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PROJECT

How Do Boy and Girl High School Pupils Perceive Inequality (Working Title)

Research on educational inequality has been booming in the last decades, but we know little about how high school students themselves perceive inequality and fairness in school and society. In my envisioned monograph, I will tackle this topic by analyzing data from a two-wave survey among students aged 12 and 15 that I am currently conducting with colleagues from different disciplines at the Cluster of Excellence "The Politics of Inequality" at the University of Konstanz. This data will help answer questions such as: How do children from different social and ethnic backgrounds perceive and evaluate their chances in the educational system? Do they think that girls and boys, migrants and natives, children from wealthy and poor parents are treated fairly, have the same chances of moving ahead, and have an equal say in school affairs and society at large? To what extent do they believe in meritocratic principles and think that they – rather than ascriptive characteristics such as sex, ethnicity, and parental background – shape grades and school recommendations? What role do school and classroom characteristics, parents, and peer networks play in forming these perceptions? I assume that these perceptions and evaluations are key in understanding processes of political polarization that are likely to start in early adolescence. In this respect, research on perceptions of inequality among high school students touches upon an important issue of our time: Why are many individuals, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, alienated from the so-called elites in politics, the media, and science? I hope to provide insight into this question by analyzing the circumstances under which these processes already start in adolescence and under what circumstances they solidify – or do not solidify – over the person's life cycle.

Recommended Reading

Diehl, Claudia, Christian Hunkler, and Cornelia Kristen, eds. (2016). *Ethnische Ungleichheiten im Bildungsverlauf: Mechanismen, Befunde, Debatten*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Diehl, Claudia, Patrick Fick, and Matthias Koenig (2018). "Religion und ethnische Bildungsungleichheiten: Empirische Befunde zu einem strittigen Zusammenhang." *Monatsschrift für Kriminologie und Strafrechtsreform* 101: 112–139. <https://doi.org/10.1515/mks-2018-1010203>.

Diehl, Claudia, Elisabeth Liebau, and Peter Mühlau (2021). "How Often Have You Felt Disadvantaged? Explaining Perceived Discrimination." *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 73: 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-021-00738-y>.

Ethnic Discrimination and Ethnic Inequality

In my presentation I focus on the topic of ethnic discrimination. What forms of discrimination can be differentiated and what role do they play for the persistence of ethnic inequality, e.g. in the educational system and on the labor market? I start out by showing how the link between ethnic discrimination and inequality can be analyzed empirically. Based on this, I take a closer look at perceptions of discrimination among immigrants. I show that perceived discrimination reflects not only perpetrated discrimination, but also aspirations for equal treatment – and sensitivity to unequal treatment. These aspirations and sensitivities are particularly pronounced among those who experience less rather than more discrimination, namely individuals with high levels of education and acculturation. Furthermore, individuals who are phenotypically different are exposed to more discrimination than those who are phenotypically “invisible”, a factor that has so far been neglected in the European debate on this topic. I present empirical evidence of these dynamics based on survey data collected among recent immigrants to Germany. A discussion of the implications of these findings for the current debate about racism concludes my presentation.

PUBLICATIONS FROM THE FELLOW LIBRARY

Diehl, Claudia (London,2025)

Inefficiencies in the division of labour in human societies

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1925492583>

Diehl, Claudia (London [u.a.],2024)

Highly skilled and highly skeptical? : How education and origin shape newcomers' relationship with their new home

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=188798187X>

Diehl, Claudia (Berlin,2021)

How often have you felt disadvantaged? : Explaining perceived discrimination

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1812829639>

Diehl, Claudia (Berlin,2018)

Religion und ethnische Bildungsungleichheiten : empirische Befunde zu einem strittigen Zusammenhang

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1812825501>

Diehl, Claudia (Wiesbaden,2016)

Ethnische Ungleichheiten im Bildungsverlauf : Mechanismen, Befunde, Debatten

<https://kxp.k10plus.de/DB=9.663/PPNSET?PPN=1615848134>