

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
 - Focussing 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 Future Orientation

- In adolescence people have to develop a personal future orientation, a central developmental task from an adolescents’ point of view
- Representations about their future life in different areas are structured cognitively
- Hopes and Fears are being anticipated, emotionally evaluated and rated concerning their probability

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 Events in the Inventory

Private	Future (Years)			Σ
	1	5	10	
pos.	4	4	4	12
neg.	4	4	4	12
Σ	8	8	8	24

Society	Future (Years)			Σ
	1	5	10	
pos.	2	2	2	6
neg.	2	2	2	6
Σ	4	4	4	12

The Panel

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

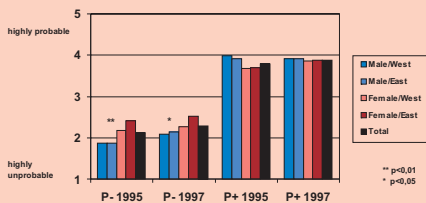
1995 - 1997	West-Berlin	East-Berlin	Σ
male	17	23	40
female	28	29	57
Σ	45	52	97

The Private Future Orientation

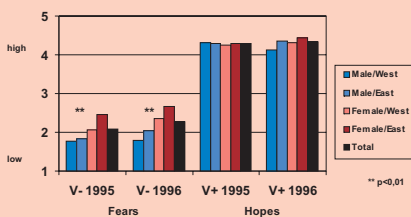
- students had to evaluate 24 possible future events like e.g. „Get addicted to drugs“ for:
 - Their **Probability** (P+, P-) (rating 1...5)
 - Their **Valence** (V+, V-) (rating 1...5)
 - The **Influence** on that event
 - Own Influence (C-I) (binary)
 - Influence of Others (C-O) (binary)

Optimism/Pessimism: Probability of Private Future Events

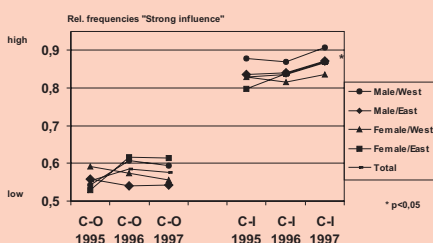
Positive and negative future events are:



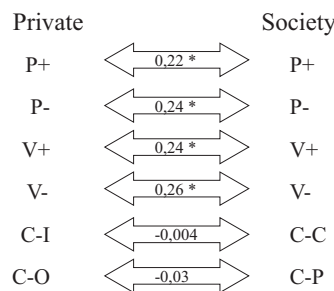
Hopes/Fears: Valences of Private Future Events



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
- All in all these differences are small

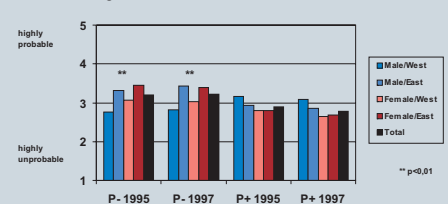
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The Social Future Orientation

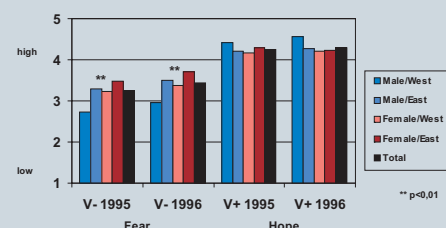
- 12 possible future events in society (e.g. “More Job Offers”) had to be rated for:
 - Their **Probability** (P+, P-) (rating 1...5)
 - Their **Valence** (V+, V-) (rating 1...5)
 - The **Influence** on that event
 - Influence of Citizens (C-C) (binary)
 - Influence of Politicians (C-P) (binary)
 - Influence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

Optimism/Pessimism regarding the Future Society

Positive and negative future events are:



Hopes/Fears: Valences of Future Events in Society



Influence on Events in Society

