

„Successful aging in diverse cultural contexts: a cross-cultural study focused on aging and the quality of life“

The phenomenon of an extended adulthood and old age has sparked off a new interest in processes and determinants of successful aging in developmental psychology. Research in this area, however, is mainly guided by a cognitive view of human behavior. To supplement this view, the present research program adds two important factors determining human behavior and development. Firstly, implicit (i.e., unconscious) motivation is taken into account: Although implicit motives mould long-term behavior and affect well-being, they are widely neglected in research on old age. Secondly, culture is added to the picture: Cultures differ in their definitions of what successful aging is and how it is attained. Within the frame given by the foci on implicit motives and culture, the research program will examine three topics regarded as universally valid but possibly culturespecifically shaped components of successful aging: realization of life goals (as determinant of life satisfaction), generativity (as the desire to pass on one's experiences), and autobiographical memory (as a review of one's life course). Such a comprehensive empirical approach considering cultural background and unconscious as well as conscious aspects of personality promises a truly groundbreaking integration of multiple facets of successful aging, a subject of rapidly growing importance not only for (developmental) psychological science but also for the general public.

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