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"We are what we eat?" - Is there a correlation between the nutrition of individuals and the network structures of their relationships?

Malte von Maltzahn und Patrick Oppermann

Abstract

Undoubtedly, nutrition can be considered as the most important precondition of our live, it is an ubiquitous part of our daily routines. But it can be more than food intake. Not many of the current societal topics are marked by such a large number of dimensions as nutrition: social, political, economic, psychological and cultural. Whereas the focus of previous social science researches discussing nutrition often pointed to political questions, for instance ecological sustainability, this paper subjects the social dimension to critical scrutiny. It will be analyzed how similar attitudes in terms of nutrition make individuals socialize or, on the contrary, if relations trigger those attitudes. Hence, the following approach wants to identify the effects of social relations on nutrition. Are social relations as independent variable influencers for eating habits? Can they rather be seen as dependent variables being guided by eating habits? With the aid of a mixed method design firstly, students at the age of 20-30 will be interviewed to gain an insight into the ways people eat.