imc | FH KREMS

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

INSTITUTE OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Research focus
Health management and policy

Under the health management and policy research focus, the institute examines social and science-related research topics which are bundled in two subject areas: design and health, and career and health.

DESIGN AND HEALTH

Systems research and policy aims to present the big picture, exploring the links that connect business, politics and other social subsystems with the health system (Luhmann, 2017). The goal is to identify the conditions that give rise to effective and efficient health systems, as well as the structures they comprise, and then to use the findings to develop innovative health policy approaches. The core topics in this regard are: service and cost allocation; equitable distribution of resources; providing simple access to the system; the design of effective incentives and organisations; and measuring the effectiveness of systems, institutions and programmes (Schwartz & Busse, 2012; Davis & McMaster, 2017).

Organisational architecture is made up of the formal and informal systems within an organisation. The effectiveness of this architecture depends on factors such as strategy, structures and business processes. This holistic approach is important because all aspects of healthcare facilities have a direct bearing on patient wellbeing and recovery processes (Huisman et al., 2012; Becker & Parsons, 2007). Implementation of measures based on this viewpoint also has financial implications, which in turn places demands on management (Ulrich, 2006).

In the health service, designing products and services based on human-centred design principles takes into account the experience of various stakeholders (patients, their families and relatives, employees, etc.) to a significant extent. This has an impact on the design of new hospitals and development of services aimed at reducing patient stress during a hospital stay, as well as on the development of medical products (Pferzinger & Herzog, 2014; Enninga et al., 2013).

CAREER AND HEALTH

Almost all of us have a career. This is made up of a sequence of positions and conditions over time within a work related social and geographical space (Gunz & Mayrhofer, 2018). Professional success is a product of a career and it is usually measured in terms of objective factors including income and rank, as well as subjective factors like satisfaction with the job or career in question (Heslin, 2005). New concepts, such as sustainable careers (De Vos et al., 2020), have taken this idea further, and they treat health, satisfaction and productivity as key outcome variables of careers.

The institute's careers-related research examines factors at a wide range of levels in terms of their impact on career progression and success: from individual differences such as personality traits (Heslin & Latzke, 2020) and the influence of age, ethnicity, gender and social background, to organisational frameworks such as career systems in organisations and context-related factors including the role of the industry and the country concerned, as well as the economic situation (Akkermans & Kubasch, 2017; Latzke et al., 2019).

In this context, the Institute of Health Management carries out research into career-related topics in the health sector, as well as health-specific aspects connected with careers in general.

Occupational and employer branding: here, the goal is to identify the factors that influence a person's choice of occupation, how occupational branding can be used to increase the attractiveness of a particular line of work, and how health service organisations can be positioned as attractive employers (employer branding).

Career paths for healthcare professionals, e.g. medicine, nursing, occupational therapy and physiotherapy: the main thrust of the institute's research is to shed light not only on entry into healthcare professions, but also on factors that determine whether people remain in those professions. What factors influence employees' satisfaction, health and productivity? And what aspects can be targeted for interventions? In terms of the methods used, the institute plans to generate insights by means of longitudinal studies, for example panel studies with bachelor programme graduates.

Career frameworks: careers always evolve in a particular context (Mayrhofer et al., 2007). Research analyses the different levels involved – from the teams and organisational structure in which careers progress to the interplay between them, as well as the professional and economic context. Regardless of the industry, the objective is to find out what factors make people healthy, satisfied and productive over time.

LITERATURE

• Akkermans, J., & Kubasch, S. (2017). Trending topics in careers: a review and future research agenda. Career Development International, 22(6), 586-627. doi:10.1108/CDI-08-2017-0143
• Becker, F., & Parsons, K.S. (2007). Hospital facilities and the role of evidence-based design. J Facil Manag 5(4):263-274. doi:10.1108/14725960710822599
• Davis, John B. & McMaster, Robert (2017): Health Care Economics. London, New York: Routledge.
• De Vos, A., Van der Heijden, B. I. J. M., & Akkermans, J. (2020). Sustainable careers: Towards a conceptual model. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 117, 103196. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2018.06.011
• Enninga, T., Manschot, M., van Gessel, C., Gijbels, J., van der Lugt, R., Sleeswijk Visser, F. Verhoeven, F., & Godfroij, B. (2013).Service design: insights from nine case studies. HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht & Research Centre Technology & Innovation, Utrecht.
• Gunz, H., & Mayrhofer, W. (2018). Rethinking Career Studies: Facilitating Conversation across Boundaries with the Social Chronology Framework. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
• Heslin, P. A. (2005). Conceptualizing and evaluating career success. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 26(2), 113-136. doi:10.1002/job.270
• Heslin, P. A., & Latzke, M. (2020). Individual difference antecedents of career outcomes. In H. Gunz, M. Lazarova, & W. Mayrhofer (Eds.), The Routledge Companion to Career Studies (pp. 162-179). London: Routledge.
• Huisman, E.R.C.M., Morales, E., van Hoof, J., & Kort, H.S.M. (2012). Healing environment: a review of the impact of physical environmental factors on users. Build Environ 58:70-80. doi:10.1016/j.buildenv.2012.06.016
• Latzke, M., Schneidhofer, T., Mayrhofer, W., & Pernkopf, K. (2019). Karriereforschung: Konzeptioneller Rahmen, zentrale Diskurse und neue Forschungsfelder. In S. Kauffeld & D. Spurk (Eds.), Handbuch Karriere und Laufbahnmanagement(pp. 3-35). Heidelberg: Springer.
• Luhmann, N. (2017): Einführung in die Systemtheorie. Heidelberg: Carl-Unger-Verlag.
• Mayrhofer, W., Meyer, M., & Steyrer, J. (2007). Contextual issues in the study of careers. In H. Gunz & M. Peiperl (Eds.),Handbook of career studies (pp. 215-240). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
• Pferzinger, M., & Herzog, D. (2014). Maßanzug Krankenhaus - Patientenorientierung in der Krankenhausplanung. Prof Process1:18-22
• Schwartz, F.W. & Busse, R. (2012): Denken in Zusammenhängen: Gesundheits-systemforschung. In: Schwartz, Friedrich Wilhelm; Walter, Ulla; Siegrist, Johannes et al. (Hrsg.): Public Health. Gesundheit und Gesundheitswesen. (S. 555-582). 3. Aufl. München: Elsevier.
• Ulrich, R.S. (2006). Evidence-based health-care architecture. Lancet 268:38-39. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(06)69921-2