

Call for Papers

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International comparison of basic education policies

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Ever since the PIAAC data (OECD 2013) as well as leo. - Level One Study in Germany (Grotlüschen/Riekman 2012) were published, the highly developed industrial and knowledge-based society's failure of securing a minimum of basic competences for all members of society and stabilizing those competences throughout life can no longer be denied. In addition, these studies confirm the connection between social status, participation in continuing education and available competences. In this large scale study, competences were measured, which are classified as indispensable for cultural and social participation as well as employability in each society. Within the German discussion, those skills are often referred to as basic education, whereas in an international context various different versions of the literacy concept prevail. Both concepts can be regarded as relative, contextual and dynamic terms, based on current social requirements and subject to constant change (Tröster, 2000). Due to the different perceptions of various stakeholders, this dynamic and relational term is difficult to determine.

In the light of the large scale study's findings, over the last years the scientific debate of the basic education concept has gained in importance along with the education policy debate on compensatory functions of basic education and literacy as well as securing a minimum level of education and competences for all. As a result of the current immigration caused by flight and expulsion and the subsequent expectations of integrating these refugees, the challenges for research, politics and practice of continuing education are increasingly intensified.

During the United Nations Literacy Decade (2003–2012), a literacy and basic education network was constituted in Germany with various stakeholders from federal government and states, continuing education organisation, social partners as well as the German Federal Employment Agency. In addition, a national strategy was developed, which was transferred into the National Decade for Adult Literacy and Basic Education proclaimed in September 2015. As the interim results gained in the DIE project "EU-Alpha" indicate, several other European and non-European countries have observed similar developments. They point to the influence of international and supranational organisations on national policy and practice in the field of basic education.

Until now, little research has been conducted on the national and international reaction of education, labour, social and integration policy to the problems pointed out by empirical education research and the resulting operational success. This requires multi-level analyses, which unite system and governance structures with micro data from relevant studies on adult competences (e.g. PIAAC) in an international comparative perspective. It was often verified

that processes of educational disadvantage have a cumulative effect during life, continuing education enforces social selectivity with "soft" and "hard" selection mechanisms, and regional contexts are also significant for educational chances (Tippelt/v. Hippel 2005; Bremer/Kleemann-Göhrig 2011; Schlögl et al. 2015; Martin et al 2015). Less information is provided on how precisely factors and constellations on the system and stakeholder level influence continuing education participation and programmes of basic education or the methods of successfully implementing the objective of "Literacy for All" (United Nations). Which constellation of stakeholders, governance structure, continuing education, labour and welfare systems copes most effectively with the challenges mentioned above?

So far, there is no systematic overview on the effects of governance, structure, education, labour and welfare policy on the level and structure of adult basic skills. Current literature research regarding this topic only revealed isolated studies on policy programmes in the field of literacy and basic education but few studies, which connect competence assessment to control mechanisms and governance structures.

Against this background, the planned issue of the *Journal for Research on Adult Education* refers to the current research approach in the field of basic education policy but also looks at innovative research approaches. Basic theoretical or empirical research is to be presented, particularly research with an international comparative approach. In addition, case studies from various countries are requested.

Contributions are invited with emphasis on the following issues:

- theoretical articles which cover the dynamic and partly relational term of basic education as well as its empirical registration/measuring (competence modelling and measuring in basic education)
- theoretical or empirical research on the connection between basic education competences and continuing education, labour and welfare policy in the country
- empirical research which identifies successful political approaches and the integration in the specific national institutional system based on data and case studies in order to point out methods to strengthen basic skills successfully

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