

Do You Actually Eat, What You Are?

Predictors of Healthy Nutrition in German Children and Adolescents

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Background and Relevance

- > Not only in Germany are chronic and degenerative diseases related to nutrition such as obesity and type 2 diabetes mellitus a huge burden on the welfare system and the individual's quality of life.
- > In order to generate effective political strategies and to establish healthy nutrition early, knowledge of the predictors of healthy nutrition is crucial.
- > Nevertheless, research in the field of nutritional behaviour in Germany is at the initial phase of explanation.

Purpose

- > Therefore, this Master's Thesis pursues the target of approaching the question of whether you actually eat, what you are.
- > Thus, it is aimed at the contribution to the construction of a theory in the field of nutritional behaviour.

Methods

- > **Model:** This examination is based on the analytical 'Triple-A'-Model, which is informed by Behavioural and Neuro-Economics.
- > **Data:** The study is grounded on the social-epidemiologic cross-sectional data of the basic KiGGS survey 2003-2006 for children and adolescents aged 1 to 17 years living in Germany.
- > **Analytical Strategy:** The study of associations comprises three analytical steps, namely univariate respectively multivariate, multiple linear as well as multinomial logistic regression on (food group specific) overall intake in g/d and kcal/d and the degree of deviation from the individual's balanced diet.

Results

Description:

- > Children and adolescents in Germany deviate to a great extent from the nutritional recommendations 'optimiX' of the Research Institute of Child Nutrition (FKE) (Figure 1).

Inference:

- > Seen as a whole, the results reveal the empirical relevance of the three dimensions of Affordability, Availability and Accessibility of the 'Triple-A'-Model as predictors of the healthy nutrition of girls and boys in Germany between 2003 and 2006 (Figure 2).
- > In particular, a high educational background and part time employment of the parents emerge as **protective factors**.
- > Disposable income is a **neutral factor**.
- > Regional deprivation, older birth cohorts, migration background and full time employment of the parents appear as **risk factors**.

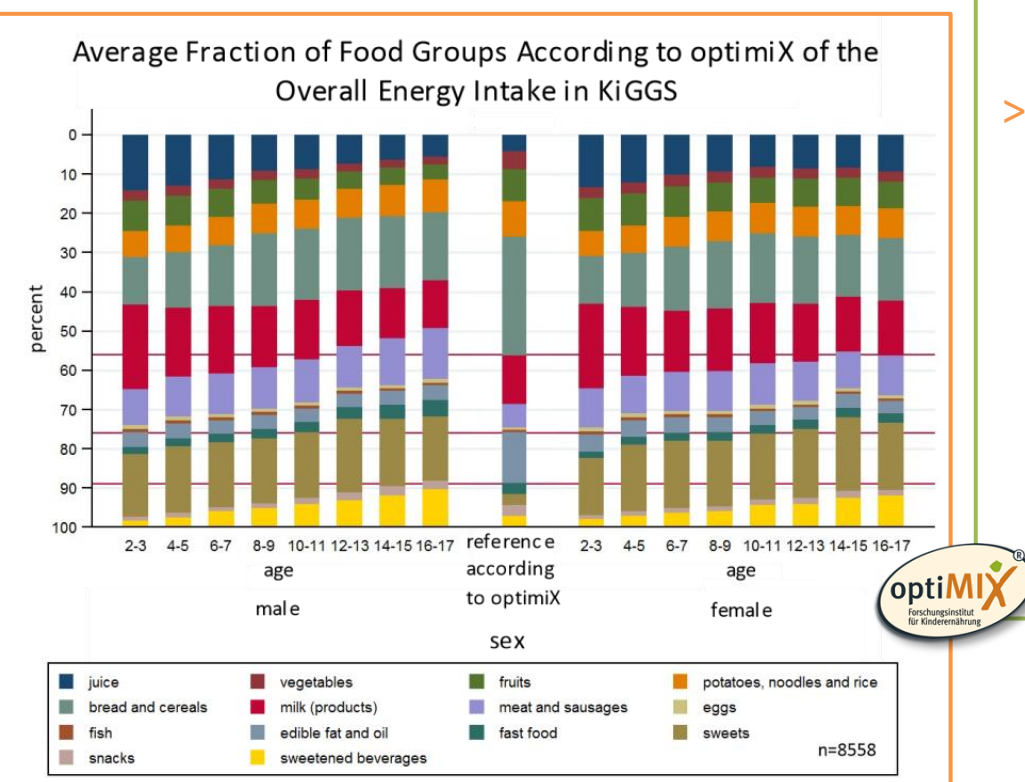


Figure 1: Average percental composition of German Childrens' diets



Predictors of Healthy Nutrition

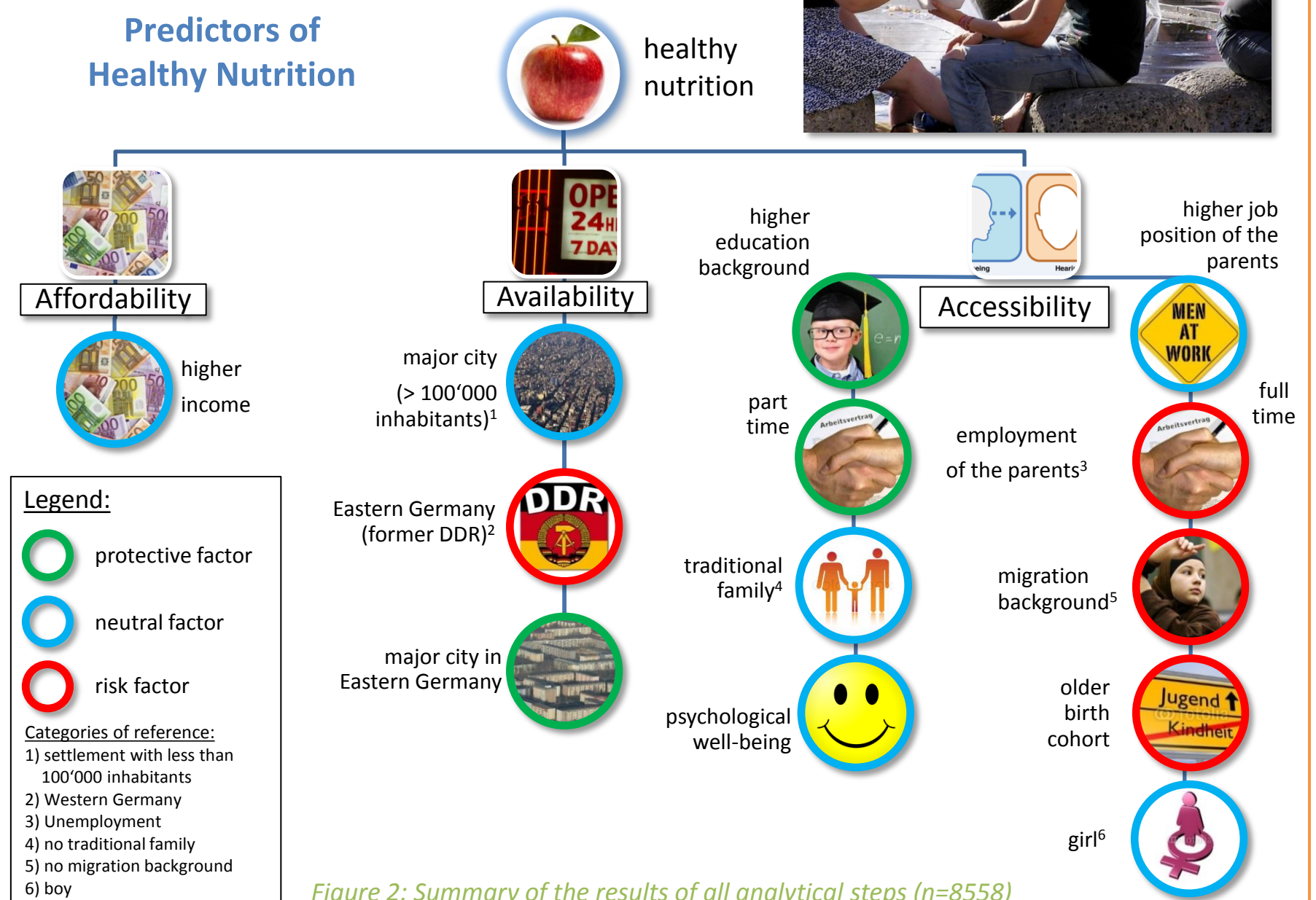


Figure 2: Summary of the results of all analytical steps (n=8558)

Conclusion

- > **Scientific:** To summarise, the partly complex structure of the results justifies further research regarding modelling and the strategy of analysis. Especially causal-analytical replications based on panel data are essential for further theorising (feasible for KiGGS from 2016 on).
- > **Political:** Simultaneously, the study at hand refers to the necessity of setting-based health promotion based on effective novel approaches with the purpose of an early establishment of the direction for the sake of nutritional health equality.



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