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**Effects of experienced injustice in unified Ger-
many on well-being and mental health**



Abstract

A longitudinal survey study on the effects of relative deprivation and relative privileges regarding the quality of life in Germany after the reunification is described. The study is based on relative deprivation theory and its supplement, the theory of existential guilt. Based on these theories as well as on social comparison theory and social identity theory, it is expected that citizens who perceive a lower quality of life in their part of Germany compared to the other part of Germany will develop a sense of fraternal deprivation. It is predicted that sense of deprivation will instigate negative emotions. Negative emotions are assumed to have negative effects on well-being and mental health. Citizens who perceive their part of Germany as being relatively privileged compared to the other part of Germany are expected to report feelings of existential guilt. Guilt is assumed to have negative effects on mental health. Positive emotions such as gratefulness and pride are predicted to have positive effects on mental health. The paper describes in detail the design of the study, the sample, the variables that were measured, and first results. Data analyses are based on a sample of more than 3,000 citizens from East and West Germany. In line with theoretical expectations, mental health can be predicted from negative emotions (anxiety, envy, guilt) and positive emotion (pride). Also in line with predictions, the judgment of East-West differences in quality of life as unjust has the strongest indirect effect on mental health. This effect is mediated by the two emotions anxiety and envy.

Zusammenfassung

Es wird eine Längsschnittstudie zu den psychologischen Auswirkungen wahrgenommener Ost-West Unterschiede in der Lebensqualität im wiedervereinigten Deutschland beschrieben. Auf der Basis der relativen Deprivationstheorie, der existentiellen Schuldtheorie, der Theorie sozialer Vergleichsprozesse und der sozialen Identitätstheorie werden folgende Hypothesen entwickelt und empirisch geprüft: Personen, die ihren Teil Deutschlands im Vergleich zum anderen Teil als benachteiligt erleben, entwickeln ein Gefühl der kollektiven Deprivation. Dieses Gefühl der kollektiven Deprivation bewirkt negativen Emotionen. Negative Emotionen beeinträchtigen die seelische Gesundheit. Personen, die ihren Teil Deutschlands im Vergleich zum anderen Teil als bessergestellt wahrnehmen, entwickeln existentielle Schuldgefühle. Schuldgefühle stellen ebenfalls eine Belastung für die seelische Gesundheit dar. Positive Emotionen wie Dankbarkeit und Stolz schützen hingegen die seelische Gesundheit. Fragestellung, Untersuchungsplan, Stichprobe und Untersuchungsvariablen werden ausführlich beschrieben. Außerdem werden erste Ergebnisse berichtet, die auf den Daten einer Stichprobe von über 3000 Ost- und Westdeutschen beruhen. Übereinstimmend mit den theoretischen Erwartungen läßt sich die seelische Gesundheit aus negativen Emotionen (Angst, Neid, Schuldgefühl) sowie der positiven Emotion Stolz vorhersagen. Wie erwartet hat die Einschätzung wahrgenommener Ost-West-Unterschieden als ungerecht den stärksten indirekten Effekt auf die seelische Gesundheit, vermittelt durch die beiden Emotionen Angst und Neid.

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Human perceptions and judgements are often based on comparisons. Comparisons imply and produce frameworks. In everyday life we experience this principle when perceiving physical stimuli. Depending on the context we perceive a noise as more or less loud, a light as more or less bright, a weight as more or less heavy, a wine as more or less dry. This principle of relativity is also observable in complex stimuli: In the context of a block of council flats, an art nouveau villa stands out as extremely attractive, and in the context of half-timbered houses, post-war architecture seems especially dreary. Often we become aware of characteristics only because they vary. This holds true for social and psychological information. Without comparison between persons we probably wouldn't even have concepts of personality, ability, and attitudes (Schmitt & Borkenau, 1992). Yet the importance of social comparisons exceeds the assessment of our fellows' personalities. Social comparisons also play an important role in the development of self-concepts (Filipp, 1979), they account for social judgements (Bierhoff, 1989), they facilitate the acquisition of social norms (Bandura & Walters, 1963), and they give information about possible ways of living, thus generating frames of orientation for life plans, possibilities of development, and adaptability in difficult life situations (Montada, 1995a). After all, we draw large parts of our psychological lay knowledge from social comparisons. Analogous to the scientific correlational study, we try to interrelate individual differences in psychological variables in order to gain insight into their structure of causal relations (Heckhausen, 1989; Kelley, 1973; Weiner, 1986).

Differences that are discovered in the course of social comparisons arouse interest, especially where desired objectives like affluence, reputation, power, or health are concerned. When the objects of our needs and desires are restricted by natural conditions (e.g., time) or social agreements (e.g., awards), distribution conflicts arise, and, in the case of unequal distributions, the experience of injustice can arise. However, social comparisons do not only trigger distribution conflicts, they can also prevent and solve them, for example, by referring to inequalities in variables which account for a claim on the allocation of the desired resource or by referring to reversed unequal distributions of other resources. This socially regulative aspect of social comparisons is often expressed in terms like equity, merit, and compensatory justice.

Research on ways of dealing with unjust distributions of desired resources can provide insight into basic intrapersonal, social psychological, and sociological regulatory mechanisms (Mikula, 1986). Nevertheless, insights of justice research are not only of theoretical or basic scientific interest: They are practically useful for the social sciences as service professions when professional help is demanded for preserving or restoring individual well-being and social peace (Montada, 1995b). Individual well-being is at issue because emotions connected with the experience of injustice are perceived as burdensome by most people and can lead to psychosomatic damage in extreme cases (Johnson, 1990). The importance of justice research insights for social peace within and between social communities derives from historical observations that social unrest, revolutions, hostility, and wars often have their roots in a collective feeling of injustice, and that masses can easily be mobilised even for military conflict if unjust disadvantages are pointed out or pretended to them (Gurr, 1970; Moore, 1978).

A mild form of social hostility is currently being diagnosed in unified Germany by many observers: Large proportions of the East German population are said to resent the fact that their living conditions are improving more slowly than they were promised during the unification (Winkler, in press). At the same time, many West Germans seem to resent what they consider an ungrateful and overly demanding attitude of East Germans (Montada, 1997).

An interpretation of inter-German resentments from the view of psychology of justice presupposes that East and West Germans compare themselves with each other regarding their quality of life. This assumption is plausible according to Festinger's (1954) theory of social comparison processes, according to which people compare themselves preferably with similar

others. This assumption is also plausible if we draw on a common understanding of distributive justice which goes back to Aristotle: equals are entitled to equal shares. According to this principle, a just distribution and judgements about distributive justice presuppose comparability regarding those variables which, according to the person acting and judging, account for a claim on allocation.

Due to the reunification, the comparability of East and West Germans has increased. Surely East and West Germans were able to see themselves as members of the same nation and heirs of a common history of arts and culture before the reunification, but they were citizens of two states and different societies, incorporated into different ideological, economic, and military power blocs. The reunification has removed many objective differences; it has transformed East and West Germans into citizens of the same state and has legally equalised them. Even before this formal equality many East Germans had dissociated themselves from the political and economic ideology of the GDR (German Democratic Republic), articulating their desire for sharing the West German type of society and showing that their system of beliefs was approaching the West German one. These and other material and symbolic processes of homogenisation have made East and West Germans "more equal" (i.e., more similar) than they had been before the reunification.

From the perspective of psychology of justice, the observation of inter-German resentments leads to the assumption that, regarding the quality of life in East and West Germany, people have different opinions about what the situation is like and what it by rights should be like. It also can be assumed that both statements consist of numerous elementary perceptions, explanations, justifications, and judgements which vary between East and West Germans and do not necessarily have to be homogenous within the two groups. Empirically investigating these and other justice related questions is the central concern of a social, differential, and developmental psychological research project entitled "Justice as a Problem in Reunified Germany" (GiP, from the German "Gerechtigkeit als innerdeutsches Problem") sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German National Science Foundation). This project will be presented here.

Theoretical Background

Because the reunification has made East and West Germans "more similar", the inter-German situation has become a very ideal case study for two psychological theories of justice - the theory of relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976; Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970) and the theory of relative privilege (Montada, 1981; Montada & Reichle, 1983; Montada & Schneider, 1989). Both theories proceed from the relativity of judgement previously mentioned and share the verified assumption of coping research (e.g., Wills, 1992) that objective living conditions are often less influential on a person's own well-being than are comparisons between a person's own life situation and that of other people (Mayring, 1991a).

The theory of relative deprivation describes psychological processes of those who score badly in social comparison. The central assumption of the theory is that one's own life situation will repeatedly be compared with expectations and demands. If they remain unfulfilled, discontent results. There can be diverse reasons for expectations and demands. Often they derive from social comparisons. So far, research has predominantly dealt with causes, concomitants, and consequences of relative deprivation (Masters & Smith, 1987; Olson, 1986), in particular of women compared to men (Appelgryn & Plug, 1981; Crosby, 1981; Jackson, 1989; Zanna, Crosby, & Loewenstein, 1987), of ethnic minorities in comparison to ethnic majorities (Abeles, 1976; Koomen & Frankel, 1992; Nagata & Crosby, 1991; Punetha, Giles, & Young, 1987; Tripathi & Srivastava, 1981), as well as members of lower in comparison to members of higher salary, power, and status at work (Crosby, 1984; Szirmai, 1991). The

spectrum of consequences of relative deprivation discussed in the literature includes judgements and feelings of injustice, momentary and chronic emotional well-being, specific and general life satisfaction, demands for improvement of one's own situation, and finally indicators of mental and physical health.

The theory of relative deprivation can be applied to the inter-German situation under the presumption that the quality of living conditions is systematically different between East and West and that the appraisal of living conditions as well as the choice of the compared person or group is each individual person's discretion and, therefore, represents subjective beliefs and judgements. A complete dissociation of these subjective perceptions from objective facts, however, would not be expected. Since an objective discrimination of the East in different domains of life is currently indisputable (e.g., Glatzer & Noll, 1995; Diewald, in press; Korczak, 1995; Winkler, in press), a resentment of East Germans would not be surprising according to the theory of relative deprivation.

The theory of relative privilegement (Hoffmann, 1976; Montada, 1981; Montada & Reichle, 1983; Reichle, Montada, & Schneider, 1985) can be understood as a reflected addendum to the theory of relative deprivation. Not until both theories are put together can they do justice to a central and empirically verified assumption of equity theory which states that unequal input/output relations will be felt as unjust by people who are deprived as by people who are favoured, and will motivate compensating actions in a similar manner (Adams, 1965; Homans, 1961; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). With regard to the structure of assumptions, the theory of relative privilegemen

t is more specific and more distinctive than the theory of relative deprivation; this holds true for the conditions of origin as well as for the possible forms of uneasiness which result from the perception of being relatively better off in social comparison. First, it is presumed that only those advantages that can't be justified will be felt as a burden. Advantages which are perceived as being deserved are equally as unproblematic as disadvantages of others that can be justified, for example, the ones who are better off perceive the disadvantages of others as the other ones' fault or consider them a just punishment for transgressions. Second, it is presumed that the perception of a causal relation between one's own unjustified advantages and unjustified disadvantages of others aggravates the problem of justice and results in additional emotional strain. A third assumption refers to the quality of the emotional reaction to the judgement of injustice. According to the theory, it depends on who will be held responsible for the unjust status quo and who will have to take responsibility for the elimination or moderation of injustice. If the privileged person ascribes the responsibility for the unjust situation to others or thinks that others don't comply with their duty to eliminate injustice, moral outrage will be the expected dominant emotion. If the person regards him/herself as responsible, then feelings of guilt are expected (Montada, Dalbert, & Schmitt, 1988), especially if the person believes that he/she has the necessary means for the elimination of injustice at disposal. In this context, these are termed existential guilt feelings to distinguish them from feelings of guilt experienced because of the harming of others that is due to one's actions (Handlungsschuld - guilt of action). The term existential guilt goes back to Hoffmann (1976) and is not to be confused with the existential philosophical concept of existential guilt or the Jewish and Christian concept of guilt (Montada & Reichle, 1983). Hoffmann (1976) attributes the American civil rights movement of the 1960s to the guilty conscience (existential feelings of guilt) of mainly upper middle-class students who, in comparison to disadvantaged parts of the population, felt privileged, but could not accept their better living conditions as legitimately just because they could not accept the worse living conditions of Indians, Mexican immigrants, black people, or any other disadvantaged social strata. Existential feelings of guilt, according to Hoffmann, can also be seen in reactions observed in survivors of catastrophes, concentration camps, or captivity during war (von Baeyer, Haefner, & Kisker, 1964; Chodoff, 1976; Dimsdale, 1976; Eitinger, 1974; Ostwald & Bittner,

1976): The survival or escape of these people from a grievous situation is often not happily and gratefully accepted by them and definitely not proudly enjoyed because it is felt as undeserved, as is the death or the lasting grief of the less fortunate companions. Lifton (1967) described this phenomenon, seen in survivors of the Hiroshima atomic bomb catastrophe, as "guilt over survival priority".

The substantial assumptions of the theory of privilegement could be empirically verified in several cross-sectional and longitudinal questionnaire studies (Montada, Dalbert, Reichle, & Schmitt, 1986; Montada, Schmitt, & Dalbert, 1986; Montada & Schneider, 1989; Schmitt, Behner, Müller, & Montada, 1992) as well as in an experimental investigation by Schmitt et al. (1989). In correspondence with the theoretical predictions, it was shown in these studies that existential feelings of guilt motivate social actions with regard to disadvantaged people, be it in the form of single actions of help (e.g., donating money) or in the form of involvement in a relevant relief organisation in the longer run.

Applying the theory of relative privilegement to the current inter-German situation makes it necessary to complete the above justice related psychological interpretation of West Germans' resentments as due to East Germans' exaggerated demands: The theory and previous studies of our team give reason to expect that at least some West Germans have a completely different problem with justice in the inter-German situation: They are unable to justify their own favourable circumstances. Similarly, they cannot justify the worse living conditions in the East, and because of this unjust inequality have a guilty conscience. As was the case with the theory of relative deprivation applied to East Germans, it is also true for this case that the subjective perceptions and judgements of the people concerned are decisive.

The theories of relative deprivation and of relative privilegement are not the only theories which influenced the conception of GiP. The theory of social comparison processes by Festinger (1954) has already been mentioned. The importance of the theory of social identity (Tajfel, 1982) for the inter-German situation after the reunification is discussed in detail by Kessler, Mummendey, & Klink (in press). Central premises of cognitive theories of emotions were assimilated into the theoretical model of GiP. As with the theory of relative privilegement, we assume that emotions felt in the context of the inter-German distribution of prosperity and quality of life can be traced back through the object of emotion to a specific pattern of cognitions (perceptions and judgements) and motivate specific actions. Lerner's (1980) belief in a just world theory and Shaver's (1985) defensive attribution hypothesis, a development of Walster's (1966) hypothesis, are pertinent for the question of GiP as they imply motivational explanations for character devaluation and accusations addressing disadvantaged people that the blame was brought about by themselves. Such accusing reproaches and devaluations of East Germans by West Germans have been repeatedly reported in the media and have also been systematically studied in the form of social attitudes and stereotypes (e.g., Harenberg, 1991; Maier-Förster & Brunner, 1992). Furthermore, the general trait model of differential psychology is taken into consideration because there is a multitude of empirical evidence that state-related perceptions, explanations, appraisals, and judgements are caused to a considerable extent by intrapersonally stable and interpersonally systematically different preparedness for perceptions, explanations, appraisals, and judgements (e.g., Steyer, Ferring, & Schmitt, 1992). Action-theoretical model assumptions have found their way into GiP in the form of the general expectancy-value model (Feather, 1982). For example, we expect that perceived injustice is emotionally and motivationally effective in a different way, depending on the individual centrality of domains of life. As a second example for action-theoretical ideas, the importance of expectations of control and efficacy when choosing an action alternative can be used (see Krampen, 1987). To understand inter-German feelings in a comprehensible and theoretical way, concepts of coping research can be used as the reunification meets all char-

acteristics of a critical life event (Filipp, 1990), at least with the East Germans. Finally, the conception of GiP has been influenced to a great extent by theories about the conditions of well-being (e.g., Abele & Becker, 1991) and mental health (Becker, 1995). Because of the limited space in this chapter it is impossible to give a detailed description of how these different theoretical terms influenced the model of GiP. We have to content ourselves with a broad outline and schematic representation of our theoretical effect model. The expected effects are summarised and shown at the level of groups of variables in Figure 1.

(1) We assume that perceptions, assessments, appraisals, and other state-related cognitions with regard to inter-German distribution of quality of life are, among others, caused by a multitude of background variables. (a) Socio-demographic variables like age and gender have been proved to be meaningful in terms of dealing with the changed living conditions after the reunification (Trommsdorff, 1996). (b) The objective personal living conditions should have an influence on the assessment of the general situation. (c) Personality traits should act as a filter when perceiving and assessing a situation. For example, convictions of control should affect attributions of responsibility, and just world belief should affect the perception and valuation of justice concerning differences between the quality of life in the East and the West. (d) Attitudes and values selectively control perception and valuation of information. For example, there should be a distinctive difference of causal attribution of the situation of East German industry at the time of the reunification between voters of the PDS (Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus) and CDU (Christlich Demokratische Union).

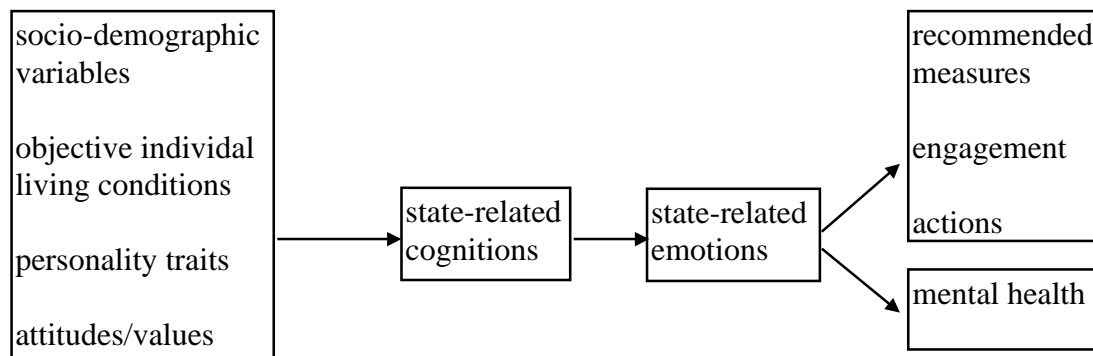


Figure 1: Theoretical effect model (schematic)

(2) As mentioned above, we proceed, in accordance with cognitive theories of emotion, on the assumption that specific emotions concerning the inter-German situation, for example, West Germans' feelings of guilt toward East Germans, can be traced to a specific pattern of state-related cognitions. An example of this may be a West German's assessment that one's own living conditions are better than those of East Germans although there is no way of justifying that.

(3) These state-related emotions are, on one hand, regarded as motives (a) for the recommendation of measures to change the situation (e.g., salary reduction in the West), (b) for one's own engagement to support these measures (e.g., signing petitions), as well as (c) for one's own concrete actions which refer to the respective domain of quality of life (e.g., participation in continuing education programs). On the other hand, it is assumed that emotions have an effect on mental health (Johnson, 1990) or rather that emotions mediate the effects of the theoretically antecedent variables.

The model presented in Figure 1, however, is a simplification and therefore incomplete. First, a recursive extension in the sense of circular effect loops should be more realistic than the present non-recursive version. One's actions can change one's attitudes (Bem, 1972), and changes of mental health can result in changes of personality (Becker, 1995). Second, the model, presented in a schematic way in Figure 1, is not very differentiated. Associations between certain patterns of cognition and certain emotions, for example, are not specified in greater detail. Third, the linear structure of causal relations, suggested by the arrows, does not take the interaction between and within several groups of variables into account. Fourth, patterns of associations within the different groups of variables are not specified in greater detail. But different state-related cognitions do not coexist separately, and instead, they are based on an interdependence. Judgements of justice, for instance, are not made independently from attributional assignments of responsibility. Fifth, patterns of associations between different groups of variables which belong to the same formal status are not specified. For example, there are varied associations between socio-demographic variables and objective individual living conditions. In a similar way it can be assumed that the criteria on the right side of the model influence each other interactively. A person will have a tendency to recommend different measures and will be willing and able to carry out different actions, depending on well-being (mental health).

Research Goals and Possible Findings

Our efforts to integrate different theoretical perspectives show that it is not the primary goal of GiP to do basic research in order to investigate a certain theory. Rather, our task is to differentially and extensively describe a domain of phenomena that is of major social importance, to contribute to the understanding of it and perhaps even to the shaping of the transformation process. This does not mean, however, that GiP should only be considered applied research and not also basic research. Because of the theory-guided conceptualisation of the variables, the design of the study, and the construction of the measurement instruments according to psychometric criteria, the results of GiP promise valuable contributions to basic research. This counts not only for the domain of social justice but also for research of emotions, differential research, attitude research, as well as contributing to the understanding of mental health. The theories of relative deprivation and relative privilegemen can be taken as examples for demonstrating that the chosen object of investigation offers a number of extraordinary chances to gain basic research insights:

(1) So far, there is no simultaneous, comparative, and related empirical study of the psychological situation of relatively privileged and relatively underprivileged people. Our previous studies were confined to the perspective of relatively privileged people, especially because a simultaneous analysis of the situation of relatively underprivileged people was practically impossible (e.g., people in the Third World) or for reasons of cultural differences between privileged and underprivileged people (Germans - Turkish foreign workers; privileged Paraguayan students - indigenous population): Both comparisons would have considerable interpretation problems. There are no similar difficulties, or at least less weighty ones, when comparing the situation of East and West Germans.

(2) The inter-German gap in the quality of living conditions results from the military situation at the end of the Second World War and follows more or less arbitrary political decisions of the Allies (zonal borders). Whoever lived in the Western zones had better chances regarding the quality of future living conditions as well as his/her offspring. Any person with roots in the Eastern zone and who remained there had even worse chances. The differently favourable living conditions in East and West are, in the end, extensively accidental and occurred to a great extent without any help or influence of the persons concerned. Therefore, we are deal-

ing with a situation which corresponds extremely well to the paradigm of the ecological experiment according to Bronfenbrenner (1978). The accidental nature of relative deprivation and relative privilegemen in unified Germany should have a favourable influence on the centrality of justice related comparisons and appraisals. At the same time, the situation offers good conditions to interpret certain causal and responsibility attributions which are central in judgements of justice, for example, when rejecting renunciation demands of oneself as unrealistic and psychologically instrumental. It is more difficult to interpret causal, responsibility, and guilt attributions in privileged and underprivileged people when the cause is indistinct (e.g., unemployment or disadvantages conditional on illness).

(3) The inter-German differences in the quality of living conditions will change in the years to come and will, in all probability, diminish. This makes a longitudinal consideration of the psychological dealing with these differences a fruitful matter, for instance, regarding the resemblance of objective changes and subjective perceptions and appraisals. Finally, a longitudinal consideration makes it possible to check causal interpretations of (time-lagged) correlations, which remain hypothetical when considered cross-sectionally.

However, in order to employ these particular conditions for scientific research, a number of difficulties have to be faced that make it practically impossible to directly transfer experimental designs and methods of investigation of previous studies regarding relative deprivation and relative privilegemen. We confine ourselves to the most important problems:

(1) The variance of quality of life within East and West Germany is extensive and probably larger than the variance between East and West. It has to be expected that the assessment of the general East-West difference is superimposed by differences within both parts of and by one's own position on the continuum of quality of life. This problem makes it necessary to include quality of life as a control variable (see demographic covariates below).

(2) The difference between East and West can differ between various domains of life, even regarding various components of quality of life within domains. For example, in the domain of work and labour, East Germans are disadvantaged concerning the level of wages, but the working climate is supposedly better in the East. This problem makes it necessary to cover the quality of life and the appropriate ratings differentially.

(3) It cannot be ruled out that within a certain period of time there will be a reversion of the differences in quality of life between East and West. In fact, there are sometimes reports of "flourishing scenes in the East" in the media. Even though the truth or representativeness of such statements can be questioned, the East might seem to be privileged when perceived subjectively. This difficulty makes it necessary to keep the direction of East-West differences open in respect to perceptions and ratings or to phrase them conditionally.

(4) The change in the quality of life since the reunification and the expected changes within the years to come will result in East and West Germans judging and evaluating their situation not only in social but also in temporal comparison. Being worse off in comparison to others is more acceptable if one's own situation has improved and future improvements are expected. Conversely, the discrimination from others is particularly painful if it is expected to be permanent or even increasing. This difficulty of the superimposition of social comparisons with temporal comparisons can only be met by making the influence of temporal comparisons assessable through investigation of corresponding control variables.

Spectrum of Variables

The mentioned difficulties which are caused by the complexity of the subject of investigation and its special dynamics demand a high degree of conceptual and theoretical differentiation.

At the same time, they require methods of data collection and of data evaluation which are as sophisticated as the theoretical differentiations. A problem of many sociological investigations is, as we see it, the empirical verification of complex theories using a small set of variables. The reason given for this is the rule of representativeness concerning the subject sample, which cannot be guaranteed with a large number of variables because of selective willingness to participate and selective dropouts. For reasons of expenditure and up-to-dateness, most opinion polls concerning the reunification and inter-German problems are restricted to relatively few questions. The price for the sample's representativeness and the up-to-dateness of the results can, however, be seen in the smaller degree of differentiation of the variables - with the consequence that the expressiveness of data relies on a number of unchecked assumptions and that the leading theory of the investigation can often not be defended against a competing interpretation of the data. This is why the conception of GiP puts as much emphasis on the representativeness of variables as it does on the representativeness of the subjects. The representativeness of the variables, which is a surprisingly neglected phenomenon in social sciences, means that the universe of elements of experience and behaviour that are affected by the inter-German situation after the reunification should not be taken into consideration selectively, but rather as extensively as possible. Only that way will there be a chance to control the problem of confounding, shared by all non experimental investigations, and to identify conditional patterns of causal relations. The effort for representativeness of variables begins with the choice of domains of quality of life and their differentiation into components. The domains of life were chosen, following subdivisions in the literature, after the importance which they presumably have for people's present well-being and life satisfaction (e.g., Abele & Becker, 1991; Diener, 1984; Fahrenberg, Hampel, & Selg, 1984; Fahrenberg, Myrtek, Wilk, & Kreutl, 1986; Mayring, 1991a). Each domain of life has been subdivided into its essential components (see Figure 2).

Domains of Life and Components of Life Quality

Domain	Components
I. Work/employment/labour	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. job offers 2. job security (permanent jobs) 3. quality of equipment at work 4. social climate at work 5. quality of occupational training 6. pay 7. chances of promotion 8. additional benefits 9. consideration for employee's interests
II. Financial situation/prosperity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. personal possessions 2. savings 3. income 4. possibilities for the individual to become prosperous 5. lack of private indebtedness 6. possession of consumer goods 7. possession of luxury goods
III. Interpersonal situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. receiving respect and appreciation 2. not being exploited by others 3. no doubts about one's own way of living/career 4. having strong self-confidence 5. to be able to trust others 6. to find true friends

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. not being disadvantaged by life 8. not mistrusted by others 9. to be completely satisfied with oneself 10. to find meaning in life 11. to be able to rely on learned skills 12. equal rights for men and women 13. to be shown solidarity by friends and acquaintances 14. to be free from feelings of guilt 15. to have self-esteem 16. not being betrayed by others 17. not to suffer from interpersonal disappointments 18. not to be doubtful about oneself 19. to have future prospects 20. to be safe from violence and crime 21. not to be helpless in everyday life 22. to find security within the family
IV. Housing and quality of the cities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. quality of rental flats and houses 2. quality of real estate 3. cost-benefit ratio for rental flats and houses 4. cost-benefit ratio for real estate 5. preservation of historical buildings 6. intactness of cities 7. leisure and cultural offers in cities 8. offers of educational institutions in cities 9. purchase possibilities in cities 10. offer of public health services and social institutions in cities 11. habitableness and business of inner cities 12. proportion of park areas in cities 13. quality of public transportation 14. public security
V. Environment and nature	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. quality of drinking water 2. quality of air 3. cleanliness of soil, rivers, and lakes 4. possibilities to relax outdoors 5. untouched natural state of the countryside 6. preservation of natural goods (biotopes, natural marshy rivers)

Figure 2: Domains and components of quality of life

Core Variables

A detailed description of the core variables can be found in Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal (1995a). The qualities of life listed in the previous paragraph form the heart of the investigation. They provide the contents for those variables which we described as state-related cognitions and emotions in Figure 1 and which are the objects of perceptions, explanations, appraisals, judgements, and feelings. At the same time, they are objects of the last three mentioned upper criteria in Figure 1 (recommended measures, engagement, actions). A first group of core variables refers to all components of each domain of life, and a second group refers to the domain as a whole (this reduction was inevitable in order to limit the numbers of variables). The following eight core variables refer to every component:

1. Perception of differences: How is the East-West difference directed and how large is it?
The subject is asked to specify on a seven-point rating scale (ranging from "-3/a lot worse

in the East than in the West" to "+3/a lot better in the East than in the West"), for example, how different the quality of job offers in East and West is (domain I, component 1). Corresponding ratings will also be assessed for all other components and domains.

2. Just differences: How would the difference have to be in order to judge the situation as just? This assessment concentrates on the experienced justice or injustice of the perceived situation. As the judgement of injustice about the perceived situation does not indicate which alternative condition would be perceived as just, this had to be explicitly assessed. The injustice of the current situation then results from the difference of the perception of dissimilarity and the just difference. This can be explained by using an example: A person, when answering a question about income, could perceive a better off situation of the West. If this person judged this situation as unjust, it would not be clear whether he/she would find an equalisation as more just, or an even larger favourable position of the West, which could be justified by referring to the larger productivity of the West. The question of the just difference solves this problem of ambiguity. An example for an item (domain I, component 6): "I think it would be fair, if wages ... (answer: "-3/were a lot worse in the East than in the West" to "+3/were a lot better in the East than in the West").
3. Centrality: For every component the person has to specify on a six-point rating scale how important the person thinks this is for himself/herself, ranging from "0/not important at all" to "5/extremely important".
4. Changes in the East: For every component the person has to rate on a seven-point rating scale how the situation in the East has changed since the reunification, the scale ranging from "-3/became a lot worse" to "+3/became a lot better",.
5. Changes in the West (parallel to 4)
6. Future changes in the East: For every component the person has to specify how the situation in the East will develop within the next three years according to his/her forecast. A seven-point rating scale had to be used, ranging from "-3/will get a lot worse" to "+3/will get a lot better.
7. Future changes in the West (parallel to 6).
8. Perception of differences from the other side's point of view: To answer this question, the person has to put him-/herself into the position of a resident from the other part of Germany and rate that person's perception of differences (analogous to 1).

The following nine core variables refer to the respective domain of life as a whole and no longer on specific components. Yet, the focus is not on single variables but on groups of variables or constructs. Every "variable" consists of a number of isolated statements. Concerning attributions, for instance, people, groups, institutions, and system characteristics are distinguished to which the status quo, its origin, or its future development can be attributed.

9. Attribution of changes in the East: What kind of attributions are there for changes in the East since the reunification? Depending on the perceived direction of changes (deterioration, improvement), the person can select between two extensive lists of causes, for example, in the case of deterioration between "indifference of the Federal Government" and "World economy situation", and in the case of improvement between "quick rise of productivity of employees in the East" or "gain of new markets". Graduations of influence strength can be made on a six-point rating scale in each case, ranging from "0/not at all" to "5/very much so".
10. Attribution of changes in the West (parallel to 9).

11. Attribution of differences between East and West (parallel to 9).
12. Responsibility for improvements: Who is responsible for improvements? A list of people, groups, and institutions is given (e.g., every single citizen in the West, the Federal Government, labour unions, courts), and the extent of responsibility is measured on a six-point rating scale.
13. Competence for improvements: In correspondence with variable 12, it will be asked how much those who are responsible for improvements are actually able to do.
14. Supported measures: An extensive list of measures to improve the situation is given (e.g., renunciation of pay raise, cutback of social contributions, increase of job creation schemes) which can be supported or refused by the subject on six-point rating scales.
15. Willingness: A number of possibilities to support the measures is given (e.g., signing petitions, take part in demonstrations). On a six-point rating scale the subject indicates how willing he/she is to make use of the respective possibility.
16. Behaviour: A number of behaviours which refer to dealing with the situation in the respective domain is assessed on a six-point frequency scale. An example of this from the domain "financial situation/prosperity" is: rigorous economy, buying only after comparing prices, participation in gambling and lotteries. Socially undesirable behaviours (e.g., phone sex, cigarette smuggling) are measured projectively. This is done by asking how much sympathy is felt for people who show the corresponding behaviour.
17. Emotions: The subject is asked to specify, on six-point scales, to what extent he/she feels the following emotions in the respective domain, in view of the inter-German situation: compassion for people in the other part, a guilty conscience because of the better situation in one's own part, anger that the disadvantageousness in the other part is in some way self-inflicted, fear of deterioration in one's own part, gratitude for the good situation in one's own part, pride in the situation in one's own part, self-pity because of the bad situation in one's own part, moral outrage at East-West differences, shame because of lack of initiative in one's own part, hope for help of the people in the other part, envy of people in the other part, admiration for people in the other part, and hopelessness regarding the situation in one's own part.

Covariates

We call a second group of variables covariates. They are shown on the left side in Figure 1, have the formal status of exogenous variables in a path-analytical regression model, and theoretically influence the criteria on the right side only via the core variables. We subdivide the covariates into six groups according to their theoretical origin and their closeness to the core variables: (1) demographic covariates, (2) justice beliefs and attitudes, (3) attitudes toward the nation, (4) basic political views, (5) certainty and power orientation, and (6) general psychological covariates which form a heterogeneous remainder category.

Demographic covariates

The demographic covariates are described in detail by Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal (1996a). They are divided into general demographic variables like gender, age, marital status etc. and into domain specific demographic variables. Demographic covariates are assessed in great detail in order to explore how strongly the core variables (i.e. the mentioned perceptions, explanations, appraisals, judgements, and emotions) depend on the individual life situation. In other words, how much do people abstract from their personal life situation when they rate the general living conditions in Germany, and how much does their judgement of the general situation reflect their personal situation. The term "demographic" is very broadly understood,

not only in relation to the assessment of objective and objectifiable variables (e.g., personal savings and financial reserves, social awards and honours, furnishing of one's home, or the proximity of one's home to environmentally polluted industrial plants), but also in relation to the assessment of subjective estimations of personal living conditions like the appropriateness of personal income or perceived promotion opportunities at work.

Justice beliefs and attitudes

The justice-related psychological covariates are described in detail by Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal (1995b). They are about generalised and outlasting attitudes, values, and beliefs, which are theoretically close to the justice-related psychological core variables. Taken into consideration and assessed with suitable tools are:

- attitudes toward principles of distributive justice (four principles: achievement, actual equality, equal opportunities, need)
- belief in a just world (five forms of beliefs: general belief in justice, belief in an unjust world, belief in immanent justice, belief in ultimate punishment of perpetrators, belief in ultimate compensation for victims)
- injustice sensitivity (three perspectives: victim/disadvantaged person, perpetrator/ privileged person, observer).

Attitudes toward the nation

It can be assumed that perceptions and appraisals of German living conditions after the reunification are determined, among other things, by the national feeling, the national pride, the national awareness, or how the attachment to one's own nation could be called. Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal (1996b) have extensively tackled this heterogeneous construct and available measurement tools, and they suggest an operational proposal for GiP.

Basic political views

It was shown in several studies that political views filter the perception of the inter-German situation, determine explanations for the status quo and its history, and control justice judgments of the current situation (e.g., Montada, 1997). Political views are assessed within the scope of the demographic covariates as party preferences. Because party preferences and election behaviour are often not only determined by political views, but also by strategical and tactical consideration, basic political views were included as additional covariates into the spectrum of variables. Following the existing party spectrum, the following basic attitudes are distinguished and assessed by means of suitable measurement tools (see Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal, 1996c): conservatism, liberalism, socialism, anarchism, environmentalism, fascism.

Certainty and power orientation

According to some authors (e.g., Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Christie, Geis et al., 1970), there is a close psychological correlation of basic political views with certainty and power orientation (e.g., Dalbert, 1996), with closed mind (Rokeach, 1960), and with need for closure (Kruglanski & Webster, 1996). To this group of personality traits belong machiavellianism, dogmatism, intolerance for ambiguity, intolerance, and authoritarianism. They are described in detail by Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal (1996d). Similar to the aforementioned attitudes toward nation and the basic political views, we ascribe a filter function to these covariates when it comes to perception, explanation, and assessment of the inter-German situation after the reunification. We expect, for example, positive correlations be-

tween authoritarianism and the causal attribution (of existing conditions) and responsibility (for improvements) addressing politicians and officials.

General psychological covariates

This remainder category of theoretically heterogeneous covariates is described in detail by Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal (1995). It consists of the following constructs whose theoretical meaning for GiP cannot be described here in greater detail because of lack of space.

- social desirability
- values
- control beliefs
- draconity and leniency
- social stereotypes (of people in one's own and in the other part of Germany)
- leisure time orientation
- educational orientation
- conservation consciousness
- empathy
- protestant work ethic

Criterion Variables

Figure 1 shows a coarse differentiation between two types of criterion variables. One group of criteria can be regarded as action tendencies and actions in a wider sense. These are described in greater detail by Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal (1995a). They are formulated specifically for the five domains of life and include the core variables 14 (supported measures), 15 (willingness), and 16 (behaviour).

A second criterion is mental health. This criterion was chosen against the background of theoretical considerations and appropriate findings that chronic emotions stemming from the lasting experience of injustice leads to an impairment of well-being. After an extensive literature review (Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal, 1995c), we decided to measure mental health using three indicators: depression (Hautzinger, Bailer, Worall, & Keller, 1994), self-esteem (following Rosenberg, 1965), as well as mental health as a second order factor in the personality model of Becker (1995). Apart from these indicators of mental health in a narrower sense, life satisfaction (following Fahrenberg, Myrtek, Wilk, & Kreutl, 1986) was assessed as well. This was done using a specific self-rating scale assessing happiness for the years of 1985 to 1995 (see Mayring, 1991b).

Measurement Instruments

A detailed description of the design and the sample can be found in the report by Schmal, Maes, & Schmitt (1996). Data were collected by self-report questionnaires. The development of the measurement instruments has been described in several reports (Maes, Schmitt, & Schmal, 1995, 1996a, b, c, d; Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal, 1995a, b, c). It was possible to employ existing instruments with mostly well-known measurement characteristics for the measurement of the last described criteria and some covariates, though some of these instruments were modified, abridged, or completed in order to fulfill the special demands of GiP. Newly developed questionnaires were used for the assessment of the core variables. For the most part, in our use of previously existing questionnaires the given response format was utilized. For the newly constructed measurement instruments, monopolar or bipolar rating scales were chosen as the response format. Altogether the questionnaires consist of 2500 items that were

evenly distributed in five questionnaire booklets. Each questionnaire booklet deals with one of the five domains of life (work/employment/labour, financial situation/prosperity, interpersonal situation, housing and quality of cities, environment and nature). Beside the specific core variables, demographic covariates, and the action criteria for the specific domain, each of the five booklets contains a choice of the remaining covariates. Mental health was assessed as a criterion in the context of the topics employment and occupation. The complete arrangement and the wording of all items is fully described in the report by Schmal, Maes, & Schmitt (1996).

Design

GiP has been planned as a longitudinal study, divided into three waves over a period of five years. The reasons for a longitudinal experimental design have already been given. Each wave consists of five occasions of measurement that specifically deal with one domain of life. The investigation started with the first occasion of measurement of the first wave in January 1996. Occasions of measurement were separated with time lags of 2 to 3 months in the first wave. All occasions of measurement are meant to be replicated after 18 and again after 36 months.

Sample

	West			East		
	North	Centre	South	North	Centre	South
large city						
medium size city						
small town/village						

Figure 3: Geographical stratification matrix for sample recruitment

A detailed description of the sample can be found in Schmal, Maes, & Schmitt (1996). To begin with, a geographical stratification matrix was prepared in order to gain, as far as possible, a countrywide and representative starting sample. The plan consisted of an East-West facet, a North-Centre-South facet, and a three-level facet, place of residence size (large city with more than 100,000 inhabitants; city with 30,000 to 60,000 inhabitants; small city, town, or village with less than 10,000 inhabitants). The complete combination of these three facets results in 18 cells (see Figure 3). At least two municipalities were chosen from each cell if possible. The residents' registration offices of these municipalities were contacted to request a random sample of 300 addresses of people in the age group between 15 and 75 years. The success of this recruitment strategy varied from cell to cell, because registration offices differed in competence and willingness to cooperate. Cells which had been filled only poorly were filled up with random samples of the electronic telephone directory. In all, both strategies led to 25,000 subjects/households. In addition to these random samples, a sample of interested people was gained from responses to regional and national newspaper ads and press reports that appealed for participation in the project. Approximately 700 people responded and agreed to participate in GiP. Finally, some criteria groups were defined for the exemplary validation of measurement instruments. A sample of PDS members was drawn. This was done on behalf of those circles who have a favourable view of the former GDR and are critical of the reunification. Besides, random samples which represent municipalities with an objectively high or with an objectively low quality of life were drawn with the help of the residents' registration offices: Weimar, Potsdam (East/high), Bitterfeld and Zwickau (East/low), Freiburg, Tübingen

(West/high), Völklingen, Pirmasens (West/low). The willingness to participate amounted to an average of just 10% over all cells of the stratification matrix and the criteria groups. This rate is slightly below the rate of previous projects of our team. The reason for the slightly

lower consent rate could be the topic. Yet it seems more plausible to assume that the indication of the large amount of time needed when participating in GiP (approximately 2,500 questions within one wave) impeded the willingness to consent. The sample of the participants comprised 3,170 subjects at the first occasion of measurement of the first wave. The return rate of the questionnaires totalled 82 % at the first occasion of measurement of the first wave. The attrition rate between the following occasions of measurement amounted to an average of 10 %. All in all, the subjects are scattered over 80 to 100 municipalities (depending on criteria for defining municipalities) from all states. Figure 4 (see previous page) supplies evidence for the overall distribution of the sample throughout Germany.

Implementation

The investigation is carried out through the postal system and anonymity is guaranteed. Subjects receive the questionnaire and a return postage paid envelope, and they are instructed to mail the envelope back without an indication of the sender. The subjects can be assigned to the cells of the geographical stratification matrix and to the criteria groups through a group code. In order to assign different questionnaires to the same subject an individual secret code was used. The person uses this code in every questionnaire. The code cannot be deciphered by us, that is, determining the address from the code is impossible. This strict anonymity is meant to counteract both response biases and a selective subject decline.

Results

Because of limited space in this chapter we can only present selected results. We will concentrate on the domain of work/employment/labour and within this domain, on the objective conditions of work and labour (demographic covariate), on the subjective quality of one's own work place (demographic covariate), and on some state-related cognitions and emotions (core variables). Furthermore, we will present findings on mental health. First, we will report differences between East and West Germans in all these variables, followed by selected interrelations according to our schematic effect model (Figure 1).

East-West Differences in Objective Conditions of Work/Employment/Labour

Indicators of the objective situation in the domain of work/employment/labour were assessed in order to determine how much subjective judgements on the collective situation in one's own and in the other part of Germany are influenced by the objective individual situation. In addition, we wanted to find out how much objective and subjective parameters of the individual and collective situation in the domain of work/employment/labour comparatively determine the life satisfaction and mental health of a person. For the following East-West comparison of the quality of objective conditions in the domain of work/employment/labour, we drew only on those indicators which can be judged clearly regarding their quality (in contrast to number of work hours per week, for example):

1. proportion of unemployed persons in relation to persons interested in working
2. proportion of limited contracts in relation to working persons
3. proportion of persons working involuntarily in their current occupation
4. proportion of executives in relation to working persons
5. number of occupational promotions since 1990
6. number of occupational demotions since 1990
7. hourly wage

The differences between East and West Germany are presented in two separate figures because of different scales (Figures 5a, b). They verify the often documented fact that East Germany is worse off regarding conditions of work/employment/labour.

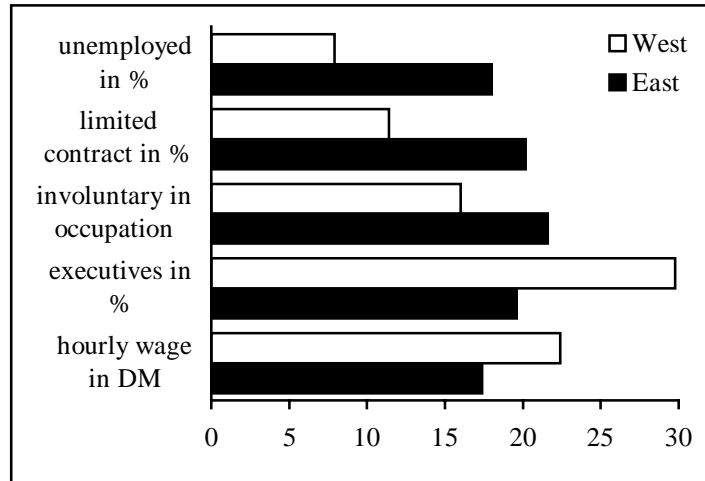


Figure 5a: East-West differences in objective conditions of work/employment/labour

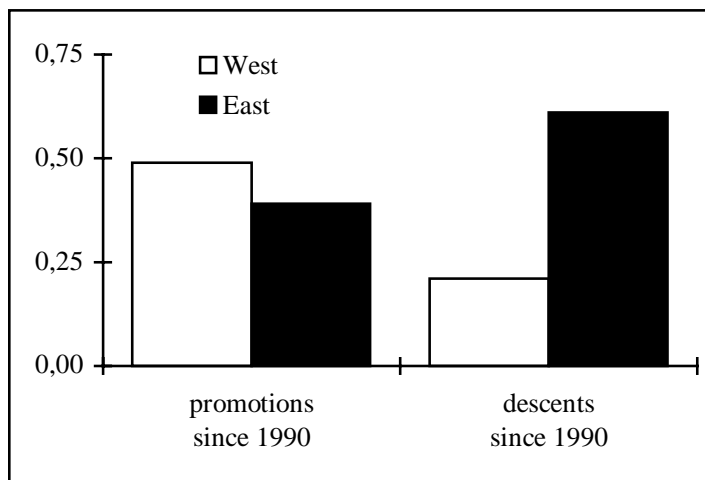


Figure 5b: East-West differences in occupational promotions and demotions since the reunification

East-West Differences in the Subjective Quality of one's own Work Place

In addition to the objective indicators, the subjective rating of the quality of one's own conditions at the workplace was assessed in order to investigate how is abstracted from a person's personal situation when rating the general living conditions in Germany. These subjective ratings refer to the nine components of work/employment/labour mentioned in Figure 1. Components 4 and 5 were measured with 3 items each, and all other aspects with one item each. In the case of unipolar dimensions, a six-point rating scale was used, and in the case of bipolar dimensions, a seven-point scale.

The correlations among these subjective ratings show a high level of homogeneity. The internal consistency α is .80. East-West differences can thus be described on the level of aggregated data. The comparison between working East and West Germans results in a significant means difference ($p < .01$). On a possible range from 0 (minimal quality) to 5 (maximum quality), West Germans on average rate the conditions at their own work place ($M = 2.56$) as better than East Germans do ($M = 2.14$).

East-West differences in state-related cognitions

The state-related perceptions and appraisals (cognitions) of the general situation in East and West Germany also refer to the nine components of work/employment/labour (see Figure 1) as the subjective ratings of one's own work place. Each of these nine components were rated on several dimensions. In the following section, we will present the results of core variables 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 (see above). All ratings were made on a seven-point bipolar scale.

Analyses of the correlational structure within these perceptions and appraisals show a high level of generalisation over the nine components on each rating. Internal consistencies range from .70 to .80, which is high for only 9 items per dimension of judgement. Only regarding the perception of differences, item 4 (social climate) proves independent, namely, it does not correlate with the other items. This corresponds to the result that, in contrast to all other components in this domain, East Germany is not perceived as being worse off concerning the social climate at the work place, neither by East Germans nor by West Germans.

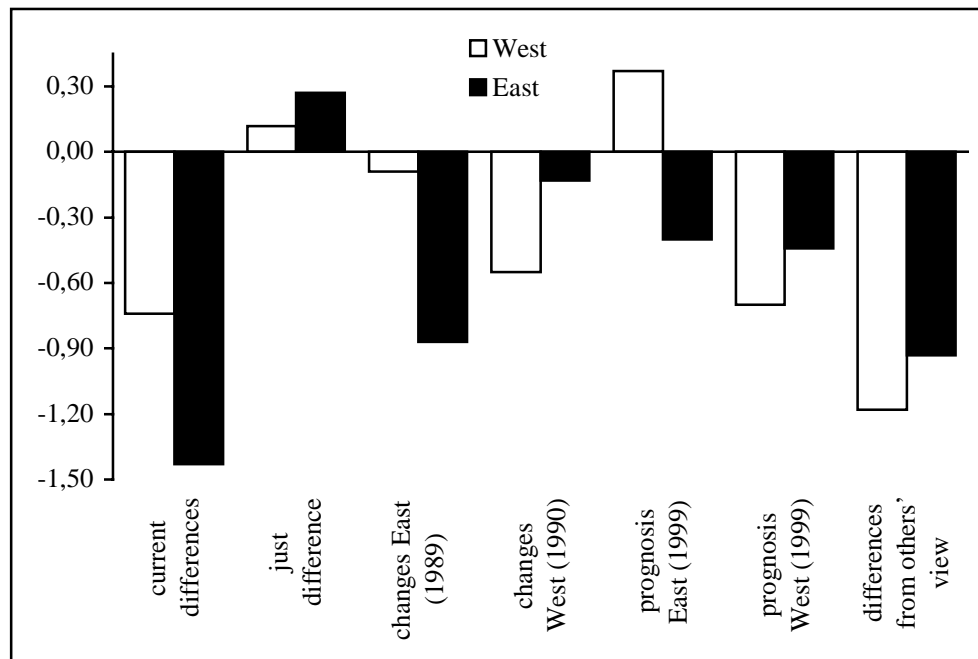


Figure 6: East-West differences in state-related cognitions

Because the homogeneity of the nine components is altogether high, East-West differences can be described on the level of aggregated data. Figure 6 shows the profile of East-West differences across dimensions of judgement. All mean differences are significant. The scale ranges from -3 to +3, -3 representing a difference in favour of the West or a deterioration of the quality of life in the domain of work/employment/labour. The correlation between the East-West dummy variable and the ratings range from .10 (just difference) to .44 (perception

of differences). In sum, the results show that East and West Germans agree on the direction of differences and changes (with the exception of future changes in East Germany), but there is a clear divergence of opinion concerning the extent. From the difference between the first two variables, an index for the justice of the current situation can be formed which clearly shows that the situation is currently rated as unjust by East and West Germans. Hence, the most important premise of this research project is fulfilled: Justice is a problem in reunified Germany, not only in the eyes of a few, but in the majority of the surveyed sample. It is remarkable that, in contrast to the often claimed resentment of West Germans, this group does in fact admit an unjust disadvantage of East Germany.

East-West Differences in State-Related Emotions

In our effect model (Figure 1), emotions are considered as mediators between perceptions/appraisals (cognitions) and action tendencies in accordance with cognitive and motivational theories of emotion. Furthermore, it can be assumed that emotions (once they have become chronic) have an influence on mental health (Becker, 1995). The 13 emotions mentioned above (core variable 17) were assessed with regard to the inter-German situation of work/employment/labour. Figure 7 shows East-West differences in these emotions which are all significant with the exception of shame. The largest East-West differences exist for gratitude, admiration, and envy. East Germans are emotionally more burdened by fear, moral outrage, envy, and hopelessness. West Germans are emotionally more burdened by compassion, guilt, and anger, but they are at the same relieved by gratitude and pride. The correlations of the emotions with the East-West dummy variable range from .17 (guilt) to .56 (gratitude).

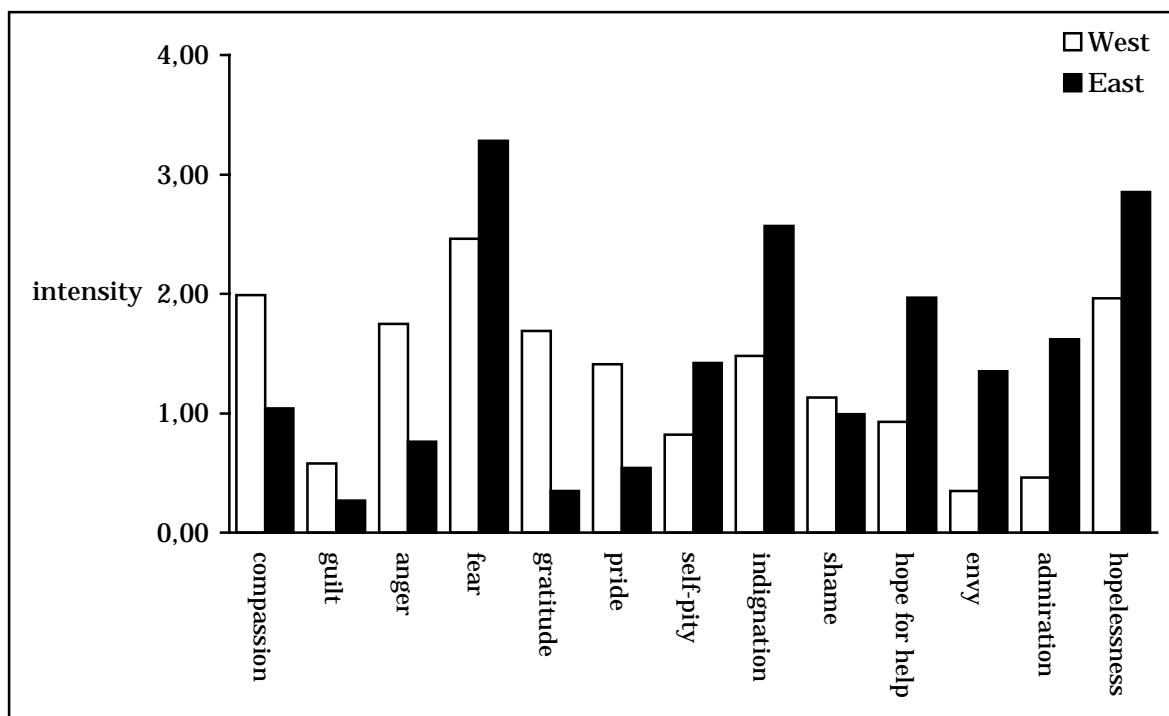


Figure 7: East-West differences in state-related emotions

East-West Differences in Mental Health

The reported differences in emotions lead to the assumption that East Germans are mentally less healthy than West Germans, at least if we presuppose a certain level of emotions experi-

enced repeatedly (Baier, 1992; Dalbert, 1993; Maatz, 1990; Schröder, 1990). Mental health was measured with three proven instruments: the mental health scale of the Trierer Persönlichkeitsfragebogen TPF (Trier Personality Questionnaire) by Becker (1989), the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale (RSS), and a modified version of the Beck Depression Inventory BDI (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1981). Differing from our theoretical expectation, but in accordance with earlier studies, no significant differences between East and West Germans were found in these indicators. The means of East and West Germans were almost identical in each indicator. To explain the same level of mental health of East and West Germans, various hypotheses are discussed in the literature (e.g., effects of toughening or inoculation, successful coping strategies, compensatory effects of other domains of life; cf. Basten et al., 1994; Becker, Hänsgen, & Lindinger, 1991; Wittchen, Lachner, Perkonigg, & Hoeltz, 1994). For reasons of limited space, these hypotheses cannot be discussed here.

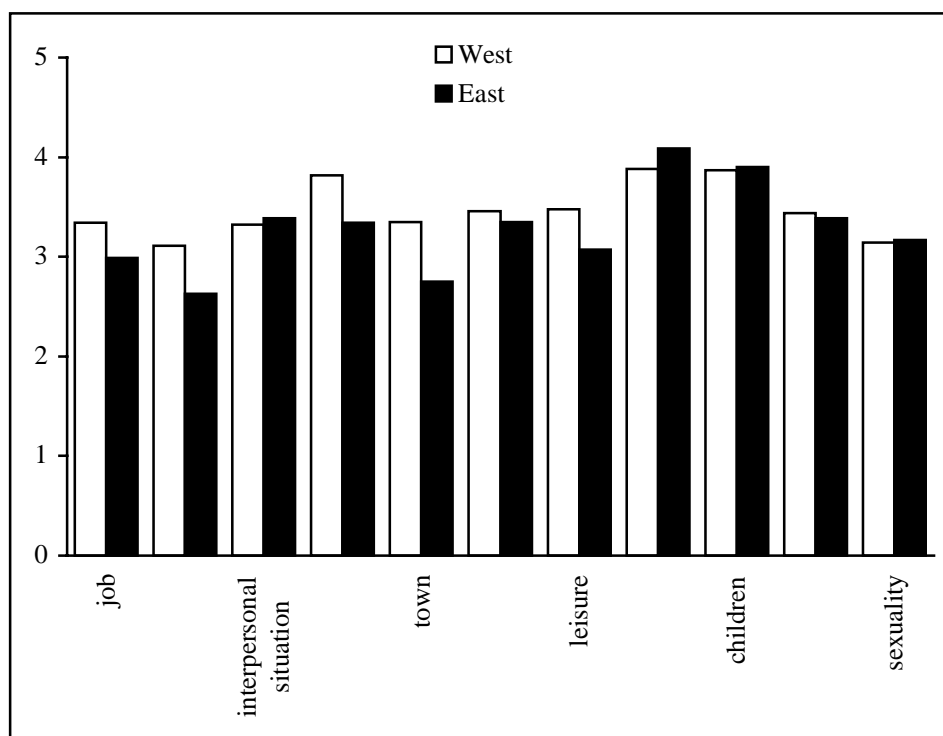


Figure 8: East-West differences in life satisfaction

At this point we merely want to consider one hypothesis recently postulated by Brähler, Geyer, Hessel, & Richter (1996) because it can easily be tested with our data. Brähler and his coauthors assume that the good mental health of East Germans could be explained by the fact that their life satisfaction in the domain of family and interpersonal situation exceeds that of West Germans by far, so that the objective and subjective disadvantages in other domains are compensated for. In our research project, life satisfaction was measured in 10 domains with an extended and modified version of the questionnaire developed by Fahrenberg, Myrtek, Wilk, & Kreutl (1986). Five of these 10 domains are similar to those domains of life which are investigated in detail in GiP. A factor analysis of the instrument identified all dimensions as pure factors with a good simple structure after varimax rotation. Only the domain of housing and quality of cities falls into two separate factors so that altogether, 11 domain-specific measures of life satisfaction can be formed. Figure 8 shows how East and West Germans differ in these 11 domains. The scale ranges from 0 (minimal satisfaction) to 5 (maximum satis-

faction). In accordance with Brähler's and his coauthors' hypothesis, East Germans are significantly more satisfied with their own marriage than West Germans, but West Germans are significantly more satisfied than East Germans in five other domains of life (labour, prosperity, housing and quality of cities, leisure), and each of these five differences is larger than the only difference in favour of East Germans. Consequently, our data would only be consistent with Brähler's assumption if the influence of satisfaction with one's own marriage on mental health counterbalanced the influence of several other domains of satisfaction.

Correlations between State-Related Cognitions

However, East-West mean differences in state-related opinions and appraisals do not say anything about their interrelation within one person. First, we need to have a look at the description of the current inter-German situation. It can be attributed to various patterns of change which consist of different starting conditions, different directions of change (improvement, decline), and different tempos of change. Psychologically, these constructions of change can be extremely important. It should be equally reassuring to East and West Germans if they regard current East-West differences as the result of small-scale improvement in the West and large-scale improvement in the East. There would clearly be different psychological implications for East and West Germans if they considered current East-West differences as consequences of explicit decline in the West and explicit improvement in the East.

The correlations (upper/lower correlation in the cells: East Germans/West Germans) in Table 1 show that East and West Germans hardly differ in the correlations of their perceptions and appraisals of differences and changes. For East and West Germans, there is an almost identical positive correlation between the perception of current differences and the perception of changes in the East, but there is no significant correlation between the perception of current differences and the perception of changes in the West. Hence, East and West Germans largely attribute current East-West differences to changes in the East: Small East-West differences are explained by improvement in the East, large East-West differences are explained by decline in the East.

Table 1: Correlations between state-related cognitions

	1	2	3	4	5
1 perception of differences					
2 just differences	-.05 -.08				
3 changes in East Germany	.43 .38	-.09 -.05			
4 changes in West Germany	.07 .00	.06 .06	.19 .24		
5 prognosis for East Germany	.32 .21	.02 .04	.56 .48	.17 .27	
6 prognosis for West Germany	.11 .03	.06 .08	.24 .25	.49 .59	.53 .41

The interrelations between the perception of past changes and the expectation of future changes are also psychologically relevant. A positive correlation would mean that, irrespective of the direction, most people assume a continuity of changes. A negative correlation, however, would indicate the perception of a turn in change, irrespective of the direction of the changes (improvement or decline). A zero correlation would imply that people do not see a

consistent relation between the past development and the presumed future development. As the coefficients in Table 1 show, the correlational pattern is quite similar for East and West Germans. Past changes and future changes within the same part of Germany clearly correlate positively. Those who perceive decline in East Germany since the reunification expect further decline in the East. The same is true for decline in West Germany. However, those who see improvement in East Germany since the reunification expect further improvement in the East. The same is true for improvement in West Germany.

Concerning the own emotional being and attitudes toward the people in the other part of Germany, it should be extremely relevant if relations between changes in East and West Germany and between expected changes in East and West Germany are seen. The perception of changes in the same direction subjectively binds East and West Germans together. The perception of independent changes makes East and West Germans seem to belong to separate communities with their own unconnected fates. The perception of conflicting changes would indicate a psychologically precarious situation in which there are no common experiences of gain and loss, instead, own gains are combined with losses of the others and vice versa, own losses are combined with gains of the others.

Our data show for both East and West Germans that they hardly see connections between changes in East and West Germany since the reunification. However, the correlation tends to be positive. In any case, most people do not see conflicting changes (improvement in one part, decline in the other part). Concerning the expectation of future changes, synchronous prognoses predominate. For West Germans, the corresponding correlation is .41, for East Germans it is even .53. Thus, East Germans believe even more than West Germans that future development on the labour market of East and West Germany will point in the same direction (improvement or decline for both), respectively, that the situation will not change fundamentally either in East Germany or in West Germany.

Predicting State-Related Emotions from State-Related Cognitions

Following the premises of cognitive theories of emotion, the assessed emotions can be led back to state-related views and appraisals because these refer to the same objects. This assumption was tested by multiple regression analyses using emotions as criteria and state-related cognitions as predictors. By adequate algebraic transformations and combinations which cannot be described and explained in detail in this context, a number of synthetic variables were formed from the cognitions. (1) The difference between the variable "just difference" and the variable "actual differences" forms an index of the justice of the current situation. (2) The difference between changes in East Germany and changes in West Germany forms an index of differential changes. (3) The same applies to expected future changes. (4) The sums of past and expected changes in East and West Germany form an index of changes for entire Germany. In addition to these transformations, variables for West Germans were recoded so that they are psychologically equivalent to those of East Germans (e.g., recoding the perception of differences leads to an index of the disadvantage of one's own part of Germany). Due to this re-coding procedure it is possible to analyse the data of East and West Germans together. Table 2 sums up the results of the simultaneous regression analyses.

This pattern of results can only be selectively discussed here. For reasons of limited space we have to relinquish both a discussion of conceptually and theoretically unexpected correlations (e.g., regarding anger or shame) and a detailed description of differences in the correlational pattern between East and West Germans that appear when the groups are analysed separately. As an example, we will mention one of these structural differences: For West Germans, feelings of guilt depend on the perception of unjust differences in favour of one's own part and the expectation that in the future, things will get rather better in one's own part than in the

other part. This correlational pattern perfectly matches Montada's (1981) concept of existential guilt. Contrastingly for East Germans, feelings of guilt depend on the assessment that, since the reunification, things have been getting rather worse for East Germany than for West Germany. In the context of this survey, this correlation leads to the interpretation of East Germans' feelings of guilt as failure to take their chances and make use of the help of West Germans.

Table 2: Predicting state-related emotions by state-related cognitions

emotion	state-related cognition (beta)	r/R
compassion with the others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.33) since the reunification things have been getting worse for the others (.06) in the future things will get worse for us (.05) 	.35
feelings of guilt because of own improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.19) 	.19
anger at the lack of initiative of the others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.17) in the future things will get rather better for the others than for us (.14) since the reunification things have been getting better for the others (.13) 	.30
fear of decline in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unjust differences in favour of the others (.24) in the future things will get worse for us (.17) since the reunification things have been getting worse for us (.13) since the reunification things have been getting better for the others (.06) 	.37
gratitude for good conditions in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.36) in the future things will get better for the others (.10) the others perceive us as privileged (.08) 	.46
taking pride in good situation in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.26) since the reunification things have been getting better in both parts (.15) in the future things will get better for the others (.13) 	.40
self-pity because of bad conditions in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> unjust differences in favour of the others (.22) since the reunification things have been getting worse for us (.11) in the future things will get rather better for the others than for us (.08) 	.26
moral outrage at East-West differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the others are better off than we are (.17) the others perceive themselves as privileged (.11) since the reunification things have been getting worse for us (.10) in the future things will get worse in both parts (.07) 	.33
shame because of lack of initiative in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> we are better off than the others (.05) 	.05

hope for help by others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unjust differences in favour of the others (.28) • since the reunification things have been getting better in both parts (.07) • the others perceive themselves as privileged (.08) 	.35
envy of better conditions in the other part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unjust differences in favour of the others (.34) • the others perceive themselves as privileged (.14) • since the reunification things have been getting rather worse for us than for the others (.09) 	.47
admiration of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the others are better off than we (.21) • in the future things will get rather better for the others than for us (.16) • the others perceive themselves as privileged (.09) 	.32
hopelessness regarding the conditions in one's own part	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the future things will get worse for us (.27) • unjust differences in favour of the others (.16) • since the reunification things have been getting worse for us (.15) • we are worse off than the others (.12) 	.47

According to the correlational pattern of the simultaneous analysis of the two groups (Table 2), two cognitions turn out to be the main factors of Germans' emotional state with regard to work/employment/labour: First, the perception of East-West differences and, second, the valuation of these differences as unjust. One of the two cognitions is always the strongest predictor for all emotions, except for hopelessness. According to this result, social comparisons are more important for the own emotional state than temporal comparisons, that is, perceptions and expectations of improvement or decline of the living conditions in one's own part of Germany. This result also confirms the central premise of our research project: East-West differences in the quality of life and the justice of these differences are issues which stir Germans.

Predicting Mental Health

The fact that East Germans' mental health is as good as West Germans' does not imply that, on the individual level, there is no correlation between mental health and state-related cognitions and emotions. Theoretically, such a correlation is to be expected. For example, the interdependence between retrospective and prospective changes discussed in the last section can be interpreted as the expression of a generalised optimism (versus pessimism). The correlation between optimism/pessimism and mental health is empirically well verified (e.g., Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emery, 1981; Becker, 1995; Krampen, 1994). Likewise, the correlation between emotions and mental health is to be expected theoretically and has been empirically verified in other contexts (Johnson, 1990). Negative emotions like feelings of guilt, anger, fear, self-pity, moral outrage, shame, envy, and hopelessness can burden mental health; positive emotions like gratitude and pride can relieve; compassion, hope for the others' willingness to help, and admiration of the others are psychologically ambivalent and thus are equally considered as risk and protective factors of mental health.

In order to test these theoretical assumptions empirically multiple regression analyses were calculated with mental health as the criterion and all state-related cognitions and emotions as predictors. The correlations between the three indicators of mental health amounted to .63 or higher, consequently, they were combined into one global index of mental health. In the entire sample, this index depends on four emotions: fear of the future in one's own part of Germany

(beta=.18), envy of the advantaged situation in the other part (-.11), pride in the good situation in one's own part (.07), and feelings of guilt because of the advantaged situation in one's own part (-.06). Separate regression analyses for East and West Germans show some similarities and some differences in the effect of emotions on mental health. In both groups, fear and envy remained the strongest predictors of mental health. For East Germans, hopelessness (-.09) represents an additional third predictor, however, feelings of guilt and pride are meaningless. Only for West Germans do feelings of guilt (-.08) represent a risk factor for mental health, whereas pride has a protective effect (.10). Finally, anger at East Germans' idleness plays a role for West Germans. Surprisingly, it is not a risk factor for the mental health of West Germans, but a protective factor (.10). Concerning the (positive or negative) sign, this does not represent a suppresser effect as can be shown by the simple correlation between anger and mental health which has the same direction, but turns out lower (.05). It is not yet clear what this unexpected correlation means psychologically.

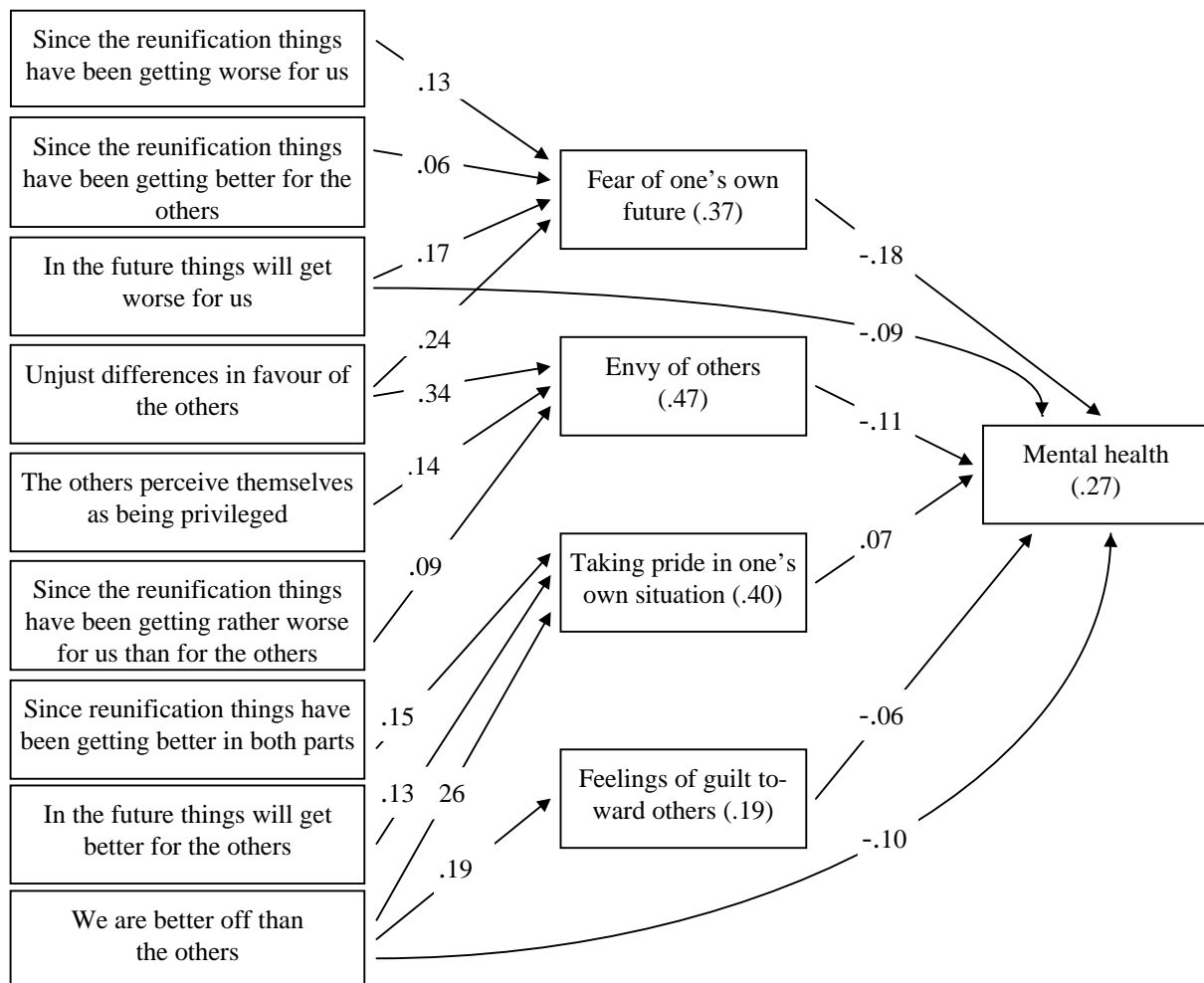


Figure 9: Path model of mental health (parameters estimated on the basis of entire sample, regression weights = betas, multiple correlations in parentheses)

The results of the reported regression analyses for the entire sample in this and the last section can be combined into a simultaneous path model of mental health (Figure 9). The presented pattern of effects is remarkable and worthy of discussion in different respects.

First, it shows that the perceived injustice of the current East-West differences in favour of the others represents the cognition which indirectly, that is, via the emotions fear and envy, most strongly correlates with an impairment of mental health. This result is consistent with one of the central theoretical assumptions of GiP: The experience of injustice regarding the inter-German distribution of quality of life damages mental health. A strict test of the assumed causal direction of this correlation will certainly only be possible in the longitudinal analysis.

Furthermore, Figure 9 shows that the effects of cognitions are almost entirely mediated by emotions. This result is even more remarkable considering that emotions were measured with only one item each, which is probably not very reliable. According to this result, emotions are psychologically closer to mental health than cognitions which, for their part, cause the emotions. This result is also consistent with our theoretical assumptions presented in the simplified effect model (Figure 1).

Finally, it is remarkable that the two "egoistic" emotions fear and envy burden mental health the most whereas the moral emotion guilt represents a lower risk factor which holds true only for West Germans. However, the importance of guilt is stressed by the direct effect of its only cognitive determinant, the perception of a relatively advantaged situation in one's own part.

The size of the multiple correlation between mental health and the preceding emotions and cognitions is worthy of discussion. Regarded absolutely, R (.27) is low. However, R is higher than the simple correlation between mental health and an index of the subject's objective situation of work/employment/labour (.20) that, among other aspects, includes whether the person is unemployed or not (cf. first passage of results section for details on objective indicators). The subjective valuation of one's own work place (cf. second passage of results section) correlates with mental health as strongly as the objective index (.20). If one adds the objective and subjective indexes of the personal situation of work/employment/labour as predictors to the regression analysis of mental health, the effects of the state-related emotions are maintained with different weights. This gives reason to believe that the perception and the emotional valuation of the collective inter-German conditions of work/employment/labour are not congruent with the valuation of one's own occupational situation. They are somewhat relatively independent factors of well-being. This can also be demonstrated by the increase of the multiple correlation from .27 to .35 if the objective and subjective characteristics of the individual situation of work/employment/labour and the characteristics of the collective situation are simultaneously used as predictors of mental health.

Prospects

When evaluating the multiple correlation of mental health in the path model in Figure 9, one has to consider that we have connected mental health only with the subjective parameters of one domain of life so far. One of the many open questions which have to be answered empirically and can also be clarified with the data of GiP is how much more the corresponding parameters of the other domains of life can add to the explanation of mental health. Additional questions concern the moderating effect of attributions, the role of attitudes, values, and personality traits (cf. covariates above) in the development of state-related cognitions and emotions as well as the regressive dependency structures of action tendency and actions as additional criteria apart from mental health.

Furthermore, an empirical determination of how much state-related cognitions and emotions are intraindividually generalised over different domains of life must be conducted. The low differentiation of cognitions between components of the examined domain of life leads us to expect a considerable level of generalisation over the other domains of life, too. In earlier

studies concerning the phenomenon of existential guilt, perceptions and appraisals of one's own advantaged situation and the disadvantaged situation of others were clearly generalised over totally different forms of privilegemen and corresponding disadvantaged groups: physically handicaped, people in the third world, foreign workers, the unemployed, indigenous people, landless peasants (Montada, Schmitt, & Dalbert, 1986; Montada & Schneider, 1989; Schmitt, Behner, Müller, & Montada, 1992). Emotions like feelings of guilt, compassion, and moral outrage, which result from the perception and certain appraisals of one's own advantaged situation were similarly generalised.

So far, we have compared our effect model only with cross-sectional data. The causal interpretation of the model's regression effects is therefore only theoretically justified, but not yet adequately tested empirically. An adequate causal test needs longitudinal data. These are currently being collected. Longitudinal regression analyses will show whether the recursive character of the effect model is confirmed or whether it has to be given up in favour of a circular model. It will be possible to find out, for instance, if mental health is only a consequence of the specified perceptions, appraisals, and emotions (as assumed in the effect model) or if it also causes them.

By expanding the time perspective, the social and differential psychological character of our research project is being completed by a developmental psychological facet. With this addition, three main aims of findings are being pursued: the already mentioned longitudinal causal analysis, the description and explanation of changes, as well as the analysis of covariation of objective and subjective changes. Changes will be investigated in accordance with a classic developmental psychological division into general changes of levels, general changes of structure, relative changes, and differential changes (Wohlwill, 1973). General changes of levels are to be expected for attributions. In the course of increasing timewise distance from the reunification, the inter-German distribution of quality of life will probably be less and less attributed to the rulers of the ex-GDR (the party and its organisations) and the socialist allies because their influence is objectively more and more decreasing, and their role is being replaced in by current events. General changes of structure refer to the strength of correlation between variables. We have to consider two contrasting mechanisms. On one hand, subjects should become more certain of their judgements by repeatedly dealing with the topic. This results in a general increase in reliability and consistency (Socrates effect). On the other hand, in the course of dealing with the topic, it subjectively becomes more and more complex. Such a heterogeneity of judgement causes decreasing correlations if the original level of analysis is kept up. Apart from general changes of structure, relative changes defined as correlative (in)stability of a variable over time (stability of position) are of interest in longitudinal analyses. In general, it can be expected that variables from the group of dispositional covariates show a higher relative stability than specific, state-related cognitions, emotions, and action tendencies. Differential changes are of specific developmental psychological interest. These refer to findings of groups of persons with different relative stability which can be differentiated by so-called stability moderators. Several psychological and demographic variables can be considered as potential stability moderators. The generally negative correlation between age and plasticity of personality leads to the assumption that younger subjects have less stable perceptions, explanations, appraisals, and emotional attitudes toward the inter-German distribution of quality of life than older subjects. Individual and collective changes in the objective living conditions represent a further group of stability moderators. The investigations of Hahn (in press) prove that objective biographical events (change of employment status) and psychological variables form a relationship of reciprocal dependency. The multitude of indicators of the objective quality of individual and collective living conditions will allow us to test how, and how much, they influence the subjective assessment of the inter-German distribution of quality of life.

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