

Social and Behavioral Science Editorial

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The resilience of the elderly provides an opportunity for many to learn about this cohort of adults, and to do what is necessary to ensure that we understand all that is involved in the aging process. Becoming older (aging) is inevitable, but it is also something that should be revered. Yet, the question beckons: What are we doing as a society to make sure that we adapt healthy lifestyles now to assure an inexorable transition into old age? This question is similarly posed as we strive to meet the demands of a growing diverse aging population.

Over the last 25 years, there has been a growing emphasis in the field of gerontology. This has resulted in an evident need for an organized platform focusing on the scientific advances, while enhancing conceptual and theoretical models within and across various cohorts of individuals. Understanding the life span contributors to aging is critical as we are experiencing a “gerontological explosion” of adults nationally and internationally. We must similarly recognize that individuals are now living longer and enjoying more years of an active lifestyle. The incidence of disease, while still high, is now more likely to be better managed with improved health care and access to services that was not readily available some years ago. Yet, we must remain vigilant in recognizing that inequities continue to exist, and everyone does not have equal access or availability of optimal or affordable health care. This remains as an important social issue that must be addressed if we continue our efforts in improving the well-being of the aging population.

To fully understand the contributions of older adults and to appreciate the subject of aging studies/gerontology in general, there must be a commitment to create a multidisciplinary platform for all to understand the aging process across diverse groups of individuals (race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender, etc.). Recognizing the enormity of this challenge, leaders in the field of gerontology are now contributing to our knowledge and insight on matters most pertinent to understanding the changing

demographic structure of the older adult population. This effort has resulted in a progressive and multidisciplinary compendium of research pertaining to aging among populations not only in the United States but also globally.

It is critical that we now focus on paramount public health, social, behavioral, and biological concerns as they relate to the needs of older adults. We must also distill the most important advances in the science of aging and incorporate the evidence of scholars in gerontology, anthropology, humanities, psychology, public health, sociology, social work, biology, medicine, and other similarly related disciplines. It is time that our attention centers on areas pertinent to the well-being of the adult population such as work and retirement, social networks, context/neighborhood, discrimination, health disparities, long-term care, physical functioning, caregiving, housing, and end-of-life care. Bringing our knowledge of this understudied group in line with the needs and impact they will have on society will be an “achievable” challenge of current and future generations of scholars.

Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine (GGM) is a premier open-access journal and reliable source that will serve as an interdisciplinary forum where scholars from a variety of disciplines present their work focusing on the psychological, behavioral, social, and biological aspects of aging. The overall objective of the journal is to disseminate information that addresses critical issues at the nexus of research findings and scholarly exchange in the areas of aging, health behaviors and outcomes, and medicine. GGM is the dialogue of interdisciplinary scholarship that will appear across multiple areas of inquiry . . . GGM is now . . . GGM is the future~

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