

# Intergenerational attitudes and improving awareness to promote independence in elderly

Prof Eef Hogervorst and Jennifer Stock  
School of Sports, Exercise, and Health Sciences  
Loughborough University, UK

# What are the predominant Attitudes related to Ageing ?

Please write down 5 adjectives that  
you associate with ageing

# Young people's Attitudes towards Ageing in the United Kingdom

*“I just don't think that you do anything when you're 60....They just sit in their chairs”*

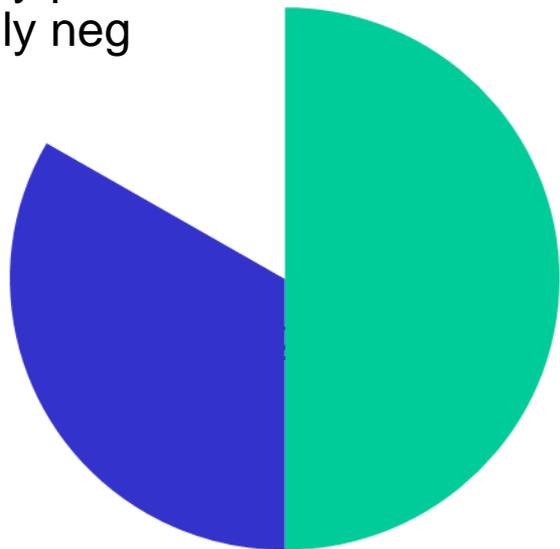
*“I just don't want people doing things for me, That's what I don't like about it [old age], that's what's so scary, but you can't help it”*

Phoenix & Sparkes, UK (2006)

# Young People in the UK: a mix of positive and negative

Of n=57  
1 only pos  
2 only neg

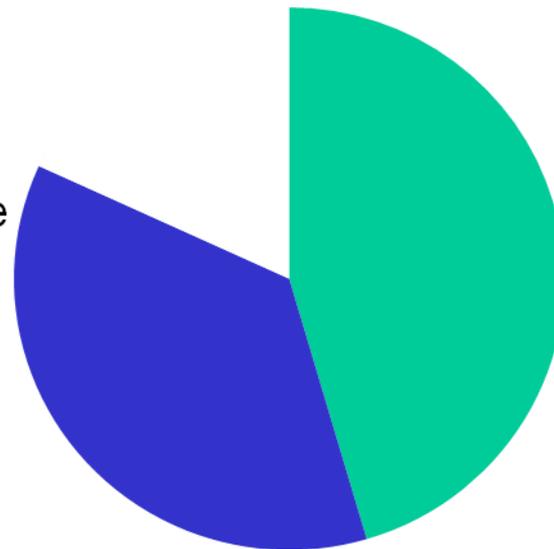
women



■ negative  
■ positive  
neutral

men

Of n=19  
1 only pos  
0 only neg



■ negative  
■ positive  
neutral

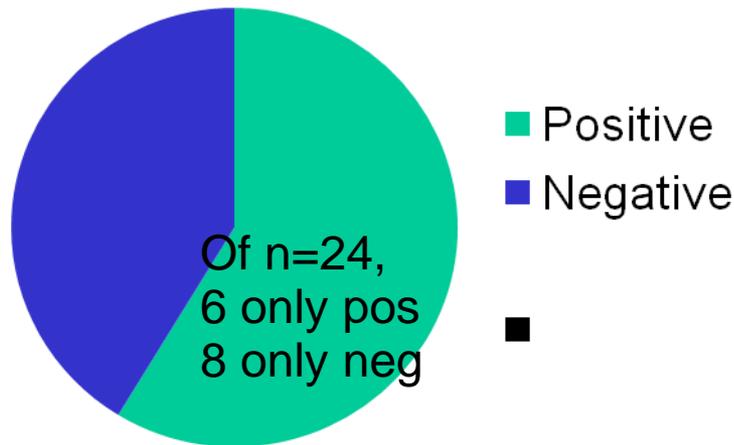
**Positive:** wise, generous, experienced, respect, friendly, kind, knowledgeable

**Negative:** slow, poor health, not active/physical, frail, weak, forgetful

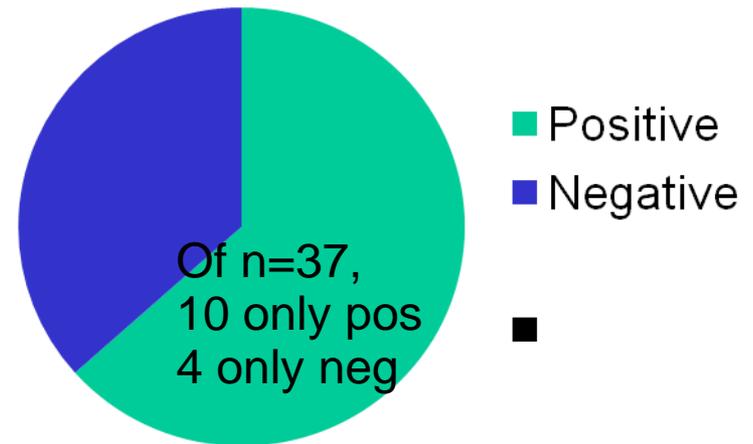
**Neutral:** old, wrinkles, grey, small

# Young People in China: only positive attitudes ?

Men



Women



**Positive:** smiling, wise, calm, friendly, caring, insightful, happy, forgiving

**Negative:** talkative, childlike, slow, poor health, opinions not relevant, ugly

# Negative Attitudes to Ageing in Elderly

## Psychosocial Loss

- Old age is a time of loneliness
- Old age is a depressing time of life
- I see old age mainly as a time of loss (of physical independence)
- I don't feel involved in society now that I am older
- I feel excluded from things because of my age

# Positive Attitudes to Ageing

## Psychological growth

- Wisdom comes with age
- It is a privilege to grow old
- It is very important to pass on the benefits of my experiences
- I believe my life has made a difference
- I want to give a good example to younger people

# Other Positive Attitudes to Ageing

## Physical Change

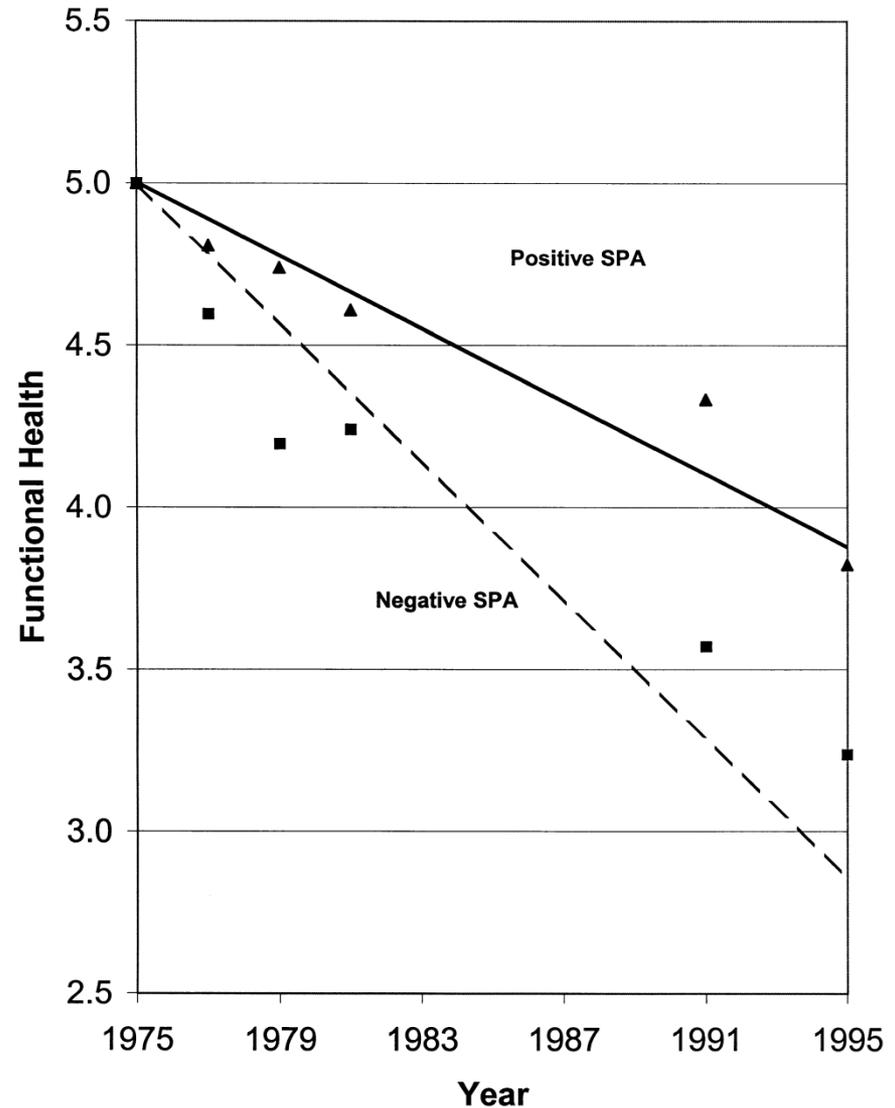
- It is important to take exercise at any age
- My identity is not defined by my age
- I have more energy now than I expected for my age
- Problems with my physical health do not hold me back from doing what I want
- My health is better than I expected for my age
- I keep as fit and active as possible by exercising

# Perceptions of Ageing

- Perceptions of ageing are predominantly negative (Nelson 2005)
- Most frequent expectations - old age is associated with:
  - Poor cognitive and physical functioning, isolation
  - Inevitable decline and deterioration (Sarkisian et al 2005)
- These perceptions are not always accurate – huge variation !
- The **BELIEF** that ageing is associated with decline may be related to health outcomes – *Self fulfilling prophecy*
- *(Merton, (1957))*

# Levy et al (2002).

- Elderly (50+) same baseline functional health
- Those with negative self perceptions show more deterioration over time
- Attitudes to ageing can affect future health
- Another study found that those with more positive self perceptions at baseline lived longer (controlling for other factors)



## Levy et al (2002): why ?

### *“Perceived control”*

- Do you have control over your future health/function?
- Or is age related decline inevitable?

This affects your present health behaviours :

- Physical activity, Healthy diet, not Smoking

Negative attitudes and little perceived control leads to **self full-filling prophecy**: to give up trying within the set limits and for (carers) not letting old people enjoy independence in old age

- Negative perceptions of ageing may reduce the involvement in health promoting behaviours
- Levy & Myers (2004) hypothesised this reduction in healthy behaviour was due to the perception that illness was inevitable
- Negative stereotypes **reinforce attitudes** that elderly are too weak to exercise and health improvements are not possible
- Keeping active being involved is essential to maintain functioning and well being



## Promoting independence in old age

- Keeping active (playgrounds for older people)
- Age friendly cities (side walks, busses, toilets)
- Aids around the house (smart homes)
- Aids in nursing homes for people with dementia and cognitive impairment to maintain function



Dr Wit and Dr Yuniar Sunarko from Lawang Mental Hospital who have done a splendid job at introducing aids for people with dementia to maintain independence and dignity

Less **perceptual ability** (Kirby, 2010): requires high contrast washrooms, using rails and correct bed height for easy access to **prevent falls** which are common in dementia.



Loss of **orientation in time and place**: give reminders and simple symbols to identify rooms. Reminiscence training to activate **prior knowledge**, to give a sense of purpose and fun



01/04/11

Structured daily activities including cooking to **activate planning skills and exercising together** on non slip floors



JADWAL KEGIATAN

No	NAMA PASIEN	CM	K	SENIN MUSIK	SELASA ROT/TAKS	RABU RELI
1	JABRIYAH	17702	2	✓	✓	✓
2	PUNYATI	78893	2	✓	✓	✓
3	SUWARYA	79912	2	✓	✓	✓
4	SARAH	32576	3	✓	✓	✓
5						
6	SITI HURMA	56601	3	✓	✓	✓
7	SALJAN	58591	3	✓	✓	✓
8	SEWA	61991	2	✓	✓	✓
9	SAHMIAH	77998	2	✓	✓	✓
10	SARINATI	81621	2	✓	✓	✓
11	SARINATI	79312	2	✓	✓	✓
12	MARONI	78818	2	✓	✓	✓
13	MASRIKIL	21992	2	✓	✓	✓
14	SITI	23311	2	✓	✓	✓
15	RETIKIL	13860	2	✓	✓	✓
16	TURHANAH	19861	2	✓	✓	✓
17	SITI	19912	2	✓	✓	✓
18	SITI SUR ROBI	18802	2	✓	✓	✓
19	SITI	77491	2	✓	✓	✓
20	SITI HURMAH	16696	2	✓	✓	✓
21	TITIK	16818	3	✓	✓	✓
22	MARINIL	19871	3	✓	✓	✓
23	TUCIYATI	15319	3	✓	✓	✓
24	RODIYATI	58950	1	✓	✓	✓
25	ERISYAH KIRI	51783	3	✓	✓	✓
26	IMPONITIK	80584	3	✓	✓	✓

- SESUAI KEBUTUHAN ANDA
- Sekilas mengenai beberapa kegiatan yang kami lakukan
- Reality orientation training**  
 Suatu modalitas terapi yang dirancang secara unik untuk mempertahankan orientasi klien terhadap diri dan lingkungannya
  - Reminiscence therapy**  
 Penggunaan berbagai benda, kisah, maupun lagu dari masa lalu klien untuk merangsang kembali memori jangka panjangnya
  - Modified occupational therapy**  
 Terapi okupasi yang disesuaikan dengan latar belakang sosio-ekonomi, pendidikan, dan budaya klien
  - Respite Care**  
 Pengasuhan sementara bagi usia lanjut, apabila pengasuh tetap/keluarganya berhalangan mengasuh selama beberapa saat
  - Palliative Care & hospice service**  
 Perawatan suportif dengan tujuan meningkatkan kualitas hidup klien yang mengalami penyakit stadium terminal
  - Pet therapy**  
 Mempergunakan kedekatan klien dengan binatang peliharaan untuk membangun kembali emosi positifnya
  - Multisensory stimulation**



# Loughborough age friendly city



## Conclusions

- Intergenerational attitudes can have a large effect on health, well being and independence
- Maintaining independence, a positive outlook and dignity at all stages (from successful ageing to disability) is crucial (BBC Young Ones)
- Translation from science (observational data to technical support) to practice is important.

# Smart Homes (work at Loughborough University): but is it smart ?

