

Dear colleagues of ISQOLS,

Please find attached some notes on my curriculum for my candidature as Vicepresident for Programs.

I include as an introduction of myself some information I present for the Member Highlights some months ago.

At the bottom of the page, I include my Google Scholar webpage where you can see my research results on quality of life.

I am at your disposal if you need further information on my motivations or my achievements.

Thanks. With best wishes,

Jorge

1. First, list your current professional title. Second, describe your background, experience, and research as it relates to Quality-of-life studies. Feel free to describe this in detail.

My name is Jorge Guardiola, I am an economist and an Associate Professor in the Universidad de Granada, Spain. At the moment, I teach economics to social workers, politics and sociologist students, and previously I taught in other faculties such as Philosophy, Education and Environment. I like to teach to other disciplines to learn more on Economics from the different perceptions and background of student.

In my early years of study, my research field was about basic needs such as lack of food-hunger (my PhD) and water access. After my PhD, I felt I needed to enlarge my study of basic needs to a holistic understanding of what make people feel good, and I become interested in happiness (see question 2). Right now, it is around 10 years that I have been studying happiness, and I am sure that I could spend 10 more fascinating years in that field as there are still many things to discover. Also, I am honored to be the

head of the local organizing committee of the 2019 ISQOLS conference in Granada, which is an additional motivation for my work.

I obtained my PhD in 2007. Due to economic crisis those were hard times for a Spanish professor to consolidate a career, but little by little I have been able to strengthen it. Actually, at this moment I feel that I am about to reach a peak in my career concerning the requirements the Spanish Government establish to be a “good professor”. That allows me to be more imaginative and to move from the question “how can I do a good paper (to become a “good professor”)?” to the paradigm “how can I research/teach stuff that is useful to society and make me feel happy (to give sense to my work)?”. The former question has been very important in the last years as it permitted me to consolidate my career. But right now the new one is taking a bigger place in my life and in my academics interests. As an answer to the second question, there comes my motivations for research and teaching:

-The connection of sustainability and happiness: The projections, such as the ones made by IPCC, do not shape a very good life for future generations, due to human-driven problems such as climatic change and the loss of biodiversity. An important force to leverage the damage is to act pro-environmentally. I think happiness research gives important clues from the scientific ground to create a more sustainable culture. If being pro-environmental improves happiness and materialism decreases it, then why not being more pro-environmental and less materialistic?

-Happiness and peace: A happy society is a peaceful society. However, not many bridges have been built from happiness research and peace research. Peace research is a very well-established and interdisciplinary field of research. I would like to go deeper in peace research and to create bridges with happiness research. In this vein, I think the teachings by Mahatma Gandhi can also inspire new paradigms in science and in life that can lead to happier and peaceful societies. This could inspire some ethics on happiness (more on question 3).

-Happiness and teaching: I teach Economics, and I really believe that mainstream Economics creates unhappy people. We should change the paradigm that puts profit as an end and people and nature as means and that is omniscient in most of Economics

textbooks. Instead, we should interchange it: People's needs (those that exist now and those that will exist in the future) should be an end and economic sustainability should be a mean. I think we should construct Economics science from this new paradigm.

2. What initially attracted you to the field of quality-of-life studies?

I was working on my thesis in Guatemala. I had to travel to the Altiplano, the poorest region in the country, to make some interviews. We were going to arrive to some villages that were very difficult to arrive. My team and I needed to drive some hours on lousy roads and sometimes do some walk.

The night before I left I had a bad sleep. I felt nervous. Those people I was about to interview were very poor. I was sure they would be so unhappy and miserable. To my surprise, the next two weeks I made the most astounding finding of my research investigation. A finding that would make me reconsider my whole idea of my academic work. The people I met were very poor, but unexpectedly to me, they also were very happy! In fact, most people I interviewed in the Guatemalan Altiplano were much happier and much poorer than me and most of my friends and family.

Back home I needed time to think of what I had experienced. I had so many questions in my mind:

- How was it possible that the people I met were so poor and so happy at the same time?
- What I learnt in the University about Economics was untrue? (happiness (utility) and income go hand by hand).
- Why was I not as much as happy as people from Altiplano if I had much more possibilities than them?

After the lecture of my thesis, I decided to move my academic field of research to happiness studies, and I started to investigate the scientific answers of these questions. I found some clues from the work of Mariano Rojas and I decided to contact him. Mariano helped me very much, giving me great guidance and support for my queries. So I was very lucky for meeting him and I thank him very much for his great heart, his intelligence and his capacity to share with others.

For searching an answer to this queries I also learn a lot from (post)development studies and from grassroot experiences and philosophies, such as indigenous Buen Vivir (good life), Christianity, Buddhism, pacifism (specially Gandhi), and my experience in life.

3. What are some areas of quality-of-life studies you feel are lacking attention? Any advice for future QoL researchers?

I think our efforts as researchers should be guided by the following question:

How can research contribute to make a happier world for the greater number of people (those that exist and those that are to come in the future)?

I think that the best path is to take into account the happiness of the most disadvantages people in the world. That means to address to oppression and exploitation made by people and companies over other people and over nature. The violation of human rights is a subject that in my view is lacking attention in happiness studies and we should put more effort on this.

I think we need more views from philosophy to create a consistent ethics on happiness. Someone can obtain happiness from hurting the neighbor or from helping him/her, but the source of this happiness is completely different according to the social impact. I think more attention should be put on how happiness ways of life can be harmful of good for society, disincentiving the former while fostering the latter in political and educational terms.

4. How long have you been a member of ISQOLS? Why did you choose to be a member of ISQOLS? How has your involvement in ISQOLS impacted your career/research/advancement in your knowledge of QoL studies?

I have been a member for over five years or six, I don't really remember... There was one year in this period when I did not pay my fee –sorry about that.

In the beginning I wanted to be a member because they made a discount for attending the congresses. After some years of enjoyment attending the congresses and knowing ISOQLS, I changed the motivation of my choice: I want to be a member to be part of a community of good researchers.

ISQOLS impacted my work positively from many sides:

- I really enjoy the congresses, I learn a lot and meet people with my same interests.
- I enjoy the webinars: I am able to interact with very inspiring people from my desk.
- I have the honor to organize the 2019 congress. It is a great adventure. I hope to see you all there.
- I met really good people with whom I started to work and become friends.

5. Feel free to include any other important comments or things you'd like to share with the ISQOLS community.

Well, I think it is not an issue that depends on ISQOLS, but in my view it is an important one for young people that starts a career or wants to consolidate it: I think that we give too much importance to the papers. Most of us have no choice if we want to get a job or being taken seriously. I think this is an issue that Universities and rulers in the government should consider: Maybe we are giving in our society too much importance to the publication and dissemination of results and creating too much competence on this. Maybe talent can be proven from other sources.

6. Webpage from Google Scholar

<https://scholar.google.es/citations?user=GwRVIK8AAAAJ&hl=es>