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## ORIGINAL ARTICLE OPEN ACCESS

# Older People's Views of Participating in an Intergenerational Café With Student Nurses

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Global ageing is increasing. Most older people live independently but at times require nursing care as they age. This care is provided in a variety of settings including acute, primary, community and residential care services. In such instances, it is important that older people feel comfortable and listened to, and it is imperative that student nurses are educated to competently care for and nurse older people in collaborative partnerships. Intergenerational initiatives promote shared learning and help break down barriers among different age cohorts. An online intergenerational café was developed to provide a learning opportunity for older people and student nurses to meet as equals and connect socially in a protected place and time. This paper reports on older people's views of their participation in an online intergenerational café.

**Methods:** Ethical approval was granted for this survey design research. Older people living in the community ( $n = 49$ ) participated in online intergenerational cafés with student nurses. Following the online café, participants were invited to voluntarily participate in the study through completion of an anonymous online survey. Consent was indicated through the return of the survey questionnaire. All agreed to complete the survey. Likert scale quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistical analysis (SPSS, version 21). Responses to the open-ended questions were thematically analysed.

**Findings:** The cafés supported intergenerational learning, and participants felt comfortable participating. Participants discovered some but not all key points of interest about students. In many ways, they were quite similar to students. Participants felt students would be respectful, empathetic and advocate for them in a care situation. Many agreed that the cafés were well organised, but some would have liked more clarity on the discussion topics.

**Conclusions:** This café initiative has merit as it helped reduce barriers and facilitated intergenerational learning.

**Implications for Practice:** Participation in Intergenerational cafés can help reduce barriers by facilitating understanding and mutual respect. They can provide a forum for discussion on nursing care expectations.

## 1 | Introduction

It is expected that by 2030, one sixth of the global population will be aged 60 years and over (World Health Organisation

(WHO) 2022a). The ageing experience is influenced by biopsychosocial age-related changes, gender, co-morbidities and age-related health issues. Each person will have a unique experience of age and ageing. To 'foster longer and healthier lives',

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## Summary

- What does this research add to existing knowledge in gerontology?
  - Intergenerational cafés provide a forum for older people and student nurses to meet socially in a protected place and time.
  - Online intergenerational cafés facilitate engagement across a wide geographical area.
  - Online intergenerational cafés are inclusive of people who cannot attend in person.
- What are the implications of this new knowledge for nursing care for and with older adults?
  - Intergenerational cafés help break down barriers between older people and student nurses.
  - Participation in intergenerational cafés can facilitate understanding and mutual respect between older people and student nurses.
  - Intergenerational cafés facilitate discussion on older people's expectations of nurses during care provision episodes.
- How could the findings be used to influence practice, education, research, and policy?
  - Intergenerational cafés could be embedded in nursing education curricula.
  - Providing intergenerational learning opportunities could be incorporated into policy statements and policy implementation.
  - This intergenerational café research could be developed and undertaken at a national and international scale.

the United Nations (UN) have designated 2021-2030, the UN Decade of Health Ageing (WHO 2022b). Specific target areas include reducing ageism, providing person-centred health care, providing as needed long-term care and supporting communities to strengthen older people's abilities (WHO 2022a). There is an increased impetus to support older people and reduce ageism at international and national level through anti-ageist discrimination legislation, ageing strategies and developing age friendly countries. At a societal level, intergenerational programmes are increasingly used to promote social connections, facilitate learning, break down barriers and reduce negative perceptions and ageism (Drury et al. 2017; Leong et al. 2022; Sharifi et al. 2023; Tuohy et al. 2023).

Participation in intergenerational programmes is not only mutually beneficial to those participating (Hernandez et al. 2022; Leong et al. 2022) but they also 'ensure personal and social benefits for... organisations, community and society in general' (Leong et al. 2022: e223). While these programmes are typically aimed at older people and children, increasingly attention has turned to older people and tertiary level students participating in intergenerational shared learning experiences. Some of these interventions include or are specifically targeted at student nurses and older people (Tuohy et al. 2023). This is important as student nurses' exposure to older people (outside family) is typically within health care service provision when older people are unwell. This may generate a negative and 'skewed' view of age and

ageing (McCleary 2014). Similarly older people, outside of their own families may not have opportunities to meet socially with younger people.

In view of the increased likelihood of experiencing health problems and living with co-morbidities as one ages, many older people will at some time require health care services, including nursing. Older person nursing requires a person-centred collaborative approach (Nursing Midwifery Board of Ireland 2015). It is important to cultivate and support a partnership approach to providing and receiving nursing care, and for both parties to feel comfortable working together. One way of doing this is through intergenerational learning programmes. Examples of such programmes include co-learning through film festival (McCleary 2014), ethnodrama (Eaton 2015), paired activities (Hwang et al. 2013; Reitmaier et al. 2014; Bowling et al. 2021), community garden project (Jakubec et al. 2021), reflective learning (Davies et al. 2013) and narrative learning (Kuo et al. 2021).

A new programme, an online intergenerational café, was developed during Covid 19 restrictions, as a way of supporting intergenerational learning and breaking down intergenerational barriers between third year student nurses and older people living in the community. The aim was to create an informal atmosphere typically associated with café conversations which are open and welcoming. A café charter set the tone by outlining principles of respecting, valuing and connecting with each other's experiences and stories during the café conversation. The study aimed to examine the implementation and use of intergenerational cafés in promoting intergenerational learning between older people and student nurses. The research questions were to:

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of an intergenerational café as a way of facilitating intergenerational learning.
2. Elicit participants' views on whether intergenerational learning has occurred.

It is important to capture participants' perspectives (Hernandez et al. 2022) and this paper describes the older people's views. Ethical approval was granted by the University's Faculty of Education and Health Sciences research and ethics committee (2020-12-23-EHS). The student nurse findings are reported upon elsewhere.

## 2 | Methods

During 2021 COVID-19 restrictions, older person participants living in the community were invited to participate in an online intergenerational café with third-year BSc Nursing students (registered on a four year programme). Inclusion criteria: the person must be aged 65 years or older and living in the community. Exclusion criteria: younger than aged 65 years and not living in the community. Recruitment was via purposive and snowball sampling, accessed via retirement and social clubs, volunteer and church groups, age action, day care, media and word of mouth.

The online platform was Microsoft teams (Microsoft teams, n.d.). Three cafés were facilitated with participants attending one café only. Participants were mailed a welcome pack which included tea/coffee, snacks, notepads, book markers and information on the café and logging onto the café. They were offered one-to-one individual online instruction on how to log onto Microsoft teams (Microsoft teams, n.d.). Once participants logged on, they were welcomed and introduced to the café format. Following this, a guest speaker (national nursing leader) presented on ageing and ageing well. It was 15 min and it was live for all three cafés. Participants were assigned breakout rooms to simulate individual café tables and to converse with student nurses (on average six people to a 'table' generally either one to one or two older people to three or four students). A topic guide was available to start off the conversation if needed. Research team members ( $n=9$ ) facilitated this process and were each assigned to two or three tables, which they periodically joined to check how everything was going. Eight were lecturers with expertise in education strategies and methods including online group facilitation. The ninth person was a senior administrator who had expertise in facilitating and managing online groups. After 45 min, all groups reconvened to the main online room and feedback on the café experience was facilitated. Overall, the cafés were 90 min each. Research was undertaken on participants' views and experiences. The research design is primarily quantitative, albeit with a qualitative component. After the cafés, all

older person participants ( $n=49$ ) were contacted (participant permission had been granted) and invited to voluntarily complete an anonymous online survey (Qualtrics, 2005). Forty-nine participants completed the survey. Surveys are a useful way of eliciting information from a large group of people. The survey was specifically created for this research (one survey for older participants, another for student participants) and its design was informed and supported by advice from a university statistician.

The questions and topic guide were constructed and refined by the team and informed by the literature review.

The survey comprised eight sections (Table 1), with a total of 51 questions using a mix of Likert scale items (rated 1–5) and open-ended questions (detailed in Table 2). Below is an outline of each section, with one example for each question provided in Table 1. Section 1 focused on demographic information and included three questions about participants' gender, age and occupation. Section 2, with eleven questions, explored participants' experiences of getting to know the student nurses in their group. Section 3, comprising five questions, addressed participants' thoughts about the similarities between older and younger people. Section 4 also included five questions, examining perspectives on student nurses providing care. Section 5 covered the organisation of the discussion café, with eleven questions focusing on its structure and purpose. Section 6, with six questions,

**TABLE 1** | Older person survey.

Section	Focus area	Example question (sections 2–7 are Likert scale)
1	Demographic data	Gender: tick which applies male, female, other.
2	Getting to know the student nurses in your group	'I learned what kind of work students do'
3	Thoughts about the similarities between older and younger people	'Student nurses use similar conversations language to what I use'.
4	Thoughts on student nurses providing nursing care to me	'I think student nurses would be empathetic to me'
5	Organisation of the discussion café	'The purpose of the café is clear'.
6	Feelings about participating in the discussion café	'I felt comfortable asking the students questions'
7	Usefulness of discussion cafés to increase intergenerational learning	'I think discussion cafés are a useful way to increase intergenerational learning'
8	Qualitative questions	Tell us your opinion of using discussion cafés as way to help learning between generations?

**TABLE 2** | Survey section 8, qualitative questions.

Tell us your opinion of using discussion cafés as way to help learning between generations?
Tell us what worked well?
Tell us what didn't work well for you?
What suggestions if any do you have for planning future discussion cafés?
Provide any further comments about your experience of participating in the discussion café?

explored participants' feelings about taking part in the discussion café. Section 7 addressed the perceived usefulness of discussion cafés for intergenerational learning through five questions. Finally, Section 8 comprised five open-ended qualitative questions, which are outlined in Table 2. Expert panel consultation helped determine the survey's face and content validity. The expert panel comprised one older person, one student nurse and two senior lecturers. Based on the expert panel, revisions were made to some of the questions. Cronbach's alpha coefficient test assessed internal survey reliability, and the results were reliable (overall score: 0.947). The completion time was 15 min.

Qualitative data were thematically analysed, guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006, 2022) framework. Data analysis was undertaken over three months with regular meetings (typically average 1–2 fortnightly and lasting 1–2 h). These meetings were held in tandem with independent analysis by the researchers. Initially, all responses to the open-ended questions were read individually by three researchers. Similar phrases across the data were identified. Codes were then identified and subsequently grouped together to form themes. These were discussed and agreed upon by the three researchers. Quantitative descriptive statistical data analysis used SPSS software (version 21). It incorporated parametric and non-parametric tests. Demographic data are outlined in Table 3.

## 2.1 | Findings

The research findings are presented under the headings of quantitative and qualitative findings. The quantitative findings encompass the data from and inclusive of sections two to seven. The qualitative findings include data from section eight.

TABLE 3 | Demographic data.

Participant details	N	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	10	20.4%
Female	39	79.6%
Total	49	100%
<b>Age (years)</b>		
65	4	8.2%
66–75	33	67.3%
76–85	11	22.4%
86–100	1	2.0%
<b>Employment</b>		
Retired	41	83.7%
Employed	3	6.1%
Unemployed	1	2.0%
Retired/student	1	2.0%
Other	3	6.1%

### 2.1.1 | Quantitative Findings

**2.1.1.1 | Getting to Know.** 'Getting to know' results suggested that older person participants felt they had the opportunity to discover some key points of interest about students. For instance, 56.25% ( $n=27$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that they found out where students were from. Additionally, 43.75% ( $n=21$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that they had developed an understanding of what was important to students. Of interest, 27.08% ( $n=13$ ) had either no opinion on this point or disagreed/strongly disagreed 29.17% ( $n=14$ ) (Figure 1).

However, results indicate that participants did not seem to get to know more specific aspects of students' lives with 70.83% ( $n=34$ ) disagreeing/strongly disagreeing that they had heard about each student's pet(s), learned what kind of music students liked (68.75%,  $n=33$ ) (Figure 2) and learned about students' hobbies and interests (56.25%,  $n=27$ ).

**2.1.1.2 | Similarities.** Results showed that 88.9% ( $n=40$ ) older people generally agreed/strongly agreed that they shared many similarities with students, including similarities relating

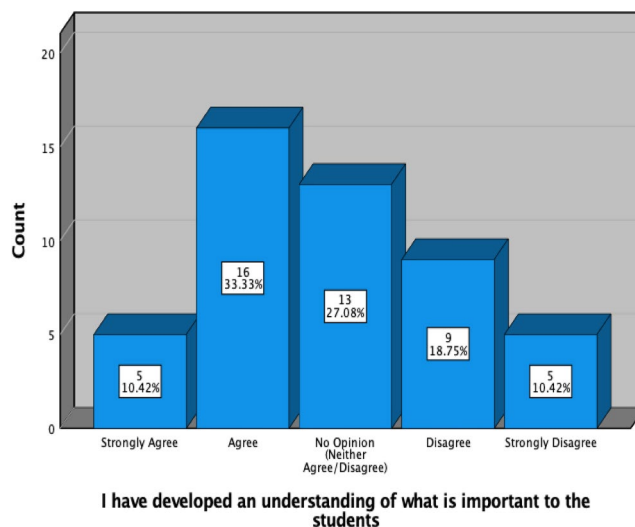


FIGURE 1 | What is important to students.

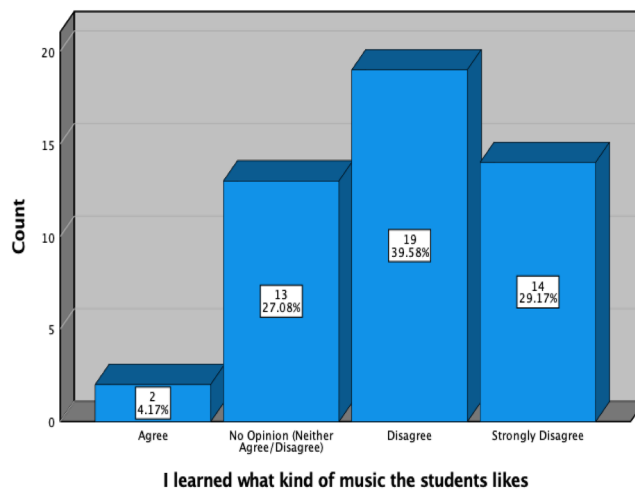


FIGURE 2 | What kind of music do students like.

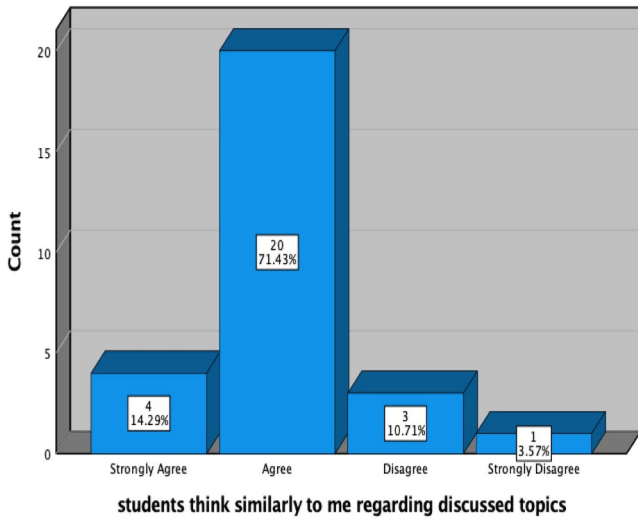


FIGURE 3 | Thinking similarly.

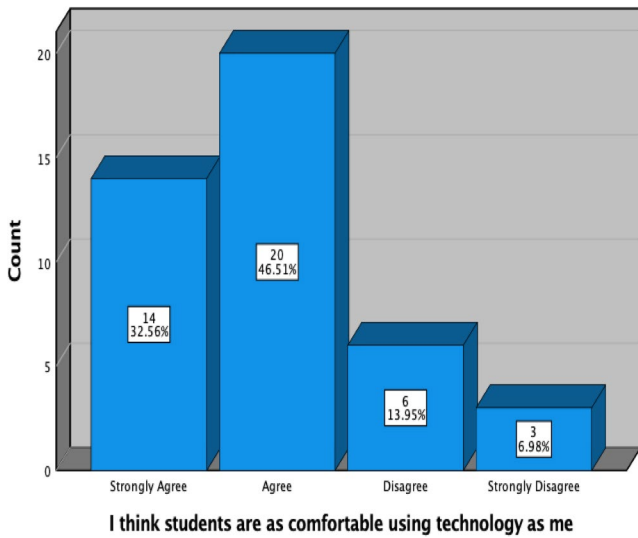


FIGURE 4 | Using technology.

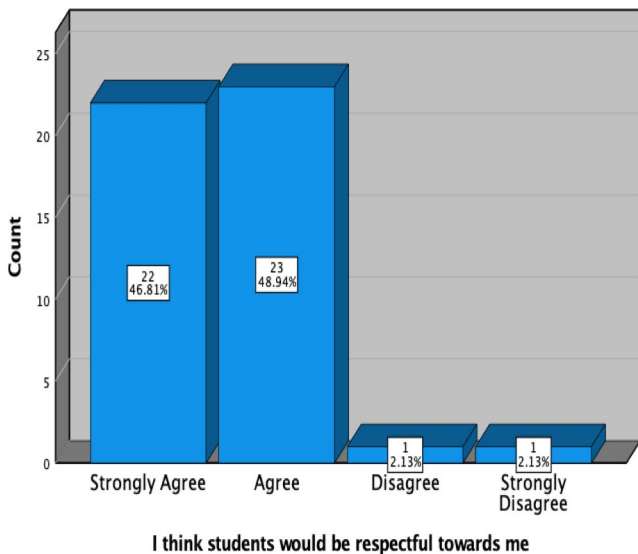


FIGURE 5 | Respectful.

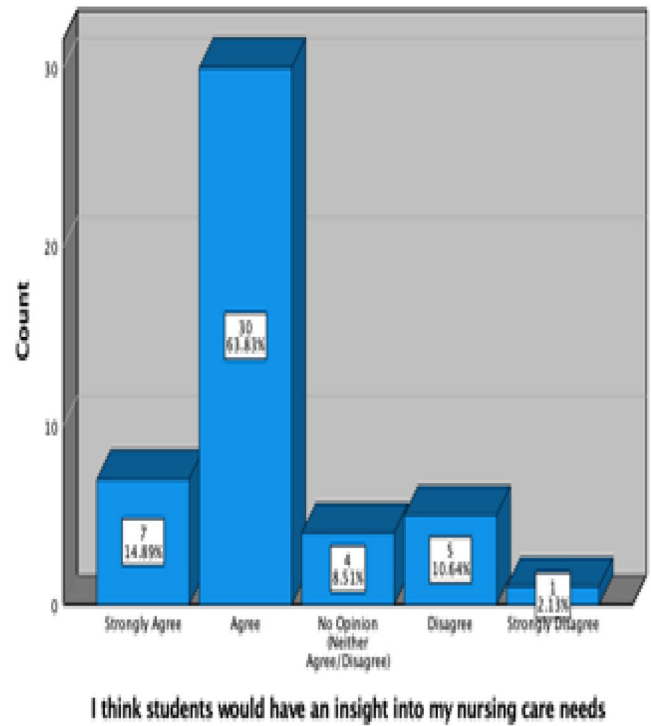


FIGURE 6 | Insight into nursing care needs.

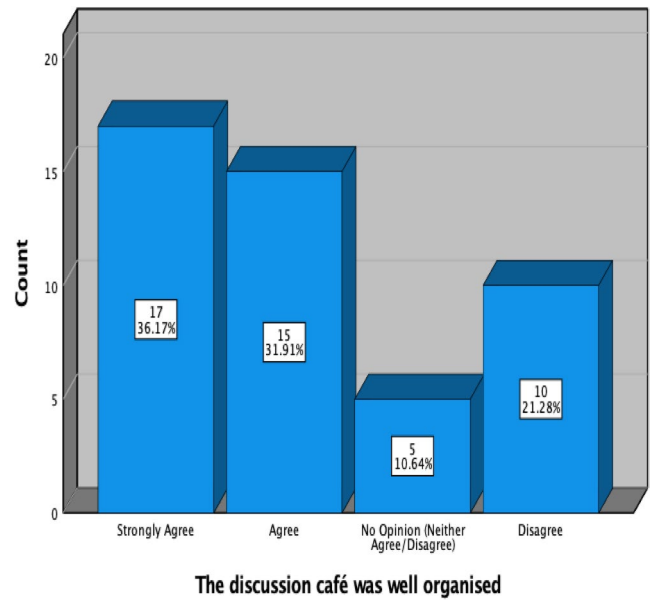
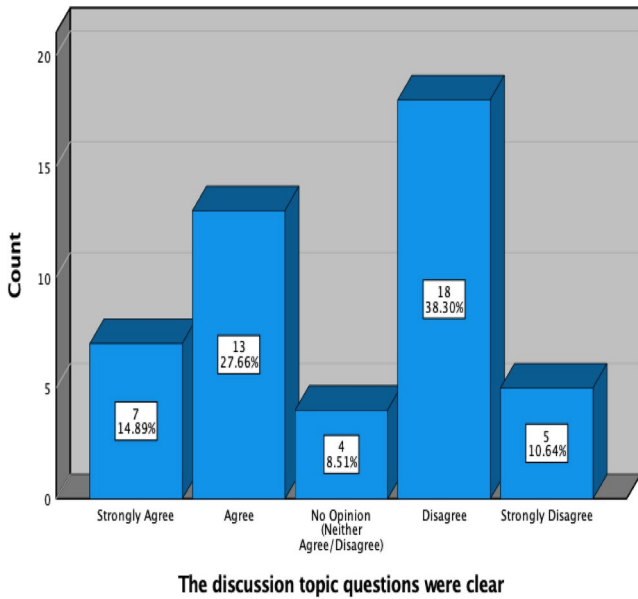


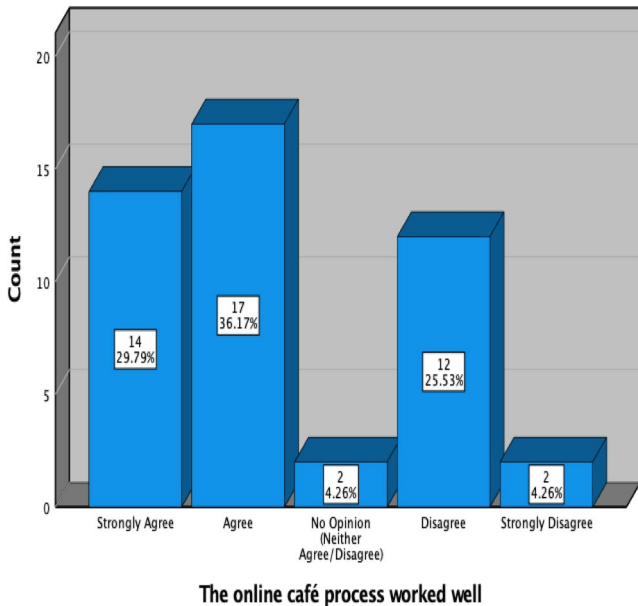
FIGURE 7 | Café organisation.

to conversational language, and 85.75% ( $n=24$ ) thinking similarly regarding discussed topics (Figure 3). Furthermore, 79.07% ( $n=34$ ) of older person participants agreed/strongly agreed that students were equally comfortable using technology as they were (Figure 4).

**2.1.1.3 | Caring.** Older person responses in the caring section were largely positive. For example, 95.75% ( $n=45$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that student nurses would be respectful towards them (Figure 5), 87.24% ( $n=41$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that student nurses would be empathetic towards



**FIGURE 8** | Discussion topic questions.

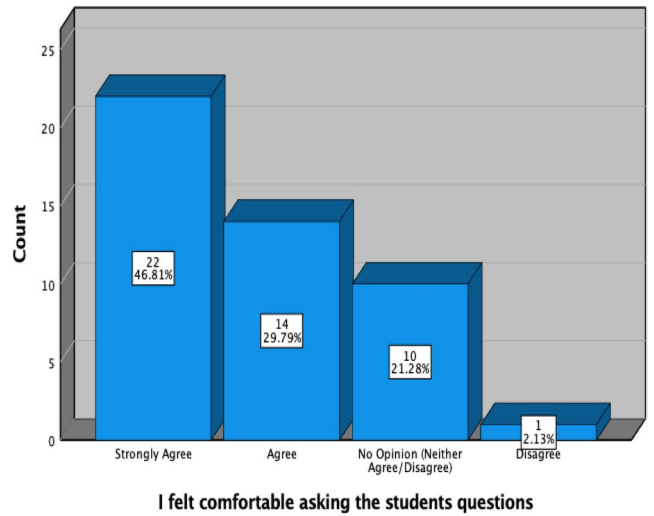


**FIGURE 9** | Online café process.

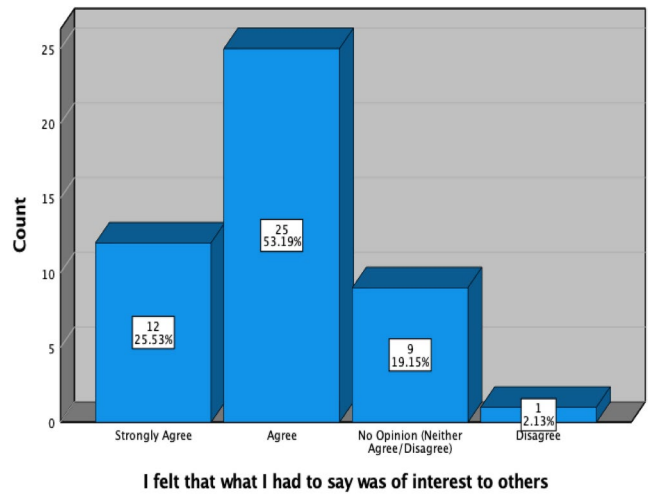
them, have an insight into nursing care needs (78.72%  $n = 37$ ) (Figure 6), and advocate on their behalf if required (74.46%  $n = 35$ ).

**2.1.1.4 | Organisation.** When responses to café organisation questions were analysed, many older person participants (68.08%  $n = 32$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that the café was well organised (Figure 7). Furthermore, most (85.1%,  $n = 40$ ) either agreed/strongly agreed that having a guest speaker was a good idea and that it was important to have facilitators in small breakout rooms (74.47%,  $n = 35$ ).

However, there were mixed responses to the question asking if participants found the discussion topic questions clear, with 42.55% ( $n = 20$ ) agreeing/strongly agreeing with this and



**FIGURE 10** | Feeling comfortable asking questions.



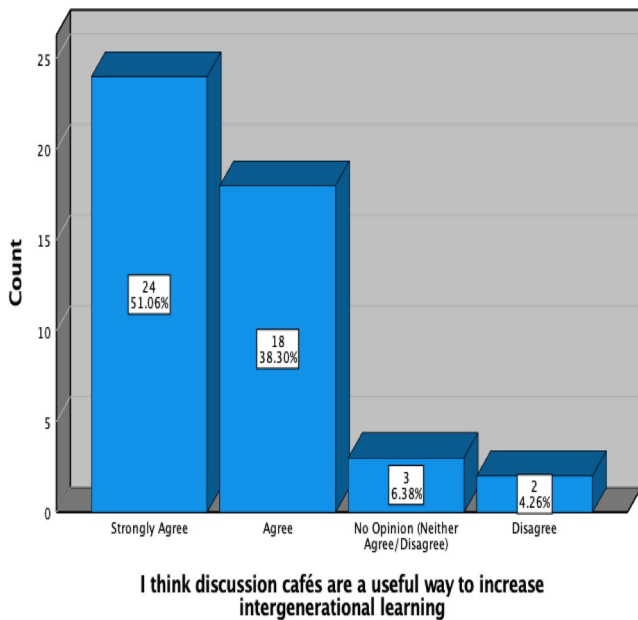
**FIGURE 11** | Feeling that what I had to say was of interest to others.

a greater percentage (48.94%,  $n = 23$ ) disagreeing/strongly disagreeing with this question (Figure 8).

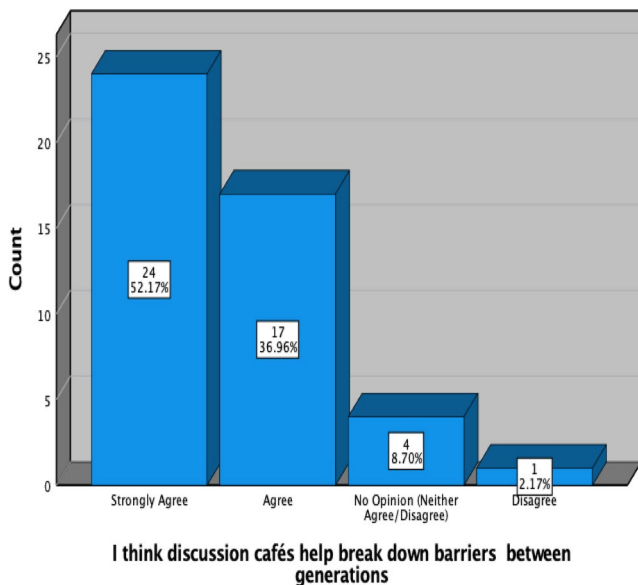
Many participants (65.96%,  $n = 31$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that the online café process worked well. However, notably, almost a third 29.79% ( $n = 14$ ) disagreed/strongly disagreed with this statement (Figure 9).

**2.1.1.5 | Feelings About Participation.** Feelings around participating in the café showed that most older people agreed/strongly agreed (76.6%  $n = 36$ ) that they felt comfortable asking students questions (Figure 10). Furthermore, 87.23% ( $n = 41$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that they felt comfortable sharing information about themselves/their families with students. Additionally, 78.72% ( $n = 37$ ) reported agreeing/strongly agreeing that what they had to say was of interest to others (Figure 11).

Overall feelings about participation in the intergenerational café showed that 54.35% ( $n = 25$ ) of participants agreed/strongly agreed that they found participating in the café empowering,



**FIGURE 12** | Intergenerational cafés are useful for increasing intergenerational learning.



**FIGURE 13** | Intergenerational discussion cafés helping to break down generational barriers.

with only 17.39% ( $n=8$ ) disagreeing/strongly disagreeing with this statement.

**2.1.1.6 | The Usefulness of Discussion Cafés.** From a usefulness perspective, 89.36% ( $n=42$ ) of participants agreed/strongly agreed that they thought cafés were a useful way of increasing intergenerational learning (Figure 12). Similarly, 95.66% ( $n=44$ ) agreed/strongly agreed that cafés help students and older people to share views, make social connections (86.95%,  $n=40$ ) and break down barriers between generations (89.13%,  $n=41$ ) (Figure 13).

Many participants agreed/strongly agreed that they learnt more about student nurses by participating in the café (60.86%,  $n=28$ ). However, it was interesting to note that 13.05% ( $n=6$ ) disagreed/strongly disagreed and 26.09% ( $n=12$ ) neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

### 2.1.2 | Qualitative Findings

Three themes were identified, ‘Processes’, ‘Conversations and Connections’ and ‘Learning’ from the qualitative data. Quotations are numbered to indicate the responses from the different participants. ‘P’ denotes the participant, and the number indicates which questionnaire the response is from.

**2.1.2.1 | Theme 1: Processes.** This theme captured participants’ views about the organisation (preparation, accessing and running) of the café. Participants liked the welcome pack, which included log-on information,

■ The pre-pack was lovely – found myself looking forward to the café. (P3)

Some participants logged on and participated with no problem, while others needed help as they had overestimated their skill set:

■ The fact that I had someone to help me with the technology helped. (P41)

■ I wasn’t as good at logging on as I thought I would be. (P23)

Some had technological problems, including unstable internet connectivity, which hampered online interaction:

■ At times... internet glitches and blank screen... (P10).

■ Sound was sometimes a problem as people “broke up”. (P24)

Other challenges included not being familiar with *Microsoft Teams* platform and functions such as ‘chat’, ‘muting’ and ‘raising hand’:

■ MS Teams was new to me (I use Zoom) so I was on a very steep learning curve. It was fairly ok once I settled into it. (P16)

In the introduction, the format and a topic guide were presented. Despite this, some participants commented that they

would have liked more guidance to help get the conversation going:

No specific discussion topics! It would have helped to have some more specific topics to get 'the ball rolling'. (P45)

Maybe a little more structure in the group. (P6)

Some participants liked the smaller groups [breakout rooms]:

The breakout groups worked well. They weren't too big which matters when strangers are talking to each other for the first time. (P17)

Participants would have liked more time,

The time ... did not allow for discussion at end of feedback session. (P10)

Participants were positive about the café but also had recommendations for the future:

Great idea, needs to be continued ... over several weeks ... would build up trust and allow for more meaningful interactions. (P11)

**2.1.2.2 | Theme 2: Conversations and Connections.** This theme captures the importance of making connections through conversations. This was particularly poignant considering the world was dealing with COVID-19 and it had an impact on every person regardless of age. The conversations about shared experiences resonated with participants and they appreciated their common challenges, feelings, and emotions. Engaging in conversations also demonstrated how those with different life experiences can connect within shared moments.

The café provided a virtual space to begin intergenerational conversations:

A good idea that provides a safe space to get to know each other. (P13)

The idea of people from different walks of life talking together was inspiring. (P39)

The participants developed an insight into the students' lives, especially during Covid-19 restrictions:

Makes us realise what student nurses have gone through during Covid as it has impacted just as much

on them as us. We all have [the]same anxieties and fears. (P36)

I loved hearing the enthusiasm that the student nurses had for their work even in these difficult times. (P19)

Participants described cafés as lively and interactive conversations,

The discussion with the students was great ... there was a real buzz with it, they were hungry for information and life experiences. (P5)

Participants described students as being open to listening to older people's views and experiences:

Very bright, articulate ...they were enthusiastic about listening to what we ... had to contribute. (P35)

One participant provided a detailed description of engaging in conversations that connected both students and older people. Participants described having similar interests and enjoyed chatting about treating people with mutual respect and about advocacy. The challenge of trying something new and how this felt was provided as an example to illustrate how a patient might feel and the support they need from the nurse:

I ... found at the start that I was in a very unfamiliar system that everyone else was comfortable with (i.e. MS Teams), and I had to find my bearings. A bit like being a hospital patient, slightly vulnerable, slightly disempowered to begin with, but I felt I could rely on the students to help me if necessary... The students came across as engaged, warm and professional. (P16)

**2.1.2.3 | Theme 3: Learning.** This theme captures how the café provided a platform to learn, and it also provides examples of the learning that happened. The café created a communal space and protected time in which to learn about each other through sharing ideas and views. Learning begins with listening and attending to what the other has to say. It is through asking questions and clarifying that understanding and learning can be facilitated:

Any opportunity to sit down with others creates the possibility of hearing other experiences and views and in this way, fosters learning between the generations. (P7)

I ... learned a lot about what matters to student nurses. (P21)

Older people described how sharing their life experiences might positively influence how students as nurses would provide care in the future:

Sharing our experiences and suggestions to nurses on how we would prefer to be spoken to and how we feel about age.

(P42)

Getting students to listen to older people tell their stories and realise we have lived full and interesting lives, and that for the most part our outer selves do not reflect our inner selves.

(P22)

The mutual learning was acknowledged by the participants, as they explained how they learnt what was valuable and important to students both personally and professionally:

It gives an insight into the care and competency that student nurses can provide.

(P41)

It breaks down barriers, help us to understand each other, explain what we consider important to us.

(P29)

### 3 | Discussion

Typically, older people and student nurses meet when the older person is ill, requiring nursing care support and hospitalised (McCleary 2014). Benefits of the intergenerational café conversations are breaking down barriers and reducing ageist assumptions that both groups may have. Conversations are informal and enable people to share views and ideas in a non-threatening environment. Having a rapport facilitates sharing and listening to each other. It is evident that this was achieved within the cafés. Older people described the café as enjoyable and that they did facilitate intergenerational learning. Participants felt that the students were open to listening to them. Older person participants generally agreed that they felt comfortable participating, sharing information and perceived that what they had to say was of interest to students. They believed that the café was a good way to make social connections, break down barriers, share views, and develop insights into people's lives. This is fundamental for intergenerational learning (Drury et al. 2017; Leong et al. 2022; Sharifi et al. 2023; Tuohy et al. 2023) and enables people to see each other as individuals. Older participants remarked on the similarities between both groups (more similarities than differences) highlighting similarities in the conversational language used and in the topics. Discovering such similarities may help break down barriers and provide a basis for conversation. This may lead to mutual respect, understanding, and reduce ageist views.

Participants generally felt that student nurses would advocate for them, be empathetic, and respectful when providing nursing care. This bodes well for the type of relationships that older people can expect if they require nursing care in the future, as these

attributes are integral to the development of a therapeutic relationship (Arnold 2020). However, it is acknowledged that while the participants shared a lot about their lives and experiences, they knew less about student nurses' lives. They knew where students were from and how they liked to be addressed, but they did not get to know more specific information, such as their pets, music choices and hobbies, suggesting more superficial connections. This may be due to having only one café, and perhaps the process may have been more akin to an interview than a conversation, where participants were answering questions rather than asking them. To counter this, more education and training for all participants (student nurses and older people) as part of the café preparation may be required so that participants feel more comfortable with the process.

Findings emphasise the importance of careful organisation and facilitation of intergenerational initiatives to meet participants' hopes and expectations; a finding consistent with the wider literature (Hwang et al. 2014; Reitmaier et al. 2014; Eaton 2015; Bowling et al. 2021). This study's cafés were initially planned as in-person events. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, planning and organisation were adapted for online delivery, requiring participant preparation for engagement through *Microsoft Teams*. Although participants were invited to trial *Microsoft Teams* before the café, this was not obligatory. Several participants were digitally literate, but some may have underestimated the potential for unanticipated problems. Consequently, some responses revealed technological challenges with accessing, logging on, unpredictable WIFI connectivity, adjusting sound, and navigating chat functions. Albrecht et al. (2022) advise on the importance of participants being able to access the internet, use digital devices and have appropriate digital skills. Hence, this study's findings strengthen the importance of providing training and support for older people engaging in online intergenerational cafés and research and emphasise the importance of technologist support before and during data collection. Agreeing on a 'required' rather than optional trial of online technology is essential to prepare participants for managing connectivity problems should they arise and minimise troubleshooting episodes during online café facilitation.

Reitmaier et al. (2014) emphasises the importance of having expert and enthusiastic 'faculty' to motivate students and older people to participate in intergenerational learning experiences. Additionally, developing information packs, preparing participants, creating a comfortable learning space, and exploring questions that matter (Albrecht et al. 2022) are essential planning considerations. In this study, a conversation/topic guide was introduced to all participants immediately before joining their assigned breakout room. Nevertheless, findings revealed that some older people would have liked more information on the conversation topics before the café to initiate and ease into dialogue. Learning from this café highlights the importance of providing participants with conversational guidance prior to as well as during the café to alleviate possible anxiety and encourage conversational flow by having a backup guide of discussion ideas.

#### 3.1 | Study's Strengths and Limitations

Limitations of this study include not having prerequisite preparatory online training for participation. It would also have

benefitted some participants if they had been provided with the topic guide in advance of the café. This study was undertaken in one region of Ireland, and data were collected using a convenience snowball sampling approach with a sample of older adults ( $n = 49$ ); hence the results may not be generalisable to the wider population of older people. Additionally, the sample included fewer men (20.4%,  $n = 10$ ) than women (79.6%,  $n = 39$ ). Including an equal number of men and women would have increased gender representativeness and included differing perspectives around participating in an intergenerational café with student nurses. A strength of this study is seeking the older participants' views on both the experience of using an intergenerational café innovation and ascertaining the learning from participation in the cafés. This information is invaluable in determining future cafés value and organisation. Strengths of the study also include having a diverse skill mix within the research and facilitation team, careful organisation and planning, as well as the development of a bespoke validated survey questionnaire.

## 4 | Conclusion

Within the context of increased global ageing, it is imperative for both older people and nurses caring for them, to facilitate opportunities for increased understanding and respect to reduce negative attitudes and ageist views. Listening to the older person through research findings is important when planning and implementing initiatives that involve older person participation and speaks to the patient care goal of 'nothing about me without me' within health services (Health Service Executive 2019). To further support this, we recommend future research in this area to include older person and student nurse representatives within the research team. Intergenerational cafés provide older people and student nurses an opportunity to meet in a neutral social context as equals, to chat and converse with each other. The research findings indicate that this initiative has merit and did help reduce barriers (such as lack of opportunity to meet and realising how much in common both groups have) and did facilitate intergenerational learning. Future plans include continuing with the café initiative and embed it within the pre-registration BSc Nursing curricula, to research in-person cafés and to expand the initiative to a larger population.

### Author Contributions

**Dympna Tuohy:** conceptualization, writing: review and editing, original draft preparation, supervision, formal analysis, project administration, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Irene Cassidy:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Margaret Graham:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Jill Murphy:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Jacinta Shanahan:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Teresa Tuohy:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation. **Jane McCarthy:** conceptualisation, writing: review and editing, original draft preparation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, funding acquisition, validation, data curation.

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### Disclosure

Statistics: The statistics were checked prior to submission by an expert statistician, Dr. Ali Sheikhi, [ali.sheikhi@ul.ie](mailto:ali.sheikhi@ul.ie).

### Ethics Statement

The study was granted ethical approval from research and ethics committee of the university (2020-12-23-EHS).

### Consent

All participants gave their informed consent for inclusion in the study before they participated.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

### Data Availability Statement

Data supporting this study may be requested from [dympna.tuohy@ul.ie](mailto:dympna.tuohy@ul.ie).

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