

SELF Project Line 3: Self-Efficacy and Health/Well-Being

It is reasonable to conceive migration as a highly stressful experience. Furthermore, self-construal has been shown to be a crucial factor in shaping how people deal with this stress (Kühnen & Haberstroh, 2013). Given that stress in general is one of most detrimental factors for **health and subjective well-being**, dissertation projects that could be conducted within the RTG may address various aspects of the self, self-regulation and external influences on health behavior change.

As health-promoting behavior change does not only come about by the individual alone but rather in interaction with other people, not only individuals but also dyads, groups and organizations should be studied, as previous research suggests (e.g., Hirata et al., 2015; Nigg, Lippke & Maddock, 2009; Whittal & Lippke, 2016; Whittal et al., 2017). Such dissertation projects should subscribe to an approach based in health and developmental psychology that has its roots in **Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**. Bandura (2000) proposed that self-efficacy is key for behavior initiation and maintenance. While **self-efficacy** is especially central for goal setting, enactment and attainment, it is also a reliable target in treatments (e.g., Lippke, 2017). Bandura's theory outlined in greater detail which sources impact self-efficacy expectations, and thereby specified in more detail what Baumeister (1999) called the executive function of the self.

Accordingly, dissertation projects can address various aspects of the self, **self-regulation and health behavior change**, e.g., well-being and behavior change in face of migration and globalization. For instance: How do individuals subjectively construe the stress they experience as migrants—as a threat or as a challenge? How do they deal with this stress: Do they use their relationships as coping resources or do they actually avoid doing so and how does this relate to interdependence/independence of the individual? Does migration impair the sense of self-efficacy, how can this sense be reestablished and what role does culture (collectivism/ individualism) play in this? In sum, the dynamics of self-efficacy changes (in the context of migration) are of much more interest than comprehensive descriptions of states of the self. This requires research methods not only using large-scale multivariate analyses but also interventional designs to actually try to help people overcoming inner temptations and external barriers, thus (re-)gaining agency for coping functionally with stress. In order to test such treatments randomized control trials of case-controlled studies will be conducted.

Possible dissertation projects on self-efficacy and health/well-being:

- Does self-regulation in terms of health behavior and subjective well-being differ across cultures and time in the migration process?
- Perceived stress of migrating individuals: Are there buffering effects of lifestyle, social support, and environmental factors?
- Do interventions addressing self-efficacy and social support help migrants to cope with stress?

Potential supervisors:

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