

# WELL-BEING OF ELDERLY PEOPLE: APPRAISAL OF THE PAST IN THE PROCESS OF COPING

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## 1 STARTING QUESTION

The interest of this project is to explain differences in the level of **well-being** among older people through **retrospective perceptions** of their life course and the **resources** they have.

## 2 STATE OF ART

- Although elderly people are faced with more health problems and restrictions of autonomy, their levels of **life satisfaction** are comparable or higher than those of younger people (Berg et al., 2006). Consequently life satisfaction is a central dimension in the process of coping for maintenance of well-being in old age (Ryff, 1999).

- In the aging process the **meaning we give to the life course** has a great importance. This process is also supported by temporal comparison (Spini et al. 2007). According to the appraisal theory people react in different ways to the same or similar event according to the perception of the situation.

- In my knowledge there is not literature on **life calendars** that use retrospective perception to explain the current well-being. In **models on coping and stress**, the theoretical elements that are often mobilized are resources, events and well-being (Ensel & Lin, 1991). What is missing in these models, and what is innovative in this project, is the introduction of perception of past events.

## 3 HYPOTHESES

- Current individual and social resources influences the perception of the past events and periods.
- The retrospective perception of the life course influence the relation between past events and current well-being.

## 4 DATA

### • Survey

–“Vivre / Leben / Vivere”  
(LIVES, IP13, PI: Michel Oris)  
self-assessed, face-to-face  
questionnaire and life calendar  
SHARE - Survey of Health, Ageing  
and Retirement in Europe.  
SHARELIFE (N=1296), Swiss data set,  
life calendar

Self-Assessed Questionnaire



### • Dependent Variable: well-being

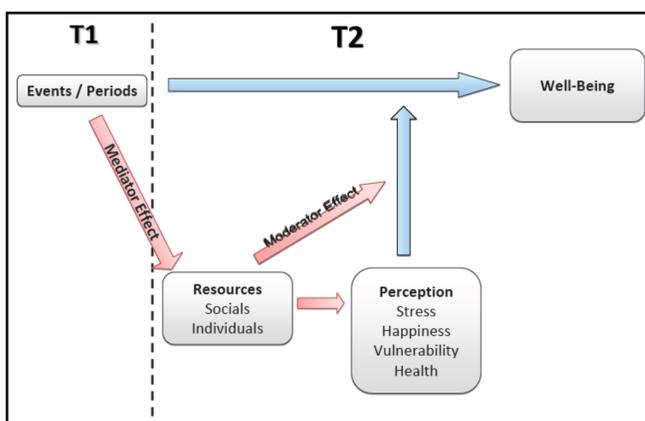
The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) (Diener et al. 1985)  
Self-Assessing Depression Scale (SADS, Wang, Treul, & Alverno, 1975)

- **System of resources:** the whole set of individual (psychological and physical) and socio-structural (socioeconomic, family, and relational) means people have and that define individual situations or states at a given moment of life (Lalive d'Epinau et al., 1983).

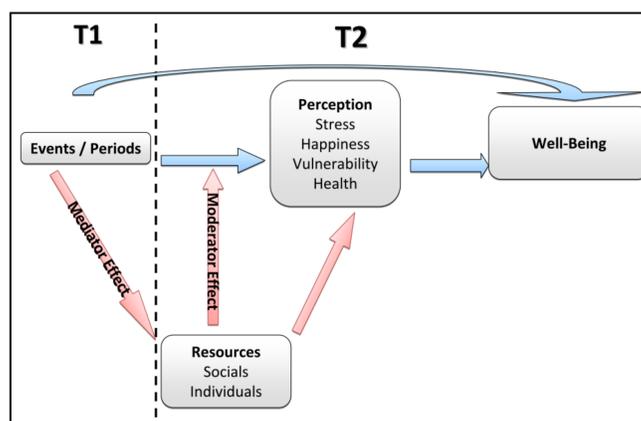
### • Indicators of retrospective perception:

Année	Age	Residence	Famille / couple	Activité	Santé	Nationalité	Age	Année
1941	0	Udine/Italie				Italien	0	1941
1942	1						1	1942
1943	2						2	1943
1944	3		Nécess. frère				3	1944
1945	4						4	1945
1946	5		Nécess. sœur				5	1946
1947	6			Ecole oblig.			6	1947
1948	7						7	1948
1949	8						8	1949
1950	9						9	1950
1951	10						10	1951
1952	11						11	1952
1953	12						12	1953
1954	13						13	1954
1955	14		Décès père	Apprentissage			14	1955
1956	15						15	1956
1957	16						16	1957
1958	17						17	1958
1959	18		Rencontre Marie				18	1959
1960	19						19	1960
1961	20		Mariage				20	1961
1962	21	Carouge, GE		Maison	100	Permis saisonnier	21	1962
1963	22		Nécess. 2 <sup>ème</sup> fille				22	1963
1964	23						23	1964
1965	24	Genève					24	1965
1966	25		Nécess. fils				25	1966
1967	26					Permis D	26	1967
1968	27		Regroupement familial				27	1968

## The Moderator Effect of Perception



## The Mediator Effect of Perception



## 5 ANALYSES AND MODELS

- Modelling the heterogeneity of subjective perceptions: “**perception trajectories**”. Frequency, Duration, Timing, Sequence, Time
- Systems of resources:** how resources inequalities are related with the life course perception (mediation and moderation) ?
- To evaluate the **moderator and mediator effect** of “perception trajectories” on well-being

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Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49, 71- 75.

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