

OPTIMISATION | 27th Congress of the German Educational Research Association

OPTIMISATION is one of the central topics of our time. It determines many areas of society, such as the development of technical infrastructure, the functionality of institutions or the improvement of human performance. At the same time, OPTIMISATION has become an important topos of educational science in a number of conceptual variations, raising a multitude of theoretical and practical questions. These questions concern, for example, the processing of individual and cultural baseline conditions of educational processes, the political and social goals of pedagogical action as well as their means, the further development of the educational system, the use of existing resources or the scientific examination of pedagogical issues.

Both educational theories and practices in the modern age confront different discourses of OPTIMISATION and socially sanctioned OPTIMISATION practices that concern educators and researchers alike. The anticipation of OPTIMISATION affects both pedagogy and educational science and has initiated a process of transformation. On the one hand, this has led to an optimistic idea of a basically unlimited capacity for growth and development (of people, institutions, societies, etc.) based on individual and collective practices. On the other hand, OPTIMISATION is not only a positively underpinned concept established in pedagogical thought and action, but is also being criticised. Some commentators suggest that a one-sided focus on OPTIMISATION could overlook fundamental limits of what is achievable and feasible in pedagogy as well as the possibility of failure and deterioration.

The aforementioned indications show that OPTIMISATION is a relevant topic throughout the educational sciences which extends into many central areas in the various educational institutions and sub-disciplines. It is, among other things,

- an anthropological figure, which resonates in the theoretical concept of perfectibility, or, in economic terms, in the pedagogical debates on human resources and resilience;
- an organisational and institutional practice that describes the extensive and smooth use of available resources to achieve goals, for example the improvement of organisational and structural aspects of work processes with the aim of maximising productive forces or productivity (efficiency and effectiveness through new media, digitisation, transition to flexible learning/mobile learning);
- a didactic strategy aimed at improving or maximising the measurable output of institutionalised teaching and learning processes. This maximisation also concerns the professionalism of the educators themselves. In this context, research-based learning or media-supported learning come to mind;



DGfE Deutsche Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft

- an educational research programme that focuses on methodical and methodological improvement in theories and concepts, survey and measurement methods as well as evaluation procedures (cf. evidence-based research, design-based research);
- a matrix for the presentation and evaluation of educational impact assessments and risk research that records and assesses the positive and negative effects of educational measures and developments. This involves the primary and secondary effects of pedagogical improvement initiatives, which can also be generated by second-order observations;
- a guiding formula for educational thought and action which is oriented towards the central goals of modern or late modern societies, such as justice, sustainability, inclusion, independence, progress, etc.

OPTIMISATION as a topos in educational science has not yet been sufficiently discussed. It presents an abundance of inherent tensions and problems, which are often unquestioned and implicitly taken into account. It is a term which seems to be established in the mainstream of pedagogical thought and action, but which also triggers fierce controversies as a term of criticism. But without an examination of the idea of OPTIMISATION in the field of education, a modern educational science cannot be conceptualized.

The DGfE-Congress in Cologne

OPTIMISATION is an ambiguous and exciting topos charged with different, sometimes contradictory and ambivalent meanings. The congress will address these various dimensions and facets of OPTIMISATION in the context of the different sectional approaches in the German Educational Research Association (DGfE) and explore their significance for educational science as a discipline and for all relevant pedagogical questions. Pedagogical practice and educational science are influenced by other functional systems (economics, politics, medicine, media, etc.); therefore, the Cologne Congress will focus on the influence of educators in research and practice on social and cultural OPTIMISATION processes.

Submissions

Submissions can only be made using the conference management system ConfTool at <https://www.conftool.org/dgfe2020/>. Please note that ConfTool accounts are deleted after each congress. Therefore, please create a new account for the 2020 congress. All given numbers for maximum characters include spaces.

The submission of a contribution (symposium, working group, research forum) consists of the following elements:

- title of the event
- a brief summary of the submission for the programme (1,000 characters)
- an indication of research area and methodology
- bibliography

- information about the authors (name, organisation, email address)
- titles and short descriptions of the individual contributions (max. 1,500 characters each)
- as a file attachment: a cross-contribution description of concept and content of the event as well as reference to the conference topic (4,000 characters)

All information about the event (with the exception of the cross-contribution abstract) must be entered in the appropriate fields of the ConfTool submission form. For the cross-contribution abstract, a template file can be downloaded via our [webpage](#). Proposals for both individual contributions to a paper session and posters are limited to 2,500 characters.

In order to be able to offer an active participation in the 27th DGfE-Congress to as many colleagues as possible, multiple appearances as speakers in symposia, working groups or paper sessions are not allowed during the congress. You can only give one presentation in these three event formats. (If the programme structure permits, it is, however, possible to take part in the organisation and realisation of further congress events, e.g., as a moderator or as a discussant, in addition to the presentation in one of these formats. Since research forums and AdHoc Groups share a time slot, attendance at more than one event in these two formats is impossible.)

Selection process and important dates

On the basis of a double-blind review, the Programme Committee appointed by the DGfE Council selects the contributions to be presented at the 27th DGfE Congress in Cologne. **Contributions must be submitted online by 24 April 2019.** Exceptions are AdHoc Groups, which can be submitted from 15 October to 30 November 2019, and Posters (deadline: 15 September 2019).

Notifications of acceptance (with the exception of AdHoc Groups and Posters) will be sent in August 2019.

Types of submissions

Symposia (150 min.) directly relate to the conference topic. They will take place on 16 and 18 March 2020 and should include a maximum of four scientific lectures, with at least one lecture to be given by an emerging researcher. Interdisciplinary symposia are welcome.

Working Groups (120 min.) will take place on 17 March 2020. A reference to the congress topic is desirable but not mandatory. There are no rules for the selection of speakers for the Working Groups. However, the participation of emerging researchers is just as welcome.

Research Forums (120 min.) will take place on 16 March 2020 (parallel to the AdHoc Groups). These are free in their content and design. They offer national and international research projects or alliances as well as junior or doctoral groups an opportunity for professional exchange.

Paper sessions (approx. 15-20 minutes per presentation plus discussion) provide a space for individual contributions directly related to the congress topic.

Submission of AdHoc Groups and Posters

AdHoc Groups (120 min.) take place 16 March 2020. They focus on current educational research topics, which can also be proposed in alternative forms. Rejected contributions for other event formats cannot be submitted as AdHoc Groups. For AdHoc Groups, a separate call will be published by the end of June 2019.

Posters present educational research or projects in a graphically accessible and aesthetically attractive way. Emerging researchers are explicitly invited to submit posters. Congress participants are invited to enter into dialogue with the authors, especially in the central poster session on 18 March 2020.

To give room for this exchange, the Cologne congress will provide the poster session with a framework of 120 minutes in different clusters. During the poster session, at least one member of the responsible authors must be available for discussion. Like all other contributions to the congress, poster proposals will be submitted electronically via ConfTool; deadline for poster proposals is 15 September 2019. The submission of a poster proposal consists of the title of the contribution and a written abstract (max. 2,500 characters). The poster must be brought to the congress by the authors in paper form in DIN A0 format. A poster award for outstanding posters will again be presented; in addition, for the first time, there will be an audience's choice award.

Cologne und Berlin, February 2019,

the Local Organisation Committee of the 27th DGfE-Congress 2020 at the University of Cologne and the Council of the German Educational Research Association (DGfE)