

Female ageism in the philippines: on media and television essay



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Female Ageism in the Philippines: on Media and Television A Formal Paper in

Broadcast Communication 10 Abstract Ageism is a social disease that stereotypes the older people with the younger, or sometimes preference with the younger. Television and media has a responsibility in shaping this thought. This paper will explain how beauty is perceived as a factor for ageism, as well as gender discrimination. Two senior citizens were interviewed on what are their thoughts and feelings on how their idols' roles changed from time to time, and subjects such as Gina Pareno, Jean Garcia were among their chosen idols. Ageism still exists in modern times today due to cultures and rational means.

What adjustments could we do to resist from this discrimination? Societal influences and attitudes must change. The information in my report are gathered through research and interviews and some are subjective based. Introduction Ageism or age discrimination is defined as the stereotyping and prejudgment of people against individuals or groups due to their age[1]. The term was invented by US gerontologist Robert N. Butler to describe discrimination against seniors and patterned on sexism and racism[2]. Ageism is clearly visible to different societies, especially in the Philippines.

On the other hand, sexism or gender discrimination is the act of labeling people based upon their sex rather than their individual traits and can also be the differentiation based on the sex of the individual. We will be focused more on age discrimination and gender discrimination on Philippine television and media. Gender and age are closely correlated upon being discriminated, and mostly women are the victims of these two phenomena.

Why is that, when a much older woman is paired with a younger and

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handsome man is much more controversial than an older man, paired or had a relationship with younger and sexy women? These are just some questions we ought to wonder and will try to find the answer with. We will first take a focus on the type of ageism we will take notice of and discuss. That specific type of ageism: Jeunism and Adulthood There are different types of ageism, and the ones we will be more concerned are jeunism and adulthood.

Jeunism is the tendency to prefer young people over older people. This includes political candidacies, commercial functions, and cultural settings where the supposed greater vitality or physical beauty of youth is more appreciated than the supposed greater moral and intellectual rigor of adulthood[3]. An example of this is making it illegal to fail to employ, to dismiss, or to reduce working conditions or wages of people aged 40–69, or an individual approach, preferring the younger or beautiful protagonist rather than a mature or old woman, and sometimes disgusted when paired to a younger partner. On the contrary, adulthood, is that concept, where a predisposition towards adults, which some see as biased against children, youth, and all young people who aren't addressed or viewed as adults.

Adulthood is popularly used to describe any discrimination against young people and is distinguished from ageism, which is simply prejudice on the grounds of age; not specifically against youth. Adulthood is ostensibly caused by fear of children and youth. [4]. Conflicting to this, is when a star like Iwa Moto, a teenager given a role of a mature, is now being accepted and but sometimes rejected by the viewers. We will see their reactions later in the discussions.

Factors that Shaped Ageism There are many theories that speculate on how ageism was developed, and shaped, and why the society has a negative image of it. Ageism grew and grew from societies and these are just some reasons behind it: The first factor that was postulated was the fear of death in the Western society. The Philippines, being colonized by western countries along time ago, adapted these ideas and cultures. As death is feared, old age is feared, and hypothesizes that ageism attitudes and stereotypes serve to insulate the young and middle-aged from the ambivalence they feel towards the elderly. This ambivalence results from the fact that the older adult is viewed as representing aging and death. This represents the most commonly argued basis for ageism.

Another judging factor was postulated by Traxler(1980) to contribute to ageism is the emphasis on the youth culture in American society. For example, the media, ranging from television to novels, place an emphasis on youth, physical beauty, and sexuality. Older adults are primarily ignored or portrayed negatively (Martel, 1968; Northcott, 1975). The emphasis on youth not only affects how older individuals are perceived but also how older individuals perceive themselves.

Persons who are dependent on physical appearance and youth for their identity are likely to experience loss of self-esteem with age. Society and culture also contribute to ageism. A society that values beauty, also values that to have or achieve beauty, one has to be young. There are some cultures that admire aged, describing wrinkles and silver hair as signs of wisdom, experience and maturity.

However in the Philippines, it is highly regarded that the young ones are the beautiful ones. Productivity in our culture is most often defined as economic potential and how much you can give back to your society economically. Therefore, both young children and the elderly are usually viewed as unproductive. Children however are seen as “ economic potential”.

The elderly is seen as an economic burden or a financial liability. Gender and Ageism Women make up majority of the population, and due to this fact generalizations were made where, stereotypes with the older women traditionally stereotyped as inactive, unhealthy, asexual, and ineffective (Block et al, 1981). This can generally be countered as women averagely live longer than men, and must be that they are healthier than the men. Older women are also often viewed as ineffective, dependent, and passive.

This represents an extension of the view of all women being ineffective, passive, and dependent, i. e. , sexism (Block et al. , 1981). Often times, women will find this role difficult to shake.

This is particularly true for an older women whose sole identification has been with her husband (Payne & Whittington, 1976). This image of the older woman can also be a self-fulfilling prophecy, particularly for new widows who are finding it difficult to deal with independence (Block, et al. , 1981). In addition, as female, women continue to experience sexism during old age and are placed, thus, in double jeopardy. How Youth is Promoted by the Media: Television In the form of the most influential and effective way of advertising, television, we are shaped unconsciously with ageism. Television

and media promotes models, actors and actresses and stress to make the point of view of the viewers to show what is beautiful, the youth.

There are only few commercials concerning aged women where they are put in the line on the activities of the young. It was perceived as unacceptable, even for the aged for older women according to my respondent, Mrs Rossana Reyes that if Gloria Diaz were to advertise a product of like, Likas Papaya soap, would be less effective than seeing Kristine Hermosa doing the commercial. Moreover, according to Mrs. Luz Fe Ortiz, my other respondent, youth is more favored to be entertaining, but in some instance like her idol Ms Gina Pareno can exhibit such humor that even youth can accept her. She has appoint, where I researched that mostly the aged women are the ones' being made fun of with such jokes that deal with death, decline, sexual inability.

There are also negative depictions like being rigid, less open-minded, grumpy as seen in movies and soap operas. Responses and Feedbacks of Aged Females: I first interviewed Mrs. Rosanna Reyes(52 years old), a nanny of our neighboring house, and an avid television viewer. Her favorite actress was Jean Garcia, and stated that she admires her because of her youthful beauty even though she is as old. She watched over her career in movies as well as the hit series Pangako Sayo, where Jean played as the antagonist.

I asked her that if she was in favor of the current relationship of Jean Garcia with Polo Ravales, who was more than ten years younger than Jean, 13 to be exact. She said “ I don't really buy it, but I am against it, she doesn't fit her as a lover anyway, I would prefer the lights of Richard Gomez or Aga Mulach

being paired to her, but if she likes him then I have no grudge against her, after all she is my idol. I asked her what is her standpoint in ageism and replied sarcastically: “ Sakitin kasi ang mga matatanda kaya pangit ang pagtingin”(Majority of the aged are sick and has unstable health, that is sometimes viewed and stereotypes them as unclean to the eyes)My second respondent was Mrs. Luz Fe Ortiz(63 years old), my friend and neighbors' grandmother.

Also an avid fan of television, and also accepts the modern style of television today. She cited that her favorite actress was Gina Pareno and Gloria Diaz, and was greatly impressed with Pareno's role in her latest movie Kasal, Kasali, Kasalo where Pareno received awards for. She highly viewed that the aged today are very effective in comedy, as they are funnier (Dolphy) than the younglings(Bayani Agbayani) and has sense in their jokes. She was greatly entertained in the role of Pareno in the movie and stated that even if she was paired with a younger man, she was able to pull it off, and stand out, and as well be not disgusted upon. Mrs. Ortiz added that age does not really matter, and sometimes the older ones are the better ones due to their experience and work in their fields.

However, both of my respondents arrive to a similar thought. The young ones are less ineffective in portraying a mature role, than an older actress playing a hippy or youth oriented character. They cited actresses such as Iwa Moto(Super Twins), Shaina Magdayao(Lobo) and Marian Rivera(Super Twins) due to their outside appearance as teenagers. Also they said that the face of their innocence speaks louder than their acting. Conclusion: Does Age Really

Matter? What can we do? As we have covered, age really does matter, but depends upon concept and context.

Ageism is highly cultural, or even worse, traditional. But I have realized and listed some things that we could do to minimize such discrimination: Ageist attitudes can be decreased with constant exposure and by working with older adults. The increase in older adults may help in an increase of positive attitudes in society. Personal contact with elders is a great way to change negative attitudes. Individuals need to identify their personal attitudes as ageist.

Admitting a prejudice is the first and most difficult step towards change. A lot of work and studies still need to be done in the area of ageism. Many studies are inconclusive and remain incomplete. The media could help in achieving this, and last but not least, the current society's influences and attitudes must change.

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