



Developmental Regulation Across the Life Span



Jutta Heckhausen,
University of California, Irvine
CADS collaborator

CADS Project Collaborations

Individual and Social Resources
for Coping with Social Change
PI: Rainer Silbereisen

Treatment Decisions and
Change of Life Plans in Elderly
Cancer Patients
PI: Rainer Silbereisen & Martin
Pinquart

Affective Influences on Risk-
Decision-Making
with Rainer Silbereisen &
Claudia Haase

Research Agenda

My research addresses motivational processes involved in development across the life span. In particular, my colleagues, students and I study the way in which individuals at different points in the life span try to control their own development. My research targets important transitions in the life course, such as the transition associated with the "biological clock" in midlife, the transition from school to work, from school to college, and from junior college to 4-year college, as well as changes associated with illness, disability, and rehabilitation throughout adulthood and old age. I am intrigued by the ability of people at all ages during the life span to adapt to and make the most of these changes. In this context, I investigate individual differences that lead some to loss and despair and others along adaptive paths to successful development and aging. This research interest includes the early development of individual differences in motives and goals, as well as early precursors of self-regulatory strategies when engaging with and disengaging from goals. Our current empirical focus is on the transition from school to work and from school to college under different societal conditions in the United States and Germany and in different social, cultural, and ethnic groups. We also study academic motivation, control striving, thriving and failing, the effectiveness of motivation and control-related interventions in college students, and the role of affect in goal engagement and disengagement. Several collaborative research projects address motivation and control behavior under conditions of social change, in chronically ill and/or disabled adults, the role of social relationships in developmental regulation, and affect regulation involved in adolescent decision making.

Who is Jutta Heckhausen?

I grew up in Germany and did my graduate work and Ph.D. at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. In 1984, I joined the Center for Life-Span Psychology at the Max-Planck-Institute for Human Development in Berlin. In the 1980s and 90s, I expanded my research area to include development in adulthood and old age, formulated the life-span theory of control with my collaborator Richard Schulz, Ph.D., and launched a research program to test its propositions and applicability to developmental regulation in adulthood. In 1995/96, I was a fellow at the Center for Social and Behavioral Science at Stanford. In 2000, I joined the Department of Psychology and Social Behavior at the University of California, Irvine and constituted the research laboratory on Life-Span Development and Motivation. I am a CADS collaborator, have spent a sabbatical at the CADS in 2006, and am involved in mentoring graduate students at the CADS.

Selected Publications

Heckhausen, J. & Heckhausen, H. (in press). *Motivation and action*. New York, NJ: Cambridge University Press.

Heckhausen, J., Wrosch, C., & Fleeson, W. (2001). Developmental regulation before and after a developmental deadline: The sample case of "biological clock" for child-bearing. *Psychology and Aging, 16*, 400-413.

Heckhausen, J., & Schulz, R. (1995). A life-span theory of control. *Psychological Review, 102*, 284-304.

CADS collaborator: Jutta Heckhausen, University of California, Irvine