



Crossing Borders

(Cross-)Cultural Psychology as an
Interdisciplinary Multi-Method Endeavor

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JACOBS
UNIVERSITY



TUESDAY, July 29, 2008

17:00 – 18:30

Paper Symposium

Boris Mayer & Gisela Trommsdorff

(Convenors and Chairs)

Value of children and intergenerational relations in different cultures

This symposium brings together an international group of scholars from five countries on the basis of the cross-national „Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations Study.“ The papers deal with three related research domains from a cross-cultural perspective: (1) relations between values of children and fertility, (2) transmission processes within the family across three generations, and (3) cross-cultural patterns of family-relationship variables. In the first contribution Mayer and Trommsdorff study the relations between values of children and fertility behavior across eleven cultures from a multi-level perspective. Adolescents' values of children predicted their future-plans to have children across levels of analyses. The second paper by Klaus and Suckow analyses the dimensionality of the perceived costs of children, the congruence between spouses with regard to these costs, and the effect of the perceived costs on the transition to parenthood in a German sample. The third contribution by Friedlmeier and Friedlmeier focuses on the transmission of fertility-related values across three generations in a US sample. The fourth paper by Lubiewska and Rokowska analyses Polish adolescents' attachment representations as well as intergenerational transmission processes regarding attachment in different family contexts. Finally, Kagitcibasi, Ataca and Diri analyze aspects of Kagitcibasi's family change model in a cross-cultural study comparing intergenerational relationships in Germany, Turkey, and Indonesia. Fred Rothbaum will discuss these studies with regard to the usefulness of a cross-cultural approach for the theoretical and methodological advancement of research on family-related value orientations and intergenerational relationships.

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**Adolescents' values of children and their future plans to have children:
A multi-level perspective**

The value of children approach relates reasons for having children (values of children, VOCs) to fertility behavior. Several studies have shown that on the cultural as well as on the individual level economic-utilitarian VOCs are related to higher fertility while emotional VOCs are related to lower fertility. In this presentation the relations between adolescents' values of children and their future plans to have children were studied using a multi-level approach. Subjects were N = 2972 adolescents from eleven cultures (mostly Europe and Asia as well as South Africa) participating in the international Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations Project. Data were analyzed using random effects hierarchic linear modelling. Results showed that on the cultural level the expected positive effect of economic-normative VOC and the expected negative effect of emotional VOC on adolescents' future plans to have children occurred. However, at the individual level emotional VOC was positively related to future plans to have children, and this effect was moderated by culture-level economic-normative VOCs: in cultures with high economic-normative VOC, the positive relation between emotional VOC and future plans to have children was attenuated. Economic-normative VOC was unrelated to future plans to have children at the individual level. The results are discussed with respect to the possible implications of these findings for a culture-informed multi-level perspective on the VOC– fertility relation.

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The costs of children for German couples

The value-of-children approach has shown explanatory power not only with respect to international comparisons but also concerning historical variations. Following this approach the fertility decision is influenced by the parental perception of costs and benefits of children, while this perception in turn is determined by individual resources of the parents as well as contextual opportunities and

restrictions. However, there are two shortcomings: (1) the focus is mostly on (female) single persons, implying that interactions within couples and different perceptions of both partners are neglected; (2) costs of children are not sufficiently analyzed. This is especially the case in Germany where childlessness is rather high although the universal emotional value of children would suggest giving birth to at least one child. The second wave of the Mini-Panel, a pre-study of a large German panel on intimate relationships and family relations, allows to analyze the perceived costs and benefits of both partners (N = 237 dyads) and their influence on fertility decisions. In a first step we analyzed the cost-dimensions of children and the congruence of partners' perceptions. Three dimensions of costs were identified: costs concerning affect/stimulation, comfort costs, and opportunity costs. Dyadic analyses revealed that individual resources of both partners influenced the perception of costs of children. In a last step we analyzed the influence of these cost-dimensions on the transition to parenthood. Results showed a high importance of women's perception of costs of children whereas males' perceptions of costs were rather irrelevant for having a first child.

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Fertility patterns and motivations for having children across three generations in the U.S.

This presentation aims to explore continuities and discontinuities in fertility patterns across three generations in the United States from a psychological perspective. Sociological studies showed that family sizes of successive generations are positively related. Here we examine behavioral dispositions that may have an impact on such continuity by focusing the intergenerational transmission of fertility values and preferences. Although transmission of values is a very selective process, it is expected that the motivation for having children as well as fertility preferences (actual number of children, ideal/big/small size of a family) are relatively stable across the three generations. The study is part of the cross-cultural Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations Project. N = 304 dyads (mothers and one adolescent child between 14 and 18 years old) and N = 70 grandmothers from a big city in Michigan, USA, were interviewed. Guided by theoretical assumptions and factor analyses four dimensions of the value of children were identified: (1) love and companionship, (2) personal development of the parent, (3) economic benefits and security, and (4) kin group benefits. A stronger transmission of values from mothers to adolescents was found than from grandmothers to mothers. Gender-specific differences occurred for adolescents regarding the importance of value-of-children dimensions and regarding the strength of transmission from mothers. The results are discussed from a culture-informed life-span developmental perspective focusing on intergenerational relationships.

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Examining generalized attachment of Polish adolescents in different family contexts

This study analyzes Polish adolescents' attachment representations and the intergenerational transmission of attachment in different family contexts. We examined attachment through the three dimensions proposed by Collins and Read (1990). The first goal was to replicate the structure of attachment dimensions in the Polish cultural context. The second goal was to test the transmission of attachment representations across three generations (grandmothers, mothers, and adolescents) in different family contextual settings. The sample is part of the cross-cultural Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations Project and consisted of $N = 300$ Polish family triads with adolescents, their mothers, and their maternal grandmothers. Results showed that adolescents' attachment representations consisted of two dimensions rather than three. For the second research question data were analyzed in two steps: First, the relationship between adolescents' attachment and the attachment of mothers and grandmothers was tested. In the second step, contextual and person-related variables were added to the regression equation. Additionally, the relationships were tested in different contextual settings emerging from a grouping of families according to their economic status, educational level of mothers, and maternal employment. Results showed that the attachment dimensions of family members were correlated with each other, but the intergenerational transmission was found to be unstable across different family settings. For example, a lack of mothers' employment weakened the transmission. Results are discussed within the framework of attachment theory and the eco-cultural paradigm.

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Intergenerational relations across contexts

The effect of socio-cultural context on intergenerational relations is examined in light of Kagitcibasi's Family Change Model. Specifically, the presentation will focus on intergenerational relations and family dynamics among German, Indonesian, and Turkish families. These societies vary systematically along the dimensions of socioeconomic development and individualism-collectivism, thus it is theoretically important to understand how they differ in important family variables. In particular, these variables concern perceived parental acceptance-rejection, quality of intergenerational relationships (in terms of intimacy, admiration, and conflict), intergenerational social support, and maternal expectations. These variables, among others, have been assessed in the cross-cultural Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations Project, directed by Trommsdorff and Nauck in several countries. Adolescents, their mothers, and their grandmothers represent three generations in this project. Previous theory and research have pointed out that while there is change in certain dimensions of family relationships coming along with socio-economic development, in other dimensions, particularly that of relatedness, there is continuity (Kagitcibasi, 2007). The presentation will take both cross-national and within-society variations into account in order to understand the underlying causal factors. It is hypothesized that Indonesian, Turkish, and German families will differ in terms of intergenerational independence and interdependence, as reflected in the specific variables under consideration. PARTheory's unidimensionality claim of parental acceptance-rejection is also questioned in light of the findings.