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ABSTRACT 227

Open Access Web-Based Data and Analysis Software: Data Resources that Facilitate the Study of the Aging in Complex Societies

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Gerontology, Education, Data Resources

The availability and application of secondary data on aging for research, classroom instruction and policy development has grown tremendously. With the rise of the Internet the costs of sharing data and information have declined dramatically; changing secondary data from a commodity to a public good to be shared in a manner enhances our ability to engage in cross-national research. While the costs of sharing data have declined across time, the costs associated with collaboration and cross organization research and training remain high. Inefficiencies include the costs of travel, replication of effort, incompatible analysis platforms and the inability to replicate findings between collaborative partners.

The NACDA Data Archive preserves and distributes over 1,600 unique studies that address issues of aging and health with a growing focus on aging in Asia and the Pacific Rim.

The NACDA Archive performs three central functions:

- 1) Acquires and preserves data sets of scientific importance to gerontological research,
- 2) Distributes data and documents in a manner that makes their use easy and cost effective,
- 3) Contributes to the open sharing of gerontological data.

This presentation will discuss how NACDA seeks to increase its capacity to effectively share its data and tools among international researcher. NACDA, based in the University of Michigan in the United States has developed a set of web-based analysis and educational tools that allow for more efficient use of secondary data for teaching and research. These tools allow researchers to access, subset and analyze data regardless of their physical location, the only requirement is an internet connection. The systems are freely available to all members of the worldwide research community and exist to encourage teaching and the collaboration of researchers across national boundaries. The paper will present applications of these tools for collaborative research, on-line education, long distance teaching and classroom laboratory situations.