

## Life Course

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The life course points to an institutionalised construction of (culturally defined) patterns of 'female' or 'male' (normal) lives.

In the context of late modernity, in which life course transitions increase, notions of life course normality become more and more fictitious. Thus, life course research increasingly has to consider both stability and change in lives as they unfold across time and generations and in historical, social, and cultural contexts. It has to reflect upon gendered demands and challenges to understanding the forces and experiences that shape human development. The life course perspective includes all stages of the life course recognizing that developmental growth continues through adulthood into old age. It therefore suggests a holistic approach promoting an ecological model, placing families and individuals in the context of historical, demographic, and social change, as well as a multidisciplinary focus. Research topics are long-term outcomes of early experiences (e.g. health; economic deprivation); development in the context of historical, demographic, and social change; life course transitions in areas such as family, work, gender relationships, or health; longitudinal assessment of the impact of social policy on these transitions. (BS)

### References:

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