase of the activity and the involvement of old people in professional life—perhaps given a second chance—and in social inclusion (ibid, p.6). The supporters of relative programs express the certainty that this is the way to the highly desired, successful aging.

However, Moody (1976) stresses the importance of the fourth model, that of self-actualization, that is, of mental and psychological development of the individual. Old age is seen as a distinct stage compared to previous ones, destined for intellectual pursuit and self accomplishment. Earlier, Erikson (1963 as cited in Moody, 1976, p.9) recognizing in that stage the polarity between "ego integrity" vs. "despair", he sought “reconciliation of the past with an awareness of finitude and death in terms of the characteristic virtue of this last phase of life, ‘wisdom’”. Similarly, Jung (1955 as cited in Moody, 1976, p.10) described “the fundamental task of the last stage of life as "individuation"-the disengagement of the transcendent Self from the socially required persona, or the "mask" of the various roles and activities required by responsible adulthood. Only when these masks fall away, Jung suggests, can the ultimate question of individual identity be faced in its final form”

For achieving self-actualization, Moody (1976) suggested—in respond to the second philosophical question—higher education institutions to take initiatives and on the basis of philosophical assumptions and psychological findings, to organize educational experiences especially designed for unique people who tend to reach self-conscience.

Devotion to the concept of transcendence and the value of wisdom for the aging population is commonplace among the theorists. Ardel (2000), highlighting the differences between intellectuality and wisdom, concludes that wisdom is much more substantial for the elderly. The knowledge related to wisdom, assists people to come to terms with the past and prepare for death, while it does not demand any particular mental power which recedes during aging. Humans broaden their perception, seek a personal meaning in life and in revising their lives, they develop sympathy towards themselves and the others (Ardelt, 2000).

In conclusion, a number of researchers who adopted the humanistic model, focus on the particular character of the trainees, which presupposes distinct planning of educational programs. Finally, in this planning, Humanities should be high on the agenda, with a view to promoting not only informative knowledge but wisdom, as well (Ardelt, 2000).

### **1.5. An alternative educational Model of Life Enrichment**

The model by Moody (1976) fueled concern and inspired many other theorists, such as Helen West and Marvin Ernst (1981) two designed a holistic educational model which meets the needs of the elderly, as these have been defined by Mc Clusky (1971) and it can function as a compass for the second research question.

Firstly, the researchers stress the difficulty for old people to maintain a sense of integrity in our time, as they are excluded from the market, play no distinctive social role and are scorned. In such an environment, the application of the fourth model of “self-actualization” by Moody

(1976), recognized by them as important for the completion of the elderly, is difficult. Putting funding aside, most programs appear ambiguous over the provision of activities aiming at self-discovery and raising awareness in old people. This challenge was addressed by West and Ernst (1981), who designed a pilot program implemented under the auspices of the University of Texas and the project CASE (Collaborative Approach to Services for the Elderly).

The program of “life enrichment” was based on the idea that there is a unique capability in one’s maturity to develop and thus the appropriate learning conditions must be created to facilitate this evolution. The program did not target only at the mental, physical or intellectual stimulation of the participants, it also attempted to engage the elderly into finding their own avenue to self-actualization by allowing them to identify their unique needs. In fact, as West & Ernst (1981, p. 281) stress “if the uniquely possible experience that is the property of older people is to be found, it is they who must be involved in the discovering”. To specify the learning needs, the researchers took into consideration the scale of needs by Mc Clusky (1971), as well as his theory of “the margin of power”. Based on these, “the goal of the life enrichment program was to provide learning experiences that facilitated older persons' meeting their educational needs in the areas of coping, expressing, contributing, influencing, and transcending” (West & Ernst, 1981 p. 262).

The sub-objectives were defined as follows:

- The development of an awareness of optimum functioning in the later years and the specification of the personal goals in the frame of this pursuit,
- The exploration of ways for social participation and offer,
- The awareness of reality of the later life and the formation of a personal action plan,
- The creation of a supportive social network for the last critical years,
- The cultivation of the ability to transcend the limits of the body and the self,

The activities selected to contribute to the realization of the aforementioned goals, were:

- Fitness activities to stimulate wellness,
- Relaxation and meditation techniques,
- Discussions on diet issues,
- Briefing by visiting speakers and service representatives on issues regarding old age,
- Activities for mental health boosting and stress reduction,
- Activities of self-expression, such as dance, singing and other forms of art,
- Actions aiming at self-growth, such as attitude revision and adoption of new goals for the future,
- Teaching of skills for a successful communication with others,
- Sessions focusing on the meaning of life and death (West & Ernst, 1981).

The program designers made sure to involve the elderly actively in the procedures of the implementation phase, while they took note of their opinions, both in the stage of the identification their needs and during evaluation. The approval was unanimous as the majority of the participants agreed that they were benefited in a physical, mental and social level and in revising their perception and attitude towards life (West & Ernst, 1981). In conclusion, this particular learning project exploited the discernible role of education in order to enrich the life of the elderly with new values, experiences and meaning.

The aforementioned models differ from one another to a certain extent as far as the focus is concerned and subsequently in terms of content. According to Wass and West (1977), the key to the program success was the evaluation of the mature students’ perceptions. Basically, their evaluation emphasized the participants’ subjectivity, while Cusack (1995) treated them as evolving beings, who the more they were encouraged, the more they improved. However, neither of the researches was followed by targeted actions but only outlined a frame of principles. On the other hand, Havighurst (1976) attempted a clearer definition of the content, with references to particular proposals, based on the known polarity between “ego integrity” vs “despair”. The most realistic depiction of what happened in his era and probably to this day in the field of Third Age Education, is made by Moody (1976). At the same time, he presents a complete proposal which, as proven by the model of West and Ernst (1981), inspired other theorists to devise programs capable of responding to the worries of the participants.

## **2. The University of the Third Age. The history of the institution**

After the examination of educational theoretical proposals, regarding the content, structure and focus of programs for mature adults, we will move from “how ideally such programs should be designed and run” to their practical implementation.

More specifically, we will attempt to examine a practical implementation of the design and the function of educational programs for third age population. Among the variety of institutions for the education of the elderly, we have chosen to present an institution that was born and plays a dominant role in Europe, the University of the Third Age (U3A). The choice was made mainly because this is the “parent” institution of the University of the Elderly in Greece which is also the focus of our research.

The origins of the institution can be traced back to Toulouse in France in 1972 and its enactment was the result of a law on Lifelong Learning passed in 1968 and the ideas of Pierre Vellas. He captured the opportunity created by the French Parliament to devise programs that would combine gerontological studies with teaching for the elderly. His intention was to contribute to the improvement of elderly life quality through an educational institution.

Nevertheless, instead of establishing an independent institution, the University of the Elderly (UTA) was affiliated to the already existing University of Toulouse, which provided its facilities and services, for the benefit of the elderly students. The programs focused on the

issues of aging and received such a success that gradually a number of UTAs emerged in France (Formosa, 2012).

Later, other educational approaches have emerged, such as educational institutions for the elderly under the auspices of the state and not the university. This expanded the range of learning opportunities on offer, such as open lectures, study groups, access to university courses, workshops, and field trips as well as health and sports programs.

By and large, the main core of the courses has been on Arts and Humanities. Finally, funding depends on the status and the form of the UTA and comes either from the state or the university or donations and contributions from the participants (Swindell & Thompsom, 1995).

As far as the British case is concerned, “the French U3A model underwent a substantial change when it reached Cambridge in 1981. Rather than relying on university goodwill, the founders of the British model adopted an approach in which there was to be no distinction between the teachers and the taught” (Swindell & Thompsom, 1995, p. 432; Tosse, 2013, p.11). Academics call for the greatest possible intellectual activation of mature adults and do not agree with the idea of older people turning into traditional “students”. Thus the English model was based on the idea of taking learning responsibility by the participants themselves, depending on the subject that they knew. Within this self-help/voluntary basis, those unable to contribute with a teaching project could undertake any other consulting, research or organizational task. At the same time, the model of partners was adopted, small mutual aid groups were established and their members shared the burdens and difficulties of old age and facilitated their participation in the programs (Formosa, 2012; Swindell & Thompsom, 1995).

The majority of U3As does not require admission examinations and are governed in a completely democratic manner by a board of directors. In terms of funding, there is a small contribution, but mainly municipal facilities, libraries and even private spaces are used in order to keep operating costs at a low level. Finally, programs include craft workshops, arts, music and sports activities (Swindell & Thompsom, 1995), but also academic courses, such as History, Creative Writing, Foreign Languages, Science and Technology.

In Europe two different U3A models emerged, the French and the English. Following these models, U3As were organized in the rest of Europe on the basis of local needs and national particularities. Countries such as Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Poland mostly follow the French model and the institutions are cooperating with a university (Swindell & Thompsom, 1995). The English model was very popular in Commonwealth countries, namely Australia and New Zealand, where the U3As grew beyond all expectations, based on community groups, self-organized and non-self-organized.

U3As spread to other continents too, but with different results. In Asia, they became widespread in China, while in the Americas it was least common in the USA. This is probably due to the variety of competing programs with Elderhostel being the most popular, which, according to the Youthhostels model, offer training through travel experiences. Only Learning



in Retirement programs (ILRs) could be considered as versions of the French or English model of European U3As (Swindell & Thomson, 1995). In conclusion, U3As can be found in every corner of the earth, but the mode of organization and operation depends on the educational, social and economic conditions of each nation-state.

### **3. The University of the Third Age in Greece**

In our country, the University of the Third Age firstly appeared in Northern Greece initially as a pilot experiment in the context of the Centers of Open Protection of Elderly and under the guidance of the Scientific Association of Adult Education of the prefecture of Thessaloniki. The actions benefited about 350 people who attended programs on arts and culture, human relations and communication and acquaintance with new technologies. The participants' evaluation of the project was positive as their steady rates of participation testify. However, this pilot project did not last for long (Lazaridou, 2009; Vergidis, Karalis & Koulaouzides, 2010).

The institution operated independently for the first time in the autumn of 2019 on the initiative of the non-governmental organization People Behind, which, since 2017, has been devising programs for the elderly for the Municipality of Athens. On their website the inspirers of the Greek U3A project emphasize, on the one hand, the gravity of the demographic disproportion in our country and, on the other hand, of age racism and the marginalization of the elderly. In a rapidly changing society, a considerable section of the population remains idle and often unable to assume responsibility for the simplest of tasks.

The People Behind mission statement stresses the empowerment of people over 65 years of age through Health and Active Aging programs, lifelong learning, digital integration and education, intergenerational exchange and participation in civil society.

From an organizational point of view, the Greek U3A is a mixed model with greater affinity with the English one, as it cooperates with and receives know-how from the renown Universities of Fulham & Hammersmith of London and U3A of Cyprus. Although it is still at an early stage of development, the intention of its founders is to involve the elderly in the coordination of activities and courses, in order to use their knowledge, skills and experience. In particular, although teaching has been undertaken by experienced instructors, it is planned to develop on a voluntary basis by instructors aged 65 and over. The only condition for someone to participate at the offered actions is to be over 65 years old and to speak basic Greek. Attendance is completely free of charge, there is no state financial support, while funding comes only from donations.

In the first phase, four four-month courses were offered (European History, Ancient Greek Philosophy, Theatrical play and Computers). Courses were planned to be done live. However, shortly after the courses started, the Covid 19 epidemic broke out, upsetting the teaching process and forcing the organizers to explore alternative ways of instruction. Indeed, by

showing strong reflexes in a short period of time, they created virtual electronic classrooms and turned teaching into an online one. In addition, as the quarantine expanded, U3A officials listened to the concerns of the elderly and added courses such as Mental Empowerment, an Online Physical Training Course and an Online Course on Ancient Tragedy and Poetry as well as “Coronavirus for the elderly”. These actions aimed at the mental empowerment and the physical and mental mobilization of the participants (People Behind, 2017). According to the testimony of those in charge, the numbers of applicants, in a short period of time, exceeded all expectations, a fact that in itself indicates the existence of an audience with a strong learning interest.

#### **4. The importance of the research**

Although the number of seniors participating in programs is growing rapidly, this percentage, compared to the total number of seniors, is extremely limited (Glendenning, 1989). For example, in the United Kingdom, a country with strong academic research in Educational Gerontology and a clear policy in support of Elderly Education (Withnall, 2009) only one out of ten seniors attends a program each year.

A key recommendation of the literature about ways of increasing older people's access to programs and encouraging learning is to explore in-depth needs and match content to interests (Pearce, 1991). Unfortunately, there is a “lack of solid research data, the recognition of seniors' specific needs and interests, and a cognizance of the fact that traditional youth-oriented approaches to education are not appropriate for the elderly” (Barnes & Wiles, 1980 as cited in Pearce, 1991, p. 458) and “ambivalence about programs for older adults on the part of administrators” (Longs, 1980 as cited in Pearce, 1991, p. 458).

Moreover, in addition to the heterogeneity that characterizes this age group, there is a great difference between each generation of older people. Specifically, each generation differs from the previous one in terms of educational level and therefore in terms of their relationship with learning and the degree of response to programs (Schuller & Bostyn, 1993). This means that research findings have limited validity, if not in their entirety, at least to some degree, and therefore need to be updated.

If the aforementioned deficiencies are noted in countries with already limited education policy for the elderly, we can imagine the literature gap in our country. In Greece, there is no official strategy specifically for the Education of the Elderly (Lazaridou, 2009), while the academic interest is extremely limited. From the literature review conducted for the needs of the present work, it was found that very few researches have been carried out and most of them in the context of dissertations. Given that in Greece, there is no official strategy about Third Age Education, while academic interest is extremely limited, the stimulation of the research interest is expected to supply the designers of the relevant educational policy with useful data which would accrue in the development of more reliable actions.

## 5. The research methodology

The aim of the present research was to identify the reasons that urged mature adults into educational programs and the ability of these programs to meet their educational needs. The goal is to determine the degree of needs satisfaction by the providers of education for the Elderly, based on the educational opportunities offered by the University for the Third Age in Greece. The research question sought to determine whether the training provided matched the needs of the participants.

The qualitative method was chosen, as it is appropriate in case our intention is to know a subject in depth about which our knowledge is limited (Creswell, 2011). With the interviews, which are the main research tool of the qualitative method, we attempted not only to extract information, but also to reveal the attitudes, perceptions, values and preferences of the respondent (Paraskevopoulou - Kollia, 2008). Following Withnall (2009) it was decided to give voice to the participants, in order to record their attitudes regarding learning and the specific program in which they participated, without restrictions and exclusions.

The research tool was the semi-structured interview and a short demographic data questionnaire. The questions were addressed to all three categories of respondents, both the educators and the coordinator of the University of the Third Age, and the apprentices in order to extract more reliable data through triangulation (Creswell, 2011).

The implementation of the research was hampered by situations unprecedented for our time and more specifically the Covid 19 epidemic and the imposed quarantine. The persons from “People behind” were first approached, informed extensively about the research objectives and received assurances of anonymity and respect for the personal data of the respondents. They were asked for their permission and assistance in communicating over the phone with program participants (Creswell, 2011). Through the mediation of the people in charge, five people were identified who were willing to talk to us and telephone appointments were arranged. The interviews took place in May 2020.

## 6. Conclusions

The main conclusion that emerged about the implementation of programs by the Greek U3A is that the institution, although a few months old, seems to adequately meet the expectations of the participants. Evidence suggests that it provided spiritual nourishment, human communication, problem-solving and support, even during the admittedly difficult period of incarceration due to Covid 19. At a time when the entire population of the country was isolated, the U3A seniors had a daily program of action and human contact. All interviewees referred to this period with gratitude and admiration for the reflexes of those in charge of U3A.

From the abovementioned, some more observations inevitably arise. First of all, the role of electronic literacy in the elderly has been demonstrated. The achievements of the U3A would not have been possible if the elderly had not had the necessary equipment and basic computer skills. The experience of quarantine highlighted the role of the internet in relation to the elderly. After all, even when the current threat of Covid 19 disappears, other conditions, such as geographical distance or health problems, make electronic communication necessary.

The widespread popularity of U3As demonstrates the need of mature adults to continue learning and remaining creative and active. The model on which each U3A is developed is particularly important, because the more democratic and self-helping it is, the more responsibilities fall into the hands of the elderly. Consequently, needs such as participation and offering or continuing employment even after retirement can be met (Mc Clusky, 1971). Of course, the positive element is the adaptability of the institution to the needs of each society. However, more and more reliable information regarding the efficiency of each project might be extracted from field research.

The last conclusion concerns the situation that prevails in the Education of the elderly in Greece. The literature review revealed a large lacuna both in theory and practice. At a time when the international literature about this new scientific field is expanding and the number of education providers is increasing, in Greece the issue of Elderly Education is treated by the state on an occasional basis, depending on the available human and financial resources. U3A innovates in the sense that it is an institution specialized in training opportunities for seniors and that is its exclusive field of action. However, this example must find imitators throughout the country and therefore requires the assistance of the scientific community, in order to bring the issue of Third Age Education out of obscurity.

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