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In diesem Heft:

Schwerpunktthema: The dynamics of stepfamilies in cross-national perspective

- Economic conditions of stepfamilies
- Entering a stepfamily in Sweden
- Perceived parental care and closeness in adolescents in the U.S.
- Stepfamily instability in Canada
- Der Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft

- Hausarbeit und Präferenzstrukturen in Partnerschaften

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Inhalt

Editorial

Liebe Leserinnen,
liebe Leser,

im Mittelpunkt dieses Hefts stehen die *Stieffamilien.* Die Gastherausgeberinnen Michaela Kreyenfeld (MPI, Rostock) und Valerie Martin (DJI, München) stellen in international vergleichender Perspektive und aus unterschiedlichen Blickwinkeln Beiträge zum Übergang in die Stieffamilie, zur Situation der Stieffamilien und der in ihnen aufwachsenden Kinder in Deutschland, Frankreich, Kanada, der Russischen Föderation, Schweden und den Vereinigten Staaten vor.

Darüber hinaus findet sich in dieser Ausgabe ein Beitrag zur Rolle der Präferenzstrukturen in Bezug auf die Hausarbeit in Partnerschaften.

Das nächste Schwerpunktheft wird sich dem nicht minder aktuellen Thema der *Partnersuche im Internet* widmen.

Ihnen wünschen wir eine anregende und gewinnbringende Lektüre.

Hans-Peter Blossfeld
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Introduction to the special issue on *The dynamics of stepfamilies in cross-national perspective*

Introduction

All European countries have seen radical changes in the demographic behavior of their populations in recent decades. Many of the facets of recent family changes have been investigated extensively, such as the increase in childlessness, the delay in first-time parenthood, the decline in marriage intensities, and the growing instability of partnerships. Moreover, the changing family structures – especially the increase in single parent families and the spread of non-marital union – have been described and explored using the concepts of de-standardization, pluralization, or the disintegration of the family (Nave-Herz 1998; Tyrell 1979). However, the topic of the increase in the number of stepfamilies has not attracted a similar level of attention in discussions on family change. This stands in contrast to the actual significance of stepfamilies, which may be expected to have grown along with the increase in separation rates. Our knowledge on stepfamilies has often come from clinical psychological studies which mostly provide a negative image of stepfamilies, as only families with problems are likely to seek psychological help (Desrosiers et al. 1994). Representative large scale data to analyze the prevalence of stepfamilies are still rare. It is mainly the data from the Family and Fertility Surveys, which were conducted in the beginning of the 1990s, that have been used to investigate the fertility and partnership behavior of stepfamily members in European countries (Vikat et al. 2004; Thomson 2004; Henz/Thomson 2005). There have also been several country-specific studies that have investigated the prevalence and well-being of stepfamilies (Villeneuve-Gokalp 2000; Bien et al 2002; Martin 2008; Martin/LeBourdais 2008; Steinbach 2008). However, there is hardly any recent cross-national research on stepfamilies in Europe. This *special issue* seeks to fill parts of this gap.

In devoting a *special issue* to the topic of stepfamilies, and in arguing that stepfamilies are a quantitatively significant family type, it is important to acknowledge as well that stepfamilies are far from new. Before the decline in mortality rates in Europe during the 19th century, many children lost their parents before they reached maturity. Thus, the death of the mother or the father was a standard trajectory for children to enter a stepfamily. Fairy tales, such as “Hansel and Gretel”, “Snow White”, or “Cinderella” docu-

mented the salience of this family type in the past. As stepfamilies were often preceded by the death of the biological parent, the stepparent usually replaced the biological parent. Contemporary stepfamilies differ, however, from the "historical stepfamily" in many dimensions. The major difference between stepfamilies in the past and present is that stepfamilies today are more complex because the biological parent is generally still alive. If the biological parents have joint custody, both will be involved in childrearing. Furthermore, the child might live in two households and maintain contact with both biological parents so that the family network of stepfamilies mostly involves more than one household unit. Stepfamilies are thus embedded in a greater number of different social contexts than nuclear families. This not only makes their family network more complex, it may also present challenges for the everyday organization of family life (MacDonald/Demaries 2002). Cherlin (1978) has labeled stepfamilies an "incomplete institution", citing a lack of norms and rules that could govern the behavior of stepfamily members. While it is possible to dispute this notion, it is generally acknowledged that stepparents usually take over parental responsibilities, even though the relationship between the stepparent and the child is not regulated; and that the stepparent has only very limited legal rights towards the child if the partnership with the biological parent dissolves.

The complexity of stepfamilies also presents challenges for empirical research on the family. A stepfamily is usually defined as a couple who co-reside with children from prior partnerships (Bumpass et al. 1995; Bien et al. 2002). If children are moving back and forth between the households of their biological parents, this causes problems for research that uses the household unit as a point of reference (Feldhaus/Huinink 2011). Stepfamilies are neither a homogeneous group. They may be distinguished based on whether they are centered around the father or the mother. If only the father has prior children, it is a "stepmother family"; while if only the mother has prior children, it is a "stepfather family" (Ambert 1986; Desrosiers et al. 1995). If the couple has common children, the family is usually titled a "complex family" or a "blended family". There are also very divergent pathways of leading into a stepfamily as it may be various events such as the death of a partner, divorce, separation or lone parenthood that precedes entrance into a stepfamily. Becoming a member of a stepfamily may thus involve a series of life course transitions. Understanding the prevalence and significance of stepfamilies therefore involves taking a dynamic view that allows us to conceptualize the trajectories that lead to stepfamily membership.

Contributions in this *special issue*

This *special issue* assembles contributions that mainly take a dynamic perspective on the evolution and development of stepfamilies. The papers explore the trajectories that lead to forming a stepfamily and the quality of the relationships within nuclear and stepfamilies, as well as the economic performance and stability of stepfamilies relative to other types of families. The contributions in this volume address the situations of stepfamilies in several countries in Europe, such as Germany, France, Sweden, and the Russian Federation. A study on Canada and the U.S. is also included. In the following, we provide details of the papers included in the *special issue*.

The first contribution is a paper by *Michaela Kreyenfeld* and *Valerie Martin* that provides a cross-national overview on the economic conditions of stepfamilies in France, Western Germany, Eastern Germany, and the Russian Federation. Based on data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Study from the years 2004/05, the paper describes the trajectories that lead to becoming a stepfamily member, and provides an overview of the prevalence of this family type in the four comparison regions. The authors also discuss how welfare state policies govern the choice of living arrangements, and how they determine the economic performance of different types of families. Stepfamilies are in many respects *sui generis*, as they differ from other families in several dimensions. In all countries, stepfamilies are larger than nuclear families. In terms of other socio-demographic characteristics (such as education and age), stepfamilies do not, however, differ greatly from nuclear families. An exception is in France, where stepfamily members tend to be less educated and have higher rates of unemployment than nuclear family members. The major finding of this paper is that the socio-demographic differences between the family types can account for the differences in economic well-being between nuclear and stepfamilies in France. However, in Western Germany, stepfamilies seem to fare worse than nuclear families, even after controlling for the socioeconomic composition of the different types of families. In the Russian Federation and Eastern Germany, no differences in economic well-being are discernible between stepfamilies and nuclear families. In these regions, the dividing line with respect to economic well-being runs between lone parents and other types of families.

The subsequent paper, by *Jani Turunen,* is a country study that focuses on the trajectories that led to the formation of stepfamilies in Sweden for the period 1970-2000. Unlike the first paper, which uses the family as a unit of observation, this paper takes the child's perspective. Using data from the Swedish Level of Living Study (LNU), it looks at when children experience stepfamily membership in their life course. The children are observed from the moment their biological parents separate until a stepparent enters the household. A major finding of this paper is that there are gender-specific differences in the chances of children of entering a stepfamily. Boys are less likely to enter a stepfamily than girls. When the child gets older, these differences diminish. The author also finds that the longer the parent has been separated, the smaller the child's chances of entering a stepfamily are. However, no differences in the rate of entering a stepfamily by the parent's educational characteristics are found. This does not, however, mean that all children have the same overall chances of becoming a member of a stepfamily. It must be taken into account that the only children who were observed were those who were "at risk of becoming a stepfamily member;" i.e., children whose parents were separated or who had never had a serious partnership. As there is an educational gradient in separation risks in Sweden, children of less-educated parents are at greater risk of entering the pool of those at risk of becoming a stepfamily member. If one conditions on the fact that the parents are separated, however, the parents' educational levels do not appear to influence the chances of becoming a stepfamily member.

The paper by *Sebastian Schnettler* and *Anja Steinbach* focuses on the relationship between parents and children. Borrowing from concepts of evolutionary biology, they investigate whether the quality of relationships differs between parents and their biological children, and between stepparents and their stepchildren. The operational definition of the

relationship quality is a measure that uses the children's assessments of the care they receive from their parents, and the closeness they feel with their parents. The data used in this analysis come from the U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). The great advantage of using this dataset is that it allows the authors to make the family a unit of analysis, and to compare siblings within a family. Using fixed-effects modeling, the parent-child relationships within families are compared in order to identify differences in the relationship quality between parents and their biological children, and between stepparents and their stepchildren. The results of this paper confirm the hypotheses of evolutionary biology, which suggest that biological children will experience greater care and attention from their parents. However, it is also acknowledged that other dimensions which might affect the relationship between stepparents and their stepchildren, especially the role of the biological non-co-residential parent, must be explored further.

After this study on the relationship between family members, the next paper, by *Valerie Martin, Céline Le Bourdais,* and *Évelyne Lapierre-Adamcyk*, again takes a dynamic perspective, focusing on the separation rates of stepfamilies. It is well-known that stepfamilies are more fragile than other families. This paper goes beyond previous studies, exploring how separation rates vary by different types of stepfamilies. Using data from the Canadian General Social Survey of 2001, the authors show that the stepfamily type is quite influential in determining the stability of a union. Stepfamilies formed around a stepmother tend to be more stable than those formed around a stepfather. Furthermore, stepfamilies are more prone to separate if the couple lives in a non-marital union than in a marital union. These differences between marital and non-marital unions have remained rather constant over time, despite the fact that the share of non-marital unions has grown radically.

The final paper in this *special issue* is a contribution (in German) written by *Ina Jaschinski*. This paper is also a dynamic study, which draws on data from the German Generations and Gender Survey from 2005. By means of event-history modeling, the determinants of re-partnering after divorce are investigated. Although that this study does not exclusively address stepfamilies, it is a valuable contribution for understanding the trajectories that lead to becoming a stepfamily member. The paper reveals that there are no gender differences in re-partnering rates; however, age at divorce has a more negative impact on the chances of re-partnering for women than for men. The author also shows that there is a positive educational gradient in re-partnering rates for both sexes. The age and the number of children have relatively little bearing on re-partnering rates.

The papers in this *special issue* highlight the importance of taking a dynamic perspective on stepfamilies. They suggest that country variations in the trajectories and well-being of stepfamilies exist, and that it is beneficial to explore them further. However, this *special issue* must leave several questions unresolved. In particular, even though the role of stepfamilies in several European countries and the U.S. and Canada is explored, it is beyond the scope of this *special issue* to provide a comprehensive cross-national overview of the prevalence, dynamics, and economic performance of stepfamilies. In addition, while the number of stepfamilies is growing, the share of stepfamilies is still small in many countries. Thus, survey-based research quickly runs into problems of small sample sizes. Last but not least, the operational definition of stepfamilies is a matter of concern. The papers brought together in this *special issue* usually define a stepfamily as a family

composed of a co-residential couple who live with children from prior partnerships in the same household unit. This narrow definition of the stepfamily does not account for the wider family network of stepfamilies, or for the possibility that children whose parents have separated can alternate between their parents' households. One of the challenges of stepfamily research is to go beyond the household unit, and to integrate the wider family network into the research agenda.

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Michaela Kreyenfeld & Valerie Martin

Economic conditions of stepfamilies from a cross-national perspective

Die ökonomische Situation von Stieffamilien im internationalen Vergleich

Abstract:
This paper investigates the economic conditions of stepfamilies in Germany, the Russian Federation and France using data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS). The analysis shows that stepfamilies more often report economic hardship than nuclear families in France and Western Germany. Socio-demographic differences between family types – particularly the fact that stepfamilies tend to be larger families – explain the differences in economic well-being between families in France. For Western Germany, differences between nuclear and stepfamilies remain after controlling for socio-economic composition of different family types. For the Russian Federation and Eastern Germany, we do not find any statistically significant differences in economic well-being between stepfamilies and nuclear families. The major dividing line for these regions runs between single parents and other types of families.

Key words: stepfamilies, family changes, Western Germany, Eastern Germany, Russian Federation, France

Zusammenfassung:
In diesem Beitrag werden die Daten der ersten Welle des Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) verwendet, um die die ökonomische Situation von Stieffamilien in Deutschland, der russischen Föderation und Frankreich zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Stieffamilien in Frankreich und in Westdeutschland häufiger ökonomischen Schwierigkeiten ausgesetzt sind als Kernfamilien. Soziodemographische Unterschiede zwischen den unterschiedlichen Familientypen, insbesondere die Tatsache, dass Stieffamilien größere Familien mit mehreren Kindern sind, können die Unterschiede in der Einschätzung der ökonomischen Situation in Frankreich erklären. Für Westdeutschland bleiben jedoch auch nach Kontrolle der soziodemographischen Merkmale die Unterschiede zwischen den Familientypen bestehen. Für die russische Föderation und für Ostdeutschland lassen sich keine signifikanten Unterschiede in der Einschätzung der ökonomischen Situation zwischen Stieffamilien und Kernfamilien aufzeigen. Die zentrale Trennlinie verläuft hier zwischen Alleinerziehenden und anderen Familienformen.

Schlagwörter: Stieffamilie, familialer Wandel, Westdeutschland, Ostdeutschland, Russische Föderation, Frankreich

1. Introduction

It is commonly understood by family sociologists that the nuclear family – defined as a married couple with their biological children – is merely an ideological construct, rather than an exclusive family model (Coontz 2000; Nave-Herz 1998). However, recent changes in family behaviour suggest that the nuclear family is retreating more rapidly than ever before. Increasing separation risks challenge the dominant position of the nuclear family, as other types of families, such as stepfamilies, are becoming more prevalent. It is, however, not just the increase in numbers that makes it appealing to study stepfamilies. They are in many respects distinct and "novel" family forms. While stepfamilies were historically mainly formed through remarriages after widowhood (Juby 2003-2004: 5), they are today overwhelmingly formed after separation. Hence, the stepparent is not replacing the biological parent, but is added to the existing family instead. The consequence is an increasing complexity of stepfamilies and extensive stepfamily networks.

The first quantitative studies that tried to assess the prevalence of stepfamilies were conducted for the U.S. In these earlier studies, stepfamilies were mainly defined as marital unions that had evolved through re-marriages (e.g. Cherlin 1978; White/Booth 1985; Glick 1989). However, research for European countries, and more recent research for the U.S. and Canada, have integrated cohabitation into the definition of what constitutes a stepfamily (Cherlin/Furstenberg 1994; Desrosiers et al. 1995; Bumpass et al. 1995). The most common understanding now is that a stepfamily is composed of a marital or non-marital couple who co-reside with children who, in turn, originate from a prior partnership (Bumpass et al. 1995; Martin and Le Bourdais 2008). It is also acknowledged that "living apart together" arrangements can qualify as a stepfamily, as non-coresiding partners might form a strong bond with the child of a "serious romantic partner" (Bien et al. 2002: 11; Stewart 2007: 2). However, these family forms have so far seldom been addressed in empirical investigations of stepfamilies (an exception is a study by Feldhaus/Huinink 2011). Unfortunately, we are not able to address this issue in this paper either and follow the classical definition, which defines a stepfamily as a couple who lives with children from a prior partnership.

The main goal of this paper is to study the socio-economic well-being of stepfamilies in France, the Russian Federation and Germany based on recent data from the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS). We have selected these three countries not only because they cover a large fraction of the population in Europe, but also because these countries represent different welfare regimes with contrasting demographic behaviour. Social policies may influence stepfamilies in several ways. Firstly, they influence the trajectories that lead to stepfamily membership as they define the incentives to choose a particular family form. Secondly, social policies define the well-being of stepfamilies because maintenance regulations towards children and ex-spouses have a direct bearing on the economic performance of stepfamilies. We investigate how stepfamilies perform in these countries compared to nuclear families, on the one hand, and lone parents on the other hand. We ask whether the special characteristics of stepfamilies – including the fact that they tend to be larger families – could explain why this group experiences greater economic hardship than other family types. The operational definition of economic condition is whether the respondent evaluates his or her own economic situation as being difficult.

2. Trajectories into stepfamily membership

Becoming a member of a stepfamily involves a series of life-course transitions. For the biological parent, these transitions include the birth of a child, the separation from the biological father (or mother) of the child and the entrance into a new coresidential union with a new partner. For the stepparent, the transition involves (at a minimum) the formation of a household with a new family and the entry into the parental role, possibly for the first time in his or her life. Meanwhile, the child mostly has to undergo separation of the biological parent, and accept the entrance of a stepparent into the household. A new child might be born into a stepfamily, which eventually transforms the family into a "blended family". Investigating the prevalence and economic conditions of stepfamilies requires an understanding of the life-course trajectory that leads to becoming a member of a stepfamily (Bumpass et al. 1995; Prskawetz et al. 2003).

From the 16th to the 19th centuries, the formation of a stepfamily was usually preceded by the death of a partner. Remarriages after the death of a partner were very common, and were often economically necessary to sustain the household (Teubner 2002a). Due to high maternal death rates, it was often the widower who remarried quickly in order to keep the family system intact. Thus, the stepmother family, in which the biological mother was replaced by a stepmother, was the main type of stepfamilies at that period of time. With the decline of mortality rates during the first demographic transition, the importance of stepfamilies decreased continuously. In the aftermath of World War II, separation, divorce and widowhood increased again (Saint-Jacques 1998), but the "golden age of marriage" (Festy 1980) that followed in the subsequent years created conditions that led to a historic low in the number of stepfamilies.

The increase in divorce and separation rates since the 1960s has ushered in a new era in which stepfamilies have become an integral part of the family of contemporary Europe. Whereas in the past stepfamilies were formed through the death of a married partner, stepfamilies are today commonly formed after a separation or divorce from a partner. Thus, the paths that lead to the formation of a stepfamily have become more diverse. It is usually divorce, the breakdown of a cohabiting union or the termination of a more loose relationship, such as a living apart together arrangement, that lead to the formation of a stepfamily. Furthermore, unlike in the past, today children overwhelmingly remain with the biological mother after separation, which inevitably results in a greater number of stepfather families (Villeneuve-Gokalp 2000).

Stepfamilies and family change

Although divorce and separation rates have increased across Europe since the 1960s, marked differences in demographic behaviour have remained. Eastern Germany, Western Germany, the Russian Federation and France differ greatly in terms of family behaviour, and, thus, also in the paths typically followed in these countries in forming a stepfamily. A salient characteristic of family behaviour of the Western-German population is that a high percentage of men and women continue to get married prior to having children (Kreyenfeld et al. 2011). Non-marital births have increased since the 1990s, and particu-

larly since 1998, when the *Kindschaftsrecht* (law related to parent and child) was reformed, and unmarried parents were finally granted joined custody. However, marriage is still an important transition for many couples before they have a first child. From this it follows that the group "at risk of forming a stepfamily" is mainly composed of divorcees in Western Germany.

The East-German pattern differs considerably from the West-German one, as unmarried parenthood is at record high levels in the East. The same can be said of the French "demographic regime" (see Table 1). Unmarried mothers are overwhelmingly women who coreside with a partner in both France and Eastern Germany (Konietzka/ Kreyenfeld 2002; Köppen 2011). As such, the breakdown of a cohabiting union should be a frequent pathway to forming a stepfamily in these two regions. The fact that cohabiting unions are less stable than marriages might be an additional factor which would explain why there is a large share of unmarried women in the pool of those "at risk of forming a stepfamily" (Marcil-Gratton et al. 2000; Juby et al. 2001).

Table 1: Demographic indicators for France, the Russian Federation, Eastern and Western Germany 1960-2008

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2008
Share of non-marital births						
France	6.1	6.8	11.4	30.1	42.6	51.6
Western Germany	6.3	5.5	7.6		18.6	25.8
Eastern Germany	11.6	13.3	22.8	35.0	51.5	60.7
Russian Federation	13.1	10.6	10.8	14.6	28.0	28.0 [ii)]
Total divorce rate						
France	0.10	0.12	0.22	0.32	0.38	0.47 [i)]
Western Germany	—	0.15	0.23	0.31	0.42 [a)]	0.43 [a)i)]
Eastern Germany	0.16	0.19	0.32	0.24	0.34 [b)]	0.37 [b)i)]
Russian Federation	0.17	0.34	0.42	0.40	--	--
Mean age at childbirth						
France	27.6	27.2	26.8	28.3	29.4	29.9
Western Germany	27.9	26.9	27.1	28.3 [c)]	28.9 [c)]	30.2 [c)]
Eastern Germany	26.4	25.4	24.5	25.1 [c)]	27.6 [c)]	29.1 [c)]
Russian Federation	28.2	26.9	25.7	25.3	25.8	27.2

Notes: [a)] with East Berlin; [b)] without East Berlin [c)] without Berlin; [i)] 2006 [ii)] 2007
Sources: Council of Europe (2005); Eurostat (2011); Dorbritz (2007); Statistisches Bundesamt (2001); HFD (2011); Generations and Gender Programme (2011)

In the Russian Federation, cohabitation is still rare, and early marriage and childbearing are almost universal (Perelli-Harris/Gerber 2011). Unfortunately, we do not have access to recent period divorce rates for the Russian Federation, but we do know that Russian divorce rates were among the highest in Europe in 1990 (Table 1). Studies based on micro-level data support the assumption that divorce intensities continued to increase in Russia thereafter (Muszynska 2006). A characteristic of the Russian regime is also the very low age at childbearing, which suggests that Russian women are not only more likely to be divorcees prior to entering a stepfamily, but that they are also likely to be substantially

younger than women in France or Germany. Additionally, as the country is well-known for its high male mortality rates (Andrev et al. 2009; Leon et al. 2009), the Russian Federation might be one of the few European countries where the death of the spouse is still a frequent transition in the trajectory of becoming a stepfamily.

Social policies and entrance into stepfamily membership

Beyond these pure demographics, the social policy context should shape the formation of a stepfamily. Welfare state institutions are largely assumed to govern maternal and paternal employment patterns, and, in doing so, to define the prevalent earner model in a society (Esping-Andersen 1999; 2009). Social policies, however, also provide incentives to get married or to cohabit (Gauthier 2007: 26; Perelli-Harris/Sanchez-Gassen 2010), and thus create incentives to leave singlehood. As children overwhelmingly stay with their mothers after separation, policies that influence the well-being of divorced and single women should be most significant in explaining stepfamily formation. If lone mothers experience economic difficulties because they are unable to support their children, the pressure to enter into a stepfamily arrangement might be higher than in countries where single and divorced mothers can sustain a "livelihood of their own" (Orloff 1993: 311; Orloff 2009: 327).

Comparing the Russian Federation, France and Germany, we must conclude that the economic pressure to exit single motherhood is probably highest in the Russian Federation, where social support to single mothers was heavily curtailed after the demise of the communist system (Zabel 2008). Furthermore, public day care centers were shut down (Pascall/Manning 2000). The combination of these factors have produced a situation that leaves single mothers at exceptionally high poverty risk (Kanji 2004). Additionally, the extremely tight housing situation has forced many single mothers to live in extended kin household structures, either with parents or other relatives (Lokshin et al. 2000). Judging from the high re-marriage rates that have been reported for the Russian Federation (Spielauer et al. 2007), it seems plausible that both aspects taken together, economic strains and the housing situation, have created strong incentives for single mothers to enter a new relationship after separation, divorce or the death of a partner.

In France and Germany, as well, single mothers are at high risk of poverty (Bradshaw et al. 2006). However, the situation is still markedly different from that of Russia, as the general economic situation is substantially more advantageous in France and Germany. For France, it could also be argued that the welfare state enables women's autonomy, as it is geared towards the integration of women into the labour market (Lewis 1992: 165; Martin 1995). From this it follows that the economic pressure to leave single parenthood is less severe than it is in the Russian Federation. The same might be said about Eastern Germany, where the wide availability of public day care enables women to be employed after having a child.

In Western Germany, a single mother's chances of being economically self-sustaining are generally seen as being rather limited. Because it is a "male breadwinner regime", the absence of a husband is usually considered a social risk factor (Ostner 1995). The incompatibility of work and employment could create economic pressure for single mothers to

re-partner in order to avoid transfer dependency. However, there are also legal forces, such as maintenance payments, that could work in the opposite direction. Germany appears to differ from the other countries in this respect as maintenance payments to the care-giving ex-spouse were quite liberally granted until the reform of the alimony law in 2008. Until then, the parent who cared for a child could claim maintenance payments (*Betreuungsunterhalt*) until the child reached age eight, and was only expected to work part-time if the child was between ages eight and 14. However, the income of a new residential partner could be considered in the assessment of the maintenance payments of the ex-partner; upon re-marriage the payment was suspended completely. These regulations might have discouraged some people (or rather some *women* who were the main recipient of these payments) from getting married or forming a non-marital union with a new partner, and thus entering a stepfamily. The legal regulations have been the same for both parts of Germany since unification. However, the *Betreuungsunterhalt* is probably not a relevant factor for explaining re-partnering behaviour in the East because Eastern Germans marry less frequently, and maintenance regulations therefore do not apply to them to the same degree.[1] Further, East-German women often do not become eligible for maintenance claims because they either work themselves, or because the income of the ex-partner is so low that it barely suffices for paying child support.

Stepfamilies: A selective population?

When studying the economic well-being of stepfamilies, it is also necessary to consider that stepfamilies are a select group of families. In particular, they are often larger families because couples have a tendency to cement their partnership by having common children. This "union commitment" explains why the number of children is higher in step- than in nuclear families (Thomson 2004; Buber/Prskawetz 2000; Prskawetz et al. 2003; Vikat et al. 2004; Henz/Thomson 2005; Holland/Thomson 2011).

Given that economic pressures increase with the number of children, stepfamilies should experience economic difficulties more often than nuclear families (Teubner 2002b). The fact that a portion of the household income hinges on the alimony payments of the ex-partner is also a distinctive aspect of stepfamilies, and might be another source of economic distress among stepfamilies.

However, stepfamilies might also differ in terms of other socio-economic characteristics, particularly if there is a social gradient entrenched in the trajectories that lead to becoming a stepfamily. If, for example, lone parenthood is more common among the less educated, we could expect to also find a social gradient by family type, assuming that lone parenthood is common in the trajectory to forming a stepfamily. However, becoming a stepparent also depends on the chances to re-partner, and unfortunately, there are only few studies on this topic available. Jaschinski (in this volume) analysed data from the

1 In principle, it is possible to claim maintenance (*Betreuungsunterhalt*) from the ex-partner of a non-marital union. However, maintenance payments are restricted to the period until the child reaches age three. In 2008, the ability of divorced persons to claim maintenance has been curtailed, so that regulations for non-marital and marital unions have become more similar. As the data from the first wave of the GGS refer to the time before the reform, we do not discuss the new regulations in detail.

German GGS and investigates how female education affects re-partnering behaviour. She argues that highly educated women should be less likely to re-partner as they are more economically independent than their less educated counterparts. However, she also acknowledges that highly educated women might be more advantaged on the partner market which increases their chances to enter into a new partnership. Empirical evidence is given for the latter presumption which shows that highly educated women experience elevated re-partnering rates. Similar findings have been reported by Wu and Schimmele (2005) for Canada. From these studies, it would follow that highly educated women are more likely to form a stepfamily. However, we also know that highly educated women are less likely to become a lone mother in Germany, France and the Russian Federation, as this is the case in most other parts of Europe (Perelli-Harris et al. 2010). In essence, it is difficult to tell how the different transitions that lead to becoming a member of a stepfamily cumulate over the life course. Even if we knew that a negative social gradient existed in separation risks, we could not necessarily assume that we would find the same gradient in stepfamilies if the social gradient in re-partnering risks runs in the opposite direction. As such, it seems difficult to establish a priori whether we would find a negative or positive social gradient in stepfamily membership.

Summary and research hypotheses

In sum, the demographic regimes in Eastern Germany, Western Germany, France and the Russian Federation differ considerably. In light of these differences, we assume that the trajectories that lead to forming a stepfamily vary in the regions that we consider here. For the Russian Federation, we expect to find a high prevalence of stepfamilies due to the unusually high divorce rates in this country, and also because economic pressures might lead Russian women to try to re-partner after the breakdown of a union. We also anticipate that, in the Russian Federation, the share of women who enter a stepfamily after the death of partner will be shown to be higher than in other countries because of the high Russian male mortality rates. For France and Eastern Germany, we anticipate that the breakdown of a non-marital union will be found to be the standard track prior to entering a stepfamily while it is the dissolution of a marital union in Western Germany.

Although we can make firm statements regarding the trajectories that lead into stepfamily membership, it is more difficult to provide concrete hypotheses regarding the economic conditions of stepfamilies. Because they are larger families, they require more housing space and economic resources and we may therefore assume that they are more prone to suffer economic hardship. Stepfamilies may also experience greater economic difficulties because the socio-economic composition of this type of family differs from that of other families. However, stepfamily membership can involve a series of life-course transitions. How the social gradient, which is entrenched in these transitions, will eventually add up over the life course is difficult to determine in advance, and must be explored using the given data.

3. Data and sample

3.1 Data source: First wave of the GGS

In the following, we use data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS)[2] to study (a) the prevalence of stepfamilies, (b) the trajectories that lead to stepfamily membership (c) and the economic well-being of stepfamilies.

The GGS is an ideal data set for investigating the topic of stepfamilies as it contains detailed information about the relationship of the respondent to his or her children as well as to the children of the respondent's coresident partner. In a "household grid", the position of the respondent to each household member is assessed. The grid has the following categories: biological child with the current partner or spouse, biological child with a former partner or spouse, stepchild, adopted child, foster child, biological or adopted child. Additionally, the respondent is asked to name the number of non-resident children, to give the relationship status for each child (biological, adopted or foster) and to provide information about whether the child is the biological child of the current spouse. In a separate section of the questionnaire, information on the children of the current partner is collected.

However, there are also some pitfalls related to this data set. The drawback of the Russian GGS is that non-response is rather high, particularly in the urban areas of Saint Petersburg and Moscow, where the response rate only reached 15 percent (Kosolapov/Zakharov 2005). Therefore, the Russian GGS is biased to some extent as it does not include sufficient respondents from these two urban areas of the Russian Federation. In the multivariate analysis, we account for this by controlling for whether the interview was conducted in Saint Petersburg or Moscow. There is also a problem related to the German data. External validation of the fertility and partnership histories has shown that the fertility and marriage rates of the younger cohorts are rather high, while they are much too low for the older cohorts. As a result, cohort marriage and fertility trends based on the German GGS do not follow the time trend suggested by vital statistics (Naderi et al. 2009; Kreyenfeld et al. 2010). The bias is particularly strong if we look at childlessness or try to generate estimates of ever-married men and women for the cohorts born before 1950. It has been assumed that the bias might relate to problems in the modules that collect information on past partnerships and on children who no longer live in the household of the respondent (Kreyenfeld et al. 2010). As the following analysis is restricted to young respondents who live with their children in the same household, we assume that the bias does not affect our investigation of the prevalence and economic conditions of stepfamilies.

2 The data for Germany (survey year 2005, version 2.0) and France (survey year 2005, version 1.7) have been made available by the United Nations (http://www.ggp-i.org/). The Russian data (survey year 2004) has been made available by the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research. We used here a version that contained a cleansed educational variable. The cleansing has been done by Aiva Jasilioniene and Evgeny Andreev.

3.2 Sample and definition

This investigation is limited to women and men who have children ages 18 and younger with whom they coreside. We follow here the age definition used by prior studies (Teubner 2002a; Steinbach 2008). We distinguish between (a) respondents in nuclear families, (b) respondents in stepfamilies and (c) single parents.

Respondents who live in a nuclear family are defined as men and women who coreside with their marital or non-marital partner, and who only have common children who coreside with the parents. A respondent is assumed to live in a stepfamily if he or she lives in a marital or non-marital union and coresides with at least one child from a prior partnership. Single parents are respondents who do not live with a partner, but with biological children. The definition to which we adhere follows the narrow principle of coresidence. This means that we do not consider partnerships if they do not have any children with whom they coreside.[3] As such, childless respondents, non-residential fathers (and mothers) and parents whose children already have all left parental home are not part of this investigation. It should also be noted that we ignore extended family structures. We define family type only by the relationship to the coresident partner and the coresident child(ren). We therefore disregard whether the respondent also coresides with other relatives. This means, for example, that a nuclear family is assumed to be composed of a couple with common children, regardless of whether this couple lives in the same household with other relatives.[4] Our definition of nuclear families does not take into consideration the marital status of the respondents, but we provide a descriptive analysis which shows to what extent nuclear families are composed of married couples.

Childless respondents and the small group of respondents who only have adopted or foster children have been excluded from the sample. If a respondent has biological children and adopted or foster children, we consider his or her biological children, but disregard the adopted or foster children. As the share of adopted and foster children is extremely small, omitting these children from the analysis does not, however, cause any bias. We also omit the small group of respondents with incomplete information from the household grid. Altogether, the remaining sample contains 3,218 French, 2,533 West-German, 539 East-German and 4,030 Russian respondents. A West-German respondent is here defined as a person who coresides in Western Germany at the time of the interview while an East-German respondent is defined as a person who lives in Eastern Germany at the time of the interview.[5] We analyze both parts of Germany separately as marital and fertility behavior between the two parts of Germany strongly differ (Goldstein/Kreyenfeld 2011). We are, however, unable to account for the fact that substantial migration has occurred since unification and that internal migration might blur a comparison of behavior in Eastern and Western Germany.

3 For a more detailed discussion on the problems related to the definition of stepfamilies, see Martin (2008).

4 This also requires that we disregard whether the children of the respondent already have their own children. There are a few cases to which this applies, as the sample includes respondents with children up to age 18.

5 We group West Berlin to eastern Germany. West Berlin used to belong to the Federal Republic of Germany before unification, but it is geographically located in the Eastern parts of Germany.

4. Prevalence and socio-economic characteristics of stepfamilies

4.1 Prevalence of stepfamilies

Table 2 tabulates the respondents by family type. The table supports previous findings regarding the prevalence of stepfamilies in France showing that they make up less than ten percent of all families (Martin 1995). For the Russian Federation, we find a share of 13 percent of stepfamilies in all families. For Western Germany, we find the same percentages as for the Russian Federation. This result is surprising as we had expected that high Russian divorce rates would transfer into a high incidence of stepfamilies, while the traditional West-German family behaviour would result into a low prevalence of this type of families.

The results for Western Germany are in line with estimates reported by Steinbach (2008) with data from the German GGS. However, it needs to be mentioned that these findings are at odds with prior work on the same topic. The most comprehensive study which provided necessary information to generate the prevalence of stepfamilies was the German Youth Survey from the years 1994 and 2000 (Bien et al. 2002). Based on this data, Teubner (2002a: 40) estimated that stepfamilies make up only about five percent of all families with children under age 18 in Western Germany (and eleven percent in Eastern Germany) which is substantially lower than the values that we have generated with the German GGS. Possibly, differences relate to the different time periods. It has also been mentioned that the German Youth Survey from the years 1994 and 2000 oversampled respondents in urban areas who are married and have children and private property which could also explain the discrepancy (Steinbach 2008: 166). However, we are unable to resolve this issue as we have no other external sources to validate these numbers due to the lack of information on stepfamilies in census and micro-census data.

For Eastern Germany, our results suggest that stepfamilies are rather widespread as they compose 18 percent of all families. This is compatible with our idea that higher shares of non-marital births and low marriage intensities transfer into a high prevalence of stepfamilies. It also fits to prior research on the topic which reports relatively higher shares of stepfamilies in Eastern than in Western Germany (Teubner 2002a; Steinbach 2008). Studies based on data from the Family and Fertility Survey (FFS) also show that Eastern Germany stands out in cross-national comparison with an extraordinarily high share of women who have children when they start coresiding with a partner (Prskawetz et al. 2003: 124). Also the estimates from this study need to be taken with some caution, though. This latter study used retrospective fertility and partnership histories from the FFS which do, however, not contain any detailed stepfamily episodes. For simplicity, it had been assumed that all children that had been born one year or more prior to the beginning of a cohabitation episode with the current partner were children from prior unions. This is, however, a strong assumption as it wrongly classifies families as stepfamilies who had their children while they lived apart and only moved together at later stages in their life courses. Therefore, it is unclear whether the finding from the FFS is indicative of a high prevalence of stepfamilies in Eastern Germany, or whether it merely reflects the fact that the retrospective histories of the FFS covered the period when Germany was separated and the housing situation precluded young East-German couples from moving

in together. However, our analysis is based on a cross-section of family types for the year 2005 in which we have detailed information on the relationship status of all family members. Thus, our analysis does not suffer from the same problems and we may therefore conclude that stepfamilies are more prevalent in Eastern than in Western Germany.

The table also identifies stepfamilies according to whether they are stepmother families, stepfather families, stepmother-stepfather families or blended families. Blended families are further identified according to which of the two partners has children from a previous partnership. The table shows that the share of stepfather families is substantially higher than the share of stepmother families, which supports the assumption that the children tend to stay with their mothers after separation. The same is true if we look at blended families; here the share of blended-stepfather families is also high, indicating that the couple lives with common children and children of the woman from a previous partnership. Even though we observe a dominance of stepfather and blended-stepfather families for all countries, some country variations are discernable. In the Russian Federation, the share of stepmother families is particularly low, suggesting that it is very uncommon for children to stay with their fathers after the breakdown of a union. In France and the Russian Federation, the share of blended families is rather high while the opposite is true for Eastern and Western Germany which largely supports prior findings on the fertility in stepfamilies (Thomson 2004: 127).

Table 2: Respondents by family type, column percent

	France	Western Germany	Eastern Germany	Russian Federation
All families				
Nuclear family	81	77	68	74
Stepfamily	9	13	18	13
Single parent family	10	10	14	13
Total	100	100	100	100
Sample size	*3,218*	*2,533*	*539*	*4,030*
Stepfamilies				
Stepfather family[1)]	33	43	49	44
Stepmother family[2)]	10	25	(24)	6
Stepmother-stepfather[3)]	(5)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Blended stepfather family[4)]	40	22	(19)	42
Blended stepmother family[5)]	(10)	(8)	(6)	(5)
Blended stepmother-stepfather family[6)]	(2)	(0)	(0)	(1)
Total	100	100	100	100
Sample size	*267*	*330*	*88*	*485*

Notes: The sample comprises respondents who have children age 18 and younger with whom they coreside. Data have been weighted; () cells are composed of fewer than 30 respondents.

[1)] Stepfather family: A mother with her biological children and a stepfather; [2)] Stepmother family: A father with his biological children and a stepmother; [3)] Stepmother and stepfather family: A mother with her biological children and a father with his biological children; [4)] Blended stepfather family: A mother with her biological children and a stepfather + common children; [5)] Blended stepmother family: A father with his biological children and a stepmother + common children; [6)] Blended stepmother and stepfather family: A mother with her biological children and a father and his biological children + common children.

Source: GGS, wave 1

4.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of stepfamilies and nuclear families

We generally assume that stepfamilies are larger families. This is true for all three of the countries under consideration (see Table 3). However, there are marked differences between the countries. Family size in France is much higher than in Germany or the Russian Federation, which fits the well-known differences in completed fertility between the countries. What is also striking is that the relative differences between stepfamilies and nuclear families are greater in France. What is also noteworthy for France is that the number of non-resident stepchildren (i.e. the children of the partner of the respondent) is larger than in the two other countries. The same is true for the number of non-resident children of previous partners. Therefore, our previous conclusion that the share of stepfamilies is rather low in France must be attributed to our narrow definition of stepfamilies. When we consider the large family network, France stands out due to the high number of non-resident stepchildren in the country. The German stepfamily differs markedly from the French stepfamily as relatively few non-resident children are involved in stepfamilies in Germany.

Table 3: Number of children by family type

	France	Western Germany	Eastern Germany	Russian Federation
Nuclear family				
Resident children of respondent & partner	1.93	1.90	1.65	1.59
Non-resident children of respondent & partner	0.15	0.05	0.04	0.13
Non-resident children of respondent	0.07	0.03	0.07	0.05
Non-resident children of partner	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.08
Total	2.23	2.01	1.79	1.85
Sample size	*2,438*	*1,846*	*344*	*2,809*
Stepfamily				
Resident children of respondent & partner	0.74	0.43	0.36	0.56
Resident children of respondent	0.84	1.33	1.19	0.77
Resident children of partner	0.69	0.23	0.30	0.52
Non-resident children of respondent & partner	0.03	0.04	0.00	0.02
Non-resident children of respondent	0.45	0.12	0.22	0.28
Non-resident children of partner	0.43	0.11	0.15	0.35
Total	3.19	2.25	2.22	2.49
Sample size	*267*	*330*	*88*	*485*

Notes: The sample comprises respondents who have children ages 18 and younger with whom they coreside. Lone parents have been excluded from this table. Data have been weighted.

Source: GGS wave 1

Table 4 compares the marital status of nuclear and stepfamilies at the time of the interview. We distinguish here between married, single, divorced and widowed respondents. As this table only considers respondents who coreside with their partners, the divorced, single and widowed respondents are in fact cohabitees. The table shows that marriage is the dominant arrangement in both step- and nuclear families. However, cohabitation (of a single, divorced or widowed woman) is more common in stepfamilies than in nuclear families. The country that stands out is, again, the Russian Federation where we find a

large fraction of widowed and divorced respondents among the stepfamilies. But also in France, nuclear and stepfamilies differ significantly as the share of married respondents is quite low in the group of stepfamilies. Contrary to our expectations, we find that step- and nuclear families hardly differ in Western Germany. For both groups, we find that more than 80 percent of the respondents are married. This finding stands in some contrast to our predictions as we assumed that the social policy regulations (i.e. the maintenance payments to care-giving divorcees) could discourage re-marriage. The relatively low share of cohabitees among the stepfamilies contradicts this notion.

Table 4: Marital status of respondent by family type

	France	Western Germany	Eastern Germany	Russian Federation
Nuclear Family				
Married	78	94	78	93
Single & cohabiting	21	6	21	6
Divorced & cohabiting	1	0	1	1
Widowed & cohabiting	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100
Sample size	*2,438*	*1,846*	*334*	*2,809*
Stepfamily				
Married	44	83	60	51
Single & cohabiting	31	10	26	18
Divorced & cohabiting	22	5	13	26
Widowed & cohabiting	3	1	1	5
Total	100	100	100	100
Sample size	*267*	*330*	*88*	*485*

Notes: The sample comprises respondents who have children ages 18 and younger with whom they coreside. Lone parents have been excluded for this representation. Data have been weighted.

Source: GGS wave 1

Table 5 shows the trajectories that lead into stepfamily parenthood. In this table, stepfamilies are categorised according to the way the partnership prior to the current union ended. We distinguish here between widowhood, separation, divorce and singlehood. Respondents who were never in a coresidential union before they entered the stepfamily are classified as "never in a cohabiting union". Respondents whose last marital union ended in divorce are placed in the "divorce" category. "End of cohabiting union" includes respondents whose last union was a cohabiting union. "Widowhood" includes respondents whose former partners died, regardless of whether they lived together in a marital or nonmarital union. For Germany, we are unfortunately unable to present estimates as they show unreasonably large shares of respondents who had no partnership before they entered a stepfamily. We attribute this to the poor quality of the partnership histories and we therefore refrain from displaying the results. For the other two countries, we find a plausible pattern that is in line with what we know about the demographic regimes in these two countries. In France, the breakdown of a cohabiting union is just as likely to be a precursor of stepfamily membership as the termination of a marital union. In the Russian Federation, divorce is a frequent track to stepfamily membership. However, what is very

striking for the Russian Federation is the relatively large share of respondents who live in a stepfamily, and whose prior partnership ended because the partner had died. This obviously relates to the high mortality risks in the country.

Table 5: Trajectory into stepfamily membership. Respondents in stepfamilies distinguished by preceding partnership status

	France	Russian Federation
Never in cohabiting or marital union	27	27
Divorce	34	44
End of cohabiting union	35	18
Widowhood	5	11
Total	100	100
Sample size	267	485

Notes: The sample comprises respondents who have children ages 18 and younger with whom they coreside. For this representation, only stepfamilies have been selected.

Source: GGS wave 1

5. Economic conditions and family type

5.1 Dependent variable and method

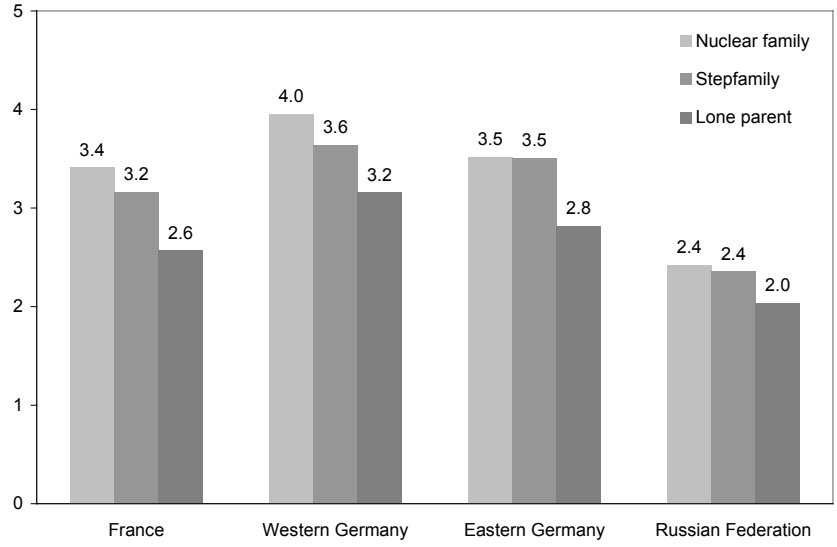
The following part of the analysis addresses the socio-economic well-being of different types of families. The key question here is whether stepfamilies fare worse economically than other families. The operational definition of the dependent variable is whether the respondent thinks that he/she can make ends meet financially.[6] There are six answer categories given to the respondent: 1: with great difficulty, 2: with difficulty, 3: with some difficulty, 4: fairly easily, 5: easily and 6: very easily. As a method, we apply an ordered probit regression. Our modelling strategy is a stepwise inclusion of the socio-demographic covariates. This strategy allows us to investigate whether the differences in economic well-being between families can be explained by the different socio-demographic characteristics of stepfamilies and other types of families. Our sample includes both male and female respondents. It is likely that the socio-economic characteristics of the woman and the man have a different impact on the well-being of a household. This should particularly be true for a male breadwinner regime like Germany where the man's economic standing should primarily define the economic well-being of the family. For this reason, we also estimate another set of models where we distinguish between woman's and man's level of education and employment. As we were unable to construct these variables for single parent households, these families have been left out for this subset of the analyses. Also left out for this part of the analysis are same-sex unions. All analyses are conducted separately

6 The wording in the core questionnaire of the GGS is as follows: "A household may have different sources of income and more than one household member may contribute to it. Thinking of your household's total monthly income, is your household able to make ends meet?"

for France, Germany and the Russian Federation. As the Eastern German sample is rather small, we grouped Eastern and Western Germany together for this part of the analysis. However, we performed interaction models to test whether the relationship between family type and economic hardship differs between the two parts of Germany.

Figure 1 displays the mean values of the dependent variable by family type. The key variable is an ordinal variable where high numbers mean little economic hardship and low numbers mean greater economic difficulties. The figure shows that stepfamilies do worse than nuclear families in France and Western Germany. The mean value in Western Germany for stepfamilies is 3.6, but it is 4.0 for nuclear families. For France, the respective figures are 3.2 (stepfamilies) and 3.4 (nuclear families). For the Russian Federation and Eastern Germany, we do not observe much of a difference between step- and nuclear families. For all four regions, we observe that single parents are the most likely to report economic difficulties.

Figure 1: Economic difficulties by family type and region, mean values of the ordinal variable that indicates if the household is able to make ends meet (1: with great difficulty, 2: with difficulty, 3: with some difficulty, 4: fairly easily, 5: easily, 6: very easily)



Notes: The sample comprises respondents who have children ages 18 and younger with whom they coreside.
Source: GGS wave 1

5.2 Independent variables and composition of the sample

Table 6 displays the composition of the sample by family status and country. We accounted for standard socio-demographic variables, such as citizenship, age, education, employment status, age of the youngest resident child and the number of non-resident and

resident children. The table also reports the sex composition of the sample showing that the large share of single parents are single mothers.

The variable "citizenship" distinguishes respondents with the citizenship of the country of interview from other respondents. For Germany, we also noted whether the interview was conducted in Eastern or Western Germany. As in the descriptive analysis, Berlin was grouped into Eastern Germany. For the Russian Federation, we used a flag variable in the model that indicating whether the interview was conducted in Saint Petersburg or Moscow to account for the low response rate in these cities.

Education was constructed by drawing on the ISCED-97-classification. We grouped the ISCED levels 0-2 into the category "low education", 3-4 into the category "medium education" and 5-6 into the category "high education". We should point out that the distribution of the educational variable is quite different in each of the countries. In France, we observe a much higher share of respondents with a high level of education. This can be attributed to the fact that we treated respondents with a *baccalauréat,* which is a standard track in the educational career in France, as ISCED 5. If one turns to the bivariate relationship between education and family type, there is a clear correlation between stepfamily membership and educational attainment in France. Respondents who live in stepfamilies are less educated. We also find a similar correlation for the Russian Federation and Germany, but the association is less strong than for France. Apart from individual education, we have also generated variables that indicate the level of education of the female and male person in the household.

We integrated employment status into the analysis by distinguishing between respondents who are employed, unemployed, not working and others. The category "not working" includes the category "looking after the home or family" as well as maternity and parental leave. We also generated this variable for the female and male in the household. The descriptive statistics for these latter variables show that Russian women are more likely to be employed than women in the other two countries. Employment rates in France are also higher than in Germany. Overall, we do not see much difference in the employment status by family type in the three countries. However, French stepfamilies seem to be at extraordinarily high risks of unemployment compared to nuclear families.

In order to account for the number of children, we include two variables. One variable indicates the number of resident children. The other variable indicates the number of non-resident children. Both are treated as continuous variables. As was mentioned in the previous section, the family sizes of nuclear families and of stepfamilies differ. The difference is largest in France, where a stepfamily has on average 0.9 non-resident children. Hardly any of the single parents in our sample have non-resident children. Because the type of family is closely correlated with the number of children, our independent variables are, unfortunately, collinear. We checked, however, whether our results remain robust if we restrict the analysis to nuclear and stepfamilies. As they are, we decided to keep lone parents in the sample.

Age was entered as a continuous variable. In addition, age was considered as a squared term (multiplied by 100) to account for nonlinearities. We also accounted for the age of the youngest child by a continuous variable. Due to the low age at childbearing, the respondents in the Russian sample are younger than the respondents in the German or French samples.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics, column % (categorical variables), mean (continuous variables)

	France			Germany			Russian Federation		
	Nucl.	Step	Lone	Nucl.	Step	Lone	Nucl.	Step	Lone
Economic difficulty									
Great difficulty	7	13	26	3	5	12	23	27	41
Difficulty	17	18	22	9	12	21	26	25	24
Some difficulty	26	27	27	23	29	30	40	38	27
Fairly easily	31	26	20	35	31	25	8	8	5
Easily	16	15	5	23	19	10	3	2	2
Very easily	3	2	1	7	5	3	0	0	1
Sex of respondent									
Male	45	48	15	40	36	12	43	44	5
Female	55	52	85	60	64	88	57	56	95
Citizenship respondent									
Native	87	89	86	81	83	87	89	90	90
Other citizenship	13	11	14	19	17	13	11	10	10
Region									
Eastern Germany	–	–	–	15	21	25	–	–	–
Moscow/St. Petersburg	–	–	–	–	–	–	11	14	14
Education respondent									
Low	20	29	31	10	12	20	5	7	5
Medium	12	9	15	59	62	55	71	76	71
High	68	62	54	29	25	21	24	16	25
Unknown	0	0	0	2	1	4	0	0	0
Education female in household									
Low	20	29	31	13	14	21	6	9	5
Medium	15	12	15	62	64	54	69	73	71
High	65	58	53	23	20	21	25	16	24
Unknown	0	1	0	2	2	3	0	1	0
Education male in household									
Low	19	25	28	6	10	11	5	8	0
Medium	9	8	13	56	57	64	72	76	70
High	71	66	59	37	31	21	23	15	30
Unknown	0	1	0	1	2	4	0	0	0
Employment respondent									
Employed	78	75	69	68	66	56	73	71	76
Unemployed	6	12	17	6	8	19	7	8	7
Not working	12	10	9	23	22	19	15	16	10
Other	4	3	5	3	4	7	5	6	7
Employment female									
Employed	69	64	66	52	56	54	65	61	76
Unemployed	6	9	19	5	6	19	6	8	6
Not working	21	22	11	40	35	21	25	26	11
Other	3	4	5	3	3	6	4	6	7
Employment male									
Employed	91	85	86	89	87	68	85	84	78
Unemployed/ not work.	5	11	6	7	9	20	9	8	10
Other	4	3	8	4	5	13	6	8	13

	France			Germany			Russian Federation		
	Nucl.	Step	Lone	Nucl.	Step	Lone	Nucl.	Step	Lone
Continuous variables									
number of resident children	2.0	2.3	1.7	1.9	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.8	1.4
number of non-resident children	0.3	0.9	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.7	0.0
Age of youngest child	6.7	7.3	8.9	7.6	8.5	9.3	9.0	8.7	10.7
Age	38.9	39.4	39.7	39.2	39.5	38.4	36.5	36.2	37.9
Sample size	2,438	267	513	2,180	418	474	2,809	485	736

Note: The sample only comprises respondents who live with their children ages 18 or younger in the same household.

Source: GGS wave 1

5.3 Results of multivariate model

Table 7 displays the results from the ordered probit model that investigates the determinants of economic hardship for women with children. We have estimated separate models for the three countries. For each country, we have again estimated three regressions. The first regression only contains our key variable of interest — namely, the family type — as well as standard control variables, such as citizenship, age and the age of the youngest child. Model 2 also controls for education and employment status and the final model includes the number of resident and non-resident children. We followed this stepwise inclusion of variables in order to check whether differences in economic well-being between step- and nuclear families can be explained by the special socio-economic composition of the group of stepfamilies.

Turning first to the models for France, we find that the first model, which only contains the major controls (M1), shows that stepfamilies more often experience greater economic hardship than nuclear families. Worse off are single parents who perform significantly worse than nuclear families. The control variables are mostly in line with general expectations: foreigners as well as younger women experience economic difficulties more often than others. The results for education and employment status, which are included in Model 2, are also very much in line with general expectations. Low education and unemployment are strongly associated with economic difficulties. Model 3 shows that the number of resident and non-resident children increases economic difficulties significantly. The most important finding of this stepwise analysis is, however, that the coefficient for being a member of a stepfamily becomes weak after controlling for education and employment and becomes insignificant after the number of children has been included into the model. In the final model (M 3), we no longer find any statistical differences between step- and nuclear families. From this, we can conclude that differences in economic well-being between step- and nuclear families in France can be completely explained by compositional differences between the two comparison groups.

For Germany, we find that non-German citizenship strongly increases economic difficulties, as do non-employment and low education. What is special about Germany is that economic well-being differs between stepfamilies and nuclear families, and that these differences remain after controlling for the number of children. For the Russian Federation, the results are at odds with the French pattern: women in stepfamilies and in nuclear

families do not differ with respect to economic difficulties. This holds true before and after controlling for education, employment and the number of children. For the Russian Federation, the dividing line in economic well-being only runs between lone parents and other types of families. Other covariates, such as education, the age of the youngest child and employment status, are similar. What is striking for the Russian Federation is, however, that older respondents suffer greater difficulties than younger ones.

Table 7: Ordered probit model, dependent variable indicates if household is able to make ends meet (1: with great difficulty, 2: with difficulty, 3: with some difficulty, 4: fairly easily, 5: easily, 6: very easily)

	France			Germany			Russian Federation		
	M 1	M 2	M 3	M 1	M 3	M 3	M 1	M 2	M 3
Family status									
Nuclear family	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stepfamily	-0.22***	-0.17*	-0.06	-0.24***	-0.22***	-0.21***	-0.09	-0.03	0.04
Lone parent	-0.73***	-0.66***	-0.74***	-0.70***	-0.61***	-0.62***	-0.39***	-0.43***	-0.47***
Sex									
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female	0.02	0.08	0.09	0.04	0.08	0.09	-0.10*	-0.05	-0.04
Citizenship									
Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	-0.29***	-0.16**	-0.13*	-0.38***	-0.30***	-0.29***	0.01	0.02	0.03
Age	0.07***	0.03	0.04*	0.05***	0.01	0.01	-0.04**	-0.08***	-0.05**
– squared /100	-0.08***	-0.02	-0.03***	-0.04***	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.07	0.04
Age youngest child	0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.02	0.00	0.00	0.03*	0.02	0.01
– squared /100	-0.07	-0.09	-0.12	0.10	0.01	0.01	-0.11	-0.05	-0.05
Education									
Low		0	0		0	0		0	0
Medium		0.29***	0.25***		0.20**	0.19**		0.47***	0.42***
High		0.45***	0.41***		0.65***	0.64***		0.96***	0.89***
Employment									
Employed		0	0		0	0			
Unemployed		-0.64***	-0.63***		-0.81***	-0.80***		0	0
Not working		-0.18**	-0.11		-0.12*	-0.12*		-0.47***	-0.43***
Other		-0.31**	-0.28**		-0.29**	-0.28**		-0.25***	-0.22***
Resident children			-0.12***			-0.03			-0.17***
Non-resident children			-0.13***			-0.05			-0.07*
Log Likelihood									
Nil model	-5202	-5202	-5202	-4872	-4872	-4872	-5536	-5536	-5536
Final model	-5073	-4971	-4949	-4696	-4561	-4559	-5419	-5284	-5265

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.

The sample comprises respondents who live with their children ages 18 or younger in the same household. The constant terms are not shown in the table. The regression for the Russian Federation also controls for whether the interview was conducted in Moscow or Saint Petersburg. The regression for Germany also controls for whether the respondent lived in Eastern or Western Germany. In addition, a dummy for missing education was employed.

Source: GGS wave 1

Table 8 is finally limited to respondents in partnerships and thus, to stepfamilies and nuclear families. This table distinguishes the impact of female and male education and employment. The analysis shows that high education of both men and women lowers economic hardship. It also shows that male non-employment has a very strong negative impact on the economic well-being of the household. Female unemployment also negatively affects the economic well-being of the household. This is, however, not the case for female non-employment (including maternity leave, parental leave and "looking after the home or family") which only moderately relates to economic distress. The most important finding from this table is, however, that the previous results are buttressed. Stepfamilies do worse than nuclear families in Germany, even after controlling for the socio-economic composition of the sample. This is not the case for the two other countries.

We also investigated whether the association between family type and economic well-being differs between Eastern and Western Germany. For this reason, we ran a model in which we interacted family type with region (see Table 8, Model 2 for Germany). In line with the previous analysis, we find that stepfamilies are disadvantaged in terms of economic well-being in Western Germany. For Eastern Germany, we do not find the same association. Here, we find that the coefficient for stepfamilies is insignificant and close to zero indicating that stepfamilies do not differ from nuclear families.

Table 8: Ordered probit model, dependent variable indicates if household is able to make ends meet, only respondents with partners (1: with great difficulty, 2: with difficulty, 3: with some difficulty, 4: fairly easily, 5: easily, 6: very easily)

	France	**Germany**		**Russian Federation**
	M1	**M1**	**M2**	**M1**
Family status				
Nuclear family	0	0		0
Stepfamily	0.07	-0.22***		0.06
Family status				
Nuclear family (Western Germany)			0.25***	
Stepfamily (Western Germany)			-0.01	
Nuclear family (Eastern Germany)			0	
Stepfamily (Eastern Germany)			0.002	
Education female				
Low	0	0	0	0
Medium	0.45***	0.17*	0.17*	0.45***
High	0.69***	0.44***	0.44***	0.69***
Education male				
Low	0	0	0	0
Medium	-0.05	0.14	0.14	-0.05
High	0.42***	0.57***	0.57***	0.39***
Employment status female				
Employed	0	0	0	0
Unemployed	-0.38***	0.67***	0.68***	-0.37***
Not working/ leave	-0.17**	-0.13**	-0.13**	-0.18***
Other	-0.04	-0.01	-0.01	-0.04

	France	Germany		Russian Federation
	M1	M1	M2	M1
Employment status male				
Employed	0	0	0	0
Unemployed/ not working	-0.49***	-0.81***	-0.81***	-0.48***
Other	-0.12	-0.32**	-0.31**	-0.11
Log Likelihood				
Nil model	-4517	-4027	-4027	-4516
Final model	-4280	-3740	-3738	-4268

Note: * p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001.

The sample comprises respondents who live with their children ages 18 or younger in the same household. The constant terms are not shown in the table. The regression for the Russian Federation also controls for whether the interview was conducted in Moscow or Saint Petersburg. The regression for Germany also controls for whether the respondent lived in Eastern or Western Germany. In addition, a dummy for missing education was employed. Other variables in the model are citizenship, age, age squared, age of youngest child, age of youngest child squared, number of resident and non-resident children.

Source: German GGS wave 1

5. Summary and conclusion

The aim of this paper was to study the economic well-being of stepfamilies in France, Germany and the Russian Federation using data from the first wave of the Generations and Gender Survey. As was done in previous studies, we limited the sample to respondents with at least one coresiding step- or biological child under age 18. We have also adhered to the standard definition, according to which a family qualifies as being a stepfamily if one of the coresiding children is from a prior partnership. Following this definition, our analysis has shown that the prevalence of stepfamilies is lowest in France, where about nine percent of all families can be classified as stepfamilies. In the Russian Federation and Western Germany, the shares of stepfamilies are 13 percent, respectively. The prevalence of stepfamilies is highest in Eastern Germany, at 18 percent.

Regarding the trajectory into stepfamily membership, the Russian case is remarkable for a modern society as an unusually large share (11 percent) of the respondents who live in a stepfamily were widowed before they entered the union. The analyses for France support the assumption that it is not just divorce, but also the breakdown of a non-marital union that commonly precedes entry into a stepfamily.

In addition to giving an account on the trajectories that lead into stepfamily membership, we also compared the marital status of stepfamilies and nuclear families at time of interview. Here we find again that the Russian Federation stands out with its high share of divorcees and widowed respondents among the stepfamilies. However, unmarried cohabitation is also relatively common in the French and East-German stepfamily. In Western Germany, respondents in step- and nuclear families are mostly married. This finding is at odds with our idea that social policy regulations (i.e. the maintenance regulations) would discourage West-German women from re-marrying. Overall, our descriptive analy-

ses on the prevalence of stepfamilies did not support well our presumptions. The prevalence of stepfamilies does not correlate well with other indicators of demographic change. Apparently, a high divorce rate, as we find it for the Russian Federation, transfers into a relatively high prevalence of stepfamilies. On the other hand, we find high shares of stepfamilies in Western Germany where marriage rates are relatively high and divorce rates at an only medium level. The French and the East-German case show that high shares of non-marital births are compatible with both low and high shares of stepfamilies.

Regarding the socio-demographic composition of stepfamilies, we find that family size is larger in step- than in nuclear families. France is striking in this context as stepfamilies in this country are found to have a much larger number of children. The share of blended families is also particularly high in France. In respect to other socio-demographic indicators, there is no homogenous pattern. In France, we find that stepfamilies stick out as they are more often subject to unemployment than other families. We also find that stepfamily membership is often associated with somewhat lower education in France. In the Russian Federation and Germany, stepfamily members are also somewhat less educated than members of nuclear families. But the differences between these two family types are much smaller than in France.

Our investigation of the economic well-being of families reveals that stepfamilies differ from other families in France and in Western Germany, but not in the Russian Federation and Eastern Germany. In France, the socio-economic characteristics of stepfamilies, particularly the fact that these are larger families, explain why these families fare worse economically than other families. In Western Germany, differences between nuclear and stepfamilies remain after controlling for socio-economic characteristics. In the Russian Federation and Eastern Germany, stepfamilies do not differ significantly from other families. In these regions, the dividing line runs between single parents and other families.

Our analysis provided an overview on the prevalence and economic conditions of stepfamilies in three of the largest countries in Europe using recent data. Unfortunately, our analyses also had to leave a lot of questions unresolved. One issue concerns the definition of stepfamilies. When we defined a stepfamily, we took into account the household context only. However, French respondents who live in stepfamilies have more non-resident stepchildren than respondents in stepfamilies in other countries. This means that our results must be viewed with caution as a wider definition, which also includes relationships with non-resident children, would probably lead to a completely different country ranking. Another problem with our analysis is that we had to handle the German analysis with great care as the retrospective partnership histories are biased in the German data. This precluded us from analysing the trajectories that lead into stepfamily membership in this country. Finally, the analyses of the economic situation of different types of families leave some issues unresolved. For France, we were able to explain the differences between families by citing the special socio-economic composition of the French stepfamily. However, for Western Germany, we were unable to give a conclusive answer as to why stepfamilies do worse than other families. We discussed the particular social policy regulations in Germany which used to provide quite generous maintenance payments to divorcees. These special regulations could affect the well-being of stepfamilies if the male partner needs to pay maintenance to the ex-spouse. An argument that speaks for this interpretation is that we do not find differences between step- and nuclear families for

Eastern Germany for which these payments only play an inferior role. Germany has recently reformed maintenance regulations by curtailing the maintenance payments for divorcees. It remains to be seen whether this policy reform had any bearings on the relative economic performance of stepfamilies in this country.

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Entering a stepfamily: Children's experience of family reconstitution in Sweden 1970-2000

Eintritt in die Stieffamilie – Die Erfahrungen von Kindern mit Familienrekonstitution in Schweden zwischen 1970 und 2000

Abstract:
In this article, I use the Swedish Level of Living Survey data to study children's experience of family reconstitution, or the first formation of stepfamily in Sweden 1970 to 2000. I set out to analyze relative risks for acquiring a stepparent for boys and girls of different ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, here measured as parent's educational attainment. The results show no educational differences in the stepfamily formation process. There are however clear gender differences in the family reconstitution process where the likelihood of gaining a stepparent varies by the child's gender. Other factors that have effect on the child's likelihood of entering the first stepfamily are the time lived with a single parent as well as the child's age in interaction with the child's sex. Although there are no educational differentials in stepfamily formation, one needs to account for the social gradient in the processes leading to children being in the risk pool. Particularly children of higher educated parents have a significantly lower risk of being born out of union or experiencing a parental union dissolution and thus being exposed to the risk of entering a stepfamily.

Zusammenfassung:
In diesem Beitrag werden die Daten des schwedischen Level of Living Survey verwendet, um die Erfahrungen von Kindern mit der Familienrekonstitution, genauer: mit der ersten Formierung einer Stieffamilie in Schweden zwischen den Jahren 1970 und 2000 zu untersuchen. Zu Beginn wird das Risiko analysiert, einen Stiefelternteil zu bekommen und zwar für Jungen und Mädchen unterschiedlichen Alters und sozioökonomischen Hintergrunds, wobei letzterer anhand des Bildungsniveaus der Eltern gemessen wird. Die Ergebnisse zeigen hinsichtlich des Bildungsniveaus keine Unterschiede im Prozess der Gründung von Stieffamilien auf. Es bestehen jedoch eindeutige Unterschiede zwischen den Geschlechtern, da die Neigung, einen Stiefelternteil zu bekommen, je nach Geschlecht des Kindes variiert. Andere Faktoren, die ebenfalls Einfluss auf die Eintrittsrate in eine Stieffamilie haben, sind: die Zeitdauer, die ein Kind mit einem alleinerziehenden Elternteil gelebt hat als auch das Alter des Kindes in Wechselwirkung mit dessen Geschlecht. Obwohl die Bildung keinen Einfluss auf die Rate des Eintritts in eine Stieffamilie hat, muss man beachtet, dass es ein soziales Gefälle bei den Prozessen gibt, die dazu führen, dass Kinder sich im Risikopool derjenigen befinden, die überhaupt in eine Stieffamilie eintreten können. Insbesondere Kinder höher gebildeter Eltern haben ein signifikant geringeres Risiko außerhalb einer Partnerschaft geboren zu werden oder die Trennung oder Scheidung der Eltern zu erleben und sind somit seltener im Risikopool der-

jenigen zu finden, die in eine Stieffamilie eintreten können.

Key words: stepfamily, stepparent, stepfamily formation, family reconstitution, re-marriage, Swedish Level of Living Survey.

Schlagwörter: Stieffamilie, Stiefelternteil, Bildung einer Stieffamilie, Familienrekonstitution, Wiederverheiratung, schwedischer Level of Living Survey

1. Introduction

Complex family forms like stepfamilies are not a new phenomenon but something that has changed form during the past few decades. Whereas the commonality of stepfamilies in the 19th and early 20th centuries were mainly due to high death rates, the reason for the re-emergence of family form complexity in the Western industrialized world since the 1960's is a change in family behavior. The constellation of changes, often called the Second Demographic Transition, includes increasing non-marital childbearing as well as separation and divorce, all of which produce a larger pool of children who may live part of their childhood in a stepfamily setting.

McLanahan (2004) claims that the Second Demographic Transition has led to growing socioeconomic differentials for children's experience of family life. American children experience two different trajectories. Children of highly educated parents gain by having older, more educated parents with higher incomes and more time for them as well as more stable unions. Children from lower socio-economic groups, on the other hand, are more likely to be born out of union, experience divorce as well as have younger parents with lower incomes and less time for their children. McLanahan shows further that educational differences in mothers' age, employment, single motherhood as well as fathers' time spent with children have increased over time in the U.S.

Although family patterns in the U.S. tend to be extreme in comparison to those in other affluent countries (McLanahan 2004; Andersson 2002), McLanahan provides some indication that socio-economic differences in children's family lives are also found outside the United States, including Sweden. Differences tend to be smaller, perhaps reflecting lower levels of social and economic inequality (Gottschalk/Smeeding 1999; Brandolini/Smeeding 2006). And it is not clear whether the differences that are found in other countries represent 'diverging destinies,' i.e., whether socio-economic differences were larger in the 1990s than during earlier periods. Because income inequality has increased to some degree in all affluent countries (Gottschalk/Smeeding 1999; Brandolini/Smeeding 2006), McLanahan's thesis may be applicable to other national contexts.

McLanahan's focus is mainly on educational differentials in children's access to a biological two-parent family and the resources in parental engagement and money that it brings. Other family dynamics that affect children's access to resources may, however, be affected by growing inequality. The dynamics of stepfamilies and parental repartnering is one potential factor that may ameliorate the effects of a loss of resources and offer a way out of single parenthood. Having another adult in the household increases household income and reduces the workload for the parent, freeing up time. It can also increase the child's access to, and support of, another adult even when the stepparent doesn't assume a

formal parenting role. One could also argue that a stepparent may take time from the parent that would otherwise have been spent with the child (Thomson et al. 2001), while at the same time not providing any additional time from the stepparent whose primary interest is the new partner and not the children.

In this paper I will investigate whether Swedish children from different socio-economic backgrounds experience different chances of entering a stepfamily, or in other words, acquiring a stepparent. Stepfamily formation is an aspect of Swedish family dynamics where very little attention has been given to socio-economic differences with only a few previous parent-level studies. A possible 'diverging destinies' scenario with a growing gap between groups of children losing or gaining from the development of the last few decades motivates a closer examination of the stepfamily formation process from a child perspective.

2. Theoretical framework

Based on previous work by Becker (1991), Goldscheider and Waite (1986) and Oppenheimer (1988), de Graaf and Kalmijn (2003) present a general theory of repartnering based on need, attractiveness and opportunity.

First, people form unions because they have a need for something that the union can bring. It can be emotional, social, sexual or economic. It can also be a need to have children. A new partner can bring support, companionship, intimacy and financial security as well as a chance to form a family. All though the need to have children is likely to be smaller when repartnering and forming a stepfamily than in first union formation because at least one of the partners already has children. The greater the need for these is, the more likely one is to form a union.

Need may differ for men and women. Women have lower labor force participation, have on average lower incomes and work more part-time than men (Blossfeld/Hakim 1997). Part-time work is especially common for women with children (Sundström 1997). They should therefore have greater financial need for repartnering than do men. Women more often have custody of children after a divorce or separation, increasing not only financial need but also need for another adult in the household to help with household tasks and childrearing.

Second, the likelihood of repartnering depends on how attractive a person is. Attractiveness can of course be physical but also social and economic. A person with a stable and well-paying job may be more attractive than an unemployed person and a highly educated person more attractive than someone with only basic education. Having children may also affect a person's attractiveness. Children from previous relationships may make a person less attractive on the repartnering market because a potential partner can expect the child to be a financial burden and a competitor for attention and affection from the parent-partner. The child may also bring other complications like increased contact with the previous partner who is the child's parent, or diffuse roles within the new stepfamily (see Cherlin 1978). Therefore, the number of children should have a negative relationship with the likelihood of repartnering. Especially co-residence could be argued to make a parent less attractive than if the children mainly reside with the other parent. Young chil-

dren may be more attractive for a prospective stepparent who might expect less conflict with a young child than an adolescent. It may also be easier to form a more parent-like relationship to a stepchild if the stepfamily is formed during the young childhood.

There are also gender differences in the effect of children on parents' attractiveness on the partnership market. Women may be viewed as less able to 'mother' a stepchild than men could 'father' a stepchild, because being a mother implies a deeper and more active role with stronger ties to the child than being a father, a role that could more easily be handled by an 'outsider' (for discussion of mother and stepmother role expectations see Weaver/Coleman 2005; Hays 1996). Related to this is that children more often reside with the mother after a separation or divorce. So men who like children might be more interested in partnering with a woman who has children than it would be the case when the woman considers a male partner. On the other hand, women with children might prefer men who are fathers because it reflects the man's experience with, and interest in, children. Having children might also make a man more attractive in cases where the prospective female partner is older and childless but still would like to have a family. The sex of the child may also affect the attractiveness of the parent on the repartnering market. Dahl and Moretti (2008) have shown that parents in the U.S. have a preference for sons and Andersson and colleagues (2006) have shown that Swedish, Danish and Norwegian parents have a preference for girls whereas Finnish parents prefer boys. Both these studies deal with biological children and the demand for stepchildren may be different but suggest that the gender of the child might be a factor worth also being taken into account when analyzing the attractiveness of a parent on the repartnering market.

Third, regardless of one's need for a partner and one's attractiveness on the repartnering market, it is necessary to actually have the opportunity to find a person to form a union with. Meeting, dating and getting to know someone well enough to form a union with him or her requires time. The more opportunities to meet new partners one has, the higher the likelihood of forming a new union. Childrearing requires time and limits one's possibilities to take part in typical activities where one might meet potential partners. The opportunity argument probably plays a larger role in repartnering than in first union formation, especially when having children from previous unions. People forming stepfamilies are generally older and less active in typical partnering market activities and institutions like schools. The repartnering market is also likely to be less effective because there are fewer single people at higher ages. Besides the age of the parent, the age of the children may also relate to the parent's opportunity to find a partner. Younger children require more time and attention from the parent thus reducing opportunities to find a new partner but, on the other hand, increasing the need to have another adult in the household to share responsibilities. Other factors affecting one's opportunities to meet a new partner include family size and market work. Working increases one's social network and daily contact with other adults, so the opportunity to find a partner should arguably be greater for someone who works than for a homemaker or an unemployed person. Working of course reduces one's financial need, so paid work is likely to affect repartnering likelihood in both directions. Because women, on average, participate less in paid work and work more part time than men (Blossfeld/Hakim 1997) their work-related mating opportunities should be smaller. Family size should have a negative relationship with repartnering opportunity for the simple reason that more children require more time.

Need, attractiveness and opportunity to re-partner should also vary between countries with different welfare state settings and social policies. Social policies and financial transfers, directed towards single parents in particular but also towards parents in general, primarily help to reduce the financial need of single parents. Laws regulating post-divorce alimony are another cross-country difference that reduce the financial need but may also discourage people to re-partner or at least re-marry since the right to alimony is usually conditional on one's post-divorce marital status. Laws regulating child support and its enforcement also affect the need to repartner. A major factor, which reduces financial need, differing between countries, is female labor force participation.

Even though social policies mainly affect the need for a partner by providing single parents with resources, the same policies should also affect the attractiveness of single parents on the repartnering market. A single parent is more attractive to a prospective partner in a society where a stepparent is not expected to take as much financial responsibility for the children from the partner's previous unions than for one's biological children.

The opportunity to partner is likely to be least affected by the welfare state setting which will be discussed in the following.

2.1 The Swedish case

Sweden is famous for having a generous welfare state with high levels of economic equality (see for example Gottschalk/Smeeding 1997) as well as a high level of gender equality and female labor force participation (Sundström 1997). During the research period covered by this paper, the female labor force participation has risen from around 60% in 1970 to just about 80% in 1993 whereas the male labor force participation has fallen from almost 90% to about 80%. Part-time work is, however, common for women in Sweden with 41% of women working part-time in 1993 as compared to only 9% of men. Part-time work is especially common among women in childbearing ages (Sundström 1997).

In the Swedish case where female labor force participation is high, the financial need for Swedish women is likely to be lower than for women in countries where most women exit the labor market when having children. Andress and colleagues (2006) have shown that Sweden has high gender equality with respect to post-separation incomes and in their study the economic consequences of a separation were small and there were no significant gender differences. Labor force participation also works in the other direction by increasing women's social network and providing more opportunities to meet a new partner.

Sweden has for a long time had family policies designed to minimize the economic differentials in family life. The extensive social policies directed towards parents and children include long paid parental leave with job protection for working parents (80 percent pay up to a cap for 13 months); monthly child allowance; means- tested housing allowance; free education (including tertiary); subsidized, high quality and widely available child care and after-school activities for primary school children, among other things. All these benefits are independent of the parent's union status and in most cases general and not means-tested, with the exception of the housing allowance (Andress et al. 2006; Oláh/Bernhardt 2008; Sundström 1991). The economic consequences of a separation are

therefore less severe in Sweden where these family policies reduce the cost of ending a dysfunctional union and at the same time reduce single parent's economic need of re-partnering. It can also be argued that Swedish policies should, in general, create less difference in the family behaviour of different social groups than in countries with less extensive family policies.

Shared custody of children after separation, both in legal and physical terms, is also increasingly common in Sweden (Schiratzki, 1999; Lundström, 2009). Joint physical custody frees up time and increases the opportunity to re-partner during the days when the child is staying with the other parent. A majority of children do, however, reside most of the time with their mothers (Lundström, 2009), giving the fathers more opportunity for repartnering than mothers. The commonality of shared physical custody and father involvement in post-separation childrearing may also affect the attractiveness of Swedish men. As stated above, a person bringing a child to a new relationship – with all the complications that might entail – is likely to be less attractive on the repartnering market than a childless person. A man with shared custody of a child should therefore be less attractive than a father who is completely non co-resident. A person who shares the custody of the child with the former partner might however be more attractive than someone who has full custody and whose child co-resides with him. Given the commonality of shared physical custody of children after a separation in Sweden, the gender difference in post-separation attractiveness should be smaller in Sweden than in countries where shared post-separation custody is rare.

3. Stepfamilies in Sweden

In his international comparison Andersson (2002) shows that between 78 and 38 percent of the children will have lived in a stepfamily setting 10 years after a parental union disruption, with the US having the highest proportion and Poland the lowest. 62 percent of Swedish children who have experienced a union dissolution will have lived with a stepparent by age 15. For children born to single mothers, 52% will have had experience of stepfamily formation by age 9 in Sweden and 65% in the United States. A large share of these family formations do ,however, take place during the first year of the child's life and can be assumed to be formed by the biological parents rather than a mother and a stepfather (Andersson 2002).

In a cross-sectional study Jonsson (2001) shows that 6 percent of Swedish children live in a stepfamily setting with a mother and stepfather and 1 percent with a father and a stepmother. These data exclude children who lived in a stepfamily at some earlier point but not at the time of the survey and thus underestimate children's experience of stepfamily life.

Neither the study by Andersson (2002) nor the one by Jonsson (2001) take socio-economic factors such as educational attainment into account. Neither do Bumpass and colleagues (1995) who have shown racial differences in American children's likelihood of ever being in a stepfamily where non-Hispanic whites have a markedly lower likelihood than do African Americans, not controlling for other class characteristics.

There are some previous studies examining stepfamily formation in Sweden. In a cross-sectional analysis of Swedish and US data Bernhardt and Goldscheider (2001) show that there is a positive relationship between earned income and the likelihood of men being stepfathers in the United States and to an even greater extent in Sweden. The effect of earnings is stronger on marriage and biological fatherhood, suggesting that stepfatherhood is less financially selected and less of a commitment for the man. This finding could also be interpreted as the mother having lower demands or less bargaining power when finding a stepfather as compared to when looking for someone to form a biological family with. The fact that earnings have a stronger effect on family formation in Sweden also implies that Swedish men allocate more of their earnings to families than do Americans, even though government support for families with children are higher. An alternative interpretation is that mothers in Sweden expect a prospective partner and stepfather to have a higher income. There is, however, also evidence from longitudinal analysis of stepfamily formation for income being unrelated with becoming a stepfather in the United States. Instead the study shows that education has a negative relationship with American men's likelihood of becoming a stepparent (Goldscheider/Sassler, 2006).

Bernhardt and Goldscheider (2001) also show a negative relationship between educational attainment and being a stepfather as well as a biological father in Sweden and the US, with highly educated men being more likely to remain single as compared to forming a family than are men with low education. The effect is, however, weaker than the effect of earnings and in Sweden only significant for men in cohabiting stepfamilies. This suggests that, although fatherhood pushes men to earn more, men with high education avoid family roles, especially when the latter are confronted with a stepfamily setting (see also Oláh et al. 2002). The educational differentials in men's likelihood of becoming stepparents are much larger in the Unites States than in Sweden, meaning that highly educated American men avoid stepparenthood to a much larger extent than Swedes do (Bernhardt/Goldscheider, 2001; Oláh et al. 2002). A negative effect of education on stepparenthood is absent for American women, meaning that highly educated American women do not avoid stepparenthood like men do (Goldscheider/Sassler, 2006). Lampard and Peggs (1999) have shown that in Britain higher socio-economic status, measured as occupational class, increases the likelihood of becoming a stepparent.

There is evidence for clear gender differences in the stepfamily formation process. Women are far more likely to have co-resident children after a separation than men and less likely to form a stepfamily. In their longitudinal study of stepfamily formation in Sweden, Bernhardt and Goldscheider (2002) show that women with co-resident children are less likely to enter a union than are those who don't live with children. They are, however, more likely to form a stepfamily together with a man who also has co-resident children than to remain single. Single men are less likely to have co-residential children than women, but the men who are single dads have a higher likelihood of forming a stepfamily than to remain single. Unlike for single mothers, there is no difference in the likelihood of a father entering a union with a woman who has or does not have children of her own (Bernhardt/ Goldscheider, 2002). This means that children are an impediment for women on the repartnering market but not for men.

4. Data

For this study I have used data from the Swedish Level of Living Study (the Swedish abbreviation is LNU). The LNU was first conducted in 1968 and replicated in 1974, 1981, 1991 and 2000. It is a nationally representative survey with a 1/1000 sample of the Swedish population in ages 15-75 (18-75 since 1991) and contains a longitudinal component while adding random samples of new respondents in the age range to create a new cross-section of the population at each time. In the 1991 and 2000 surveys, union and childbearing histories of the respondents were added enabling analysis of family change over time. For this reason, data from these last two waves have been used in this study.

I have used the child as the unit of analysis and restricted the analysis to children born to Swedish-born parents between 1970 and 2000 who are observed after a non-union birth or after parental separation at less than 16 years of age. Immigrants have been excluded because their full union histories cannot be observed in the data and because immigrant's family patterns are quite different with respect to cohabitation and separation and there are not enough cases in the data to test interactions with immigrant status. This leaves a sample of 1277 children in 780 family clusters. Half of the children are girls and half boys. The respondents are 785 Swedish born-parents of whom 435 are women and 350 men. The sample includes both children co-residing with the responding parent as well as those living partly or entirely with the other parent.

4.1 Modelling and Method

The model is on the child level with the child as the unit of analysis rather than a control variable, which is usually the case when studying repartnering. The method used is discrete-time event history analysis with robust standard errors adjusting for clustered observations (more than one child per respondent). A child is considered to be exposed to risk if it is either born out of a union, has a deceased biological parent or has experienced a parental separation. The term "union" includes both marriage and cohabiting unions. More children in Sweden are born in cohabiting unions than in marriage and very few are born to single mothers (Andersson, 2002; Kennedy/Thomson, 2010).

It is not possible to tell from the data whether a union formed by a single parent is with the child's biological parent or a stepparent. In cases where the child has a non-coresident parent at birth but experience parent's residential union during the first year of life, the partner is assumed to be the child's biological parent and the child is considered an in-union birth. This means, of course, that some of the children who are assigned in-union status at birth were in fact children of single parents who formed a new union before the child was one year old. The model may therefore underestimate the duration of living with a single parent but the error is not likely to be large. The same method has been used by Kennedy and Thomson (2010), Heuveline and colleagues (2003) and Bumpass and colleagues (1995).

The time during which each child is exposed to risk of entering a stepfamily is measured in months starting at month of birth for children born out of a union and at month of parental separation or parental death for children born in a union. Children who have ex-

perienced parental death are so few that they are analyzed together with those who have experienced a parental separation. Observations are censored when a child reach age 16 or at the month of the interview, whichever occurs first. 633 children were censored. The data has a total of 70872 months of observation. Models are estimated separately for mothers and fathers as well as for both sexes combined. There is no information about the children's post-separation residential histories in the data set but – because most children live with their mothers – estimating models separately by mothers and father give proxy models for residential and non-residential stepfamily formation.

Furthermore, I have used logistic regression in an additional analysis in order to assess the risk of being in the original study population, meaning: being less than 16 years of age, having been born out of a union, having a deceased parent or having experienced parental union dissolution before reaching the age of 16 years. This was done in order to analyze whether selection by educational background happens when the child first comes under risk of stepfamily formation rather than in the family reconstitution process. The results of this analysis are presented in the Appendix.

4.2 Measures

The dependent or the event variable is the formation of a stepfamily, here defined as the parent of the child who is the adult respondent in the survey getting married or beginning cohabitation, thus bringing a new adult into the child's life on a more permanent basis than dating. The stepfamily can be formed by either a parent co-residing with the child, in most cases the mother – or an absent parent, in most cases the father. This means that the child in fact is under risk of entering two stepfamilies. The baseline duration parameter is time under risk of stepfamily formation: less than two years, two to four years, five to nine years and ten to fifteen years. Children born out of union are considered under risk at birth, whereas children born to married or cohabiting parents are considered under risk at separation or divorce or at parental death. Education is a time-constant categorical variable: less than secondary school, secondary school (Swedish "gymnasium") and tertiary education. It is measured at the time when the child first came under risk of stepfamily formation. There is also a control variable for the parent's educational status at the time when the child became under risk.

The child's age at exposure to risk is also a four-categorical variable: less than three years, three to four years, five to nine years and ten to fifteen years of age. The age is combined with the sex of the child in an interaction term for sex and age at exposure to risk. There is also a control for number of siblings, half or full, with three categories: no siblings, one sibling and two or more siblings at time of exposure to risk.

The parent's union status at the birth of the child is controlled for with a three category variable with the following categories: born out of union, born in the parent's first or second or higher order co-residential union. Finally. there is a period control for the decade (1970s, 1980s or 1990s/year 2000) in which the child came under risk of stepfamily formation.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics: Independent variables

Variable	Percent
Parent's highest finished education	
Less than secondary	36
Secondary	39
Tertiary	17
	8
Parent's union status at birth	
Born in first union	65
Born in second union	19
Born out of union	16
Years lived with single parent	
< 2	31
2-4	32
5-9	25
10-15	12
Number of siblings	
No siblings	30
1 sibling	43
2 or more siblings	27
Decade of exposure to risk	
1970s	16
1980s	33
1990s/2000	51
Child's sex	
Boy	50
Girl	50
Child's age at exposure to risk	
<3	41
3-4	16
5-9	27
10-15	16

Source: LNU, 1991 and 2000 waves, author's calculations.

5. Findings

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the full sample of children who were at risk of entering a stepfamily at some point before age 16. Of all the children in the sample, a majority of 57% had entered a stepfamily before age 16 with the percentage of girls higher than for boys. If we instead look at differences in the percentage of children entering a stepfamily by parent's sex we can see that 64% of the children whose fathers were the survey respondents had gained a stepparent, whereas only 52% of the children of female respondents (see Table 1).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics: Dependent variable, Children ever in a stepfamily

Percent of children ever in a stepfamily at age 15 by sex of child.		
Girls	**Boys**	**Both sexes**
60%	55%	57%

Percent of children ever in a stepfamily at age 15 by parent's sex.		
Men	**Women**	**Both sexes**
64%	52%	57%

Percent of children ever in a stepfamily at age 15 by parent's highest education at child's first exposure to risk.	
Less than secondary	40%
Secondary	56%
Tertiary	47%
Education unknown	55%

Source: LNU, 1991 and 2000 waves, author's calculations.

Table 2 also shows the relationship between the child ever being in a stepfamily by age 15 and the highest completed education of the parent at the time when the child first came under risk of stepfamily entry, i.e. out of-union birth or separation. The percentage of children entering stepfamily varies between 40% and 56%, but without any clear gradient and with the highest proportion among the children of parents with secondary education.

Table 3 shows the results of the event history model for stepfamily entry. The model shows no educational gradient and none of the education variables are nearly statistically significant. The model has also been estimated with an interaction term between educational level and period. A test showed that it only increased the goodness of fit of the model for male respondents. Due to the small sample size the interaction category for children of male respondents with tertiary education, who came under risk of stepfamily formation in the 1980s, became 28 times larger than the comparison category. The results are not presented in this paper. The other socioeconomic variable, parent's employment status at child's first exposure to risk, does not show any significant association with stepfamily formation.

One of the differences that do exist is that the risk of stepfamily entry decreases with time spent with a single parent, with the first two years being the most intensive period. The odds of entry fall by half in the following three-year period and are halved again for the period between five and nine years. After 10 years of living with a single parent, the likelihood of stepfamily formation is very low. One reason for the higher risk in the first years is, of course, that many parental unions break up because one of the parents already has met a new partner with whom s/he is forming a stepfamily.

Table 3: Relative odds of child entering a stepfamily.

	All children		Children of male respondents		Children of female respondents	
Variable	**Odds ratio**	**P-value**	**Odds ratio**	**P-value**	**Odds ratio**	**P-value**
Parent's highest finished education						
Less than secondary	1		1		1	
Secondary	1.03	0.905	0.93	0.877	1.28	0.503
Tertiary	1.03	0.946	1.45	0.507	0.92	0.85
Parent's union status at birth						
First union	1		1		1	
Second union	0.47	0.007	0.37	0.034	043	0.016
Born out of union	1.03	0.930	3.82	0.022	0.39	0.026
Parent's employment status						
Unemployed	1		1		1	
Employed	0.79	0.360	1.44	0.517	0.722	0.297
Years lived with single parent						
< 2	1		1		1	
2-4	0.48	0.003	0.39	0.013	0.56	0.084
5-9	0.23	0.000	0.19	0.001	0.30	0.001
10-15	0.02	0.000	0.01	0.000	0.02	0.000
Number of siblings						
No siblings	1		1		1	
1 sibling	1.30	0.292	1.46	0.346	1.56	0.187
2 or more siblings	0.81	0.498	1.89	0.259	0.65	0.283
Decade of exposure to risk						
1970s	1		1		1	
1980s	0.42	0.014	0.24	0.028	0.47	0.060
1990s/2000	0.05	0.000	0.01	0.000	0.07	0.000
Interaction sex-age						
Girl <3	1		1		1	
Girl 3-4	0.58	0.127	0.54	0.237	0.53	0.206
Girl 5-9	0.30	0.002	0.38	0.130	0.23	0.002
Girl 10-15	0.13	0.000	0.08	0.000	0.13	0.001
Boy <3	0.52	0.020	0.35	0.032	0.57	0.121
Boy 3-4	0.49	0.030	0.27	0.011	0.61	0.302
Boy 5-9	0.23	0.000	0.48	0.187	0.12	0.000
Boy 10-15	0.19	0.000	0.28	0.084	0.09	0.001

Source: LNU, 1991 and 2000 waves, author's calculations.

The chances of stepfamily entry also decrease with the age of the child at the time s/he first was exposed to risk. The children who were less than three years of age at the time they first lived with a single parent are those with the highest likelihood of acquiring a stepparent. Children older than 10 years of age at the time of first family dissolution have a much lower likelihood of stepfamily entry than the youngest children do. This might be an effect of stepparents regarding parents of small children as more attractive partners since it is easier to build a strong parent-like relationship to a small child. Small children are also more time-consuming and a single parent might have a higher need of a partner to share daily tasks and provide support when the child is younger. Small children's being

time-consuming does, on the other hand, reduce the opportunity to meet a new partner. The age of the child is also correlated with the age of the parent and young parents are more attractive on the relationship market than are older ones. This is especially true for women whereas it may be easier for middle-aged fathers to form a new family.

The sex of the child shows a strong preference for girls with boys having much lower odds of stepfamily entry. This is in accordance with earlier findings by Andersson and colleagues (2006) on gender preferences for biological children that show a preference, albeit very small, for girls in Sweden. When we look at the interaction of the child's sex and age we see that the difference in likelihood of stepfamily entry between boys and girls decreases with age. Girls, the ones who are more likely to acquire a stepparent, have the highest risk in the youngest age category. Sons of male respondents have lower likelihood of stepfamily entry than sons of female respondents, especially at higher ages of first exposure. This may be due to fathers being more involved in post-separation child rearing when the child is an older boy (for discussion of gender and father involvement see Pleck/Masciadrelli 2004). When testing for model fit, the interaction term improves the model for male respondents and only at 10% significance-level.

The family size variable is not statistically significant but indicates that having more than one child is neither an impediment nor an incentive for forming new unions in Sweden. When controlling for period, one can see that those who came under risk in the 1970's have the highest likelihood of entering a stepfamily and the ones born in the 1990's or in the year 2000 have the lowest.

When we look at the parent's union status at birth we see that there is no significant difference between children born out of union and children born in the parent's first union. The halved odds for the children born in a second or higher order union compared to children from the parent's first one is, however, significant. The union status variable becomes interesting when we look at it separately for male and female respondents. Children born out of union whose fathers participated in the survey have four times as high the likelihood of acquiring a stepparent compared to the children born in their father's first union, whereas out of union born children of female respondents have less than half of the likelihood of those born in their mother's first union. This gender effect should be interpreted as an effect of the fact that nearly all children born out of a union live with their mothers who, in turn, end up having a lower likelihood of finding a new partner than do the fathers.

6. Discussion

The pool of children under risk of stepfamily formation has grown in the past decades due to changed family behaviour. Educational differentials in family dissolution, the main process behind children being under risk of stepfamily formation, have emerged and have become firmly established during the same time (Hoem 1997; Kennedy/Thomson 2010). Previous research has suggested that there are socio-economic and educational differences also in family reconstitution in the United States as well as in Sweden, although of very different magnitude (Bernhardt/Goldscheider, 2001; Bernhardt/Goldscheider, 2002; Goldscheider/Sassler, 2006; Oláh et al., 2002).

In this article, I have looked at differences in stepfamily formation from the child perspective. The results show no parental educational differences in the formation of a child's first stepfamily nor did it show effects of employment status. Educational differentials are, however, present in the processes leading to the child becoming under risk of stepfamily formation. The lack of educational differentials in the family reconstitution process is surprising given the earlier literature showing educational differences in family formation in Sweden. But it also fits the theory on the links between education and family behaviour being most pronounced in societies where parents bare a larger part of the cost of children than a universalistic welfare state of the Swedish kind. It seems that educational differentials play a role in the processes preceding stepfamily formation (see Appendix) but that there are no socio-economic differences in the stepfamily formation process itself.

The main differences in children's chances of stepfamily entry are gender-based, both on the child level as well as at the level of the parent. Boys have much lower odds of entering a stepfamily than girls, even though this is different at different ages with the youngest girls having the highest odds and boys catching up at higher ages. On the parental level we can see that union status at birth of the child go in complete opposite directions for men and women. The fathers of children born out of union have a higher likelihood of partnering, whereas the mothers are less likely to form a union. This difference can be explained by the fact that almost all out-of-union-born children reside with their mothers, whose chance of finding a new partner is reduced by having a child. Fathers with boys are, however, less likely to form new unions than fathers with girls, which might suggest that they take a more active role in rearing male children. The likelihood of forming a stepfamily seems to be unaffected by family size. Welfare provisions like universal child allowance and heavily subsidized high quality child care make childrearing less costly for parents and are likely to explain this.

In conclusion, one can say that there is evidence from previous research, as well as from my model for selection into the risk pool presented in Appendix, for a "diverging destinies" scenario in Sweden, albeit of less magnitude than in the Unites States (McLanahan 2004; Kennedy and Thomson 2010). But there are no educational differences in children's access to a two-adult household with one biological parent and one stepparent in Sweden.

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Appendix: Selection into the risk pool

Stepfamily formation occurs in a chain of events where educational differentials may arise. Children must be born out of union, or their parents must separate before they are at risk of entering a stepfamily.

Education increases one's human capital, it provides better job security and on average higher earnings and level of living. Educational differentials in out-of-union births, parental separation and divorce are evident in many Western European countries but the most striking differences are found in the Unites States (McLanahan 2004). About 20% of all births in the US are to lone mothers, these as well as births during cohabitation are largely concentrated to women without college education (Kennedy/Bumpass 2008). There are also clear and increasing educational differentials in union dissolution with the children of the lowest educated parents being almost twice as likely to ever live with a single parent as are the children of college-educated parents (McLanahan 2004).

Out-of-union childbearing is uncommon in Sweden. Andersson (2002) estimated that 5% of all births around 1990 were to lone mothers. Kennedy and Thomson (2010) with a slightly different model definition, including male respondents and considering children whose mother form a union during the first year of the child's life to be in-union births, estimate that 3 percent of the births in Sweden during the 1970s to 2000 are outside of a marriage or cohabiting union. There is no evidence for an increase in out-of-union births during the period since 1970 and it seems to be equally rare among parents with different educational backgrounds (Kennedy/Thomson 2010).

Andersson (2002) shows that in 16 countries in Western and Central Europe as well as the USA, the proportion of children having experienced a parental separation – the other main process behind children being in the risk pool for stepfamily formation by age 15 – range between 50 percent in the US and 9 percent in Italy. Sweden lies in between with 34 percent of all children having experienced a separation. There are also large differences between Sweden and the US in children's experience of family dissolution by parental union status. Of the Swedish children born to married parents, 24% experience a divorce by age 15 whereas 38% of the ones born in cohabiting unions experience a parental union separation. The difference is much larger in the US where 35% of the children born in marriage experience divorce, compared to 78% of the children born in cohabiting unions (Andersson 2002). Thus, the children of cohabiting couples in Sweden have about the same likelihood of experiencing family dissolution than have the children of married American couples.

Negative educational differentials in family disruption emerged in Sweden in the 1980s and increased in the 1990s (Hoem 1997; Kennedy/Thomson 2010). This development was a reversal from earlier patterns where highly educated women were more likely to divorce or separate and due to changes in women's educational attainment and changing – less traditional – family systems (Blossfeld et al. 1995). Kennedy and Thomson (2010) show that, although there is an negative educational gradient in the risk of experiencing parental union disruption, the differences are largely due to differences among cohabiting families, with little differences among children born to married parents. They show that children born to a cohabiting parent with only primary education have a 40 percent chance of experiencing parental union disruption, whereas the chance is only 25 per-

cent for the children with married parents of the same educational level. The chance for a child with cohabiting parents with a tertiary education is 24 percent, whereas it is 21 percent for a child with married parents.

Even though Sweden has seen an emergence of educational differences in the likelihood of parental union disruption, one need to keep in mind that the magnitude of these differences is only half of that in the Unites States. The children of the least educated Swedish parents are only slightly less likely to experience parental union disruption than are those of the highest educated American parents (McLanahan 2004).

Sweden seems to have a less select population of single parents but one could expect that, given the theoretical argument about need, attractiveness and opportunity, there might be socioeconomic differences in the family reconstitution process. Although social policies directed towards people with children reduce the economic need to re-partner, the attractiveness and opportunity are likely to be affected to a lesser degree by this kind of policies.

Model and results

To analyze whether selection by educational attainment happens at an earlier stage than in the family reconstitution process, a logistic regression model on the likelihood of being in the risk group of stepfamily entry – i.e., the probability that the child's parents were not living together at birth or separated at some point before age 16 – was estimated. The independent variable was parent's highest education and controls were added for the child's birth order, the age at first birth for the parent who was the survey-respondent as well as period. The model was also estimated with an interaction term with education and period but this did not increase the goodness of fit of the model. The sample had a total of 5877 children.

Table 4 identifies differentials in the likelihood of children not living with both biological parents. Children of higher educated parents – especially fathers – are less likely to enter the risk pool. In addition, we can see that the probability of being in the risk pool of stepfamily formation falls with the parent's age at first birth. We can also see that children born in the 1980s have an approximately 40% higher likelihood of living with a single parent. The decrease in risk for children born in the 1990s is due to the fact that they are only observed during younger ages and they still have time to 'catch up' or surpass the rates for the older cohorts.

Table 4: Relative odds of child not living with both biological parents.

Variable	All children		Children of male respondents		Children of female respondents	
	Odds ratio	P-value	Odds ratio	P-value	Odds ratio	P-value
Child's birth order						
First child	1		1		1	
Second child	0.70	0.000	0.70	0.000	0.70	0.000
Third or higher order child	0.60	0.000	0.63	0.006	0.59	0.001
Child's birth decade						
1970s	1		1		1	
1980s	1.4	0.000	1.71	0.000	1.22	0.109
1990s/2000	0.86	0.161	1.07	0.678	0.71	0.022
Parent's age at first birth						
< 20	1		1		1	
20-24	0.65	0.009	0.39	0.016	0.74	0.109
25-29	0.40	0.000	0.24	0.000	0.45	0.000
30-34	0.41	0.000	0.22	0.000	0.56	0.027
> 34	0.38	0.000	0.22	0.001	0.49	0.039
Parent's highest finished education						
Less than secondary	1		1		1	
Secondary	0.82	0.083	0.74	0.095	0.88	0.401
Tertiary	0.72	0.037	0.62	0.028	0.84	0.431

Source: LNU, 1991 and 2000 waves, author's calcuations.

Sebastian Schnettler & Anja Steinbach

How do biological and social kinship play out within families in the U.S.? An evolutionary perspective on perceived parental care and closeness in adolescents[1,2]

Welche Rolle spielt biologische und soziale Elternschaft innerhalb von Familien? Eine evolutionsbiologische Betrachtung der Einschätzung elterlicher Fürsorge und emotionaler Nähe unter Jugendlichen in den USA

Abstract:
Consistent with inclusive fitness theory, evolutionary biologists predict that individuals care more for their biological than their social children and hence that biological children assess the relationships to their parents better than stepchildren. To test this assumption, we use data from the U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). Unlike many other studies that have been conducted so far, this survey allows us to analyze the consequences of the dynamic between social and biological parent-child relationships *within* the same families. We use comparisons of sibling pairs and fixed-effects regression to achieve the within-family comparison. Both the descriptive and multivariate regression results confirm that – even after controlling for other relevant influences – biological parenthood matters with regard to children's relationship assessments (perceived parental care and closeness of the parent-child relationship) and in both the

Zusammenfassung:
Abgeleitet aus der Theorie der Verwandtenselektion sagen Evolutionsbiologen vorher, dass Individuen gegenüber ihren biologischen Kindern mehr Fürsorge zeigen sollten als gegenüber Kindern, zu denen eine soziale Elternschaft besteht. Entsprechend wird erwartet, dass biologische Kinder die Beziehungen zu ihren Eltern besser einschätzen als Stiefkinder. Zur Überprüfung dieser Hypothese ziehen wir die Daten der U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) heran. Diese Studie erlaubt es, im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen Datenquellen, die Konsequenzen der innerfamilialen Dynamik sozialer und biologischer Eltern-Kind-Beziehungen zu untersuchen. Um diesen Vergleich innerhalb der Familien zu ermöglichen, untersuchen wir Geschwisterdyaden und führen eine *fixed-effects*-Regression durch. Die Resultate der deskriptiven und der multivariaten Analysen bestätigen, dass der Status biologischer Elternschaft auch dann die Beziehungs-

1 This research uses data from Add Health, a program project directed by Kathleen Mullan Harris and designed by J. Richard Udry, Peter S. Bearman, and Kathleen Mullan Harris at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and funded by grant P01-HD31921 from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, with cooperative funding from 23 other federal agencies and foundations. Special acknowledgment is due to Ronald R. Rindfuss and Barbara Entwisle for assistance in the original design. Information on how to obtain the Add Health data files is available on the Add Health website (http://www.cpc.unc.edu/addhealth). No direct support was received from grant P01-HD31921 for this analysis.

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relationships to resident fathers and mothers. In the discussion, we comment on the possible integration of the evolutionary and sociological perspectives and close with some recommendations for future data collection that could allow researchers to analyze the relative impact of biological and social influences on parent-child relationships on a more fine-grained level.

einschätzungen der Jugendlichen (wahrgenommene elterliche Fürsorge und emotionale Nähe) vorhersagt, wenn für andere relevante Einflussfaktoren kontrolliert wird – sowohl in Bezug auf die väterliche als auch auf die mütterliche Beziehung. In der Diskussion kommentieren wir das Ergebnis im Hinblick auf eine mögliche Integration evolutionsbiologischer und soziologischer Forschungsperspektiven und schließen mit einigen Empfehlungen für die zukünftige empirische Datenerhebung ab. Eine Umsetzung dieser Empfehlungen könnte es interessierten Forscherinnen und Forschern in Zukunft ermöglichen, die relative Bedeutung biologischer und sozialer Einflüsse auf die Eltern detaillierter zu untersuchen.

***Key words*:** stepfamilies, siblings, fixed-effects regression, parent-child relations, parental investment, evolutionary psychology, sociobiology

Schlagwörter: Stiefelternschaft, Stieffamilien, Geschwister, fixed effects, Eltern-Kind-Beziehungen, elterliches Investment, Evolutionspsychologie, Soziobiologie

1. Introduction

A stepfamily arises when a biological parent starts a new relationship, either following the death of the other biological parent or a separation of the two biological parents. Unfortunately, there is a lack of accurate demographic information about stepfamilies in more or less every modern society, but it is estimated that the proportion of stepfamilies, based on all families with minor children in the household, ranges between 10% and 20% in different countries (for Germany see: Steinbach 2008; U.S.: Teachman/Tedrow 2008; Canada: Church 1996; Japan: Nozawa 2008; UK: Allan/Hawker/Crow 2001; France: Leridon 1998; Austria: Wilk 2002). Given this substantial number of children living in stepfamilies and the fact that adverse parent-child relationships can lead to a range of negative child outcomes (see Brown 2010; White/Gilbreth 2001), it remains an important question what role the biological status of the parent-child relationship plays. Whereas it has been shown that traditional and non-traditional families alike can provide good environments for child development (Patterson 2001), relative differences between biological and social parent-child relationships may nevertheless appear, particularly where both types coexist in the same families. It is our aim in this paper to focus on these within-family differences, specifically with regard to children's assessments of the relationships to their parents and stepparents. Relationship assessments are based on parental care and emotional closeness reported by the adolescent children. We concentrate on testing the assumption from evolutionary biology that parents invest more in their own biological children than in their stepchildren. From a sociobiological perspective, the birth and rearing of a child are investments that are part of an evolutionary strategy "aimed at"[3] spreading one's own genes.

3 The quotation marks are used to emphasize that we are not speaking of conscious, subjective intentions when speaking of "strategy", "aims", etc. Instead, we refer to psychological mechanisms that

In previous research, parental investment and the perceived quality of the parent-child relationship have been mostly examined by using small samples and descriptive or bivariate analyses. For the most part, also the problem of unobserved between-family heterogeneity has been ignored. Here, we will improve on previous research by comparing parent-child relationships within the same families, thereby controlling for unobserved between-family heterogeneity, and by including various control variables simultaneously. For this purpose, we will use the genetic pairs data, a subset of the U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). Add Health includes data on different sibship constellations, including full biological, half sibling, and step sibling dyads, thereby facilitating an analysis into the role of social and biological relationship status within families.

In the following section (Section 2), we will first introduce the main concepts of evolutionary theory that are relevant for an explanation of differences in parental behavior towards biological and social children and the resulting assessments of parent-child relationships. Second, we will contrast these with sociological arguments on parent-child relationships and, third, we will summarize results of relevant empirical studies. In Section 3, we will briefly introduce the data set used in our analysis, the selection of research units, and the operationalization of dependent and independent variables. Section 4 includes the empirical part of the paper. We will first present descriptive results on the absolute differences and relative amount of within-family variance in relationship assessments between sibling dyads that differ in the degree of genetic relatedness. Second, we will proceed with a set of bi- and multivariate, fixed-effects regression models. The results of these models show that under simultaneous control of independent variables like age of the child, gender of the child, and number of siblings, as well as control of unobserved "between-family" heterogeneity, differences between half and step siblings exist that are consistent with predictions from evolutionary theory. In the last section of the paper (Section 5), we sum up and discuss the empirical results of our analyses. Here, a particular emphasis is on assessing the degree of contradiction and complementarity of the sociobiological and sociological perspectives, ultimately leading to a call for an integration of the two theoretical perspectives in order to enable researchers to create more fine-grained empirical tests of the relative contribution of biological and social influences on parental behavior.

2. An integrated perspective on parent-child relations

2.1 Evolutionary theory

From a sociobiological point of view, the birth and rearing of a child is to be seen as an investment in the survival of one's own genes. Trivers (1972: 139) defines investments of parents as „any investment by the parent in an individual offspring that increases the offspring's chance of survival (and hence reproductive success) at the cost of the parent's

have evolved over time and can therefore, in their effects, be regarded as leading to successful strategies for the proliferation of genes.

ability to invest in other offspring". In general, a child's fitness increases with the amount of parental investment it receives (Salmon 2005), but every parental investment implies various costs like time, energy, or money. Therefore parents are faced with a trade-off between quantity of children and quality of rearing the individual child.

Whereas this explains why, from an evolutionary perspective, parents adjust their investment in biological children, it does not explain certain forms of kin altruistic behavior, that is, the investment into other genetically close kin at the expense of investing into own biological offspring. In order to explain this type of behavior, it is important to grasp the shift from seeing the individual as the unit of natural selection to the single gene that "seeks" to maximize its fitness (Hamilton 1964a, b). From a gene point of view, the body is merely a carrier, or fitness maximization device, for genes. And the chances for the spread of a gene in the gene pool are increased through reproduction of its own carrier as well as the support of reproduction of other individuals that are likely to share the same genes as ego (i.e., genetically close kin) (Dawkins 2006: 6). It was Hamilton who formalized this trade-off between direct and indirect reproduction) in what is now known as "Hamilton's rule" (Charnov 1977) or as the concept of inclusive fitness. The rule states that altruistic traits are favored by natural selection if the behaviors they give rise to, carry higher benefits than costs, weighted by the genetic relatedness to the person to whom the behavior is directed (see Table 1 for an overview of the genetic relatedness in various biological family relations[4]).

Table 1: Genetic relatedness r between ego and various biological kin

r = 1	r = .5	r = .25	r = .125
Identical twin	Full sibling	Half-sibling	First cousin
	Parent	Grandparent	
	Child	Grandchild	
		Aunt/uncle	
		Nephew/niece	

The preceding paragraphs could falsely give the impression that individuals are conceptualized as rational decision makers with the overarching goal to maximize their genetic utility. But in fact, evolutionary theory predicts only that mechanisms have evolved that maximize inclusive fitness – these mechanisms may operate in a conscious or unconscious way. For sociobiologists, in fact, the particular design of such hypothesized mechanisms has never been of central importance. But with the emergence of evolutionary psychology in the past 25 years, the existence and particular design of such psychological mechanisms has entered into the theoretical and empirical focus of researchers working from an evolutionary perspective (see Barkow/Cosmides/Tooby 1992; Laland/Brown 2002). An advantage of focusing on proximate mechanisms is that it enables researchers to study the conditions under which evolved mechanisms lead to fitness-maximizing (adaptive), fitness-minimizing (non-adaptive), or neutral consequences. The number of specialized psychological mechanisms, or in other words, the actual degree of the modularity of the mind is still much debated

4 For a detailed explanation of how to calculate the genetic relatedness *r* between relatives, see Dawkins (2006: 91-93).

among psychologists (Barkow/Tooby/Cosmides 1992; Baumeister 2005; Buss 1995). That is, evolutionary psychology shares with sociology the view of humans as reflexive agents, but unlike many sociologists, evolutionary psychologists do not believe that the mind is a blank slate (Schnettler 2010: 32). Rather, the ability for reflexive and rational action, part of an evolved domain-general architecture, is best understood as biased by other, domain-specific mechanisms (Baumeister 2005).

With regard to parental investment, one would predict that evolution favored the selection of proximate mechanisms that (a) increase the likelihood of having biological offspring, e.g., by means of sexual desire or an emotional desire to have children (cf. Foster 2000; Silk 1990), (b) mechanisms that favor the attendance of adults to care for the needs of infants (see attachment theory: Bowlby 1997), and (c) mechanisms that allow individuals to reliably recognize and to direct investment towards close biological kin (Dubas/Heijkoop/ van Aken 2009; Holmes 2004; Lieberman/Tooby/Cosmides 2007; Tal/Lieberman 2007).

Although the general prediction is that parents are more likely to support their biological children rather than their adoptive, foster, or stepchildren, certain forms of social parenting are nevertheless consistent with an evolutionary framework. This is for example the case, when social parenting is in fact a form of biological parenting by kin genetically more distant than biological parents (e.g., by an aunt or grandmother). Or it is the case when social parenting is a response to other evolved mechanisms like the desire to have and care for children in a situation when having own biological children is not possible (adoption[5]). Alternatively, support for a stepchild can be seen as a strategy to win the biological parent of that child as a mating partner for shared biological offspring[6]. In other words, the mere presence of certain forms of social parenthood is not in itself a proof against any relevance of biological factors.

2.2 Relationship of evolutionary and social science accounts

Given the preceding discussion, it becomes clear that certain cultural or sociological explanations are not necessarily at odds with evolutionary theory. On the contrary, the human psychological architecture can be seen as a system that has evolved to provide different, flexible behavioral strategies in response to varying constraints in the physical and social environment. These constraints can, for example, result from welfare-state based differences in incentive systems, from the individual economic resources relative to the overall degree of economic development in a country, or from cultural values. We will briefly discuss this with regard to the 'value of children' (VOC) approach. The VOC theory is used to explain cross-cultural differences in fertility and parental investment (Nauck 2007; Nauck/Klaus 2007; Trommsdorff/Nauck 2010). Combining sociological with psychological and economic concepts, it takes into account factors that influence the VOC in different societies

5 In some societies, adoption is more likely than not adoption of genetically related than unrelated children and/or adopted children increase the inclusive reproductive fitness of biological children by means of their contribution to household production (Silk 1980, 1987).

6 Stepparenthood may be a mating rather than a parental investment strategy, e.g., if the stepparent supports the stepchild only to win the biological parent as mating partner for shared biological offspring (Anderson/Kaplan/Lancaster 1999; Anderson et al. 1999; see also Salmon 2005; Silk 1990).

and the VOC is in turn thought to affect fertility decisions and investments in intergenerational relations. Based on the underlying theory of social production functions (Ormel et al. 1999), three aspects of the VOC are deduced: comfort, social esteem, and affect. Depending on the cultural context and individual resources of the (potential) parents, the desired number of children and the investments they are willing to make may differ substantially. That this approach is not inconsistent with an evolutionary perspective follows from the fact that striving for material comfort and social esteem can themselves be regarded as part of evolved behavioral strategies that contribute to individual self-preservation and reproduction (cf., Gintis 2004). The fewer children are required for gaining material comfort and social esteem, the more parents can enjoy the affect that comes with having and rearing children. But the fact that parents are able to experience this kind of affect is itself an evolved psychological mechanism that ensures that people care for their offspring even when children do not come with any economic or social advantages for parents.

Here we cannot provide a full discussion of the potential for integrating the biological and social science perspectives. But the previous example serves as illustration that they are not necessarily conflicting with each other. In fact, what should be clear from the preceding discussion is that behavior emerges from the interplay of biological and social influences. Therefore, in the empirical analysis of parent-child relationship assessments in this paper, we aim at simultaneously controlling for social and biological factors. Furthermore, by comparing parent-child relationship assessments within families, we control for unobserved differences between families and take the dynamic between biological and social factors as it unfolds within families seriously. Specifically, we expect that mechanisms triggering preferencing of biological offspring only get activated in family situations where both biological and social children are present. Hence, comparing biological parent-child relationships from one family with social parent-child relationships from another family could be misleading.

2.3 Previous empirical research

Research comparing biological and social parent-child relations generally supports the assumption that the former are advantaged both with regard to parental investment (e.g., time and money) and subjective relationship assessments (Anderson et al. 1999; Berger et al. 2008; Hamilton/Cheng/Powell 2007; Hofferth/Anderson 2003; Lansford et al. 2001). One difficulty in assessing the relevance of biological versus social ties is to distinguish which differences are due to between-family heterogeneity and which due to parental discrimination within families. A similar argument has been made in the literature on sibling-order effects on children's intellectual development. Here, Rodgers (2001) has shown that at least part of the effect disappears when the admixture of observed and unobserved differences between families is controlled for by shifting the analytical focus from between-family to within-family differences. By focusing on differences between families of different structures (intact[7], adoptive, step families), many existing studies on stepfa-

7 The term 'intact' is only used to refer to a certain structure of a family, in which both biological parents of a child live together in a partnership. It does not say anything about the state of the family or the quality of the relations of the family members.

milies are limited in a similar way. By showing that most of the differences in parenting practices of biological fathers and stepfathers can be explained by variation in background characteristics, Berger et al. (2008) provide some preliminary evidence against real parental discrimination based on the biological parent-child status (see also Lansford et al. 2001).

A longitudinal study on the effect of the birth of a new biological child reveals a similar effect for parents' ties to their older step and biological children: Whereas indeed parental attention shifts from older children to the newborn, it does so to the same degree in stepfamilies and families with two biological parents (Stewart 2005). A similar study draws attention to the birth order of the newborn, biological child: Whereas mothers and fathers do report more problems in parenting their stepchildren than their biological children after the birth of a biological child, this effect is only observed if the newborn is the focal parent's first biological child. A study by Manning and Smock (2000) addresses the question of overlapping family households and the impact on investments in children. A central result of this study is that financial support from fathers to children who live with their mothers declines after the birth of a child in the father's new family. The presence of stepchildren in the father's current household does not, however, have a similar effect.

Some studies compare parental investment or subjective relationship assessments between children of the same families. DeLongis and Preece (2002), for instance, show that in families with biological and social children, mothers and fathers report closer relationships to their biological children. However, they do not compare stepfamilies with purely biological families and thereby neglect the possibility that in both types of families similar differences may exist. Henderson and Taylor (1999) provide an extended comparison that not only includes simple and complex stepfamilies but also families with biological ties only. Also, these authors find that mothers and fathers are more involved with their biological than with their stepchildren. What is particularly interesting for our current study is that even in complex stepfamilies, that is, when biological and social children live together in the same family, a difference between social and biological children can be found.

In sum, differences in biological and stepparent-child ties found in between-family analyses persist even in the within-family context. But most of the existing studies are limited because they offer purely descriptive accounts and neglect multiple confounding factors. Our own analysis will be an improvement as compared to previous research by providing a within-family analysis that controls for (unobserved) between-family heterogeneity and at the same time controls for possible confounding within-family differences. The class of variables for which we can estimate effects is limited by the design of our study. We will therefore defer reporting on any possible confounding variables until Section 3.3 where we outline the design of our study and provide a reason for this limitation. Furthermore, only few studies compare differences in mixed step- and biological families with differences in purely biological families. At least in our descriptive analysis, we will fill this gap and compare differences in children's assessment of the relationships to their parents in a variety of biological and social sibling constellations, including twins, full biological siblings, half siblings, and step siblings. From an evolutionary perspective, we expect (a) that differences between siblings in their relationship assessments should be associated with differences between the siblings in the genetic relatedness to the respective parent and (b) that stepchildren assess the relationships to their parents more negatively than biological children if both live in the same family.

3. Data and variables

3.1 Dataset

We use data from the U.S. National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a school-based longitudinal study of a nationally representative sample of adolescents. The study has a complex, clustered sampling design, combining sampling of schools and of students within schools. The resulting core sample was amended with special samples to ensure sufficient case numbers for otherwise statistically underrepresented groups (e.g., twins and stepchildren). To obtain information on adolescents' school and family contexts, school administrators, parents, and in some cases, siblings were also interviewed (see Harris et al. n.d.). Here we use data from the first wave, collected in 1994-95 when respondents were enrolled in grades 7-12.

To facilitate within-family comparisons, we use a special subsample which includes data from adolescents in the core sample and from interviews with at least one sibling of these adolescents living in the same household (Harris et al. 2006). In total, the genetic sample of sibling pairs consists of over 3,000 sibling pairs with different degrees of genetic relatedness: monozygotic twins, dizygotic twins, full siblings, half siblings, and step siblings. A few more types of genetically related siblings (e.g., cousins) or unrelated siblings (e.g., adopted children) were covered as well, but for these groups case numbers were too low (Bearman/Brückner 2002: 1190-1192) to include them in our analysis .

The complex sampling procedure of the core probability sample requires that cases be weighted in order to provide estimates that are representative for adolescents in the U.S. (Chantala/Tabor 1999). However, for those individuals in the genetic sample that are not part of the core probability sample, no such weights are available (Chantala 2001). The sample is thus neither representative of the population nor do weights exist to correct estimates accordingly. But this shortcoming is outweighed by the advantage that the data allow detailed within-family comparisons and to take into account a number of factors that may play a role in mediating the assessment of parent-child relationships.

In the vast majority of families only one, but in about 200 families more than one dyad was interviewed. This unbalanced number of dyads per family would have posed some complications in the analysis. Therefore we retained only one randomly chosen dyad per family. This left us with a data set containing 2,211 twin, full, half, and step sibling pairs.

3.2 Operationalization of the dependent variable

Add Health includes data on a variety of parental investment indicators. Here, we concentrate on children's assessments of parental care and closeness: Children were asked how much they thought their resident mother and father cared for them and how close the respective parental relationship was. In this context, "resident" parents are the parents the adolescent lived with at the date of the interview – independent of the biological status of the relationship. For each resident parent, the assessment of the parent-child relationship by adolescents was measured on a scale ranging from one to five, with higher values indicating more positive assessments. For the descriptive analyses in this paper and as de-

pendent variables in regression models we calculated two separate indices based on the mean of these two items, one for the relationship to the mother (Cronbach's alpha: .64) and one for the the relationship to the father (Cronbach's alpha: .72). For certain purposes, a direct measurement of parental investment may be more appropriate. Here, however, we are interested in the overall degree of parental investment and support. No single investment indicator would reflect this overall degree, given that parents may make up lower investment in one area with higher investment in another area. Justification for the use of subjective indicators comes from both sociological and biological theory. From both perspectives, children are seen, at least initially, as striving to maximize the attention and resources obtained from their parents, even at the cost of reducing investment in their siblings. From an evolutionary point of view, this follows from the genetic difference between siblings[8] (Salmon 2005; Trivers 1974) and in sociology from the assumption that children are born as rational optimizers[9] who only learn norms of distributional justice from their parents over time (Handel 1986; Ihinger 1975). We therefore regard the combined subjective assessment of parental care and closeness of the parent-child relationship from the perspective of the child as a good approximation of the overall degree of parental attention and investment the child has received relative to other siblings in the same family. See Table 2 for an overview of the summary statistics of the dependent variables, that is, the relationship assessments to the resident mother and father.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the dependent variables (relationship assessment to resident fathers, mothers)

		Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	% Missing
Mothers:	bio	4,7	,5	1	5	0,1
	step	4,1	,9	1	5	19,2
	all	*4,7*	*,6*	*1*	*1*	*1,4*
Fathers:	bio	4,6	,7	1	5	0,9
	step	4,1	1,0	1	5	40,7
	all	*4,5*	*,7*	*1*	*5*	*11,1*

Data: Add Health Wave I (1994/95), Genetic Pairs Set

As shown in Table 2, the mean relationship assessments with regard to mothers (4.7) and fathers (4.6) are quite high, lying close to the end of a scale ranging from one to five. This is a result that is consistent with the research literature and applies to children at all ages, even in adulthood (see Steinbach 2010; Swartz 2009). In addition, the mean differences of relationship assessments from adolescents to biological and stepparents are shown in Table 2. Even though the mean assessment of relations is also high in stepmothers (4.1) and stepfathers (4.1), we already see here that children assess the relationships to their biological mothers (4.7) and fathers (4.6) clearly better.

8 In this sense, monozygotic twins should, because they share 100% of their genes, be an exception.

9 Sociology leaves the question why children are born as rational optimizers open. The sociobiological theory of parent-child conflict may be applied to provide such an answer: children are adapted to maximize their inclusive fitness.

3.2 Operationalization of the independent variables

Summary statistics for the independent variables are contained in Table 3. The *status of the parent-child relationship* (biological or social) was obtained from the responses of children because they display a lower percentage of missing values and cover both resident parents. Whenever possible, information from the parental questionnaire was used to replace missing values in the answers of adolescents. For our purposes, we created a dummy variable for each resident parent (father and mother) which notes whether the respective parent is the biological parent of the focal child or not. As expected, given that child custody decisions after a separation of the parents tend to be made in favor of mothers, more children live with their biological mother (93.0%) than with their biological father (74.3%).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for the independent variables

Continuous variables					
	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	% Missing
Years away from mother	,9	3,2	,0	18,6	,1
Years away from father	2,3	4,6	,0	19,7	4,1
Age of child	16,1	1,7	11,6	21,2	,0
Number of biological siblings	1,7	1,3	,0	12,0	,0
Number of half siblings	,3	,8	,0	9,0	,0
Number of step siblings	,1	,5	,0	7,0	,0
Binary variables					
			% (0)	% (1)	% Missing
Biological mother (yes = 1)			7,0	93,0	,0
Biological father (yes = 1)			25,7	74,3	,0
Parents are married (yes = 1)			12,7	87,3	12,8
Gender of child (female = 1)			51,1	48,9	,0
Educ. mother: > high school (yes = 1)			47,9	52,1	14,3
Educ. father: > high school (yes = 1)			47,2	52,8	19,3

Data: Add Health Wave 1 (1994/95), Genetic Pairs Set

Given different needs of children at different ages (Berk 2009), we included *age of the child* as a control variable (in decimal format). The mean age of the children in our sample is about 16, but it ranges from about 12 to 21 years. Step relations, like friendship or any other social relationship, may be affected by relationship and particularly coresidence duration. Therefore, we use information on the age when the child started to live together with the respective parent. In order to avoid correlation of this variable with the age variable, we recoded it as the *number of years the child has not lived together with the resident parent*[10] by the time the interview took place. The average number of years children did not live with their fathers (2.3) is higher than the number for mothers (.9) (see Table 3). Excluding the children that always lived with their parents, the adjusted average number of years are 8.7 (SD=4.8) for fathers and 7.7 (SD=5.3) for mothers.

10 As an alternative we used the percentage of lifetime the child had not lived with the respective parent as an indicator for coresidence. This alternative operationalization did neither yield a meaningful deviation from the model coefficients nor from the model fit in the regression models presented in section 4.3.

Research shows that both parental and child gender are relevant with regard to parental investment and relationship assessments (e.g., Henderson/Taylor 1999) and gender-homogenous parent-child relations have been found to fare more positively than gender-heterogeneous relationships (Lundberg 2005; Schnettler 2010: 134-135). Therefore, we included *gender of the child* as a dummy variable. Parental gender is taken into account by calculating separate regression models for fathers and mothers. The literature further points towards the importance of both the degree of institutionalization (Hofferth/Anderson 2003) and the quality of the parental relationship (Skopin/Newman/McKenry 1993): If the stepparent and the biological parent are married and the partnership quality is high, the investment in the partner's child should be higher. Therefore we also included a dummy variable that indicates whether the *parents were married* at the date of the interview. The vast majority (87.3%) of the parents in the sample was married (these could be two biological parents or a biological parent and a stepparent). Good indicators on the quality of the parental relationship, shown in the literature as reducing but not eliminating the investment differences between biological and stepchildren, were unfortunately not available. Furthermore, we included three continuous variables that control for *the number of siblings* living in the same household, one counting biological, one half-, and one step siblings. With a mean number of 1.7, most of the children lived with biological siblings, some lived with half siblings (.3), and only a minority with step siblings (.1) (see Table 3). Given that we will look at relative differences within families, the number of siblings is not considered important with regard to the sharing of parental resources. But the size of a particular sibling group in a family may influence family culture in a way that benefits or disadvantages children of the minor group.

But not only the current household in which the child lives matters. For the relationship to a stepparent it may also be relevant what kind of relationship the child has to the biological parent living outside of that household and what other family obligations this biological parent has (see e.g., Manning/Smock 2000; King 2006, 2007, 2009). Although it does not enable us to establish the direction of causality, the introduction of an indicator of the quality of contact between the focal child and the outside biological parent as a control variable may signal a possible interaction between the child's relationship to the stepparent living in the same household with the child's relationship to the biological parent living outside the household. Unfortunately, Add Health does not provide information on the relationship of the child to the outside-living biological parent on the same set of dependent variables. As an alternative, we therefore used a binary variable that indicates whether the child had contact at least weekly to the outside-living parent versus having contact less often or not at all.

The variables introduced so far are all variables that can vary within families. In fixed-effects regression models that we introduce in the next section, only such "family-variant" variables can be estimated. "Family-invariant" effects can only be estimated when interacted with another, family-variant variable. *Parental education* was introduced into the analysis in such a way because the literature shows that high-status parents tend to compensate and lower status parents to reinforce endowment differences in children by means of differential parental investment (Hsin 2009; Lareau 2003). In order to test whether parental status acts in a similar way to mediate investment and hence differences

in parental relationship assessments between biological and social offspring, we introduced a dummy-variable on parents' education to operationalize parental status. This dummy variable indicates whether the parent had a high school degree or less, or a high school degree with additional vocational training or at least college education at the date of the interview. About 50% of both mothers and fathers in our sample hold more than a high school degree (see Table 3).

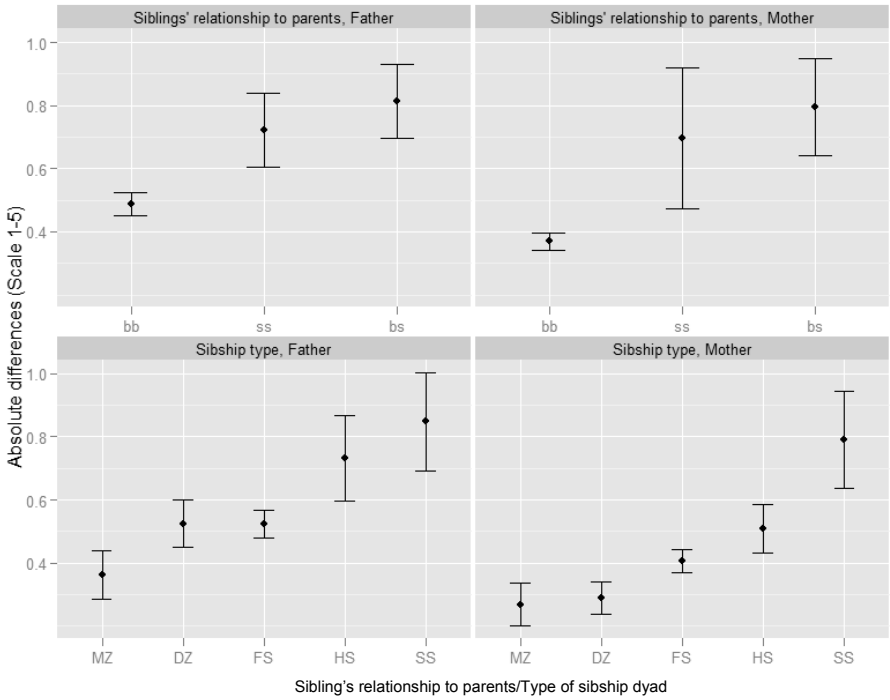
4. Results

4.1 Descriptive results

In Figure 1, we report absolute differences in relationship assessments between siblings by type of sibling dyad and parental gender. In the two bottom panels of the figure, dyads are classified by the biological relatedness of siblings. Here, the absolute differences in relationship assessments increase with the genetic distance between siblings. Not all adjacent type comparisons are statistically significant. But what can clearly be seen is that step siblings have higher absolute differences than full siblings, and full siblings higher ones than monozygotic twins. The case is less clear for dizygotic twins and half siblings. The absolute differences between half siblings are once closer to those of full siblings and once to those of step siblings. This can be explained by a composition effect: Most half-siblings share the same biological mother but have different fathers; that is, in the bottom right panel, most half-siblings are actually full siblings with regard to their mothers and in the bottom left panel mostly stepchildren with regard to their fathers.

The top two panels of Figure 1 actually provide a cleaner comparison with regard to the relationship status of each sibling vis-à-vis their parents. Here, "bb" indicates dyads in which both siblings are the biological children, "bs" dyads in which one sibling is the biological and one the step child, and "ss" dyads in which both siblings are the stepchildren of the respective parent. Consistent with predictions from evolutionary theory, we see that in both types of step-dyads absolute differences in relationship assessments between siblings are higher than in the biological pairs. Furthermore, absolute differences are higher in mixed, step-biological pairs than in pure stepsibling pairs. But this latter difference is not statistically significant. In an analysis not reported in Figure 1, we could also confirm that the observed differences were in the direction predicted: That is, on average stepchildren in mixed dyads reported lower relationship assessments than biological siblings.

Fig. 1: Absolute difference in relationship assessments between siblings, by type of sibling dyad, parent-child relationship status, and sex of parent



Notes: bb=focal parent is biological mother (n=1876) or father (n=1192) for both siblings, ss=focal parent is stepmother (n=32) or stepfather (n=283) for both siblings, bs=focal parent is biological mother (n=131) or father (n=222) for one sibling and stepparent for the other sibling; MZ=monozygotic twins (n=289), DZ=dizygotic twins (n=492), FS=full biological siblings (n=1251), HS=half siblings (n=442), SS=step siblings (n=150)

Data: Add Health, Wave I (1994/95), Genetic Pairs Set

4.2 Relative degree of between- and within-family variance

In order to estimate the relative degree of variance explained by within- and between-family differences, we calculated empty, linear random intercept models on the dependent variables with

$$y_{if} = \alpha + \gamma_f + \varepsilon_{if}$$

where i indicates individuals and f families. Here, the family-specific intercept γ_f is treated as a random variable. Using the variance components of the model allows to calculate the Intraclass Correlation (ICC).

$$ICC = \frac{\sigma_\gamma^2}{\sigma_\gamma^2 + \sigma_\varepsilon^2}$$

It indicates the relative amount of variance of the total variance that is explained by differences between families. And 1-ICC accordingly indicates the variance explained by *within*-family differences (Table 4). For assessments of the father-child relationship we obtained an ICC of 29.4% and for mother-child relationships an ICC of 21.3%. That is, in both cases the largest part of the individual variance is explained by differences within families (about 70.6% and 78.7% respectively). This result underscores the importance of testing the impact of biological parenthood within rather than between families.

Table 4: Percent between- and within-family variance in random intercept models on children's assessments of the relationships to their resident fathers and mothers, by type of sibship dyad

	Mother		Father	
	Between (ICC)	Within (1-ICC)	Between (ICC)	Within (1-ICC)
MZ	40,3%	59,7%	48,5%	51,5%
DZ	39,6%	60,4%	35,7%	64,3%
FS	20,8%	79,2%	25,9%	74,1%
HS	5,8%	94,2%	32,9%	67,1%
SS	,0%	100,0%	,5%	99,5%
All	**21,3%**	**78,7%**	**29,4%**	**70,6%**

Notes: MZ=monozygotic twins, DZ=dizygotic twins, FS=full biological siblings, HS=half siblings, SS=step siblings

Data: Add Health Wave 1 (1994/95), Genetic Pairs Set

In the next step we calculated random intercept models for sub-samples divided by differences in the genetic relatedness of siblings within families. Roughly, the percentage of within-family variance decreases with increasing genetic similarity of siblings in the same families. These results are affected by both compositional effects and real within-family differences in relationship assessments. The compositional effect is most pronounced for half-siblings (genetic relatedness = .25): In the vast majority of cases, for half-siblings the mother is the shared biological mother. The father, on the other hand, more often is the stepfather of one sibling and the biological father of the other sibling. In the case of step siblings, the within-family variance reaches (almost) 100%. This means that, on average, differences in relationship assessments between two step siblings in the same family are much larger than differences in the mean relationship assessment between step families.

4.3 Regression analysis

In order to facilitate within-family comparisons of child-parent relationship assessments, we performed a number of fixed-effects linear regression models.

$$y_{if} = \alpha + \beta X_{if} + \gamma Z_f + \mu_f + \varepsilon_{if}$$

Here, X_{if} includes all covariates that can vary within families and Z_f includes all covariates that differ between families but are fixed within families ("family-invariant"). In the fixed-effects transformation for these models[11], the Z term, like the intercept α, cancels out. That is, these family-invariant effects are controlled for but cannot be estimated.

In order to find the model that best describes the data, we used a multistage inclusion process. Following guidance from Hosmer and Lemeshow (2000: 95), we started with a series of univariable linear fixed-effects regressions and kept only those variables for inclusion in the multiple regression that were significant on the .25 level[12]. Subsequently, we introduced a number of relevant interaction and quadratic effects into the multiple regression, namely interaction effects between all independent variables and the biological status of the respective parent, an interaction between the status of the focal parent and the second parent, and quadratic effects for all continuous variables. Furthermore, we included an interaction between education of the focal parent and the status of the parent-child relationship. This process yielded one final model for the assessment of the maternal and one for the assessment of the paternal relationship (see "Multiple Regression" in Table 5).

As we can see in Table 5, genetic relatedness between children and both fathers and mothers has a strong and statistically significant effect on relationship assessments: In the bivariate regressions, having a biological parent increases the respective relationship assessment to either the father or the mother by about .6 points. This corresponds to a 15% change, based on the maximally possible change on the respective scale ranging from 1 to 5. Given that the mean relationship assessments are 4.7 and 4.6 points for maternal and paternal relationships respectively, the actual impact appears even higher. In the bivariate models for relationship assessments to the mother and the father, the effect of the second parent's biological relationship status is diametrical to the focal parent's effect. This is due to confounding of the parental status variables and disappears in the multiple regression.

Other variables that turn out to be relevant in the bi- and multivariate regression models are the number of years away from the respective parent, child age, and child gender: Each year the child did not live together with the focal parent reduces the assessment of the relationship to the respective parent by about .06 and .05 points for mothers and fathers respectively. In the bivariate models for the relationship assessment to the father, not only the years away from the father, but also the years away from the mother matter (β=.03). Yet, this effect disappears in the multivariate regression. Furthermore, after controlling for other variables, the effect of years not lived with the respective focal parent remains statistically significant but is reduced in effect size.

11 For details on the procedure see Allison (2005). We used the plm package for the statistical program R to calculate the fixed-effects models (see Croissant/Millo 2008 for details on the implementation in R).

12 For this purpose, in Table 5 variables that are not significant on the .05 but on the .25 level are marked with a # sign. This has no further relevance for the interpretation of coefficients.

Table 5: Fixed effects regression on children's assessments of their relationships to their resident fathers and mothers (coefficients and standard errors)

	Bivariate Models		Multiple Regression	
	Mother	**Father**	**Mother**	**Father**
Biological mother	,61*	-,46*	,29*	-,04
(yes = 1, no = 0)	*(,07)*	*(,09)*	*(,13)*	*(,15)*
Biological father	-,25*	,60*	-,02	,48*
(yes = 1, no = 0)	*(,05)*	*(,06)*	*(,07)*	*(,09)*
Years away from mother	-,06*	,03*	-,04*	,00
(Range: 0 - 18.6 years)	*(,01)*	*(,01)*	*(,01)*	*,(01)*
Years away from father	,01	-,05*		-,02*
(Range: 0 - 19,7 years)	*(,01)*	*(,01)*		*(,01)*
Resident parents	,10	-,50		
(married = 1, unmarried = 0)	*(,32)*	*(,60)*		
Age in years	-,03*	-,05*	-,02*	-,03*
(Range: 11.6-21.3)	*(,01)*	*(,01)*	*(,01)*	*(,01)*
Child gender	-,09*	-,19*	-,09*	-,17*
(female = 1, male = 0)	*(,03)*	*(,04)*	*(,03)*	*(,04)*
# of biological siblings	,06*	,04	,02	
(Range: 0-12)	*(,02)*	*(,04)*	*(,04)*	
# of half siblings	-,02	-,08#	,13#	-,17#
(Range: 0-9)	*(,03)*	*(,05)*	*(,08)*	*(,10)*
# of step siblings	-,13*	-,04	-,02	
(Range 0-7)	*(,05)*	*(,06)*	*(,06)*	
# of half siblings	-,18*		-,15*	
x Mother bio (y/n)	*(,07)*		*(,07)*	
(# of half siblings)^2				,06
				(,02)
Model Statistics		R^2	,07	,09
		n_f	1735	1572
		n_i	3298	2966
		F	13,81	16,66

Notes: significance levels: * <.05, # <.25; for the models including interaction or quadratic effects in the columns on bivariate (and trivariate) models, the main effects are omitted from the table.

Data: Add Health, Wave I (1994/95), Genetic Pairs Set

The age of the child is also associated with relationship assessments: With each year the age is increased, the relationship assessment is reduced by about .03 and .05 points for the relationships to the mother and father respectively. A possible explanation may be that children increasingly strive for autonomy from their parents or that parents reduce their investment with increasing age of the child, especially if younger siblings with higher age-specific needs live in the household. In the multivariate regressions, the size of the age effect is reduced as well, but it remains statistically significant.

Regarding gender of the child, the literature suggests more positive relationship assessments in gender-homogenous parent-child constellations as opposed to gender-heterogeneous ones (Lundberg 2005; Schnettler 2010: 134-135). Whereas this is indeed what we find in relative terms, in absolute terms daughters' relationship assessments are

lower than those of sons for relationships to mothers and fathers: In the multiple regression, we see that being a daughter reduces the relationship assessment to mothers by about .09 points and to fathers by .17 points.

With regard to mothers, the number of biological (β=.06) and stepchildren (β=-.13) plays a role in the bivariate regression only. But once other variables are controlled for, the number of half siblings is associated with relationship assessments – though only in the model for the mother. The results of the multiple regression show that each additional half sibling increases the relationship assessment of the focal child if the mother is the focal child's stepmother. Given the negative interaction effect between biological mother-child status and number of half siblings (β=-.15), this effect is reversed in case of a biological mother: Here, each additional half sibling reduces the relationship assessment. Given that we do not know details about the other half siblings in the household that were not interviewed (e.g., which parent is the shared biological parent), we can only speculate about the possible reason for this effect. The slightly declining relationship assessment with increasing number of half siblings for children and their biological mother is less surprising: This effect may be a sign that the more children the mother has with the stepfather, the more attention and time goes into the other part of the family – and hence the relationship to the focal child suffers. More difficult to explain is the correlation between the number of half siblings and the relationship assessment between children and their stepmother. Maybe the more children a mother has from her previous relationship, the more she needs to signal that the current family is important to her (either as part of a mating strategy or just as an investment into the stability of the current relationship).

No additional interaction (or quadratic) effects appeared relevant in the analysis – not even the interaction between education and parent-child relationship status. Coming back to the effect of the biological status of the parent-child relationship, we can sum up that even though the effects of biological father- and motherhood are reduced in effect size once all relevant control variables are introduced, biological parenthood continues to be a strong influence on relationship assessments. With coefficients of about .29 and .48 for the biological status of mothers and fathers respectively, the relationship assessment for the respective focal parent differs by about 9-12% between social and biological siblings. Given a much higher percentage of missing values in relationship assessment among step- rather than biological children (see Table 2), the real impact of biological parenthood may even be higher. We have seen in the last section that there is considerable variance within families, but the summary statistics (R^2) reveal that the current models only explain about 7% of the variance for mothers and about 9% of the variance for fathers. We need to develop further hypotheses on possible within-family criteria that may affect parental investment and relationship assessments. In the following discussion of the results, we will make a few remarks on the challenges for future data collection efforts.

5. Discussion

Starting point of this paper was the assumption that from an evolutionary perspective, parental care should differ between biological and social children in a way that disadvantages the latter, and that this difference should be mostly visible in families in which bio-

logical and social parent-child relations coexist. We improved previous research in a number of ways: (1) Descriptively we were able to show that differences in relationship assessments roughly increase with differences in the genetic similarity between siblings, (2) we used fixed-effects regression to control for (unobserved) heterogeneity while estimating the effect of biological parenthood based on within-family differences, (3) and we included relevant family-variant controls in the fixed-effects regression. The conclusion of the analysis is that biological parenthood matters: In all respects stepchildren do provide lower assessments of the relationships to their parents than biological children do.

Even though this result is consistent with predictions from evolutionary theory, we want to emphasize that our results do not necessarily contradict sociological theories. If we go back to the descriptive results reported in Figure 1, we can provide a number of alternative sociological explanations without needing to resort to any genetic differences. Monozygotic twins, we could argue, are more similar than dizygotic twins and full siblings. Therefore, parents find fewer differences to discriminate between their children based on, for example, resemblance to self or preferences for certain types of child personalities or endowments (either in an attempt to compensate for or to reinforce differences, see Hsin 2009). Furthermore, whereas dizygotic twins have the same date of birth, full siblings have an age difference. Therefore changing needs over the life course of children may contribute to differences in parental investment and hence relationship assessments for full siblings. Also, parents are influenced by social norms. Breaches of a norm of equal treatment are discovered more easily the more similar children are. But with increasing genetic distance between siblings, overall differences in parental treatment may be concealed by the complex interplay of parental investment and attention in a large variety of different life domains. In stepfamilies (but not only in stepfamilies), the interplay becomes even more complex because the interests of multiple family members, both within and outside of the own household, are intertwined (for this complex interdependence, cf. King 2006, 2007, 2009; MacDonald/DeMaris 2002; White/Gilbreth 2001).

Again, whereas these statements are indeed alternative explanations, they are not inconsistent with a biological perspective. In fact, the very mechanisms that sociologists draw on may be related to the mechanisms that are assumed to have evolved to increase inclusive fitness. The question of how biological and social factors co-influence parental behavior can only be decided on a more fine-grained level. That is, to provide a real test of the importance of genetic ties in family relationships and not to rely on average measures (like those presented in Table 1[13]), we need to be able to measure the genetic closeness between specific family members in a more detailed way. The increasing inclusion of biomarkers in surveys is therefore a good step in the right direction (cf. Finch/Vaupel/Kinsella 2001), but it cannot replace an investigation into possible kinship detection mechanisms and the inputs they rely on (cf. Dubas/Heijkoop/van Aken 2009; Holmes 2004; Tal/Lieberman 2007): Even if we are able to measure genetic relatedness on a very detailed level, research on kinship detection may uncover that kin detection predomi-

13 Whereas the genetic relatedness of children to their biological parents is always 50%, the phenotype, that is, the physiological or psychological expression of genes, may be skewed towards one parent, due to different patterns of dominant and recessive genes. Furthermore, children are genetically related to their biological siblings by 50% *on average*. In specific cases, resemblance can deviate from this average figure (Dawkins 2006: 91).

nantly works, for instance, through facial resemblance or olfactory cues. In that case, the challenge would be to implement reliable measures of resemblance of facial or olfactory cues in surveys[14].

These are but a few examples of challenges in measuring possible biological influences on parental behavior. Furthermore, we need to improve surveys in ways that better capture the full interdependence of kinship relations. This means that to the degree that families' lives are increasingly lived beyond the individual household, survey research needs to reconstruct this complex network structure as best as possible. With regard to biological and step relations this means that a real test of the relative importance of biological and social parenthood requires taking into account the force of biological and social ties within and outside the own household. After all, within-household ties are dependent on ties outside the household (see King 2006, 2007, 2009). Whereas the relationship frequency to the outside-living biological parent did not play a role in our analysis – the respective variable did not meet the statistical inclusion criteria for the multivariate regression analysis – a better and more complete measurement of this interdependence of persons living in multiple households may lead to a different conclusion.

For a full consideration of the integrative potential of biological and social explanations with regard to parent-child relationships and to facilitate cross-cultural comparisons, we also need to keep in mind that not all evolved psychological mechanisms immediately have to do with parenting. The extreme longevity that humans reach today is a relatively recent phenomenon. Psychological mechanisms may not be adjusted to this new situation when parents live way beyond the reproductive and rearing phase (to the contrary, see Hawkes 2003 on the grandmother hypothesis). Drives for self-preservation and striving for material comfort, for example, ultimately evolved to improve chances for reproduction but may have reached a certain independence from immediate returns on inclusive fitness under this new longevity regime. A variety of different welfare state arrangements, cultural values, and legal norms can influence parental investment decisions within families in different ways between different countries (regarding value of children (VOC), see Trommsdorff/Nauck 2010). That is, in order to fully understand parental investment also in the cross-cultural comparison, we may need to further investigate behavioral mechanisms like reciprocity and social exchange in family relations and throughout the linked life courses of family members (Brandt et al. 2008; Steinbach 2010: 148-158).

In sum, we were able to show that biological parenthood matters even if we analyze how social and biological ties play out within the same families and control for a number of relevant influences that may also have an impact on parent-child relationships. However, given the current state of data availability, our contribution cannot be a final test for or against biological influences on parental behavior. We have pleaded to abandon the thought that a test between biological and sociological theories is a test of either/or. Instead, we argued that it is a test of how *exactly* biological and social factors *co-influence* parental behavior. In the preceding section we have made a few suggestions for necessary improvements in data collection. But data collection itself will not solve this challenge

14 Interesting in this context is also the question to which degree knowledge about genetic relatedness obtained through DNA testing – a possibility our psychological architecture may not be prepared for – can bias influence of emotion-orchestrated psychological kin-detection mechanisms on parental behavior.

alone. Instead we also need to engage the two theoretical perspectives with each other on a more detailed level than has hitherto been achieved. In order to continue the effort of finding out how the two perspectives can be integrated and tested on a detailed level, scholars need to be creative and courageous and leave old ideological battles behind.

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Stepfamily instability in Canada – The impact of family composition and union type

Instabilität von Stieffamilien in Kanada: der Einfluss der Familienkonstellation und der Art der Partnerschaft

Abstract:
The aim of this paper is to analyze stepfamily instability in Canada by applying the proportional hazards model to the information collected in the 2001 General Social Survey on Family. More specifically, we examine the effect that the family composition and the type of conjugal union exert on the risk of separation, and test whether the impact of cohabiting union varies over time and between Quebec and the other provinces, depending of its stage of institutionalization. The analysis shows that stepmother families face a lower risk of separation than those formed around a stepfather, and that cohabiting stepfamily couples are more unstable than married ones. The risk of union dissolution among stepfamily couples has increased over time, for married as well as cohabiting partners, but the effect of cohabitation relative to marriage does not appear to significantly differ across periods or regions.

Key words: stepfamily instability, family composition, type of union, event history analysis, women, Canada

Zusammenfassung:
Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht die (In)stabilität von Stieffamilien in Kanada. Die Analysen wurden mit dem General Social Survey (GSS) 2001 unter Anwendung der Ereignisdatenanalyse durchgeführt. Von besonderem Interesse waren der Einfluss der Familienkonstellation und die Art der Partnerschaft auf das Trennungsrisiko. Ferner wurde untersucht, wie sich die (In)stabilität von Stieffamilien über die Zeit entwickelt hat. In der kanadischen Provinz Québec gelten nichteheliche Lebensgemeinschaften bereits als vollständig institutionalisiert. Ein weiterer Aspekt dieser Studie war der Vergleich der Entwicklung der québecer Stieffamilien mit denen im restlichen Kanada über die Zeit. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass Stiefmutterfamilien ein geringeres Trennungsrisiko haben als Stiefvaterfamilien und dass Ehen in Stieffamilien stabiler sind als in nichteheliche Lebensgemeinschaften. Ebenso konnte gezeigt werden, dass für beide Partnerschaftstypen das Trennungsrisiko über die Zeit hinweg stark zugenommen hat.

Schlagwörter: Stieffamilieninstabilität, Familienkonstellation, Art der Partnerschaft, Ereignisdatenanalyse, Frauen, Kanada

1 Introduction

In Canada, as in most western countries, the past several decades have been characterized by high levels of conjugal instability. Following the adoption of the Divorce Law by the Canadian Parliament in 1968, the proportion of marriages ending in divorce doubled from less than 20% in 1970 to approximately 40% at the end of the 1980s, and has fluctuated around this level thereafter (Le Bourdais/Lapierre-Adamcyk 2004). The increase observed is due to the higher propensity of couples to separate and their tendency, over time, to do so at shorter durations of marriage, even in the presence of young children.

Marriage has not only become more unstable, it is also progressively being replaced by cohabitation, first, as a way to enter conjugal life and, more recently, as a conjugal setting in which to have and raise children. Recent data show that only half of Canadian women would marry at least once in their life if the trends observed were to continue (Le Bourdais/Lapierre-Adamcyk 2004). By the turn of the century, over 40% of young Canadians started their conjugal life through cohabitation rather than marriage (Statistics Canada 2002a) and slightly over 20% of children were born to cohabiting parents (Juby et al. 2005b). Cohabiting unions in which children are born tend to last longer than those that are childless, but they still remain significantly more unstable than marriages (Bumpass/Lu 2000; Le Bourdais/Juby 2002). The number of children who see their parents separate has thus increased substantially over the years.

Following the breakdown of their first family, a substantial proportion of men and women start living with a new partner, most often through cohabitation the second time around. They then form a stepfamily, that is, a family that comprises at least one child born from one of the two partners' prior relationship. With the prevailing level of conjugal instability, the number of stepfamilies has increased over the years. In 2001 in Canada, these families represented 10% of all families (and 12% of two-parent families) with children under the age of 21 (Lapierre-Adamcyk/Le Bourdais 2008). This percentage compares to that observed in the US and most European countries (Sweeney 2010).

Several studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s have analysed union instability in remarried families and stepfamilies. They found these families to be more unstable than first married families (Teachman 1986; Wineberg 1992) and concluded that the complexity of the family structure was one of the main factors associated with union dissolution (Cherlin/Furstenberg 1994). However, as argued by Coleman et al. (2000) who conducted an extensive review of research on remarriage, these studies suffered from a number of methodological and conceptual drawbacks, namely the lack of attention they gave to stepfamily diversity by excluding, for example, cohabiting stepfamilies, and their tendency to rely on cross-sectional data that are inadequate to capture the dynamic nature of the ongoing processes. Since the turn of the century, a large body of psycho-sociological research has focussed on the nature and quality of the relationships existing among the various members that belong to a stepfamily. A number of demographic studies have analysed childbearing within stepfamilies and examined whether the number of children from previous unions affect the likelihood of having a common biological child with a new partner (Sweeney 2010). However, in spite of the impact it has on the life of individuals, the study of stepfamily instability per se has been neglected by researchers (for an exception, see Teachman 2008).

In Canada, the last demographic study to our knowledge that analysed stepfamily instability used the 1990 General Social Survey (GSS) on family. In line with previous research, this study showed that the composition of the family (stepfather or stepmother) and the type of the union (marriage or cohabitation) were important determinants of its duration (Desrosiers et al. 1995). In the ten years following that survey, several changes that have possibly modified the effects of these two variables on stepfamily instability have occurred. On one hand, the popularity of cohabiting unions has continued to grow, especially among stepfamily couples who, by 2001, in majority were living in this type of union (Lapierre-Adamcyk/Le Bourdais 2008), and more so in the province of Quebec, where it reached a level similar to that observed in the Scandinavian countries (Statistics Canada 2002b). On the other hand, the composition of stepfamilies has become more diversified, with courts less likely to grant women the sole custody of their children following parental separation. Consequently, one might ask whether the composition of the family and the type of the conjugal union still constitute strong determinants of the likelihood of separation among stepfamilies. Do the stepfamilies formed during the 1990s differ from those formed earlier in their likelihood to break up? Has the negative impact of cohabitation on stepfamily duration diminished over time, as cohabiting unions became more widespread and socially acceptable, and is its impact likely to be lower in Quebec, where this form of union is more common than elsewhere in Canada? These questions constitute the main focus of this paper that uses the 2001 Canadian GSS on family.

2 Previous literature and research hypotheses

The high rate of union dissolution in remarried stepfamilies has been well documented in past research (Cherlin 1978; White/Booth 1985; Teachman 1986; Clarke/Wilson 1994; Bumpass/Riley 2007, cited in Sweeney 2010). These families present particular characteristics and histories that appear to be related to the high level of family break-ups observed. Hence, at least one of the partners has already experienced a marital disruption. While one could expect separated individuals to have learned from their previous relationships and to be more settled and more inclined to resolve conflicts, and consequently to face lower risk of marital breakdown, past research has repetitively shown that remarried couples are less stable than first married ones. Some authors have argued that the high level of instability observed among stepfamilies is linked to the fact that remarried partners are more likely to be "poor marriage material" (Booth/Edwards 1992:181), that is, to comprise individuals who have difficult personalities, poor communication skills and present drug use or alcohol abuse problems. Now that divorce has become relatively common, it seems somewhat inappropriate to attribute the high rate of second union disruption mostly to individuals' psychological problems, even though such problems certainly do play a role in the break-up of some relationships. Rising aspirations of self-fulfilment and individuation are doubtlessly linked to individuals' willingness to break up or leave unhappy relationships (for a discussion, see Beck/Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Giddens 1992). The values and attitudes held towards marriage and divorce have profoundly changed over time (Van de Kaa 1987). Individuals entering a second marriage know that divorce is a possible and accepted solution and they might thus be more prone to see it as a way to end an unhappy marriage.

In a well-cited article, Cherlin (1978) also invoked the lack of institutionalization of remarriages to account for their increased fragility. He argued that the lack of clear norms defining (step)parent and (step)child relationships leads to role ambiguity that, in turn, can result in conflicting situations among stepfamily members who had experienced different family histories. In a more recent article, Cherlin (2004) argued that, contrary to his earlier expectations, stepfamily life has not become more institutionalized but is rather now guided by weakened behavioural norms, due to the deinstitutionalization of marriage itself and the rise of cohabitation.

Stepfamily composition and the risk of family disruption

Stepfamilies can take various forms and configurations. No common definition of what constitutes a 'stepfamily' can be found in the literature, and the terms used to describe the diverse arrangements that stepfamilies take vary across studies (for a discussion, see Martin/Le Bourdais 2008). Here, we adopt an inclusive definition and consider as a stepfamily any couple living together with at least one child who is not the biological or adopted child of both partners[1]. Contrary to most research conducted previously in the US (for exceptions, see Bumpass et al. 1995; Stewart, 2001), we do not restrict our definition to remarried couples and include cohabiting couples whose number has been steadily increasing over time. We also take into account the families formed by women, following the birth of children outside a union with a partner who is not the father of these children, which have rarely been included in past stepfamily research (for exceptions, see Henz/Thomson 2005; Stewart 2007). To distinguish the various configurations that stepfamilies can take depending upon the origin of the children living with the couple, we use the terms 'stepfather family' and 'stepmother family'.

The family composition is one of the main characteristics that have been taken into consideration in past studies focussing on stepfamilies. Psychological research has predominantly used this variable to assess the quality of the relationships existing between stepparents and stepchildren, while socio-demographic research mostly brought it into play to account for the differential levels of union dissolution observed across stepfamilies. Both fields of research have produced a series of findings which are not easily reconcilable regarding the type of relationship that might be more conducive to stepfamily stability.

Most research based on clinical or psychological studies reports that stepmothers experience more difficulties than stepfathers in their relationships with their partner's children (Ambert 1986; Pasley/Ihinger-Tallman 1987; Ihinger-Tallman/Pasley 1997). The difficulties they face in adjusting to their stepparent role would contribute to lower conjugal satisfaction and thus increase the risk of separation among this type of family (Cherlin/Furstenberg 1994; Coleman et al. 2000). Several explanations have been advanced to account for this finding. First, Ihinger-Tallman (1988) suggests that children living in stepmother families might experience conflicting loyalty feelings between the stepmother who recently entered their life and their own mother with whom they are likely to maintain regular contact. Recent research also suggests that stepmothers face difficulties in their relationships with stepchildren given the powerful stereotypes of the nurturing

1 Excluding foster children.

mother and the "wicked" stepmother that exist (Sweeney 2010: 676). Ambert (1986) further hypothesizes that stepmothers' negative perception of their role is probably linked to the fact that most of them do not live on a regular basis with their stepchildren. As a consequence, they are unable to develop a warm and secure relationship with their stepchildren as those with live-in stepchildren might achieve, while they still have to cope with the additional household work incurred by their visit.

Fatherhood has not in the past been as firmly associated as motherhood with child rearing, and expectations towards stepfathers have remained relatively modest (Ihinger-Talman 1988). Compared to biological fathers, stepfathers are not expected to play a very active role in taking on the care and the responsibility of children (Fine 1995), and they are more likely to adopt a "disengaged style of stepparenting" (Ihinger-Talman/Pasley 1997:22). Consequently, they tend to report relatively high levels of satisfaction with their parental role when they succeed in developing a good friendship relation with the children and are able to support their partner – the biological mother of these children –, in order to decrease her financial hardship or make it possible for her to work outside the home. Cherlin and Furstenberg (1994) also mention that stepparenting is often easier for men than women, since stepfathers often occupy a place that has been left empty after the departure of the biological father, whereas stepmothers often have to compete with the biological mother for gaining the children's affection.

While psychological studies all concluded that the role of stepfather might be easier than that of stepmother and thus suggested that stepfather families are perhaps more stable than stepmother families, demographic research has unequivocally shown that the former are more at risk of breaking up than the latter (Desrosiers et al. 1995; Juby et al. 2001; Teachman 1986, 2008). The main argument advanced in the literature to account for this finding is based on the assumption that stepmothers are more willing than stepfathers to invest into the relationship with the children, thus making these families more stable. Another explanation could well reside in the role tensions that mothers in stepfamilies experience as they feel "caught in the middle", that is, between their children and new conjugal partner. When conflicts develop between children and stepfathers, mothers' loyalties generally lay with the former, at the risk of jeopardizing their conjugal relationship (Weaver/Coleman, 2010). Another research suggests that stepmother families are more likely to be families in which the biological father is deeply involved in child rearing, as exemplified by the fact that he has custody of his children; these men are expected to be highly committed to family life in general and to invest into the relationship with their partner – the stepmother –, thus making the family more stable (Juby et al. 2005a).

> Following the results of demographic studies, we expect stepmother families to be less at risk of breaking up than stepfather families.

The existence of a previous union – Whether the stepfamily was formed after the break-up of a two-parent family or following the birth of a child outside a union is another characteristic that is likely to affect the stability of the family. A non negligible fraction of the stepfather families are formed by lone mothers who gave birth to children outside of a union (Juby et al. 2001); in contrast, stepmother families very rarely include a biological father who did not previously live in a union (Ermisch/Wright 1991).

Stepfather families formed by mothers who did not live with the biological father of their children are expected to be more stable than those who lived together until separation.

In the latter case, the children and the mother who went through the process of separation might find difficult the adaptation to a stepfather who did not share their previous family experience, while the stepfather might find it hard to develop a positive relationship with children in the presence of an actively involved biological father (Cherlin/Furstenberg 1994). In the former case, children might welcome the attention they get from a fatherly figure, especially if their father never lived with them and was totally absent from their life. Single mothers might also appreciate the support they receive from their new partner in taking care of their children, and his financial contribution to the household, given the economic difficulties that many of them faced (McLanahan et al. 2003).

> Consequently, we expect the stepfather families in which women had no prior union to be less at risk of experiencing a separation than those formed after union dissolution.

Type of union and the risk of family disruption

Cohabiting unions have become relatively widespread in Canada, especially in Quebec where 30% of couples reported living together outside of marriage in 2001 (Statistics Canada 2002b). This conjugal arrangement is even more frequent among stepfamilies, with couples increasingly choosing to cohabit rather than remarry following marital dissolution. A quarter of stepparents were cohabiting in the U.S. in the late 1980s (Bumpass et al. 1995) and half of Canadian stepfamilies, and as much as 70% of those living in Quebec, were doing so in 2001 (Lapierre-Adamcyk/Le Bourdais 2008).

Non-marital unions are less stable than marriages (Wu 2000). They are less institutionalized and they require less formal commitment than marriages; their boundaries are more flexible, and finalizing separation is easier to achieve than it is for married couples (Cherlin 2004). Manning and Lamb (2003) further argue that, in the U.S., cohabiting couples have less legal and social recognition than married couples, and that the obligations and rights of cohabiting stepparents towards children may be unclear and a source of conflict. Compared to their married counterparts, cohabiting stepfamilies would face a "particularly pronounced" incomplete institutionalized status (Sweeney 2010: 671), which could lead to increased levels of tension and higher risk of union instability.

> Consequently, we expect stepfamily couples living in a cohabiting union to be less stable than those who are married.

The degree of instability of cohabiting unions has, however, been shown to vary across countries, depending on the relative number and achieved level of institutionalization of these unions in each country. In Sweden, for instance, where non-marital unions are widespread and have almost replaced marriage as a way to have and raise a family, cohabiting couples benefit from similar rights to those of married couples in many areas of life, and have been found to be relatively more stable than in countries in which they are less prevalent (Kiernan 2002). Similarly, past research has shown that, as the number of cohabiting unions increased, the gap in the level of instability observed between Canadian two-parent families formed through cohabitation or marriage has diminished, especially in the province of Quebec, where cohabitation has achieved a higher stage of development than elsewhere in Canada (Le Bourdais/Juby 2002).

Based on these results, we further posit that the negative impact of cohabitation on stepfamily relative to that of marriage will decrease over time, as cohabitation becomes more widespread. We also expect the difference separating Quebec cohabiting and married stepfamily couples to be smaller than it is outside of Quebec; in other words, when compared to their married counterparts, cohabiting stepfamily couples should be relatively less likely to separate in Quebec than they are elsewhere in Canada.

Other independent variables

The birth of a child – The birth of a child in a stepfamily is not an uncommon event. Indeed, a recent Canadian study found that close to 40% of stepfamilies comprise at least one child born during the course of the union, a child who is the half-brother or sister of the children already present in the family (Lapierre-Adamcyk/Le Bourdais, 2008). As in first married families, the birth of a child has generally been shown to be positively associated with union stability (Desrosiers et al. 1995; Teachman 1986) even though, as Wineberg (1992: 880) argued, the arrival of a new child adds "further complexity in an already complex system". One of the explanations advanced for the stabilizing influence of childbearing in stepfamilies is that the new child genetically links all members of the stepfamily to one another, thus reinforcing emotional ties between them (Juby et al. 2001), and leads to increased family solidarity by legitimating in their parental role the men or women who, prior to the birth of the common child, were only involved as stepparents with children (Ambert 1986).

Other control variables – In addition to the above variables, our analysis also includes the age of partners, which is generally negatively associated with union instability. We also control for the age and number of children who belong to the stepfamily, as previous studies have shown that adolescents might have more difficulties than younger children in accepting living with a stepparent (Ihinger-Tallman 1988; Hetherington 1993; Pasley/ Moorefield 2004). The period during which the stepfamily episode was experienced is included in our models in order to control for changing conjugal patterns. Finally, we also take into account respondents' mother tongue, religious affiliation, highest level of education achieved, and work status throughout the stepfamily episode, as these variables have all been found to be linked to conjugal instability in Canadian studies (Hall/Zhao 1995).

3 Data and methods

Data – Our analysis is based on the General Social Survey (GSS) on Family conducted by Statistics Canada in 2001. The GSS interviewed a large sample of approximately 24,000 adult men and women, representative of the Canadian population aged 15 years and older living in private households (Statistics Canada 2001).[2] In addition to gathering detailed information on respondents' individual and household characteristics at the time of the survey, the GSS collected their retrospective education and work histories. Respondents were

2 Excluding the residents of Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.

also asked to record the history of all the unions (marriages or cohabiting unions) they had experienced and of all the children they had given birth to, adopted and/or raised. For each union reported, the GSS gathered the date of beginning and, if applicable, the date and reason of ending of the union.[3] For each child, the GSS collected the date of birth, as well as the date of arrival in the respondent's household of adopted and step-children; the date at which each child left the household for the last time was also recorded. Only female respondents are retained for the analysis, in order to avoid report biases linked to men's conjugal and parental histories (Rendall et al. 1999; Juby/Le Bourdais 1999).

Constructing the stepfamily episodes – By combining the information collected in the conjugal and parental histories, we were able to reconstruct all the stepfamily episodes that women had experienced prior to the survey. The episodes are set to begin from the moment a woman starts living with a married or cohabiting partner, and with children who are not the biological or adoptive children of both partners. They can end in three different ways: when the union breaks up, with the death of the partner, or when the last stepchild who lives in the family leaves the parental home.

The pathways to stepfamily formation are quite diverse. Each partner might have joined the stepfamily without having first experienced a previous union or following the dissolution (separation or death of partner) of a marriage or of a common-law relationship. Moreover, each episode might include children born from a previous relationship (within or outside a union) of one or the two members of the couple. Unfortunately, the GSS did not collect any information on the parental histories of women's partners. It is therefore impossible to determine with certainty whether the partner who started living with a woman who gave birth outside a union is the biological father of the child. Here, we consider that children born up to six months prior to the beginning of a union belong to the union or, in other words, that they are the biological children of the couple; in such cases, the family unit is therefore not counted as a stepfamily.[4] The lack of information on the partners' parental histories also makes it impossible to identify non-resident stepmothers in our sample, that is, women who did not mention having raised and lived with their partner's children.[5] Consequently, our study includes only resident stepparents and excludes those who never lived with their stepchildren. Finally, one should note that the GSS did not gather information on children's living arrangements, which might have changed over the course of the episode as the amount of time they spent in each of their separated parents' household fluctuated. We only know the date that children arrived in the respondents' life through birth, adoption or as stepchildren, as well as the date of their

3 The GSS collected the date (month and year) of each event, but the microdata file created by Statistics Canada provides the age (with a decimal) of respondents at each event.

4 The cut-off point retained to determine whether children born before the beginning of a union belong to this union or not varies across studies, from 0 month, in Prskawetz et al.'s (2002) research that treated as stepchildren all children born prior to the union, to 6 months (Griffith et al. 1985; Desrosiers et al. 1995) and even 11 or 12 months (Buber/Prskawetz 2000; Thomson 2004). We ran separate analyses using a 12-month cut-off point and found no changes in the results. We thus used 6 months as our cut-off point, as was done in a previous Canadian study (Desrosiers et al. 1995).

5 Respondents were first asked if they had "ever raised step-children". If so, they were further asked "in what month and year" did each step-child "join their household" and, if applicable, "in what month and year" he or she "last left home".

last departure from home; we are thus forced to assume that children are living in the respondent's home until this last date.[6]

Our analysis includes solely the first stepfamily episodes reported by women, which constitute the large majority of episodes spent in this type of family.[7] The sample first comprised 1,511 female respondents who had experienced at least one episode of stepfamily life in adulthood at the time they were reached by the survey (for more details about the constitution of the sample of stepfamily episodes, see the Appendix). We excluded from the analysis 158 episodes that comprised only children aged 21 years or older at the formation of the stepfamily.[8] The final analytical sample comprises 1,353 female respondents who spent at least some time in a stepfamily household.

Method – We use Cox proportional hazard models to simultaneously assess the effect of a series of covariates, which may vary over time, on the hazard (or conditional probability) of separation among women living in a stepfamily (see Blossfeld et al. 2007). The duration of the stepfamily episode at separation is established by subtracting the age at beginning of union from the age of women at separation or divorce, whichever came first. Stepfamily episodes that were still ongoing at the time of the survey or that ended with the death of the partner are censored, using the age of women at survey or at widowhood.

Fixed covariates – The first fixed covariate identifies the composition of the stepfamily, based on the existing relationships between the family members at the beginning of the episode. Three categories are distinguished: 1) stepmother families that comprise children living with their biological father and a stepmother; 2) stepfather families that include children living with their biological mother and a stepfather; and 3) stepmother/stepfather families that comprise two sets of siblings, i.e. a mother living with her own biological children and a father with his own children. The stepfather category is further broken down according to whether the woman experienced a stepfamily episode following the birth of children outside a union or following a conjugal separation.

The age of both partners of the couple at the beginning of the episode is introduced as a continuous variable, and all other covariates as dummy variables. The age of the youngest child present identifies three groups: preschool (0-4) years; elementary school (5-11) years; adolescence (12-20) years. The number of children present at the beginning of the episode is coded in three categories: (1 child; 2 children; 3 children or more). The highest educational level completed by respondents at survey is coded into four categories: 1) less than high school degree; 2) high school diploma; 3) college degree; and 4) university de-

6 For less than half of the stepmother family episodes, the woman reported that she started living with her partner shortly before her stepchildren joined her household (the median duration that separates the two events is 1.9 years). For the sake of coherence with the residential approach of stepparenthood imposed by the data, we used the arrival date of the stepchildren in the woman's household as the beginning of the stepfamily episode.

7 This approach that distinguishes the family episodes by rank is the most common in the literature. It is based on the idea that past experience influences subsequent behaviour and that the process underlying the first stepfamily episode might differ from that of ulterior episodes.

8 We were interested in studying the risk of union disruption among stepfamilies with dependent children. Although 18 is the legal age to define adulthood in Canada, we chose 21 as the age to mark this passage, given that children often pursue schooling, stay at home or depend on their parents for financial support until that age (Mitchell 2006).

gree. A region variable distinguishes Quebec respondents from those living elsewhere in Canada. Respondents' mother tongue aims to control whether regional differences are due to cultural traits separating Francophone and Anglophone Canadians; it is coded into four categories: 1) English only; 2) French only; 3) both English and French; 4) any other languages. Finally, respondents are distinguished according to their religious affiliation (Protestant; Catholic; another religion (e.g. Islam or Jewish); no religion).

Time-varying covariates – Four time-varying covariates are included into the analyses. The first one indicates the presence of a common child from the moment that a first child is born to the couple. The second specifies the type of union, which can change from common-law union to marriage if the partners marry during the course of the episode. A third variable, which controls for the time period during which the stepfamily episode was experienced, is coded into the following four categories: 1) before 1970; 2) 1970-1979; 3) 1980-1989 and 4) 1990 and after. Finally, the last time-varying covariate indicates the employment status of the respondent during the stepfamily episode; it is coded into three categories: 1) never worked; 2) working; and 3) not working (for those who had previously worked). For example, the value of the employment status of respondents can change from working, to not working, to working again, as a respondent who was employed at the beginning of the episode, stops working and then returns into employment during the course of the episode. Unfortunately, no information on other socioeconomic characteristics, such as income, was collected retrospectively in the survey and cannot be added to our analysis. Interaction variables combining, first, the type of union and region and, second, the type of union and period in which the episode was experienced are included in two separate models in order to test whether the effect of the union type varied across regions and periods. After excluding all cases in which the information on one or several covariates is missing, the final sample used in the regression models comprises 1,325 female respondents who experienced at least one stepfamily episode.[9]

Sample weights are used to adjust for the stratified and clustered design of the survey in the descriptive statistics. We further use the bootstrap weights provided by Statistics Canada in the Cox models in order to obtain unbiased and accurate estimates of variance. The results presented below reflect the standard errors derived from resampling each model 200 times.

4 Results

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics for the covariates used in the analysis are presented in Table 1. The large majority (83%) of stepfamily episodes experienced by women comprise a mother living with her own children and a partner who is not the father of these children (24.2% + 58.7%; see the bottom line of Table 1). This is not surprising given that women are more likely to live on a regular basis with their children following separation. Ap-

9 The sample in the models including the work status covariate comprises only 1,244 women; 81 cases with missing data on the work history had to be excluded.

proximately 70% [10] of these stepfather families were formed following a union disruption, and 30% after the birth of children outside a union.

The majority (57%) of women were cohabiting at the beginning of the stepfamily episode, but the percentage significantly varies across the different types of family. In stepfather families, mothers who did not previously live in a union are less likely to cohabit (38%) than those who did so (68%). The former are on average younger (25.3 years) and live with younger partners (28.5 years) than women who entered stepfamily life following a union dissolution (33,0 years for the women and 35,3 years for their partners). Women who lived in a stepfamily after giving birth outside a union have, on average, a smaller number of children (1.4), and their youngest child is younger (4.1 years) than in any other type of family. By definition, the number of children present is larger (3.0) in stepfather/stepmother families in which both partners live with children born from a prior relationship. Over 40% of women started their first stepfamily episode in the 1990s, and 28% did so in the previous decade. Compared to all women who experienced stepfamily life, the share of those who formed a union after giving birth outside a union continuously decreased across periods, in favour of stepmother families and of the stepfather families formed after a union dissolution. For example, the proportion of stepfather families following a birth outside a union was almost twice as high as that observed for all stepfamilies formed before 1970 (24.3% versus 13.0%), whereas the proportion of those following a union disruption was nearly two times smaller (7.9% versus 13.0%); from 1990 onward, the situation had reversed, with the former being proportionally smaller, and the latter being relatively larger, than the percentage observed among all stepfamilies (respectively 30.5% and 47.2% compared to 42.9%). In Quebec, stepfather families following a separation appear to be relatively more frequent than they are elsewhere in Canada, where stepfather families following a birth outside a union are more common.

Women living in stepmother families have achieved the highest level of education. Close to two-thirds of these women had completed a college or university degree, as opposed to less than 40% of mothers who had not previously lived in a union. Compared to the latter, they were also more likely to be working at the beginning of the stepfamily episode, in a proportion (72%) close to that of mothers who had gone through a separation (69%). Finally, among stepfather families formed following a union dissolution, we find a significantly smaller proportion of women who reported another language than only French or English as their mother tongue.

Table 2 gives the proportions of the stepfamily episodes that were still ongoing at various durations according to the composition of the family, based on life table estimates. Episodes that were still ongoing at the time of the survey, as well as those that were terminated by the death of the partner or the departure from the household of the last stepchild were censored, and only separation was considered as causing the end of the episode. Ten years after they began, a third of the first stepfamily episodes experienced by women had led to separation or divorce. Regardless of whether the woman had a previous union or not, stepfather families appear to be the most likely to break up. Less than two-thirds of these families were still together ten years after the beginning of the episode, compared to over 85% of the families comprising a stepmother.

10 That is, 58.7% out of 82.9%.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (% or means)[1] for covariates used in the analysis of separation among first stepfamilies episodes, according to family composition

	Familiy compositions				
	Stepmother	**Stepfather, mother no union before**	**Stepfather, mother union before**	**Stepfather and stepmother**	**All stepfamilies**
Type of union[2] (x^2 = 90.8 p = .000)					
Marriage	52.2	61.7	32.0	49.0	42.6
Cohabiting union	47.8	38.3	68.0	51.0	57.4
Age at beginning of the episode, woman (x^2 = 281.9 p 0 .000)					
Less than 25 years	34.1	63.1	14.5	16.3	29.0
29-29 years	21.8	16.9	22.3	32.7	21.3
30-39 years	32.4	14.7	44.7	36.7	35.5
40 years and older	11.7	5.3	18.5	14.3	14.3
Mean age (mother)	29.6	25.3	33.0	31.9	30.6
Age at beginning of the episode, man (x^2 = 179.3 p 0 .000)					
Less than 30 years	24.0	70.0	32.3	12.2	39.5
30-39 years	49.2	20.9	39.3	55.1	36.8
40 years and older	26.8	9.1	28.4	32.7	23.7
Mean age (father)	35.3	28.5	35.3	37.2	33.7
Number of children in household (x^2 = 195.0 p 0 .000 * = no cases)					
1	57.5	76.6	45.3	*	52.8
2	27.9	16.3	39.0	36.7	32.1
3 and more	14.5	7.2	15.7	63.3	15.1
Average number of children	1.6	1.4	1.8	3.0	1.7
Age of youngest child in household (x^2 = 106.1 p 0 .000)					
younger than 5	38.2	67.8	35.8	44.0	44.5
5-11 years	41.6	26.9	43.0	44.0	38.8
12 and older	20.2	5.3	21.2	12.0	16.7
Average age of youngest child	7.3	4.1	7.7	6.2	6.7
Proportion (%) of women who gave birth or adopted (x^2 = 75.1 p 0 .000)					
a child during the episode	43.8	53.8	27.2	32.7	36.0
Period of beginning of the episode[2] (x^2 = 79.1 p 0 .000)					
Before 1970	13.4	24.3	7.9	18.4	13.0
1970-1979	13.4	20.9	16.2		
1980-1989	29.1	24.3	28.7	30.6	27.8
1990 and after	44.1	30.5	47.2	51.0	42.9
Region (x^2 = 19.9 p 0 .000)					
Quebec	23.6	16.9	29.2	18.4	25.1
Elsewhere in Canada	86.4	83.1	70.8	81.6	74.9
Education (x^2 = 68.4 p 0 .000)					
Less than high school	15.2	40.3	24.1	26.0	26.9
High scholl diploma	22.5	21.6	28.4	28.0	26.0
College degree	40.4	31.9	37.2	30.0	36.1
University degree	21.9	6.3	10.3	16.0	11.1
Work status[2] (**N = 1244** missing cases 81) (x^2 = 106.1 p 0 .000)					
Never worked	11.8	32.5	12.1	12.2	17.0
Not working	9.6	10.3	11.8	20.4	11.5
Working	72.5	51.3	69.2	63.3	65.1
Missing data	6.2	5.9	6.9	4.1	6.5
Mother tongue (x^2 = 15.3 p 0 .000)					
English only	60.7	67.9	63.3	63.3	64.1
French only	23.0	19.9	27.7	28.6	25.2
English and French Other	16.3	12.1	9.0	8.2	10.7
Religion (x^2 = 19.7 p 0 .02 * = no cases)					
Protestant	32.6	44.1	36.6	38.8	37.9
Catholic	46.1	39.7	43.4	46.9	43.0
Other	7.3	3.4	2.8	*	3.5
None	14.0	12.8	17.2	14.3	15.6
N	164	359	756	46	1325
%	13.5	24.2	58.7	3.7	100.0

1 Percentage and means based on weighted data. The percentages sum up vertically.

2 Value taken at the beginning of the episode for time-varying covariates.

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001, General Social Survey (Cycle 15) on Family.

Table 2: Life tables estimates of the proportion of first stepfamily episodes ongoing at various durations, according to family composition

Years since beginning of the episode	Familiy composition				All stepfamilies
	Stepmother	Stepfather, mother no union before	Stepfather, mother union before	Stepfacher and stepmother	
1	.98	.92	.96	.99	.95
3	.97	.84	.86	.95	.87
5	.92	.75	.79	.92	.80
10	.88	.60	.64	.91	.67

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 General Social Survey (cycle 15) on Family.

Factors associated with stepfamily instability

Results of the proportional hazards models, which aim to test our hypotheses, are presented in Table 3. The first model includes solely the demographic covariates; the education and cultural covariates are added in Model 2, and the work status covariate, for which a substantial number of cases the information is missing, in Model 3. For each model, separate equations are further run to test whether the effect of union type differs between regions or has changed across periods. The coefficients are presented in exponential form (risk ratios). A coefficient greater than 1 indicates that the covariate introduced in the model increases the risk (or conditional probability) of experiencing a separation; conversely, a coefficient smaller than 1 indicates that it decreases this risk. For categorical variables, the risk ratios need to be interpreted in relation to the reference category (omitted from the equation), which is assigned the value of 1. The effect of variables, which values for a given woman may change over the course of the episode, is interpreted in the same way as the effect of fixed independent variables.

A separate analysis first showed that stepmother families are found to experience a lower risk of separation than stepfather families, as was hypothesized (results not presented). They have 66% less chances to separate than all stepfather families grouped into one category, even after all covariates are included in the equation, which indicates that the effect of the family type is not mainly due to differences in the socio-demographic composition of the two groups.[11] Stepfamilies mixing two sets of siblings also face a low risk of break-up that is nearly 60% lower than that experienced by families formed around mothers living with their own children. This effect remains significant throughout all

11 We ran similar models to all those presented in Table 3, which combined into one single category all stepfather families, i.e. those formed following a birth outside a union as well as those formed after a union dissolution. The risk ratios attached to the type of family obtained in the basic models 1-3 are shown below. The detailed results of these analyses are available from the authors upon request.

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Type of family (stepfather)			
Stepmother	0.34***	0.34***	0.32***
Stepfather and stepmother	0.41*	0.41*	0.37*

models and suggests that, in spite of its complexity, this type of stepfamily is a particularly stable stepfamily arrangement.

Table 3 presents the effect of the stepfamily composition on the risk of separation when distinguishing the type of event that led to the formation of stepfather families. The results run counter to our second hypothesis, which predicted the stepfather families in which mothers never lived in a union to be less likely to experience a separation than those who saw their prior union break up. The stepfather families formed after the birth of children outside a union have a 47% higher risk of breaking up than those following the disruption of a previous union (the reference category). The effect is statistically significant, even after controlling for the fact that mothers who gave birth outside a union were younger at the beginning of the stepfamily episode, and thus faced a higher risk of separation (see Model 1). The inclusion in Models 2 and 3 of all the other covariates does not significantly affect either the size of the coefficients attached to the family type, which remain large and significant.

As hypothesized, stepfamily couples who are cohabiting are found to be more unstable than those who are married. They exhibit a risk of separation that is 29% larger than that of married couples (Model 1). The negative impact of the type of union persists, even after taking into account the period during which the stepfamily episode was experienced and the fact that cohabiting unions are more frequent in recent periods that are characterized by high levels of conjugal instability.

Not surprisingly, the period in which the stepfamily episode took place does exert an important effect on the risk of conjugal disruption. The more recently the stepfamily was formed, the more likely couples were to separate. Hence, the results of the analysis presented in Table 3 show that couples living in a stepfamily before 1970 had a 60% lower risk to see their union break up than those who experienced life in this type of family during the 1970s, whereas those who did so after 1990 had nearly three times more chances to separate (see Model 1). Women living in Quebec were found to be 20% more likely to experience a union dissolution than their counterparts living in the rest of Canada; however, the result is not significant, even at the 0.10 level.

We expected the birth of a common child to stepfamily couples to substantially decrease the likelihood of parental separation, by creating a genetic link between all members of the family. The analysis shows that the arrival of a child does indeed reduce by approximately 20% the risk of separation of stepfamily couples, but the effect was found to be no longer statistically significant once we controlled for the type of the union and the period during which the stepfamily episode was experienced.

Model 1 also controls for the age of the partners and the age group and number of children present at the beginning of the episode, variables that probably all influence the decision of the stepfamily couple to have a child together. The analysis shows that the older the woman is at entry into the stepfamily episode, the less likely she is to undergo separation. Each additional year of age reduces by 4% the risk of family break-up. The effect remains significant throughout all models, and is in line with that observed in previous studies. The age of the male partner does not, however, appear to significantly influence the risk of union disruption, nor does the number of children present at the beginning of the family episode. Contrary to the results obtained in a previous study using Canadian data (Desrosiers et al. 1995), the age of the children present at the beginning of the step-

family was not found to be statistically linked to the risk of separation, and stepfamilies with younger children did not appear to be less likely to break up than those comprising adolescents.[12]

Table 3: Effects of various covariates on the risk of women's first stepfamily episode to end by separation (risk ratios from Cox models) [1]

Variables [2]	Model with demographic covariates			Model with all covariates except for work status			Complete model with all covariates		
	Model 1	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 2	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3	Model 3a	Model 3b
Type of family (stepfather, mother union before)									
Stepmother	0.40***	0.39***	0.40***	0.39***	0.38***	0.39***	0.36***	0.36***	0.36***
Stepfather, mother no union before	1.47**	1.50**	1.48**	1.43*	1.45*	1.43*	1.41*	1.43*	1.41*
Stepfather and stepmother	0.44*	0.44*	0.44*	0.44*	0.44*	0.43*	0.39*	0.40*	0.39*
Common child (no)									
Yes	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.85	0.85	0.85
Age of woman	0.96*	0.97*	0.96*	0.97*	0.97*	0.97*	0.96**	0.96**	0.96**
Age of man	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.99	0.99	0.99	1.00	1.00	1.00
Age of youngest child (0-4 years)									
5-11 years	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.90	0.90	0.90
12 years and older	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.99	0.99	0.99	1.15	1.15	1.15
Number of children (1)									
2	1.00	1.01	1.00	0.97	0.98	0.97	0.98	0.99	.98
3 and more	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.87	0.86	0.88	0.89	.88
Type of union (marriage)									
Cohabitation	1.29†			1.29†			1.36*		
Period (1970-1979)									
Before 1970	0.38**	0.38**		0.40**	0.40**		0.39**	0.39**	
1980-1989	1.48 †	1.48*		1.41†	1.42†		1.35	1.36	
1990 and after	2.78***	2.78*		2.68***	2.67***		2.56***	2.56***	
Region (Elsewhere in Canada)									
Quebec	1.20		1.20	1.11	1.25	1.11	1.20		1.21
***Type of union* * Region** (Canada * marriage)									
Canada * cohabitation		1.22			1.23			1.28	
Quebec * marriage		1.05			0.98			1.06	
Quebec * cohabitation		1.59*			1.48			1.69*	
Type of union* * *Period (1970-1979 * marriage)									
< 1970 * marriage			0.36**			0.37**			0.37**
< 1970 * cohabitation			0.83			0.78			0.75
1970-1979 * marriage			1			1			1
1970-1979 * cohabitation			1.19			1.17			1.31
1980-1989 * marriage			1.46			1.39			1.38
1980-1989 * cohabitation			1.83*			1.76*			1.74
1990 & over * marriage			2.72***			2.60***			2.50***
1990 & over * cohabitation			3.54***			3.41***			3.48***

12 We tried grouping children's age in various ways (e.g. creating smaller and larger age groups) but this did not change any of the results observed (results not shown).

Variables[2]	Model with demographic covariates			Model with all covariates except for work status			Complete model with all covariates		
	Model 1	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 2	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3	Model 3a	Model 3b
Mother tongue (English)									
French				1.03	1.03	1.03	0.98	0.97	0.98
English and French				1.01	0.99	0.99	1.09	1.06	1.07
Other				0.89	0.88	0.89	1.03	1.03	1.03
Religion (Protestant)									
Catholic				1.16	1.16	1.16	1.10	1.11	1.10
Other				1.51	1.53	1.51	1.58	1.60	1.58
No religion				1.13	1.14	1.13	1.11	1.11	1.10
Education (High school diploma)									
Less than high school				1.16	1.16	1.15	1.23	1.23	1.22
College degree				1.26	1.26	1.26	1.29†	1.29†	1.29†
University degree				1.22	1.21	1.22	1.30	1.27	1.30
Work status (never worked)									
Working							0.95	0.96	0.95
Not working							1.06	1.06	1.06
Log Likelihood	-2544.13	-2543.78	-2543.93	-2540.82	-2540.50	-2540.67	-2398.94	-2398.61	-2398.79
	N = 1325			**N = 1325**			**N = 1244**		

[1] Level of significance: *** : p < .001 ** : p < .01 * : p < .05 † :p < .10 after applying bootstrap weights.
[2] The reference category is indicated in parentheses. Variables in italics are time-varying covariates.
Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 General Social Survey (cycle 15) on Family.

Models 2 and 3 further include socioeconomic and cultural covariates in the equation. The coefficients of some of these variables are relatively quite large, such as the one attached to religion other than Catholicism and Protestantism. However, neither the women's religion, nor their mother tongue appear significantly linked to the risk of stepfamily break-up, once other covariates are already included in the equation. Women who had obtained a college or university degree have a 20 to 25% higher risk to experience separation than those who just completed high school, but the difference does not at first appear to be statistically significant. Only once the presence of women in the labour market is controlled for, does the effect of having achieved a college degree become significant at the 0.10 level. The work status of women during the course of the stepfamily episode does not, however, appear in itself to have a substantial impact on its outcome.

For each of the three main models, two separate equations were run to test whether the effect that the union type exerts on the risk of separation varied between regions and across periods. Model 1a first shows that the risk of stepfamily married couples to separate does not vary whether they lived in Quebec or in the other Canadian provinces (risk of 1.05 compared to 1). The risk of separation of cohabiting couples does not either appear to be statistically different between regions (the test of the difference between the two coefficients did not turn out to be significant). However, Quebec cohabiting couples face a 60% higher risk of seeing their stepfamily break up than married couples living outside of this province. Our hypothesis stating that the difference separating Quebec cohabiting and married stepfamily couples would be narrower than that found elsewhere in Canada is thus not verified. Although non-significant, the gap observed in Quebec is in fact larger

than that observed outside the province (1.59 versus 1.05 in the former, compared to 1.22 versus 1 in the latter). The size of the coefficients slightly varies when other covariates are included in the equation, but the conclusion remains the same (see models 2a and 3a).

The next model aims to test whether the differential effect of marriage and cohabitation on stepfamily instability has changed across periods, and more specifically whether the negative impact of cohabitation relative to that of marriage has diminished over time. Model 1b first clearly shows that the risk of separation of stepfamily couples has increased in a continuous fashion across periods for married as well as cohabiting couples. Compared to married women who lived in a stepfamily during the 1970s (the reference group), married women who did so prior to 1970 had a 64% lower risk to go through separation, whereas those who went through a similar experience during the 1990s had 2.7 times more chances to separate. Similarly, cohabiting women who lived in a stepfamily during the 1980s and the 1990s had respectively more than twice (coefficient of 1.83 compared to 0.83) and more than four times (3.54 versus 0.83) the chances to see their stepfamily break up than those who lived in a stepfamily before 1970.[13] The gap separating the risk ratios of married and cohabiting couples has narrowed down substantially between the stepfamily episodes experienced before 1970 and those lived during the 1970s. Before 1970, cohabiting couples had over twice the risk of separating than married couples (coefficient of 0.83 versus 0.36), but only between 1.19 to 1.30 times this risk thereafter. However, in none of the periods used in the analysis is the difference separating married and cohabiting couples statistically significant. Therefore, we cannot conclude, as hypothesized, that the negative impact of cohabitation in relation to marriage on the duration of stepfamily has substantially diminished over time.

5 Summary and Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to analyze stepfamily instability in Canada using the information collected in the 2001 General Social Survey on Family and, more specifically, to examine the effect that the family composition and the type of conjugal union exerts on the risk of separation. On one hand, we wanted to test whether the composition of the family still exerts a determinant impact on its duration, given the increasing diversity of stepfamilies and the, at times, contradictory findings obtained in demographic and socio-psychological research. On the other hand, we wanted to ascertain to what extent the effect of the union type had changed over time, as cohabiting unions became more widespread and socially acceptable, and differed between the province of Quebec and the other Canadian provinces, where it had reached different levels of development. For this, we applied the proportional hazards model to the analysis of the first stepfamily episodes experienced by women.

Confirming our first hypothesis, the analysis showed that stepmother families experience a lower risk of separation than stepfather families. As argued in past research, this result can perhaps be explained by women's willingness to invest into their relationships

13 Though quite large, the gap separating cohabiting women who lived in a stepfamily before 1970 and during the 1970s is not statistically significant, but that observed between pre-1970 and 1990s families and that between the 1980s and 1990s families is.

with stepchildren and the fact that fathers who reside with their own children are likely to be passably involved in child rearing and in family life more generally. Stepmother/stepfather families that mixed two sets of siblings were also found to be less likely to separate than those comprising only the mother's children, and this in spite of the complexity of the family structure. Although these families involve a larger number of members who share different family histories, the two partners living together are both acting as parent and stepparent of the children present, and this reciprocity might facilitate communication and reduce the possibility of conflict in the couple

The analysis did not, however, confirm our second hypothesis related to stepfamily composition. Hence, mothers who experienced stepfamily life after giving birth outside a union were found to be more – rather than less – likely to separate than those who did so following a union dissolution, even after we controlled for the age of mother and children, and women's achieved level of education and work status. This result is perhaps in part attributable to unmeasured characteristics, such as income or the lower commitment to conjugal life of women who started their family life outside of a union.

Our third hypothesis, predicting stepfamily couples living in a cohabiting union to be less stable that those who are married, was supported by the analysis. Not surprisingly, the risk of separation among stepfamily couples was shown to increase through more recent periods, for married as well as cohabiting partners. However, the negative impact of cohabitation in relation to marriage was not found as, expected, to diminish over time, as cohabitation became more widespread, nor did we observe the difference separating married and cohabiting couples to be narrower in Quebec, given the preponderance of this type of union among stepfamily couples. The fact that common-law unions are much more prevalent in Quebec than they are elsewhere in Canada does not appear to be conducive of greater conjugal stability, as we expected. Hence, the deinstitutionalization of conjugal life that has gone further in Quebec than in the other provinces seems to go hand in hand with rising aspirations of self-fulfilment and the willingness not to stay in unhappy relationships. Our results thus suggest that, as more flexible and easily revocable relationships gain in importance, all types of unions generally become more unstable, at least for stepfamily couples.

Other than these covariates, only the age of woman at the beginning of the stepfamily episode was shown to consistently affect the risk of conjugal separation at the conventional level of statistical significance ($p<.05$). The older the woman was at her entry in stepfamily life, the lower her risk to see her family break up was. The birth of a child through the course of the episode was shown to reduce the risk of union dissolution, but not in a statistically significant manner.

Stepfamilies bring together individuals, of whom one partner at least has previously experienced family life and brings one or more children into the conjugal union. At the same time that they start living together, the partners either have to establish new relationships with stepchildren or to redefine their relations with their own children in the presence of a stepparent. The dynamics of the family life are obviously influenced by the characteristics of the two partners at the formation of the stepfamily, but also by the past trajectories that both of them had followed. Retrospective surveys, like the 2001 GSS that we used here, are quite successful for collecting the past histories of respondents through series of events that can be easily remembered and dated, such as births or marriages, and they provide rapidly and, at relatively lost cost, valuable data to study the evolution of family dynamics across

cohorts and over time. However, their format prevents the collection of the life histories of the respondents' previous partners, and they are poorly equipped to gather information about situations that changed progressively over time, such as the proportion of time that children spend in each of their separated parents' household while growing up.

The retrospective nature of the survey we used perhaps partly explains some of our findings. The fact that stepmother families appeared more stable than stepfather families could be linked to the way in which the parental histories of respondents were collected. Hence, to be considered as experiencing a stepfather family episode, a mother just needed to report living with a partner who was not the father of her children before these definitely left her household, no matter how much time her children spent in her home and the degree of involvement of her partner in her children's lives. In contrast, to be counted as a stepmother, a woman had to mention having raised and lived with her partners' children, thus, to have played an active stepparent role and for a sufficiently long period to mention it later in a survey. Non-resident stepmothers who were found in psychological studies to have a more negative perception of their parental role because of their lack of contact on a regular basis with their partner's children were thus likely to be de facto excluded from our analysis. This selectivity problem perhaps accounts for the rather surprising result we obtained, like past demographic studies, in light of the evidence provided in psychological research on the difficulties faced by stepmothers in their relations with children. Further research is obviously needed to re-examine the issues of stepfamily definitions in retrospective surveys and of their effects on the duration of the family. A possible avenue to achieve such a goal might be to compare, in a given country, the results derived from two different sources of data, such as panel and retrospective surveys. In the absence of a prospective survey, an alternative approach could be to confront the results derived from separate samples of male and female respondents, who experienced stepfamily life either as parents or stepparents, regarding the effect of family composition on their risk to undergo separation. This is the task that we aim to pursue in our next research.

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Appendix – Construction of stepfamily episodes and treatment of missing data

The construction of stepfamily episodes led to a substantial reduction of the sample size, as summarized in Table A1. Of the original sample that comprised 13,646 female respondents, 2,372 were first excluded because they had never lived in a union by the time they were reached by the 2001 GSS. An additional number of 1,891 respondents were further eliminated, since they had never lived with any biological, adopted or step–children. In addition, 113 women, who had experienced only one union, but for which the date of the beginning was missing, were further excluded; the missing information made it impossible to ascertain whether the reported children were born within or outside the union, and consequently to decide whether the union was a biological two-parent family or a stepfamily. Slightly over half (7,299) of the female respondents reported living only with biological (or adopted) children and doing so exclusively with the father of these children, regardless the number of childless unions that they might have experienced in the course of their life. Another 157 women with children for whom values on all variables were imputed by Statistics Canada, were further excluded from the analysis.[14] Finally, 303 additional cases for which data were missing for central variables used to reconstruct the stepfamily episodes were eliminated. These cases comprised various combinations of missing values on the children's age at birth, at departure from the respondent's household and/or at the time of the interview and on conjugal unions. This exercise reduces the sample size from 13,646 to 1,511 female respondents who had experienced at least one stepfamily episode.[15]

Table A 1 – Construction of stepfamily episodes and exclusion of cases

	Number
Initial sample	13,646
Exclusions:	
– Never experienced a union	2,372
– At least one union, but never had any biological, adopted or step children	1,891
– Only one union and date of beginning is missing	113
– Only biological (or adopted) children and lived with the other parent of these children	7,299
– Only children with totally imputed data	157
– Missing values on crucial variables (e.g., dates of beginning and end of a union reversed; missing date of children's birth or arrival in the household)	303
Total number of excluded cases	12,135
Number of women who experienced at least one stepfamily episode	1,511

14 These children's age, sex and relationship to the respondent were all imputed by Statistics Canada, but the information on the age they had when leaving the respondent's household (or when joining it, for adopted or stepchildren), is missing.

15 A relatively high number (596) of respondents had missing data on one or more variables but could be kept in the analysis, because we were able to either impute data to these variables or censored the life history, by using other information available in the data file. For example, when the arrival date in the respondent's household of stepchildren still present at survey was missing, we assigned the date of the beginning of the union as that of the beginning of the stepfamily episode.

Ina Jaschinski

Der Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft: Eine vergleichende Analyse zwischen Männern und Frauen auf Basis des deutschen Generations and Gender Survey

Re-partnering after divorce in Germany – A comparison between men and women based on an analysis with the Generations and Gender Survey

Zusammenfassung
Angesichts kontinuierlich hoher Scheidungszahlen werden nacheheliche Beziehungen zu regelmäßigen Lebensereignissen innerhalb einer Partnerschaftsbiografie. Allerdings gibt es relativ wenige Studien zu den Determinanten der nachehelichen Paarbildung. In diesem Beitrag werden die Daten des Generations und Gender Surveys (GGS) aus dem Jahr 2005 verwendet, um einen Einblick in das nacheheliche Partnerschaftsverhalten in Deutschland zu gewinnen. Im Fokus der Betrachtung steht dabei, welche wesentlichen Einflussfaktoren diesen Prozess der Paarbildung bestimmen und zu welchen Unterschieden es dabei zwischen Männern und Frauen kommt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass es bei den Übergangsraten in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft kaum Geschlechterunterschiede gibt. Sowohl für Männer als auch für Frauen geht vom Bildungsniveau ein positiver Effekt auf die Übergangsrate in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft aus. Nur in Bezug auf das Alter bei Scheidung gibt es geschlechtsspezifische Unterschiede. Insbesondere bei Frauen zeigt sich der negative Einfluss des Alters deutlicher.

Schlagwörter: Nacheheliche Paarbildung, Trennung, Scheidung, Ereignisanalyse

Abstract
Due to continuously high marital dissolution rates, re-partnering becomes an increasingly regular life course experience. However, only few empirical studies have addressed the topic of re-partnering after divorce. This analysis uses data from the first wave of the German Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), which was conducted in 2005, to study patterns of post-divorce union formation in Germany. Particular attention is given to potential gender differences. Surprisingly, the empirical investigation shows no major gender differences in re-partnering rates. High education increases re-partnering rates for both sexes. There is, however, a gender difference for the age at divorce determining re-partnering behaviour: while women who are older at divorce experience a rather low rate of re-partnering, we do not find such a clear pattern for their male counterparts.

Key words: post-divorce re-partnering, separation, divorce, event history

1 Einleitung

Im Zuge des familialen Wandels hat sich die Partnerschaftsqualität als das entscheidende Kriterium für die Stabilität von modernen Beziehungen manifestiert (Beck-Gernsheim 1994; Nave-Herz 2004). Die Schwelle dafür, eine Partnerschaft aufzulösen oder gar eine Ehe zu scheiden, ist gesunken, was das Ansteigen der Scheidungsziffern seit den 1970er Jahren zeigt (Lesthaeghe 1992). Trotz abnehmender Partnerschaftsstabilität ist jedoch nicht davon auszugehen, dass ein partnerschaftliches Zusammenleben weniger bevorzugt wird. Da jedoch ein abnehmender Trend in Bezug auf die Wiederheiratshäufigkeit von Geschiedenen zu beobachten ist, wird die nacheheliche Paarbildung scheinbar durch die Zunahme nichtehelicher Lebensgemeinschaften kompensiert (Heekerens 1988: 42). Dieser Zusammenhang lässt sich mit dem analytischen Potenzial der amtlichen Statistik nur sehr schwer beantworten. Anhand der Haushaltsstatistik im Rahmen des Mikrozensus ist allerdings belegbar, dass nichteheliche Partnerschaften neben dem Zusammenleben im früheren Alter auch für nacheheliche Partnerschaften an Bedeutung gewinnen. Ergebnisse zur Schätzung der Paarkonstellationen belegen, dass nichteheliche Partnerschaften mit zwei geschiedenen Partnern einen Anteil von 11 Prozent ausmachen und damit an zweiter Stelle hinter den Partnerschaften mit zwei Ledigen (60 Prozent) liegen (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung 2008: 29).

Innerhalb der Familienforschung spielt die Analyse des Scheidungsverhaltens schon seit mehreren Jahrzehnten eine zentrale Rolle, jedoch ist das Forschungspotenzial zum nachehelichen Paarbildungsverhalten noch längst nicht erschöpft. Ziel dieses Beitrages ist es, den Einfluss verschiedener Determinanten auf den nachehelichen Paarbildungsprozess zu untersuchen, wobei der Schwerpunkt auf einem Vergleich zwischen Männern und Frauen liegt. Gefragt wird unter anderem, wie lange es nach einer Scheidung dauert, bis jemand mit einem neuen Partner einen gemeinsamen Haushalt teilt. Wie beeinflussen soziodemografische Faktoren wie das Alter oder das Bildungsniveau einer Person diesen Übergangsprozess? Welche Einflüsse sind im Hinblick auf bereits vorhandene Kinder bedeutsam?

Um diese Fragen umfassend zu behandeln, wird zum theoretischen Einstieg in das Thema die Partnerwahl vor dem Hintergrund individueller Entscheidungsmechanismen und struktureller Bedingungen diskutiert. Der Erklärungsgehalt dieser theoretischen Perspektiven wird anschließend auf die Bildung von nachehelichen Partnerschaften projiziert, womit die Ableitung der zentralen Forschungshypothesen im zweiten Abschnitt verbunden ist. Der dritte Abschnitt enthält die methodischen Vorüberlegungen zur empirischen Analyse. Darauf folgt im vierten Abschnitt die Darstellung und Interpretation der Ergebnisse zum Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft sowie eine abschließende Reflexion der Studie.

2. Theoretische Perspektiven des Partnerwahlverhaltens

2.1 Die Partnerwahl mit dem Bezug zur individuellen Handlungsebene

Für die Erklärung von Partnerwahlprozessen wird immer wieder der klassische Ansatz der *ökonomischen Theorie der Familie* (Becker 1973, 1993) reflektiert. Aus ökonomischer Perspektive besteht der Vorteil des Zusammenlebens in einer Partnerschaft darin, dass bestimmte Güter kostengünstiger als in einem Einpersonenhaushalt produziert werden können (Becker 1973: 814). Da im Ansatz der „New Home Economics" die traditionelle Form der Arbeitsteilung zwischen Mann und Frau besonders herausgearbeitet wird, ist die Anwendung der Familienökonomie auf traditionelle Arbeitsmarktstrukturen relativ unproblematisch. Umso mehr stellt sich die Frage, ob die Logik dieser Theorie dem veränderten Geschlechter- und Rollenverhältnis in unseren modernen Gesellschaften noch gerecht wird. Seit dem Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts haben technologische Entwicklungen, der Ausbau wohlfahrtsstaatlicher Dienstleistungen sowie jüngste Veränderungen der Erwerbsmuster diverse gesellschaftliche Neuerungen ausgelöst, durch die sich das Rollenverständnis der traditionellen Arbeitsteilung grundlegend verändert hat. Geschlechterarrangements, bei denen beide Partner durch Erwerbsarbeit einen Beitrag zum Haushaltseinkommen leisten, sind in den meisten europäischen Ländern längst dominant (Daly 2005: 383). Dieser Wandel lässt sich jedoch in das Grundmodell von Becker integrieren, da die Situation der Arbeitsteilung zur Steigerung der Effizienz des Haushaltes auch dann gegeben ist, wenn beide Partner erwerbstätig sind. Trotz des zunehmenden Anteils der Frauenerwerbstätigkeit hat das ökonomische Modell weiterhin Geltung, da Frauen infolge von Diskriminierungsprozessen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt ein bedeutend geringeres Erwerbseinkommen erzielen als Männer. Zudem unterbrechen sie ihre Erwerbstätigkeit nach der Geburt eines Kindes und übernehmen weitaus mehr Tätigkeiten im Haushalt (Becker 1993: 77).

Ein weiterer mikroanalytischer Ansatz ist die Austauschtheorie, die insbesondere auf familienzyklische Ereignisse anwendbar ist. Der Kerngedanke des austauschtheoretischen Modells hinsichtlich der Partnerwahl erklärt, welche Interaktionen eine Beziehung intensivieren, sodass sich Partner dauerhaft aneinander binden. Die Individuen ziehen anhand der Kosten- und Nutzeneinschätzung ihrer wechselseitigen Tauschbeziehung eine Bilanz und entscheiden sich für eine Fortführung oder einen Abbruch der Beziehung (Blau 1967: 92f.), wobei in einer familiären Austauschbeziehung der Wert einer erhaltenen Leistung nicht in gleichem Maße zurückgefordert wird (Nye 1979: 10). Ein wesentlicher Vorzug der austauschtheoretisch orientierten Erklärungsversuche ist die dynamische Betrachtungsweise. Die Paarbildung verläuft als kontinuierlicher Interaktionsprozess, indem zwischen den Akteuren ein Austausch von Ressourcen stattfindet, der mit der Situation und über die Zeit variiert. Ein weiterer positiver Aspekt des austauschtheoretischen Ansatzes ist die Erklärung, warum andere Handlungsoptionen trotz scheinbarer Vorteile nicht gewählt werden (Thibaut/Kelley 1959: 24). Im Gegensatz zum familienökonomischen ist die austauschtheoretische Perspektive nicht auf einen gemeinsamen Haushalt des Paares festgelegt. Dieser Zusammenhang könnte für nacheheliche Partnerschaften von besonderer Relevanz sein, da Partnerschaften ohne gemeinsames Zusammenleben eventuell bevorzugt werden – auch aufgrund der negativen Erfahrung, die mit der Auflösung des ehemaligen ehelichen Haushaltes verbunden ist.

Obwohl die Austauschtheorie viel breiter angelegt ist, basieren die folgenden Herleitungen auf familienökonomischen Überlegungen. Vor dem Hintergrund, dass in dieser Untersuchung der Zusammenzug beider Partner das zentrale Ereignis darstellt, erscheint die Fokussierung auf den Haushaltskontext als eine angemessene Vorgehensweise zur theoretischen Modellierung. Becker projiziert seine ökonomischen Überlegungen auf den Haushaltskontext, in dem zwei Partner miteinander in Kooperation stehen – „[…] persons in love can reduce their costs of frequent contact and of resource transfers by sharing the same household“ (Becker 1973: 819). Damit ist eine Generalisierbarkeit des partnerschaftlichen Zusammenlebens möglich, und die Partnerwahl kann somit auch für geschiedene Personen vor dem Hintergrund der Familienökonomie betrachtet werden, solange mit der nachehelichen Beziehung eine gemeinsame Haushaltsführung verbunden ist. Die Theorie postuliert dann einen maximalen Gewinn aus der gemeinsamen Verbindung, wenn die Frau in haushaltsspezifisches und der Mann in marktspezifisches Humankapital investiert. Nach diesem traditionellen Konzept haben geschiedene Personen über einen mehr oder weniger langen Zeitraum ehedauerspezifisches Kapital angesammelt. Frauen, die in der Ehe ihre arbeitsmarktspezifischen Qualifikationen zugunsten der traditionellen Arbeitsteilung vernachlässigt und hauptsächlich in haushaltsbezogenes Kapital investiert haben, werden nach der Scheidung schlechtere Chancen auf dem Arbeitsmarkt haben. Diese unsichere ökonomische Situation erschwert es ihnen, die negativen Konsequenzen einer Scheidung zu überwinden, was in den meisten Fällen nur durch eine Folgepartnerschaft gelingt (De Graaf/Kalmijn 2003: 1460). Dementsprechend liegt die Motivation, eine neue Partnerschaft zu gründen, in erster Linie darin, die eigene finanzielle Absicherung zu gewährleisten. Analog kann diese Überlegung auf Männer übertragen werden, wenn diese eine einseitige Investition in erwerbsorientiertes Humankapital vorgenommen und weniger ihre Fähigkeiten bezüglich einer effektiven Haushalts- und Erziehungsarbeit ausgebaut haben. In diesem Fall besteht auch für geschiedene Männer eine starke Orientierung auf ein partnerschaftliches Zusammenleben. Eine andere Situation ergibt sich für geschiedene Männer, die nach der Scheidung finanzielle Belastungen für die ehemalige Familie tragen. Hier stellt sich die Frage, wie attraktiv eine neue Partnerin ist, die kein monetäres Einkommen erzielen kann. Will und kann ein geschiedener Mann dann noch die alleinige Rolle des Familienversorgers übernehmen? Zu diesem Aspekt sind Oppenheimers Überlegungen (Oppenheimer 1988, 1994) relevant. Neben der Auflösung traditioneller Geschlechterrollen müssen auch die veränderten Arbeitsmarktstrukturen seit den 1980er Jahren berücksichtigt werden. In Zeiten diskontinuierlicher Erwerbsverläufe aufgrund von schlechteren Arbeitsmarktbedingungen wird eine Investition beider Partner in marktspezifisches Kapital notwendig, um die Phase einer eventuellen Arbeitslosigkeit des einen Partners zu überbrücken und den Einkommensausfall abzufedern (Oppenheimer 1994: 318). In Bezug auf die Gründung von Folgepartnerschaften kann daraus abgeleitet werden, dass für besser ausgebildete Frauen zwar kein ökonomischer Zwang zur Verpartnerung besteht, was die Notwendigkeit einer erneuten Paarbildung einerseits verringert, andererseits jedoch mit einer Erhöhung ihrer Attraktivität einhergeht (Oppenheimer 1988).

2.2 Strukturbedingte Mechanismen des Partnerwahlprozesses

Betrachtet man die Aspekte der Partnerwahl in Abhängigkeit von den Mechanismen des Partnermarkts, schränkt dieser als Ort der Begegnung die Partnerwahl sowohl räumlich als auch sozial ein. Nach dem strukturtheoretischen Ansatz wird anhand der sozialen Positionen, die von Personen eingenommen werden, eine gesellschaftliche Schichtung erzeugt (Blau 1977: 28). Je größer die Statusdistanz zwischen zwei Personen, desto geringer ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit ihres Zusammentreffens (Blau 1994: 30ff.). Nach dem Prinzip "Who does not meet does not mate" erfolgt die Herstellung von Interaktionsgelegenheiten innerhalb bestimmter „Verkehrskreise" (Lengerer 2001: 151). Eingegrenzt werden diese durch die soziale Umgebung sowie durch regionale und kulturelle Aspekte, die einen bedeutsamen Platz im Leben einer Person einnehmen (Nave-Herz 2004: 133). Für die ausgesuchte Untersuchungspopulation der Geschiedenen scheint das Arbeits- und Berufsumfeld besonders relevant. Aufgrund der lebenszeitlichen Verankerung des Scheidungsereignisses haben diese Personen in den meisten Fällen ihre Ausbildungsphase längst abgeschlossen. Neben den Entwicklungen wie dem Anstieg des Alters bei Erstheirat führt außerdem die kontinuierliche Zunahme der Frauenerwerbsbeteiligung dazu, dass die Bedeutung des Arbeitsplatzes als lokaler Partnermarkt zugenommen hat und sich viele Partner am Arbeitsplatz kennen lernen (Hochschild 1997: 201).

Im Zusammenhang mit den Einflussfaktoren des Partnermarkts ist die bevölkerungsstrukturelle Komponente ein weiterer nicht zu vernachlässigender Faktor. Demografische Strukturen, die mit einem numerischen Ungleichgewicht zwischen Männern und Frauen einhergehen, können erhebliche Konsequenzen für die Partnerwahl haben. In der sozialwissenschaftlichen Literatur wird dieser Effekt hinsichtlich der rein quantitativen Verteilung zwischen den potenziellen Partnern mit dem Begriff „marriage squeeze" bezeichnet (Akers 1967; Schoen 1983). Auch für das Scheidungs- und Wiederverheiratungsverhalten sind die Bedingungen des Partnermarkts von zentraler Bedeutung. Wenn nicht genügend Personen des anderen Geschlechts zur Verfügung stehen, werden die strukturbedingten Zwänge eine bestimmte Partnerkombination oder gar Partnerlosigkeit für gewisse Gruppen zur Folge haben (Klein 2000). Es ist jedoch schwierig zu beurteilen, ob ein günstiger Erst-Heiratsmarkt gleichzeitig auch günstige Bedingungen für die Partnerwahl der selektiven Gruppe der Geschiedenen bereitstellt. Muster der Partnerwahl können mitunter von lokalen Bedingungen modifiziert werden. Auch wenn geschiedene Personen aufgrund ihres fortgeschrittenen Alters bildungs- und altershomogene Teilpartnermärkte verlassen haben, können diese Mechanismen durch berufliche oder freundschaftliche Netzwerke kompensiert werden, indem diese Institutionen positive Bedingungen für das Zusammentreffen von potenziellen Partnern schaffen.

Insgesamt betrachtet ist die Partnerwahl für geschiedene Personen mit einer zunehmenden Kompromissbereitschaft verbunden, wodurch nacheheliche Partnerschaften in einigen Merkmalen eher von Heterogamie geprägt sein können. So verringert sich die Altershomogamie zwischen Personen, die schon einmal verheiratet waren (South 1991: 929; Booth-Edwards 1992: 192). Da sich Partnermarktstrukturen altersspezifisch verändern, sind diese für das Paarbildungsverhalten von Geschiedenen zu berücksichtigen. Mit steigendem Alter wird der Partnermarkt kleiner und ineffizienter, weil ein großer Anteil von potenziellen Partnern im altersnahen Bereich partnerschaftlich fest gebunden

ist.[1] Aus Sicht der Lebenslaufperspektive verschlechtern sich die Aussichten auf dem Partnermarkt zunehmend. Numerische Ungleichgewichte sind unter potenziellen Partnern mit gleichen Eigenschaften oft umso ausgeprägter, je älter die Personen sind, womit sich außerdem die abnehmenden Homogamiequoten erklären lassen (Klein 1999: 231f.).

2.3 Ableitung der zentralen Forschungshypothesen

Der vorliegende Beitrag fokussiert auf Geschlechterunterschiede im nachehelichen Partnerbildungsverhalten. Auf Basis der Vorüberlegungen liegt es nahe zu vermuten, dass diese Geschlechterunterschiede mit dem Alter und der Bildung der Befragten in Verbindung stehen. Aufgrund der an das Lebensalter geknüpften Mechanismen bietet das Alter zum Auflösungszeitpunkt der Ehe eine sehr wichtige Orientierung für die Erklärung des nachehelichen Paarbildungsverhaltens, nämlich mit Bezug auf die Verfügbarkeit potenzieller Partner. Mit steigendem Alter schmilzt nicht nur der „Partnerpool", auch die physische Attraktivität einer Person nimmt ab und die gesundheitlichen Beeinträchtigungen steigen, was die eigene Position auf dem Partnermarkt verschlechtert. Somit ist von einem negativen Alterseffekt auszugehen, das heißt: *Mit steigendem Alter bei Auflösung der Ehe sinken die Chancen für die Gründung einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft (Hypothese 1)*. Dieser Effekt auf das nacheheliche Paarbildungsverhalten wird für Frauen stärker sein als für Männer (Bumpass/Sweet/Martin 1990). Mit zunehmendem Alter verschlechtert sich die Position auf dem Partnermarkt für geschiedene Frauen drastischer, zum einen weil geschiedene Männer im „Wiederverpartnerungsprozess" auf ein viel weiteres Altersspektrum zurückgreifen und mitunter jüngere Partnerinnen bevorzugen (Hughes 2000). Andererseits verschiebt sich mit zunehmendem Alter das Geschlechterverhältnis, was mitunter für Frauen verminderte Chancen zur Paarbildung zur Folge hat (Engstler 2003: 206).

Beim Paarbildungsverhalten von geschiedenen Personen muss vor allem die ökonomische Situation vielschichtig beleuchtet werden, da sich diese aufgrund der getätigten Investitionen in der vorherigen Ehe, beispielsweise gemeinsame Kinder oder Wohneigentum, oft kompliziert gestaltet. Als empirisch messbarer Faktor für den sozioökonomischen Status ist das Bildungsniveau einer Person von zentraler Bedeutung. Dahingehend lässt sich folgender Zusammenhang vermuten: *Je größer das Ausmaß bildungsspezifischer Ressourcen, desto höher die Chancen für das Eingehen einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft (Hypothese 2)*. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass ein hohes Ausbildungsniveau außer mit steigenden Einkommenschancen auch mit einer höheren Wahrscheinlichkeit für eine Erwerbsbeteiligung einhergeht. Diese Faktoren tragen entscheidend zur individuellen Attraktivität einer Person auf dem Partnermarkt bei. In Bezug auf die strukturellen Mechanismen der Partnerwahl erzeugt die Partizipation am Arbeitsmarkt zudem günstige Rahmenbedingungen für das Zusammentreffen mit potenziellen Partnern (Hughes 2000). Hinsichtlich der Geschlechterabhängigkeit des Bildungseffektes ist ein positiver Einfluss sowohl bei Männern als auch bei Frauen zu erwarten. Frauen, die ein hohes Bildungsni-

1 Zwar stehen Geschiedene als selektive Gruppe dem Partnermarkt wieder uneingeschränkt zur Verfügung, jedoch kommen auch „partnerschaftlich gebundene Personen" mit einer bestimmten, wenn auch geringen Wahrscheinlichkeit für eine Folgebeziehung in Frage (Stauder 2006).

veau erreicht haben, also besser mit Humankapital ausgestattet sind, haben größere Chancen auf dem Partnermarkt (Oppenheimer 1988). Zwar postuliert das familienökonomische Prinzip für niedrig gebildete Frauen eine höhere Neigung zur nachehelichen Paarbildung, jedoch ist davon auszugehen, dass die schwindende Attraktivität aufgrund der ökonomisch schlechter gestellten Situation die Wirkung individueller Präferenzen überlagert. Bedenkt man außerdem, dass die negativen wirtschaftlichen Folgen einer Scheidung häufig durch staatliche Transferleistungen kompensiert werden, lässt sich auch aus diesem Grund für niedrig gebildete Frauen eine geringere Neigung zum nachehelichen Paarbildungsverhalten herleiten – um nämlich den Anspruch auf Sozialtransfers nicht durch ein gemeinsames Haushaltseinkommen zu verwirken (De Graaf/Kalmijn 2003). Männer, die weniger ökonomische Ressourcen zur Verfügung haben, können nach der Scheidung in eine prekäre finanzielle Situation geraten, wodurch eine nacheheliche Haushaltsgründung zunehmend erschwert werden könnte. Jedoch sind Männer zu einem höheren Anteil erwerbstätig und seltener von Sozialtransfers oder Unterhaltszahlungen abhängig.

Inwieweit die Kinder aus der geschiedenen Ehe den Übergang in eine neue Partnerschaft verhindern oder begünstigen ist ein vielfach diskutierter Zusammenhang. Wenn Kinder im Haushalt leben ist die Gründung einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft auch immer mit der Gründung einer Stieffamilie verbunden, die alle Beteiligten vor eine Herausforderung stellt (Textor 2010). Es lässt sich annehmen, dass für das Zusammenziehen mit einem neuen Partner bereits im Haushalt lebende Kinder eine größere Barriere für den betreuenden Elternteil darstellen (Bernhardt 2000): *Je mehr Kinder zum Zeitpunkt der Scheidung im Haushalt sind, desto mehr verstärkt sich der hemmende Effekt auf das nacheheliche Paarbildungsverhalten (Hypothese 3a).* Da die Betreuungsperson der gemeinsamen Kinder stärker an den Haushalt gebunden ist, werden zudem die Kontaktmöglichkeiten zu potenziellen Partnern aufgrund einer gewissen sozialen Isolation eingeschränkt (Klein 1990). Neben der Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt sollte man auch das Alter der Kinder betrachten. Die Begründung liegt darin, dass jüngere Kinder einen höheren Betreuungsbedarf fordern, der beide Elternteile involviert. Zwar hat der Elternteil, bei dem die Kinder nicht leben, ein völlig unterschiedliches Ausmaß an Betreuungszeit, jedoch kann bei einer Aufrechterhaltung der Bindung durch regelmäßige, aber dafür sehr intensive Besuche der Kinder eine neue Partnerschaft trotzdem erschwert werden (Textor 2010): *Dementsprechend ist ein negativer Effekt bezüglich des Alters des jüngsten Kindes zu erwarten, da im jüngeren Kindesalter mehr Betreuungsaufwand durch die Elternteile erforderlich ist (Hypothese 3b).*

Zusammenfassend lässt sich aus den dargestellten Überlegungen als allgemeine Hypothese zum Einfluss des Geschlechts formulieren, *dass Männer häufiger eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft gründen werden als Frauen (Hypothese 4).* Diese Vermutung begründet sich einerseits aus der angeführten Geschlechterabhängigkeit bezüglich des Alterseffektes, anderseits ist dem Einfluss von Kindern eine entscheidende Bedeutung in Bezug auf die Erklärung von Geschlechterunterschieden beizumessen – dies scheint für Frauen stärker ins Gewicht zu fallen, da nach einer Scheidung die Kinder überwiegend im mütterlichen Haushalt leben (Tammen 2007: 529ff.). Vergleichbare Studien zeigen, dass unter Geschiedenen letztendlich mehr Frauen alleine leben als Männer (Wu/Balakrishan 1994; Hughes 2000; Wu/Schimmele 2005).

3 Vorüberlegungen zur empirischen Analyse

3.1 Erklärungen zur Methode

Die empirische Untersuchung wird mit Hilfe von ereignisanalytischen Verfahren vorgenommen. Dazu müssen Längsschnittdaten vorliegen, die sich auf bestimmbare Individuen beziehen und über die Zeit variieren (Blossfeld et al. 2007). In dieser Analyse wird auf einen ganz bestimmten Zeitraum einer Partnerschaftsbiografie fokussiert, der mit der Auflösung einer Ehe beginnt und mit der Gründung einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft endet. Damit stellt der Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft das zu erklärende Ereignis dar. Um Verweildaueranalysen vornehmen zu können, muss die Struktur eines Ereignisdatensatzes immer eine Zeit- und Zensierungsvariable beinhalten. In diesem Zusammenhang wird die *Prozesszeit* folgendermaßen definiert: tritt das Ereignis ein, so bezieht sich die gemessene Verweildauer auf die Differenz zwischen dem Zeitpunkt des Zusammenzugs mit dem neuen Partner und dem Auflösungszeitpunkt der vorherigen Ehe; erfährt die befragte Person das Ereignis nicht, so ergibt sich die Prozesszeit aus der Differenz zwischen dem Interview- und dem Scheidungszeitpunkt.

Für die Bestimmung eines multivariaten Modells ist die Verteilung des Ereignisses im Zeitverlauf relevant. Ein geeignetes Modell für die Möglichkeit der Schätzung ist das *Piecewise Exponential Model*, mit dem sich die Basisprozesszeit näher spezifizieren lässt. Entsprechend der Modellannahme erfolgt eine Unterteilung der Risikozeit in festgelegte Segmente. Das Risiko kann also nur zwischen den einzelnen Intervallen variieren und ist innerhalb eines Intervalls immer konstant (Blossfeld/Rohwer 2002: 120-130). Das Modell lässt sich mathematisch folgendermaßen beschreiben:

$$h\left(t\middle|Z\right) = h_0(t)\exp\left(\sum_{k=1}^{p}\beta_k Z_k\right)$$

Dabei beschreibt $h_0(t)$ die Baseline-Hazardfunktion für das Eintreten des zu untersuchenden Ereignisses zum Zeitpunkt (t). Die Übergangsrate wird durch die Basisübergangsrate $h_0(t)$ sowie durch die unbekannten, zu schätzenden Parameter (β_k) und die bekannten Kovariaten (Z_k) beeinflusst. Die Parameter werden anhand der Maximum-Likelihood-Methode geschätzt.

3.2 Beschreibung des Datensatzes und der Datenselektion

Für die empirischen Analysen werden die Daten des deutschen *Generations and Gender Surveys* (GGS) aus dem Jahr 2005 herangezogen. Diese Umfrage ist eine international durchgeführte Erhebung mit dem Ziel, vergleichbare Analysen und Ergebnisse zum Thema Familiengründungs- und Geburtenverhalten bereitzustellen. Neben dem generativen Verhalten und verschiedenen familienbezogenen Ereignissen sind Geschlechter- und Generationenbeziehungen ein weiterer Schwerpunkt im GGS, wodurch vielschichtige Untersuchungen zu Paarbildungs- bzw. Paarauflösungsprozessen angestellt werden können (Ruckdeschel et al. 2006: 7f.). Die Datenstruktur des GGS ermöglicht es, eine umfassende

Partnerschaftsbiografie der Befragten zu konstruieren. Die aktuelle Partnerschaft wird über das so genannte Haushaltsraster erfasst. Daraus wird ersichtlich, ob die Person mit ihrem Partner einen gemeinsamen Haushalt teilt oder ob es sich um eine intime Beziehung handelt, bei der die Partner aber nicht zusammenwohnen. Vorherige Partnerschaften werden ebenfalls detailliert registriert. Damit werden zu allen Partnerschaften einer Person chronologisch und monatsgenau die verschiedenen Ereignisse wie Zusammenzug mit dem Partner, Heirat und Auflösung der Partnerschaft durch Trennung, Scheidung oder Verwitwung erfasst.[2]

Insgesamt wurden 10.017 in Privathaushalten lebende deutschsprachige Personen befragt, die zum Zeitpunkt des Interviews zwischen 18 und 79 Jahre alt waren. Für die Auswahl der Stichprobe kommen nur Personen in Frage, die mindestens eine Scheidung erlebt haben. Im Prozess der Datenselektion wurden folgende Fälle aus der Analyse ausgeschlossen: keine Angaben zum Zusammenzug mit einem neuen Partner, keine Informationen weder zum Trennungs- noch zum Scheidungszeitpunkt, bei unlogischer Reihenfolge der Ereignisse, wenn der Partner verstorben ist oder Befragte außerhalb der Altersspanne 18-65 Jahre bei Auflösung der Ehe liegen. Somit verbleiben 338 Männer und 509 Frauen im Auswahlsample. Von den insgesamt 847 Personen sind 485 Befragte eine nacheheliche Beziehung eingegangen, 362 Personen sind zensiert, da sie das Ereignis bis zum Zeitpunkt der Befragung nicht erfahren (siehe Anhang, Tabelle A1).

3.3 Operationalisierung der Variablen

Abhängige Variable

In dieser Untersuchung wird der Beginn einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft durch das Zusammenziehen in einen gemeinsamen Haushalts bestimmt. Eine solche Vorgehensweise berücksichtigt nicht jene Personen, die nach ihrer Scheidung eine Folgebeziehung eingehen, aber nicht zusammen leben. Diese Einschränkung ergibt sich aus der Datenstruktur, da im GGS nur Partnerschaften gezählt werden, wenn die Partner in einem Haushalt zusammengelebt haben. Basierend auf der theoretischen Argumentation fokussiert diese Analyse zum Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft auf die Gründung eines gemeinsamen Haushaltes. In der Realität lässt sich der Beginn einer Partnerschaft oft schwer definieren, da Paarbildungen immer mit einem individuellen Entwicklungsprozess verknüpft sind, der graduell verläuft. Dagegen stellt das Zusammenziehen mit dem Partner ein quantifizierbares Ereignis da, das auch den Institutionalisierungsgrad einer Partnerschaft enorm erhöht. Zur genauen Bestimmung der Prozesszeit müssen folgende Annahmen getroffen werden: Aufgrund der rechtlichen Bedingungen des deutschen Scheidungsrechts, das die Einhaltung eines Trennungsjahres vorsieht, geht einer Scheidung die Trennung fast immer voraus. Auch wenn erst das Scheidungsdatum die Ehe rechtmäßig auflöst, scheint es für diese Untersuchung angemessen, als Startzeitpunkt der Betrachtung

2 Als Grundlage für die Berechnungen diente eine bereinigte Version des Datensatzes. Im Rahmen des „Nonmarital Childbearing Projects“ am Max-Planck-Institut für demografische Forschung wurden die GGS Daten mehrerer Länder hinsichtlich der Fertilitäts- und Partnerschaftsbiographien einheitlich aufbereitet (vgl. Perelli-Harris et. al. 2009).

das Trennungsdatum zu wählen.[3] Nur wenn die Angaben zum Trennungszeitpunkt unvollständig sind, wird auf das Scheidungsdatum zurückgegriffen.[4] Bei einigen Personen sind die relevanten Ereignisse auf den gleichen Zeitpunkt datiert. Diese Unschärfen sind höchstwahrscheinlich dem retrospektiven Charakter der Befragung geschuldet, da in der Vergangenheit liegende Erfahrungen im Nachhinein nicht immer realitätsgetreu wiedergegeben werden. Außerdem nehmen Partnerschaften im Privatleben der Menschen einen sehr intimen Bereich ein. Allein die Sensibilität des Themas ist ein entscheidender Aspekt der Reliabilitätsproblematik (Diekmann 2004: 383). Um eine Prozesszeit von null zu vermeiden, wurde in solchen Fällen zwischen dem Trennungsdatum und dem Zeitpunkt des Zusammenzugs mit dem Folgepartner ein Zeitraum von einem Monat unterstellt.[5] Diese Korrektur in den Daten dient dem Zweck, diese problematischen Fälle nicht aus der Untersuchung ausschließen zu müssen. Der Nachteil dieser Handhabung besteht allerdings in einer manuell herbeigeführten Verzerrung der Ergebnisse, die eine Beschleunigung des zu untersuchenden Übergangs am Anfang des Prozesses bewirken könnte.

Unabhängige Variablen

Die Analyse der Determinanten des Übergangs in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft schließt neben den Haupteinflussfaktoren wie *Trennungsalter, Bildung, Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt, Alter des jüngsten Kindes* sowie *Geschlecht* und weitere Kovariaten wie *Religiosität* und *Wohnregion* mit ein (siehe Anhang, Tabelle A2). Die Generierung der Bildungsvariablen erfolgt anhand des erreichten Bildungsabschlusses. Dabei werden drei Bildungsgrade unterschieden: „niedrig“ (Haupt- bzw. Volksschulabschluss oder polytechnische Oberschule mit Abschluss der 8./9. Klasse), „mittel“ (mittlere Reife, Realschulabschluss oder polytechnische Oberschule mit Abschluss der 10. Klasse) und „hoch“ (Fachhochschulreife und allgemeine oder fachgebundene Hochschulreife). Es wird unterstellt, dass der Bildungsabschluss bereits vor den relevanten Ereignissen wie Scheidung oder neue Partnerschaft erreicht wurde. Um den Einfluss von Kindern zu messen, werden zwei Variablen konstruiert, die als zeitunabhängige Kovariaten die Information zum Zeitpunkt der Trennung wiedergeben. Die Variable Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt zum Trennungszeitpunkt hat vier Ausprägungen („gar keine Kinder“, „keine Kinder im Haushalt“, „ein Kind im Haushalt“ und „zwei oder mehr Kinder im Haushalt“). Das Alter des jüngsten Kindes wird über die vier Ausprägungen „kein Kind“, „0-9 Jahre“, „10-17 Jahre“ und „18 und älter“ kategorisiert. Im Gegensatz zur Kinderzahl im Haushalt liefert das Alter des letztgeborenen Kindes eine wichtige Information zum Ausmaß der elterlichen Verantwortung. Diese Variable misst somit den Einfluss von Kindern unabhängig davon, ob sie im Haushalt leben oder nicht.

Ein weiterer Bestimmungsfaktor für die Analyse ist der Einfluss der Religion. Der Bezug zur Religiosität einer Person wird über die Häufigkeit der Teilnahme an religiösen Veranstaltungen abgeleitet und bezieht sich nicht auf eine bestimmte Konfessionszuge-

3 Dieses methodische Vorgehen deckt sich mit dem anderer Studien zum Thema „Remarriage“ (Bumpass et al. 1990) oder „Repartnering“ (Wu/Schimmele 2005).

4 Für insgesamt 9 Fälle wird bei der Berechnung der *Prozesszeit* sowie des *Alters bei Auflösung der Ehe* vom Zeitpunkt der Scheidung ausgegangen, da es keine Angaben zum Trennungszeitpunkt gab.

5 Für 16 Fälle wurde eine Prozesszeit von einem Monat imputiert.

hörigkeit, wodurch die Intensität der religiösen Bindung realistischer erfasst wird. Es ist davon auszugehen, dass streng gläubige Personen im Vergleich zu nicht religiösen Menschen nach einer gescheiterten Ehe die Aufnahme einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft ablehnen bzw. viel weiter zeitlich aufschieben. Da für religiöse Menschen eine Scheidung mit negativen sozialen Sanktionen verbunden sein kann, so würden sich diese durch das verfrühte Zusammenziehen mit dem neuen Partner eher noch verstärken (Wu/Balakrishan 1994). Die Berücksichtigung der Kontrollvariablen Wohnregion dient dazu, auf den Einfluss der Größe des Wohnortes zu schließen und wird anhand der Ausprägungen „ländlich“ (unter 20.000 Einwohner), „städtisch“ (unter 100.000 Einwohner) und „Großstadt“ (mehr als 100.000 Einwohner) gemessen. Dabei ist zu beachten, dass die Angabe des Wohnsitzes zum Zeitpunkt des Interviews erfolgte. Somit können keine Aussagen darüber getroffen werden, ob sich die Person beispielsweise erst nach der Scheidung vom ehemaligen Partner für den Umzug in eine andere Wohnregion entschieden hat. Es ist vorstellbar, dass mit steigendem Urbanitätsgrad auch eine Erhöhung der Realisierung nachehelicher Partnerschaften einhergeht, da ein städtisches Umfeld vielfältigere Möglichkeiten für das Zusammentreffen von potenziellen Partnern bietet.

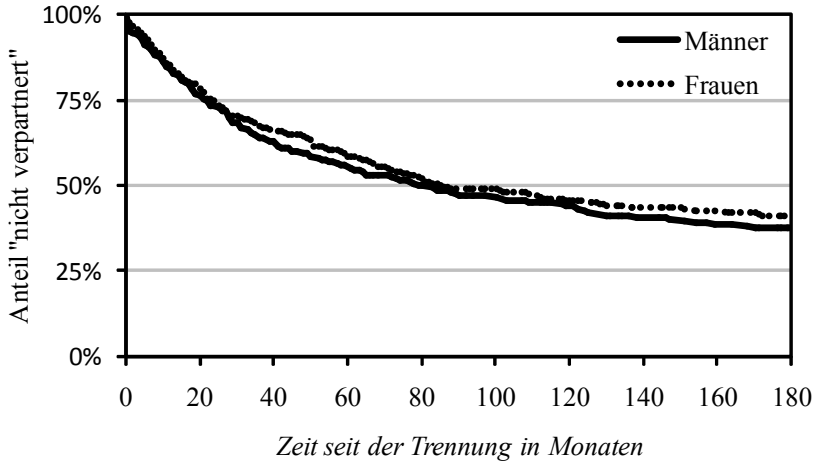
4. Empirische Analysen

4.1 Deskriptive Ergebnisse

Hinsichtlich des zeitlichen Verlaufs zum Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft werden anhand deskriptiver Schätzungen nur geringfügige geschlechtsspezifische Unterschiede[6] sichtbar (Abbildung 1). In den ersten drei Jahren überlagern sich die Kurven nahezu, und der steile Abfall bestätigt, dass eine „Wiederverpartnerung“ bei geschiedenen Männern und Frauen unmittelbar nach der Auflösung der Ehe besonders hoch ist: immerhin erleben 25 Prozent dieses Ereignis innerhalb der ersten zwei Jahre. Eine Erklärung dafür könnte sein, dass der Auslöser für die Trennung oft ein neuer Partner ist und das Zusammenziehen mit diesem Partner schon vor der rechtsgültigen Scheidung erfolgt. Betrachtet man den Verlauf der Kurven insgesamt, so zeigen sich die stärksten Unterschiede zwischen Männer und Frauen im Zeitraum von 36 bis 48 Monaten. Dementsprechend gehen im dritten Jahr nach der Scheidung Männer etwas häufiger als Frauen eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft ein. Zum Ende des Beobachtungszeitraums (nach 15 Jahren) haben 38 Prozent der Männer und 41 Prozent der Frauen das Ereignis noch immer nicht erfahren.

6 Teststatistik: Log-Rank=0.347; Wilcoxon=0.350

Abbildung 1: Kaplan-Meier-Survivalkurve zum Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft für geschiedene Männer und Frauen



Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen)

4.2 Ergebnisse der multivariaten Schätzung

In Tabelle 1 sind die Ergebnisse der ereignisanalytischen Modelle dargestellt. Die zuvor sichtbare Zeitabhängigkeit des „Wiederverpartnerungsprozesses“ wird in der multivariaten Schätzung durch eine angemessene Spezifikation der Baseline in sieben relativ kurze Zeitintervalle modelliert. Der Einfluss der Dauer seit der Trennung auf den Übergang zur nachehelichen Partnerschaft ist signifikant und erweist sich über alle Modelle hinweg konstant. Das Risiko für die Aufnahme einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft ist unmittelbar nach der Trennung innerhalb des ersten Jahres am höchsten. Im Zeitraum von ein bis zwei Jahren verringert sich das Risiko nur geringfügig um ungefähr 16 Prozent. Nach dem dritten Jahr ist das Muster der relativen Risiken zum Verlauf der Verweildauer von einem starken Abfall gekennzeichnet. Im nächsten Zeitintervall (5 bis 7 Jahre) wird dieser Trend durch eine Erholungsphase unterbrochen, jedoch fällt im darauffolgenden Zeitintervall das Risiko, das Ereignis zu erfahren, sehr stark ab. Bezugnehmend auf die Referenzkategorie ist nach mehr als zehn Jahren das Risiko um 85 Prozent geringer. Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass mit zunehmender Prozesszeit das Risiko für eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft immer weiter abnimmt.

Der Einfluss des Bildungsniveaus folgt dem prognostizierten Zusammenhang. Dementsprechend zeigen Personen mit hohem Bildungsniveau auch die höchste Neigung in Bezug auf das nacheheliche Paarbildungsverhalten. Zieht man die Werte aus dem dritten Modell[7] heran, so ist für Hochgebildete ein fast 35 Prozent höheres Risiko im Vergleich zu niedrig Gebildeten ausgewiesen. Auch Personen mit mittlerer Bildung haben gegen-

7 Anhand des Log-Likelihood-Wertes kann für dieses Modell die höchste Güte abgelesen werden

über der Referenzgruppe bessere Chancen zur Gründung einer Folgepartnerschaft, selbst wenn diese Unterschiede etwas geringer ausfallen und statistisch nicht signifikant sind.

Die ermittelten Koeffizienten für den Einfluss der Religiosität zeigen, dass eine starke Bindung zur Religion sich negativ auf den Übergangsprozess auswirkt. Zwischen „etwas religiösen" und „nicht religiösen" Menschen sind keine wesentlichen Unterschiede zu erkennen. Jedoch muss bei der Interpretation dieses Ergebnisses beachtet werden, dass bei gläubigen Menschen im Allgemeinen eine geringere Scheidungsneigung vorhanden ist (Böttcher 2006). Dadurch ist die Gruppe der sehr gläubigen Befragten stark selektiv, weil sich nur ein geringer Anteil überhaupt scheiden lässt und somit erst in die Risikopopulation gelangt.

Führt man sich den Einfluss der Wohnortgröße vor Augen, so wirkt sich das Leben in ländlichen Gebieten erstaunlicherweise positiv aus, die Übergangsrate ist im Vergleich zu Großstädtern etwa um 40 Prozent höher. In Bezug auf diesen Zusammenhang ist ein Selektionseffekt denkbar. In diesem Sinne könnte unterstellt werden, dass sich Menschen, die auf dem Land leben, vielleicht nur dann trennen bzw. scheiden lassen, wenn sie bereits wieder einen neuen Partner in Aussicht haben. Dieser Befund könnte auch durch einen in Großstädten höheren Anteil an Partnerschaften ohne gemeinsamen Haushalt zustande kommen. Da die Information zum Wohnort nur zum Zeitpunkt des Interviews vorliegt, könnte das Ergebnis auch durch den Wegzug von Geschiedenen aus ländlichen Gebieten beeinflusst sein.

Betrachtet man den Einfluss, den das Alter des jüngsten Kindes ausübt, so geht mit höherem Alter der Kinder eine geringe Neigung zur nachehelichen Paarbildung einher, entgegen der angestellten Vermutung, dass kleinere Kinder eine erneute Haushaltsgründung behindern (Modell 1). Für Personen mit Kinder über 18 Jahre ist das Risiko um mehr als die Hälfte vermindert, verglichen mit Personen mit Kindern bis zu neun Jahren. Da aber dieser Effekt im zweiten Modell durch die Kontrolle der Variablen Alter bei Trennung überlagert wird, kann hier folgende Abhängigkeit zwischen den beiden Einflussgrößen vermutet werden: Im Falle eines fortgeschrittenen Alters bei Trennung sind die Kinder zum Zeitpunkt der Auflösung der Ehe höchstwahrscheinlich auch älter. Im dritten Modell zeigt sich der Einfluss der Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt wie in der dazu formulierten Hypothese. Für Personen, die im Haushalt zwei und mehr Kinder zum Zeitpunkt der Trennung haben, ist das Risiko für das Zusammenziehen mit einem neuen Partner um 20 Prozent geringer als für Befragte mit nur einem Kind im Haushalt. Eine Einschränkung ergibt sich daraus, dass dieser Befund nicht gleichermaßen für Frauen und Männer gedeutet werden kann, und zwar wegen der ungleichen Aufteilung der Kinder auf die getrennten Haushalte, in den meisten Fällen zugunsten des mütterlichen Haushaltes (BMFSFJ 2003: 8).

Die geschätzten Koeffizienten hinsichtlich der Variablen Alter bei Trennung folgen der abgeleiteten Hypothese, dass sich im höheren Alter die Chancen zur Gründung einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft signifikant verschlechtern. Bezugnehmend auf das dritte Modell sinkt das Risiko um 39 Prozent, wenn das Trennungsalter zwischen 35 und 49 Jahren liegt, bei über 50 Jahren sogar um 62 Prozent im Vergleich zur Referenzaltersgruppe 25 bis 34 Jahre. Durch die enorme Verbesserung der Modellgüte kann dem Alter bei Trennung eine hohe statistische Relevanz beigemessen werden.

Tabelle 1: Relative Risiken des Übergangs in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft, Ergebnisse des Piecewise-Constant-Exponentialmodell

	Modell 1	Modell 2	Modell 3
Dauer in Monaten			
< 12	*1*	*1*	*1*
12-24	0,83	0,84	0,84
24-36	0,73 **	0,74 *	0,74 **
36-60	0,41 ***	0,42 ***	0,42 ***
60-84	0,45 ***	0,46 ***	0,46 ***
84-120	0,21 ***	0,22 ***	0,22 ***
> 120	0,15 ***	0,15 ***	0,15 ***
Geschlecht			
Männer	*1*	*1*	*1*
Frauen	0,97	0,89	0,97
Bildung			
niedrig	*1*	*1*	*1*
mittel	1,18	1,16	1,16
hoch	1,30 *	1,38 *	1,35 *
Religiosität			
sehr religiös	*1*	*1*	*1*
etwas religiös	1,34 *	1,29 *	1,30 *
nicht religiös	1,31 *	1,21	1,22
Wohnregion			
Großstadt	*1*	*1*	*1*
städtisch	1,00	1,01	1,01
ländlich	1,42 **	1,39 *	1,42 *
Alter des jüngsten Kindes			
kein Kind	1,04	1,03	–
0-9 Jahre	*1*	*1*	–
10-17 Jahre	0,80	1,30	–
18 und älter	0,47 ***	1,07	–
Anz. der Kinder im Haushalt			
kein Kind	–	–	0,95
0 Kinder im HH	–	–	1,12
1 Kind im HH	–	–	*1*
2+ Kinder im HH	–	–	0,79 *
Alter bei Trennung			
18-24	–	1,24 *	1,23 *
25-34	–	*1*	*1*
35-49	–	0,55 ***	0,61 ***
50+	–	0,36 ***	0,38 ***
Log Likelihood	-1274,35 N=847	-1253,308 N=847	-1251,658 N=847

*** $p \leq 0.01$ ** $0.01 < p \leq 0.05$ * $0.05 < p \leq 0.1$

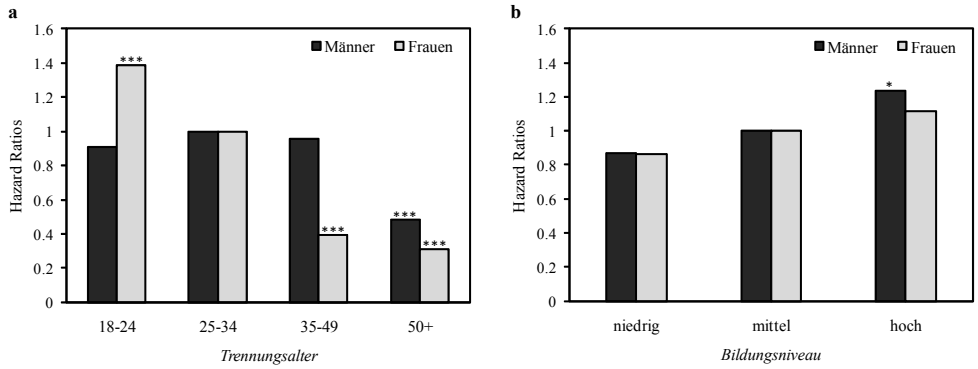
Anmerkung: bei Fällen ohne oder fehlerhafte Angabe ist eine zusätzliche Kategorie "missing" eingegangen

Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen).

4.3 Interaktionseffekte

Da in der multiplikativen Modellschätzung kein signifikanter[8] Einfluss der Variablen Geschlecht sichtbar ist, wird im Folgenden mit der Berechnung von Interaktionseffekten die Geschlechterabhängigkeit in Bezug auf die Haupteinflussfaktoren näher spezifiziert.

Abbildung 2: Interaktion von Geschlecht und Alter bei Scheidung (a) und von Geschlecht und Bildungsniveau (b), relative Risiken (standardisierte Darstellung)



Anmerkung: Weitere Kontrollvariablen im Modell a sind Dauer nach Trennung, Bildung, Religiosität, Wohnregion und Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt; im Modell b sind alle genannten Kontrollvariablen einbezogen – nur ist anstelle von Bildung das Trennungsalter enthalten.
*** p≤0.01 **0.01<p≤0.05 *0.05<p≤0.1

Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen)

Wie in Abbildung 2a deutlich erkennbar ist, kommt der negative Effekt des Alters bei Frauen viel stärker als bei Männern zum Tragen. Bei Frauen ist im Vergleich zu der jüngeren Referenzaltersgruppe 25-34 ein sehr starkes Absinken des Risikos einer nachehelichen Paarbildung bereits in der Alterskategorie 35-49 erkennbar. Dagegen wirkt sich der Alterseffekt bei Männern erst in der Altersgruppe 50+ hemmend aus und bleibt über die drei jüngeren Altersgruppen relativ gleich. Auffallend ist, dass bei den jungen Frauen (18-24) die Neigung zur „Wiederverpartnerung" am höchsten ist. Dieser signifikante Befund dürfte zum einen daran liegen, dass der Beginn der relevanten Partnerschaftskarriere bei Frauen allgemein in etwas jüngerem Alter als bei den männlichen Altersgenossen stattfindet. Wenn Männer schon zum Zeitpunkt der Heirat und somit auch bei der Scheidung älter als ihre Partnerinnen sind, verschiebt sich bei ihnen dementsprechend auch die Gründung eines nachehelichen Haushalts im Lebenslauf weiter nach hinten. Vergleicht man die Übergangsraten der ältesten Personen, so ist für Männer im fortgeschrittenen Alter (50+) ein um 52 Prozent, für Frauen ein um 69 Prozent verringertes Risiko zu ver-

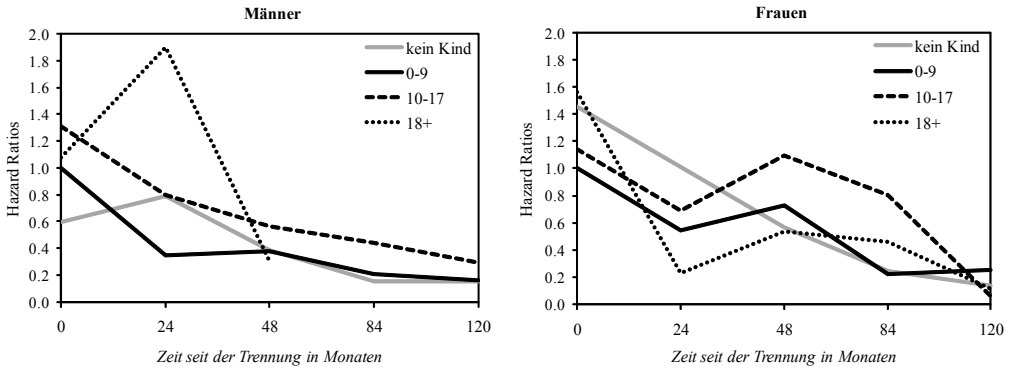
8 Es kann trotzdem ein tatsächlicher Effekt vorliegen, auch wenn die Ergebnisse des statistischen Tests nicht signifikant sind. Außerdem können anhand der statistischen Signifikanz keine Aussagen über die Stärke eines Effekts getroffen werden (Schnell et al. 2005: 452f.).

zeichnen. Ob diese hochsignifikanten Ergebnisse vorrangig durch partnermarktspezifische Ungleichgewichte zustande kommen oder Frauen in höherem Alter tatsächlich ein bewusst vermindertes Paarbildungsverhalten aufweisen, lässt sich anhand dieser Untersuchung leider nicht aufklären.

In Bezug auf geschlechtsspezifische Bildungseffekte konnte mit der Berechnung des in Abbildung 2b dargestellten Interaktionseffekts festgestellt werden, dass sich mit steigendem Bildungsabschluss die Neigung zur nachehelichen Paargründung sowohl für Männer als auch für Frauen erhöht. Im Vergleich zu Personen mit mittlerer Bildung haben sowohl Männer und Frauen mit niedriger Bildung ein gleichermaßen geringeres Risiko der Paarbildung. Nur innerhalb der Kategorie hohes Bildungsniveau ist eine geringfügig höhere Paarbildungsneigung bei den Männern sichtbar. Aufgrund der mangelhaften statistischen Signifikanz dieser Befunde, können jedoch nur Vermutungen angestellt werden. Einerseits könnte sich für gut ausgebildete Frauen eine stärkere Motivation ergeben, die Entscheidung für eine neue Partnerschaft weiter aufzuschieben, da sie weniger von einem männlichen Verdiener abhängig sind. Anderseits könnte sich für sehr hochgebildete Frauen ein hinderlicher Aspekt daraus ergeben, dass mitunter nicht genügend geeignete männliche Partner mit vergleichbarem Bildungsniveau zur Verfügung stehen, weil sie entweder altersbedingt nicht mehr vorhanden oder partnerschaftlich bereits gebunden sind (Lankuttis/Blossfeld 2003: 17).

Aufgrund der Problematik, dass der Einfluss des Alters des jüngsten Kindes durch den stark signifikanten Alterseffekt überlagert wird, ist es sinnvoll, diese Einflussgröße, im Verlauf der Prozesszeit, separat in einem Interaktionsmodell zu überprüfen. Dazu werden getrennte Modellrechnungen für Männer und Frauen vorgenommen. Ein weiterer Grund für die Betrachtung des Alters des jüngsten Kindes besteht darin, so eine generelle Wirkung zum Einfluss von Kindern bei Männern nachzuweisen, da die Variable Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt aufgrund der mangelnden Besetzungszahlen für Männer nicht herangezogen werden kann.

Abbildung 3: Interaktion von Dauer nach der Trennung und Alter des jüngsten Kindes, relative Risiken (getrennte Darstellung für Männer und Frauen)



Anmerkung: Weitere Kontrollvariablen in beiden Modellen sind Bildung, Religiosität, Wohnregion und Trennungsalter.

Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen)

Wie Abbildung 3 verdeutlicht, haben sowohl Männer als auch Frauen mit Kindern im Alter von 10 bis 17 zum Zeitpunkt der Trennung eine höhere Übergangsrate für das Zusammenziehen mit einem neuen Partner als geschiedene Männer und Frauen mit kleineren Kindern unter zehn Jahren. Dieser Risikoverlauf ist ein Indiz dafür, dass jüngere Kinder, die relativ hohe Betreuungsansprüche stellen, eine Barriere für das nacheheliche Paarbildungsverhalten darstellen können. Demnach könnte auch für geschiedene Väter, die durch kleinere Kinder eine stärkere Bindung an die ehemalige Familie haben, eine nacheheliche Haushaltsgründung erschwert sein. Die Bestätigung dieses vermuteten Zusammenhangs zum negativen Einfluss von kleinen Kindern – unabhängig davon, ob sie im mütterlichen oder väterlichen Haushalt leben – ist aufgrund der geringen Fallzahlen jedoch mit Einschränkungen verbunden. Hinsichtlich der Signifikanz der Ergebnisse sollten nur die Werte für das erste Zeitintervall, also innerhalb der ersten 24 Monate herangezogen werden.

Eine nennenswerte Auffälligkeit in dieser Darstellung ist jedoch das starke Absinken des Risikos für Geschiedene ohne Kinder im Zeitverlauf. Gerade für diese Personengruppe wäre zu jedem Zeitpunkt eine höhere Neigung zur nachehelichen Paarbildung zu erwarten, weil diese beispielsweise die Realisierung eines eventuellen Kinderwunsches ermöglichen würde. Scheinbar ist die Dynamik zur nachehelichen Paarbildung für Geschiedene ohne Kinder jedoch primär auf den Beginn der Nachscheidungsdauer gelegt. Somit könnte man vermuten, dass bei Geschiedenen ohne Kinder eine Art Selektionseffekt die immer weiter absinkende Neigung im Zeitverlauf erklärt. Einige Geschiedene vermeiden möglicherweise das Zusammenziehen mit einem Partner, weil sie sich bewusst für das Alleinleben und gegen eine Familie entscheiden. Dieser Befund zeigt sich bei Männern und Frauen nicht gleichermaßen. Kinderlose Frauen weisen unmittelbar nach der Scheidung noch eine sehr hohe Übergangsrate auf und erst im Zeitverlauf sinkt diese unter das Niveau geschiedener Mütter. Daher scheint die geringere Familienorientierung bei kinderlosen Männern stärker ausgeprägt, da die Übergangsrate niedriger im Vergleich zu geschiedenen Männern mit Kindern ist.

5. Zusammenfassung und Ausblick

Die Zielsetzung dieser Studie bestand darin, den Einfluss demografischer und sozioökonomischer Determinanten des nachehelichen Paarbildungsprozesses zu analysieren, und zwar mit Schwerpunkt auf geschlechtsspezifische Abhängigkeiten. Bei der Gründung einer Nachfolgebeziehung fällt die Intensität besonders am Beginn des Prozesses (in den ersten 24 Monaten) bei Männern und Frauen gleichermaßen sehr hoch aus. Dieses Ergebnis passt zu den Befunden in Bezug auf den Wiederheiratsprozess. Lankuttis und Blossfeld (2003) stellen fest, dass die Wiederheiratsneigung zwei bis fünf Jahre nach der Trennung am höchsten ist. Damit ist eine logische Reihenfolge in der zeitlichen Intensität der Ereignisse gegeben. Eine hohe Neigung zur nachehelichen Paarbildung ist der Wiederheiratsneigung vorangestellt. Die Erklärung, warum nacheheliche Partnerschaften oft unmittelbar nach der Trennung erfolgen, kann letztlich darauf zurückgeführt werden, dass einige Scheidungen erst durch das Kennenlernen eines neuen Partners verursacht werden. Dieser Aspekt scheint für die nacheheliche Paarbildung von enormer Bedeutung zu sein, leider

ist die Prüfung des vermuteten Zusammenhangs hinsichtlich der Kausalität mit den vorliegenden Daten nicht möglich.

Mit zunehmender Verweildauer verringerte sich die Übergangsrate, wobei an dieser Stelle das Zusammenspiel interagierender Faktoren angeführt werden kann. Je länger eine Person im Ausgangszustand „geschieden" verweilt, desto älter wird sie und desto mehr sinken die Chancen für die Aufnahme einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft. Dieser festgestellte negative Alterseffekt ist konsistent mit der eingangs formulierten Hypothese und auch ein replizierter Befund bei der Untersuchung von Folgebeziehungen (Klein 1990; Bumpass/Sweet/Martin 1990; Wu/Balakrishan 1994; Wu/Schimmele 2005).

Betrachtet man die festgestellten Unterschiede zwischen den einzelnen Altersgruppen im Kontext strukturbedingter Mechanismen der Partnerwahl, so scheinen Geschiedene in höherem Alter schlechtere Aussichten zu haben, mit einem neuen Partner zusammenzuziehen. Für Frauen ist dieser Effekt deutlich stärker ausgeprägt, was auf die Verengung des Partnermarkts zuungunsten älterer Frauen hindeutet. Hinsichtlich der untersuchten Bildungseinflüsse bestätigt sich die Vermutung, dass mit der Höhe des Bildungsniveaus tendenziell eine steigende Neigung zur nachehelichen Paarbildung einhergeht. Da sich dieser positive Effekt sowohl für Männer als auch für Frauen zeigte, sind gemäß den Annahmen der Familienökonomie traditionell orientierte Familienmuster im Sinne einer geschlechtsspezifischen Arbeitsteilung beim nachehelichen Paarbildungsprozess offenbar weniger von Bedeutung. Vielmehr können die Bedingungen für das Zustandekommen einer nachehelichen Partnerschaft von höher ausgebildeten Personen verbessert werden. Verallgemeinernd lässt sich daraus schlussfolgern, dass die eigene ökonomische Unabhängigkeit ein ausschlaggebendes Kriterium in Bezug auf die Attraktivität eines potenziellen Partners ist.

In vielen Studien wurde die Existenz von gemeinsamen Kindern aus der vorhergehenden Ehe als entscheidender Einflussfaktor für den „Wiederverpartnerungsprozess" von Geschiedenen beschrieben (Ermisch 2002; Lampard/Peggs 1999; Bernhardt 2000; Hughes 2000). Inwieweit das Vorhandensein von Kindern aus einer vorhergehenden Ehe den Übergang in eine nacheheliche Partnerschaft behindert, konnte auf Basis der hier vorgelegten Analysen nur anhand der Kinder im Haushalt zum Zeitpunkt der Trennung eindeutig festgestellt werden. Leben zwei und mehr Kinder im Haushalt, so weist diese Person eine geringere Übergangsrate auf. Der weiterhin vermutete Zusammenhang, dass kleinere Kinder einen hemmenden Einfluss auf die Höhe der Übergangsrate haben, kristallisierte sich durch die Berechnung des Interaktionseffektes zum Alter des jüngsten Kindes in Verbindung mit der Dauer seit der Trennung heraus. Geschiedene Männer und Frauen mit Kindern unter 10 Jahren zeigen eine geringere Übergangsrate als geschiedene Elternteile mit Kindern im jugendlichen Alter.

Zur Vertiefung des nachehelichen Paarbildungsverhaltens sind weitere Studien im Bereich der Familienforschung angebracht, da diese Phase der Familienbiografie aufgrund kontinuierlich hoher Scheidungszahlen immer mehr an Bedeutung gewinnen wird. Künftige Untersuchungen sollten unter anderem die Unterhaltsproblematik näher beleuchten, da bisherige Studien hier ambivalente Ergebnisse hervorbrachten (Engstler 2003; De Graaf/Kalmijn 2003). Ein weiterer relevanter Aspekt ist die Erweiterung bildungsabhängiger Faktoren um den Einfluss der Erwerbstätigkeit, um so die finanzielle Unabhängigkeit beurteilen zu können. Dieser Umstand sollte in weiterführenden Analysen unbedingt

als zeitabhängiger Faktor betrachtet werden. Schließlich stellt sich besonders im Hinblick auf geschlechtsspezifische Unterschiede die Frage, ob eine Frau erst nach der Scheidung wieder eine Erwerbsarbeit zur Überwindung der negativen Scheidungsfolgen aufnimmt und in diesem Fall weniger auf eine nacheheliche Haushaltsgründung angewiesen ist. Insgesamt lässt sich anhand der vorausgegangenen Analysen schlussfolgern, dass sich das Paarbildungsverhalten von Männern und Frauen weniger stark als zunächst angenommen unterscheidet. Nur im Hinblick auf den Einfluss des Trennungsalters haben die Ergebnisse gravierende Unterschiede zwischen Männer und Frauen aufgedeckt.

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Anhang

Tabelle A1: Anzahl der in die Analyse ein- und ausgeschlossenen Fälle

	Gesamt	Männer	Frauen
Fallzahl im GGS	10.017	4.610	5.407
Ausschluss weil:			
keine Scheidung	8.717		
Partner gestorben	368		
inkonsistente Reihenfolge der Ereignisse	37		
außerhalb der Altersspanne (18-65)	3		
k. A. zum Trennungs- und Scheidungszeitpkt.	28		
k. A. zum Zusammenzug mit neuem Partner	17		
Personen in der Stichprobe	847	338 (39,91 %)	509 (60,09 %)
nacheheliche Partnerschaft	485	201 (40,53 %)	284 (55,80 %)
keine nacheheliche Partnerschaft	362	137 (59,47 %)	225 (44,20 %)

Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen)

Tabelle A2: Verteilung der Ereignisse und der Risikozeit auf die Ausprägung der unabhängigen Variablen

	Gesamt		Männer		Frauen	
	Ereignisse	Risikozeit (%)	Ereignisse	Risikozeit (%)	Ereignisse	Risikozeit (%)
Geschlecht						
Männer	201	*39.47*				
Frauen	284	*60.53*				
Bildung						
niedrig	52	*13.75*	13	*8.79*	39	*16.99*
mittel	293	*60.16*	116	*58.89*	177	*61.00*
hoch	135	*25.31*	70	*31.50*	65	*21.27*
missing	5	*0.77*	2	*0.83*	3	*0.74*
Religiosität						
gläubig religös	56	*15.26*	23	*9.33*	33	*19.12*
etwas religiös	230	*45.85*	81	*45.78*	149	*45.90*
nicht religiös	195	*38.51*	93	*44.21*	102	*34.79*
missing	4	*0.38*	4	*0.68*	0	*0.19*
Wohnregion						
Großstadt	335	*74.78*	134	*77.41*	201	*73.07*
städtisch	84	*17.12*	41	*16.46*	43	*17.56*
ländlich	66	*8.10*	26	*6.13*	40	*9.37*
Trennungsalter						
18-24	99	*12.21*	26	*13.46*	73	*11.39*
25-34	235	*40.78*	83	*38.68*	152	*42.16*
35-44	111	*30.12*	69	*27.82*	42	*31.62*
45+	40	*16.89*	23	*20.04*	17	*14.84*
Alter des jüngsten Kindes						
0-9 Jahre	259	*48.48*	93	*45.82*	166	*50.75*
10-17 Jahre	64	*14.51*	36	*12.90*	28	*15.55*
18 Jahre und älter	28	*11.43*	13	*8.12*	15	*13.59*
kein Kind	134	*25.26*	59	*33.16*	75	*20.11*
Anzahl der Kinder im Haushalt bei Auflösung der Ehe						
0 Kinder im HH	87	*16.80*	73	*31.97*	14	*6.90*
1 Kind im HH	152	*27.97*	45	*21.45*	107	*32.22*
2+ Kinder im HH	112	*29.98*	24	*13.42*	88	*40.77*
kein Kind	134	*25.26*	59	*33.16*	75	*20.11*
	485	*100.00*	201	*100.00*	284	*100.00*

Quelle: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, Deutschland (eigene Berechnungen).

Forschungsbeiträge

Sabine Buchebner-Ferstl

Hausarbeit in Partnerschaften – die Rolle von Präferenzstrukturen

Ein innovativer Ansatz zur Erklärung von Verteilungsmustern

Housework and partnership – the role of preference patterns.

An innovative approach to explain the division of housework

Zusammenfassung:
Die hier vorgestellten Ergebnisse sind aus der qualitativen Studie „The glass partitioning wall" (in Anlehnung an den Begriff der „glass ceiling") hervorgegangen, in der 40 österreichische Paare mit mindestens einem Kind unter sechs Jahren zur Aufgabenverteilung im Haushalt befragt wurden. Auf dieser Grundlage konnte ein fundiertes theoretisches Modell der Arbeitsteilung im Haushalt entwickelt werden. Den zentralen Bestandteil des Modells bilden internale Faktoren, so genannte Präferenzen der Partner, die als Verteilungsüberzeugungen, Kompetenzüberzeugungen und Gestaltungsprinzipien in Erscheinung treten. In der qualitativen Studie ließen sich sowohl auf der Ebene des Individuums als auch auf Paarebene typische Muster identifizieren, die jeweils durch eine spezifische Konstellation hinsichtlich der Präferenzen gekennzeichnet sind. So gehen etwa hohe Kompetenzzuschreibungen an die eigene Person zumeist mit höheren Ansprüchen und sehr konkreten Gestaltungsprinzipien einher.

Schlagwörter: Hausarbeit, Verteilung der Hausarbeit, Geschlechtergerechtigkeit

Abstract:
The findings presented in this article have emerged from the qualitative study "The glass partitioning wall" (an analogue to the well known "glass ceiling") in which 40 Austrian couples with at least one child (aged six or younger) have been interviewed about their division of housework. Based on the results, a well-grounded theoretical explanation model for the division of housework could be developed. The leading factors of the model are internal factors, the „preferences", of the partners, which include "gender equity in the division of tasks", "perceived competence in household (or family) tasks" and "standards for household tasks". In the qualitative study on the individual level as well as on the partnership-level specific patterns in couples' attitudes could be identified. For example, a high degree of perceived own competences for household tasks is mostly attended by high and elaborated standards.

Key words; housework, division of housework, gender equality

1. Einleitung

Sowohl die deutschsprachige als auch die internationale Forschungsliteratur ist durch eine generelle Einigkeit darüber geprägt, dass hinsichtlich der Aufgabenverteilung zwischen den Partnern und der Verteilung der Hausarbeit im Besonderen nach wie vor ein beträcht-

liches Ungleichgewicht zwischen den Geschlechtern besteht. Dabei wird einerseits ein quantitatives Ungleichgewicht zu Lasten der Frau konstatiert, das trotz der zunehmenden Erwerbsbeteiligung der Frau eine erstaunliche Stabilität aufweist (z.B. Gisser 2003; European Commission 2007; Marshall 2006; Gupta 2006). Andererseits wird auch in verschiedenen Studien immer wieder auf ein qualitatives, stark an Geschlechtsnormen orientiertes, Ungleichgewicht hingewiesen (z.B. Mikula 1994; European Commission 2007).

Die umfangreiche Forschungsliteratur zur Verteilung der Hausarbeit erlaubt eine Einteilung in rollentheoretische, handlungstheoretische und emotionssoziologische Ansätze. Rollentheoretische Ansätze sehen die Verteilung in geschlechtsspezifischen Sozialisationserfahrungen begründet, die das von Einstellungen transportierte Konstrukt „Geschlechtsrollenorientierung" schaffen. Der hier zuzuordnende „Doing-Gender-Ansatz" begreift wiederum die Verteilung der Hausarbeit als Möglichkeit, die eigene Geschlechtsrollenidentität zu demonstrieren. Handlungstheoretische Ansätze (z.B. Austauschtheorie, Time-Availability-Ansatz) gehen von rational handelnden, auf Nutzenmaximierung ausgerichteten Individuen aus, während emotionssoziologische Ansätze emotionsbasierte Handlungsorientierungen in den Mittelpunkt stellen. Das Mehrebenenmodell von Huinink/Röhler (2005) stellt eines der wenigen Modelle dar, die versuchen, die unterschiedlichen Ansätze zu integrieren. (Für eine detaillierte Darstellung und Diskussion der theoretischen Ansätze vgl. z.B. Huinink/Röhler 2005.)

In den verschiedenen – vornehmlich quantitativen – Studien zur Arbeitsteilung wurde auch die Wirkung verschiedener Bedingungsfaktoren, in erster Linie soziodemografischer Variablen, untersucht (z.B. Dribe/Stanfors 2009; Baxter et al. 2008; Cunningham 2007; Marshall 2006; Künzler et al. 2001). Als relevant erwiesen sich dabei vor allem die Variablen Alter, Bildungsniveau, die Erwerbstätigkeit der Frau, die Dauer der Beziehung und das Vorhandensein von Kindern.

Auffallend ist, dass die subjektiven Bewertungen der Partner eine oft vernachlässigte Variable bei der Erforschung der Gründe für eine ungleiche oder egalitäre Verteilung der Hausarbeit darstellen, was möglicherweise eine Erklärung für paradoxe Phänomene bietet, wie z.B. den Umstand, dass eine offensichtlich ungleiche Verteilung häufig mit einer überraschend hohen Zufriedenheit in Verbindung steht (vgl. z.B. Zuo/Bian 2001). So spielt nicht nur das Faktum eine Rolle, wie die zeitlichen Ressourcen verteilt sind (Time-Availability-Ansatz), sondern vielmehr auch, ob unterschiedliche Zeitbudgets als Verteilungskriterium akzeptiert werden. Auch die Bewertung der Hausarbeit an sich spielt eine Rolle – sie stellt nicht automatisch eine ungeliebte Restgröße dar, wie es etwa handlungstheoretische Ansätze nahelegen. Die Hausfrauenrolle kann positiv konnotiert sein und als identitätsstiftend erlebt werden („Doing gender"), ebenso kann diese Rolle auch im Sinne eines „Undoing gender", einer bewussten Abgrenzung von Geschlechtsrollen (vgl. z.B. West/Fenstermaker 1995; Deutsch 2007), abgelehnt werden. Bewertungen auf unterschiedlichen Ebenen (z.B. „Hausarbeit ist Sache beider Partner"; „Hausarbeit macht Spaß"; „die Gestaltung meines häuslichen Umfeldes ist mir wichtig" etc.) führen zu unterschiedlichen „Bewertungsmustern", für die in Wechselwirkung mit den Bewertungen des Partners/der Partnerin sowie externalen Gegebenheiten (z.B. Zeitbudget) unterschiedliche Implikationen erwartet werden können.

Diese „Bewertungsmuster" bzw. „Präferenzstrukturen" stehen im Zentrum der hier vorgestellten Studie.

2. Die Studie „The glass partitioning wall“[1]

2.1 Allgemeine Beschreibung

Die Studie „The glass partitioning wall“ (Cuyvers et al. 2004) wurde im Zeitraum von Mai 2002 bis Mai 2005 unter Beteiligung des Österreichischen Instituts für Familienforschung (ÖIF) im Rahmen des Equal-Programms der Europäischen Union durchgeführt[2] und befasste sich mit der Arbeitsaufteilung von Paaren. An diesem internationalen Forschungsprojekt nahmen neben Österreich auch die Niederlande (Nederlandse Gezinsraad (Niederländischer Familienrat) – NGR) sowie Belgien (Centrum voor Bevolkings- en Gezinsstudie (Zentrum für Bevölkerungs- und Familienstudien) – CBGS) teil.

2.2 Forschungsgegenstand und Forschungsfrage

Gegenstand der Studie „The glass partitioning wall“ war die Verteilung der innerfamilialen Aufgaben Hausarbeit, Kinderbetreuung und Erwerbstätigkeit. Zentrales Anliegen dieser qualitativen Untersuchung war es, die Gründe für diese Aufgabenverteilung vor dem Hintergrund individueller bzw. paarspezifischer Überzeugungen, Interaktionsprozesse und Rahmenbedingungen zu verstehen und im Sinne eines „Bottom-up-Prozesses“ allgemeine Hypothesen über das Zustandekommen von Verteilungsmustern ableiten zu können.

Der Fokus des vorliegenden Beitrags liegt auf der Verteilung der Hausarbeit, wobei die Verteilung der Erwerbstätigkeit und der Kinderbetreuung keine davon unabhängigen Variablen darstellen, sondern als Kontextfaktoren berücksichtigt werden müssen.

2.3 Methode

Erhebung

In jedem der drei Länder wurden 40 Paare mit mindestens einem Kind unter sechs Jahren mittels qualitativer Paar-Interaktions-Interviews (vgl. unten) dazu befragt, wie sie die Erwerbstätigkeit, die Hausarbeit sowie die Kinderbetreuung untereinander aufteilen und was sich durch die Geburt des Kindes verändert hat. In Österreich wurden Paare aus den (östlichen) Bundesländern Wien und Niederösterreich befragt. Die Stichprobenziehung erfolgte nach dem Schneeballsystem, die eigentliche Auswahl der Paare orientierte sich jedoch innerhalb dessen an theoretischen Überlegungen. Um weiterführende Informationen zu den Hintergründen der Väter-Karenz[3] zu erhalten, wurde etwa großes Augenmerk auf die Einbeziehung von „Karenz-Vätern“ gelegt.

1 Vom Projektleiter kreierte Wortneuschöpfung in Anlehnung an den Begriff der „glass ceiling“ (gläsernen Decke) zur Beschreibung einer unsichtbaren, jedoch schwer zu überwindenden Barriere im Zusammenhang mit dem Geschlecht

2 Referenznummer: NL-2001/EQG/0004

3 In Österreich: Beurlaubung von Vätern anlässlich der Geburt ihres Kindes.

Im Verlaufe der Befragung kamen insgesamt drei unterschiedliche Erhebungsinstrumente zur Anwendung, die sich gegenseitig ergänzten. In einem *Fragebogen* wurden neben der Erfassung einiger sozialstatistischer Daten spezifische Fragen zur in der Partnerschaft praktizierten Arbeitsteilung gestellt. Darüber hinaus wurden generelle Einstellungen zur Erwerbstätigkeit und zur Aufgabenteilung in Partnerschaften sowie hinsichtlich politischer Maßnahmen zur Vereinbarkeit von Familie und Erwerbsarbeit abgefragt. Ein weiteres Erhebungsinstrument bildete ein sogenannter *Q-Sort (Question-Sort).* Hier waren die Partner aufgefordert, eine individuelle Rangreihung aus insgesamt 32 unterschiedlichen Fragen (bzw. Aussagen) vorzunehmen. Die gemeinsame Befragung beider Partner im Rahmen eines *Paar-Interaktions-Interviews* (zur Methode vgl. Kalle et al. 2000) bildete den wesentlichen Teil der Untersuchung. Ziel dieser Befragungsform ist es, eine Diskussion zwischen den Partnern anzuregen, wobei unter anderem auch unterschiedliche bzw. widersprechende Antwortmuster aus den vorangehenden Einzelbefragungen – hier Fragebogen und Q-Sort – in die Debatte eingebracht werden.

Für das Paarinterview dienten folgende Fragen als Orientierung für den/die Interviewer(in):

1. Wie sind die Aufgaben (hinsichtlich Hausarbeit, Kinderbetreuung und Erwerbsarbeit) in der Partnerschaft aktuell verteilt und wie war die Verteilung vor der Geburt des ersten Kindes gestaltet?
2. Welche Gründe werden für diese Verteilung angeführt?
3. Wie ist das Paar zu dieser Verteilung gekommen, gab es Konflikte, etc.?
4. Gab es eine Festlegung bezüglich der Aufgabenteilung?
5. Wenn ja: welche, bzw. wie und warum wurde diese getroffen?
6. Gab es Veränderungen durch das Kind im Vergleich zur Situation davor?
7. Unterschiede aus Fragebogen und Q-Sort: Wo stimmen die Antworten der Partner gut, wo weniger gut oder gar nicht überein?

Auswertung

Alle Interviews wurden auf Tonband aufgezeichnet und im Anschluss daran transkribiert. Zur Analyse der Transkripte wurde ein elaboriertes Codierschema entwickelt, mit Hilfe dessen es möglich war, in einem mehrstufigen Prozess die relevanten Informationen z.B. hinsichtlich der praktizierten Verteilung der Aufgaben oder den Begründungen dafür aus den Interviews (sowie Fragebogen und Q-Sort) herauszufiltern. Zu diesem Zweck wurden die Interviews in Einzelaussagen gesplittet, die einerseits nach Aufgabenbereich (Hausarbeit, Kinderbetreuung, Erwerbsarbeit), andererseits nach Aussagetypus (z.B. Aussage zur Verteilung der Aufgaben, Aussage zur Begründung für die Verteilung) sortiert wurden.

Ein Schwerpunkt der Studie lag in der Identifikation der Gründe für die Verteilung. Die aus den Interviews abgeleiteten Gründe, die entweder wörtlichen Zitaten entsprachen (selbstberichtete Gründe) oder aus den Aussagen indirekt erschlossen werden konnten, ließen sich vier Kategorien zuordnen, die sich im Forschungsverlauf herauskristallisierten. Bei den internalen Gründen konnten so genannte „psychosoziale“ Gründe (PS), wie z.B. Vorlieben und Abneigungen, von „ethischen“ Gründen („legal/ethical“ – LE), wie übergeordneten Wertvorstellungen, unterschieden werden. Auf externaler Ebene spielten

neben (in Bezug auf die Verteilung der Hausarbeit eher untergeordneten) materiellen/ökonomischen Ursachen (ME) vor allem situationsbezogene Gründe (SI), wie z.B. das unterschiedliche Zeitbudget der Partner, eine Rolle.

Neben den von den Partnern vorgebrachten Begründungen für die Aufgabenverteilung war für die vorliegende Studie besonders der Interaktionsaspekt von Bedeutung. Es wurden drei Interaktions-Kategorien, nämlich explizite vs. implizite Interaktion, Konflikthaftigkeit sowie Dominanz/Zurückhaltung hinsichtlich der Gestaltung der Interaktion kodiert, wobei unterschieden wurde, ob die jeweilige Interaktion einen Bezug zu spezifischen Aufgaben (z.B. Bügeln) aufwies oder die Aufgabenverteilung generell betraf.

2.4 Ergebnisse

Einige zentrale Ergebnisse der Studie

Die Analyse des umfangreichen Datenmaterials lieferte eine Fülle interessanter Ergebnisse, die hier jedoch nicht in aller Ausführlichkeit dargestellt werden können.[4] An dieser Stelle sollen primär jene Ergebnisse präsentiert werden, die unmittelbare Relevanz für das im Anschluss dargestellte Präferenzstrukturmodell besitzen.

Vorangestellt seien einige statistische Hintergrunddaten: Das Durchschnittsalter betrug bei den Frauen 33, bei den Männern 35 Jahre. Jeweils 18 Paare (45%) hatten ein bzw. zwei Kinder, die übrigen drei oder mehr. Es handelte es sich um eine verhältnismäßig hoch gebildete Stichprobe: Bei 25 Paaren hatte mindestens ein Partner einen Hochschulabschluss vorzuweisen. Die Hälfte der Frauen und 65% der Männer waren der Gruppe der unselbständig Erwerbstätigen zuzurechnen. 45% der insgesamt 37 erwerbstätigen Männer, jedoch keine einzige der 24 erwerbstätigen Frauen gaben eine Arbeitszeit von mehr als 40 Stunden pro Woche zu Protokoll. Teilzeiterwerbstätigkeit war bei den Frauen der Stichprobe erwartungsgemäß weit verbreitet: Bei 19 von 24 Frauen überschritt die Wochenarbeitszeit nicht die 30-Stunden-Grenze. Insgesamt zwölf Frauen, aber auch drei Männer befanden sich zum Befragungszeitpunkt in Karenz. Weitere neun Väter waren bereits in Karenz gewesen oder hatten diese bereits fixiert.

In Hinblick auf die Verteilung der Hausarbeit zeigte sich klar der erwartete und in vielen Studien – z.B. Baxter et al. (2008); Schulz/Blossfeld (2010) – bestätigte Traditionalisierungseffekt durch die Geburt des (ersten) Kindes. Während 25 Paare nach eigenen Angaben eine „egalitäre“ oder „eher egalitäre“ Verteilung vor der Geburt des ersten Kindes praktizierten (sieben Paare hatten zu diesem Zeitpunkt noch keinen gemeinsamen Haushalt), trifft dies zum Zeitpunkt der Erhebung nur auf 16 Paare zu.

Als Hauptgrund für die Verteilung der Hausarbeit wurden Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten genannt. 28 Paare beschrieben dies explizit als „Verteilungskriterium“. Betrachtet man nun jene 27 Fälle, bei denen die Frau nach der Geburt des Kindes (zumindest vorübergehend) den überwiegenden Teil der Hausarbeit übernommen hat, so wurde zumeist damit argumentiert, dass die Frau mehr Zeit zur Verfügung hat(te). In den Interviews kamen jedoch auch zahlreiche Begründungen dafür, dass die Frau generell mehr Hausarbeit

4 Für eine detaillierte Darstellung vgl. Buchebner-Ferstl/Rille-Pfeiffer (2008).

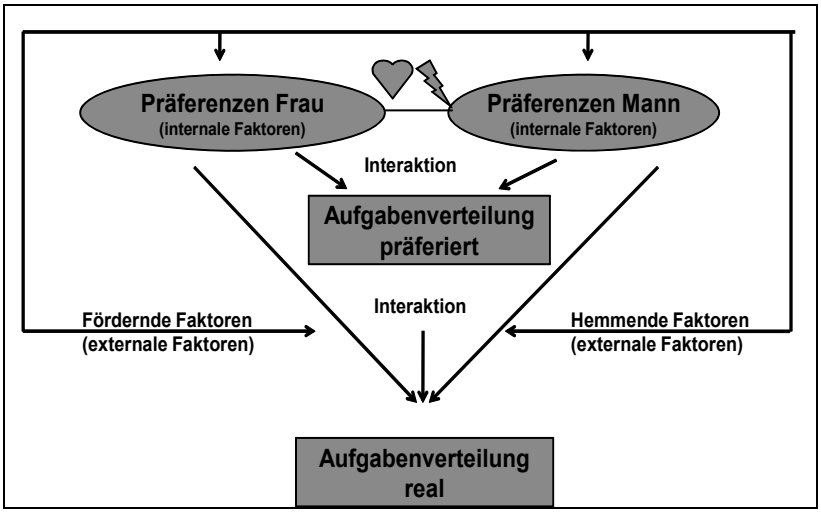
übernimmt, zur Sprache. Diese waren ausschließlich auf persönlicher Ebene (PS – psychosocial reasons) angesiedelt. Eine wesentliche Ursache lag darin, dass sich die Frau häufig mehr für den Haushalt verantwortlich fühlte (23 Paare). 12 Paare gaben darüber hinaus an, dass der Mann eine „höhere Schmutztoleranz" habe bzw. er niedrigere Ansprüche an den Haushalt stelle als die Frau. Eine Rolle spielte zuweilen auch der Umstand, dass der Mann bestimmte Aufgaben einfach verweigerte oder dass es der Frau nichts ausmachte, mehr zu tun. Einige wenige Frauen argumentierten, sie seien „so erzogen worden", dass die Frau den größeren Anteil des Haushalts übernehme.

Die Verteilung der Hausarbeit hatte sich beim Großteil der Paare (29 von 40) „so ergeben", war also implizit erfolgt. Bei gut der Hälfte der Paare (21) erfolgten Debatten über die Verteilung hauptsächlich anlassbezogen und in Bezug auf spezifische Aufgaben, wie z.B. das Aufräumen. Auch wenn sich beide Partner grundsätzlich über die Wichtigkeit einer egalitären Verteilung der Hausarbeit einig waren, so war es dennoch auffallend häufig oft die Frau, die darüber entschied, was, wann, wie und wie oft zu tun ist, während der Mann eher den reaktiven Part einnahm. Die höhere Kompetenz der Frau wurde häufig unausgesprochen als gegeben angenommen.

Entscheidungsprozessmodell zur Verteilung der Hausarbeit

Auf Basis der für Österreich vorliegenden Daten des Projekts erfolgte eine vertiefte Auseinandersetzung mit dem Aspekt der Hausarbeit, die in der Entwicklung eines innovativen Erklärungsansatzes hinsichtlich der Verteilung von Hausarbeitstätigkeiten mündete (vgl. Buchebner-Ferstl/Rille-Pfeiffer 2008; Buchebner-Ferstl 2005a). Im Verlauf der Studie kristallisierte sich ein Entscheidungsprozessmodell heraus, welches in Abbildung 1 grafisch dargestellt ist.

Abbildung 1: Entscheidungsprozessmodell bzgl. der Verteilung der Hausarbeit



Quelle: eigene Darstellung

Den Ausgangspunkt des Modells – und gleichzeitig die Basis für die Identifizierung von „Paartypen“ (siehe weiter unten) – bilden internale Faktoren, so genannte Präferenzen. Wünsche, Meinungen, Rollenbilder, Kompetenzzuschreibungen etc. manifestieren sich als individuelle Vorstellungen, auf welche Weise die Verteilung sowie die konkrete Durchführung gestaltet sein soll und wer in welchem Ausmaß für welche Aufgaben Verantwortung trägt. Viele dieser Präferenzen werden in den Interviews explizit als „psychosoziale“ (PS) oder „ethische“ (LE) Gründe sichtbar.

Die unterschiedlichen Präferenzen der Partner können nun zueinander in Konflikt stehen oder nicht. Im Idealfall ergänzen sich die Partner hinsichtlich ihrer Präferenzen und finden zu einer Aufgabenverteilung, die von beiden präferiert wird („Aufgabenverteilung präferiert“). Die „äußeren Umstände“, d.h. die externalen Faktoren, die in den Interviews als situationsbezogene (SI) sowie materiell/ökonomische (ME) Gründe zutage treten, modifizieren naturgemäß die gewünschte Verteilung, was folglich zu einer „Aufgabenverteilung real“ führt.

Doch auch wenn kein Konsens besteht, also keine „Paarpräferenzen“ zustande kommen, gelangt das Paar schließlich unter dem Einfluss externaler Faktoren zu einer faktischen Verteilung der Hausarbeit – je nachdem, wessen Präferenzen durch die Umstände größere Förderung oder Hemmung erfahren.

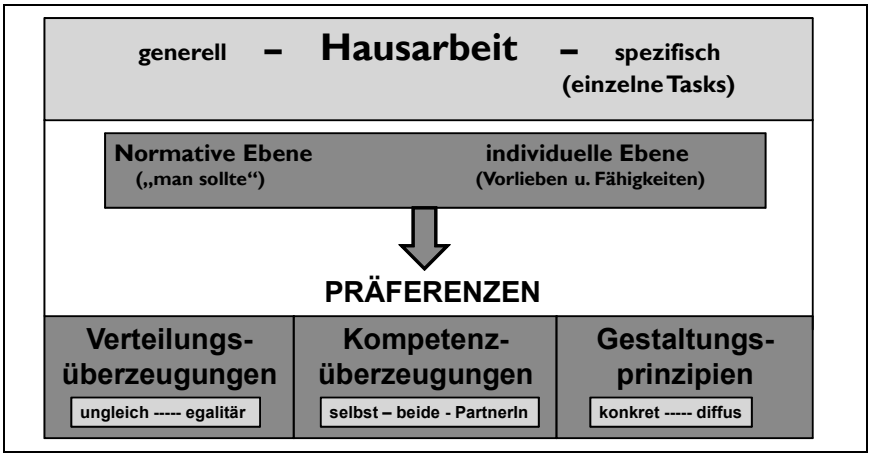
Zu berücksichtigen ist im Übrigen auch, dass die externalen Faktoren auch Einfluss auf die ursprünglichen Präferenzen ausüben können, indem sie z.B. die Prioritäten einzelner Präferenzen verändern. Die Ergebnisse geben aber auch Anlass zu der Vermutung, dass die Umstände, d.h. die externalen Faktoren, maßgeblich von den Präferenzstrukturen beeinflusst werden. Die meisten Paare machen etwa eine Gleichverteilung der Hausarbeit vom individuellen Zeitbudget abhängig. Paare mit auf Egalität ausgerichteten Präferenzstrukturen scheinen dabei aber offenbar auch eher ein ähnlicheres Zeitbudget anzustreben als Paare mit traditionellen Präferenzstrukturen.

Drei Dimensionen von Präferenzen: Verteilungsüberzeugungen, Kompetenzüberzeugungen und Gestaltungsprinzipien

Die Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass die im Entscheidungsmodell ausgewiesenen „Präferenzen“, d.h., jene internalen Faktoren, die in der Studie als „psychosocial (PS)“ oder „legal/ethical (LE) reasons“ in Erscheinung traten, die zentralen Bestimmungsfaktoren für die Verteilung der Hausarbeit darstellen. Wesentlich ist, dass die Präferenzen von Mann und Frau jeweils drei relevante Dimensionen umfassen. Dabei handelt es sich um *Verteilungsüberzeugungen, Kompetenzüberzeugungen sowie Gestaltungsprinzipien*. In Abbildung 2 sind diese Präferenzstrukturen im Paarkontext dargestellt.

Jeder der drei relevanten Bereiche (Verteilungs- bzw. Kompetenzüberzeugungen sowie Gestaltungsprinzipien) kann einerseits auf den Haushalt generell und andererseits auf spezifische Einzelaufgaben (Bügeln, Kochen, etc.) bezogen werden. Zwischen generellen und spezifischen Einstellungen können beträchtliche Unterschiede bestehen. Wird zum Beispiel auf quantitativer Ebene eine egalitäre Verteilung angestrebt, so können die einzelnen Aufgaben durchaus sehr geschlechtsspezifisch verteilt sein.

Abbildung 2: Die drei Dimensionen der Präferenzstruktur



Quelle: eigene Darstellung

Bestimmt werden diese (generellen und spezifischen) Überzeugungen vorwiegend durch gesellschaftliche Normen („Männer sind dafür besser geeignet“ etc.) sowie individuelle Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten („diese Aufgabe macht mir Spaß“ etc.), die auch häufig Hand in Hand gehen.

Unter *Verteilungsüberzeugungen* fallen Meinungen und Einstellungen, wie die Aufteilung gestaltet werden soll und welche Einflussfaktoren, wie z.B. unterschiedliches Zeitbudget, Krankheit, Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten etc., als modifizierende Variablen akzeptiert werden. Als Beispiele können angeführt werden:

– „Es ist gerecht, dass die Person, die mehr Zeit hat, auch mehr im Haushalt tut“ (generell, normative Ebene).
– „Bei uns bügelt der, der es am besten kann“ (spezifisch, individuelle Ebene).

Kompetenzüberzeugungen bestimmen das Ausmaß der Kompetenz, das man sich selbst bzw. dem/der Partner(in) zuschreibt. Ein weiterer Aspekt berührt die Frage der Verantwortlichkeit: Inwieweit werden Haushaltsagenden dem eigenen Kompetenzbereich bzw. dem des Partners/der Partnerin zugeordnet. Maßgeblich ist vor allem das eingeschätzte Verhältnis von eigener und Partner(innen)-Kompetenz. Beispiele für Aussagen, die Kompetenzüberzeugungen offenbaren:

– „Frauen können einfach besser einen Haushalt führen“ (generell, normative Ebene).
– „Es ist meine Aufgabe, dafür zu sorgen, dass die Wäsche gemacht wird“ (spezifisch, individuelle Ebene).

Gestaltungsprinzipien bezeichnen konkrete Vorstellungen über die Art und Weise der Durchführung. Beispiele wären etwa:

– „Ich will, dass das Wohnzimmer jeden zweiten Tag gesaugt wird“ (spezifisch, individuelle Ebene).
– „Ein Haushalt muss ordentlich sein“ (generell, normative Ebene).

Die Gründe für die Verteilung der Hausarbeit vor dem Hintergrund der individuellen Präferenzstrukturen

Besonders hervorzuheben ist der Umstand, dass alle als Begründung für eine Gleich- oder Ungleichverteilung der Hausarbeit in den Interviews in Erscheinung tretenden Aussagen (mindestens) einer der drei Kategorien (Verteilungs- und Kompetenzüberzeugungen sowie Gestaltungsprinzipien) zugeordnet werden konnten. D.h., es wurden die persönlich relevanten Kriterien für die Verteilung dargelegt („Ich mache mehr, weil ich mehr Zeit habe"; „Das ist, weil er lieber kocht als ich" etc.), unterschiedliche oder ähnliche Kompetenzen direkt thematisiert oder indirekt beispielsweise durch ein stärkeres „Sich-Verantwortlich-Fühlen" ausgedrückt sowie unterschiedliche Kriterien für die Durchführung (Sorgfalt, Häufigkeit etc.) angesprochen.

Insgesamt zeigte sich, dass offenbar Verteilungsprinzipien die wichtigste Position einnehmen. Dabei spielt es eine zentrale Rolle, welchen Einfluss auf die Verteilung die Partner den individuellen Zeitbudgets zugestehen, d.h., ob unterschiedliche Zeitbudgets eine ungleiche Verteilung rechtfertigen.

Die generelle Ebene, d.h. die Einstellung, ob die Hausarbeit prinzipiell egalitär aufgeteilt werden solle oder z.B. „reine Frauensache" sei, bildet die Grundlage für alles Weitere. Die Ablehnung einer egalitären Verteilung durch einen oder beide Partner lässt eine solche von vorneherein als unwahrscheinlich erscheinen. Auf spezifischer Ebene, also in Hinblick auf die einzelnen Aufgaben, kann insbesondere im Bereich der Haushaltsführung die sehr häufig genannte Aufteilung nach Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit zu einer (auch zeitlich) höchst ungleichen Verteilung führen, die dennoch nicht unbedingt als ungerecht erlebt werden muss.[5] Die „Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten" der Frauen betreffen häufiger zeitintensive Tätigkeiten, die sehr oft durchgeführt werden müssen, während die klassische Männerdomäne „Reparaturarbeiten" im Regelfall keine Dauerbeschäftigung darstellt.

Die beiden anderen Präferenzdimensionen, nämlich Kompetenzüberzeugungen und Gestaltungsprinzipien, treten gleichsam als modifizierende Variablen in Erscheinung. Sind etwa die Ansprüche der Frau an die Gestaltung der Haushaltsaufgaben höher, steigt die Wahrscheinlichkeit für eine eher traditionelle Verteilung, wie die folgende Aussage illustriert:

> Frau: „Ich brauche einen gewissen Grundlevel an Ordnung, damit ich mich organisieren kann, und ich habe dann das Gefühl gehabt, ich sitze am kürzeren Ast. Nämlich der, der ordentlich ist, oder der, der es ordentlich braucht, der muss immer dafür sorgen, dass es so ist, während der andere schnell einmal alles fallen lässt" (Interview 8, S. 2)

Überzeugungen, die der Frau eine grundsätzlich höhere Kompetenz in Haushaltsdingen zubilligen, begünstigen in ähnlicher Weise eine traditionelle Verteilung. In den Interviews drückte sich dies etwa in Aussagen von Frauen aus wie „Ich mache es lieber selbst, dann ist es wenigstens ordentlich gemacht". Auf der anderen Seite kann die Überzeugung, selbst kompetenter zu sein als der Partner oder die Partnerin, die zumeist mit rigiden

5 Zu Ungerechtigkeitswahrnehmungen und sozialen Konflikten bezüglich der Verteilung von Haushalt und Kinderbetreuung vergleiche auch Mikula/Freudenthaler (1999)

Gestaltungsprinzipien einhergeht, diesem bzw. dieser die Bereitschaft zur Beteiligung gleichsam „austreiben“:

> Mann: „Die Arbeit zu machen, zu putzen, ist nicht das Problem, sondern, dass ich so putze, wie sie es will, das ist das Problem. Wenn ich irgendwas mache und ich sehe, sie macht es zwei Minuten später auch noch einmal, das ist natürlich, ja, dann mache ich es einfach nicht mehr. Dann sind halt solche Sachen, gewisse Sachen kann ein Mann nicht so machen wie eine Frau“ (Interview 34, S. 2)

In Hinblick auf die Verteilung der Hausarbeit konnten in der untersuchten Stichprobe oftmals Veränderungen über die Zeit festgestellt werden.[6] Diese hingen eng mit den jeweiligen Zeitbudgets der Partner zusammen, die bei den meisten Paaren bei der Verteilung der Hausarbeit Berücksichtigung fanden und die wiederum durch die Verteilung der Erwerbstätigkeit bestimmt wurden. Dass die Verteilung der Hausarbeit jedoch nicht völlig synchron mit dem Zeitbudget einherging, stand wiederum mit den drei Präferenzbereichen Verteilungsüberzeugungen, Kompetenzüberzeugungen und Gestaltungsprinzipien in Zusammenhang. Schrieben etwa die Partner der Frau eine höhere Kompetenz in Haushaltsangelegenheiten zu, hatte dies häufig zur Folge, dass die Frau mehr Aufgaben übernahm, als es dem individuellen Zeitbudget nach zu erwarten gewesen wäre. Für die konkrete Verteilung von Haushaltsaufgaben scheint also zusammenfassend ein Wechselspiel zwischen individuellen bzw. paarbezogenen Präferenzen und externalen Faktoren, allen voran das Zeitbudget, ausschlaggebend zu sein.

Die Interaktion der Paare vor dem Hintergrund der individuellen Präferenzstrukturen

Bedeutsam erscheint die in der Studie auffällig oft berichtete geringe Konflikthäufigkeit, was darauf hinweist, dass zumeist Paare mit komplementärer Präferenzstruktur zueinander finden bzw. eine dauerhafte Beziehung eingehen, die die Gründung einer Familie beinhaltet. Umgekehrt kann vermutet werden, dass Partnerschaften, die durch sehr unterschiedliche Präferenzstrukturen gekennzeichnet sind, aufgrund des ihnen innewohnenden Konfliktpotenzials wahrscheinlich weniger stabil und von kürzerer Dauer sind.

In den Interviews waren Konflikte und Unstimmigkeiten vorwiegend auf eine Differenz hinsichtlich der Gestaltungsprinzipien zurückzuführen. Unterschiedliche Ansprüche an die Haushaltsführung (in Hinblick auf Sauberkeit, Ordnung, Aufwand etc.) im Allgemeinen sowie hinsichtlich der „richtigen“ Durchführung einzelner Aufgaben gaben bei den meisten Paaren zumindest gelegentlich Anlass zu Diskussionen.

Die Identifikation von Paartypen

Auf Individuumsebene war es nun von besonderem Interesse, in welchem Verhältnis die drei Überzeugungsebenen zueinander standen. Dabei zeigte sich, dass in vielen Fällen die individuellen Präferenzstrukturen mit jenen des Partners oder der Partnerin gleichsam „kompatibel“ waren und sich folglich eine gemeinsame Präferenzstruktur des Paares herausbildete. Es ließen sich somit nicht nur auf der Ebene des Individuums, sondern auch auf Paarebene typische Muster und Tendenzen, sozusagen „psychologische Strukturen“ identifizieren, die die Bildung von „Paartypen“ ermöglichten.

6 Die InterviewpartnerInnen wurden explizit zu Veränderungen – v.a. im Zusammenhang mit der Geburt des ersten Kindes – befragt.

In der Studie konnten vier Paartypen auf einem Kontinuum mit den Endpunkten „traditionell“ und „egalitär“ erkannt werden, die jeweils durch eine spezifische Konstellation hinsichtlich der Präferenzen gekennzeichnet waren: traditionell, traditionell orientiert, egalitär orientiert, egalitär. So unterschieden sich beispielsweise traditionell orientierte Paare von traditionellen lediglich hinsichtlich der Verteilungsprinzipien, nämlich insofern, als sie das individuelle Zeitbudget der Partner berücksichtigten. Egalitär orientierte und egalitäre Paare wiederum gestanden den Partnern ähnliche Kompetenzen und Verantwortlichkeiten zu und waren durch eine höhere Kompromissbereitschaft hinsichtlich der Gestaltungsprinzipien gekennzeichnet als traditionelle und traditionell orientierte Paare. Gleichzeitig unterschieden sich die beiden egalitären Gruppen aber hinsichtlich der Verteilungsprinzipien (Berücksichtigung des Zeitbudgets nur bei egalitär orientierten) und der Kompetenzüberzeugungen (bei den egalitären auch auf spezifischer Ebene egalitär) voneinander.

In der nachfolgenden Tabelle sind die vier Paartypen, die in der Folge genauer beschrieben werden, im Überblick dargestellt.

Tabelle 1: Präferenzstrukturen unterschiedlicher Paartypen in Bezug auf die Haushaltsführung

Kontinuum		Verteilungsüberzeugungen	Kompetenzüberzeugungen	Gestaltungsprinzipien
	Traditionelles Paar	Auf genereller wie spezifischer Ebene gemäß den traditionellen Geschlechterrollen; auf genereller Ebene wenig Berücksichtigung des individuellen Zeitbudgets	Auf genereller Ebene höhere Kompetenz der Frau; hinsichtlich spezifischer Aufgaben gemäß den traditionellen Geschlechterrollen	Auf genereller wie spezifischer Ebene zumeist konkretere Gestaltungsprinzipien der Frau; höhere Ansprüche der Frau
	Traditionell orientiertes Paar	Auf genereller Ebene egalitäre Verteilungsüberzeugung unter Berücksichtigung des individuellen Zeitbudgets; auf spezifischer Ebene gemäß den traditionellen Geschlechterrollen	Auf genereller Ebene höhere Kompetenz der Frau; hinsichtlich spezifischer Aufgaben gemäß den traditionellen Geschlechterrollen	Auf genereller wie spezifischer Ebene zumeist konkretere Gestaltungsprinzipien der Frau; höhere Ansprüche der Frau
	Egalitär orientiertes Paar	Auf genereller Ebene egalitär, aber unter Berücksichtigung des individuellen Zeitbudgets; auf spezifischer Ebene häufig Tendenz zu traditionellen Geschlechterrollen	Auf genereller Ebene egalitäre Kompetenzüberzeugungen; auf spezifischer Ebene häufig Tendenz zu traditionellen Geschlechterrollen	Ähnliche konkrete (oder diffuse) Gestaltungsprinzipien; maximale Bereitschaft, Gestaltungsprinzipien des Partners/der Partnerin zu akzeptieren
	Egalitäres Paar	Auf genereller wie spezifischer Ebene egalitär; auf genereller Ebene wenig Berücksichtigung des individuellen Zeitbudgets	Auf genereller wie auf spezifischer Ebene egalitäre Kompetenzüberzeugungen	Ähnliche konkrete (oder diffuse) Gestaltungsprinzipien; maximale Bereitschaft, Gestaltungsprinzipien des Partners/der Partnerin zu akzeptieren

Quelle: eigene Darstellung

Von 40 Paaren ließen sich 37 ganz klar jeweils einem der vier Typen zuordnen. Dabei ergab sich deutlich Anlass zu der Vermutung, dass die Wahrscheinlichkeit für eine bestimmte Verteilung ebenso wie die Art und Weise der Interaktion in Zusammenhang mit der Zugehörigkeit zu einem dieser Typen steht. Es ergibt sich die in Tabelle 2 präsentierte Verteilung:

Tabelle 2: Verteilung der Paartypen in der Stichprobe[7]

Paartypen	Verteilung
Traditionelle Paare	2,5% (1 Paar)
Traditionell orientierte Paare	62,5% (25 Paare); davon 35% (14 Paare) mit Hinweisen auf unterschiedliche Organisationsprinzipien (Konflikte und/oder höhere Ansprüche der Frau) und 27,5% (11 Paare) ohne entsprechende Hinweise.
Egalitär orientierte Paare	27,5% (11 Paare)
Egalitäre Paare	2,5% (1 Paar)
Nicht eindeutig zuordenbar	7,5% (3 Paare)

Quelle: eigene Darstellung

Es zeigt sich, dass der Typus des „traditionell orientierten Paares" klar überwiegt. Nahezu zwei Drittel lassen sich diesem Typ zuordnen. Nur jeweils ein einziges Paar in der Stichprobe konnte eindeutig als „traditionelles Paar" bzw. „egalitäres Paar" ausgewiesen werden.

2.4.1 Traditionelle Paare: Hausarbeit ist Frauensache

Traditionelle Paare zeichnen sich generell durch den Umstand aus, dass mindestens einer der Partner der Meinung ist, Hausarbeit sei Frauensache. Die Ansprüche an die Haushaltsführung sind seitens der Frau zumeist sehr hoch und häufig höher als die des Partners. Die „naturgegebene" größere weibliche Kompetenz für den Haushalt wird im „Idealfall" von beiden Partnern kaum in Frage gestellt. Bei als „männlich" definierten Aufgaben wie Reparaturarbeiten wird dem Mann sehr wohl die (alleinige) Kompetenz zugestanden; die „klassischen" Haushaltsaufgaben sind aber fast ausschließlich Domäne der Frau. Typisch ist auch, dass der Einfluss des Zeitbudgets negiert wird, was bedeutet, dass auch bei gleichem Zeitbudget oder sogar bei größerem Zeitbudget des Mannes die Frau den überwiegenden Teil des Haushalts übernimmt. Auf diese Charakteristika wird häufig bei „Hausfrauenehepaaren" verwiesen (z.B. Dierks 1997), sie konnten aber etwa bei Buchebner-Ferstl (2005b) auch bei anderen Konstellationen (z.B. Mann im Ruhestand, Frau mehr als 40 Stunden pro Woche selbständig erwerbstätig) aufgefunden werden.

Konflikte sind vorprogrammiert, wenn nicht beide Partner von der generellen Zuständigkeit und größeren Kompetenz der Frau überzeugt sind oder der Mann abweichende Gestaltungsprinzipien einbringen will. Bezieht einer der Partner auch das Zeitbudget mit ein, so kommt es darauf an, wie dieses strukturiert ist. Ein subjektiv erlebter Rechtfertigungs- und eventuell Handlungsbedarf können sich ergeben, wenn der Mann, z.B. aufgrund seiner Pensionierung, über das größere Zeitbudget verfügt (vgl. Buchebner-Ferstl 2005b).

7 Die Gesamtzahl von 41 Paaren ergibt sich aus dem Umstand, dass ein Paar zwei unterschiedliche Paartypen (egalitär und egalitär orientiert - zu unterschiedlichen Zeitpunkten) repräsentiert.

2.4.2 Traditionell orientierte Paare: Der Mann als „Hilfsarbeiter“

Für die traditionell orientierten Paare ist es kennzeichnend, dass sie dem Mann den Part des „Helfers“ zuweisen, wobei jedoch fast immer das individuelle Zeitbudget berücksichtigt wird. Die Beteiligung des Mannes kann dabei als absolut notwendig angesehen werden oder auch aus „purem Zufall“ (z.B. „weil er jetzt so viel Zeit hat“) resultieren. Was die Verteilung der einzelnen Aufgaben betrifft, so gilt genauso wie für die traditionellen Paare die geschlechtsspezifische Verteilung.

Ebenso wie bei den traditionellen Paaren schreibt mindestens einer der Partner der Frau höhere Kompetenzen bezüglich der Haushaltsführung zu. Häufig ist dies die Frau. „Traditionell orientierte“ Partnerschaften können aber auch so strukturiert sein, dass Bemühungen der Frau, ihrem Mann nicht nur Pflichten, sondern auch Verantwortung zu übertragen und Kompetenz zuzugestehen, am traditionellen Denken des Mannes und einer zum Teil offen zur Schau getragenen „Kompetenzverweigerung“ scheitert. Dies entspricht der Strategie des „Sich-Dumm-Stellens“, die u.a. bereits bei HochschildMachung (1993) oder Koppetsch/Burkart (1999) Erwähnung findet.

Hohe Kompetenzzuschreibungen an die eigene Person gehen fast immer auch mit sehr konkreten Gestaltungsprinzipien einher. Dies bedeutet, dass ein Partner – in der Regel die Frau – sehr präzise Vorstellungen davon hat, wie die Haushaltsführung aussehen soll und diese Vorstellungen als bindende Norm für alle Beteiligten erachtet. So schildert etwa ein Befragter:

> Mann: „Nein es war, na ja, zwei Spülbecken, und eines zum Abtropfen, und die C. hat halt, nachdem sie in der Wohnung aufgewachsen ist, eine festgelegte Vorstellung gehabt, wo was zu stehen hat und wie was gemacht wird, und ich habe schon allein, vielleicht weil ich Linkshänder bin, hätte ich das Ganze anders angeordnet, und bis wir da einen Weg gefunden haben, der beiden passt, das war schon ein bisserl ein Lernprozess“ (Interview 11; S. 5)

Versucht der Mann, seine eigenen Vorstellungen als „ebenso richtig“ durchzusetzen, resultiert dies naturgemäß in Konflikten hinsichtlich der Gestaltungsprinzipien, die sich bei mehr als der Hälfte der traditionell orientierten Paare nachweisen ließen.

Typisch für traditionell orientierte Paare ist auch, dass die Ansprüche des Mannes häufig unter jenen der Frau angesiedelt sind. Häufiger ist dieses niedrige Anspruchsniveau bezüglich des Ordnungs- und/oder Hygienestandards im Haushalt zu finden, was sich in der viel zitierten „hohen Schmutztoleranz des Mannes“ widerspiegelt.

2.4.3 Egalitär orientierte Paare: Gleiche Verantwortung, aber nicht unbedingt gleiche Verteilung

Bei egalitär orientierten Paaren können sich – ähnlich wie bei den traditionell orientierten – recht unterschiedliche Verteilungsmuster bzgl. der Hausarbeit ergeben. Im Regelfall wird das individuelle Zeitbudget bei der Verteilung berücksichtigt. So kann bei diesen Paaren durchaus die Hausarbeit fast ausschließlich von der Frau erledigt werden, wenn ihr Zeitbudget entsprechend groß und seines entsprechend gering ist. Genauso gut ist aber auch der umgekehrte Fall denkbar.

Ein wesentliches Unterscheidungsmerkmal zu den traditionellen und traditionell orientierten Paaren liegt jedoch in den Kompetenzzuschreibungen. In dieser Konstellation wird

dem Mann keine Hilfsarbeiterposition zugewiesen. Dies kann oder wird in den meisten Fällen in gegenseitigem Einvernehmen geschehen, es kann jedoch auch vorkommen, dass der Partner/die Partnerin diese Rollenzuschreibung einfach nicht akzeptiert und sich damit durchsetzt – sei es, dass die Frau sich weigert, die Rolle der „Chefin" zu übernehmen oder dass der Mann sich erfolgreich gegen Bevormundung zur Wehr setzt. Das Resultat lautet auf jeden Fall: Gleiche Verantwortung bzw. gleiche Kompetenz, aber nicht unbedingt gleiche Verteilung.

Auf spezifischer Ebene wird dennoch zumeist eine Verteilung nach „Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten" bevorzugt, die auch hier sehr häufig den Geschlechterrollen folgt. Dies muss jedoch keinesfalls heißen, dass Aufgaben ausschließlich von einem Partner erledigt werden. Eine allenfalls vorhandene höhere Kompetenz wird jedoch nicht ausgespielt. Eng damit zusammen hängt naturgemäß eine große Freiheit hinsichtlich der Gestaltungsprinzipien: Auch, wenn ich etwas besser kann oder auch selbst anders mache, lasse ich dem/der anderen die Freiheit, Dinge auf seine/ihre Weise zu erledigen. Egalitär orientierte Paare verzichten weitgehend auf Strategien wie Bevormundung oder „Sich-Dumm-Stellen".

2.4.4 Egalitäre Paare: Konsequentes „Halbe-halbe"

Egalitäre Paare schließlich praktizieren die „echte", idealtypische, d.h. konsequenteste Form des „Halbe-Halbe", nämlich auch auf der Ebene der Einzeltätigkeiten. Es ist selbstverständlich, dass nicht nur die Arbeit, sondern auch die Verantwortung geteilt wird. Art und Häufigkeit der Durchführung müssen zwangsläufig bis zu einem gewissen Grad ausgehandelt werden, damit sichergestellt ist, dass jede Person ihren Teil erledigt. Unterschiedliche Einstellungen müssen klar artikuliert und mit dem Prinzip von Gleichheit und Gerechtigkeit in Einklang gebracht werden.

Allerdings ist zu berücksichtigen, dass „Gerechtigkeit" nicht lediglich am Zeitaufwand, sondern eher an einer Ausgewogenheit von Input und Output (subjektivem Nutzen) zu messen ist. So kann die Durchführung einer wenig zeitintensiven, jedoch besonders unangenehmen Tätigkeit als unfair empfunden werden, wenn dem Partner/der Partnerin gleichzeitig eine aufwändigere, jedoch subjektiv „angenehmere" Tätigkeit zugewiesen ist.[8] Um Konflikte zu vermeiden, sind eine gegenseitige Anpassung und ständiges Neuaushandeln unerlässlich.

Das einzige Paar der Stichprobe, das nach der Geburt des ersten Kindes versucht hat, sich an diesem Ideal der „absoluten Egalität" zu orientieren, ist damit gescheitert:

> Frau: „Also, mit dem ersten Kind haben wir ganz viel negiert, das war irgendwie, wir machen alles ganz anders, und wir sind hier ganz super, und dabei ist es uns eigentlich nicht gut gegangen".
>
> Mann: „Es ist ja immer so, dass man sagt, man macht alles zur selben Zeit fünfzig zu fünfzig, sondern es gibt Lebensabschnitte, und das denke ich mir, haben wir gelernt, wo man auch mal mehr übernehmen kann, jetzt bist du da und jetzt übernimmst du auch mehr, und dann dreht es sich vielleicht auch mal wieder um". (Interview 40, S.6 und S.10)

8 Zur Problematik der Definition von Gerechtigkeit in Paarbeziehungen vgl. Huinink/Röhler (2005).

2.5 Zusammenhang zwischen Paartyp und soziodemografischen Variablen

Wie einleitend bemerkt, ist aus der Forschungsliteratur bekannt, dass soziodemografische Variablen wie Bildung, Erwerbsausmaß, Institutionalisierungsgrad der Partnerschaft, Religiosität sowie Anzahl und Alter der Kinder bzw. der Übergang zur Elternschaft maßgeblichen Einfluss auf die Verteilung ausüben (vgl. z.B. Baxter et al. 2008; Dribe/Stanfors 2009; Schulz 2009).

Obgleich naturgemäß auf Basis der (sehr selektiven) qualitativen Stichprobe keine statistisch signifikanten Aussagen möglich sind, zeigen sich dennoch Tendenzen, die darauf hinweisen, dass nicht nur die Verteilung selbst, sondern auch die dahinterliegenden Präferenzstrukturen durch soziodemografische Merkmale der Partner zumindest mit beeinflusst sind.

Der mit dem Übergang zur Elternschaft verbundene Traditionalisierungseffekt, der sich auch in der vorliegenden Studie zeigte, wurde bereits angesprochen. So kommt es erwiesenermaßen (vgl. z.B. Hynes/Clarkberg 2005) zu einer Reduktion des weiblichen Erwerbsausmaßes in den ersten Lebensjahren des Kindes, während der männliche Partner im Allgemeinen seine Erwerbstätigkeit nicht reduziert. Diese Veränderung nimmt wiederum Einfluss auf die aktuelle Verteilung, jedoch durchaus vor dem Hintergrund unterschiedlicher Präferenzstrukturen. Während sich traditionell und egalitär orientierte Paare darin einig sind, dass „derjenige mehr tun soll, der mehr Zeit hat“ (= in geringerem Ausmaß erwerbstätig ist), bestehen große Unterschiede hinsichtlich der zugeschriebenen Kompetenzen und Verantwortlichkeiten (vgl. dazu auch das folgende Kapitel 2.5).

Auch in Hinblick auf die Bildung gibt es Anknüpfungspunkte zur vorliegenden Untersuchung. So weisen Schulz/Blossfeld (2010) darauf hin, dass die Bildungsexpansion dazu geführt hat, dass sich mit steigendem Bildungsniveau liberalere Geschlechtsrollenorientierungen – und damit auch in weiterem Sinne liberalere Präferenzstrukturen – herausgebildet haben. Der deutlich Einfluss der Schulbildung zeigt sich in der vorliegenden Studie darin, dass die drei Frauen sowie die neun Männer, die einen Realschul- oder Lehrabschluss aufweisen[9], allesamt der Gruppe der „traditionellen“ bzw. „traditionell orientierten“ Paare zuzuordnen sind und sich egalitärere Konstellationen somit auf Paare mit höherer Bildung beschränken.

Was den Institutionalisierungsgrad der Beziehung betrifft, so sind gut zwei Drittel der „traditionell orientierten“ Paare verheiratet (17 verheiratete versus 8 unverheiratete Paare). Bei den „egalitär orientierten“ Paaren ist das Verhältnis hingegen fast ausgeglichen (sechs verheiratete und fünf unverheiratete Paare). Dies weist darauf hin, dass unverheiratet zusammenlebende Paare nicht nur egalitärere Verteilungsmuster aufweisen als verheiratete (vgl. z.B. Baxter 2005), sondern dass diese ausgeprägtere Egalität auch für die dahinterliegenden Präferenzstrukturen gilt.

Auch der Grad der Religiosität geht in die erwartete Richtung[10]: rund zwei Drittel der traditionell orientierten Paare (16 von 25) bejahen die Frage „Würden Sie sich als aktives

9 Alle anderen Personen haben das Abitur oder Hochschulabschluss.

10 Studien (z.B. Heineck 2004) zeigen, dass konfessionelle Bindung und Teilnahme an religiösen Aktivitäten positiv mit traditionellen Einstellungen hinsichtlich der familiären Aufgabenverteilung korrelieren.

Mitglied einer Religionsgemeinschaft bezeichnen?“ im Fragebogen, während dies neun von elf „egalitär orientierten“ Paaren verneinen.

2.6 Diskussion des Präferenzstruktur-Modells und der Ergebnisse

Die Aussagen der befragten Paare lassen den Schluss zu, dass egalitäre Verteilungsüberzeugungen, die fordern, dass sich Männer – vor allem vor dem Hintergrund der weiblichen Erwerbstätigkeit – gleichermaßen an Haushalt (und Kinderbetreuung) beteiligen, eine gängige, kaum in Frage gestellte Norm darstellen.[11] Viele Paare bleiben aber – vor allem in Hinblick auf den Haushalt – unabhängig davon weitgehend in traditionellen Überzeugungen verhaftet und haben sich weniger weit vom traditionellen Pol geschlechtsspezifischer Rollenstrukturen entfernt, als es vielleicht auf den ersten Blick den Anschein hat. Auffallend ist, dass die Gründe für eine ungleiche, geschlechterrollenspezifische Verteilung weniger als übergeordnete Wertvorstellungen in Erscheinung treten, sondern vielmehr als individuelle Persönlichkeitseigenschaften wahrgenommen werden, die eben „zufällig“ geschlechtstypisch verteilt sind. Während „Halbe-halbe“ rein quantitativ – jedoch fast immer unter Berücksichtigung des individuellen Zeitbudgets – offenbar eine gesellschaftliche Norm darstellt, scheint für die Verteilung einzelner Aufgaben eher die Norm „nach Vorlieben und Fähigkeiten“ maßgeblich zu sein, die einem „Halbe-halbe“ zumeist bis zu einem gewissen Grad entgegensteht.

Die Ergebnisse der qualitativen Studie „The glass partitioning wall“ weisen darauf hin, dass die im Entscheidungsprozessmodell (Abbildung 1) als Präferenzen bezeichneten internalen Faktoren die zentralen Bestimmungsfaktoren für die Verteilung der Hausarbeit darstellen. Modifiziert werden sie durch äußere Umstände, gleichzeitig stehen sie jedoch in Wechselwirkung mit denselben. Um kognitive Dissonanz zu reduzieren, besteht naturgemäß das Bestreben, die Umstände auch den Einstellungen anzupassen. Die so genannten „Präferenzstrukturen“, die die internalen Faktoren darstellen, bilden dabei nicht lediglich die Verteilungsüberzeugungen der Personen ab – wie die Verteilung idealerweise gestaltet sein soll –, sondern erfassen auch zwei weitere zentrale Bestandteile der „psychologischen Struktur“ der Personen hinsichtlich der Hausarbeit, nämlich Gestaltungsprinzipien und Kompetenzüberzeugungen. Erst die Berücksichtigung dieser drei Faktoren im Paarkontext und in Wechselwirkung mit „den Umständen“ ermöglicht ein tieferes Verständnis gerade jener Verteilungsmuster, die einen Partner ganz offensichtlich benachteiligen und/oder in scheinbarem Widerspruch zu den Einstellungen der Personen stehen und dennoch mit einer hohen Zufriedenheit verknüpft sind. In diesem Sinne vermag dieses Modell Aussagen darüber zu treffen, auf welche Weise Personen kognitive Konsonanz herstellen. Darüber hinaus integriert es verschiedene theoretische Ansätze wie z.B. den Time-Availability- Ansatz, indem es berücksichtigt, welche Rolle die Partner dem individuellen Zeitbudgets beimessen. Zahlreiche Anknüpfungspunkte bestehen naturgemäß auch zur Rollentheorie – höhere weibliche Kompetenzzuschreibungen und klarere bzw. anspruchsvollere Gestaltungsprinzipien auf Seiten der Frau sind auch in erklärt egalitären Partnerschaften noch häufig als Auswirkung geschlechtsspezifischer Sozialisation inter-

11 Das mag bei anders strukturierten Personengruppen wie z.B. Pensionist(inn)enpaaren durchaus anders aussehen!

pretierbar. Auch andere empirische Ergebnisse lassen sich gut in das postulierte Modell integrieren. Poortman/van de Lippe (2009) konnten zeigen, dass eine höhere Beteiligung der Frauen an der Hausarbeit damit in Zusammenhang steht, dass Frauen diese im Allgemeinen positiver bewerten als Männer, höhere Standards haben und sich mehr für den Haushalt verantwortlich fühlen. Kompetenzüberzeugungen lassen sich als Resultat von im Laufe der Sozialisation erworbenen Handlungsroutinen (Kaufmann 1995) interpretieren, und Kaufmann verweist auch darauf, dass sich der Partner mit den „höheren Standards" hinsichtlich der Durchführung zumeist durchsetzt. Auch die von Hochschild/Machung (1993) erwähnten Strategien der Bedürfnisreduzierung oder des „Sich-Dumm-Stellens" lassen sich gut mit den Komponenten Gestaltungsprinzipien bzw. Kompetenzüberzeugungen in Verbindung setzen.

Zu betonen ist des weiteren, dass die Studie eine Zuordnung der InterviewpartnerInnen zu vier klassischen Paartypen auf einem Kontinuum von traditionell bis egalitär ermöglicht, die sich jedoch nicht auf Basis der realen Aufgabenverteilung, sondern auf der Grundlage der genannten drei Präferenzebenen voneinander unterscheiden. So kann etwa bei einer nach außen hin egalitären Verteilung dem Mann lediglich eine Hilfsarbeiterfunktion zugewiesen sein, während bei einer offensichtlich traditionellen Verteilung von gleichen Kompetenzen und Verantwortlichkeiten beider Partner ausgegangen wird und das aktuelle Zeitbudget der Partner für die Ungleichheit verantwortlich ist. Dies stellt die Begrifflichkeiten „traditionell" und „egalitär" in einen völlig neuen Kontext, der in dieser Form bisher noch nicht zur Diskussion stand.

Zuletzt bleibt noch zu erwähnen, dass in der Stichprobe rund zwei Drittel der Paare der Gruppe der traditionell Orientierten zuzuordnen war, die Präferenzen also unabhängig von der Verteilung überwiegend traditionell geprägt waren. In Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass die hochselektive Stichprobe (hohe Bildung, viele Karenzväter) ein im Vergleich zur Gesamtbevölkerung fortschrittlicheres Weltbild erwarten ließ, lässt sich vermuten, dass das Ideal der Egalität im Haushalt nach wie vor in weiter Ferne liegt. Obgleich soziodemografische Merkmale wie Bildung die Präferenzstrukturen in ähnlicher Weise zu beeinflussen scheinen wie die Verteilung selbst – hohe Bildung steht in Verbindung mit egalitäreren Einstellungen einerseits und einer egalitäreren Verteilung andererseits – zeigen die Ergebnisse dennoch, dass geschlechtsspezifische Überzeugungen etwa in Hinblick auf Kompetenzen und Verantwortlichkeiten auch bei Angehörigen hoher Bildungsschichten stärker verbreitet sind als man wohl annehmen würde.

3. Ausblick

Die in dieser Studie gewonnenen Erkenntnisse regen dazu an, im Rahmen einer quantitativen Untersuchung einen Blick auf die „gesellschaftliche Präferenzstruktur" zu werfen, d.h. vor allem auf jene Normen und Werte, die hinsichtlich der Verteilung der Haushaltstätigkeiten und der jeweiligen Kompetenzen, die Männern und Frauen in diesen Bereichen zugeschrieben werden, gegeben sind. Im Speziellen bedarf das Zusammenwirken der unterschiedlichen Präferenzstrukturen der beiden Partner noch einer genaueren Betrachtung, die eine Ausdifferenzierung und vertiefende Analyse der identifizierten Paartypen möglich machen würde. Ebenso erscheint es vielversprechend, die Zusammenhänge

und Wechselwirkungen zwischen soziodemografischen Faktoren und Rahmenbedingungen wie Bildung und Kinderzahl, den Präferenzen bzw. den daraus abgeleiteten Paartypen und der letztendlich resultierenden Verteilung einer genaueren Analyse zu unterziehen. Auf diese Weise könnten vielleicht auch Widersprüche zwischen Einstellungen und Verhalten besser erklärt und die Persistenz ungleicher Verteilungsmuster besser verstanden werden als dies bisher möglich ist.

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