


Establishing the Field of "Dignity Studies": Toward an Interdisciplinary Paradigm of Social Integration Based on the Concept of Dignity

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	Research Area Information	Research Area Number: 23A103 Project Period (FY) : 2023 - 2027 Keywords: human dignity, dignity of life, East Asian concept of dignity, death with dignity, value theory	

Purpose and Background of the Research

● Outline of the Research

The goal of this research area is to **establish "Dignity Studies"** as an **interdisciplinary and international academic platform** for refining the concept of dignity as a new paradigm for social integration.

Stage I: Understanding the issues of contemporary society through the framework of "dignity" and "violation of dignity"

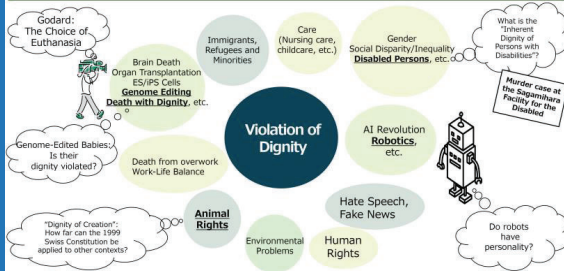


Figure 1: Relationship between Dignity and Social Problems

Stage II: Providing a theoretical framework for diverse academic disciplines through dignity research



Figure 2: Relationship of dignity research to other academic fields

● In response to the destruction and horrors of the two World Wars, the concept of **human dignity** was adopted as an **ideal to promote an international social order** in the *Charter of the United Nations* and other documents in order to prevent the recurrence of such tragedies.

● We **focus on the category of "violation of dignity"** to explore new social issues faced by our contemporary societies including advanced medical care, elderly care, discrimination against women and people with disabilities, poverty and inequality, migration and asylum seekers, hate speech, generative AI and big data.

● We will also address issues such as **"whether non-human beings have dignity"** related to animals, AI/robots, and nature.

● Despite its important role in modern society, the concept of **dignity is not clearly defined**, and there is **no common global understanding of human dignity**.

● By studying the history of the concept of **dignity** and how it has been understood, as well as the internal configuration of **dignity** in non-Western cultures, we will **clarify what dignity means from a cross-cultural perspective**.

● The results of this research will be provided to various academic fields to offer a **comprehensive theoretical framework** for a deeper understanding of the problems of contemporary society and solutions to these problems.

The first and second stages are not comprehensive enough as they both are individual and could be defined as "symptomatic treatment". For this reason, a **new academic discipline called "Dignity studies"** is needed to discuss the various issues surrounding this concept.

Stage III: Establishment of "Dignity Studies", the study of "dignity" as a new philosophy of social integration.

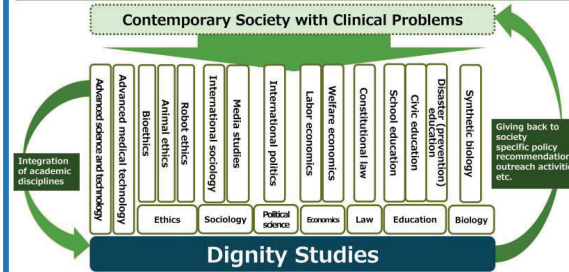


Figure 3: Establishment of Dignity Studies

● Amidst the current COVID-19 pandemic, many people are concerned about the future of society, and there is a growing interest in the question of **dignity**.

● Hence, it is urgent to **establish a new academic field called "Dignity Studies"** in order to solidify the concept of "dignity" as an ideal for new social integration and to implement it in society.

● The project aims to bridge the gap between problems that have been discussed individually by conducting interdisciplinary research from the perspective of dignity and to identify problems that have been overlooked until now. Furthermore, the results of this research will be shared with the public through lectures, school education, and care work.

Expected Research Achievements

- By conducting **theoretical research from the perspective of conceptual history and clinically applied research on dignity** in parallel and in relation to each other, we will **build a comprehensive understanding of "dignity" and at the same time work towards resolving various social challenges**.
- Based on these research results, we will **implement recommendations for school education and civic education**, and carry out a **"social implementation of dignity"**.

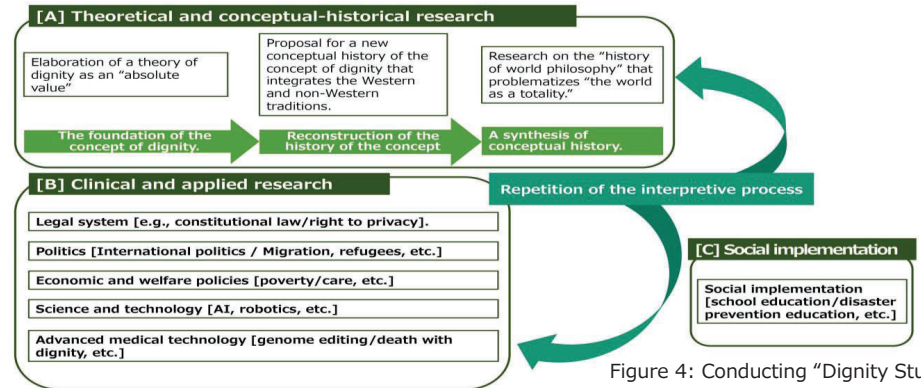





Figure 4: Conducting "Dignity Studies"



**Dissemination of research results**  
Publication of a collection of articles (including texts in English and German) on the thoughts, concrete proposals, and analysis surrounding the concept of "dignity" both in Japan and abroad.



**Foundation of an International Society of Dignity Studies**  
The International Society of Dignity Studies is founded for the international development of Dignity Studies research.



**Social implementation of Dignity**  
We elaborate on proposals for school curricula (including disaster education) and open lectures for the public. We also make concrete proposals for the new academic subject "Public Studies"