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Social Quality

A new conceptual framework in promoting
quality of life of older people

Talks by experts, e.g. Professor Alan
Walker from UK, from Japan, Malaysia &
Indonesia.

Hong Kong: a small start.

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The Basic Concept of Social Quality

- The term social quality provides a
wider and multidimensional approach
to the **quality of life** than does **poverty**
or **social exclusion** that up to now
have been the main quality-of-life
measures used by the European
Union and European governments.

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Definition of Social Quality

The extent to which people are able to
participate in the social, economic and
cultural life of their communities under
conditions which enhance their well-being
and individual potential

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The Basic Concept of Social Quality

- The social quality perspective views people as '*social beings*'.
- People interact with each other for their *self-realisation* in the context of the formation of collective identities such as families, communities and other groups (van der Maesen, 2002).
- It is intended to be comprehensive and to encompass both objective and subjective interpretations.

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Four basic domains

1. Social-economic security
2. Social inclusion
3. Social cohesion
4. Social empowerment

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The Basic Concept of Social Quality

Beck et al., (1997a) identified four elements of social quality each of which are conceptualised as a continuum:

1. *Socio-economic security – insecurity*;
2. *Social inclusion – exclusion*: inclusion in political, economic and social systems
3. *Social cohesion – anomie*: live in communities characterised by a sufficient level of cohesion
4. *Empowerment – disempowerment*. To empower to take advantage of opportunities.

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1. Socio-economic security

- Socio-economic security – insecurity refers to the way the essential needs of citizens with respect to their daily existence are addressed by the different systems and structures responsible for welfare provisions.

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Socio-economic security



- An acceptable minimum of socio-economic security provides protection against poverty, unemployment, ill-health and other forms of material deprivation.
- Thus, macro level domains for this element will include: material security; employment security; housing security; and maintenance of health.

2. Social inclusion



- Social inclusion – exclusion is connected with the principles of equality and equity and the structural causes of their existence.
- Inclusion in the social security system; labour market inclusion; housing market inclusion; health service coverage.
- Other social inclusion domains are: inclusion in the education system and services; political inclusion; inclusion in community services; and social status inclusion.

3. Social cohesion



- Social cohesion – anomie concerns the processes that create, defend or demolish **social networks** and the social infrastructures underpinning these networks. An adequate level of social cohesion is one which enables citizens 'to exist as real human subjects, as social beings' (Beck et al. 1997b p 284).

Social cohesion



- On the other hand, **anomie** is fostered by regional disparities, the suppression of minorities, unequal access to public goods and services and an unequal sharing of economic burdens.
- Social cohesion is related to both **social capital** (World Bank, 1998) and **social integration** (Klitgaard and Fedderke, 1995).
- Its domains include: economic cohesion; social status cohesion; political cohesion; public safety; and altruism.

4. Social empowerment

- Domains of empowerment include: social and cultural empowerment; political empowerment; economic empowerment; and social psychological empowerment.
- Beak et al. (1997b: 290) refer to empowerment as 'developing the competence of citizens in order to participate in processes determining daily life'.

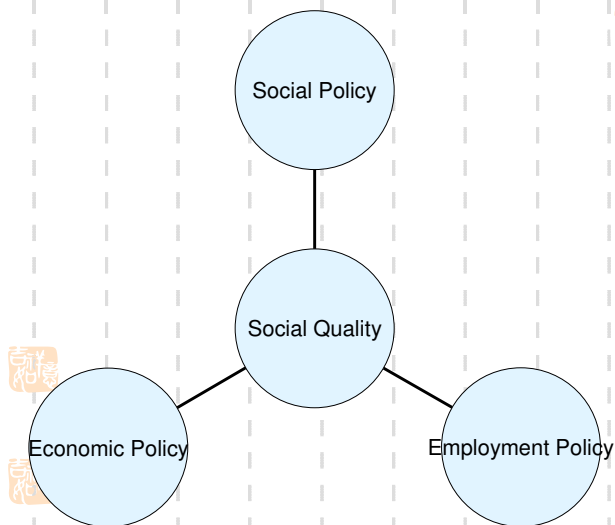
Social Quality Factors

Constitutional	Conditional	Normative
Personal security	Social economic security	Social justice
Social recognition	Social inclusion	solidarity
Social responsiveness	Social cohesion	Human dignity
Personal capacity	Social empowerment	Democratic citizenship

Social Quality

The bases for participation in later life:

- Social-economic security: family, society
- Social inclusion: community, society
- Social cohesion: trust, solidarity, safety
- Social empowerment: support network, enabling services



Draft EU Policy Triangle

Conditions for SQ



	Societal Development	Biographical Development
System, institutions & organization	Social-economic security	Social inclusion
Community, families & groups	Social cohesion	Social empowerment

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Quality Constructs



1. Quality of service: Total Quality Management
2. Quality of life: level of living, basic needs.
3. Quality of society: social cohesion, human development
4. Social quality

Increasing coverage on the 4 domains of SQ starting with QoL, QoS.

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Social Quality in Asia



- Human Welfare and Public Policy under Social Justice, Equity and Democratic Relationship, Chiba University, Tokyo, March 2006.
- SQ & Sustainable Welfare Societies, Taiwan National University, Taiwan, March 2007
- Network of Asian Universities
- Collaboration with UNESCAP
- International Journal of Social Quality
- Europe/Asia Collaboration on human security

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Studies adopting social quality



- Increasing no. of studies adopting Social Quality in research studies in the Region
- In Taiwan: Social Economic Security of SQ with Feminist Thinking on Elderly Women by Lillian Lih Rung Wang.

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Thank You