Longitudinal Analysis of Components of Future Orientation in Adolescence

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The Project „SLT“
- A longitudinal Study in Berlin 1993 - 1997, supported by the DFG
- Researching on „Subjective Life Theories“ of adolescent Students aged 13 to 18 years
- Focusing on the Development of Political Orientations, Value Orientations and the Future Orientation and further moderating variables like Subjective Well-being and Personal Traits ("Big Five")

The Main Questions
- How do adolescents see their private future and the future of the society?
- Are there changes in their expectations concerning their future life in course of time?
- Do East- and West-Berlin students differ in their look into the future?
- Are there relations between private future orientation and societal future orientation?

The Private Future Orientation
- students had to evaluate 24 possible future events like e.g. „Get addicted to drugs“ for:
  - Their Probability (P+, P-) (rating 1...5)
  - Their Valence (V+, V-) (rating 1...5)
- The Influence on that event
  - Own Influence (C-I) (binary)
  - Influence of Others (C-O) (binary)

The Panel
- In the Poster, data from the panel of college students („Gymnasiasten“) from 1995-1997 are presented

The Events in the Inventory
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Future (Years)</th>
<th>—</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>—</th>
<th>—</th>
<th>—</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pos.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neg.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Social Future Orientation
- 12 possible future events in society (e.g. “More Job Offers”) had to be rated for:
  - Their Probability (P+, P-) (rating 1...5)
  - Their Valence (V+, V-) (rating 1...5)
  - The Influence on that event
    - Influence of Citizens (C-C) (binary)
    - Influence of Politicians (C-P) (binary)
    - Influence of Chance (C-F) (binary)

Optimism/Pessimism: Probability of Private Future Events

Hopes/Fears: Valences of Private Future Events

Influence: Own Control and Control of Others

Relations between Private and Social Future Orientation (1995)

Conclusion
- The students’ look into their private future is optimistic
- Positive events are seen to be likely and desired
- Negative future events in private life are not very frightening and evaluated as less probable
- The students’ subjective internal control on private future events is high
- The future of society is seen more negative
- Positive and negative events in society are estimated to be likely
- Negative events in society are more frightening than negative events in private life
- Students indicate that politicians are controlling the future of the society rather than citizens
- There are only weak relations between private and social future orientation
- There are only few differences between students from East- and West-Berlin
- Females from East-Berlin are more pessimistic about their Private Future than the other groups
- East-Berlin students see the Social Future more negative than West-Berlin students
- In all these differences are small

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