

Senior Fellowship for Dr. Annabella Osei-Tutu: "Is it well with my soul? Effects of contemporary African religious practices on well-being"

Initiative: Wissen für morgen – Kooperative Forschungsvorhaben im subsaharischen Afrika

Ausschreibung: Postdoctoral Fellowships Social Sciences

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Promotion of well-being and healthy lives is the third goal of the United Nations Organization Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) and as such well-being has become a major concern among national leaders and policymakers. We adopt a broad approach to well-being that encompasses subjective, material, relational as well as spiritual/religious dimensions of social and psychological functioning associated with living a fulfilled life. Critics have noted that hegemonic conceptions of well-being are rooted in the modern individualist models of person associated with WEIRD - western, educated, industrialized, rich, democratic - settings. They have proposed that these hegemonic conceptions do not resonate with the more relational understandings of being and well-being that are prominent in many non-WEIRD settings. In this regard, critics have highlighted the need to rethink current understandings of well-being especially within contexts of embeddedness (such as found in West Africa) and in developing countries. The project is unique as it illuminates another source of variation in conceptions of well-being: religious ideology and practice. Religious organizations are vibrant in West Africa. They function as 'total institutions' and exercise a tangible influence on individuals and societies. The project will contribute towards a better understanding of the religion-society dynamics. It will document variations of well-being that might be important to consider in social and development policy framing. Findings will advance the global discourse on how religious practices influence well-being. Further, the project will critique notions of well-being in mainstream scientific research in the West to include conceptions held in situations of embeddedness in West Africa which are often not captured.

Projektbeteiligte

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Cultural Models of Well-Being Implicit in Four Ghanaian Languages