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Return to Invested Capital and the Performance of Mergers and Acquisitions.

Aim: The Disease Management Programmes (DMPs) introduced in Germany since 2003 are intended to improve health care for the chronically ill. Whether they do this is currently being investigated in various evaluation settings. In order to assess possible changes in the process quality from the point of view of patients, the BARMER health insurance company conducted a national postal survey in Germany in 2007 of its customers with diabetes mellitus type 2 in order to compare programme participants and non-participants. This evaluation is a sub-analysis intended to clarify whether the utilisation, acceptability and perceived benefits of the programme differ as a result of educational status.

Subjects and Methods: A nationally representative random sample was drawn from BARMER insurance customers with type 2 diabetes, aged 45–79 years. Questionnaires were evaluated from 38.5% of the sample (DMP-participant respondents: $n = 2,158$; non-participant respondents: $n = 2,182$).

Results: A lower educational status was related among other things with increased morbidity, a poorer level of information and also a less well-developed “preventive attitude” to the disease. The finding that 49% of participants had a higher school qualification compared with 45% of non-participants, although significant, is less pronounced than the differences found between DMP participants and non-participants for other values analysed. A social influence could be found concerning the differences in treatment provided within the programme. A multivariate analysis shows that both the participation in the programme and higher levels of education have independent positive effects on the satisfaction with health status, with the effect of programme participation being stronger.

Conclusions: It can be assumed that the clear differences established between the groups of DMP participants and non-participants can in no way be explained solely by the comparatively small difference related to school education. Patients obviously appreciate the fact that the health personnel and the insurance company are paying increased interest to their disease, and this is true to an increased degree for participants with only basic schooling. Although overall this group is significantly under-represented among the participants, they reported to an increased degree that they were profiting from the programme.