

A Quarterly Review of Social Reports and Research on Social Indicators, Social Trends, and the Quality-of-Life.
News Included of Working Group 6 on Social Indicators and Social Reporting of the International Sociological Association.
Newsletter of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies

THE EASTERLIN PARADOX REVISITED, REVISED, AND PERHAPS RESOLVED

Ed Diener* and Daniel Kahneman**

*University of Illinois and the Gallup Organization

**Princeton University and the Gallup Organization

One of the most important papers ever published on well-being was Easterlin's 1974 classic, in which he claimed that there was little evidence that economic growth had improved "the human lot." Specifically, Easterlin suggested that despite considerable economic growth, subjective well-being (SWB) had not increased in developed countries. Reviewing the data existing at that time, Easterlin concluded that although there were noticeable differences in "happiness" between rich and poor individuals within nations, differences in SWB between rich and poor nations were small or nonexistent. Furthermore, he suggested that increases in the wealth of nations over time were not accompanied by similar increases in SWB.

The now famous "Easterlin Paradox" is the puzzling fact that, whereas individual income is associated with happiness, the wealth of nations seemed not to be, at least among relatively prosperous countries. Easterlin explained this paradox with the concept of social comparison - the idea that a person's relative position influences happiness, but as people in a society achieve higher average income there is no net increase in SWB because the comparison standard rises. Thus, he hypothesized that the pattern of income findings was due to the fact that income only has an effect insofar as people are richer than those around them, but there is no beneficial effect as a society's income

rises. Easterlin's paper was both controversial and important. On one side of the debate were those who argued that an overemphasis on economic growth hurts the environment and human relationships. On the other side were most economists, who focus on the importance of economic growth. Richard Easterlin had fired a shot heard round

the academic world, and began a debate that has lasted 35 years.

A number of scholars weighed in against Easterlin. In a 2002 review, Diener and Biswas-Diener concluded that there were a number of studies showing strong correlations between nations' income and the average SWB in them. Because the association of national income and national happiness was so strong, it appeared that Easterlin was misled because the early surveys on which he based his conclusions were all wealthy nations, and hence there was a very restricted range of national wealth available to him.

The debate next focused on the question of whether rising incomes lead to rising SWB. For example, Hagerty and Veenhoven suggested that although there was variability between nations, on average happiness increased in those nations with the greatest increases in income. Easterlin fired back with his own analyses. He showed that the growth of happiness in the USA and Japan was small or nonexistent, at a time when economic growth was phenomenal. The Easterlin critics argued that perhaps these nations were exceptional.

Often the sampling of nations and of years, as well as the wording of SWB questions, were issues in the debate. In the last year a number of studies appeared that shed new light on the important Easterlin question.

In recent years the Gallup Organization has been conducting a World Poll, in which large representative samples are collected from most nations in the world. Cantril's "ladder of life" is one of the measures of well-being used in that survey. The economist Angus Deaton reported an analysis of the relationship between the country average of the ladder of life and the logarithm of GDP. The first result was that plotting the data against

(Continued on next page.)

In this Issue...

REVIEWS:

- The Easterlin Paradox Revisited, Revised, and Perhaps Resolved 1-3
Measuring Progress: Let's All Be Serious 4
Comment on Mahar Mangahas' Article, the OECD Forum, & the Stiglitz Report 5

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Summary of the Discussion of the OECD/ISQOLS Satellite Meeting Held in Florence 6-7
Call for Papers, Social Indicators at the XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology .. 7
Call For Papers Applied Research in Quality of Life, The Official Journal of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies 3
ISQOLS Homepage 8

Editor's Note: This issue of SINET commences with an essay by Ed Diener and Daniel Kahneman on recent research they have done on the famous Easterlin paradox. They believe their research has solved some of the classical aspects of this paradox (debated in the social indicators/quality-of-life literature for the past 35 years), but, at the same time, points to new questions to motivate research for the next decades. This is followed by Mahar Mangahas's column from the Philippine Daily Inquirer (October 31, 2009) on the recent OECD World Forum on "Statistics, Knowledge, Policy" held in Busan, Republic of Korea. Alex Michalos then adds to the discussion initiated by Mahar. Among the News and Announcement entries, readers will be particularly interested in Joe Sirgy's Summary of the Discussion of the OECD/ISQOLS Satellite Meeting held in Florence last July after the 9th ISQOLS Conference.

SINET

Social Indicators Network News

EDITOR EMERITUS:

Abbott L. Ferriss,
Atlanta, GA

COORDINATING EDITOR/ PUBLISHER:

Kenneth C. Land,
Duke University, Durham, NC

MANAGING EDITOR:

Rob Marks,
Duke University, Durham, NC

CORRESPONDING EDITORS:

Children, Youth and Education:

Donald J. Hernandez
Bureau of the Census,
Washington, DC

Health and Aging:

Linda K. George and
Deborah T. Gold,
Duke University, Durham, NC

General Social and Cultural

Trends:

James A. Davis,
National Opinion Research Center,
Chicago, IL

John P. Robinson,
University of Maryland,
College Park, MD

Marketing/Quality of Life

Research:

M. Joseph Sirgy,
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
& State University

Social Forecasting/Futurology

Joseph Coates,
Coates and Jarratt, Inc.
Washington, DC

Subjective Well-Being and the Quality of Life:

Ed Diener,
University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

International Correspondents:

Asia and the Pacific:

Mahar Mangahas, Philippines,
Social Weather Stations,
Quezon City, The Philippines

Dudley L. Poston
Texas A&M University,
College Station, TX

Europe:

Maria Ciechocinska,
University of Agriculture & Educa-
tion, Zytini, Poland

Lief Gouiedo
Stockholm, Sweden

Wolfgang Glatzer
Frankfurt, Germany

Zsolt Speder
Budapest, Hungary

(Continued from previous page.)

log yields a linear relationship. The log of income is an appropriate transformation of income in that it reflects the declining marginal utility of money, and the fact that people are likely to consider increases in income in percentage terms. If anything, the rise of the ladder of life with log GDP is steeper for the richer nations. Second, Deaton reported an astonishing correlation of .84 between national averages of the ladder score and log GDP. Indeed, the variability of the ladder score across countries swamped the variation within countries.

The Easterlin hypothesis was addressed directly by the economists Stevenson and Wolfers, who used the Gallup World Poll and also reviewed a large amount of existing evidence. Stevenson and Wolfers also questioned some of Easterlin's analysis which had failed to consider changes in the wording of the questions. They also presented new statistical analyses, including a study of relationships between changes of GDP over time and economic growth. The evidence was suggestive of a positive relationship, but Stevenson and Wolfers cautiously refrained from strong conclusions from their analyses of temporal changes. However, they conducted another analysis of the World Poll, in which they compared the slope of the regression of the ladder score on log income, both within and between countries. The reasoning was that Easterlin's focus on comparative effects implies a steeper relationship within than between countries. They found no support whatever for this prediction. The slopes of the regression of country averages on log GDP and of individual ladder scores on the log of their income were very similar. If anything, the between-country slope was steeper.

For a long time researchers in the field of SWB have used a single, usually life satisfaction or a global measure of "happiness these days". A long time ago, one of us (Diener) proposed a more complex definition of SWB as "high life satisfaction, the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect. Coming from a different perspective, Kahneman and his collaborators distinguished life evaluation from experienced happiness, which is defined by positive and negative affect. Not entirely by accident (we are both Senior Scientists at Gallup), the World Poll included dichotomous questions about the prevalence of different emotions in the experience of yesterday. Together with William Tov and Raksha Arora, we conducted parallel analyses of the ladder (a measure of life evaluation) and of measures of PA and NA. Our tentative conclusion is that the Easterlin hypothesis is very likely to be false for life evaluation, but could well hold for

measures of affect.

Following on Deaton's analyses of the ladder and log income, we found in the entire World Poll sample available in early 2008 that the correlation between individual's ladder scores and the log GDP of the country in which they lived was .42. Adding the individual's own income only raised the correlation to .44. The correlation is higher than in previous studies because the Gallup Poll covers the full range of income in the world, including the poorest people who were vastly underrepresented in previous surveys. The data for the ladder conclusively show a strong link between life evaluations and income, and also imply that a common standard for what a "good life" consists of is shared by people across the globe. This picture is not consistent with Easterlin's hypothesis.

The results for measures of affect are different. The correlation between log income and affect balance is much weaker: -.31 at the national level and .14 at the individual level. At the national level, we found that objective indices of the level of corruption in countries (which we interpret as a measure of trust) were stronger than log GDP as predictors of affect, especially negative emotions, in contrast to the ladder which is better predicted by income. In an article forthcoming in the Journal of Personality and Positive Psychology, we found that social and psychological factors such as learning new things and being able to count on others in an emergency were strong predictors of feelings, while material possessions and income were strongly related to scores on the ladder scale.

We also found differences when we compared the effect of income within-country and between-countries on the ladder and on measures of affect. Recall that Easterlin predicts that within-country slopes should be steeper, because of comparative effects. Contrary to that prediction, Stevenson and Wolfers found that the slope within most countries was shallower than the between-countries regression. In contrast, we find that within-country slopes are steeper in 99 of 133 countries for Positive Affect ($p < .001$) and in 119 of 133 countries for Negative Affect. The results do not prove the validity of Easterlin's hypothesis for affect, but they are clearly consistent with that hypothesis.

We also examined changes in SWB over recent decades, based on early surveys summarized on Veenhoven's World Database of Happiness, and the recent Gallup World Poll. What we found corroborates conclusions recently reached by Inglehart. We observed a correlation of .54 of rising incomes with rising life evaluations on the ladder scale, but a correlation of -.13 between rising income and

(Continued on next page.)

(Continued from previous page.)

rising happiness. Increased income correlated with increased life satisfaction at .25. In other words, the Easterlin hypothesis was wrong when it comes to life evaluation as assessed by Cantril's Self-Anchoring Striving Scale. However, "happiness," which is more strongly correlated with affect than is life satisfaction, did not rise with income. While Easterlin appears to have been wrong for life evaluations, his thesis appears to be alive and well when it comes to feelings. This makes sense if one assumes that positive feelings, although perhaps subject to some influence from income, are largely driven by temperament, personal relationships, and activities that create interest and flow.

If our conclusions turn out to replicate and withstand the scrutiny of other scientists, the implications are profound. First, they suggest that economic growth is not sufficient to increase all types of SWB. Indeed, a more far-reaching conclusion is that national averages of on-line happiness are only weakly correlated with wealth, suggesting that economic development will not greatly improve this type of SWB. A second implication is that we must be more careful in future research to always assess several types of SWB, and not be content with measures of life satisfaction alone. Third, the findings support the idea that we need national accounts of subjective well-being, because economic accounts do not fully capture societal progress versus decline. In a recent book, *Well-Being for Public Policy*, Diener and his co-authors present the argument that societal accounts of well-being are needed, and that such accounts could shed light on policy debates in diverse fields such as the environment, health, and work. Finally, the new findings suggest that we need more research on how societies influence negative and positive feelings. Which is the more important type of SWB? Many philosophers have argued that reflective life judgments are most important, because they represent what people strive to achieve. In earlier writings, Kahneman argued that on-line feelings are the most important measure of well-being. We now agree that both are important.

Easterlin initiated one of the most important debates in the behavioral sciences of the past few decades. The data now available are much more extensive than those available in 1974. Our tentative conclusion is that Richard Easterlin was both right and wrong, and that his hypothesis needs to be revised. It appears that economic growth

might have only a small impact on people's average ongoing feelings of well-being, but may heighten people's evaluations of their lives. Even small correlations, however, can amount to large absolute differences between the richest and poorest. Why income is differently associated with feelings versus life evaluations is an important topic for the next decade of research.

Recommended Reading

Diener, E., & Biswas-Diener, R. (2002). Will money increase subjective well-being? *Social Indicators Research*, 57, 119-169.

Diener, E., Kahneman, D., Tov, W., & Arora, R. (2010). Income's association with judgments of life versus feelings. In E. Diener, J. Helliwell, & D. Kahneman (Eds.), *International Differences in Well-Being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Diener, E., Lucas, R., Schimmack, & Helliwell, J. (2009). *Well-Being for Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Diener, E., Weiting, N., Harter, J., & Arora, R. (2010). Economic and social-psychological prosperity are associated with different forms of well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, in press.

Easterlin, R. A. (1974). Does economic growth improve the human lot? Some empirical evidence. In P. A. David & M. W. Reder (Eds.), *Nations and households in economic growth*. New York: Academic Press.

Easterlin, R.A. (2005). Feeding the illusion of growth and happiness: A reply to Hagerty and Veenhoven. *Social Indicators Research*, 74, 429-443.

Hagerty, M., & Veenhoven, R. (2003). Wealth and happiness revisited - growing national income does go with greater happiness, *Social Indicators Research*, 64, 1-27.

Inglehart, R., Foa, R., Peterson, C., & Welzel, C. (2008). Development, freedom, and rising happiness: A global perspective (1981-2007). *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 3, 264-285.

Kahneman, D. (1999). Objective happiness. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The Foundations of Hedonic Psychology*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Stevenson, B., & Wolfers, J. (April 15, 2008). Economic growth and subjective well-being: Reassessing the Easterlin Paradox. Working Paper Series. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1121237>

Veenhoven, R., & Hagerty, M. (2006) Rising happiness in nations 1946 - 2004. *Social Indicators Research*, 79, 421-436.

Call For Papers Applied Research in Quality of Life The Official Journal of the International Society for Quality- of-Life Studies

The aim of this journal is to publish conceptual, methodological and empirical papers dealing with quality-of-life studies in the applied areas of the natural and social sciences. As the official journal of ISQOLS, it is designed to attract papers that have some direct implications for or impact on practical applications of research on the quality-of-life. We welcome papers crafted from interdisciplinary, inter-professional and international perspectives. This research should guide decision making in a variety of professions, industries, nonprofit, and government sectors such as healthcare, travel and tourism, marketing, corporate management, community planning, social work, public administration, human resource management, among others. The goal is to help decision makers apply performance measures and outcome assessment techniques based on concepts such as well-being, human satisfaction, human development, happiness, wellness and quality of life. The Editorial Review Board is divided into specific sections indicating the broad scope of practice covered by the journal, and the section editors are distinguished scholars from many countries across the globe.

Authors interested in submitting manuscripts for publication should consult the website <http://ariq.edmgr.com>. Manuscripts should be directed to the relevant Section Editor of the Editorial Review Board. If an appropriate Section Editor can not be identified, direct the manuscript to the current Editor in Chief, Alex Michalos.

MEASURING PROGRESS: LET'S ALL BE SERIOUS

Mahar Mangahas

Social Weather Stations, The Philippines

[Busan, Republic of Korea] This week's mammoth World Forum on "Statistics, Knowledge, Policy" -- with a thousand participants, the largest convention ever held here, said the mayor -- was a high-powered effort by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to push the principle that progress should be measured meaningfully, i.e., NOT IN TERMS OF MERE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

At the opening, the audience, consisting heavily of officials who produce conventional economic statistics (one was Dr. Romulo "Romy" Virola of the National Statistics Coordinating Board), heard a congratulatory speech from no less than Korean President Myung-Bak Lee, a keynote speech from Slovenian President Danilo Turk, and a welcome address by OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría.

The top draw, Nobel economics winner Joseph Stiglitz, who recently headed a special commission on measuring economic performance and social progress, said: "What we measure affects what we do, and we have been measuring the wrong thing." The Gross National Product (more meaningful to a nation's people, he pointed out, than Gross Domestic Product) only measures market activity, and doesn't even do it well.

When US GNP was rising, it did mean that the average income was rising, but it hid the fact that the median income was falling. In other words, the average was going up on account of increases in the incomes of the rich, and not the incomes of the common people. Surveys of production, which underlie GNP, are more telling of what's happening to the rich; it takes surveys of income to see what's happening to the poor.

GNP reform. Stiglitz favors computing "Green GNP," by making adjustments for the depletion of natural resources used to produce it. He complained that it hasn't been done because research funding was taken away by the US coal lobby. He said that present computation of GNP puts a zero value on carbon, which is foolish.

Stiglitz said that public goods and services provided by the government for free are undervalued in the GNP, because the latter counts only what the government spends

to produce them, not what it would be worth if people had to buy them. And why count expenditures for defense, police or prisons in GNP at all, since they are not final products themselves, but only instrumental for society to produce the final products in peace?

(These are actually very old principles, developed in the so-called "social indicators movement" of the 1970s. Their application in the Philippine context is in my book, *Measuring Philippine Development*, Development Academy of the Philippines, 1976.)

Subjective well-being. Yet the equally-eminent professor Richard Layard, of the Center for Economic Performance of the London School of Economics, insisted that merely patching up the GNP is not enough. In his talk on "Why subjective well-being is the key measure," he proposed adoption of a single over-arching measure that does not use the metric of money. "We can only break away from the GDP stranglehold by doing something different," Layard said. "We should value goods as the people value them, not as we outsiders value them."

Layard's second proposition is that "Happiness alone is self-evidently good." I think he also means "Misery alone is self-evidently bad," since he habitually uses happiness and misery in the same sentence, which is consistent with SWS's measuring self-rated deprivation, rather than self-rated surplus. I find his third proposition, "Satisfaction with life is the most practicable measure of happiness," arguable since there are many, equally-practical, self-rating-style indicators of well-being.

Layard's advice tied in well with the International Well-being Index (IWBI) designed by Prof. Robert Cummins of Deakin University, Australia, who spoke in the same panel. The IWBI, which brings together satisfaction ratings on several separate domains, has been tried out in over 50 countries (including the Philippines, done by SWS pro bono), but is not meant for comparing countries. After all, progress really means improvement over time, not improvement relative to others.

To me, the most impressive actual, not merely recommended, measurement of

progress reported at the forum was that of Statistics Korea, presented by its Commissioner Ms. Insill Yi. She spoke of how Korean GDP per capita had grown by seven times over 1990-2002, and yet those satisfied with their lives fell from 61 percent to 47 percent. She also uses ratings of public trust in government institutions, among other indicators. I think her interesting work, which looks comparable to the current work on a Canadian Index of Welfare, by itself justified holding the OECD forum in Korea.

What now? The OECD is advocating global reforms in the measurement of progress to rescue the credibility of official statistical systems and to improve the quality of political debates and democracy. The OECD itself promises to start using measures of subjective well-being in 2010.

I attended this forum because measuring national progress (though sometimes regress is what emerges from the data) in a meaningful way is precisely the mission of the SWS surveys. SWS not only advocates such reforms, but has operationalized them.

The OECD has no master plan. Each national and international agency is supposed to reform itself. How will they do so? (Where does NSCB go from here, Romy?) Will agencies like the World Bank start accepting data generated by civil society research institutes to fill gaps in official government statistics? Let's all be serious now.

Contact SWS: www.sws.org.ph or mahar.mangahas@sws.org.ph.

COMMENT ON MAHAR MANGAHAS' ARTICLE, THE OECD FORUM, AND THE STIGLITZ REPORT

Alex C. Michalos
Brandon University

I guess I have known Mahar for over 30 years and I have great admiration for his work at the Social Weather Stations. As I recall, at a plenary session at the 9th ISQOLS Conference in Florence last July, he raised a question like "Why would you expect national statistical offices to begin measuring what we are measuring when for all these years we have been measuring things they would not measure?"

In the last two sentences of his Philippine Daily Inquirer article, Mahar returned to this theme, "Will agencies like the World Bank start accepting data generated by civil society research institutes to fill gaps in official government statistics? Let's all be serious now."

I think Mahar's doubts and suspicions are well-founded, but I also think that we have to continue to press national and international agencies to do more. Such agencies are largely creatures of elected governments and tend to be no more progressive than their supporting governments. When the latter are on side, progress can be made toward the development of more comprehensive statistical systems for monitoring and managing the progress of societies, e.g., notice the relative progress made on such systems in Australia and the UK.

When I first got involved in the social indicators movement in the late 1960s, I thought that in 25 years or so we would have some comprehensive social reports. About a decade later the environmental movement took off, and I had to revise my estimated time of arrival by several years.

If one tracks the progress of UN agencies crafting increasingly comprehensive systems for monitoring progress with economic, social and environmental indicators from the Paris Biosphere Conference of 1968 to the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (1972), the UNESCO/UNEP conference in Tbilisi (1977), the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992), and the UN General Assembly resolution of 2002 naming the 2005-2014 period as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, it is clear that there have been and currently are many official agencies focused on such systems. Sustainable development as the UN official documents see it is the umbrella

concept to pull together the diverse activities concerning social, political, economic and environmental progress.

The OECD Progress of Societies initiative should be seen against the broader background of continuous UN activities over 30 years. As well, the Stiglitz Report should be read against those activities. I did not go to the Busan meeting and have not finished reading the Report. I have only just passed the Executive Summary. Here are some highlights, with some comments.

We are told that:

- p.12, "aggregation across dimensions. . . is subordinate to the establishment of a broad statistical system that captures as many of the relevant dimensions as possible". This is like the position of those who developed the Human Development Index and those of us working on the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. We regard the composite index as the door to the system, which is where the main work gets done with detailed linkages, possibilities for interventions, etc.
- p.12, One should "not just measure average levels of well-being...[but] also document the diversity of peoples' experiences."
- p.12, "a good place to start is the measurement of...living standards."
- p.14, We should "broaden income measures to non-market activities...start with information on how people spend their time...take into account the amount of leisure..."
- pp.14-15, Use the "following key dimensions...material living standards, health, education, personal activities including work, political voice and governance, social connections and relationships, environment (present and future conditions), insecurity, of an economic as well as a physical nature". They are not as comprehensive as those proposed for the Canadian Index of Wellbeing, but there is considerable overlap. My guess is that they will put arts, culture and recreation in the "activities" slot. As I have said in many other places, we have considerable liberty in loading general terms with as much as we like.
- p.15, One should "assess inequalities in a comprehensive way".
- p.16, "there are strong demands to de-

velop a single summary measure. Several summary measures of quality of life are possible...average levels of life satisfaction...the Human Development Index". Some of you will recall Mike Hagerty's committee in which we tried without success to get an index that all members of ISQOLS could get behind.

➤ p.16, "Measures of both objective and subjective well-being provide key information about people's quality of life. Statistical offices should incorporate questions to capture people's life evaluations, hedonic experiences and priorities in their own survey"

➤ p.18, "separate sets of physical indicators will be needed to monitor the state of the environment. This is in particular the case when it comes to irreversible and/or discontinuous alterations to the environment". Presumably later they will address the difficult problem on non-substitutability of things like air and water, etc.

➤ p.18, "the commission regards its report as opening a discussion rather than closing it...a global debate around the issues and recommendations raised in this report provides an important venue for a discussion of...what we...care about... At the national level, round-tables should be established...to identify and prioritise those indicators...the commission hopes that this report will provide the impetus not only for this broader discussion, but for on-going research into the development of better metrics..."

It seems to me that the Canadian Index of Wellbeing is another major effort in the world to press forward the kinds of ideas the Commission is talking about. We just have to remember and keep reminding each other that human beings are complex organisms living in very complex social, political, economic and environmental conditions, and that a plausible measure of progress will almost certainly have to be very complex. So it will take time and other resources, and most of all, patience to develop. We should expect progress to be slow, but help to keep it moving.

Alex C. Michalos, Ph.D., F.R.S.C.
Brandon University
michalos@brandonu.ca

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE OECD/ISQOLS SATELLITE MEETING HELD IN FLORENCE (JULY 23RD AND 24TH, 2009)

Joe Sirgy

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

I believe that the gist of the presentations and discussion of the satellite meeting related to the development and use of national-level subjective indicators of well-being can best be captured in terms of at least seven theoretical paradigms or major concepts: (1) hedonic psychology, (2) social judgment theory, (3) bottom-up theory, (4) positive/negative affect, (5) social capital, (6) social justice, and (7) functioning..

Hedonic Psychology: The presentation of Arthur Stone and the ensuing discussion focused on conceptualizing and operationalizing measures of subjective well-being using concepts from hedonic psychology. The focal point of this theoretical paradigm is subjective well-being can best be conceptualized in terms of momentary feelings of positive and negative affect captured through a variety of methods such as the immediate sampling method, end-of-day diaries, the recall-of-yesterday method, and the day-reconstruction method. These methodological approaches to capturing subjective well-being were initially suggested by Daniel Kahneman and his work on "objective well-being." Variations of this type of conceptualization and operationalization of subjective well-being are in the form of a semantic differential scales involving a variety of adjectives reflecting bi-polar emotional/affective states. Statistics Netherlands offered an example of this type of measure with a longer time frame (weeks instead of days). Much of the discussion reflected the pros and cons of such an approach to the conceptualization and measurement of subjective well-being.

Social Judgment Theory: There was much discussion of the use of global measures of subjective well-being that focused on life satisfaction. Examples include the Delighted-Terrible Scale (Andrews and Withey), the Cantril Ladder (Bradburn), the Happiness Scale (Veenhoven), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener), and the like. The vast majority of these operationalizations of subjective well-being can be explained using social judgment theory of well-being. This theory posits that people do make judgments about their life overall using some reference (or standard of comparison). For example, Alex Michalos' multiple discrepancies theory

helps us understand how people make these global evaluations about their life using standards such as the ideal life, the deserved life, past life, current life, future life, etc. Heinz-Herbert Noll presented GESIS' measure of global evaluation of life using past, current, and future life as points of reference.

Bottom-up Theory: This theory is also very popular in QOL studies. It underscores the notion that overall global evaluations of life satisfaction are a function of positive and negative affect reflected in various life domains such as family life, social life, leisure life, financial life, community life, spiritual life, and so on. Many of the satellite presentations used bottom-up theory implicitly to describe their measures of subjective well-being. For example, Robert Cummins described his program of research related to the Personal and International Well-Being Index. This system of measures is grounded in bottom-up theory. Similarly, Heinz-Herbert Noll described GESIS' system of measures by showing how his institute measures satisfaction with the various life domains and the perceived importance of these domains. Presentation from Statistics England, Statistics New Zealand, Eurostat, and others used this theoretical paradigm to describe their research. Also a number of presentations from the various statistical agencies focused on specific life domains. For example, Statistics Italy described their elaborate surveys related to sense of safety, social and physical "disorder," victimization, fear of crime, and poverty.

Positive/Negative Affect: There is a research program in QOL studies that demonstrates that the determinants of positive affect of well-being may be different from the determinants of negative affect. Therefore, positive affect should be captured differently from negative affect (i.e., positive and negative affect are two separate dimensions and not polar opposites of the same dimension). Much research by Diener and his colleagues have demonstrated this notion. There was discussion among the presenters and the audience about the need to capture positive affect independently from negative affect. The survey from the U.K. (and the U.K. statistical agencies) clearly highlighted this distinction.

Social Capital: There was some discussion about the fact that social capital (or "relatedness") is more significantly related to subjective well-being than economic indicators (e.g., income, cost of living). This point was well underscored by Mariano Rojas' presentation and his findings pertaining to the "relatedness" construct as being highly applicable to Latin-American countries.

Social Justice: Wolfgang Glatzer complained about how the concept of social justice was not reflected by any of the presentations from both the scholarly community and the various statistical agencies. Much research in objective indicators of well-being carried out by many international agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, and the IMF have focused on understanding well-being disparities between rich and poor countries and male versus females. Some of this work is also reflected in subjective indicators of well-being. The response from the presenters was the fact that much of the work conducted by both public statistical agencies and private polling firms do capture respondents' perceptions of disparity issues. For example, Bob Tortora from Gallup pointed out that the international surveys conducted by Gallup do contain many survey items capturing perceptions of gender disparity, disparity among ethnic groups, and the like.

Functioning: The presentation made by Jennifer Madans from the US National Center for Health Statistics described many of the subjective well-being measures in terms of "functioning." Functioning was distinguished from related health concepts such as self-reported health status and health-related QOL measures. To underscore this notion of functioning, the Budapest Initiative was described and in this context health state was said to be conceptualized and measured in terms of determinants of individual functioning, risk factors related to functioning, disease states that interfere with functioning, use of the healthcare system to enhance functioning, and environmental barriers that deter functioning.

(Continued at bottom of next page.)

Call for Papers

Social Indicators at the XVII. ISA World Congress of Sociology

July 11-17, 2010, Gothenburg, Sweden

The XVII. World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association (ISA), will take place in July 2010 in Gothenburg, Sweden. The overarching theme is "Sociology on the Move". The Research Committee on "Social Indicators" (RC 55) organizes a series of all together 11 sessions addressing various issues of current social indicators and quality of life research. Four of these sessions are joint sessions, organized in close cooperation with other Research Committees:

Session 1 : Social Indicators of Progress in Societies (Organizer: Valerie Moller, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa, v.moller@ru.ac.za)

Session 2: Social Indicators of Subjective Well-Being and Happiness (Organizer: Ruut Veenhoven, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, veenhoven@fsw.eur.nl)

Session 3: Social Indicators of Migration and the Integration of Migrants (Organizer: Rob Bijl, Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP, The Hague, The Netherlands, r.bijl@scp.nl)

Session 4: Reciprocity, Social Ties and Wellbeing: Indicators and Comparative Studies (Organizer: Ming-Chang Tsai, National Taipei University, Taiwan, mtsai@mail.ntpu.edu.tw)

Session 5: Inequality, Insecurity and Well-Being - Indicators and Analyses (Organizer: Christian Suter, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, christian.suter@unine.ch)

Session 6: Social Indicators and Policy Making. (Organizer: Ming-Chang Tsai, National Taipei University, Taiwan, mtsai@mail.ntpu.edu.tw)

Session 7: Social Indicators 'on the Move' (Organizer: Heinz-Herbert Noll, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim, Germany, heinz-herbert.noll@gesis.org)

Joint Session of RC 55 "Social Indicators" and RC 11 "Sociology of Aging": Worlds of Difference in Qualities of Life for Older People Living in Developing and Developed Countries (Organisers: Valerie Moller, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South

(Continued from previous page.)

...Summary of the Discussion of the OECD/ISQOLS ...

Summary: Overall, the satellite meeting was a resounding success. Both scholars and practitioners learned from one another. The practitioners voiced a sentiment to carry the agenda forward and to make every attempt possible to use subjective indicators of well-being if and when possible. Enrico Giovannini expressed the sentiment that such a satellite meeting should be repeated as a complement to the main annual ISQOLS conference. He also announced that he will be stepping down as OECD chief statistician and assuming the chief statistician position in Italy Statistics (a position closer to home). However, he expressed his interest to remain involved with the OECD Global Project as much as possible. The audience wished him well in his new position. Finally, Enrico expressed his many thanks to Filomena Maggino for her extraordinary effort in organizing both ISQOLS Conference and the OECD/ISQOLS satellite meeting. This sentiment was echoed by all of the attendees.

Africa, v.moller@ru.ac.za and Jaco Hoffman, Oxford University, Oxford, United Kingdom, jacobus.hoffman@ageing.ox.ac.uk)

Joint Session of RC 11 "Sociology of Aging" and RC 55 "Social Indicators": Older People's Contributions to Societal Wellbeing (Organizers: Sara Arber, University of Surrey, Guildford, United Kingdom, S.Arber@surrey.ac.uk, and Wolfgang Glatzer, Goethe University, Frankfurt a.M., Germany, Glatzer@soz.uni-frankfurt.de)

Joint Session of RC 55 "Social Indicators" and RC 24 "Environment and Society": Sustainability and Quality of Life: Concordant or Conflicting Goals of Societal Development? (Organizers: Heinz-Herbert Noll, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim, Germany, heinz-herbert.noll@gesis.org and Mercedes Pardo Buendia, University Carlos III of Madrid, Spain, mercedes.pardo@uc3m.es)

Joint Session of RC 55 "Social Indicators" and RC 53 "Sociology of Childhood": Assessing children's quality of life (Organizers: Heinz-Herbert Noll, GESIS - Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences, Mannheim, Germany, heinz-herbert.noll@gesis.org and Doris Bühler-Niederberger, University of Wuppertal, Germany, buehler@uni-wuppertal.de)

A detailed call for papers and more information is available at the Congress-Website: <http://www.isa-Sociology.org/congress2010/rc/rc55.htm>.

Applications should be sent to session organizers. The deadline for submission of abstracts is November 30, 2009.

Heinz-Herbert Noll
heinz-herbert.noll@gesis.org
President of RC 55 and Program Coordinator

**THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR
QUALITY-OF-LIFE STUDIES:
HEADQUARTERS AND WWW HOMEPAGE**

The International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS) was formed in the mid-1990s. The objectives of ISQOLS are: 1) to stimulate interdisciplinary research in quality-of-life (QOL) studies within the managerial (policy), behavioral, social, medical, and environmental sciences; 2) to provide an organization which all academic, business, nonprofit, and government researchers who are interested in QOL studies can coordinate their efforts to advance the knowledge base and to create positive social change; and 3) to encourage closer cooperation among scholars engaged in QOL research to develop better theory, methods, measures, and intervention programs.

The year 2006 membership fees are US\$75 for regular members and \$50 for students or retired persons. Prof. M. JOSEPH SIRGY (Virginia Tech and State University) is Executive Director of ISQOLS. Anyone interested in knowing more about ISQOLS should contact Prof. Sirgy at the central office.

The ISQOLS central office recently moved to new physical and virtual locations. Please note the new addresses:

International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies (ISQOLS)
1800 Kraft Drive, Suite 111
Blacksburg, Virginia 24060-6370, USA

Officetel: (540) 231-5110; fax: (540) 961-4162
E-mail: isqols@vt.edu
Website: www.isqols.org

SINET

Social Indicators Network News

Subscription Information

As a service to the world-wide social indicators community, SINET is issued quarterly (February, May, August, November). Subscribers and network participants are invited to report news of their social indicator activity, research, policy development, etc., to the Editor for publication. Deadlines are the 20th of the month prior to each issue.

Address:

SINET, Kenneth C. Land, Editor,
Department of Sociology, Box 90088,
Duke University, Durham, NC 27708-0088, USA
E-mail: kland@soc.duke.edu
Telephone: 919-660-5615
Fax: 919-660-5623

Subscriptions are on a calendar year basis; annual rates:

Libraries/Institutions US\$26.00

Individual:

US & Canada US\$18.00

All Others US\$20.00

Sorry; credit cards are not accepted. Check must be in US dollars. Payment may be made through a wired money order; check with your financial institution for further information. Advance payments are always welcomed. Call or write for a multiple-year invoice.

Archived issues are available for purchase. Please call or write for prices and details.

SINET

Social Indicators Network News

Kenneth C. Land, Editor
Department of Sociology
Box 90088, Duke University
Durham, NC 27708-0088 USA
151-1057-6936-22940