

Abstracts

Martin Abraham and Jürg Arpagaus

Competition, social embeddedness or life course management? Determinants of horizontal sex segregation at the market for occupational traineeships

This paper focuses on the sex segregation at the Swiss labour market. We analyze the decision of young female and male pupils in their last year for an occupational traineeship in a firm. By choosing an occupation the pupils commit themselves to a segment of the labour market with a given sex segregation. Based on different theoretical approaches we test hypotheses on the determinants of the decision to choose a mixed or a segregated occupational field. We distinguish between three types of such determinants: 1) competitive opportunity structures, 2) preferences in respect to the future life course, and 3) effects resulting from socialization and social embeddedness. Our empirical analysis is based on a survey of 2000 trainees in the region of Zurich (Switzerland). The strongest effects on the probability to choose a sex-segregated occupation come from school performance and the effort invested in the search for a traineeship. There are hardly any effects of various kinds of social contacts except for the parents' influence. Here we find a positive influence of fathers on the pupil's decision for a male occupation and of mothers on the decision for a female occupation. Surprisingly these effects are independent of the pupil's sex.

Andrea Mosimann and Nathalie Giger

Child care infrastructure: Between party politics and societal imperative. A study on the municipal level.

This paper examines differences in child care in Switzerland. Based on welfare state and family policy literature we test several political and societal influence factors. The executive power in this policy field is performed on the communal level in Switzerland; therefore, the municipalities of the largest Swiss canton (Zürich) build the focus of this study. We argue that political factors such as the share of left parties in the municipal authorities play a role, especially in the debates about the expansion of child care. Societal factors (share of single parents and fully employed women) are positively associated with an extensive supply of child care. Furthermore, a center effect becomes visible: child care infrastructure tends to be concentrated not only in large cities but also in regional centers.

Christiane Gross and Jochen Groß

Rational-Choice-Explanations on Smoking Behaviour and Empirical Relevance

What contribution is offered by theories of rational choice to explain smoking behaviour? In order to answer this question, two approaches of the Rational-Choice-Paradigm are presented: Theories of Habit and Addiction and the Human Capital Approach. The hypotheses derived from these theories are tested with four datasets (Eurobarometer 1995, Bundesgesundheits-Survey 1998, telefonischer Gesundheitssurvey 2003 and ALLBUS 2004). The Hurdle-

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Regressions used not only allow the qualitative discrimination between smokers and non-smokers, but also treat the number of cigarettes consumed as a count variable. As a result, mainly stable effects of age, sex, and education upon the smoking-status (smoker versus non-smoker) and the mean number of cigarettes consumed by smokers are found. Indeed, unemployed persons are more likely to be smokers, but they do not smoke more cigarettes per day. The effects of marital status, income, and size of domicile vary strongly depending on the dataset used, which might explain different findings in previous publications. Although addictive behaviour intuitively appears to be an anomaly of the Rational-Choice-Paradigm, this analysis shows that RC-approaches provide feasible hypotheses for the explanation of smoking behaviour.

Regula Valérie Burri

Sociotechnical Rationality: Theory of Practice and the ‚Logic‘ of Artifacts

Bourdieu's Theory of Practice has been one of the most successful approaches in social theory. This article, however, points to the desiderata in Bourdieu's framework. It draws on debates in the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) to illustrate how the materiality of objects and artifacts is neglected in his Theory of Practice. Combining Bourdieu's work and approaches in STS, the article suggests two new concepts to analyze social practices and materiality: ‚logic of artifacts‘ and ‚sociotechnical rationality‘.