

Qualitative Studies: Call for papers

Caring About Elderly Care

<http://ojs.statsbiblioteket.dk/index.php/qual/index>

Elderly care is low on status and high on urgency. Demographic projections predict an ageing population that faces multiple morbidities and thus more varied and extended care needs. This demographic shift is a matter of global concern, and one that nations in the Global North are ill equipped to address (Rouzet et al., 2019). However, many countries around the globe, including those who mainly rely on the family as care provider, are witnessing changes in intergenerational relationships affecting the nature and practices of elderly care (Gangopadhyay, 2021). Even in countries where families will probably remain the primary provider of elderly care, societal changes such as migration, urbanization, HIV/AIDS and enduring poverty will mean that support from governments and civil society organizations is increasingly necessary (Adamek, Chane, & Kotecho, 2020).

Care for elderly people follows various paths across societies (Keisu, Öhman, & Enberg, 2016). In Scandinavia, from where this call for papers is issued, it is almost a given that elderly care refers to professional treatment, while, at the same time, elderly care workers occupy a subordinate position in several hierarchies: a) a gender hierarchy in which care work is associated with unpaid work performed by women in the home (Høst & Larsen, 2018); b) a professional hierarchy in which care workers are positioned below nurses and doctors; and c) a 'dirt' hierarchy where work with the body and its maintenance or decay falls below work with tools (Liveng, 2007). The technical and medical aspects of care have been elevated, and reforms have been implemented to improve quality and efficiency while simultaneously changing the notion of care work from treating illness towards rehabilitation (Oeseburg, Hilberts & Roodbol, 2015). Despite these tensions and changes, care workers report that they find their work meaningful and rewarding (Colombo et al., 2011).

Elderly care is also embedded in ethical and political/philosophical bodies of literature, and various scholars have shown the complexity of the word 'care'. Mol (2008) suggested a 'logic of care' involving ambivalences, disagreements, insecurity, misunderstandings and conflicts. Waerness (1984) suggested a 'rationality of caring', arguing that we must pay attention to the specific qualities inherent in caregiving work. The rationality of caring is different

from scientific rationality which aims at controlling the environment, she argues. Caring addresses the relations between people and includes a range of human experiences that have to do with feeling concern for and taking care of other people's well-being. Defining care in a political sense, as an ideal for democracy, Tronto (2001) refers to care as everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our 'world'.

Contributions may draw on these or other bodies of work. Most importantly, we encourage fresh perspectives, curious questions and careful investigations and analyses of the notion of care and what care for the elderly means, how it is practised and what might be the future of elderly care. Our aspiration is to put together a collection of papers that link 'global care' as a (bio)political and democratic term to 'local care' as an everyday practice of caregivers (paid and unpaid, volunteer and non-volunteer) and care receivers, and the political, societal and ethical aspects of organizing, practising and researching elderly care. In this vein, we also invite methodological reflections on researcher stance and how to represent elderly care research.

Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- What constitutes 'good' elderly care? Is the concept of 'quality' relevant to elderly care, in which way, and what alternatives might there be?
- How is elderly care education and training organized and practised, and what are the consequences of professionalization and institutionalization of elderly care?
- How do elderly care practices reflect, respond to, incorporate or resist political and socioeconomic trends?
- What can we learn from cross-national comparative studies, are the Global South-North and East-West false or unproductive dichotomies, and what alternatives might inform comparative research designs?
- How did/does the COVID19 pandemic influence elderly care in specific contexts?
- What does it mean to give and receive care? Is care provided, created, co-created or something else, and what do these or other care-verbs entail?
- Which initiatives (micro or macro) contribute to the acknowledgement of care work?
- In which ways do elderly care practices reflect the ethics, values and organization of specific societies?
- How do we as researchers study and write about elderly care *with care*?

Abstracts

Please send an abstract to cw@ikp.aau.dk before 1st November 2022, comprising a title and a brief text (max 1200 characters incl. spaces) sketching the idea and ambition of the contribution.

Contributions must be in English.

Questions can be sent to Charlotte Wegener: cw@ikp.aau.dk or Britta Møller britta@ikl.aau.dk

Important dates

1st November 2022: Abstracts submitted to the editors

1st December 2022: Contributors invited to write a full paper

1st May 2023: Manuscripts submitted to the editors and subjected to peer review

1st September 2023: Contributors receive peer reviews

1st November 2023: Deadline for submission of revised and finalized manuscripts

1st December 2023: Special issue published

References

- Adamek, M. E., Chane, S., & Kotecho, M. G. (2020). Family and kin care of elders in sub-Saharan Africa. In P. Maharaj (Ed.), *Health and Care in Old Age in Africa* (pp. 61-77). Routledge.
- Colombo, F., et al. (2011). Help Wanted? Providing and Paying for Long-Term Care. OECD Health Policy Studies, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264097759-en>
- Gangopadhyay, J. (2021). Ageing across the globe and policy implications. In *Culture, Context and Aging of Older Indians: Narratives from India and Beyond* (pp. 117-132). Springer Singapore.
- Høst, H., & Larsen, L. (2018). Vocational education for health care workers in the Nordic countries compared. In C.H. Jørgensen, O.J. Olsen & D.P. Thunqvist (Eds.), *Vocational Education in the Nordic Countries: Learning from Diversity* (pp. 118–135). Routledge.

- Keisu, B., Öhman, A., & Enberg, B. (2016). What is a good workplace? Tracing the logics of NPM among managers and professionals in Swedish elderly care. *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies*, 6(1): 27.
- Liveng, A. (2007). *Omsorgsarbejde, subjektivitet og læring: Social-og sundhedshjælperelvers orienteringer mod omsorgsarbejdet og deres møde med arbejdets læringsrum* [Doctoral dissertation]. Roskilde University, Psychology & Educational Studies.
- Mol, A. (2008). *The Logic of Care: Health and the Problem of Patient Choice*. Routledge.
- Oeseburg, B., Hilberts, R., Roodbol, P. F. (2015). Essential competencies for the education of nursing assistants and care helpers in elderly care. *Nurse Education Today*, 35(10): e32-e35.
- Rouzet, D., Sánchez, A. C., Renault, T., & Roehn, O. (2019). *Fiscal Challenges and Inclusive Growth in Ageing Societies*. OECD Publishing.
- Tronto, J.C. (2001). An ethic of care. In Holstein M and Mitzen P (Eds.), *Ethics in Community-Based Elder Care* (pp. 60-68). Springer Publishing Company.
- Vabø, M., & Szebehely, M. (2012). A caring state for all people? In A. Anttonen, L. Häikiö, & K. Stefánsson (Eds.), *Welfare State, Universalism and Diversity* (pp. 121–143). Edward Elgar.
- Waerness, K. (1984). The rationality of caring. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 5(2): 185-211.