

Final Report: CIDER-LERN Workshop, January 2017

Introduction

On January 25th and 26th 2017, the first joint workshop of the research networks CIDER and LERN took place at the Leibniz Association Headquarters. The workshop brought together young educational researchers from various disciplines and from all across Germany to exchange methods and results, in addition to establishing new contacts.

Workshop Goals

The main objectives of the workshop were to connect the CIDER fellows with other educational researchers from the Leibniz Association, those from the LERN network in particular and to disseminate interdisciplinary research by means of workshop formats tested in the first project phase of CIDER (such as "Thematic Groups"). The workshop also aimed at contributing to the promotion of young talents within the LERN network.

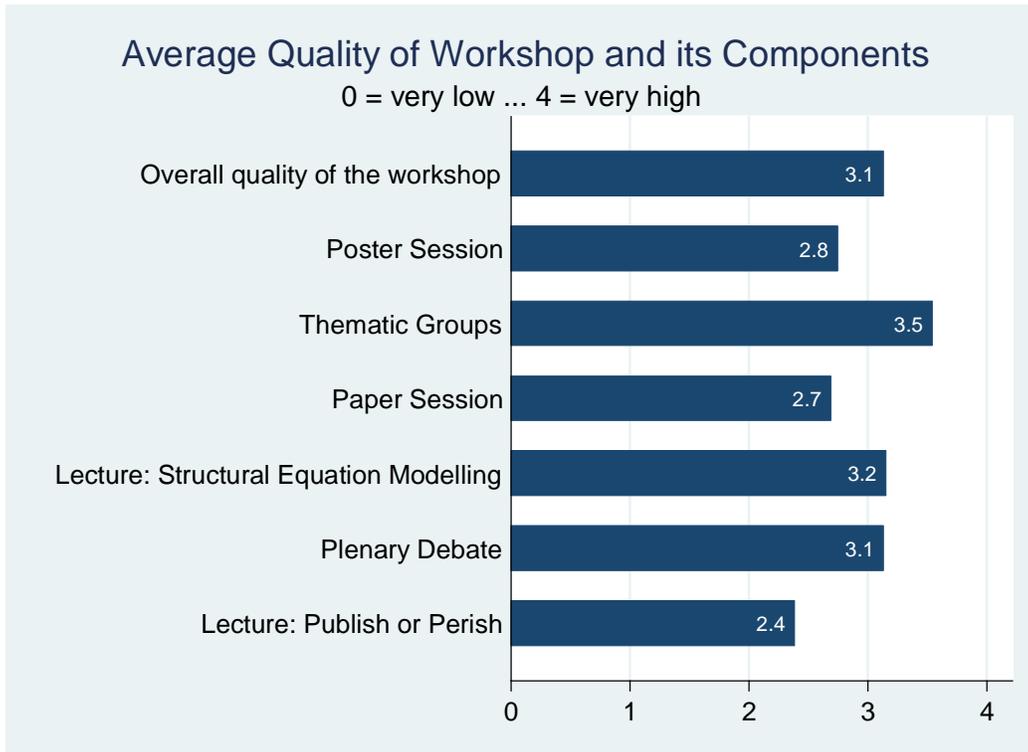
Sessions Quality Assessment

The workshop included both methodological and more content-related formats, numerous contributions by young scholars, as well as lectures by well-established scholars. There were both formal scientific discussions and those which addressed the role and communication of educational research in a wider societal context.

In order to gain an insight into participants' satisfaction with the different formats, we asked them to complete a short survey at the end of the event. On the basis of the results, a few particularly popular formats are presented in more detail below. The figure below shows the average ratings of the individual components of the workshop, with the scale ranging from 0, "very bad" to 4, "very good".

The most popular format was the so-called "Thematic Groups", rated as "good" or "very good" by all of the participants. In these parallel sessions, several 20-minute presentations were bundled under a thematic caption, and were intensively discussed in small groups. The first group's topic was "An Interdisciplinary Take on Grit in Educational Research", while the second one discussed "Innovative Methodological Approaches in Empirical Education Research". The sessions confirmed the experience from the first project phase of

CIDER that this format is ideally suited for interdisciplinary exchange. Here, young scientists had the opportunity to get acquainted with the work of peers from other institutes and disciplines and also to profit from the feedback of an interdisciplinary audience in an intimate setting.



Also, Prof. Dr. Florian Schmiedek's methodological lecture on "Structural Equation Modeling for Causal Analysis", which opened the workshop on Wednesday, was received very well. It was supplemented with a commentary by the economist Prof. Dr. Jan Marcus, who discussed the above mentioned method rarely used in economics from his perspective. This way methodological exchange between different disciplines could be promoted.

Besides these more research-oriented formats, the Plenary Debate on Science Communication was rated highly by the participants. Arwen Cross from "Science in Dialogue" led the discussion from topics such as communication between different social science disciplines, to communication between researchers and educational politics stakeholders to their dealing with the media. Different backgrounds and experiences of the discussants provided the basis for a highly interesting debate. More than 80% of the participants evaluated the debate as "good" or "very good" and said they had learned something new about how to communicate the scientific results to the the general public.

Participants

The event had 43 participants altogether. The majority were members of institutes belonging to the LERN network, postdocs and doctoral students in particular. In addition, a total of 10 fellows from the CIDER College from both the first and second cohort were present. More than a half of the participants agreed that the workshop strengthened cross-institutional ties. Thus the main goal of enlarging and linking the two research networks seems to have been successfully achieved.

Against the backdrop of the interdisciplinary exchange, the multitude of the disciplines represented during these two days was encouraging. The most prominently represented disciplines were the education sciences and psychology with 10 participants each. In addition, 6 sociologists and 4 economists involved in educational research were present. The remaining participants consisted of scientists from other disciplines and non-researchers.

The previous CIDER experience has shown that the overcoming of subject-specific jargon and finding of a common language is one of the most important prerequisites for interdisciplinary exchange. This process necessarily begins with open questions - be it about conceptual definitions or methods. Therefore, it can be regarded as very positive that 85% of the participants found the workshop atmosphere comfortable enough to ask questions.

Conclusion

The above clearly shows that the CIDER-LERN Workshop 2017 successfully met its initial objectives. The event provided a platform for the diffusion of results and methods among researchers from various disciplines, contributed to the networking between various LERN institutes and CIDER and contributed to the promotion of young researchers in the field of education. The organization team sees the fact that more than 85% of the interviewees rated the overall workshop experience as "good" or "very good" as confirmation that the joint organization of workshops between CIDER and LERN was a success worth repeating in the future.