

The SHBPP at the AUB FM/MC holds its 10th Regional conference “Aging Arab Women: Myths, Facts, and Implications”

Posted on 2/13/2018

1 0 0 0



In the first collaboration between the Salim El-Hoss Bioethics and Professionalism Program at the American University of Beirut Faculty of Medicine and Medical Center and the University of Carthage, with the Institut Pasteur de Tunis and UNESCO Cairo Office, the 10th regional conference was held at the Faculté des Sciences Juridiques, Politiques et Sociales de Tunis campus in Tunis, Tunisia on February 6-7, 2018 under the title “Aging Arab Women: Myths, Facts, and Implications”. The conference brought together experts in health, education, law, psychology, and religion from the MENA region. They gave presentations tackling various key issues facing Arab women today, particularly the portrayal of women in the region through the media, culture, religion, art, and education and its implications on the status of women.

The conference was opened by the Minister of Women, Family, and Children in Tunisia, Ms. Naziha Laabidi, who spoke about the upcoming plans and initiatives to be carried out by the ministry to improve the status of aging women in Tunisia, which includes the release of the first code of elderly rights and the magazine for the elderly, the first of its kind to be dedicated to tackle the socio-cultural and health concerns of this population. This was followed by a number of presentations by the guest speakers covering a wide array of issues, the protection of elderly women in Tunisia, the knowledge, attitude and associated stigma of mental illness among women, aging women and body image, the role of education in shaping mindsets about women, and aging women in the age of youth apology, as well as the presence of elderly women in Tunisian media. Two-panel discussions also addressed many of the questions and comments brought forward by the attendees.

The conference was concluded with the following recommendations:

- Education and the image of women:

- Work on improving the image of women in predominant culture in the Arab region
- Encourage school projects on women's rights by focusing on the concept of gender equality
- Use modern tools (multimedia, YouTube ...) to provoke discussions on contemporary women's issues and encourage students to draw conclusions by themselves, replacing didactic speeches and passive learning methods.
- Reemphasize the need for equal rights and duties and the role of man within his social context and his responsibilities toward the empowerment of women.
- Emphasize the active role of women in society as citizens and not only as mothers and wives, to reconcile young girls with their active and not just physical image
- Focus on the welfare of women: therapeutic activities such as sports and cognitive exercises, artistic activities, and other means of expression.

- For older women in particular:

- Work on reducing dependency and vulnerability by empowering elderly women
- Pass and enforce laws that ensure the protection of elderly women's rights and dignity
- Train competent staff to accompany elderly people with dignity