

What is meant by ageism

Sociology



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The term ageism was introduced by Robert N Butler in 1969 to describe the extent of discrimination suffered by the older generation at present. “

Butler’s general definition of ageism references it as stereotyping and discriminating specifically against the old” (What Is Ageism, n. d.). Ageism is a type of stereotyping in which aged people will be discriminated in some ways in their social life. It involves certain prejudices with respect to the views, opinions and functioning of old people. For example, modern generation is more interested in same sex marriage and homosexual activities whereas older generation may not advocate that. Modern generation may label the opinions of older generation as the bi-products of conservatism and they will neglect it. It should be noted that ageism is similar to racism and sexism since all these entities have some kind of discrimination as a common element.

“ The number of Americans 65 and older is projected to double over the next three decades from 35. 9 million to nearly 70 million, comprising 20 percent of the population in 2030 compared to less than 13 percent now” (Ageism in America, 2004). The average life span of people is increasing day by day in America because of the huge improvements in life standards and better healthcare. In other words, the number of old people in America is increasing disproportionately with the number of younger generation. Since new generation is interested more in following modern life styles and culture, communication and cultural gap between the younger and older generation is increasing in America. The increase of these gaps often results in severe social problems in American societies.

To conclude, ageism is a type of stereotyping in which old people is discriminated. It is increasing in America at present and several social

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problems are developing as a result of that.

References

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