What?

- Comparative or cross-national aging research is:
  - Investigation in TWO or more societies, cultures or countries compared with respect to the same underlying concepts, units of analysis
  - Intended to explain, compare, contrast, and generalize across population aging experiences.

- Comparative research can be
  - Descriptive
  - Evaluative
  - Analytic

“...The expectation is that the researchers gather data about the object of study within different contexts and, by making comparisons, gain a greater awareness and deeper understanding of social reality”

Hantrais and Managen (1998)
Why and Why Now?

(a) Today

(b) 2050

> 20% of population over age 65
World Population Pyramids 1950-2100

Population by age groups and sex (percentage of total population)

World: 1950

Males
Females

World: 2010

World: 2050

World: 2100

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2011)
Global Population Increase

Projected increase between 2005 and 2030 by age

- 0-64 years
- 65+ years
- 85+ years
- 100+ years

### Speed of Population Aging

**Number of years for population age 65+ to increase from 7% to 14%**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developed Countries</th>
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<th>Developing Countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France (1865-1980)</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>Azerbaijan (2000-2041)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden (1890-1975)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Chile (1998-2025)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia (1938-2011)</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>China (2000-2026)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada (1944-2009)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Tunisia (2008-2032)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland (1966-2013)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Thailand (2003-2025)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK (1930-1975)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Brazil (2011-2032)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain (1947-1992)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Colombia (2017-2037)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There is a need to raise awareness about not only global aging issues but also the importance of rigorous cross-national scientific research and dialogue that will help us address the challenges and opportunities of an aging world.

U.S. National Institutes of Health
1 in every 5 people will be elderly

THINK AGAIN
GLOBAL AGING

GLOBAL AGING
COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON AGING AND THE LIFE COURSE

THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL AGING
In conjunction with the esteemed World Food Prize Symposium
Why: Potential and Promise of Cross-National Research

- Understand global aging in its own right
- Address basic gerontology questions
  - What aspects of aging are universal while other aspects are nationally or culturally specific?
- Compare performance of systems, policies, interventions
- Produce studies that cross traditional social science, biological science, public health boundaries
- Exploit the “natural experiments” in other contexts
- Produce ideas, innovations, “tech transfer”
- Ask and answer “Big Questions”
Why is Comparative Research So Hard to Do?

- Concepts of aging themselves
- Language
- Traditions of theory, methodology, values, even ideology
- Scientific literature – what we read
- Data
- Time and Incentives
- Criticisms, status
- Resources

- Excessively narrow and over simplified?
- Plagued by unique measurement problems?
- Hard to draw causal implications?
Methodological Considerations

- Reliability and quality of data
- Non-equivalence of key concepts – often in variables and measures: ADLs
- Translation problems
- Matching of samples
- Timing of data collection
- Comparability of research instruments
- Harmonization of secondary datasets
Best Practices for International Teams

- Invest time to build common understanding
- Meet face-to-face
- Maximize technology and opportunities for communication
- Assess shared passion and interest in research topic
- Invest in the process of team development
- Have open-mindedness, patience, a sense of humor
- Find a common platform: data, a class to teach, a conference to attend
- Have a goal: a paper to write, a grant to seek, a deadline.
- Have fun.
Key Domains: McDonnell Partnership

- Caregiving
- Work & Retirement
- Economic Security
- Age Friendly Design & Community
- Managing Chronic Conditions
- Social Participation
- Health & Social Service Delivery
- Long-term Care
Examples for Us

WHO Study on global AGEing and adult health (SAGE) collaborating countries

Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), astill

Luxembourg Income Study Working Paper Series

Income Inequalities within Couples in the Czech Republic and European Countries

Martina Mysiková

October 2010
McDonnell Academy Global Energy and Environment Partnership

A CONSORTIUM OF 28 UNIVERSITIES AND CORPORATE PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER IN ENERGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND OPERATIONS

For questions or additional information, please contact administrator.

RESEARCH
- FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES
- EDUCATION
- OPERATIONS
- SYMPOSIA
- CORPORATE SPONSORS
- ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- SEMINARS & MEETINGS
- STUDENT NETWORK

LATEST NEWS

- The 4th MAGEEP symposium which focuses on Abundant, Clean, & Cost-effective Energy Systems for Sustainability is being planned for December 9 - 12, 2012 in Mumbai, India. Click here for additional details.

- IL&FS Endowed Fund for MAGEEP Visiting Scholars created by a donation from IL&FS India. The program will allow for Visiting Scholars to come to WUSTL and for MAGEEP University students to do paid internships at IL&FS India. Click here for more information and application materials.

- The 3rd MAGEEP meeting: Symposium on Global Energy Future held in St. Louis, October 1 - 5, 2010 was a great success with more than 500 attendees. Click here for presentations and other details.

Vision / Mission:
Collectively identify and collaboratively tackle important global energy and environmental challenges in an integrated and holistic manner.
My Hopes For Our Conference

- Get to know each other and our work!
- Identify key domains where we can collaborate on CNAR? Produce collaborative teams and proposals for funding.
- Create a comparative aging data team?
- Create a comparative policy research team?
- See if there is a “Big Think” paper on the challenges of global aging?
- Advise us on programs, web, students, other infrastructure for this initiative.
“the optimum way to develop both the research agenda and the data needed to address the economic and social issues associated with an aging world is through ongoing interaction among multidisciplinary national scientific communities” – National Academy of Sciences
Resources: Examples of Cross-National and National Aging Datasets

- Data sets funded by the National Institute on Aging:
  1. United States: Health and Retirement Study (HRS)
  2. English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)
  4. Mexican Health and Aging Study (MHAS)
  5. Korean Longitudinal Study of Aging
  6. International Database on Aging (involving 227 countries)
  7. International Network for the Demographic Evaluation of Populations and Their Health (INDEPTH, involving 19 developing nations)
  8. Human Mortality Database (involving 28 countries)
  9. World Health Organization (WHO) Study on Global Ageing and Adult Health (SAGE) (involving 6 countries)
  10. Chinese Longitudinal Healthy Longevity Survey
  11. Longitudinal Study of Aging Danish Twins
Resources: Funding Sources

- There are many funding sources available from governments, foundations, and corporations. Within the United States, a few funding opportunities are:

  - National Science Foundation: Catalyzing New International Collaborations (CNIC)
  - NIH/NIA: Regional and International Differences in Health and Longevity at Older Ages (R01, R21)
  - Fogarty International Center
  - WU Global Aging Initiative Seed Funding