

AGEISM IN THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines ageism as "stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people on the basis of their age" regardless of their age groups (World Health Organization, Citation2020). This is age discrimination, which can manifest itself in the workplace in the form of precedent-setting, unwarranted assumptions about the capabilities and competencies of employees based on their age.

There is a substantial body of scientific literature that has concentrated on unfavorable perceptions of older workers, including that they are less productive, less driven, less adaptive, rigid, and resistant to change than their younger colleagues. (Levy & Macdonald, Citation2016; Marchiondo et al., Citation2019).

Nevertheless, ageism is not only associated with older workers, but also with workers from all other age groups (Snape & Redman, Citation2003). For instance, younger employees may face unfair disadvantages in promotions and deployment because they are viewed as unfit for particular positions or as being less devoted to their employer than older employees. Therefore, I believe it is essential to discuss ageism in the workplace, regardless of an individual's age, as discrimination may appear with regard to any of the age categories.

INTRODUCTION

Ageism, or age discrimination, is a significant issue in the workplace that can take many different forms. Ageism, for instance, might appear as bias in the job. Many individuals believe that older workers are less efficient, less able to adapt to new ideas or technology, less flexible, and less driven than their younger counterparts. Older workers may not receive the same opportunities as younger workers as a result of these biases. They might not get training, mentoring, or possibilities for advancement, for instance. ("Ageism in Working Life: A Scoping Review on Discursive Approaches).

The study, "Ageism at Work: The Impact of Intergenerational Contact and Organizational multi-age perspective" from European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology, help to understand what perceptions of age can lead to ageism in the workplace.

Another way ageism in the workplace can manifest itself is through inequality. Older workers may often face job cuts due to reduced productivity or age. They may also be paid less than younger workers, even if they are doing the same job. Some organizations may also set an upper age limit for hiring new employees.

Ageism in the workplace can result from inequality, as evidenced by articles like

"Perceived age discrimination in the workplace: the mediating roles of job resources and demands" in Journal of Managerial Psychology show how inequality can lead to ageism in the workplace.

It is not uncommon also for young workers to experience ageism at work. This issue is frequently founded in the widespread myth that younger workers are more energetic and adept at technology than their more experienced counterparts. However, such a notion might have negative effects, namely ageism, a pernicious kind of discrimination founded on age-based prejudices. (Age and work-related motives: Results of a meta-analysis. 113, 1-16.)

There are several ways in which ageism against young employees may occur at work. For instance, their youth may cause them to be disregarded or underestimated in their offerings. They could encounter obstacles to promotion as a result of assumptions about their lack of experience. (Exploring the relationship between ageism and career development of older workers.)

Ageism in the workplace has been proven to be a reality. For instance, a 2020 study from King's College London discovered that young people are more likely than older coworkers to be age-determined at work. As they ascended the corporate ladder, they discovered that they were less than their older counterparts and more likely to come across physicians.

MITIGATING AGEISM IN THE WORKPLACE: STRATEGIES FOR FOSTERING INCLUSIVITY AND EQUALITY ACROSS GENERATIONS

As stated above, ageism in the workplace is a major issue for employee empowerment and a healthy work environment. However, there are several ways to deal with this problem that can be considered.

The first way to combat ageism in the workplace is through education and awareness. Ageist stereotypes can be avoided by educating workers about how unfair and incorrect they are. For instance, offering training and workshops so that staff members can learn how to respect senior staff members and how they can contribute to the team and the business as a whole. (Abrams, Z. I., & von Hippel, W. Ageism in the workplace.)

The second way is to create policies to combat ageism in the workplace. This can entail taking action to prevent age-based discrimination, such as embedding these safeguards in the company's policies and procedures, placing them in employment contracts, and setting up systems to monitor and handle infractions.

A third way to combat ageism in the workplace is to encourage diversity in the team. To build a more diverse and inclusive team, this may involve hiring workers from various age groups and cultural backgrounds. It may also entail implementing initiatives to promote diversity within the team, such as enhancing the presence of various cultural activities and events at work. (Abrams, Z. I., & von Hippel, W. Ageism in the workplace.)

A fourth way to combat ageism in the workplace is to use flexible work arrangements. Age-related demands can be accommodated for through flexible work arrangements like telecommuting, part-time employment, and work-agreement scheduling. Flexible work arrangements may be a better choice for some older individuals who find it challenging to work full-time or long hours in one location. (Ayalon, L., & Tesch-Römer, C. Taking a closer look at ageism: Self-and other-directed ageist attitudes and discrimination.)

A fifth way to combat ageism in the workplace is to develop support programs for older workers. For older workers, this may entail expanding training, mentoring, and coaching possibilities. It may also entail developing retraining programs for those looking to change careers. These programs can aid older workers in honing their abilities and getting ready for new challenges. (Ayalon, L., & Tesch-Römer, C. Taking a closer look at ageism: Self-and other-directed ageist attitudes and discrimination.)

Combating ageism in the workplace necessitates a multifaceted strategy. This includes training, rules, team diversity, flexible working options, and senior employee support programs. Addressing the issue of age discrimination not only adds to a more inclusive and courteous work environment, but it also improves the team's overall efficiency and production.

CONCLUSION

This academic essay examined the topic of ageism in the workplace and its negative consequences. I outlined that ageism includes negative stereotypes and discrimination based on age and that it can lead to less productivity, dissatisfaction among employees, layoffs, and conflicts within the company.

The essay recommends various strategies for combating ageism in the workplace, such as increasing employee age diversity, educating and informing employees and managers about ageism, and developing flexible work settings that allow people to remain productive throughout their careers.

Finally, ageism is a severe issue in the workplace that can have a detrimental impact on productivity, morale, and employee happiness. As a result, businesses must take action to prevent ageism by providing a work atmosphere that welcomes people of all ages, as well as teaching employees and management about the issue and how to resist it. All of this can contribute to a more effective and productive work environment, as well as increased employee satisfaction and motivation.

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