



The Significance of Social Capital in the Health Behaviour of Young People

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- Summary

What is Social Capital?

- „Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition..." (Bourdieu 1986: 249)
- Social Capital „... is embodied in the relations among persons.“ and „... a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust“ (Coleman 1990: 304)
- „The basic argument, then, is that the extent to which people are embedded within their family relationships, social networks, and communities, and their sense of belonging and civic identity, constitutes ‘social capital’. This stock of ‘social capital’ in turn has an impact on health and well-being. “ (Morrow 1999: 758)

How does Social Capital work?

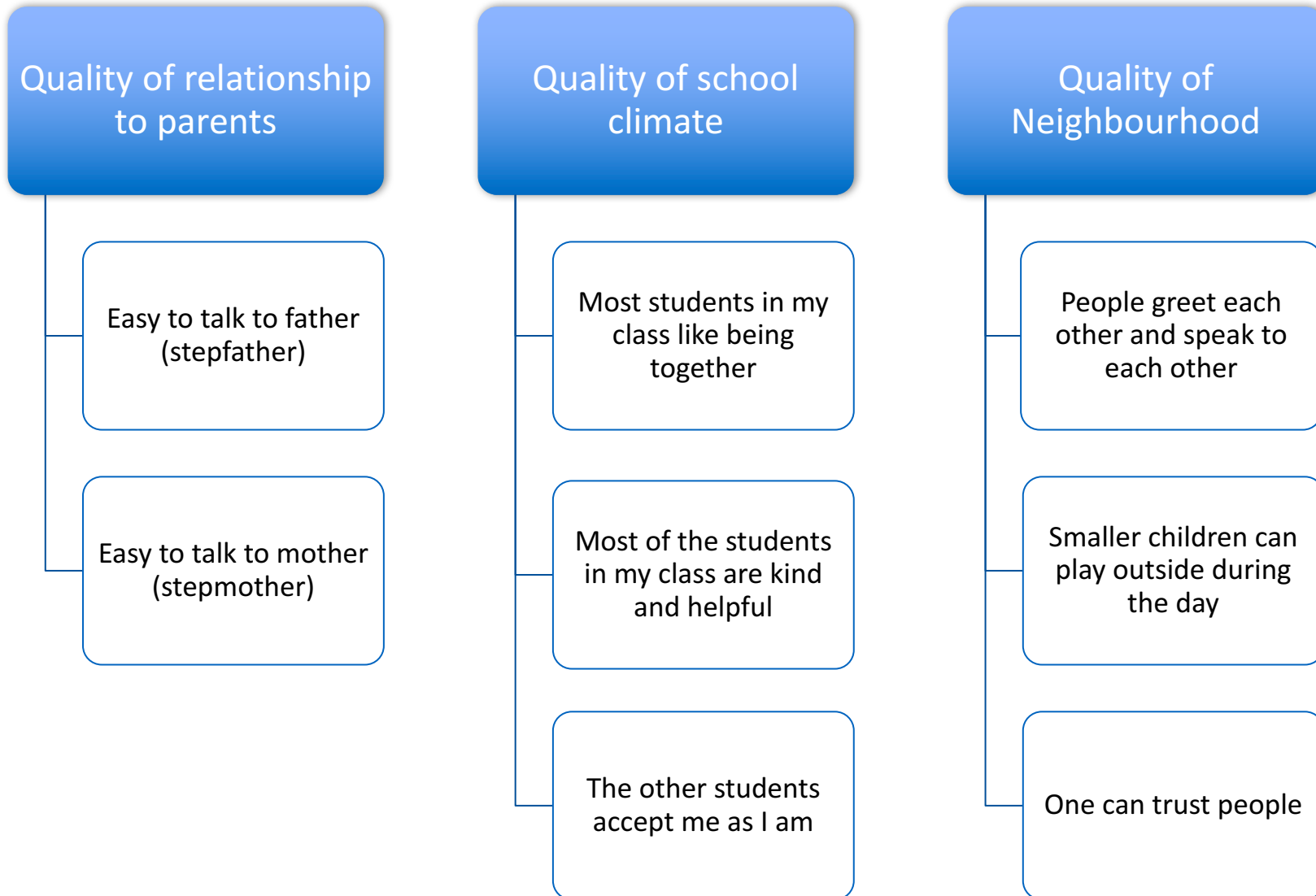
- For young people social capital can be understood as a trust-based network, which can be accessed when social support is needed:
 - "...confidence in the reliability of a person or system, regarding a given set of outcomes or events, where that confidence expresses a faith in the probity or love of another, or in the correctness of abstract principles " (Giddens 1990: 34)
- Hypothesis:
 - Children with a high volume of social capital show a better health development

Data

- Data base is the panel study "Health Behaviour and Injuries during School Age", which started on an annual cycle in the school year 2014/15 in Germany (for details see: www.fzdw.de/gus)
- The study initially surveyed students of the 5th grade (10-12 year olds), comprising 10,621 pupil

Participating only in wave 1	2,687
Participating only in wave 2	1,234
Participating only in wave 3	2,486
Participating only in wave 1 + 2	1,998
Participating only in wave 1 + 3	686
Participating only in wave 2 + 3	1,610
Participating in wave 1 + 2 + 3	5,247
total	15,948

An Index of Social Capital in Young People



An Index of Social Capital in Young People

- The aggregate index of social capital is formed by an unweighted calculation of the three components
- These components have reliability values ranging from 0.58 (Quality of relationship to parents) to 0.72 (Quality of neighbourhood) in the three panel waves
- Cronbach's alpha for the aggregate index of social capital ranges from 0.68 (wave 1) to 0.70 (wave 3)
- The index seems applicable for further analyses

Variation in Social Capital over time

The Index is standardized on a range from 0 to 10,
wave-specific means and 99%-confidence intervals

	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3
Overall volume: Social Capital	7.74 [7.70 – 7.77] n=9,061	7.46 [7.42 – 7.50] n=9,163	7.30 [7.26 – 7.33] n=9,324
Component 1: Quality of relation to parents	8.25 [8.21 – 8.30] n=9,836	7.77 [7.72 – 7.82] n=9,605	7.53 [7.48 – 7.59] n=9,716
Component 2: Quality of school climate	7.21 [7.16 – 7.26] n=10,080	7.02 [6.97 – 7.07] n=9,810	6.92 [6.87 – 6.97] n=9,788
Component 3: Quality of neighborhood	7.71 [7.66 – 7.77] n=9,457	7.59 [7.53 – 7.64] n=9,442	7.39 [7.33 – 7.44] n=9,553

- The volume of Social Capital decreases significantly over time

Variation in Social Capital within Children

	W1 → W2	W1 → W3	W2 → W3
Overall volume: Social Capital	$R^2 =$ 0.29	$R^2 =$ 0.20	$R^2 =$ 0.34
Family Affluence Scale (FAS)	$R^2 =$ 0.60	$R^2 =$ 0.51	$R^2 =$ 0.62

- The volume of Social Capital varies within children

Effects of Social Capital and FAS on Health

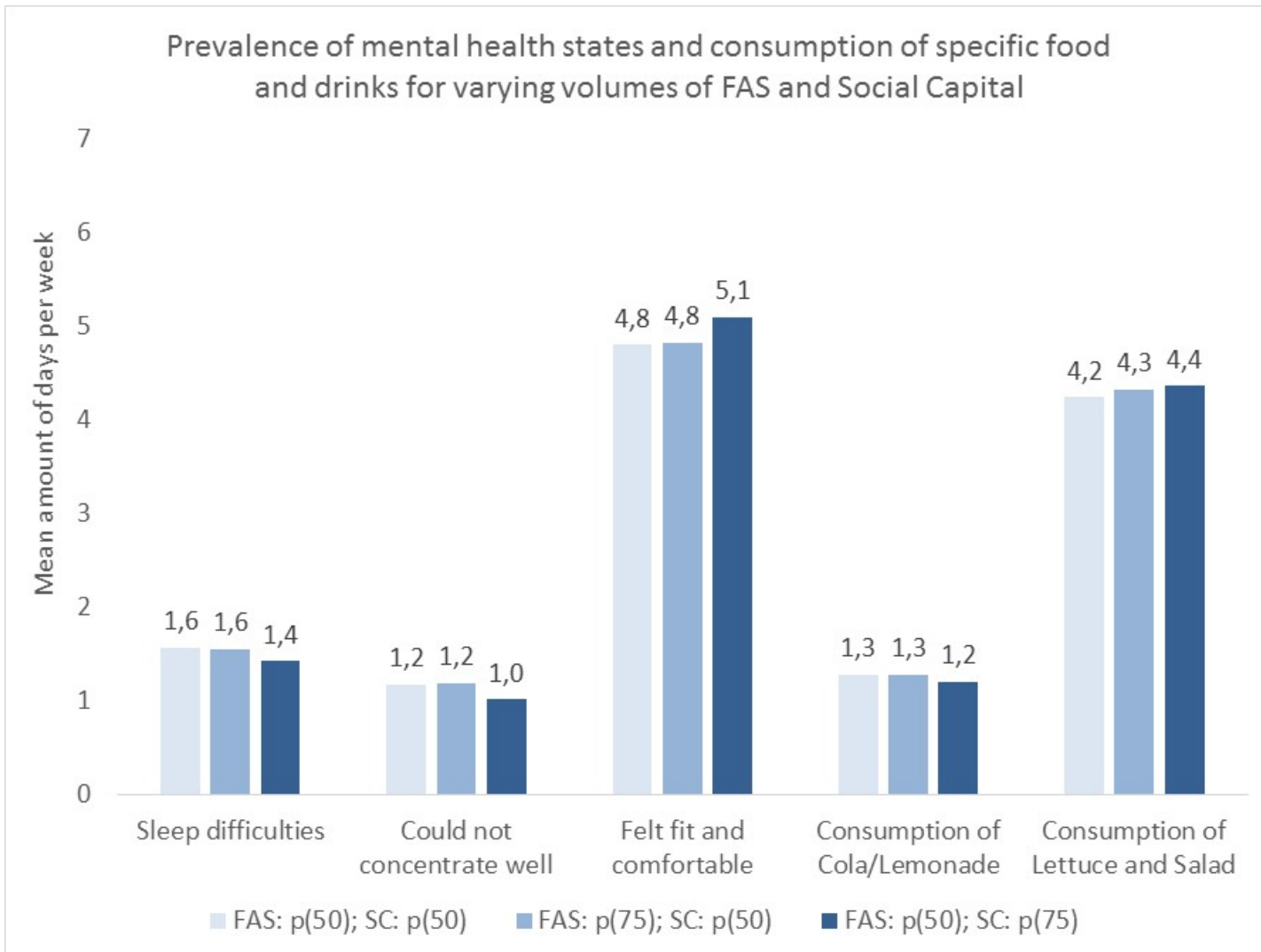
Fixed effects regression models

	Social Capital			Family affluence			Constant	
	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se
Sleep difficulties	-.164	(.018)	***	-.017	(.019)		2.94	(.202)
Could not concentrate well	-.202	(.016)	***	.013	(.016)		2.62	(.172)
Feeling fit and comfortable	.355	(.018)	***	.019	(.019)		1.94	(.196)
Consumption of Coke and Lemonade	-.091	(.015)	***	-.005	(.016)		2.01	(.170)
Consumption of Vegetables and Salad	.152	(.016)	***	.107	(.017)	***	2.22	(.176)

- An (within-children) increase in the volume of social capital reduces (mental) health problems and improves health behaviour
- Changes in FAS hardly play any role

Effects of Social Capital and FAS on Health

Fixed effects regression models



Effects of Social Capital on Health over time

Fixed effects

	Sleep difficulties			Could not concentrate well			Felt fit and comfortable		
	b	se	p	b	se	p	b	se	p
Social Capital	-.123	.024	***	-.155	.020	***	.287	.024	***
Family Affluence Scale (FAS)	-.017	.020		-.003	.016		.046	.019	*
Year of Survey	.276	.111	*	.249	.097	**	-.339	.109	**
Social Capital * Year of Survey	-.034	.014	*	-.019	.012		.021	.014	
Constant	2.61	.236		2.27	.194		2.43	.234	

	Consumption of Cola/Lemonade			Consumption of Vegetables/Salad		
	b	se	p	b	se	p
Social Capital	-.048	.019	**	.122	.021	***
Family Affluence Scale (FAS)	-.030	.016		.111	.017	***
Year of Survey	.174	.089	*	-.187	.100	
Social Capital * Year of Survey	-.002	.011		.020	.013	
Constant	1.72	.185		2.46	.207	

- The (positive) effect of Social Capital on health and health behaviour increases slightly over time

Summary

- Does social capital affect health and health behaviour in young people?
- Longitudinal studies allow to analyze the effect of *changes* in the volume of social capital on *changes* in health and health behavior on the individual level (within-vs. between-estimator)
- Longitudinal studies are the best way to approach causal effects of social capital
- We can identify hints for a causal effect of social capital in the health development of young people

Thank you very much!



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