

Call for Papers Issue 1 | 2027

Research Methods and Methodology **Adult Education Research between Innovation & Continuity**

Editors

Henning Pätzold & Katrin Kraus

Observation and discussion of the research methods used are part of a discipline's self-reflection. Overview and introductory works, e.g. by Tippelt and Schmidt-Hertha (2018), Hof and Egloff (2018), Schäffer and Dörner (2012) or St. Clair (2023), document that there is a need to understand the scientific field of research not only as a mere application of corresponding methods and techniques, but that research as a contribution to the "Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact" (Fleck 1980) is closely linked to the respective discipline in which research is carried out.

Discipline-specific subjects have an impact on the preference for certain research methods. The research on programs (Fleige et al. 2019, p. 65ff) or the videographic analysis of continuing education situations (Dinkelaker 2022) are two examples among many in which adult education subjects require a specific approach that cannot be derived from other research methods. Furthermore, large-scale studies should be mentioned, which influence the perception of the discipline beyond its own boundaries through content and methods, such as the LEO study (Grotlüschen and Buddeberg 2020), PIAAC (Rammstedt et al. 2024) or the Adult Education Survey (BMBF 2024). Not least due to their potentially significant political impact, a corresponding methodological reflection is also taking place here, for example in participation research (Schemmann 2023).

Apparently, adult education research has largely left behind simplistic methodological debates (e.g. between qualitative and quantitative approaches). It is developing its own methodological traditions, methodological focuses and epistemological positions. The increasing internationalization of the field also contributes to this. However, there is currently no place where these developments can be systematically analyzed and thus made available for the discipline's critical (self-)reflection.

The forthcoming issue aims to close this gap by bringing together articles that make the approach(es) of adult education research itself the subject of academic debate.

Of interest are both historical contributions which trace research methodological and methodological positions and traditions as well as systematic discussions of methodological, methodological and epistemological perspectives. Empirical approaches to research practice are just as welcome as theoretical-methodological essays that include the constitution of the subject matter of adult education.

Possible contributions also include research methodological or methodologically oriented discussions of current developments, such as the use of AI in the research process, research ethics issues or data management requirements. Also conceivable are contributions that take a critical look at the fit between the subjects and methods of continuing education research and at the same time take interdisciplinary perspectives into account. Finally, contributions are also welcome that present innovative

methodological approaches for discussion in the context of current research or revitalize methods that are productive in terms of research methodology but are currently little discussed (e.g. social network analysis or participatory approaches).

Developments in research methodology are not independent of national discourses and traditions. In this respect, contributions that deal with corresponding developments in German-speaking countries (and explicitly reflect on this context) are just as welcome as those that refer to international developments.

* * *

You may send an abstract of your proposed article (max. 500 words) by **1 September 2026** to the editorial office: redaktion-zfw@die-bonn.de. The abstract should include the names of authors and affiliations, working title, topic(s) that will be addressed, method(s), and countr(ies) of focus.

Please submit your final **manuscript** at: www.springer.com/journal/40955

Deadline for submissions: 30 November 2026

Publication Date: 1 April 2027

All manuscripts will undergo a double-blind peer review procedure.

The editorial office accepts manuscripts only for first and single publication (i.e., manuscripts that have not been previously published and are not being considered elsewhere for publication).

Manuscript length: max. 50,000 characters (incl. spaces and reference list). Further information on the journal and the submission of manuscripts is available on the website <https://www.springer.com/journal/40955/>

Funding Information

The Journal for Research and Adult Education (ZfW) is a fully open access journal. It is published under the DEAL agreement between Springer Nature und the Project DEAL. The article publication charges (APC) are covered by this agreement provided that the corresponding authors are affiliated with an institution participating in DEAL. These are most German universities and research institutions. As soon as your article has been accepted for publication, the corresponding author will go through an identification process. The affiliation with a DEAL-eligible institution will be verified. For more information, please contact the editorial office or click [here](#). Authors from countries or institutions that do not participate in DEAL please contact the editorial office redaktion-zfw@die-bonn.de

Literature

Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung. (2024). Weiterbildungsverhalten in Deutschland 2022. Ergebnisse des Adult Education Survey — AES-Trendbericht. Berlin, Bonn: BMBF. https://www.bmfr.bund.de/Shared-Docs/Publikationen/DE/1/26667_AES-Trendbericht_2022.pdf. Zugegriffen: 29. Juli 2025.

Dinkelaker, J. (2022). Videografie [online]. socialnet Lexikon. Bonn: socialnet, 10.01.2022. <https://www.socialnet.de/lexikon/28223>. Zugegriffen: 29. Juli 2025.

Fleck, L. (1980). Entstehung und Entwicklung einer wissenschaftlichen Tatsache. Suhrkamp.

Hof, C., & Egloff, B. (2022). Handeln und Forschen: in der Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung (1. Aufl.). wbv Publikation. <https://doi.org/10.36198/9783838558349>

Grotlüschen, A., & Buddeberg, K. (Hrsg.) (2020). LEO 2018: Leben mit geringer Literalität. wbv Publikation.
<https://doi.org/10.3278/6004740w>

Tippelt, R., & Schlutz, E. (2023). Leitstudien. In R. Arnold, E. Nuissl, & J. Schrader (Hrsg.), Wörterbuch Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildung (3. vollst. überarb. Aufl., S. 263–264). Klinkhardt.

Tippelt, R., & Schmidt-Hertha, B. (Hrsg.) (2018). Handbuch Bildungsforschung. Springer.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-531-19981-8>

Rammstedt, B., Gauly, B., Kapidzic, S., Maehler, D. B., Martin, S., Massing, N., Schneider, S. L., & Zabal, A. (2024). PIAAC 2023. Grundlegende Kompetenzen Erwachsener im internationalen Vergleich. Waxmann.
<https://doi.org/10.31244/9783830999652>

Schäffer, B., & Dörner, O. (Hrsg.) (2012). Handbuch Qualitative Erwachsenen- und Weiterbildungsforschung. Barbara Budrich.

Schemmann, M. (Hrsg.) (2023). Researching participation in adult education. wbv Publikation.
<https://doi.org/10.3278/9783763973910>

St. Clair, R. (2023). Researching learning and teaching with adults: an introduction. Routledge.