

Editorial: Education, Health and Labor Market Outcomes

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About thirty years ago, in November 1986, the World Health Organization (WHO) published the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion*. The charter implied a change of paradigm in industrial countries' health policies – shifting the focus from disease prevention towards a more general health promotion “to enable all people to achieve their fullest health potential” (WHO 1986). Education is considered to be a crucial prerequisite for health. According to the WHO, fostering the development of personal skills and health competencies will reduce health inequalities and will also help individuals realize their health potential.

To date, vast but somewhat inconsistent literature exists that addresses interactions between education, health, and labor market outcomes for many countries (e.g. *Grossman* 2005 and 2015). Due to limited data availability, existing evidence for Germany is less extensive. In October 2015, the research institute WifOR held an interdisciplinary workshop to discuss and consolidate the respective findings from different fields of research. Our special issue of the *German Review of Social Policy* publishes some of the work presented during this workshop.

The main objective of the workshop was to determine how the effects of education and other socio-demographic characteristics on individual health can be measured. In order to establish policies promoting health, mechanisms must be in place to measure their effectiveness. There are two major challenges in the identification and analysis of the respective impacts:

First of all, researchers need to draw on sound methodological approaches to take the many potential interactions into account. This implies restricting the analysis to well-defined channels and using appropriate statistical methods to address causality. Secondly, appropriate data sources from available surveys or administrative claims data need to be found. Our special issue of the *German Review of Social Policy* therefore focusses on methodological approaches as well as on the discussion of available data sources.

The first study, *Gross et al. 2017*, summarizes existing evidence on the impact of education on health measures as well as on labor market outcomes. The study includes empirical evidence from a variety of countries and presents a summary of the insights gained. It covers approaches

and results from the fields of sociology, psychology and economics. A brief section on data sources introduces existing survey data that may be used to gain further insights into the impacts of education on health and labor market outcomes.

Two further studies included in this issue of the *German Review of Social Policy* demonstrate the specific potential of administrative claims data for analyzing interactions of education, health and work capacity. *Mika 2017* uses statutory pension insurance claims data to analyze employment biographies with respect to the risk of early retirement due to reduced earnings capability. *Hofmann/Mühlenweg 2017* more generally discuss the potential of German statutory health insurance claims data in order to depict education gradients on measures of health including work capacity.

Last but not least, the study by *Eberl et al. 2017* addresses informal care – a topic becoming more and more relevant in times of demographic ageing. The study presents first insights based on German data to demonstrate (joint) impacts of caregiving and labor market activities on the caregiver's health.

To sum up, the special issue addresses various approaches and data sources shedding light on interactions of education, health and labor market outcomes. The insights presented also point to the necessity of further research which may help foster positive developments in health promotion in line with the *Ottawa Charta*.

References

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