

AGEISM: MEDIA DISCOURSES DURING THE PORTUGUESE ELECTIONS

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Introduction: Ageing as a social problem has emerged recently as one of the main challenges facing contemporary societies. The rep-

representations that are shared socially contribute to the perception of a common reality to a particular group. As the public perception is related to mediatized discourses, social representations of old age in the traditional media are very relevant to constructed meanings circulating in the public sphere. This paper aims to analyse online and offline mainstream media discourses on Ageism from 20th September 2015 to 2nd October 2015 in order to identify: i). social representations of old age; ii). discursively constructed.

Methods: The methodology is a comparative case study from 13th editions of daily newspaper Público and 10th editions of daily online newspaper Expresso Diário (only week days). We analysed 1,097 texts and we focus on 88 texts about the subject in order to identify the existence of dominant discourses and the visibility of the issue.

Results: The representational discourses of old age delivered by the mainstream media are similar to political discourses. However, the positive narratives on ageism are not enhancing. At least during the campaign for the elections, as expected. As the social representations of old age in media discourses are moulded by political discourses, it is important to highlight the economical tone of the shared narratives.

Conclusions: The findings reveal that mainstream media representations of old age are similar to political discourses. However, we also found evidence of misrepresentation of elderly within the campaign coverage and often refer just for the financial issue.

Keywords: Media. Social representations.