

Call for Papers

Journal for Research on Adult Education
Zeitschrift für Weiterbildungsforschung

Issue 3 | 2024

Adult Education and Sustainability

Guest editors

Mandy Singer-Brodowski & Henning Pätzold

Handling Editor

Bernhard Schmidt-Hertha

In recent decades, the topic of sustainability has increasingly taken its place in political and social agendas. Since the 2000s at the latest, a separate field of sustainability research has also developed in the scientific community (Kates et al. 2001).

What unites different sustainability concepts is that sustainability is normatively understood as a claim not to impair the life chances of future generations through the behavior of those currently living and to strive for justice between the generations now living in the Global North and the Global South (for an introduction, see Grunwald & Kopfmüller 2022). A current policy framework is available in the form of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations Global Sustainability Agenda.

The connection between current supply crises (including energy and food) and Russia's war of aggression on Ukraine, as well as increasing extreme weather events as a result of man-made climate change, make it clear once again that issues of ecological sustainability are closely linked to those of democracy, gender equality, global economic distributive justice, and others. Here, the importance of education becomes immediately apparent. While the named connections are not always clear at the first glance, they can be communicated through education, which is listed as a separate goal in the SDGs not least for this reason. Moreover, education is central to enabling people to participate in and shape transformation processes at different levels (individual, organization, cross-organizational networks) and in the various subsectors (economy, civil society, media).

The rapid rise in importance of the topic of sustainability in particular points to the special significance of adult education. The power to act that becomes relevant in the context of sustainability issues lies predominantly with adults (although the influence of youth activists, such as Fridays for Future, should not be underestimated here), and the time frames in which technological, economic and social adaptations to climate change, for example, are required leave only limited room for educational programs that focus solely or predominantly on future or now still young generations. Nonetheless, the reciprocal importance of adult education and sustainability issues has still been addressed rather selectively in the literature to date (see Milana et al. 2016; Schreiber-Barsch et al. 2019; Elven 2022). In particular, there is a lack of approaches that specifically make adult pedagogical issues, theories, and concepts fruitful for sustainability topics and systematically explore and strengthen connections between the two. There is also very little research to date on education for sustainable development in the context of continuing vocational education and training (Kandler & Tippelt 2018, Stadt Freiburg i.B.

2022, 21). In addition, much of learning in the context of sustainable development is initiated as informal learning through media, friends, family, and leisure (Stadt Freiburg i.B. 2022, 23).

The special issue will publish contributions along these lines, i.e., those that build theoretical-conceptual bridges between sustainability and adult education, contribute empirically to the current determination of the relationship between the two fields, and/or systematically empirically examine adult educational practice in relation to sustainability.

The editors and the editorial team look forward to your suggestions for topics. You are also welcome to send us an initial outline, which can be fleshed out with the editors in the further course. You can send an outline (max. 500 words) of your contribution to the editors at redaktion-zfw@die-bonn.de by February 15, 2024.

Deadline for manuscripts: May 15, 2024

Publication date: December 2024

All contributions will undergo a double-blind anonymous peer review. The editorial board accepts manuscripts for first and sole publication only.

For more information about the journal and how to submit manuscripts, please visit www.springer.com/journal/40955

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