

Evaluation of the bachelor thesis “Mental Health and Well-being in Comparison between East and West Germany: A Literature and Data Overview” by Emelie Berneking, Prague FHS UK, 56 p.

In her BA thesis, Emelie Berneking compares questions of mental health and well-being between East and West Germany.

The thesis is well-organized in structure, reflecting a thoughtful and well-ordered approach to the research questions. The thesis begins with an introduction laying out the theoretical framework and research methodology. The inclusion of a theoretical chapter is commendable, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent analyses. There follows a literature review, methodological approach and analysis.

Emelie Berneking takes a methodological approach from medical sociology to address her research questions, drawing on "A Sociology of Mental Health and Illness" (2014) by Anne Rogers and David Pilgrim (p. 3). Pilgrim and Rogers provide concepts setting forth how material and social realities shape human behavior, even as they do not succumb to determinism. The concepts of Rogers and Pilgrim allow Berneking to explore the interplay between sociological factors, individual agency, and mental health outcomes.

Berneking provides a historical introduction (pp. 15-19), giving the reader a picture of historical and political circumstances after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, followed by description of postreunification events as the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was absorbed into the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).

The analysis section that follows considers sociological factors and mental health data in East and West Germany, comparing rural and urban regions (p. 26), age demographics (p. 29), alcoholism (p. 31) and economic distribution (p. 33). The data is taken from German federal health reporting and other empirical sources.

The discussion and interpretation of the data provide insights into the complex relationship between sociological factors and mental health outcomes (p. 36-39). The application of the concepts of Rogers and Pilgrim to explain how individuals both actively shape and are shaped by their environment endows the discussion with theoretical depth.

This thesis is a work of scholarship that demonstrates intellectual rigor, analytical skills and theoretical acuity. The structure of the thesis, its theoretical coherence and its findings demonstrate her potential for further academic work.

I recommend the work for defense and rate it as excellent (1.0).

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