

ALI 504: Family and Social Change

Session Two

Words for Reflection

Age is not merely a biological function of the number of years one has lived, or of the physiological changes the body goes through during the life course. It is also a product of the social norms and expectations that apply to each stage of life.

<https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontosociology/chapter/chapter13-aging-and-the-elderly/>

As for those of your wives who have ceased having menses — or if you have any doubts their term of waiting and of those who have not yet had menses, shall be three months. As for those who are pregnant, their term shall be until they deliver. And whoever is wary of Allah, He shall grant him ease in his affairs

Sura Talaq, no.65, verse 4

That is Allah's ordinance
which He has sent down to you
and whoever is wary of Allah
He shall absolve him of his misdeeds
and give him a great reward

Sura Talaq, no.65, verse 5

Changes in society

Children

- 1) Parents lives revolve around children
- 2) Less contribution of children to tasks
- 3) Concentrated focus on education
- 4) Friendlier parent-child relationship
- 5) More aware of the world we live in
- 6) A decline in free outdoor play (fear of safety)
- 7) Family and mosques have less influence

Education systems have been forced to find ways to deal with the results of societal and lifestyle changes – **less active kids, highly stressed families, increased diversity in classes, higher numbers of violent and suicidal students, and streets that may not be safe for walking to school.** Breakfast programs, after school care and counseling services have valiantly attempted to step in and take on roles previously filled by extended family, churches and neighbours. What was once a three-legged stool of school, home and community has increasingly become unbalanced, with one of the legs (school) expected to compensate for the rest.

<http://www.changelearning.ca/get-informed-education-today-and-tomorrow-shifts-society.html>

Changes in Society

The Elderly

- 1) Living longer with good health and active lifestyles
- 2) Hard to keep up with modern trends and education
- 3) Social media promotes age defiance
- 4) People try to fight aging – dependence and vulnerability
- 5) Their wisdom and experience is under valued

اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ ضَعْفٍ ثُمَّ جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ ضَعْفٍ قُوَّةً ثُمَّ
جَعَلَ مِنْ بَعْدِ قُوَّةٍ ضَعْفًا وَشَيْبَةً ۖ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ ۖ وَهُوَ
الْعَلِيمُ الْقَدِيرُ

It is Allah who created you from weakness
then He gave you power after weakness.
Then, after power, He ordained weakness and old
age: He creates whatever He wishes
and He is the All-knowing, the All-powerful.

Sura Rum, no.30, verse 54

The Elderly in Islam

And the right of him who is older than you is that you should respect him because of his age, and honor his submission to God since he has precedence (over you) in Islam. You should refrain from confronting him in disputes and should not surpass him or walk ahead of him, and you should not consider him to be foolish. If he behaves foolishly with you, you should put up with it and honor him because of the right of his Islam and his age. This is because the right of age is in the same measure as (the right of) Islam. And there is no power but in God.

Imam Sajjad (a), Rislataul Huqooq

Hadith from Imam Sadiq (a)

There are three whose rights none are ignorant of except a hypocrite known for his hypocrisy: an elderly (white haired) person in Islam, the bearer of the Qur'an, and the just Imam.

Part of reverence to God, the Exalted, the High, is to show reverence to an old man.

Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p.658.

The Generation Gap

A generation gap consists of the differences in opinions expressed by members of two different generations.

More specifically, a generation gap can be used to describe the differences in actions, beliefs and tastes members of younger generations when compared to members of older generations

While generation gaps have been prevalent throughout all periods of history, the breadth of differences of these gaps has widened in the 20th and 21st centuries.

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/generation-gap.asp>

Differences between generations

- Religious Beliefs
- Moral values
- Attitude towards other races and groups
- Work ethics
- Leisure activities
- Family and community bonds

Questions

- 1) Choose one difference between the generations.
- 2) Discuss three ways in which the generations differ about it.
- 3) What impact do those differences have?
- 4) How can the impact be reduced in negativity?