

tion has not been safely ruled out. Hence DHEA-S level may prove a gender dependent predictor of diseases associated with senescence which may also originate in a stressful upbringing, and it may be associated with unusual physical or sexual stress and thyroid dysfunction leading to various physiological correlates like circulating

levels of hormones from adrenal, gonadal and other related hormone. Authors demonstrate that DHEA-S-cortisol ratio may prove an index to assess the degree to which an individual is buffered against the negative effects of stress in aging which could be overcome by raised level of DHEA-S.

PAPER SESSION 'GERONTECHNOLOGY IN THE ASIAN REGION'; CHAIR: NATALIA BOBKO (UKRAINE)

Older Chinese in the information age: The Oldkids Internet community in Shanghai, China

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Just as in many other countries across the globe, the Chinese population is aging, and this trend is coincident with the dramatic growth of Internet use nationwide. Previously, the only information about the use of the Internet by older Chinese came from survey studies targeted at all age groups, which have indicated that Internet adoption by older Chinese has greatly lagged behind other age groups. However, quantitative data can reveal little about what the Internet really means to older Chinese, and how older Chinese make sense of the technology in their everyday lives. In this paper, I first introduce Chinese national and regional

statistical data to show the aging of the population, the growth of the Internet, and the digital divide between older and younger generations in China in general and Shanghai in particular. Next, I report the results of an ethnographic study conducted in Shanghai, China in 2004. Through in-depth interviewing and participant observation, I explore how older Shanghainese perceive and use the Internet. The data shows that many older Chinese are deeply dedicated to using the Internet, and that the technology has positively influenced their lives in a number of interesting and unexpected ways.

Innovative technology implications for elderly: A challenge for Pearl River Delta, China

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Pearl River Delta is one of the most technologically developed regions in China. As for most of the developed areas, elderly population in the region is also increasing rapidly. Information technologies are transforming the ways in which people relate to their world and to each other. Almost every business believes it needs a computing network presence. Government services are rapidly expanding on the internet. However, the gerontological community in the region is noticeable by

its absence from most policy discussions about information technology. One of the main objectives of this research is to improve the quality of life among elders and their caregivers through utilization of technology. This paper begins with a brief aging challenge facing from a regional prospective, continues to exam the development of technological innovation strategy that will become important solutions and concludes with suggestions for potential cooperation between cities.

Mixing national dollars and time dollars for a continuum of care for the elderly in Taiwan

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A feasible project for elderly long-term care cannot solely rely on the public sector on government's means, especially for a society that is not rich before aging. In a civic society of moderate prosperity like Taiwan, where non-for-profit organization popping up all over places, substantial wealth in terms of financial and human resources is vested in the fabrics of society. In order to tap into this wealth, an ingenious plan based on a mix of public and private efforts must be created. A time bank that keeps record of the volunteer's

service time is something that can play a major role in creating such a project. The time bank, which is under development in Taiwan, will be conducive to activating the voluntarism in the community and complementing the public purse for a sustainable LTC system, matching professional and volunteer services. We shall take inventory in the strengths and weaknesses of Taiwan in the provision of LTC, and then recommend a time bank system that can aid to the creation of a feasible long-term care plan.

Housing planning for old age amongst civil servants in Malaysia

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Post independence housing policies in Malaysia have resulted in high ownership rate especially among the civil servants. Findings indicated that home owners were better off, had more floor plan and were more satisfied with their house than those in rented accommodation. Due to changing family traditions and socio-economic changes, the residential choices of older people are also in transition. This study investigated the preference of housing type, location and living arrangement in old age for Malaysian civil servants. The sample consists of 1,402 civil servants identified through stratified random sampling in four ministries. The results showed that a majority of the

respondents are in possession of good quality housing with an average bedroom number of three, reflecting a reasonable number to meet their household needs (5 to 6 members). More than two-third of the respondents plan to stay in their present house upon retirement, an indication for ageing-in-place preferences and highlighting the importance of home modification for an all age-friendly environment. Most of the respondents plan to stay with their spouse in retirement (94%). Further analysis is needed to determine the factors that contribute to future housing choices among the respondents and its implications for future housing policies in Malaysia.

Ageing in place: Towards an ergonomically designed home environment for older Malaysians

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The study of home environment is a domain within the field of environmental gerontology that addresses issues related to ageing in place. Ageing in place is one of the highest priorities of the elderly and those who wish to do so should be enabled to remain in their own home as long as possible. An ergonomic approach to its design would improve the relationship between the elderly user and his/her environment, thus encouraging ageing in place. The main objective of the paper is to describe the difficulties faced by older Malaysians in their present home and develop design guidelines for an elderly friendly home environment based on the

data collected. A total of 386 respondents currently residing in five urban locations were interviewed, mostly pertaining to factors associated with problems faced in their home. Six areas were investigated to identify barriers that impede the performance of basic daily living for the respondents. Recommended adjustments were made to improve comfort and safety of the elderly as the basic tenet of the research is to put centre stage the idea of optimizing the person-environment interaction of the older person, linking gerontechnology and ergonomics in supporting the older Malaysians to age in place.

Quality of life of the elderly in Bangladesh: Evidence from a micro study

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Despite its rich cultural, social, ethnic, and religious diversity, Bangladesh is a victim of overpopulation, frequent natural disasters, continuing poverty and socio-political unrests. Albeit aging issue in Bangladesh had not been major problem until recently, it now has emerged as a problem of enormous dimensions to merit serious attention since every year, some 0.1 million new elderly is entered into the group of senior citizens. This study, which is the first of its kind, endeavours to examine the quality of life of Bangladeshi elderly. Their overall life satisfaction and satisfaction towards the 17 pre-identified domains of life are evaluated using a 5-

point Likert scale and based on findings drawn from in-depth interviews of 100 elderly aged 55 years and above, 50 from each gender and rural and urban settings. The study reveals that Bangladeshi elderly are generally dissatisfied with their quality of life, which is significantly influenced by two demographic variables, educational level and monthly income. Rural elderly women are particularly vulnerable with basic needs remaining unsatisfied in many cases. Except for family ties, the elderly are not satisfied with any aspects of life. The findings of this study manifest the need for immediate attention of the policymakers.