

A3.5 Education Acquisition with a Migration Background in the Life Course



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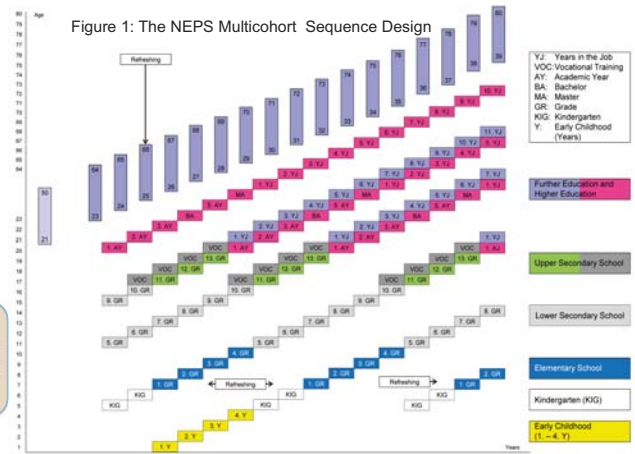
NEPS
 National Educational Panel Study

Background & Aims

Project A3.5 is part of the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS) which is organized as a research consortium with the MZES being one of its members.

The overall aim of NEPS is to collect longitudinal data on the development of competencies, educational processes, educational decisions, and returns to education throughout the life span.

Together with colleagues at Humboldt University and the University of Bamberg we address the acquisition of education across the life span against a migration background. To this end, we developed migrant-specific instruments that are now implemented across all the six NEPS cohorts.



Key Example: Constructing a Comprehensive Social Capital Instrument

Theoretical Background

Social capital (SC) has been extensively used to explain educational and labor market success. Yet, different pathways have been suggested:

- A) Resources such as information, referrals and support are available through networks,
- B) Reference groups affect adaptation of norms and values, participation in education, and career mobility.

Most studies, however, offer only data on a single SC dimension. Thus, the relative explanatory power of different kinds of social capital is difficult to judge.

Aims and Design of the Social Capital Pilot Study

Based on the distinction of theoretical mechanisms, we included three SC modules in our pilot study:

- Strong ties and reference group effects (Burt generator),
- Resource generator,
- Position generator.

We conducted 347 interviews (CATI) with respondents that were randomly sampled from registers of private telephone numbers.

Results of the Social Capital Pilot Study

Confirmatory factor analysis supports the two dimensional SC assessment:

- Dimension A: Social resources (information and support)
- Dimension B: Reference groups (expectations)
- Only small and statistically insignificant differences between migrants and natives
- Measurement equivalence of factor loadings and intercepts for migrants and natives

Standardized Coefficients and Intercepts from Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Item	Across groups	Natives	Migrants	Δ
Reference Group: Colleagues are ambitious	0.49	0.53	0.49	0.03
Reference Group: Common to take courses in firm	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.02
Reference Group: Training is important for colleagues	0.97	1.00	0.86	0.14
Resources: Info vacant positions	0.73	0.83	0.78	0.04
Resources: Support getting new job	0.79	0.70	0.66	0.03
Colleagues are ambitious (Intercept)	1.38	1.32	1.21	0.11
Common to take courses in firm (Intercept)	0.92	0.89	0.84	0.05
Training is important for colleagues (Intercept)	1.01	0.98	0.83	0.15
Info vacant positions (Intercept)	2.21	2.09	1.99	0.10
Support getting new job (Intercept)	2.38	2.20	2.10	0.10
N	178	210	119	
Coefficient of Determination	0.98	0.99	0.93	
χ^2 (df)	1.14 (4)	14.97 (14)		
RMSEA (Upper Bound)	0.05	0.08		

The Final Social Capital Instrument

Based on the pilot study results we revised the SC instrument. The final NEPS SC measures offer comprehensive, innovative and reliable data for explicit theory tests.

The Multi-dimensional measure includes:

All five modules are complemented by measures of:

- ...the ethnic network composition for weak and strong ties
- ...prospective and retrospective social capital measurements



Summary & Conclusion

Similar to the SC instrument we developed several other measures to assess immigrant-specific characteristics like ethnic and national identification, religious affiliation, and orientations towards the country of origin. We implement our instruments across all NEPS cohorts.

We therefore tailored our instruments to meet the demands of different survey modes (PAPI, CATI, Online), and of different respondents (students, parents, and teachers).

We are currently refining our measures for subsequent panel waves across all NEPS cohorts.