ISQOLS 2014

Special Session on
“Social Policies and Well-being in Later Life”

CALL FOR PAPERS

Session Organizers:
Florian KOHLBACHER, German Institute for Japanese Studies (DIJ) Tokyo, Japan & Xi’an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, PR China
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Demographic change has emerged as a powerful trend affecting a large number of countries around the world. Populations are ageing, and in some cases shrinking. This has tremendous economic, social, individual and organizational consequences (Drucker, 2002; Dychtwald & Flower, 1990; Magnus, 2009). This special issue is devoted to the question how these changes affect the well-being of individuals taking into account the role social policies play in this context.

In recent years, there has been a lively debate on the relationship between societal welfare and subjective well-being (Alex Linley, Joseph, Harrington, & Wood, 2006; Diener, Lucas, Schimmack, & Helliwell, 2009; Stiglitz, Sen & Fitoussi, 2009; Veenhoven, 2006). Societal welfare can be described not only in terms of objective societal wealth (e.g. economic production, income and wealth, welfare state infrastructure), but also in terms of subjective wellbeing, referring to the mean level and distribution of life satisfaction and happiness in a society. The study of people’s well-being and happiness has highly relevant implications for individuals and societies (Coulmas, 2009; Layard, 2011). Despite the growing importance of the older age group in the population, and the global scale of the demographic shift, the topic of social policies and well-being in later life has not yet received sufficient attention, however. Understanding older people and ageing societies via academic, empirical research will help policy makers and opinion leaders to deal with the individual needs of both younger and older people in ageing societies and in designing the appropriate environments to enhance their well-being. Such an understanding will also help to follow Boudiny’s (2013) recent call to turn ‘active ageing’ from an empty rhetoric to an effective policy tool.

The vast majority of the research on ageing societies on the one hand, and well-being on the other, has been conducted in North America and Europe. But other nations also merit closer attention. Moreover, comparative research will help to better understand societal and cultural conditions of aging (Tesch-Römer & von Kondratowitz, 2006) and well-being (Wierzbicka, 2009). Take the case of China and Japan for example: The Japanese society has grown old after becoming rich and has already established a wide variety of social policies (Coulmas, 2007; Coulmas, Conrad, Schad-Seifert, & Vogt, 2008; Muramatsu & Akiyama, 2011), while China is growing old before becoming a rich nation (Peng, 2011; Zeng, 2009; Zhang, Guo, & Zheng, 2012) and has to adapt and develop its social policies in this process.
This special session adopts a cross-national perspective and thus seeks contributions from a variety of countries with ageing populations. Comparative studies are particularly welcome, but research focusing on one particular nation is also within the scope of this special session.

Overall, this special session will be open to multidisciplinary approaches and researchers who work on the well-being of older people. Theoretical and empirical papers are invited to this special session which are devoted to the topic of social policies and well-being in later life in ageing societies.

Authors can have their papers considered for a special issue in the Journal of Positive Psychology (JPP), guest edited by the special session organizers. For the detailed call for papers see the website of "The Journal of Positive Psychology".

Participation in this session is not a requirement for submitted to the special issue and manuscripts accepted for and presented at ISQOLS are not automatically considered for the JPP special issue. However, the submission deadlines permit authors of papers presented at ISQOLS to receive constructive feedback regarding the manuscript, thereby improving it in preparation for submission to the special issue.

**Timeline:**
Conference Date: September 15–18, 2014
Conference venue: Henry Ford Building of the Free University Berlin, Germany
Submission of Abstracts: May 16, 2014
Announcement of Acceptance: June 15, 2014
Registration: June 1-August 31, 2014
Late Registration: September 1, 2014-conference (late registration fees)

**Submissions:**
Please submit your proposed abstract of approximately 500 words with a list of 3-5 keywords and the reference of the session title “Social Policies and Well-being in Later Life” using the following e-mail: kohlbacher@dijtokyo.org and ctr@dza.de.

**References:**


