

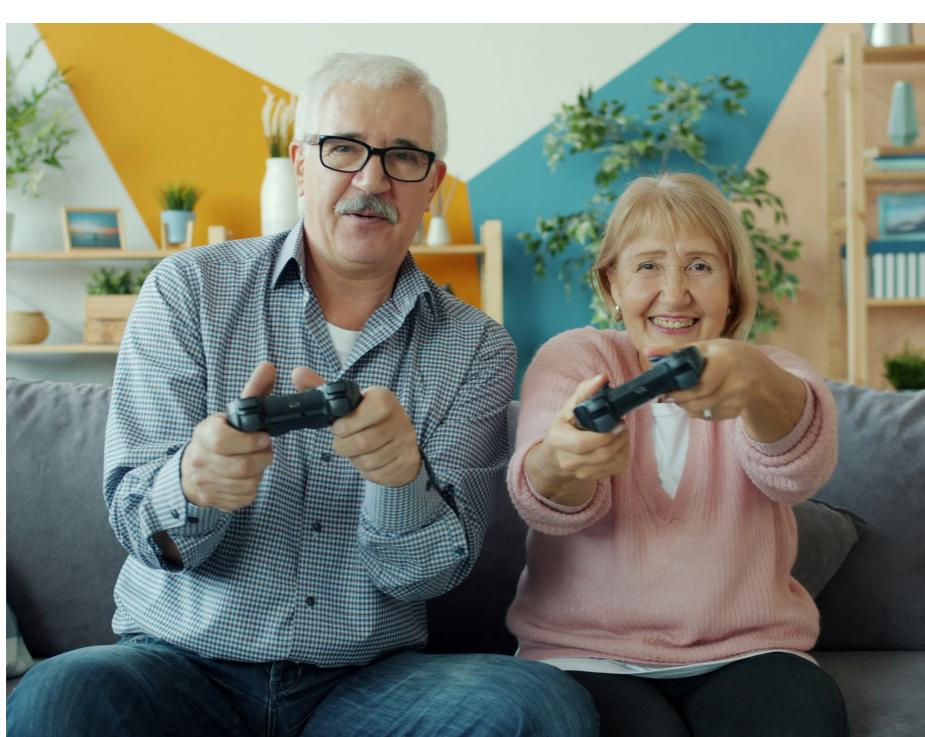
Elder play for supporting Active Ageing

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Background

Promoting **quality of life** through engagement in play experiences in the life course perspective (Giele & Elder, 1998) can be connoted by:

1. Integration of sociality, identification processes and **physical activity**;
2. Stimulation of **sensory experience**;
3. Enhancement of social involvement and **community participation**.

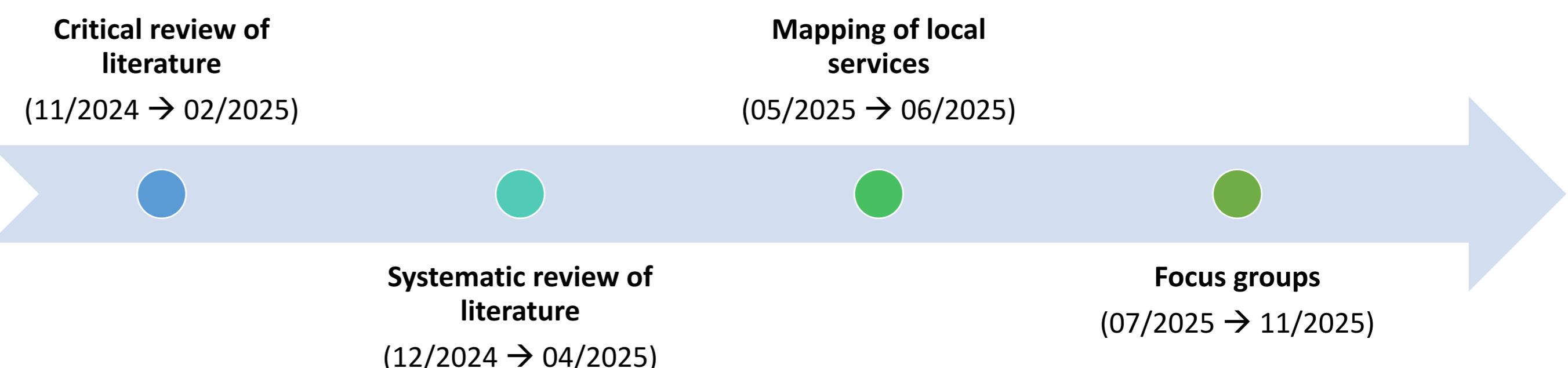


(Image source: unsplash.com / Vitaly Gariev)

Several studies have delved play activity within different disciplinary areas.

An interesting perspective occurs in research on **Active and Healthy Aging (AHA)**, which explores effective strategies to preserve and improve the physical and mental functioning of elderly populations (WHO, 2002).

Workflow



Methods

The study was conducted combining the following research methods.

Documental analysis:

- Critical review of literature (Grant & Booth, 2009) on key concepts (**play, older age, ageing**) for unwinding their conceptualization and identifying theoretical backgrounds;
- Systematic review of literature, according to the **PRISMA guidelines** (Page et al., 2021), on the interconnections between AHA and playing in older age.

Exploratory study:

- Mapping of local services for elderly population that provide play or playful activities for their users, carried out through an analysis of **institutional web sites** and **regional platforms**;
- **Focus groups** with stakeholders (Acocella, 2008; Corrao, 2000), during which several opinions, ideas and perceptions regarding play experience in older age emerged, as well as their implications for AHA.

Research aims

Documental analysis:

1. To build up a theoretical background upon systematic and rigorous approaches to existing literature;
2. To achieve a better understanding of the research topic from an interdisciplinary perspective.

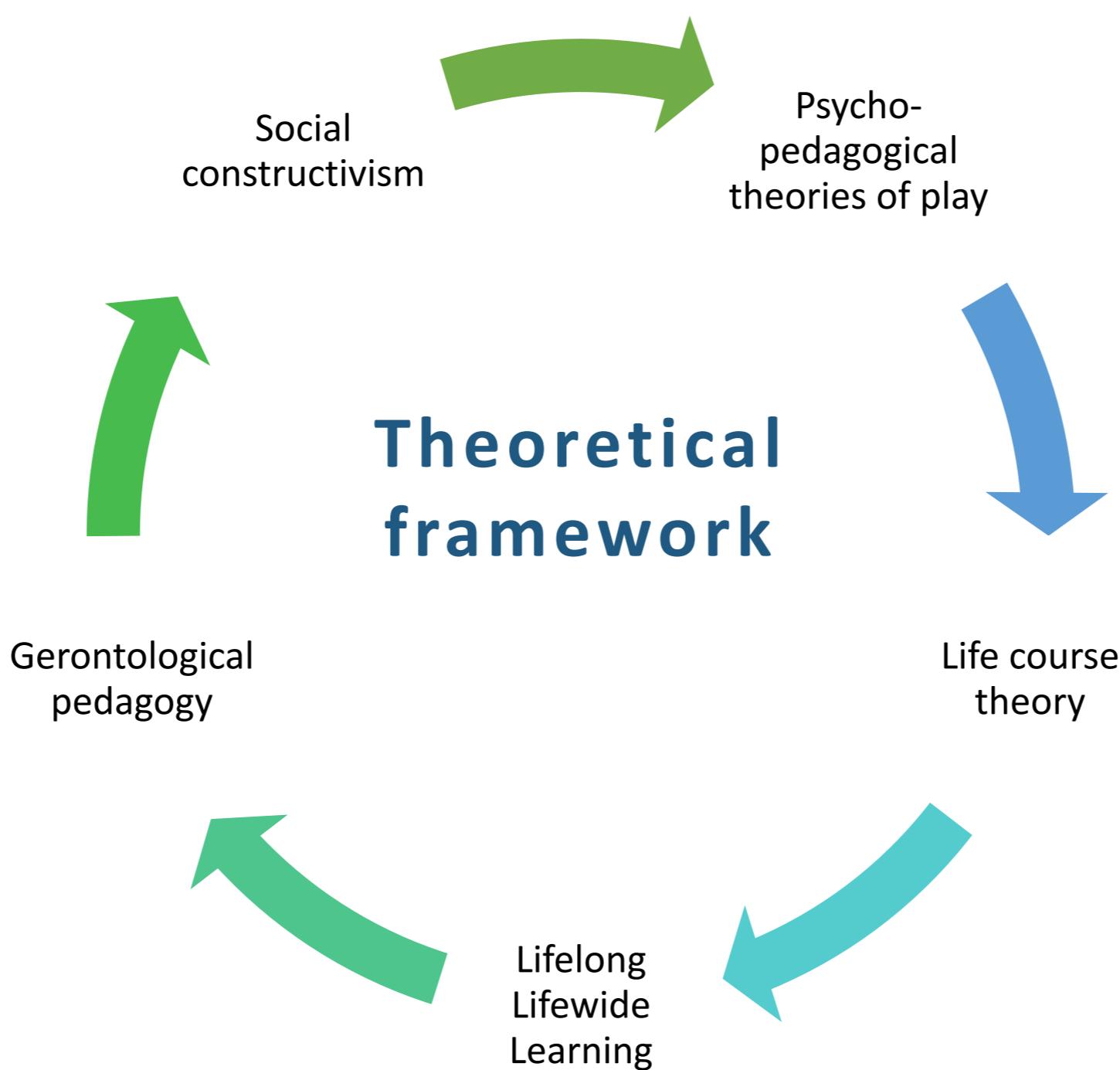
Exploratory study:

1. To delve contextual factors that can influence play experience in older age;
2. To gain an insight on stakeholders' perception of the research topic.

Future directions

Re-focusing research about play experience for supporting AHA on the **current feasibility** of its application and on what is already spread in **social contexts** leads to a need for deeper understanding of the phenomenon from the point of view of older players themselves, i.e. the so-called *emic* perspective (Olivier de Sardan, 1998).

Further research is needed for achieving through **phenomenological lenses** what play experience means in older age.



References

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