

LONG-TERM PREDICTION OF CIVIC INVOLVEMENT AND HOSTILITY TOWARDS FOREIGNERS

Context, Intergenerational Transmission, and Gender

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1. Theoretical Framework

Civic involvement and *ethnic tolerance* are assumed to be core dimensions of political socialization, being of vital importance for the individual (autonomy) as well as for society (legitimation and stability). Both phenomena are known to have multiple causes. There is considerable empirical evidence regarding the role of different contexts. Both civic involvement and ethnic tolerance are influenced by *class* and *milieu*, by *actors* and *relationships* in *families*, in *school*, and in *peer groups* (Clausen & Geissler, 1996). The effect of *formal education* on ethnic tolerance has often been confirmed but is still not fully understood (Hopf, 1999).

For the *intergenerational transmission* of values and attitudes, a key role is attributed to the quality of the *parent-child relationship* (Bengtson, Biblarz, & Roberts, 2002). It seems plausible to assume that this is also true for ethnic tolerance. With regard to the intergenerational transmission of hostility towards foreigners, Rippl (2004) was able to show in a recent study that *parental transmission power* is negatively correlated with the level of integration of adolescents in a clique.

For *political involvement*, the stable "gender gap" in Germany shows that gender-specific processes in political socialization are still relevant (Westle & Schoen, 2002).

3. Operationalization of the Dependent Variables

Civic involvement has been constructed as a quasi-second-order scale. It includes two scales and two items. One scale represents *political alienation* (inverted, 3 items, alpha=.74), the other measures the *self-concept of political competencies* (3 items, alpha=.84). The two items are *interest in politics* and *readiness to vote*. The core item for *political alienation* is: "Folks like me don't have any influence on the government anyway" ($r_{it}=.61$). For the scale *self-concept of political competencies* the following item with an r_{it} of .74 is most typical: "It is easy for me to take part in political discussions." The reliability of the second-order scale *political involvement* (4 variables) is .74.

The theoretical construct *hostility towards foreigners* was measured by a 4-item scale (alpha=.77). The item with the highest r_{it} (.69) reads: "Foreign workers should be sent back to their native countries".

4. Predicting Civic Involvement

The sequential orthogonal models for *civic involvement* show considerable effects of all contexts. With over 20% explained variance for women, the predictability over 20 years is quite remarkable.

Domain / context	Predictors in adolescence for CIVIC INVOLVEMENT in adulthood	Women ^a R ²	Men ^a R ²
Social context and demographics	Social context / urban vs. rural milieu (child at age 15)	0.2% n.s.	0.8% n.s.
	Social class (child at age 15; higher class = higher involvement)	2.4% *	4.1% ***
Family context	Parents' cultural capital (child at age 13; higher capital = higher involvement)	2.6% *	0.6% n.s.
	Parents' political involvement (child at age 13; higher involvement = higher involvement)	5.2% ***	1.5% n.s.
Peer context and school context	Opportunities for democratic participation at school (child at age 15)	0.8% n.s.	0.5% n.s.
	Status relevance of political interest in class (child at age 15)	0.7% n.s.	0.4% n.s.
	Child's level of formal education (higher education = higher involvement)	10.3% ***	10.4% ***
Personal resources and political behavior	Child's verbal intelligence (at age 15; higher intelligence = higher involvement)	1.8% *	0.1% n.s.
	Child's school grades (at age 15)	0.3% n.s.	0.1% n.s.
	Child's political knowledge (at age 15)	0.5% n.s.	0.5% n.s.
	Child's active democratic participation at school (at age 15; more participation = higher involvement)	1.6% *	0.7% n.s.
		F _{total} R ² total 26.4% R ² total adjusted 23.0%	F _{total} R ² total 51.1% R ² total adjusted 15.9%

^a Sequential orthogonal calculation of variance portions; p values relate to F change

The cultural script of the male gender role seems to regulate men's access to politics in a way that is relatively independent of their parents' resources and values, whereas for women's political socialization the parents' habitus plays a more crucial role, without being determined by social class and formal education.

2. Research Questions

- (1) Are there any long-term effects of the different contexts in adolescence (class, milieu, family, school, peers) on *civic involvement* and on *hostility towards foreigners* in adulthood?
- (2) Does the relationship with parents in adolescence moderate the intergenerational transmission of *hostility towards foreigners*?
- (3) Are the effects of parents and of peers on *hostility towards foreigners* inversely dependent?
- (4) Does gender make a difference?

These questions will be answered based on data from the LifE Study (Fend, Georg, Berger, Grob, & Lauterbach, 2002). The LifE Study allows for testing prediction models with a time span of 20 years and more. Context data from adolescence (at age 15) is used for predicting *civic involvement* and *hostility towards foreigners* in adulthood (at age 35). Statistical procedures include gender-specific linear regression models in SPSS and a SEM group-comparison approach in AMOS, again separated by gender.

5. Predicting Hostility towards Foreigners

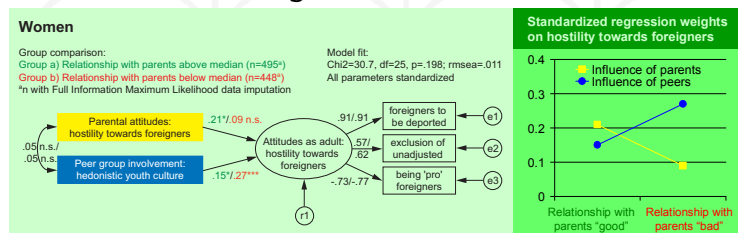
The sequential orthogonal prediction models for *hostility towards foreigners* yield slightly lower levels of predictability over 20 years, especially for women. Still, all contexts add to prediction.

Domain / context	Predictors in adolescence for HOSTILITY TOWARDS FOREIGNERS in adulthood	Women ^a R ²	Men ^a R ²
Social context and demographics	Social context / urban vs. rural milieu (child at age 15; urban = less hostility)	1.8% n.s.	2.7% *
	Social class (child at age 15)	0.9% n.s.	1.8% n.s.
Family context	Parents' hostility towards foreigners (child at age 13; more hostility = more hostility)	0.4% n.s.	6.4% ***
	Parents' authoritarian educational attitudes (child at age 13; more authoritarian = more hostility)	2.1% *	0.6% n.s.
Peer context and school context	Status relevance of political interest in class (child at age 15)	1.4% n.s.	0.7% n.s.
	Force of conformity in class (child at age 15)	0.3% n.s.	0.1% n.s.
	Child's participation in hedonistic peer culture (more hedonistic activities = more hostility)	2.2% *	1.4% n.s.
Personal resources and political behavior	Child's verbal intelligence (at age 15)	0.2% n.s.	0.0% n.s.
	Child's school grades (at age 15)	0.0% n.s.	0.8% n.s.
	Child's active democratic participation at school (at age 15)	0.5% n.s.	0.2% n.s.
		F _{total} R ² total 17.2% R ² total adjusted 11.9%	F _{total} R ² total 4.06% R ² total adjusted 20.8% 15.7% ***

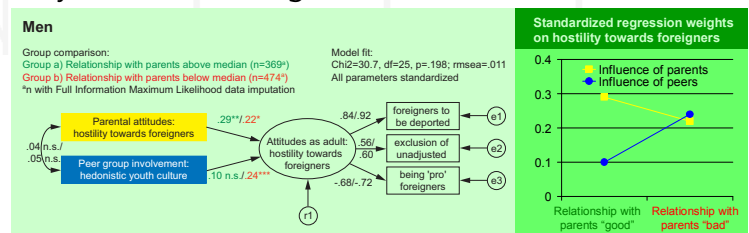
^a Sequential orthogonal calculation of variance portions; p values relate to F change

The parents' effect seems to be more of the "transmission" type than of the "authoritarian child-rearing practices" type. The gender-specific pattern with regard to parents and peers suggests that their interplay should be investigated further.

6. Patterns in Intergenerational Transmission of Hostility towards Foreigners



The SEM group-comparison model for females shows that there is an inverse dependence of parental and peer influence. Both influences are moderated by the quality of the relationship with the parents.



For males there is an analogous differential effect for quality of relationship with the parents. However, for males, parental transmission power is generally higher and peer influence is lower than for females. Moreover, there is a very slight interaction effect between gender and parent relation: The loss of parental transmission power due to a not-so-good relationship is a bit higher for females than for males (.12 compared to .07).

7. Conclusion

- (1) There is evidence that contexts in adolescence have long-term effects on *civic involvement* and *hostility towards foreigners* in adulthood. They account for approx. 20% and 15%, respectively, of the variance.
- (2) The relationship with parents in adolescence does moderate the intergenerational transmission of *hostility towards foreigners*. A good relationship is associated with higher transmission power.
- (3) The effects of parents and of peers are inversely dependent. Lower parental transmission power is associated with higher peer influence and vice versa.
- (4) Gender does make a difference, especially with regard to the impact of parents. Parents have more influence on males than on females concerning the transmission of *hostility towards foreigners*. In fact, this impact on males persists even when the relationship is relatively poor. On the other hand, parents are more important for females than for males regarding access to political life.

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