

## ABSTRACT

This work attempts to make a contribution to the study of a different educational context of the role, emergence and function of the Third Age Universities.

The Third Age Universities and more broadly the issues pertaining to the education of the elderly are often unknown and sociologically unaddressed, at least in Portugal.

Despite the existence of several studies that critically address the problems of State Policies in the field of Adult Education, there is a lack of both debate and theorisation of the Education of the Elderly in our country. The topic has also received little attention within the framework of the Sociology of Non-School Education.

Given these circumstances and adopting an historical, political and sociological stance, the Third Age is analysed as a socially constructed reality. Also its historical, political and social evolution is analysed along with the ways State Policies have addressed and acknowledged the rights of the Third Age, namely the right to education.

Within this framework and based on the research methodology and scientific principles of the Case Study, the aim of the present study is to analyse a Third Age University as a Non-School Education context. An account of some of the dynamics, logic and rationale that characterise the way through which the protagonists of this survey perceive and practice their educational and cultural projects will be given.