
Global Handbook of Quality of Life

International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life

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Global Handbook of Quality of Life

Exploration of Well-Being
of Nations and Continents

 Springer

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International Handbooks of Quality-of-Life

ISBN 978-94-017-9177-9 ISBN 978-94-017-9178-6 (eBook)

DOI 10.1007/978-94-017-9178-6

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014960088

Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg New York London

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Printed on acid-free paper

Springer Science+Business Media B.V. Dordrecht is part of Springer Science+Business Media (www.springer.com)

Foreword

This is an extra-ordinary collection of papers designed to be comprehensive with respect to topics covered and methodologies employed by scholars across the whole globe with diverse disciplinary backgrounds. The editors are well-known productive academics who promise a great deal and deliver the goods as promised.

Since the middle 1960s an enormous amount of research has been accumulated on quality of life and/or wellbeing. So some overviews of accomplishments of the work of the past 50 years or so have been needed. There have been a few overviews of the field, including most recently the *Handbook of Social Indicators and Quality of Life Research* edited by Land, Michalos and Sirgy (2012, Springer). While there is some overlap with the Land, Michalos and Sirgy collection, this collection goes beyond the earlier handbook in its worldwide scope of topics, including, for example, discussions of demographic and health development, the spread of democracy, global economic accounting, multi-item measurement of perceived satisfaction and expert-assessed quality of life (i.e., subjective and objective measures of wellbeing), wellbeing of children, women and poor people, wellbeing in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, South America, Eastern and Western Europe, worries, pains, hopes and fears of people around the world.

For anyone requiring a comprehensive historical account of the field in a single volume, this volume would be an excellent resource. For a much longer and even more comprehensive view, the *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Wellbeing Research* (2014, Springer) would be the place to go. The American sociologist Robert K. Merton said that if he was able to see farther than anyone before it was because he stood on the shoulders of giants. Regardless of the path taken, handbooks, encyclopedia or both, researchers over the next 50 years will have robust, if not gigantic, shoulders to stand on.

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Acknowledgements

Writing a book about global quality of life is a task that requires the participation of many colleagues; it is a collective effort of specialists and generalists in social sciences working cooperatively together. The realization of the Global Handbook rests on many studies on quality of life and wellbeing which are available worldwide and which – taken together – constitute the framework of the Global Handbook. Thanks are owed to many colleagues for contributing to research on social indicators, social reporting, social monitoring, quality of life and wellbeing. The main support came from the 63 authors from about 20 countries who freely contributed their chapters. It is an encouraging experience both to receive so much support from the networks of quality of life and wellbeing research and to solve scientific tasks collectively. It would have been impossible to produce such a handbook without this generosity of many colleagues and friends. Of profound significance has been the varying support which we received from supranational organizations. It seems to be the first time that social reporting of supranational and international organizations has been presented in a broader context.

The main editorial work for this handbook was carried out by the editor and three co-editors who shared the task of peer reviewing all the chapters. Of tremendous help in the production process was the competent editorial assistance of Jennifer Gulyas and Ruth Hasberg. They performed all the tasks from organizing the procedures, editing incoming chapters and writing articles as authors. For special chapters we got help for proof reading from Richard Hauser (Frankfurt) and Jürgen Kohl (Heidelberg).

The Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, where the project was anchored, provided tangible and intangible support. Particular thanks are owed to the Goethe University, its President and the Vice President, the Dean of the Department for Social Sciences (Gesellschaftswissenschaften) and the “Freunde und Förderer der Goethe Universität” for giving us a home and social and financial assistance. The Executive Council of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies recognized the value of a comprehensive publication and gave its formal support. We received formal votes in favor of our project from the Executive Council of ISQOLS, from the Board of Directors and the ISQOLS president. We are grateful for the trust placed in our performance to carry out our ambitious project.

March 2014

Wolfgang Glatzer

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