The German National Academics’ Panel Study (Nacaps) – a new longitudinal study observing young researcher’s careers and life courses

Background
On the societal level, education and training of young academics have an essential meaning for the capacity, competitiveness and innovative capability for Germany as a leading place in economics and sciences. On the individual level, attaining educational certificates on a higher tertiary level is linked to advantageous labour market outcomes (Enders/Bornmann 2001, Heineck/Matthes 2012) and promotes attaining elite and leadership positions in different sectors (Hartmann/Kopp 2001). However, due to a lack of consistent and reliable database, numerous current scientific and political questions regarding qualification and recruitment as well as professional careers of young academics cannot be answered adequately in an empiric way (BuWiN 2017).

The National Academics Panel Study (Nacaps), a theoretically founded multi-cohort panel study, makes an essential contribution to filling this data gap.

Objectives of the project
The project’s goal is twofold: Regularly collecting representative cross-sectional data for Germany concerning the qualification of young academics as well as longitudinal data observing individual career paths of doctoral candidates and postdocs inside and outside of the scientific sector. Furthermore, these datasets will be made available to the scientific community.

Therby, Nacaps is regarded to be an important data base in the field of theory-based, empirical research in education in general and higher education in special. The existing longitudinal data infrastructure in Germany (e.g. SOEP, PIACC-L and NEPS) will be complemented by another panel study focusing on young academics.

Topics of interest

- Motives and attitudes
- Qualification process
- Scientific work
- Career paths
- Individual background
- Outcomes
- Reporting and data dissemination strategy

Potential research questions
As Nacaps is able to identify individual and contextual determinants of academic careers in the academic sector as well as in other fields (like R&D) from a life-course and causal perspective, the following research questions can be empirically answered:

• How do different formal and informal contexts, support and mentoring during Ph.D. affects individual competence acquisition and socialization for young academics?

• What determines Ph.D. success and individual career paths? And, how is the relation between structural, individual and ascribed characteristics?

• How is the relation between individual decision processes and institutional, system-relevant selection processes?

• How do occupational situations between Postdocs who stayed in academia and Postdocs who left academia differ?

• What are individual and collective returns for Ph.D. certificates inside and outside the scientific sector?

Study design and data collection

The focused theoretical constructs will be surveyed retrospectively (e.g. previous educational trajectories) as well as prospectively (e.g. career intentions).

Reporting and data dissemination strategy

Data Portal

- For participating universities: exclusive access to surveydata and aggregated data for purposes of comparison

- For professional and interested audience: indicator-based reporting on aggregate level

Reporting

- Reports with special focus

- Scientific publications

Micro Data

- Providing Scientific Use Files (SUF) for scientific analyses via DZHW research data archive

- Methodological reports for single surveys

References:

Authors of this poster contribution:
Kolja Briedis (briedis@dzhw.eu)
Dominik Adrian (adrian@dzhw.eu)
Susanne Redeke (redeke@dzhw.eu)
Ulrike Schwabe (schwabe@dzhw.eu)

General Information:
www.dzhw.eu
www.nacaps.de

www.dzhw.eu
www.nacaps.de