

ONE JOY: FORMATIVE ITINERARIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF ELDERLY PEOPLE IN THE CARNIVAL OF CAMPO GRANDE



<https://doi.org/10.56238/arev7n4-013>

Submitted on: 03/03/2025

Publication date: 04/03/2025

**Neila Barbosa Osório¹, Djanires Lageano Neto de Jesus², Luiz Sinésio Silva Neto³,
Marlon Santos de Oliveira Brito⁴ and Nubia Pereira Brito Oliveira⁵**

ABSTRACT

Population aging has aroused reflections on the quality of life of the elderly, especially in relation to their active participation in cultural events. The "UMA Só Alegria Project", developed by the University of Maturity of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UMA/UEMS), proposes to integrate the elderly public in the carnival festivities in an inclusive way, inserting themselves in intergenerational education and promoting active aging through cultural practices. The objective of this work was to analyze how pedagogical practice is integrated into the training itineraries of older people, by investigating the educational and cultural processes during the festivities and analyzing the participation of UMA students in cultural celebrations. A qualitative approach was adopted, using direct observations, reflective notes and analysis of institutional documents. Thus, the results revealed how the project contributes to the strengthening of the cultural identity of the elderly and promotes social inclusion, evidencing positive impacts on the psychological and cultural dimensions. On the other hand, activities prove to be an effective tool for active aging, contributing significantly to intergenerational education and the appreciation of older people as active agents of society.

Keywords: Lifelong education. Carnival. Training Itineraries. Elderly.

¹Post-Doctorate in Education, professor at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT).

E-mail: neilaosorio@uft.edu.br

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/8325746711520223>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6346-0288>

²Dr. in Education. State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS).

E-mail: netoms@uems.br

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0080447988753959>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1434-5080>

³Dr. in Health Sciences and Technologies. Adjunct Professor of Medicine at the Federal University of Tocantins.

E-mail: luizneto@uft.edu.br

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/0239885769879636>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3182-772>

⁴Doctorate student in Education in the Amazon at the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT).

Email: marlonoliveirabrito@gmail.com

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/4283147360294621>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5487-2400>

⁵Master's degree in Education in the Amazon, from the Federal University of Tocantins (UFT).

Email: professoranubiabrito@gmail.com

LATTES: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/6151725101318469>

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1026-4734>

INTRODUCTION

Population aging has generated reflections on the quality of life of older people, especially with regard to their active participation in cultural and leisure events. The "UMA Só Alegria Project", developed at the University of Maturity of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UMA/UEMS) emerges as an innovative proposal, aiming to integrate the elderly public in the carnival festivities in an active and inclusive way. This project is part of the broader context of intergenerational education, which seeks to promote active aging through cultural practices that involve several generations.

The study addresses the relevance of this initiative and its social, cultural and psychological impacts on the elderly population, highlighting its contribution to the strengthening of cultural identity and the fight against ageism. In addition, it analyzes their contributions to the formative itineraries of elderly people who study or intend to study Youth and Adult Education (EJA).

The descriptions seek to understand: How does the University of Maturity (UMA) insert itself as a pedagogical tool that articulates teaching and learning based on intergenerational education and the pedagogy of active aging through Carnival parties? by investigating how the "UMA Só Alegria Project" contributes to the continuing education of elderly people, encouraging their active participation in a significant cultural event, such as Carnival.

The general objective was to analyze the importance of the "UMA Só Alegria Project" as an innovative pedagogical practice that integrates Carnival into the training itineraries in the education of elderly people, addressing its social, cultural and psychological impacts. The specific objectives include: (i) to investigate the educational and cultural processes during the Carnival festivities in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul; (ii) analyze the participation of UMA students in the project and its implications for active aging; and (iii) explore how the pedagogy of active aging can be applied to the context of cultural celebrations.

The relevance of this study lies in the contribution it can offer to the understanding of educational practices that involve the elderly population in cultural and social contexts. The inclusion of the elderly in events such as Carnival is a way to promote active citizenship and strengthen the cultural identity of this population (Freire, 1987). The research is also justified by the need to combat ageism and provide educational spaces that respect and value the experience and wisdom of the elderly.

A qualitative approach is adopted, focusing on the investigation of the "UMA Só Alegria Project". The study uses techniques such as direct observations, reflective annotations, and analysis of institutional documents. The triangulation of the collected data allows an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of teaching and learning during Carnival. For this, the precepts of Bardin (2011) and the methodological foundations of Lakatos and Marconi (2003) were followed, allowing a rich analysis of the pedagogical and cultural practices that involve the elderly in the project.

The results are structured in the discussion of the theoretical context and the methodological basis of the study; exploration of the "UMA Só Alegria Project" and its practical application during Carnival, with emphasis on educational and cultural processes; presentation of a table with analyses of the social, cultural and psychological impacts of the participation of older people; and, finally, in the discussion of the implications of the results found for intergenerational education and active aging.

2 PATHS TRAVELED

The understanding and recording of the "UMA Só Alegria Project" were carried out through a qualitative approach that favored data collection through direct observations, reflective notes and lived experiences, in addition to the rigorous analysis of institutional documents, bibliographic and operational references. This methodology, based on precepts that dialogue with the teachings of Bardin (2011) and with the methodological foundations presented by Lakatos and Marconi (2003), allowed an in-depth investigation of the teaching and learning processes that culminated in the active participation of students from the University of Maturity (UMA) during the Carnival festivities in Campo Grande, Mato Grosso do Sul.

During the development of the project, the field observation revealed nuances and dynamics of the interactions between the participants, recording behaviors, spontaneous reactions and the way in which the educational content was assimilated and applied in the festive context. This practical experience, in line with the content analysis suggested by Bardin (2011), was essential to understand the impact of pedagogical and cultural activities on the elderly involved.

At the same time, the realization of detailed notes — which encompassed both the subjective impressions of the researchers and objective data regarding the participation and engagement of those involved — made it possible to prepare a chronological and

thematic record of the experiences. This procedure, in line with the methodological foundations of Lakatos and Marconi (2003), facilitated a critical reflection of the teaching and learning processes experienced during the project, revealing aspects that often go beyond the scope of a merely documentary analysis.

The triangulation of data from observations, notes and document analysis — which included the examination of lesson plans, activity reports, photographic records and institutional communications of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS) — allowed to accurately identify the objectives, strategies and results achieved. This set of procedures evidenced the contribution of the project to the promotion of citizenship and the strengthening of the cultural identity of the participants, corroborating the theoretical perspectives of Bardin (2011).

Finally, the integration of the data obtained through these various techniques in bibliographic studies that are referenced in the work, enabled a holistic understanding of the educational and cultural processes involved in the "UMA Só Alegria Project". The methodological approach adopted not only facilitated the identification of the challenges and potentialities of the actions carried out, but also built a narrative that values the life experience of UMA students, emphasizing the transformative role of education in promoting inclusion and valuing local culture.

3 CARNIVAL AS A FORMATIVE ITINERARY FOR THE ELDERLY

Carnival, as a cultural manifestation rooted in Brazilian history, has a significant educational potential, especially in the context of the education of the elderly. According to Silva (2024), Carnival allows dialogues between popular culture and education, enabling the transmission of intergenerational knowledge and promoting the inclusion of different social groups (Oliveira *et al.*, 2023). In this sense, by being incorporated as part of a formative itinerary in Youth and Adult Education (EJA) (Brazil, 2018 and 2021), Carnival can stimulate the appreciation of memory and cultural identities, in addition to favoring learning through experience and collective interaction.

The experience of Carnival as a pedagogical practice can also be analyzed from the study of Nachif and Alves (2018), who highlight the role of the party in Corumbá - Mato Grosso do Sul, as an element of strengthening intangible heritage and the construction of social belonging. When adapted to educational contexts, Carnival can contribute to the elderly to resignify their life experiences, actively participating in artistic and cultural

expressions that dialogue with their trajectory. In addition, by integrating carnival activities into the training itineraries, such as dance workshops, making props, and studying historical manifestations, education can become more dynamic and accessible to this audience (Brito and Osório, 2024).

From this perspective, Brandão's (2008) approach to education as part of the lived world reinforces the importance of experiential learning. It was perceived in the experience that Carnival, when worked on in the education of elderly people, expands the possibilities of socialization and belonging, contributing to personal development and to the strengthening of community ties. In this way, by recognizing this festivity as an educational space, pedagogical policies and practices aimed at EJA (Brasil, 2021) can enrich training itineraries, encouraging the active participation of the elderly in the construction of knowledge and cultural preservation (Osório *et al.* 2023).

It was found that the participation of the elderly population in Carnival, despite its educational and social potential, still faces significant challenges, including structural barriers and prejudices. As pointed out by Abrão and Del Pino (2016), access to learning spaces and contemporary technologies is often hampered by the lack of technological and structural adaptations that allow their full inclusion. In the carnival context, this is reflected in the absence of accessibility in blocks and parades, as well as in the marginalization of the elderly as active subjects of the festivity. These challenges reinforce the need for training itineraries that promote the participation of this population, rescuing their cultural memory and encouraging their presence in these spaces.

One of the actions that were highlighted in the experiences was the Motion of Applause, and the following table presents the honorees, highlighting their functions and significant contributions to the event, especially in the context of the "Samba School Deixa Falar", which involved the elderly people of the University of Maturity (UMA/UEMS). The motion ceremony was an opportunity to recognize the commitment and dedication of these individuals, who play key roles in their respective fields. The table organizes the main information of the honorees, detailing their positions and functions, in addition to providing an observation on the impact of their performances on the event, such as conducting the drums, financial management, and coordinating the activities of the samba school.

Table 1: Motion of Applause of the "Samba School Deixa Falar" in the context of the Project

Honored	Position/Function	Observation
---------	-------------------	-------------

Nayara Thomaz	Drum Master	Responsible for conducting the drums at the Samba School
Francis Fabian	President of the Samba School Deixa Falar	Representative of the samba school at the event
Lelis Therezinha Rolim da Cunha (Lelis Mandetta)	Financial Director and Access Interlocutor at UMA/UEMS	Important participation in the University of Maturity (UMA)
Marlem da Conceição Francisco	Vice-President of the Samba School Deixa Falar	Coordinates activities and contributes to the success of the samba school

Source: The authors (2025)

It is worth noting that, historically, education in Brazil (Brazil, 2018 and 2021) has not always considered the inclusion of the elderly population (Inep, 2021) as a priority, which contributes to the persistence of social barriers. Ghiraldelli Jr. (2001) points out that the Brazilian educational system was structured based on a logic that privileges youth, making it difficult for older people to access cultural and formative practices (Osório *et al.* 2023). The State University of Campo Grande (UEMS) strengthens the fight against this hegemony and takes advantage of Carnival to fight against exclusion and prejudice against aging, which often associates old age with inactivity or distancing from popular culture (Saviani, 2007). The University presents, however, by integrating Carnival as a pedagogical strategy in EJA, that it is possible to transform this reality, ensuring that older people have legitimate spaces for expression and learning.

The following is the image of the Motion of Applause certificate, awarded to participants who have stood out in collaboration with the education of older people at the University of Maturity (UMA/UEMS). Another experience that was considered extremely important, as it recognized the hard work and dedication of those involved in the process of inclusion and continuous learning of the elderly population (Inep, 2021 and Saviani, 2007)). By highlighting the contribution of these individuals, the university reinforces its commitment to promoting intergenerational and accessible education (Oliveira *et al.*, 2023), which values the protagonism of the elderly and ensures that they have a space of recognition and respect in their learning journey and social participation.

Image 1: Certificate of Applause: Recognition for Contribution to the Project



Source: UMA/UEMS (2025)

The analysis of the data also pointed out that popular education has a fundamental role in overcoming these barriers, promoting the recognition of the social rights of the elderly population. Souza (2010) and Cunha (1986) emphasize that education should be an instrument of social transformation, allowing historically marginalized groups to have a voice and active participation. Thus, by including Carnival in the training itineraries for the elderly, it is possible to strengthen the bond of these people with culture and society, providing a more dignified and meaningful experience (Brito and Osório, 2024). This movement not only values the history and knowledge of the elderly, but also combats ageism and expands the possibilities of intergenerational education (Oliveira *et al.*, 2023).

The following table presents a detailed analysis of the UMA Só Alegria project, which uses Carnival as a pedagogical tool to promote active aging and social inclusion of older people (UN, 2020). Each row of the table describes a specific aspect of the project, analyzing its impact on the education, socialization and cultural appreciation of the elderly, based on different theoretical perspectives and educational practices (Osório *et al.* 2023). The references cited in the table provide a solid basis for understanding how Carnival, as a cultural manifestation rooted in Brazilian history, can be incorporated into training itineraries, enriching the educational experience and strengthening the identity of the elderly (Brito and Osório, 2024).

Table 2: Analysis of the ONE Joy Project

Description	Experience and Analysis	References
Carnival as a cultural manifestation and its educational potential	In the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, the participation of the elderly included activities such as dance workshops, making props and presentations, promoting inclusion and valuing their cultural identities.	Silva (2024)
Carnival as a tool for strengthening heritage and social belonging	In the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, elderly people participate in rehearsals and carnival events that rescue memories and create a sense of belonging. The active experience in cultural expressions allows them to feel an integral part of the party.	Nachif and Alves (2018)
Experiential learning at Carnival for seniors	In the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, the experience of Carnival involves the active participation of the elderly in activities ranging from the creation of costumes to the experience of parades, which contributes to dynamic and participatory learning.	Brandão (2008)
Structural barriers and prejudices in access to new technologies	In the context of the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, structural adaptations are made, such as the creation of accessible spaces and the promotion of inclusive activities to ensure that older people can fully participate in the festivity.	Abrão and Del Pino (2016)
Historical exclusion of the elderly population in education and Carnival	In the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, exclusion is overcome by integrating Carnival as part of training itineraries, ensuring that older people can express themselves and learn, challenging prejudices and offering new opportunities.	Ghiraldelli Jr. (2001)
Popular education as an instrument of social transformation for the elderly	The <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project is an example of how Carnival can be used to promote the inclusion of elderly people in an educational and cultural process that values them as active subjects.	Souza (2010) and Cunha (1986)
Carnival as a challenge to traditional views on aging	In the <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> project, Carnival is worked as an intergenerational learning space, allowing the elderly to teach and learn from other age groups.	Cunha (1992)
Protagonism of elderly people and citizenship in the carnival context	Projects such as <i>UMA Só Alegria</i> promote the protagonism of the elderly, strengthening their autonomy and social recognition. By actively participating in carnival activities, they exercise their right to culture and education in a participatory way, reaffirming their active role in society.	Freire (1987) Alvino (2015)

Source: The Authors (2025)

Projects such as *UMA Só Alegria* play an essential role in valuing culture and promoting active aging (UN, 2020), by encouraging the participation of older people in festive events such as Carnival. CNE/CEB Resolution No. 7/2018 highlights the importance of training itineraries that contemplate age and cultural diversity, reinforcing the need for

educational practices that promote inclusion and belonging (Brito and Osório, 2024). In this context, by integrating carnival activities into educational processes, these projects allow the elderly to rescue affective memories and strengthen community ties, contributing to lifelong education and the appreciation of popular culture.

The cultural perspective of aging, as discussed by Cunha (1992), reinforces the idea that culture is not a static element, but rather a continuous process of construction of meanings. UMA Só Alegria, by inserting elderly people in the carnival experience, challenges traditional views that limit aging to passivity and isolation. This initiative demonstrates that participation in cultural manifestations can be a formative element, providing intergenerational learning and strengthening the identity of the elderly as active subjects in society. In addition, by allowing them to share their experiences with other generations, the project contributes to a broader understanding of culture and education.

Thus, from the phenomenological analysis (Merleau-Ponty, 2006) of the experiences lived by the participants, it is possible to understand that the inclusion of elderly people in events such as Carnival is in line with Alvino's (2015) reflection on protagonism, citizenship (Freire, 1987) and human rights in aging. UMA Só Alegria exemplifies how socio-cultural projects can promote autonomy and social recognition, offering opportunities for the elderly to exercise their right to culture and education in a participatory way (Freire, 1987). In other words, Carnival, when worked as part of a formative itinerary, not only strengthens the bond of the elderly with their affective memories, but also reaffirms their active role in society, contributing to a more dignified and integrated aging.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study achieved the objective of investigating Carnival as a formative itinerary for the elderly, highlighting its educational and social potential, in addition to its impact on cultural inclusion and the appreciation of memory. The analysis revealed that Carnival, when integrated with Youth and Adult Education (EJA), provides a meaningful experience for the elderly, promoting socialization, belonging and the strengthening of cultural identities.

The active participation of the elderly from the University of Maturity of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UMA/UEMS) in activities such as dance workshops, prop making and parades of blocks, such as the UMA Só Alegria project, demonstrates that the carnival experience can be a powerful tool for experiential learning, according to the

approach of Brandão (2008). In addition, the research highlighted the importance of adapting educational practices to overcome structural barriers and prejudices that still marginalize the elderly population (Inep, 2021), guaranteeing them access to spaces for expression and active participation in popular culture.

The contribution of this study to the area of education is mainly due to broadening the understanding of the educational possibilities of Carnival, in addition to offering a model of formative itinerary that integrates the culture, history and experiences of the elderly. By approaching Carnival as a pedagogical tool, the research challenges traditional views on aging, promoting a more inclusive and intergenerational understanding of education.

The study sample was restricted to a specific context, which may have influenced the generalization of the results to other realities. In addition, the study did not include the analysis of assistive technologies that could further facilitate the full participation of older people, especially in the more modern aspects of the Carnival festivity, such as the use of digital resources. Another limitation was the difficulty in quantitatively measuring the impact of the participation of the elderly in Carnival, since many of the benefits are subjective and related to the experiential experience.

For future research, it is intended to expand the sample, including different regions of Brazil and different age groups within the elderly population, to better understand the effects of Carnival as a formative itinerary in different contexts. In addition, it is planned to investigate the use of assistive technologies and digital resources in carnival activities for the elderly population, considering the adaptation of pedagogical practices to technological advancement.

In conclusion, this study reinforces the importance of rethinking pedagogical practices aimed at the elderly, incorporating traditional cultural manifestations, such as Carnival, to enrich the educational and social formation of this population. By integrating Carnival as a formative itinerary, this work contributes to the construction of a more inclusive society that respects the rights and culture of older people, offering them legitimate spaces for learning and active participation in society.

REFERENCES

1. Abrão, K. R., & Del Pino, J. C. (2016). Cognição e aprendizagem no espaço da tecnologia. *Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação*, 11(4), 1776–1798. <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v11i4.5934>
2. Alvino, F. S. (2015). Concepções do idoso em um país que envelhece: Reflexões sobre protagonismo, cidadania e direitos humanos no envelhecimento [Tese de doutorado, Universidade de Brasília]. Repositório Institucional da UnB. https://repositorio.unb.br/bitstream/10482/19708/1/2015_FabioSoaresAlvino.pdf
3. Bardin, L. (2011). Análise de conteúdo. São Paulo, Brasil: Edições 70.
4. Brandão, C. R. (2008). *Minha casa o mundo*. Aparecida, SP: Ideias e Letras.
5. Brasil, Ministério da Educação. (2021). *Política Nacional de Educação para Pessoas Idosas*. Brasília, DF: Autor.
6. Brasil, Ministério da Educação. (2018). Resolução CNE/CEB nº 7, de 14 de dezembro de 2018. Estabelece as Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para o Ensino Médio. *Diário Oficial da União*. Brasília, DF: Autor.
7. Brito, M. S. O., & Osório, N. B. (2024). *Universidade da Maturidade: Caminhos formativos para a pessoa idosa* (1st ed.). Palmas, TO: EdUFT. <https://sistemas.uft.edu.br/periodicos/index.php/editora/issue/view/868>
8. Cunha, L. A. (1986). *Educação e desenvolvimento social no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Francisco Alves.
9. Cunha, M. C. (1992). *Cultura com aspas*. São Paulo, SP: Cosac Naify.
10. Freire, P. (1987). *Educação como prática da liberdade* (11th ed.). Rio de Janeiro, RJ: Paz e Terra.
11. Ghiraldelli Jr., P. (2001). *História da educação no Brasil*. São Paulo, SP: Cortez.
12. Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira. (2021). *Pesquisas estatísticas e indicadores educacionais: Resultados do Censo Escolar 2021*. <https://www.gov.br/inep/pt-br/areas-de-atuacao/pesquisas-estatisticas-e-indicadores>
13. Merleau-Ponty, M. (2006). *A estrutura do comportamento*. São Paulo, SP: Martins Fontes.
14. Nachif, D. A., & Alves, G. L. (2018). *O carnaval em Corumbá, Mato Grosso do Sul: Patrimônio e memória*. São Paulo, SP: Autor.
15. Oliveira, N. P. B., & outros. (2023). Brincando e aprendendo na Amazônia: Construção de brinquedos como prática pedagógica de relações intergeracionais. *Revista Cocar*, 19(37). <https://doi.org/10.55762/cocar.v19i37.7355>
16. Organização das Nações Unidas. (2020). *Agenda 2030 para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável*. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/education/>
17. Osório, N. B., Silva Neto, L. S., & Oliveira, N. P. B. (2023). *Material didático de formação de professores da Universidade da Maturidade - UMA*. Recife, PE: Even3 Publicações. <https://doi.org/10.29327/5293177>
18. Saviani, D. (2007). Pedagogia: O espaço da educação na universidade. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, 37(130), 99–134. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S0100-15742007000100006>
19. Silva, E. S. E. (2024). *Diálogos entre educação e carnaval: Olhares possíveis* [Dissertação de mestrado, Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul]. Repositório Institucional da UFMS. <https://repositorio.ufms.br/handle/123456789/8290>
20. Souza, R. F. (2010). *Educação popular e direitos sociais no Brasil*. São Paulo, SP: Autores Associados.