



# Ambivalent and Hostile Ageism

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## Background and Aims

According to the World Health Organization, ageism corresponds to the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people based on age. Benevolent and hostile attitudes towards individuals on the basis of their age are experienced by older people in multiple societies. The aims of the current study were to assess ageism and explore whether there is a relationship between this construct and age, as well the role of health status perceptions in that relationship.

## Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted in a sample of 356 participants (135 males and 221 females), with a mean age of 53.51 years old ( $SD = 20.27$ ). Participants completed the Ambivalent Ageism Scale (AAS; Cary, Chasteen, & Remedios, 2016) and a multidimensional social resource, physical and emotional health questionnaire.

## Results

Mean scores of the different subscale items ranged from  $2.50 \pm 2.21$  and  $6.84 \pm 0.58$ . These results were significantly higher than the ones reported in the original version of the AAS ( $p \leq .003$ ). Age was positively correlated with 9 items [6 benevolent (items, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9) and 3 hostile (items 10, 12 and 13)]. Results also showed that participants presenting better health perceptions are the ones showing higher levels of ageism.

Table 1  
Mean, Standard Deviation (AAS) and Differences in the Samples

Items	Portuguese sample		Reference sample		t; gl; p
	M	SD	M	SD	
1.	2,5	2,21	2,54	1,61	-0,316; 353; =0,753
2.	3,42	2,53	1,97	1,28	10,8; 355; <0,001
3.	3,61	2,53	2,14	1,36	10,9; 354; <0,001
4.	6,2	1,6	2,66	1,51	41,6; 355; <0,000
5.	5,46	2,15	1,96	1,28	30,6; 355; <0,001
6.	5,31	2,26	2,01	1,49	27,5; 355; <0,000
7.	6	1,64	2,55	1,48	39,5; 355; <0,001
8.	6,83	0,58	4,28	1,62	82,8; 355; <0,001
9.	6,77	0,7	3,79	1,63	80,0; 355; <0,001
10.	5,13	2,01	2,6	1,45	23,7; 355; <0,001
11.	5,61	1,91	2,67	1,5	28,9; 354; <0,001
12.	4,7	2,15	2,51	1,5	19,2; 355; <0,001
13	2,72	2,39	2,34	1,5	2,9; 355; =0,003

Table 2  
Correlation Between AAS, Age and Health Perceptions

Items	Age N = 356	Age (years) 1. (n = 56)	Age (years) 2. (n = 130)	Age (years) 3. (n = 170)
1.	0,05	0,02	0,06	-0,02
2.	0,03	-0,06	-0,04	-0,04
3.	0,06	-0,01	-0,04	0,03
4.	0,23**	0,05	0,12	0,24**
5.	0,21**	0,1	0,17	0,25**
6.	0,17**	0,05	0,19*	0,09
7.	0,22**	0,25	0,31**	0,18*
8.	0,12*	0,15	0,16	0,03
9.	0,17**	0,14	0,21*	0,06
10.	0,17**	0	0,04	0,20*
11.	0,1	-0,25	0,02	0,18*
12.	0,12*	-0,14	0,05	0,12
13.	0,27**	-0,17	0,17*	0,23**

Legend (table 2): subgroup 1. Perceived health status as "Enough bad and bad"; Subgroup 2. Perceived health status as "Neither good nor bad"; Subgroup 3. Perceived health status as "Good and fairly good"

## DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION

The differences found between our results and those of the AAS original study may be explained by characteristics (education, rural area, cultural issues, etc.) which may impact on ageism definition. Therefore, it is important to enhance a better understanding of this construct in order to decrease the harmful effects of hostile and benevolent ageism.

## REFERENCES

- Cary, L., Chasteen, A., & Remedios, J. (2017). The Ambivalent Ageism Scale: Developing and Validating a Scale to Measure Benevolent and Hostile Ageism. *The Gerontologist*, 1-10. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnw118
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