Number 13/14

713 Editorial advisory board
714 Risk factors of social assistance transitions: a case-control study for Germany
Benjamin Fuchs
729 The country of origin as a preparation stage: towards a holistic approach to migrant exclusion
Nikolaos Xypolytas
743 Participation and Chinese non-government organization accountability
Ling Zhong and Karen R. Fisher
Jeffrey Kentor and Andrew Jorgenson
773 Informal economies and scholastic epistemocentrism: a reflexive rethinking
Anna Danielsson
788 Investigating pro-environmental behaviors of well-educated people in Thailand: implications for the development of environmental communication
Piyapong Janmaimool
808 Welfare governmentalities: pastoralism and parties’ youth wings in Mexico
Edgar Zavala Palayo
823 Under pressure: an international comparison of job security, social security, and extra effort
Ferry Koster and Maria Fleischmann
EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Professor Robert B. Anderson
University of Regina, Canada

Professor Benjamin P. Bowser
Professor of Sociology and Social Services,
California State University, USA

Professor Timothy Dowd
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology,
Emory University, USA

Professor John E.T. Eldridge
Department of Sociology, Anthropology and
Applied Social Sciences, University of
Glasgow, UK

Professor Miriam A. Glucksmann
Department of Sociology, University of Essex, UK

Dr Anjula Gurtoo
Indian Institute of Science, India

Professor Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao
Director, Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica,
Taiwan

Professor Gavin Jack
Monash University, Australia

Professor Ron Jacobs
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate
Studies, Department of Sociology, Arts and
Sciences, State University of New York, USA

Professor Leif Jensen
Pennsylvania State University, USA

Professor Lisa A. Keister
Duke University, USA

Professor Enrico Marcelli
Department of Sociology, San Diego State
University, USA

Professor Enzo Mingione
Professor of Sociology and Dean of Faculty of
Sociology, University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

Professor Zdravko Mlinar
Emeritus Professor of Sociology, University of
Ljubljana, Slovenia

Professor Else Øyen
Scientific Director of Comparative Research
Programme on Poverty (CROP), Norway

Professor Jozef Pacolet
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium

Professor Dr Birgit Pfau-Effinger
Institut für Soziologie, University of Hamburg,
Germany

Professor Luke Pittaway
Georgia Southern University, USA

Professor Gianfranco Poggi
Università di Trento, Italy

Professor Chris Pole
Nottingham Trent University, UK

Professor Jason L. Powell
Department of Social Work and Social Care,
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

Dr John Round
School of Geographical Sciences,
University of Birmingham, UK

Dr Richard White
Faculty of Development and Society,
Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Professor Adrian Wilkinson
Griffith University, Australia

Professor Jan Windelbank
Department of French, University of Sheffield, UK

Professor Charles Woolfson
Linköping University, Sweden
Risk factors of social assistance transitions: a case-control study for Germany

Benjamin Fuchs
Institute for Employment Research, Federal Employment Agency, Nuremberg, Germany

Abstract

Purpose – Poverty transitions can be explained by two opposing theories: the traditional sociological approach that focuses on social stratification and individualisation theory, which emphasises on life course risks for all strata. Both perspectives have been investigated extensively for income poverty while neglecting other important poverty indicators, such as deprivation or the receipt of social assistance. The purpose of this paper is to focus on the latter to investigate the impact of social stratification (e.g. social class), life course risks (e.g. health problems), and their interactions on the probability of social assistance entry for Germany.

Design/methodology/approach – The analysis utilises survey data containing a sample of first-time social assistance entrants and a sample of the residential population. Applying case-control methodology, logistic regression is conducted to model the impact of social stratification determinants, life course risks, and their interactions on the probability of social assistance entry.

Findings – Social stratification determinants, particularly social class, have a significant effect. However, their effect is weaker than the effect of life course risks. Contrary to the prediction of individualisation theory, the poverty-triggering impact of life course risks varies substantially by social stratum. The combination of both theories yields high predictive power.

Originality/value – This paper is the first to comprehensively test social stratification and individualisation theory with respect to social assistance receipt as a poverty indicator. It is the first paper that investigates the entire population at risk of social assistance entry in Germany.

Keywords Poverty, Individualisation, Life course risks, Social assistance, Social stratification

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

In current sociological poverty research, two competing perspectives are prevalent among the various theoretical approaches. The traditional sociological perspective asserts that poverty is highly structured by social stratification determinants such as social class or ethnic origin. Conversely, individualisation theory states that the importance of such determinants has decreased within the twentieth century such that their association with poverty should be marginal in contemporary Western societies. Instead, individualisation theorists consider poverty a phenomenon that is induced by life course risks such as health problems or unemployment, which affect all social strata rather than only disadvantaged social groups. However, many empirical studies on poverty transitions indicate that these seemingly opposing theories are actually complementary. These studies suggest that a simultaneous investigation of both perspectives is a promising way to obtain a sociological understanding of poverty dynamics (e.g. Barbieri and Bozzon, 2016; Hill et al., 1998; Layte and Whelan, 2002; Walker, 1984).

However, the question of whether one or both of these theories is an appropriate representation of the social reality of poverty has not been sufficiently addressed.
Most research has focussed on income poverty, but other important poverty indicators, such as social assistance receipt, deprivation, or subjective measures, have rarely been used in a combined investigation of these theories. One rare exception is the study of Kauppinen et al. (2014) on social assistance dynamics in Scandinavia, which did not investigate the impact of social class as the determinant for which sociological theory may bring its genuine contribution to the scientific analysis of poverty. Some authors have recently argued in favour of deprivation as the most appropriate measurement of poverty (e.g. Terraneo, 2016), whereas others prefer different indicators (Whelan and Maître, 2008). Ideally, a comprehensive sociological theory of poverty would yield high predictive value for various meaningful poverty indicators. When this notion is applied to social stratification and individualisation theories on poverty, it implies a research gap because the current state of research is limited to income poverty.

The current study is motivated by this research gap and applies both theories to another important poverty outcome, namely, the receipt of means-tested social assistance. Empirical studies that have utilised this long-established concept of poverty (e.g. Simmel, 1965) have recently been criticised for equating social assistance exits with poverty exits by showing that many individuals who stop receiving social assistance remain in precarious life circumstances (Groh-Samberg, 2004; for a comprehensive criticism of various relative poverty indicators, see Sen, 1983). However, social assistance entries can be regarded as a meaningful measurement of poverty transitions. Although there might be a significant share of poor people among non-recipients, recipients can be understood to be poor. Empirically, means-tested social assistance benefits in Western countries are significantly below the poverty line of 60 per cent of the median income in most household constellations (Avram, 2009; Eardley et al., 1996). This low amount, the means-tested character, the associated stigmatisation and the dependency dimension (Spicker, 1998) make the receipt of these benefits a meaningful indicator of relative poverty in societies that offer a minimum income support scheme.

This paper examines a country that offers social assistance benefits that are particularly well suited as a poverty indicator: Germany, which introduced a new social assistance scheme in the social and labour market reforms of 2005 ("Hartz legislation"). In contrast to what the administrative term "unemployment benefit II" (Arbeitslosengeld II) suggests, the reformed social assistance benefits are not linked to a previous or current employment status. A household is eligible if its net income falls below the legally defined subsistence level and savings are mostly used. Both conditions are verified through a strict means test. These benefits refer to all households in need that have at least one person who is able to work. Therefore, "unemployment benefit II" can be considered a social assistance scheme for employable individuals and their household members. The amounts, which exactly meet the legally defined subsistence level in Germany, are substantially below the poverty line of 60 per cent of the median income in most household constellations (Lietzmann et al., 2011). The introduction of these benefits led to huge public protests, demonstrations and political agitation that argued that the new social assistance benefits imply "poverty by law" (Armut per Gesetz) (for an overview of the reform, see Promberger, 2015). Although the low amount, the means-tested character, and the association with deprivation (Christoph and Lietzmann, 2013) and reduced social integration (Beste et al., 2014) make the receipt of the reformed social assistance benefits a good indicator of poverty, the state of research concerning transitions into this form of poverty is limited.

There is currently only one paper on social assistance entries for Germany after the reforms of 2005 (Aldashev and Fitzenberger, 2009), and it has no reference to sociological theory. Furthermore, that study considers only employees. No analysis with a focus on first-time transitions exists. This issue is particularly critical because the first receipt is a crucial incident that can initiate a process of long-term welfare dependence or recidivism.
Both phenomena are of high relevance for the occurrence of “poverty careers”, which are highly prevalent within Germany’s new social assistance scheme (Graf and Rudolph, 2009). Motivated by this research gap, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the predictive power of social stratification, individualisation theory, and their imbrication for the first social assistance entry.

2. The current study

This paper contributes to the literature by investigating the entire German population at risk of social assistance entry. This is the first paper to apply and comprehensively test sociological theory on this topic. Its research questions are motivated by the ongoing discussion of the poverty-triggering impact of social stratification determinants and life course risks. The latter are considered major biographical events or statuses that are believed to trigger undesired events within individual biographies, such as poverty transitions[2]. Social stratification determinants are considered social structural variables that are linked to positions within the social hierarchy and that are believed to shape individual biographies. Social class is considered to be the central social stratification determinant and is conceptualised in the sense of Erikson et al. (1979) as a combination of employment and occupational status which enduringly constitutes one’s relational position within the given labour market and production system in industrial societies. This paper investigates whether the social stratification determinants of education, social class, ethnic origin and gender are significant predictors of first-time social assistance transitions, their relative importance compared to the life course risks of unemployment, health problems and single parenthood, and whether the impact of the investigated life course risks varies for different social strata. The paper is structured as follows. First, it outlines the two theoretical perspectives and summarises the state of research. Then, the data set and the case-control methodology are described. The following section presents the variables that are used and interprets the multivariate results. In the final section, the results and limitations of the study are summarised, and directions for further research are given.

3. Social stratification, life course risks, and their relation to poverty

3.1 Theoretical considerations

In sociological research, certain determinants of social stratification, such as class affiliation or gender, have been considered the main factors within processes that explain social inequality. These determinants may be understood as resources for or barriers to a certain position within the social hierarchy, which is linked to the valued goods of a society, such as power and income (Breen, 1997) or, vice versa, to having considerably less of these goods and being poor. This approach assumes that the social structures that we inhabit have a substantial influence on our life chances (Alcock, 2004). Applied to poverty dynamics, this structural perspective suggests a significant and strong influence of social stratification determinants on poverty entry and exit. This perspective is reflected within various theoretical approaches that address poverty and social inequality, such as Marxism, with its focus on social class, or feminism, with its focus on gender. If this long tradition of sociological thought is still a valuable framework for contemporary poverty research, it requires a substantial impact of social stratification determinants on various indicators of poverty in modern societies, such as transitions into the last social safety net these societies provide, namely, means-tested social assistance. Less politicised theoretical approaches, such as (neo-)Weberian theory, also suggest a persistent importance of social stratification (e.g. see Sica, 2001).

In recent decades, this “traditional” perspective has been challenged by approaches that focus on life course risks. Ulrich Beck postulated a trend hypothesis that has been
controversially discussed within sociological poverty research: the individualisation thesis. He stated that life course risks have become more important within the biographies of individuals in modern societies over time, whereas social stratification and, especially, social class have become less determinative. At the end of this development, these societies are supposed to have changed into what Beck calls a “risk society” (Beck, 1986), in which each individual can be affected by these risks at any time. Individualisation theory suggests that poverty no longer has a common societal cause in modern societies, such as discrimination by social class (Andreß and Schulte, 1998; Beck, 1986). These authors do not understand poverty as a result of social processes that have roots in social stratification; instead, they postulate a “democratisation of poverty”. Consequently, poverty should transcend traditional social boundaries and occur in biographies of individuals from various social strata. Applying this perspective to poverty entries and inspired by the methodology of dynamic poverty research (Bane and Ellwood, 1986), Leisering and Leibfried (1999) derived the biographisation hypothesis. This hypothesis states that poverty is far more likely to be induced by poverty-triggering circumstances that may occur within the life course than by social stratification determinants. Of these, social class is the central determinant that has produced the most intense discourse. A rigid interpretation of individualisation theory implies that class has lost its relevance as a social category. Some have even diagnosed a “death of class” (Pakulski and Waters, 1996) or a “zombie category” (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002).

3.2 State of research
The state of research shows some support for the individualisation perspective. Layte and Whelan (2002) theoretically applied the individualisation thesis to poverty and tested it empirically. The authors investigated various European countries by comparing the risk of relative income poverty of the manual working class compared to the non-manual classes. They found that this risk narrowed between 1989 and 1995 in countries such as the Netherlands, Germany and Luxembourg. Strong support for individualisation theory also comes from the studies of Leisering and Leibfried (1999), who used the framework of dynamic poverty research on claimants of former social assistance benefits in the German city of Bremen. Analysing two first-time social assistance inflow cohorts of this city, they applied the dynamic poverty research methodology, which was previously established for studies of relative income poverty in the USA. Their results identified a “risk society” in Germany in the 1980s and 1990s, with individualised and social boundary-crossing poverty (Leisering and Leibfried, 1999) in which social assistance served as an important final social safety net. This and other studies showed that most first-time social assistance episodes were accompanied by the occurrence of life course risks, such as health problems, changes in the family structure, and, especially, unemployment (Buhr and Voges, 1991; Leibfried et al., 1995). Life course risks have consistently been found to be important factors for social assistance entry or receipt in various countries. Empirical studies suggest a causal effect of family status and health on the social assistance entry probability for Sweden (Andrén and Gustafsson, 2004), Norway (Lorentzen et al., 2012), Britain (Cappellari and Jenkins, 2009) and Germany before the social assistance reform of 2005 (Castronova et al., 2001; Riphahn et al., 2013). In countries where the social assistance scheme is not directly linked to previous or current employment status, unemployment also appears to have a causal impact on the social assistance transition probability (Andrén and Gustafsson, 2004; Castronova et al., 2001; Lorentzen et al., 2012).

In contrast, some results suggest the persistent importance of social stratification determinants or contradict individualisation theory. Layte and Whelan (2002) found that although social class differences in income poverty risks narrowed over time in central European countries, they remained constant in countries such as the UK and Spain. For some countries, these differences even diverged. The authors concluded that
“German social theorists have been partially right, though only in the context of their own country”. The study by Groh-Samberg (2004) raised doubts about the validity of studies on social assistance claimants in Bremen. Constructing a multi-dimensional measure of poverty that included the dimensions of deprivation, employment status, social assistance receipt and time, Groh-Samberg analysed representative German survey data for the 1996-2000 period. He found that poverty was highly structured by social class, and he harshly criticised individualisation theory. Conversely, Vandecasteele (2011) emphasised the complementarity rather than the contradictions between the structural and the individualisation perspectives with regard to transitions into relative income poverty in her study on thirteen European societies. She showed that although life course risks are strong predictors, the influence of social stratification is not negligible, especially in the case of social class. These results also appear to hold true for social assistance receipt as a poverty indicator in various countries (Andrén and Gustafsson, 2004; Cappellari and Jenkins, 2009; Castronova et al., 2001; Lorentzen et al., 2012). These studies have also found statistically significant interactions of social stratification determinants with life course risks, which had mostly weak effect sizes. Unfortunately, none of these studies have investigated the impact of social class.

At this point, it seems that no matter how individualised the modern European “risk societies” are, it is likely that social stratification determinants remain important. In sum, there is evidence for both the social stratification and the individualisation perspectives. However, a rigid interpretation of the latter in the sense of a “death of class” is not supported by the evidence.

3.3 Hypotheses
Considering the state of research, the hypotheses are derived as follows. Based on individualisation theory, it is assumed that Germany is a typical example of a “risk society” as described by Beck (1986) after the reforms of 2005 and that the life course risks of unemployment, (single) parenthood and health problems are deciding factors for transitions into poverty[3]. Transitions into the first social assistance receipt episode are investigated as a particularly good subject to test the individualisation perspective. The first transition should be strongly affected by life course risks, according to this theory. If social boundary-crossing poverty, as a typical phenomenon of a “risk society”, does exist, this must be visible at the first receipt episode, if not at all receipt episodes. However, due to the fact that there is considerable theoretical and empirical evidence for the persistent importance of social stratification, the current study combines the individualisation and the traditional perspectives, which leads to the following hypotheses:

H1. Social stratification determinants should be statistically significant predictors.

but, on the other hand:

H2. Social stratification determinants should be weaker predictors than life course risks.

In line with individualisation theory, it can be expected that different social strata are equally affected by life course risks so that:

H3. There are no substantial interactions between social stratification determinants and life course risks.

4. Data and Methods
4.1 Data
The data used to test the hypotheses originate from the fourth wave of the Panel Study “Labour Market and Social Security” (PASS), which consists of several different samples (Trappmann et al., 2010). The first wave began in 2007 with one sample of households in
which there was at least one person receiving social assistance in July 2006 and a stratified sample of the German residential population. In the second wave, an additional sample was drawn from the administrative social assistance data of the Federal Employment Agency, which contains households in which there was at least one person receiving social assistance in July 2007 but not in July 2006. Because this procedure was repeated in subsequent waves, three inflow samples of social assistance recipients are included in the Scientific Use File of the fourth wave. The population sample and the inflow sample of wave four will be the basis for the analyses. The latter contains only persons who received social assistance in July 2009 but not in July 2006, 2007 and 2008.

4.2 The case-control approach
The panel design of the survey might suggest fixed-effects panel regression models or other longitudinal methods that aim to reveal causal relationships. By using the population sample of PASS, these procedures might yield generalisable results about which causal risk factors for first-time social assistance transitions exist for the German working age population. Unfortunately, there are too few prospectively observed first-time social assistance transitions for such methods within this sample. The same holds true for other major panel surveys, such as the German Socio-Economic Panel. Administrative data of the Federal Employment Agency as used by Aldashev and Fitzenberger (2009), which would provide sufficient transitions, do not include the entire at-risk population and do not contain information about the household structure. Applying individualisation theory would thus not be possible because the impact of (single) parenthood cannot be assessed. To address these problems, the analysis follows the methodology of case-control studies (Schlesselman, 1982), which are used in epidemiology to identify risk factors for rare diseases. The problem with cohort studies, which is the methodology of choice for research about causal relationships between risk factors and diseases when experimental research is impossible in this research field, is that they often do not contain sufficient rare disease events. Within case-control studies, a sufficient number of persons who contracted the disease of interest ("cases") are selected and interviewed to make quantitative analyses possible. Usually, these are retrospective interviews about exposure to perceived risk factors before the disease occurred. Additionally, a group of persons without the disease are interviewed ("controls"). The resulting estimation samples of case-control studies are characterised by an oversampling on the dependent variable; that is, the share of contracting persons is disproportionately high.

The empirical analysis in case-control studies is usually conducted using logit models with disease status as the dependent variable, which indicates a binary outcome (0 – affiliation with the control group; 1 – affiliation with the case group). Suspected risk and protection factors and control variables serve as predictors. The results of case-control studies cannot be causally interpreted (Breslow, 2005), but they are used to reveal statistical associations that, if strong enough, should be further investigated in longitudinal studies. The oversampling on the dependent variable in the logit model affects the estimated parameters in that the estimate for the constant term is incorrect, but all other slopes are unaffected (Donkers et al., 2003). Thus, all estimated coefficients (except for the constant term) can be interpreted in the same way as if there was a simple random sampling. A prominent example of this methodology is the causal relationship of smoking and lung cancer, which was first detected by case-control studies and then verified by longitudinal studies.

4.3 A case-control study on social assistance transitions
The case-control design can be applied to the PASS data to address the problem that the transition into first-time social assistance receipt is a rare event with correspondingly small transition numbers. The entry sample of the fourth wave of PASS serves as the case group.
This group includes persons living in households that received social assistance in July 2009 but not in July 2006, July 2007, or July 2008. Using the social assistance spell data of PASS, all persons who had receipt episodes between or before these reference dates are excluded from the entry sample to retain only first-time inflows. In a second step, all persons receiving social assistance before and including July 2009 are excluded from the population sample. This sample of non-recipients serves as the control group. Furthermore, only persons who were of working age at the interview date and whose household members were all successfully interviewed are included in the estimation sample. This approach leads to a suitable sample size, that is, a sample of 2,988 persons of approximately 39.7 million persons at risk of first-time social assistance entry (own calculations using PASS, see Table I).

4.4 Method
Logit models are estimated using the fourth wave of PASS with group attachment as the outcome (0 for the control group, 1 for the case group). These models distinguish persons who entered social assistance receipt from persons who did not enter social assistance receipt between August 2008 and July 2009 for the part of the German residential population that had not previously received social assistance. The aim is to reveal which factors trigger or prevent the first transition into social assistance receipt. The analysis is restricted to persons of working age in July 2008, which is the population at risk of starting social assistance receipt according to the legal regulations. The aim is not to quantify the exact causal effects of the investigated predictors, which is not possible because data for this purpose are not available for Germany. Instead, this study investigates the strength and significance of statistical associations and their predictive value.

5. Multivariate results and discussion
5.1 Variables
In the first model, social stratification determinants are investigated without accounting for life course risks. Social class is included using a slightly modified version of the Goldthorpe scale (Erikson et al., 1979), with the higher professional-managerial class as the reference category. Social class is measured at the household level using the dominance principle (Erikson and Goldthorpe, 1992), which assigns the class position of the household head to each household member. In the case of households with no employed household head in July 2007, the class position of the most recent employment spell of any household member within two years before July 2007 is assigned. Migration background (measured by personal or parental immigration), gender and education are also included in the model and relate to the household head. A reduced version of the CASMIN classification (Brauns and Steinmann, 1999) serves as the measure for education: 1a (inadequately completed general education) and 1b (general elementary education) are combined to the category of low educational level, which serves as the reference category; 1c (basic vocational education), 2a (intermediate vocational qualification), 2b (intermediate general qualification), 2c_gen (general maturity certificate), and 2c_voc (vocational maturity certificate) are defined as the medium educational level; and 3a (lower tertiary education) and 3b (higher tertiary education) are combined into the category of high educational level.

The second model investigates the effects of life course risks without accounting for social stratification determinants. A combined parenthood and partnership status variable that measures the family context is included in the model to account for the case of single parenthood, where being single without having children under the age of 15 in the household serves as the reference. Unemployment is differentiated by its length: no short-term or long-term unemployed individual living in the household is the reference. A variable that indicates whether there is at least one person with severe health impairment in the household is also included.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social stratification determinants</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education level hh head</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>−0.09**</td>
<td>−0.11***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>−0.14**</td>
<td>−0.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social class of the hh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher professional-managerial</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower professional-managerial</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher routine non-manual</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled manual</td>
<td>0.07*</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower routine non-manual</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.17***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled manual</td>
<td>0.24***</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic origin hh head</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No migration background</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migration background</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td>0.14***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender hh head</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0.08*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life course risks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No hh member with severe health impairment</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⩾1 hh member(s) with severe health impairment</td>
<td>0.20*</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No unemployed hh member</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-term unemployed, but no</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>0.27***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>⩾1 long-term unemployed hh member(s)</td>
<td>0.41***</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single without children &lt; 15 years</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-parent hh</td>
<td>0.18**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple without children</td>
<td>−0.26***</td>
<td>−0.20***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple with children</td>
<td>−0.22***</td>
<td>−0.18***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-23</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-33</td>
<td>0.13***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-43</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44-53</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-62</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Place of residence</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Germany</td>
<td>0.06**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Model summary**                 |         |         |         |
| Sample size                       | 2,988   | 2,988   | 2,988   |
| Number of retrospective events    | 585     | 585     | 585     |
| Pseudo $R^2$ (McFadden)           | 0.126   | 0.165   | 0.300   |
| BIC                               | 2,671.4 | 2,524.2 | 2,249.8 |

**Notes:** Estimation sample: 15-62 year old persons who did not receive social assistance in July 2006, July 2007, or July 2008. Pupils, students or persons in professional training are excluded. *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$.

**Source:** Scientific Use File PASS, wave 4 (own estimations)
In the third model, social stratification determinants, life course risks, and a set of control variables are included simultaneously. Age is included as a categorical control variable using the 44-53 year old age group as the reference. The place of residence also serves as a control variable to differentiate between West Germany and East Germany (the former German Democratic Republic). Finally, interactions between social stratification determinants and life course risks are included in the third model.

5.2 Stratification vs life course risks – what predicts better?

Table I displays the results of the three multivariate models. In the first model, only social stratification determinants are considered. In the second model, only the impact of life course risks is investigated. In this way, a comparison of the explanatory power is possible. The third model includes both elements and a set of control variables. To allow comparisons of the magnitude of effects between the models, which is not possible with logit coefficients or odds ratios, average marginal effects (AME) are reported[4]. The AMEs indicate the average effect of an independent variable on the probability of beginning social assistance receipt over all observations.

Model 1 indicates that all investigated social stratification determinants have a significant impact when we do not control for life course risks. The significant AME of 0.08 indicates that on average, individuals living in female-headed households have an 8 per cent higher probability of beginning social assistance receipt compared with individuals living in a male-headed household. Higher education is a protective factor that reduces the probability of beginning social assistance receipt \( (p < 0.01) \). Migration background is a significant risk factor that increases the probability by 14 per cent on average. The results for social class, for which the discourse between individualisation theorists and advocates of the social stratification perspective has been most intense, are unambiguous. The unskilled manual working class has, on average, a 24 per cent higher probability of experiencing a first-time social assistance transition than the higher professional-managerial class does. Therefore, the results are more in accordance with Groh-Samberg’s (2004) diagnosis of a strongly poverty-threatened German working class rather than individualisation theory. However, the self-employed class is also strongly affected. Its probability is, on average, 21 per cent higher compared to the higher professional-managerial class. Overall, social stratification predicts social assistance transitions quite well, which is indicated by a good model fit \( (\text{McFadden’s } R^2 = 0.126, \text{BIC} = 2,671.4) \). That is, rigid interpretations of individualisation theory in the sense of social stratification as a negligible factor are incorrect. Despite these clear results, it might be that social stratification determinants are correlated with life course risks so that the revealed effects could be negligible and originate only from life course risks. This possibility will be investigated in the third model.

Model 2 indicates that life course risks also have a substantial impact, at least when social stratification determinants are not considered. Short-term and long-term unemployment are significant risk factors \( (p < 0.001) \). Regarding health, a severe health impairment of one or more household members is also a substantial risk factor \( (\text{AME} = 0.20) \). Concerning the impact of children, living in a single-parent household increases the probability by 18 per cent on average compared to a household with a single person and no children under the age of 15. The AMEs of couple households with and without children are basically the same \( (−0.22 \text{ vs } −0.26) \). It seems that parenthood is a risk factor only for singles.

A comparison of Models 1 and 2 via BIC provides evidence for the relative importance of social stratification determinants and life course risks. Individualisation theory implies that life course risks are the main factor and are more important than social stratification determinants. This notion should be reflected by a better model fit of Model 2 compared to
Model 1, which is indeed the case (2,524.2 vs 2,671.4). The BIC discrepancy is significantly above the value of 10, which according to Kass and Raftery (1995), provides “very strong evidence” for a better model fit. Thus, H2 cannot be rejected. Nevertheless, social stratification determinants are strong predictors, which contradicts rigid interpretations of individualisation theory (“death of class”).

At this point, one could argue that the empirical results might be sensitive to what is conceptually understood as a social stratification determinant or life course risk. This possible sensitivity can be illustrated for the case of age. Some theorists consider age an important social stratification determinant (Turner, 1998), whereas, others doubt that age can be understood as a social stratification determinant (Irwin, 1996). In the current study, age is not considered a social stratification determinant but is included in the third model as a control variable. However, further analyses revealed that if age is included as part of the social stratification determinants model, the BIC value decreases to 2,586.9. This BIC value is still far above the BIC value of the life course risks model (2,524.2), which means that the life course risks model has better predictive power and that the contentual result of life course risks as better predictors of social assistance transitions persists.

Model 3 includes all variables simultaneously. The results contradict the notion of the irrelevance of social stratification determinants because all investigated determinants except gender continue to have a significant impact. Concerning the impact of life course risks, all of these continue to have a significant impact with the exception of the health impairment variable, which becomes insignificant. However, the AME of 0.13 still points in the expected direction, suggesting that health impairments of household members raise the probability of a social assistance transition. The insignificant estimate might be attributed to the low number of persons in the sample who have a household member with a severe health impairment (the sample contained 22 respondents who had a household member with a severe health impairment).

5.3 Does the impact of life course risks vary by social strata?
Table II shows the results of the introduction of the respective interaction term(s) into Model 3. The first column shows the social stratification determinant (italicised) and the life course variable with which the interaction terms are built. The third column indicates whether any of the resulting interaction terms is statistically significant at the five percent level. For example, as seen in the third column, at least one of the two resulting interaction terms between migration background and unemployment status are statistically significant. The logit coefficients of the interaction terms “migration background x short-term unemployment” and “migration background x long-term unemployment” are $-1.28$ ($p < 0.01$) and $-1.70$ ($p < 0.05$) (results not shown due to the high total number of interaction terms that would have to be listed)[5].

The fourth column shows the results of the likelihood ratio tests (LR tests) with which the baseline model and the baseline model with the respective interaction term(s) are tested against each other. Under the null hypothesis, the explanatory power of both models does not differ. For instance, concerning the interaction between the ethnic origin of the household head and the unemployment status, the introduction of the interaction terms significantly improves the explanatory power of the model ($\chi^2 = 9.69; p < 0.01$).

However, the statistical significance of the interaction terms and the LR test together are not sufficient to answer the question of whether there are substantial interactions between social stratification determinants and life course risks. The higher explanatory power of the models with interaction terms could originate from the fact that they are more strongly parameterised than the baseline model. Therefore, it is useful to compare the BIC of the fully specified models to the BIC of the baseline model. One can only rule out such a
parameterisation misapprehension if the BIC does not increase substantially due to the inclusion of additional variables. Column 5 shows the BIC of the interacted models, and column 6 shows the resulting difference to the BIC of the baseline model. For the model that includes the significant and model-improving interaction terms of education and family type, the BIC of 2,270.3 is considerably worse than in the baseline model ($\Delta \text{BIC} = 20.5$). It is obvious that this interaction enhances explanatory power only through stronger parameterisation. Nevertheless, the significant and model-improving interaction of ethnic origin and health status only moderately increases the BIC ($\Delta \text{BIC} = 3.5$).

Moreover, the introduction of the interaction term of gender and family type even decreases the BIC ($\Delta \text{BIC} = -17.3$). Therefore, it can be concluded that contrary to what individualisation theory suggests, the impact of life course risks does vary substantially for different social strata.

### 6. Summary and conclusion

This paper investigated the predictive power of social stratification and individualisation theories for social assistance transitions as a poverty indicator. The study utilised German survey data with a large share of social assistance recipients to investigate first-time social assistance entries. Although the longitudinal design of these data suggested the use of fixed-effects models or other methods that aim to reveal causal relationships, the empirical investigation had to be performed indirectly because there are too few prospectively observed transitions into first-time social assistance receipt in German panel surveys. The study applied case-control methodology to circumvent this problem, and the empirical analysis indicated that life course risks such as unemployment, health problems, and single parenthood have a strong impact on the transition probability. Contrary to the prediction of individualisation theory, these risks do not have the same poverty-triggering effects for all investigated social strata. This result is in line with the evidence for income poverty, which also found significant interactions of life course risks with social stratification determinants.
(e.g. Whelan and Maitre, 2008), and underlines the importance of investigating multiple forms of poverty to retain a complete picture. Future research should apply the social stratification and individualisation perspective to poverty indicators that have not yet been investigated from these perspectives (e.g. subjective poverty measures).

The current study also shows that the traditional sociological perspective remains relevant because social stratification determinants (ethnic origin, education level, and especially social class) continue to have a strong influence on an important poverty indicator. However, life course risks have higher determinative power. The social processes that lead into indigence are obviously linked both to the occurrence of life course risks and to social stratification. This study and other studies show that focussing on the complementarities instead of the contradictions between the two perspectives is a suitable framework for poverty research. However, rigid interpretations of individualisation theory have been found to be wrong. This situation calls for more moderate theoretical interpretations of individualisation (e.g. Mayer, 2004). In summary, scholars should integrate both perspectives and eliminate the remaining contradictions within a comprehensive sociological theory of poverty.

This study has certain limitations. The associations revealed cannot be causally interpreted due to the case-control design. Nevertheless, the case-control design is fruitful and should be transferred to social policy research, where it is uncommon and may be unknown to many scholars. It allows a quantitative investigation of processes that are, in some countries, infrequently observed in longitudinal data but highly relevant to socio-political issues, such as the transition into social assistance receipt. In the current study, case-control methodology enabled the detection of strong associations that suggest causal relationships and that should be examined in further research. However, the design made it difficult to investigate the impact of life course risks as biographical events because no suitable longitudinal data are available for the German social assistance scheme. In the current study, life course risks concerning health, family situation and employment were conceptualised as critical statuses in which individuals may find themselves within their biographies. Investigating life course risks as events in the form of job losses, childbirths, partnership dissolutions and health deteriorations revealed interesting results for some measures of poverty (e.g. Vandecasteele, 2011); this approach should also be applied to transitions into social assistance as a further poverty measure. This longitudinal perspective can reveal which social processes actually cause people to apply for the final social safety net and improve our understanding of poverty dynamics.

Notes
1. In administrative terms, the reference is “benefit units”. This unit includes the employable individual and, if present in the household, the partner and unmarried children under the age of 25. For simplicity, this paper uses the term “households”.
2. Poverty can also be regarded as a life course risk, which should be associated with the occurrence of other life course risks like unemployment. See Heyne (2012) for this relationship.
3. The current study draws on the picture of a risk society, which does not require assumptions about the occurrence of social change that leads to this type of society. Thus, it does not implicitly take the individualisation thesis for granted, a deficit of various studies that adopt the individualisation perspective (Burzan, 2011).
4. Any other coefficients of interest (e.g., standardised regression coefficients) can be obtained from the author.
5. The estimates of the numerous interaction terms can be obtained from the author.
References


About the author
Benjamin Fuchs Graduated in Social Sciences at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany in 2011. He is currently Working as a Scientific Researcher at the Institute for Employment Research and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. His main research fields are social policy, the sociology of health and fertility, where he takes on a rigorous, quantitative perspective. Benjamin Fuchs can be contacted at: benjamin.f.fuchs@gmail.com
The country of origin as a preparation stage
Towards a holistic approach to migrant exclusion

Nikolaos Xypolytas
Department of Sociology, University of the Aegean, Mytilene, Greece

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of the country of origin for understanding the process of migrant exclusion. Migrant exclusion is treated holistically and viewed as a long process of three distinct stages: preparation, allocation and habituation. The focus will be on the analysis of the first stage, which takes place in the country of origin, and its role for the development of the other two equally important stages.

Design/methodology/approach – The research is based on 45 life history interviews with migrant domestic workers from Ukraine, living and working in Greece.

Findings – The research suggests that there are three aspects of life and work in Ukraine that constitute the preparation of migrants for their social and occupational role in the host country and decisively contribute to their exclusion: low-status work in Ukraine, the undermining of familial ties and the need to repay the loans taken for the migration journey.

Originality/value – The paper wishes to contribute to the theoretical and empirical discussion on migrant exclusion and stresses the importance of looking at the country of origin as an analytical tool for a sociological analysis of migration.

Keywords Country of origin, Domestic work, Migrant exclusion

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

This paper is an analysis of the importance of the country of origin for understanding the process of migrant exclusion. This will be done by looking at the case study of Ukrainian migrant domestic workers in Greece. Migrant exclusion is understood as a long process that is associated with many factors, but, at its core, it involves employment in low-status and low-paid work in the host country which, in turn, drastically undermines occupational and social mobility (Anderson, 2000; Psimmenos, 2000; Xypolytas, 2016b). However, this end result is nothing but a last stop in a journey of deprivation that started many years before in the country of origin. In order to sociologically tackle the exclusion of migrants, one needs to holistically approach this long process and identify important stages within it. The recent migration research in Greece has led to the formulation of a three-stage process of migrant exclusion, namely, preparation, allocation and habituation (Psimmenos, 2013).

The paper will mainly focus on the first stage of preparation that deals exclusively with the country of origin and it will show its importance for better understanding the process of migrant exclusion. It is suggested that specific aspects of life and work prior to migration are crucial for occupational placement in the host country and also contribute to the identification of migrant workers with the characteristics and demands of low-status work. More specifically, the employment in low-status jobs in Ukraine during the economic crisis, the undermining of family ties and the urgent need to repay loans for the migration journey are three aspects of preparation that strongly affect the social and economic position of migrants in the host country. In other words, the end result of exclusion is a process tied to the social and occupational history of migrants in the country of origin.
Migrant exclusion as a three-stage process

The migration flow in Greece from the Balkans and Eastern Europe during the 1990s was accompanied by a rather vibrant research activity on the issues of migrant exclusion (Psimmenos, 1995; Lazaridis, 1999, 2000; Emke-Pouloupoulos, 2003). There were a variety of topics that emerged such as working and living conditions (Anderson and Phizacklea, 1997), legal status (Triantafyllidou and Kosic, 2004), access to welfare (Psimmenos, 2009), community participation (Fouskas, 2012) and gender relations (Kampouri, 2007; Papataxiarhis et al., 2008). However, it was only fairly recently that the social situation in the country of origin, prior to migration, stepped into the light of detailed academic scrutiny (Xypolytas, 2013; Lazarescu, 2015). This resulted in an elaboration of the mechanisms that lead to migrant exclusion, viewed from a holistic standpoint that acknowledges the importance of the country of origin, the migration process and the experience of life and work in the host country. This approach is comprised of three distinct stages. The first one is the stage of preparation and it concerns the impoverishment in the country of origin and the cultural adaptation of migrants to individualized and low-status work. The second stage is the allocation of the migrant population in specific parts of the labor market of the host country, and the third is the habituation to the characteristics and demands of their occupation (Psimmenos, 2013).

Looking more specifically at the preparation stage, this involves the process of the impoverishment of the labor force prior to migration that occurs through unemployment or the sudden fall in the living standards of the workers’ families (Therborn, 2006; Tilly and Tilly, 1998). During this period, workers face dire problems that might lead them to the decision to migrate, which is more associated with the so called push factors of migration (Ravenstein, 1885). But more importantly, in the preparation stage, something else happens which goes beyond the discussion suggested in the push/pull model of migrant flows. People are forced into decisions that decisively alter their perceptions concerning social and economic relations. This leads to the individualization of future migrants and culturally prepares them for low-status and low-paid work in the host country.

This is a stage that is often overlooked in the analysis of migration, and it tends to create a quite problematic narrative. It is almost as if migrants’ lives and experiences in the country of origin are somehow miraculously erased the minute they enter a new environment and become inconsequential in understanding people’s motives and constraints. However, this impoverishment, as the bibliography of economic and social crises suggests (Bakke, 1940; Ginsburg, 1942; Elder, 1999), creates crucial breaks in the biographies of people. Their significance is such that not only does it influence the future decision to migrate but, more importantly, the attitudes and orientations within this context would be inexplicable without taking into account these turbulent times prior to migration.

This theoretical oversight becomes even more surprising keeping in mind that the first, and arguably the most classical sociological study of migration, Thomas and Znaniecki’s (1984) book *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, clearly established the theoretical and methodological necessity of approaching the country of origin. For the writers, it was impossible to fully understand the complexities of polish migration to the USA without taking into consideration the drastic changes in the structure of the polish countryside (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1984). These were not approached as simple push factors for migrating, but the changes in the structure and organization of family and community in Poland were seen as essential explanatory tools for understanding the social relationships that were established by polish migrants in America (Psimmenos and Kassimati, 2006; Xypolytas, 2013). Unfortunately, however, over the years, the importance of such classical studies was viewed almost solely in terms of honorary significance for the history of the discipline and not so often appreciated for their profound scientific value.
The analysis of the country of origin can provide insights into familial and community ties that play a vital role in understanding migration. The undermining of these ties has always been an important factor that influences the decision to migrate, but more importantly, it increases the vulnerability of workers in the host country (Morokvasic, 1984; Romaniszyn, 2000; Vassilikou, 2009). Similarly, economic crises have a profound effect on career paths and labor identities. The lives of workers or professionals are indeed affected by the economic consequences of unemployment, but also by the inability to define one's self through labor and to achieve the social status that is associated with it. A status that is defined not only through working in occupations that are appreciated by dominant ideology, but also through membership in labor communities and provision for one's family (Morokvasic, 1983; Xypolytas, 2013). These drastic changes in the lives of people take place within a long period of time and are essential, for they represent a stage in which people are culturally prepared for labor migration by being disassociated from community and socially valued labor.

Apart from the above, the preparation stage is also particularly important since it paves the way for the two other stages of migrant exclusion: allocation and habituation. Although the present paper cannot include a thorough analysis of these two processes[1], it will suffice to say that the research tradition of migration shows that one of the most decisive aspects of exclusion is the employment of migrants in the host country. The migrant labor force appears to be allocated in particular places within the labor market that are defined by low-paid and low-status work (Castles and Kosack, 1973; Cohen, 1987; Sassen-Koob, 1984; Peck, 2000; Fouskas, 2012; Psimmenos, 2017). The allocation process is heavily dependent on the migration policy of the host country and the specific needs of the labor market (Sakellis and Spyropoulou, 2007; Solari, 2010; Xypolytas, 2013). However, it is the preparation stage that lays the groundwork for the immersion of migrants in low-status work. As the research findings on Ukrainian migration will later show, people are accustomed in low-status jobs in the country of origin as a way of combating the consequences of an economic crisis. Similarly, there are also practical reasons, involving migration policy, that lead migrants to urgently seek any form of employment in the host country that are strongly related to the immediate sending of remittances back home in order to cover migration costs (King et al., 2006; Ruiz and Silva, 2009).

Finally, the stage of habituation of migrant workers to the norms and values of their work is indeed of paramount importance, as it is the process that leads to the undermining of occupational and social mobility in the host country. During this stage, the worker adapts to the cultural aspects of her work and identifies with its characteristics. The consequences of this are the entrapment of migrants in low-status jobs and the inability to move past this specific position in the social hierarchy (Xypolytas, 2016b). Once again, the preparation stage plays a pivotal role in this process, since research suggests that the essential prerequisite for habituation is the break-up from familial and community ties (Fouskas, 2013; Lazarescu, 2015). These ties are instrumental for social protection, and their lack pushes workers to the arms of employer patronage and deferential labor. These are the central cultural characteristics of low-status jobs, such as domestic service, and become the sole source of social security for migrants in the host country (Xypolytas, 2013, 2016a).

Generally speaking, the importance of the country of origin for analyzing migrant exclusion cannot be overstated. In the next sections, the paper will focus on the methodological considerations of looking at the preparation stage, as well as the research findings of its importance for approaching migrant domestic workers from Ukraine in Greece.

Research methodology
The research used the qualitative methodology, and more particularly life histories, keeping in mind the need to collect both factual data, such as events or experiences, and attitudinal data,
which are based on the perceptions of migrants themselves (Graham, 2000). Life histories involve collecting and interpreting personal histories and oral testimonies, collected during an interview process and aims at understanding “[...] the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important, and how to provide interpretations of the accounts they give of their past, present and future” (Roberts, 2002, p. 1). This technique was seen as the ideal method to approach this particular research for two important reasons. First, social facts are to be understood as the products of the constant interaction between personal consciousness and objective social reality (Thomas and Znaniecki, 1984). It would be simply impossible to sociologically analyze migrant exclusion based on various quantitative indicators – as sophisticated and elaborate as these may be – because it would by definition neglect the perceptions of migrants themselves concerning their social situation. The second reason involves the appropriateness of this method in order to follow in its entirety long social processes such as the three stages of migrant exclusion on both the sending and the host country (Thompson, 2000). Such a long and complicated process – as C.W. Mills would have argued – can be effectively analyzed by tracing the intersections of specific structural forces with the biography of migrants themselves. Given the considerations above, the research was approached biographically, and an interview guide was constructed in order to gather information and perceptions on three crucial aspects of migrants’ lives: life and work in Ukraine; the migration process; and the experience of live-in domestic work in Greece.

The research comprised of 45 semi-structured interviews based on the life histories of Ukrainian domestic workers in Greece. The interviews took place between October 2008 and December 2009. The reasons behind the choice of Ukrainian migrants were the following. First, this specific nationality is overrepresented in live-in domestic work in Greece, and second, there have been many relatively recent studies of Ukrainian workers (Kampouri, 2007; Kassimati and Moussourou, 2007; Sakellis and Spyropoulou, 2007; Psimmenos and Skamnakis, 2008; Nikolova and Maroufov, 2010) that could provide ample room for comparison with the results of this research.

The main criterion for participating in the research was that the interviewee had to live in Greece and work in this particular job for a period of no less than ten years. By choosing this rather lengthy period as a prerequisite, the research tried to ensure that the participants have gained considerable experience from their work and migration and also, given that the interviews were conducted in Greek, the ten-year period ensured, to a certain extent, a working knowledge of the Greek language.

Apart from the ten-year period, the specific interviewees were selected through “snowball sampling.” This is the technique whereby one interviewee is introducing the researcher to a second interviewee and that one to a third, etc. (Vogt, 1999). The access is provided through certain “key people” who are important in the community, and thus the researcher is able to gain the trust that is necessary to conduct research in hard-to-reach populations (Berg, 1988; Atkinson and Flint, 2001).

Concerning the ages of the migrant women, at the time of their interviews, most of them were in their 50s and they came to Greece during the period between 1997 and 1999. This meant that they spent a considerable amount of time (at least six to seven years) in the preparation stage in Ukraine, battling with the consequences of the economic and social crisis resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. The vast majority of them were in their 40s during their migration journey, and their children were rather young at the time and were usually given to their grandparents in order to be taken care of during their mother’s absence.

One of the greatest challenges this research had to face was the amount of detailed information that was needed. It became evident from the pilot stage of the research that the interviewees would have to provide considerably lengthy narratives or examples
of their experiences. This meant that the entire interview was impossible to be conducted in one sitting, as interviewees would grow tired after 2 hours or so. This was further accentuated by the fact that in most cases, the meetings occurred on Sundays, which is usually the workers’ day off, and there was only about 8 hours of free time before they had to return to their employers’ houses.

The decision then was to split the interview in two separate meetings. In the first, the interviewee would describe their experiences in Ukraine as well as the migration process. The second part of the interview, which would be conducted on a different day, usually the coming Sunday, would focus on migrants’ experience of life and work in Greece. This allowed for a wealth of information concerning both the sending and the host country and, more importantly, it created a sense of familiarity and trust that was necessary in documenting experiences that are sensitive for the research participants.

Equally challenging was overcoming certain problems that are associated with snowball sampling. The main one was being able to find different key people for referrals, since finding only one or two key people making chain referrals will most likely lead to a biased sample (Faugier and Sargeant, 1997). Gaining access to hard-to-reach groups can be rather difficult, and if one is limited to the introductions of one subgroup within the research population, then it is most likely that the entire population will appear as cohesive and it will be difficult, if not impossible, to find isolated individuals within (Van Meter, 1990), as well as the reasons behind this isolation. In order to avoid these possible problems of reliability, six different key people were used with a minimum of five and a maximum of nine referrals per person.

After conducting and transcribing the interviews, the data were analyzed using codes that were connected with the reoccurrence of specific themes in the interviews. There were three categories of axial codes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1994) relating to work, family and social relationships, and each one was further separated in two categories, namely, country of origin and host country. These categories were specialized even further resulting, all in all, in 31 codes. This process of coding is associated with grounded theory and builds up the scientific argument on the basis of the data at hand, while, at the same time, avoiding “common sense theorizing” and the forcing of preconceived notions and beliefs in the analysis (Schutz, 1967).

Concerning the possible limitations of the research, one of the greatest problems of all biographical research is the possible inaccurate reconstruction of the past, on the behalf of the interviewee, as an unconscious effort to render incongruent the identity of the past with the one formulated as the result of migration. This is a possible problem that has tantalized qualitative researchers and epistemologists for quite some time, especially with regards to the idealization of the past (Bertaux, 1981; Schimank, 1988; Kohli, 2005). In order to avoid such problems, the only available option was that the emphasis on the past was put mainly on factual as opposed to attitudinal data. The latter were sought mainly in the data concerning the destination country and the present employment condition. For example, questions such as: “How did you feel about your work or family in Ukraine?” were not directly asked. Instead, there were questions that aimed at presenting the daily work routine or the balance between family and work. Of course there were cases where there were nonetheless expressions of attitudes concerning the past and it always has to be kept in mind that the experience of migration and domestic work can alter these recollections. However, these problems are present in all forms and methods of attitudinal research, and acknowledging them is an important step for further understanding the interplay between social structures and perceptions of social agents.

Life and work in post-socialist Ukraine as the preparation stage of migrant exclusion

Regarding the importance of the preparation stage for the analysis of migrant exclusion, the case of Ukrainian domestic workers represents an excellent example. Ukrainian women
migrated on a later age (35-45-years old), having already established in their country families of their own as well as a fairly long occupational history. More specifically, there are three important aspects in the country of origin that are instrumental for understanding the experience of migration in the host country: first, the close contact Ukrainian women had with casual, low-status work prior to their decision to migrate in Greece; second, the relationships within the family, which have been greatly undermined by the economic crisis accompanying the collapse of the Soviet Union; and third, the urgent need to cover the accumulating costs of loans that were necessary for the migration journey.

Low-status jobs in Ukraine
One of the most important findings of this research concerns the involvement of women with casual and low-status jobs prior to migration. This, at first glance, does not appear to be striking but it becomes so when one looks at the educational and occupational status of the Ukrainian population. During the period of the Soviet Union, the educational attainment level in Ukraine was considerably high (Gerber and Hout, 1995; Cerych, 1997; Satzewich, 2002; Gerber, 2003). After the end of high school, the options were between technical schools and university education providing a specialized workforce that would, at least in theory, cover the production needs of the country (Dobson and Swafford, 1980).

Looking at the occupational background of the specific research population, one is immediately confronted by promising career paths, which include various different occupations in the service sector, such as teachers and specialized medical professionals or employment in the upper parts of the factory hierarchy, such as engineers and specialized designers[2]. So, given the educational attainment and the occupational history of the population, both the entrance and the prolonged stay in live-in domestic service raise questions concerning the adaptation of Ukrainian women to such different occupational and social environments.

In order to unravel this adaptation process, it imperative to understand the consequences of the economic crisis that accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union on the occupational history of future migrants. The crisis in Ukraine in the early 1990s led to a radical decline of both production output and wages (Krasnozhon, 2010). Factories started working only certain days of the week and the wages were insufficient to support the workers and their families. More importantly, for the scope of this paper, the form that wages would often take was payment in kind, depending on the product of the factory. This meant that workers would have to find ways to sell these products on the black market, thus forcing people to come in contact with a form of economic action that was unknown to them. This was the first and very important rift in the occupational history of Ukrainians, who, up until that time, understood employment and transaction in purely typical ways. Liuba, who worked in a television factory, explains this:

From the beginning it was difficult because the factory didn’t have the currency to pay. They gave us some things. Whatever the factory was making. For example, a television set per month. If you wanted you could get one each month. OK, I got one, but now I had to sell it. And it was very difficult because I didn’t know how to (do that). If you don’t want to get it (television set) you have to wait until the factory has money to pay you (Liuba, 45 years old).

The situation that Liuba described was similar for those in the service sector. The option in this case, however, was to find a part-time job in other, and often completely unrelated, fields. But even this option did not generate sufficient funds for women to support their family. One of the most common solutions that both service and factory Ukrainian workers went for was the unofficial sale of various products in flea markets in Poland. Especially for women living in the western part of Ukraine, this was relatively easy, as their towns were close to the polish borderline. The price difference between the two countries was
considerable, with Poland having much higher average prices. Therefore, women would gather various products and travel in the weekend to Poland in order to sell their goods. Lydia was a kindergarten teacher, who was working part-time in a pastry shop and also went to polish flea markets on the weekends:

I got a second job in a pastry shop, because I knew how to do a few things. So I was working every other day, once on the kindergarten and once on the pastry shop. It was very tiresome. But I did other things as well. I was going to Poland, because it was very close, and I did “business”. In our country things were very cheap. In Poland you can sell more expensive. Especially when you bring vodka, but other things as well, like cigarettes, salami and other stuff. It was illegal of course and it did not always bring so much profit. But you know, you just have to find ways to survive (Lydia, 50 years old).

What Lydia described is very important for a number of reasons. First, it describes the process by which she experienced the rift from her previous occupational identity. The focus, under conditions of economic crisis, she suggests, is not on the occupational skills but on the skills of survival. This is a particularly important finding that appears constantly in the bibliography of the social consequences of recession (Komarovsky, 1940; Xypolytas et al., 2017). Second, the use of the English word “business” (the exact word was used in the interview that was performed in Greek) signals for a new understanding of economic action in the context of post-socialism (Thiessen, 1997). All the interviewees that sold products in the polish flea markets explained their contact with casual labor as an act of entrepreneurship. This is crucial in the sense that it shows the meaning that was attached to free market in post-socialist states and the new identities that were formed in this new context (Zhurzhenko, 2001).

The experience of low-status jobs in Ukraine is indeed an essential tool for understanding the preparation stage for the future migrants. It disassociated women from their skills placing emphasis solely on the monetary aspect of labor and, at the same time, it legitimized such actions in the context of adaptation to the workings of the free market economy. However, the choice to individually migrate in a foreign country cannot be explained only on the basis of the aforementioned developments. The influence of the economic crisis on familial ties is of paramount importance for understanding migration choices.

Undermining of family ties
The undermining of family ties during times of crisis is a recurrent theme in the recession literature (Komarovsky, 1940; Elder, 1999). Tensions within the family, such as domestic violence or alcoholism, have always been present in situations of extreme economic and social duress. In the case of Ukraine, familial relationships did indeed suffer a great blow during the first years of post-socialism (Bridger and Pine, 1998; Gerber, 2012; Rajkai, 2014). The breakdown of economic activity, the loss of long-established careers and the experience of unemployment lead to a number of social problems that directly affected Ukrainian families (Wilson, 2000; Satzewich, 2002; Perelli-Harris, 2008; Tolstokorova, 2010; Solari, 2010). Marital problems associated with the economic crisis were often pointed out during the interviews with female migrants. Galina, who used to work as in the police force as an interrogator, describes the problems she was facing with her husband during the first years after the collapse of the Soviet Union:

At 25 (years old) I had my daughter and by the time she was 6 months old we separated. My husband was a good man but he had lost his job and he used to drink. My daughter was 6 months old. I was at work and he would come drunk to the police station and start shouting. Such a shame! We got separated and I had no help. Nothing (Galina, 45 years old).

Apart from divorces that were issued before migrating to Greece, many of the interviewees were widowed due to accidents or health problems that their husbands were facing.
Interestingly enough, out of the 45 interviews, in 4 cases, the causes of death were related to the Chernobyl nuclear plant accident. Jaroslava, who is a mother of two, explains this in the following extract:

He went to Chernobyl for a week. You weren’t really asked whether you want to go or not. There came a piece of paper and it said that you have to go to the army. And they rounded them up from the first day the plant exploded. He went there and he learnt about what happened and they gave them masks and everything. So what? All these people that went there didn’t make it. 4 to 5 years maximum (Jaroslava, 53 years old).

The undermining of familial ties prior to the decision to migrate is indeed very important for the analysis of the preparation stage as well as the later stages of exclusion. The allocation of Ukrainian women in live-in domestic work is a process that is inextricably linked with the isolation from familial and community networks. This type of work by definition requires the continuous presence of the worker in the employer household, and it is thus extremely difficult to maintain a working relationship with the family, even more so in the context of international migration, where the family is dispersed in different geographical regions[3]. Similarly, the distancing from family is important for the habituation in domestic work, since it contributes to the feelings of replacement that workers experience toward members of the employer family (Glenn, 1986; Anderson, 2000; Xypolytas, 2013).

*Covering the costs of the migration journey*

The third aspect of the preparation stage involves the urgent need to pay back the accumulating costs of the migration journey. As the literature suggests, the cost of migration is considerably high, and it is not easy for people who wish to migrate from countries that face economic recession to procure the necessary funds to make that journey possible (Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler, 2003; Spener, 2004; Martin, 2009; Lindquist, 2010). One obvious solution to this problem is to borrow money. In the case of Ukraine in the 1990s and the first decade of the twenty-first century, the banks were less than eager to issue loans due to the problems the banking system faced during the period (Dombrowski, 1994). In addition to that, the interest that the banks charged was so high that it was virtually impossible for people to repay their loans.

The average cost of migrating from Ukraine to Greece was within the range of $800-1,500. For this amount of money, the women were buying a tourist visa for Greece that lasted from 5 to 15 days and a bus ticket from various cities in Ukraine to the city center of Athens. In addition to that, the price included “favorable” treatment in the customs and border control, as well as a two- or three-night stay in a hotel in the center of Athens. The range depended on the ability of the “migration office” to have the tourist visa issued. These “migration offices” were semi-legal businesses in Ukraine that had close contacts to the Greek embassy as well as customs and border control.

In order to pay this substantial amount of money – given the extremely low wages of the mid-1990s in Ukraine – and avoid the formal banking system, the women that chose to migrate would borrow money from close friends and relatives. These loans were informal but they did have an interest rate of 5 percent per month that was commonly agreed upon for amounts of money that exceeded $70-80. The most popular way of dealing with this problem was to borrow small amounts of money, for which there was no reason to add interest, from many different people. Still, however, the great bulk of the sum would have to come from borrowing from one or two people who would then of course charge the common interest of 5 percent. Liuba describes her experience with borrowing $1,200 and repaying the loan in the following manner:

I got this sum by borrowing from 10 people. One would give me 50$, the other 20$, the other one 30$ and so on so forth. I’d write down what I owe to everyone specifically, so I would send it back.
was very difficult because you wouldn’t know where you’re going. Would I find work (in Greece)? What if I couldn’t? How would I pay? The way I thought about it if I didn’t have money I would give to this person a ring, to one person this, to another one that etc. But there was the interest. Because when someone gave you more money you had to pay the interest and I had to pay interest for some of the money (Liuba, 53 years old).

This long process of procuring the funds for the migration journey is particularly interesting for two reasons. First, it shows the extent of the rift in familial and community ties in the country of origin as a result of the economic crisis. These relationships are important sociologically as they appear, normatively at least, to be non-contractual and are often perceived as a sanctuary from competitive economic activity (Nisbet, 1967). However, in the context of the economic, political and social crisis that affected Ukraine after the collapse of the Soviet Union, economy decisively permeated these institutions. It formed relationships that were built not on the basis of reciprocity and solidarity but rather on the notion of meeting certain economic obligations (Xypolytas, 2013).

The second important aspect of this process is the urgent need for migrant women to find employment in live-in domestic work. The tourist visa that was the means to be legally present in the country had an expiry date of few days. In that period, migrants were obliged to find a way to be hidden from authorities and the public eye in general. Live-in domestic work was the ideal scenario, since it meant that women were confined in the premises of the household and thus were able to avoid police checks once their visa expired. Additionally, the cost of the journey was accumulating, due to the 5 percent informal interest rate on their loans. That meant that finding a job, in general, was essential. This particular job was the best possible option, in that, apart from invisibility, and it also provided an income that could directly cover the interest costs, since live-in domestic workers do not have to pay for boarding and food.

Discussion and implications for further research

These three aspects of life in Ukraine that comprise the preparation stage appear to be instrumental for understanding the process of exclusion of migrants in the host country, as a result of their continuing affiliation with domestic service. The experiences in the country of origin pave the way for the other two stages of exclusion, notably, the allocation in live-in domestic work and the habituation to the role of the domestic worker (Xypolytas, 2016a). Concerning allocation, the contact with low-status, casual labor in Ukraine was crucial in preparing migrant women for their later role as live-in domestic servants. The means of securing income during the period of the economic crisis undermined the occupational identity of migrant women and placed emphasis on skills of economic survival. This is the context within which the decision to seek employment in live-in domestic service was reached. Similarly, the need to swiftly cover the costs of the journey represents a factor that adds urgency to employment seeking. However, apart from the issue of allocation, the undermining of familial ties in the country of origin is crucially important for the habituation stage. The absence of such relationships is a prerequisite for the establishment of pseudo-familial relationships with the employers’ household (Xypolytas, 2016b). The emotional nature of the labor involved in domestic work, along with the need for social and emotional protection, results in the identification of the worker with the demands of the employers and characteristics of domestic service (Psimmenos and Skamnakis, 2008; Xypolytas, 2016a).

The implications of this research go far beyond the scope of this specific occupation or nationality[4] and they involve the understanding that the crises that emerge in the sending countries prior to migration play a pivotal role in the exclusion of future migrants. In the light of the recent migration and refugee flows, for example, this study emphasizes the
significance of understanding the events in the country of origin for establishing effective integration policies. More specifically, this research brings forward the consequences of the deskilling of migrants, which starts in the sending country and is followed by the allocation in – and identification with – low-status jobs in the host country. This suggests that European social policy, especially in the south, can avoid previous integration models and instead focus on either utilizing the existing skill sets of the newly arrived migrants or on establishing new skills that do not revolve around personal services, casual labor and low-status jobs. After all, one has to keep in mind that for these new migrants, the urgent need to find work and avoid the possibility of returning back to one’s crisis or war-ridden country poses an additional danger and also, the possibility of them being trapped in low-status jobs that might decisively contribute to their future exclusion. These are legitimate concerns that need to be addressed through research that looks into migration in a non-piece meal manner and emphasizes on the interrelation of its different aspects.

All in all, migrant exclusion is indeed a long process that needs to be approached holistically in order to reach to meaningful sociological conclusions concerning its dynamic and its consequences. The three-stage process, preparation, allocation and habituation, represents an effort to effectively contextualize a lengthy and complicated course leading to enduring socioeconomic disadvantage. Looking at the country of origin, the space par excellence for the preparation of migrants provides great insight into the deprivations faced prior to migration. The experience of these deprivations formulates attitudes and values concerning social relationships and personal identity. They inform the actions and choices of migrants in the host country, to the extent that any analysis of migration – including the latest refugee crisis – will be rendered ineffective in terms of comprehension if it does not emphasize on the attitudinal elements of migration that spring from peoples’ experiences in their own countries.

Notes

1. For further reading on the allocation and habituation processes, see Xypolytas (2013, 2016a) and Psimmenos (2000, 2013, 2017).

2. Out of the 45 interviewees participating in the research, 22 were working in factories and 23 in the service sector. In total, 8 of the factory workers were in the higher ranks of the hierarchy and 17 of the service workers were employed on higher status occupations, such as teachers, microbiologists or police officers.

3. The bibliography on the history of domestic work suggests that the loosening or lack of family ties is a prerequisite for the entrance in domestic work. Many women, throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth century, would work as servants either on a young age, prior to marriage, or on a later stage, if their husband passed away. This is what led to the description of domestic work as an occupation that was a part of the life cycle of working class women (Davidoff, 1973, 1974, Chantzaroula, 2012).

4. The specific sending country factors after all do not relativize the importance of structural forces but help to better understand them.

References

Bakke, E.W. (1940), Citizens Without Work, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.


Chantzarakoula, P. (2012), Sculpting Servitude: Domestic Workers in Greece During the First Half of the 20th Century, Papazisis, Athens (in Greek).


Fouskas, T. (2012), Migrant “Communities” and Workers Representation, Papazisis, Athens (in Greek).


The country of origin as a preparation stage


**Corresponding author**
Nikolaos Xypolytas can be contacted at: n_xypolytas@yahoo.co.uk

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: [www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm)
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Participation and Chinese non-government organization accountability

Ling Zhong
College of Humanities and Development Studies, China Agricultural University, Beijing, China, and
Karen R. Fisher
Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia

Abstract

Purpose – As transition countries shift to a mixed welfare system, the accountability of non-government organizations (NGOs) becomes critical to quality services. Yet, poor financial and managerial practices of some NGOs in China have led to distrust from citizens. The purpose of this paper is to use a democratic accountability framework to examine citizen participation in NGOs as an approach to understand an angle of this distrust. Does the Chinese language academic literature about NGO accountability engage with concepts of participation in NGO governance, management and service use?

Design/methodology/approach – The method was content analysis of a search of words and concepts relating to NGOs, participation and accountability in the available Chinese language literature on NGO accountability through the newly developed search engine Wenjin Search of the National Library of China.

Findings – The analysis found that most Chinese literature only emphasizes problems of accountability, causes and regulatory solutions. When the literature includes participation, it refers to it as a platform for civil society, rather than a process of accountability within an NGO.

Research limitations/implications – Searching by keywords in one search engine may not be exhaustive. The results probably reflect most of the current research of Chinese scholars, considering the depth of the search engine.

Practical implications – Formal NGOs are relatively new in the Chinese political landscape; and government regulations are largely administrative and unenforced. At conceptual and political levels, the absence of discussion about other forms of accountability ignores questions about public dissatisfaction with NGO performance and the public’s willingness to contribute to NGO effectiveness, and civic engagement.

Originality/value – An implication is that until Chinese NGO research also incorporates democratic accountability concepts, it will continue to ignore the internal and external drivers from citizens for NGO change. Transition country NGOs that encourage participation have the potential to engender greater accountability in the organization, community and in state relations.

Keywords China, Participation, Accountability, Citizen participation, Consumer services, Democratic accountability, Chinese NGO

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

As transition countries[1] shift to a mixed welfare system, the accountability of non-government organizations (NGOs) becomes critical to quality services. The proliferation of grassroots NGOs in China over the last two decades means they are playing an increasingly important role in civil society, the market and the state, in ways that would be recognized as familiar in most developed countries. Informal NGOs and NGOs with a legal status in China are filling service gaps, organizing civil action and advocating for citizens. As the government and civil society grapple with harnessing and managing this new force,
questions of accountability have become more urgent. Recent financial scandals have dogged large and small NGOs, from national Red Cross corruption to deaths of children illegally cared for by unregistered organizations.

These questions about accountability, distrust, and more broadly, the potential roles of NGOs in Chinese society, are also common internationally. What is unusual, although probably politically explicable, is an apparent lack of research and dialogue about applying democratic accountability frameworks to understand the empirical experience about the relationship between the extent of citizen participation in NGOs and possible future directions of accountability processes. Participation is a dimension of NGO accountability that could be expected to be changing in the context of reforms to China’s social welfare system, as well as broader social, political and economic contextual shifts. Examining questions about participation in the Chinese NGO context is important because internationally democratic accountability frameworks theorize this link (Mattei, 2009; Jordan and Van Tuijl, 2006). This paper attempts to begin that dialogue by examining the academic and grey Chinese language literature about NGO accountability to investigate the degree to which it engages with concepts of participation, core to democratic frameworks.

The paper describes the background of Chinese NGOs to set the context. It then outlines the democratic accountability conceptual framework to argue why analyzing participation in NGOs could be a relevant dimension for understanding the quality of NGO activities in China. It describes why the content analysis method was adopted and the findings about the concept of participation in Chinese NGO literature using the framework. Finally, it discusses how the socio-political context may have affected the results and draws implications for NGO accountability theory and governance in China and transition countries, particularly as applied to social service organizations.

Chinese NGOs
Prior to 1980s, there were almost no recognized NGOs in China, except quasi-government organizations (Hsu, 2010). In the 1990s, China witnessed a burgeoning of grassroots NGOs. At that time most registered NGOs were still quasi-government in character, such as highly bureaucratic, lacking autonomy and with low efficiency (Deng, 2010a). After 1995, the Chinese government began to promote the expansion of NGO activities. By 2013, the government recognized approximately 547,000 NGOs, among which 289,000 were social organizations (shehui tuanti), 255,000 were private non-enterprise organizations (minban fei qiye danwei), and 3,549 were foundations (Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2014). The government categorizes these organizations by function, including industrial and commercial services, science and technological research, education, health, social services, culture, sports, environment, law, religious, agricultural and rural development, vocational and international. Jin (2010) adds a social dimension to this categorization: philanthropic and social services, rights and policy advocacy, industrial and commercial economic, political and governance participation, and general social organizations. This expansion of activities means that NGOs are now socially and politically active in fields of poverty alleviation, educational equality, environmental protection, labor and health care (Chen, 2012).

As the number of Chinese NGOs has increased, accountability problems have also arisen. These problems range from legality and service provision quality to financial transparency. Scandals related to public NGOs, such as in the government organized Red Cross or private NGOs, have been exposed in recent years, raising public concern about accountability. For instance, the Red Cross Guo Meimei incident in 2011 not only severely damaged the reputation and credibility of the Red Cross, but also aroused the public’s suspicion and confidence of the entire third sector. Guo Meimei made false claims that she was a business manager in Red Cross, which were publicized through her microblog in social media (Xu, 2012). Following this financial scandal, donations to philanthropic and foundation NGOs of 6.3 billion
RMB from March to May 2011, dropped dramatically to only RMB 840 million from June to August in the same year (Caijing Roundups, 2011). People had less trust in public philanthropic NGOs and preferred to donate directly to people in need or government organizations. Other public coverage of child abuse cases in NGOs further damaged the earlier favorable public image of NGOs (Li, 2013a). Many people began to doubt the legitimacy, qualifications and competence of some NGOs. The public criticized some NGOs as irresponsible, inefficient, bureaucratic, lacking transparency and openness, and lacking specialized professionals (Li, 2013b; Gao, 2009; Yao, 2013). Faced with these criticisms, building accountability has become a priority for NGOs. It has also become a research focus among Chinese researchers.

**Multidimensional accountability**

Internationally, NGOs are popularly considered to be mission-driven and altruistic (Crack, 2013). This view holds that the driving force of public-benefit NGOs is that they value and strive to contribute to social good. In practice, however, these values are not unique to NGOs, and nor do all NGOs live up to these lofty heights. All organizations reflect, enact, and propagate their own values and these values are manifest in how the organizations are run and what outputs or outcomes they produce or pursue (Chen et al., 2013). NGOs like other social structures are criticized for poor management and lacking transparency. Although they must comply with requirements from governments, donors, and trustees, they are not legally accountable to the people who are intended to benefit from them (Benjamin, 2013).

The “crisis of accountability” of NGOs is studied by scholars from many perspectives (Burger, 2010; Ma, 2002; McGann, 2006), contributing to larger concepts of legal, managerial and democratic accountability of any organizational structure. The former two are concerned with holding individuals and organizations responsible for compliance and performance measured against legal, regulatory or other normative standards. Related to these standards, public accountability refers to the spectrum of approaches, mechanisms and practices used by the stakeholders concerned with public services delivered by government or NGOs to ensure a desired level or type of performance (Burger, 2010; McGann, 2006).

Of greater interest in this paper though, is another branch of accountability literature focused on participatory practice, core to democratic frameworks. Overlapping with the legal and managerial requirements, democratic accountability also addresses questions about opportunities for citizen participation in organizational structures that affect them directly or indirectly, whether as a person benefiting from the activities of the organization (service users), an employee, manager, community member or member of the public (Mattei, 2009). Participation can also be understood with both the managerial and the democratic accountability frameworks (Beresford, 2003; Stickley, 2006). The former is concerned with market values of the organization and its products responding to consumer demands, while the latter is concerned with participant voice inside and outside the organization and control over how the NGO activities or participation in the NGO contributes to their lives (Beresford, 2003). NGOs that are open to scrutiny and control from interested people internal and external to the organization can be a means of empowerment (Stickley, 2006; Kilby, 2006; Ma, 2002). Their participation can be an opportunity to question charitable, professional or bureaucratic paternalism and recast people who encounter the NGO, as citizens or consumers who can challenge hierarchical power and authority through their action, voice, engagement or withdrawal.

The implications of these dynamic multidimensional concepts of accountability (Mattei, 2009) are that if NGOs want to achieve their social good values, they need to commit to self-regulating accountability processes (Bies, 2010), as well as complying with external requirements and managerial expectations (Chisolm, 1995). Both these implications imply the need for participation by the people intended to benefit and other interested members of the public (Martin, 2011), in order to influence NGO practices.
How relevant is this participatory approach to understanding accountability of Chinese social service NGOs? International literature has begun to address this question (e.g. Dai, 2014; Hsu, 2014; Fisher et al., 2011; Hasmath and Hsu, 2008), but a preliminary review of Chinese literature on NGO accountability revealed that very few publications has so far included these questions of public participation or user involvement. While the Chinese language academic literature focuses on attributing NGO accountability problems to a lack of an effective self-regulation and external supervision (Wang and Zhao, 2012; Xia, 2011) and inadequate specialized professional staff, it does not seem to extend this to participatory concepts. This gap is inconsistent with international theorization of democratic accountability, which has the potential to explain and perhaps even contribute to resolving the crisis in public confidence in Chinese NGOs. This paper attempts to understand that apparent gap.

Analyzing participation
This paper focuses on social service NGOs, such as health and care, where participation includes the involvement of service users. Rather than a passive role as customers or clients, participatory frameworks examine the active agency of service users in defining both their needs and how services should be best organized. The idea of user participation in service providing NGOs is based upon the desire to enable users to exert an influence on the services they receive. It is a shift away from seeing people as the passive beneficiaries. Service users in the participatory framework are positioned as active agents in shaping their lives and acting upon the outcomes of welfare policies (Speer, 2012). More specifically, since social service organizations operate in the same service system as other informal carers and formal government and non-government providers, each with diverse priorities (Martin, 2011), user participation can stimulate NGOs to respond to the voice of service users and other interested people in service planning and service delivery (LeRoux, 2009). As NGOs increasingly have a role as social service providers in China, and service quality is one measure of their accountability, the authors in this paper use these terms about participation interchangeably.

Internal to the NGO, participation can be facilitated through structures that promote service users’ voices, such as ad hoc agency working groups, user feedback, user advisory committees, and membership on the board of directors (LeRoux, 2009; Carr, 2004). Meaningful internal involvement can result in benefits to the person from receiving better services, as well as improved organizational quality, from which other service users also benefit. Indirectly, it can also be an opportunity for often excluded and disenfranchised people to have a say in matters of direct concern to their lives, when they have a means to become involved in constructing their support and services (Carr, 2004).

Participation also includes the related concepts of public involvement in civil society, which is relevant to trends emerging in social service change in China (e.g. Fisher et al., 2011). Ebrahim (2003) suggests that external opportunities for participation range from public information and consultation about planned NGO activities; through to public involvement in project activities, such as community contributions toward labor and funds; negotiation over decisions within the NGOs, gaining greater control over local resources; and most control through people’s independent initiatives or driving the NGO and state-sponsored activities. These opportunities for external participation illustrate means for NGOs to prioritize activities relevant to their community, beyond the direct service users. This interaction can reshape the state-civil society boundaries and change civil society’s role and responsibilities.

Yet participation in practice remains challenging, not least because of its potential to shift power and demand accountability. The move away from just consulting people about activities toward developing services in active partnership with those who use them is not always translated into practice (Carr, 2004). Even where consumer choice is implemented, it does not often address underlying social relations in service planning and delivery. Much of the rhetoric on empowerment still implies top down control, with little shift in decision
making (Ebrahim, 2003). The act of participation or the exercise of voice can often remain largely symbolic or tokenistic (Campbell, 1996; Ebrahim, 2003).

In summary then, the democratic accountability framework applied in this paper is one that assumes that participation can be part of the processes of NGO policy planning, decision making, service delivery and service quality evaluation; and where this occurs, participation can contribute to NGO accountability. Internal and external participatory processes by the people intended to benefit from the NGO activities, staff and members of the public is assumed to open democratic possibilities (LeRoux, 2009), promote transparency and enhance the effectiveness of the social services and the NGO governance in general. It is therefore important to understand the extent to which Chinese academic literature has become engaged with these socio-politically difficult concepts in the context of the crisis of NGO accountability.

The remainder of the paper examines whether service user participation is reflected in Chinese language literature on NGO accountability and which concepts are incorporated, such as accountability problems, theorized benefits of participation, and types and process of participation related to accountability. Implications are drawn from the findings about the relevance of the approaches to enhancing Chinese NGO accountability, and the theoretical implications for adapting them to the Chinese context.

Method
The research followed Lacy et al.’s (2015) sampling and design standards for content analysis, with an explicit search protocol; a literature search to identify and test key words; and a purposive sampling decision. A search was conducted of the Chinese literature on NGO accountability with Wenjin Search, a newly developed search engine of the National Library of China. The search engine has integrated the digital resources of the Chinese National Library and local libraries and is the core digital system of the National Library. The search included alternative words for NGO, social organization, accountability, participation and public participation. The search terms and results are summarized in Table I. The documents (3,139) with the search terms were retrieved to analyze how the concepts of participation were portrayed in the NGO accountability literature. The search results are mostly academic articles, and some newspaper and magazine articles.

This search method by key words through a single search engine may not be fully exhaustive and may miss some information if it is not precisely targeted. For instance, some articles did not use the key word “participation,” instead they used alternative expressions like “interaction” or “communication” to mean the same thing (Li and Xu, 2008). This risk was mitigated by searching for the relevant concepts within the paper after it was retrieved. Considering the wide use of the search engine, the results probably reflect most of the current research of Chinese scholars on this topic. As the authors’ research continues, new search methods will be developed to expand the research scope.

Concepts of participation in Chinese NGO accountability literature
The literature on NGOs (and the more common term, social organizations) was analyzed for accountability, participation and both accountability and participation (Table I). These combinations of results are analyzed below.

Social organizations and accountability
Most publications (96 percent) that were retrieved about current NGO accountability problems did not mention participation. Rather, the 1,271 NGO accountability articles focused instead on factors such as lack of efficiency and transparency, poor performance and financial impropriety (Mao, 2013). These accountability problems were attributed to two main causes:
poor internal management systems (Liu and Zhu, 2013) and ineffective external, government supervision systems (Wang and Zhao, 2012; Xia, 2011). Most of the literature found that social organizations generally lack a clear sense of public responsibility or sense of duty. Even the professionals working with NGOs sometimes did not share a same or similar understanding of the mission of the organizations in which they worked (Gao, 2009). Social organizations were initially supported by the public, yet as they became more established, they lost their reputation with the public, as well as with the specialists who worked in them (Gao, 2009; Yan, 2011). Information asymmetry, financial non-transparency and random fund raising also diminished their reputation. Social organizations did not have a well-developed internal self-regulation system (Gao, 2009; Liu and Zhu, 2013; Ma, 2002; Wang and Zhao, 2012; Xia, 2011; Xu and Li, 2011). The literature did not apply a participatory perspective, although each of these criticisms would be consistent with that type of framework too.

The literature also discussed the ineffective external supervision systems of NGOs. This was attributed to the lack of separation between registration and monitoring in the many government supervision authorities (Wang and Zhao, 2012). As Yan (2011) pointed out, the legal framework for Chinese NGOs is mainly administrative, with sector guidelines. The laws are not authoritative or enforceable, which means they have low or no operability when it comes to specific cases or incidents. Again the literature did not take the further step of linking these problems to the government slowness to respond to public demands for government to enforce greater NGO accountability, as would be suggested if a democratic framework were also applied.

The literature also discussed the ineffective external supervision systems of NGOs. This was attributed to the lack of separation between registration and monitoring in the many government supervision authorities (Wang and Zhao, 2012). As Yan (2011) pointed out, the legal framework for Chinese NGOs is mainly administrative, with sector guidelines. The laws are not authoritative or enforceable, which means they have low or no operability when it comes to specific cases or incidents. Again the literature did not take the further step of linking these problems to the government slowness to respond to public demands for government to enforce greater NGO accountability, as would be suggested if a democratic framework were also applied.

Social organizations and participation
When the literature contained the key words of NGO or social organization and participation (1,820 articles), it was generally about the benefits of NGOs participating in civil society, rather than about the consequences of citizens participating in NGOs or the implications of citizen
participation for accountability within NGOs. Most publications (97 percent) did not discuss public or service users’ participation in social organizations as promoting their own accountability to those citizens, the public in general or to government. This literature explored how NGO activities in social affairs changes social development and social governance in general. For instance, 690 publications were about NGOs’ participation in environmental protection and 670 about NGOs as an innovative form participating in social governance, rural governance or public crisis management. Interestingly, this literature did not make a direct link between individual citizen participation within an organization and the wider social benefits of the NGO participating in civil society.

Social organizations, participation and accountability

In the final section of Table I, only a small number of publications contained the words NGO or social organization, participation and accountability (48 articles) and none used the alternative word for accountability (wenze) in the full combination. Of these few publications, only two mentioned the relationship between public participation and NGO accountability. One was a newspaper article “How can polls be made not tokenistic” (Deng, 2010a, b), which mentioned NGO accountability in passing in a discussion about how opinion polls should be more than tokenistic, and should be integrated into the decision-making processes of public policy. The second publication was a magazine article “Response to the group demands for environmental rights” (Jiang, 2012), which emphasized that public participation in NGOs was necessary to guarantee that environmental projects were objectively and justifiably applied for, carried out and assessed.

Only one empirical study examined NGOs, public participation and accountability (Shang and Li, 2011). The publication found that in child welfare organizations participation took different forms: the organization was initiated and launched by mothers of children with disabilities; and the organization was maintained well and developed by resources mobilized by the mothers from various sources, including financial support, technical support and psychological support from the government, the community, civil society and an international NGO. The authors argued that these forms of participation by the service users themselves reflected the users’ values, benefits and demands, which was also important to hold NGOs accountable to the public.

Discussion

The results reveal that the Chinese literature about NGO accountability emphasizes the concepts of internal management systems and external supervision mechanisms. Although many publications about accountability used the term participation, it mostly referred to the involvement of NGOs in civil society, social development and governance. Almost none were concerned with the relationship between citizen participation within or outside NGOs and the NGOs’ accountability to these citizens, the wider public and the state. Deeper discussion was absent about participation as a process of engagement that could enhance NGOs. Examples of participating in NGO management, decision making, service delivery and evaluation, through which to voice their needs and expectations were absent, except the one empirical article where the local NGO had been advised about good practice by a similar international NGO (Shang and Li, 2011).

Explanations for the lack of Chinese language literature could include an absence of conceptual interest, managerial and mechanistic approaches to accountability, government regulations, and public distrust, each discussed below. It is unlikely that the reason that NGO accountability and participation are not linked in the literature is that it has been dismissed as unimportant or that it is empirically not evident in the actions of citizens or consumers within NGOs or in public engagement or avoidance of contact with NGOs. The popular media demands for greater NGO accountability are evidence of public dissatisfaction with past NGO
performance. Social media, especially microblogs, have become a tool for some people to expose scandals, corruption and misconduct. Social media is an accessible means for the public to give voice to the poor performance of NGOs. Some scholars, however, criticize this forum as cyber/internet violence (Zhao, 2011; Zou, 2008), because it can induce abuse and uncontrollable consequences. In the absence of alternatives for participation or accountability, media supervision is post hoc to remedy problems rather than avert them. The media coverage also demonstrates the potential power of citizens to shift the behavior of NGOs and to pressure the government to improve regulation and enforcement of NGO accountability. Perhaps contribution to social media also demonstrates citizens’ willingness to participate in more constructive engagement in and with NGOs.

A further explanation for the scarcity of research on the link between participation and accountability may be the level of public engagement in NGOs. Some scholars argued that it seems that the public does not actively participate in NGO activities because of the accountability problem itself (Wang and Zhao, 2012; Xia, 2011). They suggested that it is not because the public are not interested in or do not have any enthusiasm for public affairs, but because they have no trust in NGOs. The NGOs do not have sufficient credibility because the public cannot see transparent, sound management systems (Xu and Li, 2011). The scholars claimed that most NGOs do not yet share a sense of accountability about criteria for services they should provide, the value they should hold and the social responsibility they should take (Deng, 2000; Gao, 2009). Without specialized managers or professional staff, the quality of their management and services is criticized (Yan, 2011). They have limited internal capacity to improve the quality of their services because they do not have the corresponding management systems, resources and information (Fisher et al., 2011). It is little wonder that community members and staff witnessing these compromises and inconsistencies may be reluctant to become directly involved in the NGOs, either as people using the services, staff, volunteers or donors.

More likely than a disinterest in the theoretical link between NGO accountability and participation, is that the political context has probably meant that it has been easier for scholars to first focus on how to establish managerial self-regulating systems within NGOs, external regulation and monitoring mechanisms from government or civil society. Perhaps Chinese scholars see this managerialist approach, which combines internal and external regulation, as a practical first step to address accountability in the current political context.

The literature criticizes the current rules and guidelines for NGOs as amounting to principles, rather than specific criteria or deliberate rules (e.g. Regulations for the Registration and Management of Social Organizations, 1998; Interim Regulations on Registration Administration of Private Non-enterprise Units, 1998; Trust Law of People’s Republic of China, 2001; Accountability Criteria for NPOs, 2003; Regulations for Management of Foundations, 2004; and China’s Public Welfare NPO Guidelines for Self-Regulation, 2008). It notes that the regulations are not fully developed (Deng, 2000) and with low operability (Guo, 2010). The rules focus on the role and effectiveness of the NGO registration system (such as how to gain legal status; the power and duty of the government business supervising unit and the Civil Affairs Department over the NGO). The rules emphasize NGO accountability to the government agencies and the donors, but do not mention accountability to the public or the service users. For example, they do not anticipate citizen involvement in governance, transparency of financial records to donors, feedback or complaints mechanisms for people using the services.

The scholarly focus is a reflection of the current state of Chinese NGO organizational structures and practices. Many Chinese social organizations are governmental or quasi-governmental organizations or operate as if they were (Deng, 2000; Kang and Feng, 2014). This is because to become registered NGOs, they must be affiliated to a government business supervising unit, then registered at the civil affairs department (dual registration system).
The business supervising unit is usually a government agency, which can refuse to support the registration. Even when it does support registration, the implication is that it can control many aspects of the NGO, including funding allocation, sometimes has appointments to the governance structure (Kang and Feng, 2014; Liu and Zhu, 2013). Therefore, to gain legal registration and to survive, NGOs rely on government agencies. The other alternatives are to remain unregistered without a legal status, register as a private for-profit company or conduct activities without a legal status. Reforms to this system are progressing. By 2013, 19 provinces had implemented or tested direct registration, where the second government unit was to provide guidance only, not supervision; and the process for registration is simpler. As yet, the threshold is lowered only for NGOs that replace public services originally provided by the government, but many others are still not included (Kang and Feng, 2014).

This dual dependence on government for registration is tied to legal status, tax privileges, and sometimes access to financial resources, which is important for the survival and growth of NGOs. But it has also hindered their capacity to make independent decisions based on the NGO mission and public needs. Building and maintaining the relationship with the government emphasizes upward accountability to the government, rather than internal to people involved in NGO activities or external to donors or local communities (Kang and Feng, 2014). The implications are that NGOs respond to the immediate dual government compliance demands and are less likely to also make room for power sharing with internal and external local community members.

International literature on NGO accountability acknowledges the complexity of the concepts and the multiplicity of the approaches, from government regulation and self-regulation (Benjamin, 2013) to recognition of accountability as a political process, requiring engagement with citizens inside and outside the organization. At a conceptual level at least, NGOs in China operate within these same social structures. If NGO accountability is seen as a process of empowerment, it enables the public first to know about how they can participate, then to decide what and how they can contribute within and outside the NGOs so that NGOs’ performance is pertinent to and reflects the need and demand of the public. And as an emancipatory process, it positions participants in a more active and powerful status. By participating, the public has the potential to bring about social change through individual contribution or community involvement in forms of information sharing or consultation, decision making, service design, delivery and evaluation, and peer-regulation. NGOs have the potential to listen to the public, through which they “learn and collaborate with peers to engender a culture of reflective leaning across the sector” (Crack, 2013).

Implications for NGO accountability in China
This review of Chinese language literature on participation and NGO accountability has the potential to inform questions about its future directions in China. The current Chinese language literature focuses on managerial approaches to understanding the problem and solutions to NGO accountability. In general it fails to engage in questions of participation, which would require a more explicit acknowledgment of democratic frameworks of accountability. At a practical level, the current focus is understandable – formal NGOs are relatively new in the Chinese governance structure and political landscape; and government regulations are largely administrative and unenforced. But at a conceptual and political level, the absence of discussion about other forms of accountability ignores the broader questions about public dissatisfaction with NGO performance and their potential willingness to contribute to improvement in service quality, NGO effectiveness, and civic engagement.

This study adds to the conceptualization of NGO accountability and participation as applying to transition countries such as China. The limited discussion by Chinese researchers and policy makers about NGO practices that have promoted opportunities for
citizen participation around China can only have contributed to the accountability problem of Chinese NGOs. No doubt some NGOs are engaging in participatory practices, as the few Chinese language and international articles have begun to explore. Recognition and understanding of these practices in the Chinese context could also contribute to broader questions of accountability in other parts of Chinese society. In the absence of analytical discussion of the rights, opportunities and benefits of this form of political participation, the public has relied on criticism of NGOs through traditional and new social media such as microblogs or WeChat. Despite their enthusiasm for public affairs, they have limited opportunities to participate in NGO processes that they can trust. The cycle of poor accountability and low civic contribution continues to repeat. While accountability of NGOs to the public remains unanalyzed, the public are likely to remain less active in NGO activities. Based on these arguments, integrating participation into the other managerial mechanisms for NGO accountability could contribute to improving trust in the activities and governance of Chinese NGOs and construct more inclusive Chinese NGO governance.

Investigating Chinese NGO accountability linked to the concept of participation in Chinese language research has direct application to the Chinese welfare state. Future researchers could extend this focus to the effectiveness of participation in Chinese NGO accountability and apply similar analysis to other transition countries.

Note
1. Transition country here refers to countries like China and central and eastern European countries that are shifting from planned to market economies.

References


**Corresponding author**
Ling Zhong can be contacted at: zhongling@sztu.edu.cn

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website: [www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm)

Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Military expenditures and health: a cross-national study, 1975-2000

Jeffrey Kentor
Department of Sociology, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan, USA, and
Andrew Jorgenson
Department of Sociology, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, USA

Abstract

Purpose – Recent sociological research highlights the growth of military expenditures in hi-tech, capital-intensive armaments and technology. The purpose of this paper is to examine the impact of these capital-intensive expenditures on two related health outcomes: under-five mortality and life expectancy.

Design/methodology/approach – This research utilizes a series of cross-national panel models estimated for a diverse sample of developed and less-developed countries from 1975 to 2000.

Findings – The authors find that hi-tech military expenditures increase under-five mortality and reduce life expectancy over the period studied, by reducing the number and type of soldiers able to take advantage of increased health-related resources obtained in the military and indirectly, by increasing income inequality, which negatively impacts these health outcomes.

Research limitations/implications – This cross-national study should be supplemented by case studies to better understand the processes being examined.

Practical implications – The increase in capital-intensive military expenditures found worldwide reduces the total number of soldiers in the military and raises their enlistment requirements. This makes it difficult for people with limited human capital to take advantage of the military’s traditional pathway for upward mobility. New pathways for mobility will have to be developed to avoid the creation of a new permanent underclass.

Social implications – There are significant social policy implications for the findings. Hi-tech military expenditures have a significant negative impact on the short- and long-term health outcomes of children and adults, in both developed and less-developed countries, which must be addressed by public policy planners.

Originality/value – This is one of a handful of sociological studies on the impact of military establishment on society. These findings highlight the importance of “bringing the military back in” to the forefront of sociological research.

Keywords Public health, Disadvantaged groups, Health services, Political economy, Social policy

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

After an absence of more than four decades, there has been a resurgence of empirical work on the impact of the military on various aspects of society, including economic growth, income inequality, and the environment. Our study continues this effort, focusing on the impact of military expenditures on two related health outcomes: under-five mortality and life expectancy. We begin with a review of the extant literature on the impact of the military establishment, enabling us to develop four hypotheses regarding the military expenditures/health relationship. We test these hypotheses with a cross-national panel analysis of 63-72 countries for the 1975-2000 time period. We focus on one particular aspect of military spending, that of capital-intensive, high-tech expenditures. We do so because there has been a global shift toward reliance on high-tech equipment, rather than personnel, over the period in question.

Fast forwarding to our results, we find that these high-tech military expenditures increase under-five mortality and reduce life expectancy, in wealthy and poor countries alike. The findings have significant policy implications, which we consider in the conclusion section of the paper.

Military expenditures and economic growth

The debate regarding the impact of military expenditures on economic growth, the “guns or butter” question, continues without resolution after nearly 50 years of investigation.

Military and inequality
The military is also seen as an equalizing force in sociology, by expanding human capital through education and technical training (Andreski, 1968; Lenski and Nolan, 1984). Empirical findings generally support this argument (Garnier and Hazelrigg, 1977; Chan, 1989; Kentor, 1998; Kick et al., 2006; Graeff and Mehlkop, 2006), although there is some evidence to the contrary (Cutright, 1967; Weede, 1993).

There are relatively few studies and even less consensus on the impact of military expenditures on income inequality. Abell (1994) found that military expenditures increased income inequality in the USA post-Viet Nam era. Abell argued that this was due to pay differentials between the military and civilian sectors, which are mediated by a shift to a hi-technology, capital-intensive military. Labor in hi-tech industries is relatively high paid (Melman, 1974). However, hi-tech expenditures generate relatively fewer employment gains, especially for those who do not possess sufficient education or skills to work in the defense industry or related research activities (Carson, 1987). Ali and Galbraith (2003), in a cross-national panel study between 1987 and 1997, find that military expenditures increase wage inequality. They hypothesize that this is due to the reallocation of resources away from social programs in education and health that have an equalizing effect on society (see also Vadlamannati, 2008). Ali and Galbraith (2003, p. 2) also note the potential impact of what they refer to as “equipment-intensive” militaries, suggesting that spending in this area might reduce the mitigating effects of a labor-intensive military on inequality. More recently, Lin and Ali (2009) utilize a panel Granger non-causality test on 58 countries from 1987 to 1999 and find no causal relationship between military expenditures and income inequality.

Benefits of military participation
Service in the military brings a wide range of benefits, including higher levels of education, the acquisition of transferable skills, future employment, and higher incomes than non-veterans (Mangum and Ball, 1989; Angrist, 1998; Light, 1998; Hisnanick, 2003). This is especially true for minorities and other disadvantaged groups (Sampson and Laub, 1996; Bufford, 2003). More recent work suggests that the military provides a pathway for disadvantaged individuals out of resource-poor environments (Teachman and Tedrow, 2004). It is also suggested that the military enhances opportunities for expanded social networks (Hisnanick, 2003) and weak ties that improve opportunities for employment (Granovetter, 1973, 1974).

High-tech military expenditures (military expenditures per soldier (MEPS))[1]
There is a growing literature that examines one aspect of military expenditures: spending on high-tech materials (e.g. Clark et al., 2010; Jorgenson and Clark, 2009; Jorgenson et al., 2010; Kentor and Kick, 2008; Kentor et al., 2012). It is argued that this disaggregated component of overall military expenditures has a distinct impact on a host of outcomes. This new focus resonates with the admonitions of several researchers in this field, who
suggest that a disaggregated approach will provide a more productive avenue for research in this area (Griffin et al., 1982; Mintz and Hicks, 1984; Kick and Sharda, 1986; Kentor and Kick, 2008).

Military establishments worldwide are becoming increasingly capital intensive (Abell, 1990; Cody, 2005; Kentor and Kick, 2008; Myers, 2004). This component of military expenditures has been operationalized as “military expenditures per soldier (MEPS), which reflects a military’s capital intensiveness” (Kentor, 2004). Kentor et al. (2012) report that these hi-tech expenditures doubled on average in a broad sample of 83 countries from 1970 to 1999, while the number of military personnel actually declined slightly. Capital-intensive militaries require more educated, but fewer, personnel. As a result, they have instituted increased entry requirements, excluding those without the necessary education and skills. No longer able to take advantage of this pathway of upward mobility and, without other institutional opportunities, individuals without the necessary human capital resources are unlikely to obtain the education and skills necessary to participate in an increasingly hi-tech civilian economy. Nor do they have access to the benefits provided to enlistees, both during and after active duty.

Empirical studies of capital-intensive military expenditures
Comparative research on the impacts of capital-intensive militarization has gained momentum in recent years, focusing on economic growth, inequality, and the environment. In a cross-national study of developed and less-developed countries, Kentor and Kick (2008) report that hi-tech military expenditures inhibit economic growth, due in part to limiting labor force growth. The economies of less-developed countries are most affected by these hi-tech expenditures. In a follow-up cross-national study, Kentor et al. (2012) find that hi-tech military expenditures exacerbate household income inequality in both developed and less-developed countries. They argue that the higher induction requirements of capital-intensive militaries limit the ability of minorities and disadvantaged groups to access the benefits provided by military service and obtain subsequent employment in the civilian economy. This results in an increasing number of long-term unemployed and unemployable individuals.

Jorgenson et al. (2010) find that MEPS contributes to growth in national-level anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions for both developed and less-developed countries. Similarly, Clark et al. (2010) focus on militarization and energy use, and find that nations with higher levels of MEPS consume greater amounts of fossil fuels. Jorgenson and Clark’s (2009) panel study of the ecological footprints of nations identifies a strong positive association between such consumption-based environmental pressures and MEPS. Capital-intensive militaries are likely to increase their material infrastructure or become more spatially dispersed, which requires increased consumption of natural resources and land use (Jorgenson et al., 2012).

Having explored the relevant literature on military spending, we turn now to the question at hand: the impact of military expenditures on health outcomes.

Military expenditures and well-being
There is a broad literature on the impact of military service and expenditures on health and education.

Resource allocation (trade-offs)
It is argued by many that there is an adversarial relationship between military spending and social spending. It is thought that these areas compete with each other for resources. This argument, referred to as “resource allocation” or “opportunity costs,” goes
as far back as Adam Smith (1937). Wolpin (1986) argues that exceptionally large military expenditures in less-developed countries have lowered living standards. Empirical studies are equivocal. Russett (1982) finds no “trade-offs” between military spending and health and education expenditures in the USA from 1941 to 1979. Harris (1986) also find no support for trade-offs in 12 Asian countries between 1967 and 1982. However, a number of researchers do find evidence for the trade-off hypothesis. Debalko and McCormick (1984) find significant, but weak, negative effects of military expenditures on public health and education. In a budgetary trade-off study of 13 Latin American countries, Looney (1986) reports a negative relationship between defense expenditures and social welfare spending. Dixon and Moon (1986), in a cross-national study of 116 countries, find that military spending inhibits social welfare outcomes, while military participation has a positive impact on these outcomes. Adeola (1996) reports a positive relationship between military expenditures and education spending, but a negative effect of military spending on health and social outcomes for a sample of 60 developing countries in 1985. Gifford (2006) finds that countries with large standing militaries spend less on social well-being. Conversely, countries with conscription exhibit greater spending in these areas.

**Under-five mortality and life expectancy**


**Military expenditures, income inequality, and health**

As noted earlier, recent empirical studies suggest that MEPS may increase income inequality (Kentor *et al.*, 2012). There is a substantial literature suggesting that income inequality may adversely affect health outcomes. Initial research in this area found a negative relationship between income inequality and health outcomes, including under-five mortality (Pampel and Pillai, 1986; Wagstaff and Van Doorslaer, 2000) and life expectancy (Wilkinson, 1992, 1996; Lobmayer and Wilkinson, 2000). More recent studies tended to dismiss these claims as artifactual (i.e. Deaton, 2003; Beckfield, 2004). Current research, however, appears to reaffirm the earlier findings (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2006; Babones, 2006). Wilkinson and Pickett’s (2006) review of the literature provides a comprehensive picture of the state of this research. Wilkinson and Pickett reviewed the findings of 168 analyses of the relationship between income distributions and health outcomes. According to their findings, 70 percent of these analyses indicate that societies with larger income differences have poorer health. If the analyses are restricted to metropolitan areas or larger and studies with problematic control variables are excluded, only 6 percent of the remaining 128 analyses would be considered “unsupportive.” Two subsequent articles support this position. In a cross-national study of 126 countries, Dorling *et al.* (2007) report a significant influence of income inequality on mortality, especially for younger adults, and conclude that “social inequality seems to have a universal negative impact on health.” Finally, Karlsson *et al.* (2010) find in their cross-national study of 21 countries a negative relationship between income inequality and self-reported health for data collected in 2006.
The impact of hi-tech military expenditures on health: four hypotheses

The above literature review provides the groundwork for the following four propositions that will be tested in subsequent analyses:

1. Direct effect of hi-tech expenditures: the military provides various health benefits for its personnel and their families. This includes physical conditioning, improved nutrition, medical care, and health education for the enlistee and her/his family as well as access to Veterans Administration benefits in subsequent years. It also provides education and technical skills that enable disadvantaged individuals to obtain employment in the civilian sector, with higher lifetime wages than non-veterans. Therefore, excluding those who most benefit from military enlistment and who could not otherwise obtain them would have a negative impact on overall health outcomes. So our first hypothesis is that increases in MEPS would have a negative impact on health outcomes, both short and long-term, by denying those without the necessary human capital access to military employment.

2. Opportunity costs: a second argument is that overall military expenditures compete with civilian expenditures for overall government expenditures. From this perspective, increases in military expenditures reduce government expenditures in social services. Reductions in social services will have a deleterious impact on the overall health of a country’s population.

3. International political economy (arms imports): the militaries in less-developed countries may be “encouraged” by the few large military arms exporting countries to become more capital-intensive, driving up their arms expenditures and exporting capital that might otherwise be used for social welfare.

4. Inequality: recent findings indicate that hi-tech military expenditures increase income inequality. The literature further suggests that inequality may negatively impact health. Therefore, our final hypothesis is that hi-tech military expenditures may have an indirect negative effect on health outcomes, via the positive effect of MEPS on income inequality.

With our hypotheses in place, we now proceed with our empirical analyses.

Methods and data

Cross-national design

This study employs a cross-national design. The strength of this methodology is in the identification of consistent, systematic relationships across a broad geography of countries that vary widely in terms of economic systems, level of development, social supports, educational policies, inequality, etc., providing some assurance that these findings reflect more than idiosyncratic events. This strength is also its weakness, in that it precludes a clear understanding of how these dynamics operate in any given country. For that, case studies are required. Those would be a valuable addition to our understanding of the processes in question.

Two-way fixed effects (FE) models and ordinary least squares (OLS) cross-sectional models

We use a pooled-time series of cross-sections panel data set design and employ the “xtregar” suite of commands in Stata software (Version 11) to estimate two-way FE models with the within estimator (Allison, 2009). This is one of the most commonly used methods in the comparative social sciences – including comparative sociology, because it addresses the problem of heterogeneity bias (Halaby, 2004). Heterogeneity bias in this context refers to the confounding effect of unmeasured time-invariant variables that are
omitted from the regression models. To correct for heterogeneity bias, FE models control for omitted variables that are time invariant but that do vary across cases. This can be done by estimating unit-specific intercepts, which are the fixed-effects for each case. With the “xtreg” suite of commands in FE are estimated with the within estimator, which involves a mean deviation algorithm for the dependent variable and each time-varying independent variable. We also include unreported period-specific intercepts (i.e. “year dummies”). Therefore, these are two-way FE models. FE models are quite appropriate for this type of cross-national panel research because time-invariant unmeasured factors could affect human well-being outcomes. The FE approach also provides a stringent assessment of the relationships between the time-variant predictors and outcomes, given that the associations between them are estimated net of unmeasured between-country effects. Overall, this modeling approach is quite robust against missing control variables and more closely approximates experimental conditions than other model estimation techniques (Hsiao, 2003). In all FE models we include a correction for first-order autocorrelation (i.e. AR(1) correction), which was determined necessary through diagnostic tests (Greene, 2000; Wooldridge, 2002).

Due to data availability limitations for an important income inequality control variable, in the final series of reported analyses we employ OLS regression with robust standard errors. All variables are transformed into logarithmic form and thus all reported regression models estimate elasticity coefficients[2]. The coefficients of an elasticity model are relatively easy to interpret. Specifically, the coefficient for each independent variable in such a model is the estimated percentage change in the dependent variable associated with a 1 percent increase in the independent variable, controlling for all other factors in the model.

**The data set**

For many of the reported model estimates, we analyze a balanced panel data set, consisting of observations at five-year increments from 1975 to 2000 for 72 nations. We include countries where data are available for both outcomes and the key independent variables at each of the included time points, and the independent variables are lagged five years relative to the dependent variables. Due to limited data availability for some of the additional controls, several of the tested FE models for both dependent variables include unbalanced panel datasets with less than 72 nations. We remind readers that since we include an AR(1) correction, the reported overall sample sizes and mean numbers of observations per country in the estimated models are reduced, the former by the number of countries in the data set, and the latter by a value of 1.

In the final series of reported analyses that employ OLS regression with robust standard errors, the number of countries is reduced to 41 with an average of 1.3 observations per nations.

Table I lists all the countries included in the analyses.

**Variables**

We first describe the two dependent variables, followed by descriptions of the independent variables in the order they are introduced into the estimated models.

**The dependent variables.** The first dependent variable is average life expectancy, which indicates the average number of years a newborn would live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth were to stay the same throughout its life. These data are obtained from the World Bank (2007), and are derived from male and female life expectancy at birth. The World Bank obtains male and female life expectancy data from United Nations Population Division, census reports and other statistical publications from national statistical offices, Eurostat: demographic statistics, Secretariat of the Pacific Community: Statistics and Demography Program, and US Census Bureau: International Database.
The second dependent variable, which we obtain from the same source as the first dependent variable, is under-five mortality rate. This measure refers to the probability of a child dying between birth and the age of five, if subject to current age-specific mortality rates, and is expressed per 1,000 live births. The World Bank obtains these data from the Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation.

The independent variables. We employ MEPS in the subsequent analyses. MEPS is calculated by dividing total military expenditures by total military personnel. Total military personnel estimates are gathered from the World Bank (2007) and total military expenditures are obtained from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) (1977/1984/1987/1991/2000). Military expenditures include all current capital expenditures on the armed forces, including peacekeeping forces; defense ministries and other government agencies engaged in defense projects; paramilitary forces, if these are judged to be trained and equipped for military operations; and military space activities. More specifically, such expenditures include operation and maintenance; procurement; military research and development; military and civil personnel, including retirement pensions of military personnel and social services for personnel; and military aid (in the military expenditures of the donor country). Military personnel are active duty military personnel as well as paramilitary forces if
the training, organization, and equipment suggest they may be used to support or replace regular military forces.

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in constant 2000 US dollars is included to control for level of economic development. These measures of economic development are obtained from the World Bank (2007).

We include two additional military variables: military expenditures as percent GDP and military participation rate. Military expenditures as percent GDP are obtained from the World Bank (2007), who use SIPRI's military expenditures data along with total GDP data in constant US dollars to calculate the measures. Military participation rate is a ratio of the number of military personnel per 1,000 population. To calculate military participation, we use the World Bank's (2007) military personnel estimates and total population data.

We control for fertility rate, which is a common predictor in models of under-five mortality and average life expectancy. The measure of fertility rates, which we obtain from the World Bank (2007), represent the average number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live to the end of her child-bearing years and bear children in accordance with current age-specific fertility rates.

Exports as percent total GDP is included to control for a country's level of integration in the world economy. These data are obtained from the World Bank (2007).

Primary education is included as a measure of human capital, and is the total primary school enrollment (both sexes), regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the primary school-aged population. The values can be over 100 percent due to the inclusion of overage and underage students in enrollment statistics. We obtain these data from the World Bank (2007), who gathers them from the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics.

Doctors per 1,000 is included as a control variable, and includes graduates of a school of medicine who are working in any medical field (including teaching, research, and practice) per 1,000 individuals. We obtain these data from the World Bank (2007), who gathers them from the World Health Organization.

We employ a gini coefficient with a potential range of values from zero to 100 that measures household income inequality. These data are obtained from the University of Texas Inequality Project (http://utip.gov.utexas.edu/data.html). The data set is readily downloadable, and labeled as EHII (i.e. estimated household income inequality data set)[3]. Recent studies in the social sciences that employ the EHII income inequality data include Galbraith (2009), Jen et al. (2008), Kentor et al. (2012), and Meschi and Vivarelli (2009).

Arms imports as percent of total GDP includes the supply of military weapons through sales, aid, gifts, and those made through manufacturing licenses. Data cover major conventional weapons such as aircraft, armored vehicles, artillery, radar systems, missiles, and ships designed for military use. Excluded are transfers of other military equipment such as small arms and light weapons, trucks, small artillery, ammunition, support equipment, technology transfers, and other services. Arms import data are initially obtained from World Bank (2007) and are reported in constant 1990 US dollars. We use total GDP data in constant 2000 US dollars (World Bank, 2007) to create the measure of imports as percent of total GDP.

Health expenditures as percent of total GDP, which we obtain from the World Bank (2007), refer to the sum of public and private health expenditures as percent of GDP, and covers the provision of health services (preventive and curative), family planning activities, nutrition activities, and emergency aid designated for health.

We include income share held by lowest 10 percent as an additional measure of income inequality. These data, which we obtain from the World Bank (2007), are limited in their availability and thus models that employ them are estimated with OLS regression.
There is substantial variation in these variables across the countries included in the analyses. In 1980, for example, the USA had a per capita income of US$36,450, life expectancy of about 77 years, and under-five mortality rate of 8 per 1,000. In contrast, Malawi in 1980 had a per capita income of US$156, life expectancy of 44 years, and under-five mortality rate of 174 per 1,000. There were 0.25 physicians per 1,000 in Malawi, compared to 1.5 physicians per 1,000 in the USA. Income inequality was a different story. The income share held by the lowest 10 percent of the population in 1980 was 1.8 percent in the USA, 2.0 percent in Rwanda, and 2.5 percent in Canada. Military expenditures have the greatest range across countries. In 1980, the USA spent about 265 billion dollars on defense, while the next largest spender, the U.K, spent 49 billion dollars. The difference is more dramatic today. US military expenditures were 596 billion dollars in 2015, compared to 55 billion dollars in the UK.

Descriptive statistics and pairwise bivariate correlations for all variables included in the analyses are provided in Table II.

Analyses
The following analyses estimate the direct and indirect effects of capital-intensive military expenditures on under-five mortality and average life expectancy as specified in our four hypotheses above. The first set of analyses (Table III) examines the direct impact of these expenditures on our health outcomes as detailed in the first hypothesis. In the next two steps (Tables IV and V), we assess the mediating effects of opportunity costs, arms imports, and income inequality identified in second and fourth hypotheses. The FE panel methodology described above is used in Tables III and IV. However, OLS models are reported in Table V due to data limitations.

Results
We turn now to the results. Unstandardized coefficients (flagged for statistical significance) as well as their t-statistics (absolute values) are reported. For the FE models, we provide $R^2$ within and $R^2$ overall values (also reported for the OLS models), and for all estimated models we also report the number of countries, mean observations per country, and overall sample size.

The results in Table III indicate that MEPS negatively affect life expectancy and positively affect under-five mortality rates. Three models are examined for each health outcome. Model A includes only MEPS and GDP per capita. Model B adds the military participation rate and total military expenditures/GDP controls. The remaining control variables of fertility rate, exports/GDP, primary education enrollments, and doctors per 1,000 are included in Model C. MEPS is statistically significant in all three models in the expected directions, with a positive effect on under-five mortality and a negative effect on life expectancy.

Turning to the control variables, GDP per capita positively affects average life expectancy and negatively affects under-five mortality rates in all models. Primary education levels and the number of doctors per 1,000 both positively affect life expectancy and negatively affect under-five mortality in their respective models. None of the other control variables have statistically significant effects on either health outcome[4].

The findings reported in Table IV address the indirect effects of capital-intensive military expenditures on health identified in the second, third and fourth hypotheses (resource allocation, arms imports, and income inequality). These models include MEPS as well as the other two military measures and GDP per capita. Each reported model for both outcomes also includes one additional predictor: domestic income inequality, measured as a gini coefficient (Model D), arms imports as percent of GDP (Model E), or health expenditures as percent of GDP (Model F). Military expenditures per soldier continue to negatively affect
Table II. Descriptive statistics and pairwise bivariate correlations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
<th>(8)</th>
<th>(9)</th>
<th>(10)</th>
<th>(11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under-five mortality</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military expenditures per soldier</td>
<td>9.48</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>7.78</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-0.89</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military participation rate</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military expenditures as % GDP</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fertility rate</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>-0.79</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>-0.80</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports as % GDP</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.34</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary education</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctors per 1,000</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health expenditures as % GDP</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.66</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income share held by lowest 10%</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>-0.39</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All variables are logged (ln)
life expectancy and positively affect under-five mortality in all but one Model (F). In this model, the $p$-value for the estimated effect of military expenditures per soldier on life expectancy when controlling for health expenditures is slightly above the 0.10 significance level, but this may be due to limited data availability for health expenditures.

### Table III.
Coefficients for the regression of life expectancy and under-five mortality on selected independent variables: two-way fixed effects model estimates with AR(1) correction for 63-72 countries, 1975-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>UFM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE Model A</td>
<td>-0.03*** (4.59)</td>
<td>0.07** (3.16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE Model B</td>
<td>-0.03*** (4.04)</td>
<td>-0.38*** (6.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE Model C</td>
<td>-0.03* (1.75)</td>
<td>-0.10 (0.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFM Model A</td>
<td>0.06** (2.79)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFM Model B</td>
<td>0.06*** (1.75)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UFM Model C</td>
<td>0.06**** (1.75)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Unstandardized coefficients flagged for statistical significance; absolute value of $t$-statistics in parentheses. All models include unreported period-specific intercepts; all variables except year dummies are logged. LE, life expectancy; UFM, under-five mortality. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; **** $p < 0.10$ (two-tailed)
the sample size and mean number of countries for this estimated model are largely reduced. The estimated effects of the other two military variables and GDP per capita are generally consistent with the analyses reported in Table III. However, the estimated effects of health expenditures, arms imports, and income inequality (gini coefficient) on both health outcomes are all non-significant, providing no support for second, third and fourth hypotheses.

The final set of results, reported in Table V, assesses the mediating effect of a different aspect of income inequality: the income share held by the lowest 10 percent of the population. As a reminder, sufficient data for this variable are not available to perform FE panel analyses, so OLS models with robust standard errors are estimated instead. For direct comparison, we also report baseline models for both outcomes (that include MEPS, GDP per capita, and the other two military variables) restricted to the same reduced sample as the models that introduce the alternative inequality measure.

In these models, the estimated effects of MEPS on both health outcomes remain statistically significant and in the expected directions. The newly introduced income inequality measure, the income share held by the lowest 10 percent of the population, also has a significant negative effect on under-five mortality rates, but is not significant in the life expectancy models[5]. Total military expenditures/GDP increase under-five mortality, but have no effect on life expectancy. GDP per capita continues to have a positive effect on life expectancy and a negative effect on under-five mortality. While these results are supportive of a mediating role of income inequality, they must be considered tentative, given these models do not include FE and the relatively small number of cases.

**Discussion and conclusion**

The reported findings support the central proposition of this study: hi-tech, capital-intensive military expenditures have adverse effects on under-five mortality and life expectancy over the period in question, net of relevant control variables. Our most robust findings are direct adverse effects of these capital-intensive expenditures on both health outcomes. We also find tentative support for the mediating role of income inequality on under-five mortality.

We find no support for propositions concerning mediating roles of resource allocation or arms imports. We argue that the shift to a hi-tech, capital-intensive military reduces the overall need for military personnel while increasing the human capital requirements of enlistees, effectively limiting the ability of those without the requisite education and skills to obtain entry. These disadvantaged individuals are thereby denied access to the many benefits afforded military personnel and their families, including education and technical

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>LE</th>
<th>UFM</th>
<th>UFM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model G</td>
<td>-0.04* (1.73)</td>
<td>-0.04**** (1.67)</td>
<td>0.23* (1.79)</td>
<td>0.27** (1.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model H</td>
<td>0.11*** (4.73)</td>
<td>0.11*** (4.74)</td>
<td>-0.91*** (8.21)</td>
<td>-0.93*** (7.63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military participation rate</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.30)</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.31)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military expenditures as % GDP</td>
<td>0.04 (0.30)</td>
<td>0.02 (0.16)</td>
<td>1.60* (1.99)</td>
<td>1.16*** (1.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income share held by lowest 10%</td>
<td>-0.01 (0.62)</td>
<td>-0.52*** (2.83)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>3.65*** (29.41)</td>
<td>3.70*** (30.27)</td>
<td>8.41*** (12.62)</td>
<td>8.71*** (13.86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R² overall</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of countries</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean observations per country</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Unstandardized coefficients flagged for statistical significance; absolute value of t-statistics in parentheses. LE, life expectancy; UFM under-five mortality; all variables are logged. *p < 0.10, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01 (two-tailed); ****p < 0.10 (one-tailed)
skills training, health benefits both during and after active service, increased lifetime income and, more broadly considered, a bridge or pathway out of their resource-poor environments. The inability to access these benefits has a direct adverse impact on the health of the individual and her/his family.

There may be an indirect dynamic as well. Previous research indicates that this move to hi-tech militaries increases income inequality, by restricting the military’s traditional role of pathway of upward mobility for disadvantaged people (Kentor et al., 2012). Our results suggest that this increased inequality leads to increased under-five mortality over the period studied. This finding also contributes to the broader debate on the impact of income inequality on health.

It is important to note that these dynamics are not confined to wealthy countries alone. We find that the relationship between hi-tech military expenditures and health exists in countries at all levels of development, and its continued growth (Kentor et al., 2012), will likely exacerbate this effect over time. Our findings, along with other recent studies, give increasing awareness to the negative impacts of the military on many outcomes, including economic development (Kentor and Kick, 2008), the environment (Jorgenson et al., 2010; Jorgenson et al., 2012), and income distribution (Kentor et al., 2012).

The policy implications of our study are significant. Our results suggest that capital-intensive militaries no longer afford the disadvantaged with a pathway of upward mobility. This may be the only major avenue available for these individuals in many nations, wealthy and poor alike. It does not seem unreasonable to ask why it is that many nations, including the USA, provide disadvantaged people no alternatives to military service to better their lives and the lives of their families. And to the extent that this pathway has been closed, what (if any) institutional structures will replace it? It is surprising perhaps to realize that an entire country’s health is significantly impacted by policy changes in militaries that enlist only a small fraction of the total population. Evidently, the military’s historical role as a pathway of upward mobility is a powerful one, not only for those directly affected, but for society as a whole. As Stanislav Andreski (1968) noted nearly a half-century ago, the military performs important and unintended functions in society, by bringing together people of widely differing economic, racial, ethnic, and educational backgrounds, a theme echoed more recently by Yarmolinsky (1971).

Some may respond to the findings herein and elsewhere by arguing that the purpose of the military is to protect its country and citizens from external threats, and that these unintended consequences are unfortunate but irrelevant to the military’s mission. Perhaps, but these dynamics have broad, lasting impacts on society. Consequently, governments would do well to pay close attention to the unintended repercussions brought about by changes to this institution.

Notes
1. Some military scholars prefer to use the term “troop” instead of “soldier.” However, the concept of “military expenditures per soldier” is commonly used in the sociological literature, so we continue this practice.

2. We note that results of sensitivity analyses available upon request where we estimate all models with the “unlogged” forms of the measures are consistent with the reported estimates.

3. More specifically, these data are estimates of gross household income inequality, computed from regression equations that consider the relationship between the commonly used Deininger and Squire (1996) inequality measures and UTIP’s UNIDO pay inequality measures, controlling for the source characteristics in the Deininger and Squire data and for the share of manufacturing in total employment. The EHII measures are more appropriate for cross-national analyses of domestic income inequality than the commonly used Deininger and Squire measures since they include substantially more countries and yearly estimates, they account for changes over time and
differences across countries in pay dispersion, and the estimates are adjusted to household gross income as a reference, and unexplained variations in the Deininger and Squire income inequality measures are treated as inexplicable and thus disregarded in the calculations.

4. In sensitivity analyses available upon request, we estimate the same models as reported in Tables III and IV for samples that exclude all developed countries as well as those that exclude just the USA. The estimated effects of MEPS on both health outcomes in the models for the reduced samples are substantively consistent with the reported findings.

5. In sensitivity analyses available upon request, we instead use measures of income share held by the lowest 20 percent of the population. The results are substantively identical with the reported findings, which should be expected since the two income measures are correlated above 0.9.

References


Further reading


Corresponding author

Jeffrey Kentor can be contacted at: jeffrey.kentor@wayne.edu
Informal economies and scholastic epistemocentrism: a reflexive rethinking

Anna Danielsson
Department of Government, Uppsala University, Uppsala, Sweden

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine three explanatory perspectives in the academic literature on informal economies that seek to account for agents’ engagement in informal economic practices.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper draws on Pierre Bourdieu’s reflexive sociology to interrogate the existing perspectives and to provide a conceptual rethinking of informal economies and informal economic practices.

Findings – The paper reveals an inherent scholastic epistemocentrism in the established perspectives. By privileging either an objectivist or a subjectivist viewpoint, these accounts do not examine the practical knowledge and logic that constitute agents’ knowledgeable engagement in informal economic practices. By making use of Bourdieu’s thinking tools of “field”, “capital” and “the habitus”, the paper offers a conceptual rethinking of informal economic practices as the product of a dialectic relationship between socially objectivated structures and subjective representations and experiences.

Originality/value – The paper introduces a reflexive rethinking of informality that draws on but also develops an emergent literature on informal economic practices as relational and context bound.

Keywords Practice, Reflexivity, Informal economy, Pierre Bourdieu

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

The “informal economy” is a topical issue in many academic disciplines (e.g. Cling et al., 2014; Polese and Morris, 2015; Danielsson, 2016). In some fields, this marks a recent development. The disciplines of international relations (IR) and international political economy (IPE), for instance, were long hesitant to take on informal economies as objects of study (Peterson, 2010, p. 244). One vital catalyst behind the upsurge in academic interest was the acknowledgement of “informalisation” as a globally persistent process (Williams, 2014, p. 737). This interest displays itself, among other things, in debates about how to define informal economic activities. However, studies of informal employment and business practices (performed by self-employed micro-businesses or larger companies) do largely concur on a definition of informality as referring to income-generating and monetarised activities that due to non-registration, tax avoidance and failure to adhere to formal regulations occur outside the official purview of the state (Williams and Round, 2008[1]).

One of the more intensely studied aspects in the sprawling literature concerns agents’ participation in informal economic practices (e.g. Williams, 2010; Bruns et al., 2011; Barsoum, 2015). The aim of this paper is to examine from a novel viewpoint three established (and criticised) approaches – the structuralist, legalist and network perspectives – that seek to explain agents’ everyday engagement in informal economic exchanges. I argue in this paper that these perspectives are, for various reasons, characterised by a “scholastic epistemocentrism” (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, 2000). The epistemocentrism reveals itself as these perspectives offer either an objectivist or a subjectivist account of informal economic practices. This implies that neither perspective succeeds in taking agents’ practical knowledge and the dynamics of everyday practice seriously.

The turn to Pierre Bourdieu for the interrogation and (re)theorising how we as scholars study informal economies is both vital and rewarding. In light of the global ubiquity of informal economic practices and the significant academic interest that the informal economy
has come to attract as object of study, a reflexive “step back” and interrogation of the relation between theory and practice and of what the “scholarly gaze” implies for our understanding of this object appear particularly acute. In addition, the paper’s linked aim of reconceptualising informal economies in a Bourdieu-inspired manner that brings the scholarly gaze closer to everyday practice (while remaining aware of the distinctions between theoretical and practical knowledge) can further enhance the relevance of studying informal economies in disciplines such as IR and IPE that have recently turned to “the everyday” (e.g. Neumann, 2002; Hobson and Seabrooke, 2007; Buenger and Gadinger, 2014).

The argument is developed in three main parts. The first part discusses Bourdieu’s notion of epistemic reflexivity and his critique of the “scholastic point of view”. The second part analyses the theoretical and meta-theoretical underpinnings of the structuralist, the legalist and the network approach, respectively. In this part, I discuss the underlying scholastic epistemocentrism of these perspectives in terms of a “theoreticist fallacy” and an “interactionist fallacy”. Drawing on recent works (Morris, 2011; Cassidy, 2011; Boels, 2014) that have engaged Bourdieu’s diversified understanding of capital to give a more nuanced understanding of agency and participation in informal economies, the third part uses Bourdieu’s concepts of “field”, “capital” and “the habitus” to rethink informal economies in a way that escapes the false choice between objectivist and subjectivist perspectives. By suggesting that the full implications of Bourdieu’s relational sociology emerge only when these conceptual tools are used in conjunction rather than separately (see also Bourdieu, 1993/1984, p. 73), this also contrasts the recent Bourdieu-inspired studies.

A scholastic point of view
The fundamental cornerstone of Pierre Bourdieu’s work is the notion of epistemic reflexivity. To go beyond immediate and preconceived knowledge and to lay the foundation for a more autonomous research object, the researcher needs to perform a double epistemological “break” and “objectivate the objectivating subject” (Bourdieu, 1990/1980; Bourdieu et al., 1991, pp. 13-55; Bourdieu, 2004). Each break concerns the objectivation of the epistemological and social conditions of possibility of the object and the subject of knowledge (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 25; Bourdieu, 2000, p. 120; Bourdieu, 2004, p. 93). For Bourdieu, then, reflexivity and a sociology of (scientific) knowledge are not philosophical or meta-theoretical concerns but basic methodological postures of a sociology meant to address “the practices of knowledge at the same time as it produce[s] knowledge of social practice” (Calhoun, 2002, p. 17).

By placing epistemological reflexivity at the centre of his theory of practice, Bourdieu criticised what he called, drawing on John L. Austin, the “scholastic point of view” (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 380). The scholastic gaze is an academic vision of the world made possible by Skhole, that is, by scholars’ particular social situation as distantly positioned and freed from the necessities, preoccupations and urgencies of the specific practical situation and thereby “oblivious to the ends which are immanent in it” (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 381). Adoption of a scholastic point of view, and the forgetting of its particular social and economic conditions of possibility, forms a prerequisite for entering a scholarly field or any field that seeks to speak and/or think about the social world (Bourdieu, 1989b, p. 381; Bourdieu, 2000, p. 15). The question, then, is what the scholastic viewpoint implies for attempts of thinking, knowing and understanding the social world. The detached situation of Skhole produces scholastic fallacies in three areas of practice – the “realm of knowledge (or science), the realm of ethics (or law, and of politics) and in the realm of aesthetics” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 50). All three forms of scholastic fallacy stem from the same principle: the tendency to universalise what is in fact a particular, historical case, and to forget the economic and social conditions that made such a viewpoint possible.
The most important scholastic fallacy is the one that results in a “scholastic epistemocentrism”. As two, distinct practical relations to the world and comprehensions of the world, there is an insurmountable difference between practical knowledge and scholarly knowledge, or between what Bourdieu calls “reasonable reason” and “reasoning reason” (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 50). Although scholarly knowledge represents one kind of practical logic (Bourdieu et al., 1991), it is produced from a viewpoint that is distant from the situational and “fuzzy” practices under study. Poulit and Mérand (2013, p. 27) write that “every form of theorizing projects in practice a scholastic viewpoint that belongs to a different social logic”. Scholastic epistemocentrism, then, is the fallacy not so much of theorising per se but of ignoring this distinction and of making the models, representations and theorisations that a researcher develops to account for practices the de facto principle of these practices, their raison d’être:

[By] projecting his theoretical thinking into the heads of acting agents, the researcher presents the world as he thinks it (that is, as an object of contemplation, a representation, a spectacle) as if it were the world as it presents itself to those who do not have the leisure (or the desire) to withdraw from it in order to think it. He sets at the origin of their practices, that is to say, in their “consciousness”, his own spontaneous or elaborated representations, or, worse, the models he has had to construct (sometimes against his own naive experience) to account for their practices (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 51).

Scholastic epistemocentrism does not represent a mere theoretical conundrum or a condemnation. There are clear risks involved that directly affect research practice and the constructed object. One example concerns how epistemocentrism may create false divisions and oppositions – between objective and subjective dimensions of social life or between structure and agency – that hinder a closer understanding of social practices and their conditions of possibility (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 16; see also Calhoun, 2002, pp. 12-17). This risk is particularly pertinent to the academic study of informal economies.

Two fallacies in the scholarly literature on informal economic practices

This part discusses the three established explanatory perspectives on informal economic practices. Each approach emphasises either the role of external, macro-level processes or the role of micro-level social factors and processes[2]. An analysis of the theoretical and meta-theoretical underpinnings of these perspectives reveals a scholastic epistemocentrism in terms of how the explanatory principle forms around either an objectivist or a subjectivist viewpoint. As a result, neither perspective is capable of explaining first informal economic practices as social phenomena with distinct practical logic(s), and second, the difference between theoretical and practical knowledge of informality. In the following, this is discussed in relation to two “fallacies” that link to an objectivist and a subjectivist account of practices, respectively: a theoreticist fallacy and an interactionist fallacy.

External forces produce and shape the informal economy

From the early 1980s onwards, the “informal economy” was variously conceptualised as a distinct sphere of economic activity worthy of being studied in its own right. This implied a shift from the hitherto prevailing understanding of informality as a residual, pre-capitalist vestige of “backwardness” (Williams et al., 2007, p. 403; see also Ocampo and Jomo, 2007). As a sphere distinct from the formal economy, the informal economy has an inside precisely because it has an outside. This outside, whether in the form of macro-level “national” or “global” forces, was nevertheless further theorised as directly giving rise to informality as well as shaping its dynamics. Indeed, a necessary condition for external processes to matter is that they can be said to act upon a sphere that is distinguishable from these processes as such. In the literature, two perspectives on the informal economy as a distinct sphere that
is produced and shaped by external forces can be discerned, each of which correspond to an objectivist viewpoint on agents’ practices.

The first perspective is known as the “legalist” approach. This perspective conceptualises economic informality as the product of a deficient and exclusionary formal institutional framework. Dysfunctional and cumbersome formal rules and regulations create excessive costs that attract businesses and workers to the informal economy (De Soto, 1989; Feige, 1990; London and Hart, 2004). In developing and advanced countries alike, the state of the formal economy and the formal institutional framework thus explains the existence and dynamics of informality. For example, when regulation fees, tax levels and social security contributions are perceived as too high, agents are theorised as making a voluntary and rational choice to engage in the informal economy (De Soto, 1989, 2000; Fleming et al., 2000; Maloney, 2004; Elbadawi and Loayza, 2008; Dabla-Norris et al., 2008).

The “structuralist” approach represents a second perspective that details how external processes explain the existence and dynamics of informality. Although still conceptualised as a distinct sphere, this perspective does not see the informal economy as detached from its formal counterpart. Rather, as for the legalist perspective, the two economies are closely interrelated, yet now in a different sense. The existence of informality relates to underdevelopment in the global periphery that, in turn, links to development processes in the global centre. Informality is conceptualised as a spin-off to capitalism and advanced formal economies (Castells and Portes, 1989). Small, informal businesses in the global south are vital for the development of capitalist modes of production advanced by multi- and transnational firms. Rather than a marginalised or separate sphere, informal economies constitute structurally linked yet subordinate components of global production networks, value chains and commodity supply chains (see, for instance, Bulut and Lane, 2011; Phillips, 2011). Sub-contracting, outsourcing and similar arrangements create structural interdependences, yet, at the same time, an exploitation of agents who engage in informal economic practices (Castells and Portes, 1989; Portes and Schauffler, 1993).

When, at the end of the 1980s, the informal economy was found to also increase in developed countries, the structuralist reasoning expanded. Various types of global and transnational economic forces are theorised as producing and shaping the dynamics of informal economic practices in both developing and advanced countries. The notion of “informalisation” (Castells and Portes, 1989) has been an important impetus. Theorising “informalisation from above” (Slavnic, 2010), the ubiquity of informal economic activities worldwide is considered the product of globalisation, formal economic de-regulation and downsizing, practices of off-shoring, demands on flexibility as well as decreased state welfare expenditures (DeMaria Harney, 2012; Likic-Brboric et al., 2013; Barsoum, 2015). To this are added analyses of “informalisation from below”. The downsizing of formal businesses, a quest for cheap labour and the welfare retraction in advanced economies create a situation in which marginalised individuals and groups in both developed and underdeveloped countries engage in informality (Slavnic, 2010). One oft-mentioned group is migrant labourers in advanced economies who are seen as forced to various types of informal and precarious work (Vershinina and Rodionova, 2011; Likic-Brboric et al., 2013).

Social and interactional factors to account for informal economic practices
Contrasting the legalist and structuralist visions, other accounts emphasise the micro-level social and interactional dimensions of informal economies. One established perspective underlines the role of social networks in organising and making informal economic practices possible. In the mid-1990s, the study of informality took an almost unanimous turn to social networks as unit of analysis. Networks were “essential” to informal economies (Trigilia, 1998, p. 216) and the concept turned into the analytic lens to explain informality.
This development links, on the one hand, to the emergence of new economic sociology and its attention to micro-level forms of economic organisation and the actions and interactions of agents. On the other hand, the turn to networks reflects particular socio-historical conditions. The demise of the Soviet Union had produced work on the ethnographies of the post-socialist transformations that acknowledged the continued importance of networks and personal relationships. This was pivotal to the further theorising of informality and networks.

The post-socialist transformations sparked a renewed interest in informal economic activities. This interest draws on earlier research on the “second economies” of the Soviet era (e.g. Grossman, 1977; Humphrey, 1998). Studies found that informality had shaped the socialist era as much as contemporary post-socialist geographies (Sik, 1992; Stenning et al., 2010; Polese and Rodgers, 2011). In addition, the renewed interest stemmed from the observation that post-socialist countries did not seem to follow the assumed trajectory towards formalisation (Williams, 2005, p. 70). In this literature, three aspects of informality and networks are particularly discussed: the notion of informality as a (marketised/ non-marketised) “coping mechanism”, informality as part of “multiple economies” and the positioning of criminal networks in relation to informal economies.

Ethnographic studies of post-socialist transformations reveal a continued reliance on personal relationships and various types of informal practices. Economic distress leaves agents and households with little choice other than to retreat to various types of informal economic activities that may or may not be monetarised and “marketised”. As a substitute to a formality that remains unattainable, informality is theorised as a coping strategy dependent on social networks (Stenning et al., 2010; Round et al., 2008; Round and Williams, 2010). The networks involved may spread beyond family and kinship ties. For Adrian Smith and Alison Stenning (2006), the household represents one node among many in networks that stretch geographically to include, for instance, the workplace, the housing block and the local market (p. 202; see also Round et al., 2008, pp. 174-175).

Further, inspired by the “diverse” or “multiple” economies approach associated with the rethinking of capitalist development by Economic Geographers Katherine Gibson and Julie Graham (e.g. Gibson-Graham, 2008), studies of post-socialist informal economies argue for an imbricated understandings of informality and formality. Rather than a strict formality-informality separation, informal economic practices play out within “multiple” economies characterised by overlapping formal and informal practices (Pavlovskaya, 2004; Smith and Stenning, 2006; Round et al., 2008; Cassidy, 2011; Morris, 2011). These studies underscore the departure from neoliberal assumptions of transparency and formalisation (Smith and Rochovská, 2007). Overlaps between various types of economic practices are seen as enabled by social networks. Jeremy Morris, for instance, shows that workers move simultaneously in between formal and informal work. Engagement in informality is made possible by contacts and networks originally established in the formal workplace. For the workers themselves, this means among other things that informality is not “detached, marginal or qualitatively particularly different” from formal work (Morris, 2011, p. 622).

Finally, this strand of the informality literature emphasises that networks and informal economies should not be a priori characterised by interpersonal trust, kinship and reciprocity (Samers, 2005, p. 879). More or less outspoken violence and subordination rather than kinship and solidarity may shape informal interactions. In particular, networks that include mafia organisations and criminal groupings may play important regulatory roles in relation to the activities and spaces of informal economies (Burawoy et al., 2000; Round et al., 2008; Rasanayagam, 2011).

Linked to the proposition about the pivotal role of networks is the concept of “social capital”. If networks form the structure within which informal activities are organised, social capital is the lubricant that facilitates agents’ engagement in informality. Defined as interpersonal trust that gives access to network-based resources, social capital conditions
informal activities when there is a lack of contracts and third-party enforcement. Alongside networks then, social capital forms the regulatory framework needed for the functioning of informality (Roberts, 1994; Lyon, 2000).

Theorisations of informality and social capital are often based on two underlying social theories. Many studies find inspiration in Mark Granovetter’s critique of under and oversocialised views of agency and his concept of “embeddedness”. Granovetter (1985) emphasises the role of interpersonal relations in generating trust and discouraging opportunism (p. 490). As interpersonal trust, social capital enables the functioning of informal exchanges that occur without documentation (Trigilia, 1998, p. 224). Pre-existing social ties based on family, kinship, class or ethnicity generate social capital (Sik, 1995; Bridger and Pine, 1998). Oft-mentioned examples concern so-called “ethnic informality” and entrepreneurship (Quassoli, 1999) or the existence of small businesses in the “Third Italy” where long-term interpersonal relations between small firms and employees generate social capital and enable cooperation and complicity in circumventing institutional and regulatory hindrances (Portes, 2010).

Other studies of informality draw on James S. Coleman’s more instrumental take on social capital and interpersonal relations. For Coleman, social capital resides in the direct relationship between at least two agents. Such relationship is commonly self-sustaining. The incentive to uphold interpersonal relations and social capital is intrinsic to the relation and makes it a mechanism of social control (Coleman, 1984, p. 85; Coleman, 1993, p. 9). In other words, the generation of social capital implies a simultaneous control of behaviour. There is in informal exchanges an “expectation that fraudulent actions will be penalized by the exclusion of the violator from key social networks and from future transactions” (Portes, 2010, p. 137). The regulative quality of social capital has less to do with pre-existing cultural traits and more with the rational cooperation between agents driven by mutual interests in informal practices. High costs of cheating imply that agents are likely to try to preserve the exchange relationships (Fafchamps, 1992).

The fallacies of the objectivist/subjectivist division
The above discussion distils three established perspectives in the literature that explain informal economic practices by referring to either the formal institutional framework, to global constraints and processes of economic reconstruction or to micro-level social dynamics. Their differences aside, what unites these approaches is an inherent scholastic epistemocentrism. This shows in terms of how informal economic practices are explained from either an objectivist or a subjectivist viewpoint, which bring about a theoretician and an interactionist fallacy, respectively[3].

Although based on distinct meta-theoretical understandings of agency, the legalist and the structuralist perspective see informal economic practices as the product of structures and conditions beyond the purview of agents. Agents’ choices and practices are deduced from structures external to the informal economy, whether in the form of global structural constraints or rationalist cost-benefit analyses tied to the institutional framework. Agency is exogenously constituted. Indeed, by making action the direct product of external, objectivated structures, agency is effectively black-boxed. As long as this context remains stable, agents’ behaviours are predictable (see also Hay, 2002, pp. 50-53). Behavioural changes are assumed to originate with changes in the external structural context.

The premise of exogenisation thus objectivates not only external structures but also agents in the informal economy. The objectivist reasoning of the legalist and structuralist approaches results in a theoretician fallacy. This fallacy consists in “treating classes on paper as real classes, in concluding from the objective homogeneity of conditions, of conditionings, and thus of dispositions, which flows from the identity of position in social space, that the agents involved exist as a unified group, as a class” (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 17)[4].
Such homogenisation of agents shows, for instance, the depiction of ethnic minority groups as marginalised from the formal economy and forced to engage in informal economic practices. For example, Branka Likic-Brboric et al. (2013) state that:

Very often, it is vulnerable labour migrants who find themselves in this informal sector where neither regular employment contracts nor safe work exist. Thus, many foreign workers, who lack formal residence status, understanding of their rights, or knowledge of language are open to extreme forms of labour exploitation. The jobs migrants are offered are often more physically or psychologically demanding in terms of the long hours or poor working conditions, when compared to resident populations. In addition, the very nature of the rules and regulations for entry into the labour market, requirements for residence and work permits, and for recognised work qualifications, can funnel migrants towards ‘precarious’ forms of work (Likic-Brboric et al., 2013, p. 678).

A second form of scholastic epistemocentrism emerges through the network perspective on informal economic practices which results in an interactionist fallacy (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008). Analyses that explain informal economic practices through social networks tend to form around an interactionist meta-theoretical position. Explanations centre on the subjective conditions of individuals or of groups and their actions, interactions and constructions of the world in which they find themselves – that is, the opposite principle to the objectivist vision. Although, importantly, informal practices may be closely contextualised in relation to, for instance, structural constraints or historical preconditions, the basic explanatory principle lies with networks and the interactions and exchanges that occur between agents who are linked in physical and geographical space (e.g. Smith and Stenning, 2006; Round et al., 2008). No matter how extended these interpersonal relations become, this perspective implies a reduction of social structures to interactions and to the networks in which interactions take place. Following Bourdieu, the interactionist vision is not enough to explain the principle of agents’ practices:

Interactions, which bring immediate gratification to those with empiricist dispositions – they can be observed, recorded, filmed, in sum, they are tangible, one can reach out and touch them – mask the structures that are realized in them. This is one of those cases where the visible, that which is immediately given, hides the invisible which determines it. One thus forgets that the truth of any interaction is never entirely to be found within the interaction as it avails itself for observation (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 16).

In other words, the interactionist fallacy of the subjectivist vision consists in failing to "effect an epistemological break with the facts of interaction as they appear to be" (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008, p. 10). By relating informal economic practices only to tangible social structures in the form of networks, the explanation omits wider structural dynamics, positions and power relations that may (or may not) come into play through network-based interactions. Although any economy involves interactions, more important is how practices emerge in relation to structural configurations and dynamics that both unite and differentiate agents beyond proximity in physical or geographical space[5].

Thinking everyday informal economic practice from a reflexive posture

This part discusses in conceptual terms how rethinking of informality through Bourdieu’s reflexive sociology enables an understanding of everyday informal economic practices that avoids the theoreticist and interactionist fallacies. For Bourdieu, an analysis of social practices requires a transcendence of the objective-subjective division. This does not imply a “third way” that ignores the specificities of each vision. Rather, the Bourdieusian sociology sees practices as the product of a dialectic relationship between the objective and the subjective dimensions of social life. Practices emerge out of the meeting between socially recognised and objectivated structures and agents’ experiences and readings of the world that render certain dispositional orientations. In other words, the social structures that
condition practices live a “double life” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 7). On the one hand, social structures are produced by agents’ systems of perception and classification that guide them in their everyday life. On the other hand, social structures are not reducible to the representations that agents have of their practices and of the reality in which they find themselves. Socially recognised structural relations and resource configurations that exist beyond the individual shape representations and practices (Bourdieu, 1989a, pp. 14-15). Moreover, the account of practices developed by the researcher as a reconstruction of agents’ practical knowledge should include a theorisation of the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge (Bourdieu, 1989b, pp. 383-384). Although this gap is unsurmountable, it can be reflexively theorised. Importantly, the rethinking offered here seeks by no means to cover all aspects of Bourdieu’s sizeable oeuvre. Rather, I will focus the discussion around further examples of the established objectivist and subjectivist approaches and detail how a Bourdieu-inspired reconceptualisation would rephrase these and what this means, in research practice, for how to study informal economies.

For network-based analyses, to begin with, connections that include family and friends or weaker ties related to the workplace and the local market are vital for the organisation and enabling of informal economic activities. Often though, these analyses take the existence and spatiality of any specific network for granted. Making a similar point, Adrian Smith and Alison Stenning seek to question anything taken for granted spatiality. Specifically, they seek to go beyond a focus on the household that characterises much research on informality and post-socialist transformations. To do so, Smith and Stenning develop the concept of “nested geographies”. This idea enables an exploration of the constitutive links between different economic practices (for instance formal and informal) across different geographical spaces. Economic practices, from this perspective, are situated in “specific and often dispersed geographies” or “relational spatialities” (Smith and Stenning, 2006, pp. 191-192, 204). This particular example of how to expand the network perspective on informal economies serves as a fruitful backdrop to highlight the difference between network-based interactionist accounts and a Bourdieusian rethinking. Rather than expanding the geographical situatedness, a Bourdieusian stance would shift to interrogate the social and symbolic “situatedness” of informal economic practices. For this, a specific understanding of the ontological primacy of relations (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 52) and the concept of “capitals” are crucial.

For Bourdieu (2005), sets of interactions are neither a sufficient nor the most important component in the constitution of an economy. Based in a relational ontology, Bourdieu’s approach differs from a network analysis in that it departs from a focus on entities (agents or networks) and their interactions, and instead seeks to reveal the underlying relations of similarity and difference, contestation and interdependence that constitute social space. This approach, as suggested by Didier Bigo (2011), “focuses on the apparent invisibility of the relations between agents rather than the visibility of these same agents” (p. 237). The researcher, then, “progressively constructs social spaces which, though they reveal themselves only in the form of highly abstract, objective relations, and although one can neither touch them nor ‘point to them’, are what makes the whole reality of the social world” (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 231). These relations are not pre-existing but comes into being only through agents’ practices. Epistemologically, relationalism implies that there is no essence or intrinsic quality to social entities, whether individual agents or networks. The relations constitute agents rather than the other way around (which is often the case in network analyses). Any agential characteristics come into being through practice and are of interest merely as relational attributes that denote similarities, differences and distinctions.

The concept of “capital” is pivotal in the researcher’s quest to reveal, through construction, the configuration of invisible relations that connect as much as differentiate agents engaged in informal economic practices beyond interpersonal ties. For Bourdieu, capitals represent different
types of resources – for example, social, economic, cultural, technical and juridical – that may bring about gains in relation to a social activity. In relation to informality, social and economic capital are commonly the most interesting forms (although this can never be decided a priori the empirical analysis). 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, p. 51). It may exist at a practical level in and through exchanges. Social capital may also be socially institutionalised and “guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.)” and therefore partly irreducible to physical or geographical proximity. As economic capital mediates the time needed for the acquisition and reproduction of capitals, it constitutes the basis of the other forms (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 51-54; Bourdieu, 1993/1984, pp. 32-33).

Social or any form of capital is a relative and potential power resource. The notion of potentiality is important. Differing from studies that consider social capital as necessarily facilitating engagement in informal economic exchanges (e.g. Lyon, 2000), a capital is, for Bourdieu, never a given resource that is useful in itself or through any particular agents’ possession of it. Rather, to become an asset, any form of capital needs to be socially recognised as “valuable” in a specific activity. “Symbolic capital” is the form that any capital takes when viewed through categories of perception that recognise its specific logic, that is, when it is “known through the categories of perception that it imposes” (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 21). Recognised capital forms the primary principle of vision through which agents constitute reality. Symbolic capital thus has an integrative capacity that unites disparate practices not by providing filters through which reality is distorted, but by creating what reality is in terms of shared understandings of demands, necessities, possibilities and impossibilities. Methodologically, this implies that the researcher has to interrogate agents’ resources, acts of recognition, shared meanings and understandings in order to understand the configuration of capitals that underpins visible informal economic exchanges and the social processes of valuing that turn some forms of capital rather than others into useful and powerful assets.

This is akin to Morris’ discussion of how a specific value system constitutes a shared identity among blue-collar workers. The shared identity both underpins the role played by social networks for informality and makes agents’ engagement in informal activities an effect of a social valuing of particular forms of work rather than (purely) an effect of a strictly economic interest (Morris, 2011, pp. 625, 628). However, the crux of Bourdieu’s power analytics is that capitals are not only potential power resources in terms of how they constitute meanings, values and hence social reality. Capitals are also relative resources that are differently distributed among agents and that, when recognised, constitute the basis of a hierarchical social order characterised, as mentioned, by shared understandings as well as distinctions. To visualise this hierarchical social-symbolic order of differential capital relations and practices, Bourdieu developed the concept of “field”.

Fields, as denoting a set of practices and their social-material conditions of possibility, sum up the discussion of informal economic practices as the product of a dialectic relationship between the objective and the subjective dimensions. For Bourdieu, capitals do not function except in relation to a “field” (Bourdieu, 1993/1984, p. 73). Fields emerge out of historical processes of differentiation that bring about a specific configuration of social and material resources. Various forms of capital (again, as potential forms of power) circulate within and between fields. At any particular moment, the dynamics and hierarchies of the field depend on the underlying capital configuration and processes of recognition (Bourdieu, 2005). The capital distribution constitutes relations between positions (held by agents) that are relatively defined by their volumes and forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1993/1984, pp. 72-77; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 97). The capital distribution and the recognised symbolic capital thus inform of the
divisions and differentiations of the field and the power relations that beyond direct interactions connect and differentiate agents. Rather than interpersonal interactions, then, the relative weight of the positions in this distribution sets the dynamic of the field.

Analytically, fields have two generic components. First, not any social activity is graspable through the lens of a field. In addition, a field can never be constructed a priori the empirical analysis. Necessary is that the social activity can be conceptualised as a terrain of relatively positioned agents who despite differences in capital holdings share a certain understanding – expressed through common practices and through acts of recognition of how the field works and what the stakes are (Bourdieu, 1993/1984, pp. 72-73). Although this does not make fields reducible to agents, a field may be constructed only after an analysis of agents’ shared knowledge of how the field works, of what the valued resources are, which agents are privileged and what necessary action entails. This brings us to the importance of the concept of the “habitus”. The “habitus” is the principle of agents’ dispositions and mobilised practices (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 52; Bourdieu, 1977/1972, p. 72). In this rethinking of informal economies, the concept of the habitus is particularly crucial as it enables us to step down from researchers’ a priori objectivated understandings without falling back on an equally misleading subjectivism, as exemplified by interactionist accounts (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 52). Analytically, the habitus constitutes an embodied history that acts out the past in relation to the immediate present with its practical urgencies and demands. It represents the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of externalisation (Bourdieu, 1977/1972, p. 72). The basic idea is that differently positioned agents have position-relative viewpoints and dispositions that influence how they read the world and that mobilise certain practices (rather than others). Although the habitus tend to adjust to the field’s power relations (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 18), change is not precluded as the habitus may always generate novel practices in relation to new experiences (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 161).

Indeed, the second generic component of fields is that they are terrains of struggles. As agents are differently positioned, there are constant struggles over the legitimate definition of the field, its stakes and thereby its borders. In other words, there are constant challenges to the prevailing power relations (Bourdieu, 1989a, pp. 15-21; Bourdieu, 1993/1984, p. 73). Some fields, however, are more stable than others. The relative stability of fields depends in part on agents’ “misrecognition”. Misrecognition occurs under specific circumstances (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 66). Symbolic capital involves symbolic violence on the condition that it is simultaneously misrecognised, and that the underlying contingency of the field’s power relations is unquestioned. Through misrecognition, the power relations of the field are naturalised and a taken for granted, commonsensical world is produced. Power turns into domination. Relatively disadvantaged agents contribute to the reproduction of the dynamics of the field that disadvantage them. Symbolic violence is upheld by complicity between relatively advantageous/disadvantageous agents (Bourdieu, 1977/1972).

In a Bourdieu-inspired rethinking of informal economies, then, informal economic practices become “field-specific”. Informal economic practices arise out of the meeting between the capital structure and power relations of the field, and agents’ experiences and dispositions. By, in this way, rephrasing subjectivist perspectives and interactionist-based accounts of informality, the Bourdieu-inspired rethinking relates agents’ dispositions and practices to relative positions in a specific field that cuts across temporal as well as geographical boundaries. Agents’ practical sense and engagement in informal economic activities represent immanence in the world for agents who are capable of acknowledging the stakes involved and through which the world imposes its immanence in terms of things to do, say and feel (Bourdieu, 1990/1980, p. 66). This understanding of practice rephrases the explanatory logic of objectivist accounts of informal economies. Instead of assuming that similarities in material conditions bring about more or less homogenous groups of agents engaged in informal economic practices (e.g. Feige, 1990; London and Hart, 2004; Vershinina
and Rodionova, 2011; Likic-Brboric et al., 2013), the researcher is forced to, first, explore the relative positions, differential capital holdings, shared meanings and distinct social experiences and trajectories of agents. This may result in a construction of groups and an understanding of the distinctions between agents that form around principles of differentiation other than those that, at first glance, appear decisive. Moreover, and importantly, as a product of the field and the habitus, informal economic practices are partially autonomous of external forces. External forces matter only insofar that they are able to influence and restructure the power relations and structural dynamics of the field. Bourdieu, at times, likened the field to a prism. In this sense, a field refracts external forces in relation to its own history and dynamics. Only to the extent that external constraints and forces manage to (re)shape the structural relations of the field are agents’ informal economic practices and linked practical knowledge reshaped (Bourdieu, 1996/1992).

Conclusion

By revealing a scholastic epistemocentrism inherent to three established approaches to informal economic practices, this paper has contributed with a Bourdieu-inspired rethinking of informal economies that theorise practices as the products of a dialectic relationship between the objective and subjective dimensions of social life. By conceptualising informal economic practices as forming a partially autonomous social sphere characterised by capital configurations and power relations that connect as well as distinguish agents, the rethinking problematises the established perspectives. As a partially autonomous sphere, informal economic practices are neither immune to nor directly shaped by external macro-level processes and structural constraints. This also means that similarities in material conditions cannot be directly assumed as making certain agents or groups of agents prone to engage in informal economic practices. In addition, as the product of agents’ shared understandings as well as their position-relative possibilities and constraints, informal economic practices are not necessarily dependent on social networks. Recognised and symbolised forms of capital render shared understandings of what are the possible/impossible and advantageous/disadvantageous ways of acting. In this way, symbolic capital forms the basis of structural effects from afar, that is, field-specific effects that beyond networks and interpersonal ties shape agents’ practices.

Finally, the Bourdieu-inspired reconceptualisation of informal economies offers an opportunity to theorise the gap between theoretical and practical knowledge of informality. The reconstruction of the space of positions enables the researcher (at least to some extent) to “see” the point from which observation of the social world takes place (Bourdieu, 1989a, p. 19). Although not discussed here, potential interrelations between an “informal field” and a scholarly field can be theorised. Within a single framework, then, informal economies can be reconceptualised both in relation to internal dynamics and in relation to other fields. This breaks down the traditional divide between academics and their objects of study and enables an understanding of the object of informality as formed by multiple social forces. That said, it should be noted that the full transfer of the Bourdieusian reflexive sociology to informality studies brings challenges, not least with regard to the need of combining inductive, historical and interpretive research methods.

Notes

1. In the following, this definition guides the discussion of existing research. It should be noted, however, that one implication of the paper rethinking of informal economies is that any precise categorisation of practices as part/not part of an informal “field” is a result of the empirical analysis and cannot be settled a priori.

2. This discussion draws on Danielsson (2014). It examines some of the more established explanatory propositions (though by no means all) of the informality literature.
3. Even when individual authors to some extent blend perspectives, for example, by contextualising micro-level social dynamics in relation to overarching socio-economic hardships, the basic explanatory principle adheres to either an objectivist or a subjectivist vision.

4. Given the emphasis on agents’ rational choice to engage in informality, it may appear surprising to refer to the legalist reasoning as committing a theoretic fallacy. This can be explained, however, by the approach’s instrumentalist/thin rationalist meta-theoretical underpinnings that imply that agency is a priori theorised as an optimal adaptation to the surrounding external structural context. For legalists, the triad of interests-beliefs-behaviour go together. Beliefs refer to cost-benefit analyses, interests are assumed to be driven by economic gain (the lowering or avoidance of costs). From the state of the formal institutional framework, then, it becomes possible to deduce what is the rational way of acting. Indeed, many have noted the structural feature of thin rationalist perspectives (see further in Hay, 2002).

5. This does not imply that networks and social capital are unimportant. However, their importance may be grasped only if the researcher goes beyond interactions to take field dynamics, structural positions and power relations into account.

References
Informal economies


informal economies


Further reading

Corresponding author
Anna Danielsson can be contacted at: anna.danielsson@statsvet.uu.se

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:
www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldsight.com
Investigating pro-environmental behaviors of well-educated people in Thailand

Implications for the development of environmental communication

Piyapong Janmaimool

Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, School of Liberal Arts, King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi, Bangkok, Thailand

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the environmental behaviors of well-educated people in Thailand. Determinants of individuals’ involvement in pro-environmental behaviors (PEBs) are evaluated.

Design/methodology/approach – An exploratory model was created to investigate the relationship between PEBs and potential predictors that were selected based on the purposes of environmental risk communication and environmental education improvements. Those factors included dispositional, attitudinal, motivational, environmental knowledge, and psychosocial characteristics. Questionnaire surveys with well-educated people (n = 810), that is those holding an educational qualification that ranged from a senior high school degree to a doctoral degree, were conducted. Multiple regression analysis was performed to justify the proposed relationship.

Findings – The result revealed that PEBs of well-educated people could be greatly predicted by an individual’s sense of obligation, perceived probability of receiving impacts from environmental problems, outcome expectancy from environmental behaviors, and environmental knowledge related to environmental phenomena and appropriate environmental actions; whereas, an individual’s environmental worldview and life satisfaction were less significant. Moreover, most of psychosocial variables were not significant predictors.

Originality/value – Factors determining well-educated people’s engagement in PEBs were evaluated. The results of the investigation provided the implications for environmental risk communication and environmental education improvements.

Keywords Environmental knowledge, Environmental education, Pro-environmental behaviours, Environmental risk communication, Well-educated people

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

It is generally accepted that the consumption behaviors of human beings have contributed to vast adverse impacts on the environment. Pro-environmental behaviors (PEBs) play an important role in solving this critical problem and handling unsustainability (Revella, 2013). In this study, PEBs of well-educated people in different types of career were investigated. Policy makers expect well-educated people to have active responses to the current environmental problems and be engaged in PEBs. In addition to their higher level of education, this group can easily access various types of communication channels such as the internet, television and radio; therefore, they can easily acquire information on the state of the environment. Moreover, mostly living in the city, well-educated people’s lifestyles have potential impacts on the local environment in terms of air pollutants from intensive use of personal vehicles, toxic waste production, and polluted water. Changes in their behavior...
significantly affect environmental quality, at least in the local environment. However, according to the current situation, many well-educated people are still reluctant to act environmentally. Therefore, determining factors affecting their engagement in PEBs would allow concrete strategies to be developed to promote behavioral changes.

Many previous studies revealed potential predictors of individuals’ engagement in various types of PEBs, and different models of PEBs were proposed (Bronfman et al., 2015; Chen, 2016). Most of those studies employed the theory of planned behavior (TPB) and Stern’s value belief norm (VBN) theory to explain why people act or do not act environmentally. TPB suggests the decision to engage in PEB is based on an individual’s behavioral intention, which is influenced by three major variables: subjective norms, attitudes, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). It was, however, criticized by some scholars due to the exclusion of moral judgments (Jones and Dunlap, 1992; Kaiser et al., 2005). Stern first proposed VBN theory in 1999 (Stern, 1999); it included the moral dimension of the human decision-making process and the perception of environmental values. VBN theory has been widely used by many researchers to explain several types of PEBs, mostly low-cost PEBs (Stern, 1999; Steg, 2005; Bronfman et al., 2015; Testa et al., 2016). Besides TPB and VBN, other relevant theories and concepts were also developed to deliberatively explain PEBs. The theory of interpersonal behavior (TIB), for instance, includes emotive and habitual perspectives. In this study, an integrated exploratory model for the investigation of PEBs of well-educated people was developed, and potential predictors were selected based on the research goal, which was to provide a concrete strategy to encourage behavioral change through the improvement of environmental education and the development of environmental risk communication strategies.

This study encompasses two research objectives. The first objective is to explore the Thai educated people’s engagement in a list of selected PEBs that have been widely promoted in the Thai society. Those PEBs include five types of behaviors: green purchasing behaviors, waste management behaviors, commuting behavior, environmental protection behavior, and involvement in environmental activities. The second objective is to examine the determinants of well-educated people’s PEBs. The integrated exploratory model for the investigation was created based on the application of relevant theories and concepts. Finally, the results of the investigation provided the implications for environmental risk communication and environmental education improvements.

2. Theoretical context
2.1 PEBs
PEB can be defined as any activity performed in response to current environmental phenomena (Eilam and Trop, 2012). Steg and Vlek (2009) define PEBs as actions that avoid harm to the environment as much as possible, or benefit the environment. According to Stern (2000), PEBs can be conceptualized into two dimensions: impact-oriented dimensions and intent-oriented dimensions. Impact-oriented dimensions refer to a behavior that potentially yields a positive alternation of natural ecosystems or a positive change in the availability of materials or energy. Furthermore, PEBs related to the impact-oriented dimension can be divided into two categories: public-sphere environmentalism, which includes active behavior such as engagement in environmental groups and non-active behavior such as supporting environmental policy, and private-sphere environmentalism that refers to environmentally friendly purchase behavior and waste management behavior. For the intent-oriented dimension of PEBs, PEB is any kind of action performed with the intention of positively altering the natural environment; it emphasizes people’s motives. People may participate in activities that make no contribution to improving environment, but exhibit their concern for the environment by making donations. Many previous studies on PEBs employed the impact-oriented definition to define dependent variables such as an
individual’s engagement in recycling, ecological conservation, or environmentally friendly consumption (Schultz and Zelezny, 1998). It is expected the practices of all types of PEBs will contribute to environmental improvements.

2.2 Determinates of environmental behaviors
Currently, there are many theoretical perspectives developed to explain PEB. Based on extensive reviews of literature in various fields, the authors classified the potential predictive factors of PEBs into four major categories as outlined below.

2.2.1 Dispositional factors. In the field of social psychology, individuals’ decision to engage in PEB can be explained by three main theoretical dimensions including rational, moral, and non-rational dimensions. All those dimensions imply individuals’ dispositional characteristics which could influence their decision to act environmentally. Based on the rational dimension, an individual’s decision to perform behaviors is dependent on his or her intention which is influenced by attitudes of the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). An individual is likely to engage in PEB, if he or she has a positive attitude toward PEB. To measure individuals’ attitudes toward environmental behaviors, outcome expectancy, or individuals’ judgment on the significant contribution of his/her action to solve environmental problems will be evaluated. In another way, an individual’s intention to perform PEB is possibly influenced by social forces which are defined as subjective norms. Subjective norms represent one’s perception on what other people expect a certain pattern of human behavior (Cialdini et al., 1990; Durkheim, 1997) stated that functional societies naturally have “collective consciousness” referring to a set of shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge that are common to a group, and this collective consciousness shapes the way people think and behave. Therefore, individuals who have a sense of solidarity with other people in a society are likely to act in the ways that most people do. If environmental behaviors are perceived as a social norm, it is likely that individuals will decide to engage in the behaviors. Perceived behavioral control is also influential; namely, a decision to perform PEB depends on how an individual perceives his or her capability to perform.

Many researchers explained PEB based on the rational dimension. For instance, Fernandez-Manzanal et al. (2015) argued that, despite having a high educational degree, people will only act environmentally in cases in which they wish to act. The study conducted in Bhutan revealed that traditional Buddhist cultural beliefs, social norms, and a code of conduct potentially influence dress, custom, and behavior (Brunet et al., 2001). The Bhutanese Government has tried to relate environmental conservation with Buddhist cultural beliefs and practices, and the survey carried by Brooks (2011) showed the influence of national-level norm on people’s engagement in environmental conservation. In China, Feng and Reisner (2010) found that attitudes toward PEBs or people’s perceived importance of environmental protection is the most significant factor determining individuals’ engagement in environmental resource conservation. The study carried out by Zhang et al. (2015) also revealed that subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, behavioral intentions as well as situational factors had a direct effect on household waste behaviors of residents in Guangzhou, China.

Besides the rational dimension, PEB can be explained by theories relevant to the moral dimension. According to Stern’s VBN theory, PEB is tremendously influenced by individuals’ moral obligation which refers to the degree to which an individual recognizes his/her responsibility to take actions for solving environmental problems (Sanchez, 2010). Some scholars argue that PEB is not only a function of moral and rational decision process as explained in TPB and VBN. Triandis proposed the TIB which includes emotive and habitual perspectives. Based on TIB, environmental behavior is also influenced by habit and facilities
(Gagnon et al., 2003). Some acts are not solely influenced by intention, but performed based on individual’s routinized behaviors, and some acts might be performed only in supportive situation. For instance, the study carried out in Thailand revealed that the condition of recycling facility and personal recycling skill had a direct effect on the recycling behaviors and also had an indirect effect on the behaviors through recycling intention (Ittiravivongs, 2011). In Vietnam, the study of De Koning et al. (2016) revealed that PEBs are habitual behaviors as they are a money-saving strategy. Those behaviors are such as sparse electricity use and food leftovers re-use.

2.2.2 Attitudinal factors. According to VBN theory, environmental attitude is a key driver of PEB. Environmental attitude directly influences individuals’ environmental awareness. Individuals, who have a positive environmental attitude, relatively have a positive attitude toward PEB (Barr and Gilg, 2006). Thus, they decide to perform PEB (Levinson and Strube, 2012; Xue and Zhao, 2015). Many studies investigated individuals’ environmental attitude by measuring environmental worldview, and they found that worldview significantly contributed to environmental behaviors (Poortinga et al., 2004; Vining and Ebreo, 1992). On the contrary, Gooch (1995) posited that environmental attitude as well as environmental awareness can be generated by an individual’s direct experience in nature, without the need to comprehend the global environmental issues. Collado and Corraliza (2015) found that children with a positive experience in nature reported relatively high involvement in PEBs despite not understanding human-nature relations. Rajecki (1982) also indicated that direct experiences of environmental pollutants have stronger relationships with PEB than indirect experiences have.

2.2.3 Motivational factors. Regarding the motivational dimension, protection motivation theory (PMT) is applied to explain individuals’ engagement in PEB (Rogers, 1975). Based on PMT, PEB is influenced by an individual’s intention to protect himself or herself from threatening events. Protection motivation is created based on threat appraisal and coping appraisal. Treat appraisal, sometimes called risk estimation, means the estimation of probability of receiving impacts and the estimation of severity of the adverse consequences. Gu et al. (2015) found that people who exhibited higher risk perception of air pollutants tend to be more actively involved in PEB. In China, the study carried out by Chen et al. (2013) found that though people might perceive lower levels of behavioral control, they tended to actively engage in PEBs, if they perceived their exposure to environmental harm. Wang and Cheng (2015) found that the perceived severity of environmental impacts plays a more important role in promoting PEB than other viewpoints of environmental risks. Besides treat appraisal, coping appraisal is also important to individuals’ decision to perform PEB. Coping appraisal refers to the estimation of response efficacy and self-efficacy. Individuals will decide to perform protection behaviors if they think that they have a capability to perform, and realize that those behaviors could minimize impacts of adverse consequences.

2.2.4 Environmental knowledge. Many scholars stated that environmental knowledge could enhance individuals’ awareness on issues related to environmental problems, and also increase competency to cope with adverse impacts. Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) indicated that environmental attitudes are formed by individuals’ possession of environmental knowledge and thus PEBs manifest. Laroche et al. (2001) defined environmental knowledge as an individual’s capability to identify environmental phenomena, problems, causes of problems, as well as concepts and behavior patterns related to environmental conservation and protection. Hines et al. (1986) proposed two types of environmental knowledge necessary to the formation of PEB: knowledge of environmental issues and knowledge of action strategies. Different types of environmental knowledge could have different influences on PEBs. Environmental knowledge tremendously plays an important role in promoting PEBs. Hungerford and Volk (1990) therefore proposed systematic goals in
developing environmental education. Those are such as education for promoting individuals’ ecological foundations, education for enhancing ecological awareness, education for enhancing individual capabilities to evaluate appropriate actions, and education for enhancing competence in environmental practices. The result of an investigation conducted by Bronfman et al. (2015) revealed that a wide range of environmental behaviors, such as power and water conservation, ecological biodiversity protection, rational automobile use as well as environmentally aware consumer behavior and ecological waste management, were actively practiced by people who possess environmental management knowledge. Similarly, the study carried out in Thailand indicated that providing environmental education and environmental management knowledge in school could enhance students’ engagement in PEBs (Thathong and Leopenwong, 2014). The investigation carried out by Dansirichaisawat and Suwunnamek (2014) also showed that environmental attitude, environmental knowledge, and environmental lifestyle had significant effects on environmentally based purchasing behavior.

2.2.5 Psychosocial factors. A number of studies on environmental behaviors included psychosocial factors for the analysis of antecedents of PEB. Those factors, most of which had a significant relationship to PEB, include gender (Xiao and Hong, 2010), age (Diekmann and Preisendorfer, 1998; Raudsepp, 2001; Van Liere and Dunlap, 1980; Dietz et al., 1998), educational level (Xiao and McCright, 2014), and income (Poortinga et al., 2004). For instance, Schultz and Zelezny (1999) addressed the fact that environmental concerns and environmental behaviors are a luxury mostly carried out only by the wealthy. The investigation conducted by Meyer (2016) found a positive relationship between level of education and PEBs. It also revealed that females reported higher engagement in PEBs, such as recycling and double-sided printing, than males did. Similarly, Sanchez et al. (2016) indicated that females have higher pro-environmental purchase behavior than males. Xiao and Hong (2010) found that women tend to participate more often in PEBs inside of the home, such as in reusing and recycling activities, than men do; whereas, activities outside of home could not be predicted by gender differences. However, Davidson and Freudenburg (1996) identified that the influence of gender differences on the prediction of PEB is not universal; it seems to depend on the social situation in each region. In addition, a number of previous studies revealed that low-income people have difficulty engaging in PEBs even though they have high awareness of environmental problems (Ozaki, 2011). Xu et al. (2012) found that Chinese consumers who had a higher level of education were more active to engage in purchasing eco-labeled seafood. Similarly, Chankrajang and Muttarak (2017) revealed that Thai people with more years of schooling had a greater possibility of engagement in knowledge-based environmental friendly practices. Additionally, individuals’ life satisfaction might be positively related to environmental behaviors. People’s estimation of their life satisfaction could reflect an optimistic disposition. Studies related to optimism revealed that people who exhibit high levels of optimism have a relatively high ability to deal with stress and problems, while less optimistic people are more likely to avoid and ignore problems (Scheier et al., 1986; Rand, 2009). The investigation of relationship between PEB and psychosocial factors could provide basic understandings on how education policy should developed for each specific group.

2.3 Theoretical framework and research questions
The research question of this study is:

RQ1. What types of factors could predict well-educated people’s engagement in PEB?

This study selected to investigate the factors which could comprehensively explain PEBs of educated people, and could provide implications for the development of environmental communication and education. Those factors must potentially constitute to behavioral changes. Therefore, the factors must be related to attitude, morality, motivation,
Based on the results of the literature review, the potential predictors of PEBs can be categorized into five groups, including dispositional, attitudinal, motivational, environmental knowledge, and psychosocial factors. The first group is the dispositional factor, which comprises two factors: sense of obligation and outcome expectancy from PEB. These two factors were selected because high possibility to affect PEBs of well-educated people and possibility to provide some implications to improve environmental education. It is assumed that well-educated people, who have a high sense of obligation and have positive outcome expectancy, will engage in PEBs more actively than those who have lower levels.

The second group consists of attitude factors, including individuals’ environmental worldviews and experience of environmental pollutants. As presented in Section 2.3.2, having positive environmental attitudes and high awareness on environmental impacts of human activities, individuals are likely to have a positive attitude toward PEB. The third group consists of motivational factors, including people’s perceived probability of environmental problem occurrence, perceived severity of adverse consequences, perceived probability of receiving impacts. As stated in the PMT, individuals’ risk estimation also affects PEB. Having high-risk perception, individuals would have high motivation to initiate self-protection behaviors such as PEB. The fourth group consists of the factors related environmental knowledge which is divided into three types, including knowledge related to environmental phenomena, cause of environmental problems, and action strategies. It is assumed that well-educated people, who have a high level of environmental knowledge, will perform PEBs more actively than those who have lower levels.

The last group consists of the factors related to psychosocial factors, including gender, age, career, income, location, education level, life satisfaction, etc. As presented in the Section 2.3.5, these factors had a significant impact on PEBs, particularly gender and education. In this study, the location in which people live was also deemed worthy of investigation. The researcher assumed that people who live in Bangkok city, where is experiencing various kinds of pollution: air, water, and noise, might engage significantly differently in PEBs than those who live in other provinces. Moreover, the influence of individuals’ life satisfaction on PEB is also investigated. It can be assumed that people who achieve high life satisfaction might engage in PEBs more actively than people who achieve low-life satisfaction. To measure people’s engagement in PEBs, the study explored frequency of engagement in a list of PEBs, which included two types of PEBs: public-sphere environmentalism and private-sphere environmentalism in keeping with Stern’s classification (2000). Reusing and recycling behavior, purchasing environmentally friendly products, not purchasing food packaged in a foam box, using a cotton bag instead of a plastic bag, using public transportation instead of a personal car, avoiding any activities that potentially harm the environment, properly eliminating toxic waste, and participating in environmental activities held by any organizations were investigated. Figure 1 shows an overview of the conceptual model of individuals’ engagement in PEBs.

### 3. Research methods

#### 3.1 Dependent variable

In this study, individuals’ level of engagement in PEBs was defined as the dependent variable. The literature review suggests that self-reports are widely used to measure individuals’ levels of engagement in PEBs (Gatersleben et al., 2002). In this method, respondents would be asked how frequently they engage in a particular environmentally friendly behavior, and a developed scale ranging from “never” to “regularly” would be used to track an answer (De-Young, 1990; Margai, 1997). In this study, the researcher employed the measurements developed by Schultz and Zelezny (1998). Eight PEBs that have been widely promoted in Thailand were investigated. These behaviors included reusing and
recycling behavior, purchasing environmentally friendly products, not purchasing food packaged in a foam box, using a cotton bag instead of a plastic bag, using public transportation instead of a personal car, avoiding any activities that potentially harm the environment, properly eliminating toxic waste, and participating in environmental activities held by any organizations. Respondents were asked to indicate how often they have done each of those activities using a five-point Likert scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = regularly). The results obtained from each question would be tested for their correlation before being added and calculated as a mean score, thus representing a level of engagement in PEBs.

3.2 Independent variables and measurement
Although the result of the literature review suggests many potential variables related to many theoretical grounds, this study limits itself to those variables that would be useful for the development of education and communication policy for encouraging behavioral change. These selected variables were categorized into five groups of factors. The first group is the dispositional factor, which contains two variables: sense of obligation and outcome expectancy or PEB attitude. The researcher adapted questions for measuring these two variables from Sanchez (2010). For the measurement of outcome expectancy, respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they recognize the significance of their role in helping solve environmental problems. The scale ranged from 1 (not help at all) to 5 (completely help). For the measurement of self-obligation, respondents were asked to indicate their acceptance of “paying more money to buy environmentally friendly goods for environmental protection.” The scale ranged from 1 (not acceptable) to 5 (completely acceptable). The second group is attitudinal factors, which contains two variables: environmental worldviews and experiences of pollutants. To measure environmental worldviews, the NEP scale, widely used by many scholars to measure individuals’ environmental attitude (Corral-Verdugo and Armendariz, 2000; Atava et al., 2015),
was employed to investigate individuals’ perception of three major issues: human-nature relationship, limiting growth, and human dominance over nature. Respondents were asked to express their level of agreement with the six statements (see Table I). The scale ranged from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). For the measurement of individuals’ experience of pollutants, respondents were simply asked to indicate whether they have ever experienced adverse consequences of three types of pollutants: air, water, and soil pollutants.

The third group is motivational factors, which contains three variables: perceived probability of environmental problems, perceived severity of adverse consequences, and perceived probability of receiving impacts. To measure the variable of perceived probability of environmental problems, participants were asked whether the current development and human activities still generate environmental pollutants, and to measure the variable of perceived severity of adverse consequences, participants were asked levels of severity that environmental pollutants can affect humans. Similarly, to measure individuals’ perceived probability of receiving impacts, the participants were also asked about the possibility that they will receive impact from damaged environments. The author developed five-point Likert-scale questions. The scale ranged from 1 (no possibility/no severity) to 5 (high probability/high severity). The fourth group is the factor of environmental knowledge, which is divided into three types: the current environmental phenomenon, causes of the current environmental problem, and environmental management skills (Hines et al., 1986). Respondents were asked to indicate how much they know about these three issues. The scale ranged from 1 (completely do not understand) to 5 (completely understand). The last group is psychosocial factors, which contain gender, age, career, income, location, education level, and life satisfaction. To measure individual life satisfaction, this study employed the life satisfaction question developed by World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2004). Respondents were asked about their subjective perceptions of three important issues: satisfaction with living environment, satisfaction with economic status, and satisfaction with life overall (see Table I). The answers were measured on a scale from 1 (no satisfaction) to 5 (very high satisfaction). The results obtained from each question would be added and calculated as a mean score, representing a level of life satisfaction. A higher score reflects a higher perception of life satisfaction. For other variables, respondents were simply asked to indicate their information.

### 3.3 Data collection and analysis

This study was carried out in Thailand, one of Southeast Asian countries. Thailand has its area about 513,120 square kilometers which is divided into 77 provinces, and has Bangkok city as the capital city. In 2016, the number of population was about 65,729,098; whereas 8,280,925 people lived in the city of Bangkok. Thailand’s ecological footprint from 2001 to 2010 was the highest in the Maekhong sub-region (Global Footprint Network, 2016). Furthermore, Thailand’s ecological deficit has steadily increased since 1990. The participants of this study were divided into two groups such as the participants living in Bangkok city, and those in other provinces. The selected other provinces are the combination of big and small cities where most well-educated people work. Those are such as Chiangmai, Supanburi, Nakornprathom, Songkha, Mahasarakam, Kanchanaburi, Ratchaburi, and Khonkan provinces. In addition, the participants were selected based on their educational degree, type of career, and location. The participants must, at least, hold a senior high school degree. The study employed both an online questionnaire and a questionnaire sheet distribution. The participants living far from Bangkok were mostly asked to complete the online questionnaire. The participants living in Bangkok were mostly asked to fill in the questionnaire sheet. The total number of participants was 810. Almost half of the participants live in Bangkok. Career distribution was also taken into consideration. The participants of this study were from various careers: governmental office, private company, independent employee, academics, and personal
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Survey question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-environmental behavior</td>
<td>Frequency of engagement in reusing and recycling products not purchasing food packaged in a foam container using a cotton bag instead of a plastic bag using public transportation instead of a personal car avoiding any activities that potentially harm the ecological environment properly eliminating toxic waste participating in environmental activities held by any organizations</td>
<td>How often do you reuse or recycle things such as plastic bags and bottles? During the past year, how often have you purchased environmentally friendly products such as organic products? biodegradable detergents, and returnable containers? How often do you use a cotton bag instead of plastic bags? Have you avoided buying food packaged in foam containers? During the past year, how often have you used public transportation? Have you ever collected plants or organic materials when visiting natural areas? Do you properly eliminate toxic wastes such as chemical containers and batteries? During the past year, how often have you participated in environmental activities organized by any organizations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of obligation</td>
<td>Satisfaction to pay for the environment</td>
<td>Are you satisfied to pay more for environmentally friendly products?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome expectancy</td>
<td>Perception of the self-capability to solve environmental problems</td>
<td>Do you think a single person’s actions can contribute to the improvement of environmental quality?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental worldview</td>
<td>Perception of “human-nature relation”</td>
<td>How much do you agree with these statements? The balance of nature is very fragile and easily disrupted. The earth has limited resources and space (like a space ship) Human activities, sometimes, contribute to environmental changes Human beings have the right to modify the environment in response to their needs The ecological system exists to support human needs Development has its limitations, and population growth is higher than nature can support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience of pollutants</td>
<td>Experience of air pollutants</td>
<td>Have you ever been affected by an air pollutant?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse viewpoints of environmental risks (motivational factors)</td>
<td>Perceived probability of environmental problems occurring</td>
<td>What is the possibility that the current development and human activities still generate environmental pollutants? How severely can environmental pollutants affect humans?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental knowledge</td>
<td>Environmental phenomena</td>
<td>How much do you know about current environmental phenomena such as the climate situation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>Satisfaction with living environment</td>
<td>Are you satisfied with your living environments?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I. Factors, variables, and development of questionnaire (continued)
Therefore, the results of the analysis could explain PEBs of well-educated people in general. The surveys were conducted in January 2016.

For the data analysis, before preforming the statistical analyses, the researchers evaluated the internal consistency of the scales used for measuring the variables. An appropriate internal reliability would be judged based on Cronbach’s $\alpha$, which should be above 0.7. In this study, the values of Cronbach’s $\alpha$ were above 0.7; therefore, data gained from the surveys were reliable. Then, all collected data were statistically analyzed by two types of statistics. The first statistic was a multiple regression analysis, which was performed to evaluate the proposed relationship between individuals’ engagement in PEBs (dependent variable) and potential predictors (independent variables). By performing a multiple regression analysis, the researcher can evaluate the impact of each variable on PEBs (Kennedy, 2003). Finally, all results were discussed, and implications for the development of environmental education and risk communication strategies were proposed.

4. Results

4.1 PEBs of well-educated people and descriptive statistics of predictors

The result of the investigation revealed that participants have moderately engaged in PEBs. Table II depicts that an average PEB score was 3.28 with a standard deviation of 0.92. The results of Bartlett’s test of sphericity ($p = 0.000$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy (KMO = 0.808) manifested high correlations among all variables, except the variable of public transport use, which has low correlations with the other variables. In addition, according to the result of factor analysis, the loading value of this variable was low. The study, therefore, decided to exclude the variable of public transport use from the calculation of PEB variable. Other variables, manifesting high correlations among one another, were added and calculated as a mean score representing a single variable of PEB. Higher scores refer to higher levels of engagement in PEBs. The participants reported high engagement in avoiding activities that harm the environment, such as collecting plant seeds from the forest. Compared to other PEBs, the scores of engagement in environmental activities organized by any organizations, the use of cotton bags instead of plastic bags, reusing and recycling were lower. Environmentally friendly purchasing had an average score of 3.28 (SD = 0.78), slightly higher than not purchasing food packaged in a foam container, which had an average score of 3.24 (SD = 0.91). After excluding the score of public transport use, an average PEB score was 3.22 with a standard deviation of 0.57 (see Table III).

Considering the characteristics of the participants and the descriptive statistics of the other predictors (see Table III), there were 395 participants from Bangkok and 415 from other provinces. Overall, the number of female participants was higher than that of male participants, at 57.5 and 42.5 percent, respectively. Almost 60 percent of participants have a bachelor degree and 22.3 percent have a master’s degree.
The participants working for the private companies have the highest rate of 26 percent followed by being students 25.7 percent of the participants. Considering their average income, the survey result showed that participants having an average income of between 15,000 and 30,000 Baht have the highest rate of 35.7 percent of the participants. This amount coincides with a standard income for a person holding a bachelor degree. According to the result of statistical analysis, the relationships between psychosocial variables and level of engagement in PEBs were low. Table III also presents scores of other predictors and their reliability presented as the value of Cronbach’s $\alpha$. All variables manifest good reliability with Cronbach $\alpha$ s all above 0.70.

### 4.2 Factors determining well-educated people’s engagement in PEBs

To test whether dispositional factors, attitudinal factors, motivational factors, factor of environmental knowledge, or psychosocial factors could predict participants’ engagement in PEBs, a multiple regression analysis was performed. The result is reported in Table IV. The selected predictors were the 19 indices, and the criterion variable was the level of engagement in PEBs. The overall model is significant with $F (19,790) = 35.944$, $p = 0.000$. The multiple correlation coefficient ($R$) was 0.681, and $R^2$ was 0.464. This indicates that approximately 46.4 percent of the variance in PEB can be accounted for by the linear combination of the nineteen predictors. The variance inflation factor (VIF) was between 1.064-1.799, which is below the threshold value of 10 (Field, 2009). It indicated that there was no multicollinearity. Regarding the influence of each variable on PEB, the result shows that sense of obligation is the most significant variable; its beta-value is 0.330. Perceived probability of receiving impacts, knowledge related to environmental action strategies and environmental phenomena, and outcome expectancy are also significant at 0.1 percent, while environmental worldview is significant at 1 percent. All those variables have a positive effect on PEBs. The participants reported high scores of these variables and tended
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean/n ±/%</th>
<th>Correlation with PEB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pro-environmental behavior</td>
<td>3.22 ± 0.57</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>344 42.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>466 57.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger than 18 years</td>
<td>47 5.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25 years old</td>
<td>242 29.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-40 years old</td>
<td>480 59.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-60 years old</td>
<td>41 5.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>395 48.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other provinces</td>
<td>415 51.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior high school</td>
<td>115 14.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>480 59.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
<td>181 22.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>34 4.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental officer</td>
<td>103 12.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private company’s employee</td>
<td>212 26.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal businessmen/merchants</td>
<td>118 14.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent employee</td>
<td>55 6.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>25 3.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>208 25.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic staff</td>
<td>58 7.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/housewife</td>
<td>31 3.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income in Baht</td>
<td>0.103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>less than 10,000</td>
<td>152 18.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000-15,000</td>
<td>167 20.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,001-30,000</td>
<td>289 35.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,001 = 50,000</td>
<td>145 17.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more than 50,000</td>
<td>57 7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with living environment</td>
<td>3.68 ± 0.83</td>
<td>0.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with income-expenditure balance</td>
<td>3.30 ± 1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction with life overall</td>
<td>3.63 ± 0.92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total life satisfaction score</td>
<td>3.53 ± 0.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>3.85 ± 0.91</td>
<td>0.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome expectancy</td>
<td>2.67 ± 0.72</td>
<td>0.524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV1: The balance of nature is very fragile and easily disrupted</td>
<td>4.12 ± 0.94</td>
<td>0.244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV2: Human activities, sometimes, contribute to environmental impacts</td>
<td>4.47 ± 0.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV3: The environment exists to support human needs</td>
<td>-3.15 ± 1.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV4: The earth has limited resources and space (like a space ship)</td>
<td>4.36 ± 0.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV5: Development has its limitations</td>
<td>3.99 ± 1.02</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WV6: Human beings have the right to modify the environment in response to their needs</td>
<td>-2.88 ± 1.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total worldview (WV) score</td>
<td>10.92 ± 2.99</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Experience of air pollutant**

| No | 104 12.8% |
| Yes| 706 87.2% |

Table III. Average PEB score, descriptive statistics of potential predictors, and Cronbach’s alpha (continued)
to actively engage in PEBs. In addition, some psychosocial variables were also significant. Age, at 1 percent, has a negative relationship with PEB. It indicates that younger, well-educated people tend to be more active in PEBs than older educated people are.

The result of multiple regression analysis reveals that gender is also significant at 5 percent. Female participants reported more engagement in PEBs that the male respondents did. Life satisfaction is also significant at 1 percent. Overall, nine variables have a significant effect on PEB. Considering $\beta$ values of those variables, sense of obligation and perceived severity of receiving impacts from environmental problems have a high effect on PEB, and most of the psychosocial variables are not significant.
5. Discussions and implications for development of communication strategies

The findings clearly demonstrate that individuals’ sense of responsibility and outcome expectancy, defined as dispositional factors, are the significant factors predicting PEB of well-educated people. Similar to findings reported by some previous studies (Steg, 2005; Chen, 2016; Testa et al., 2016), moral obligation, stated in VBN theory, was the strongest predictor of PEB, particularly prediction of low-cost PEB (Steg, 2005). Outcome expectancy and sense of obligation could play an important role in bridging the gap between environmental belief and environmental behaviors (Steg, 2005; Chen, 2016). People will decide to act environmentally when they perceive and realize that undoing environmental harm is their responsibility and that their actions could contribute to the improvement of environmental quality to some extent. Environmental worldview had less influence than sense of obligation and outcome expectancy. This is not surprising because environmental worldviews, reflecting people’s environmental attitude, could enhance people’s environmental awareness and lead to the decision to perform environmental actions (De Groot and Steg, 2009; Levine and Strube, 2012). However, the decision of whether or not to act environmentally was significantly affected by another factor (Poortinga et al., 2004; Vining and Ebreo, 1992). The positive relationship between life satisfaction and PEB was also found in this investigation. People with higher life satisfaction more frequently engage in PEB. This finding corresponds to the findings in Venhoeven et al. (2013). Low-life satisfaction could reflect pessimism, which influences self-problem-solving skills. Those who are pessimistic tend to avoid problems rather than finding a way to solve them (Scheier et al., 1986; Rand, 2009). In this way, individuals expressing low-life satisfaction are more reluctant to participate in PEBs.

Notably, level of education, income, location, career, and experiences of pollutants had no effects on PEB. Higher income participants and participants with higher education degrees did not show significantly higher levels of PEB. These findings were different from the expectations. Financial status does not affect the PEBs of well-educated people, and educated people with a higher level of education do not show a higher level of engagement in PEBs. Well-educated people’s decision to act environmentally may rely on their rational processes of thinking, enormously depending on their environmental attitude and awareness (Xue and Zhao, 2015). Additionally, participants with different genders and age groups reported a significant difference of engagement in PEB. Well-educated females tend to be more active participants in PEB than well-educated males are. As demonstrated by Meyer (2016), females had significantly higher levels of PEBs, such as recycling and double-sided printing. Xiao and Hong (2010) also reported females’ engagement in significantly higher levels of domestic PEBs. This study could also confirm that well-educated females are more actively engaged in PEB than well-educated males are. Females might have more concerns on issues related to their lives, thereby impacting their actions. Considering environmental risk perception held by males and females, it was also found that females always exhibit a greater environmental risk perception than males do because of their higher levels of concerns about their lives and their families (Slovic, 1999). In addition, females see themselves as being more vulnerable to environmental health problems (such as toxins, nuclear hazards, and environmental damage) than males do (Webersil, 2010). Regarding the relationship between age and PEB, the findings showed that younger well-educated people seemed to act more environmentally than the older groups did. Previous studies, however, suggested several dimensions affecting this issue. Raudsepp (2001), for instance, found a positive relationship between age and PEB, but Van Liere and Dunlap (1980) and Dietz et al. (1998) found a negative relationship. The negative relationship was also confirmed by Diekmann and Preisendorfer (1998), who found a significantly higher level of recycling PEB among the younger group than the older group. However, the reason that younger people are more active in PEB remains unexplained. This may require future research.
Moreover, two types of environmental knowledge showed the greatest significance in predicting PEB: knowledge related to environmental phenomena and environmental actions, with the exception of knowledge related to causes of environmental problems. The participants exhibiting lower levels of understanding of the current environmental phenomena (such as climate change and pollutants) tended to engage in significantly lower levels of PEBs. Similarly, the participants exhibiting lower levels of environmental action knowledge also reported significantly lower levels of PEBs. This finding corresponds to Bronfman et al.’s (2015) study, which indicated the significance of environmental knowledge in encouraging people to engage in PEB. With environmental knowledge, people could form their environmental attitude and assess the necessity to act environmentally (Kollmuss and Agyeman, 2002). Knowledge related to action strategies also increase individuals’ competency to perform PEB, and thus a decision to engage in PEB is made (Corral-Verdugo, 1996; Bronfman et al., 2015). Finally, the result of multiple regression analysis and analysis of variances also demonstrated the relationship between PEB and perceived probability of receiving impacts from environmental problems. Other viewpoints of environmental risks perceived by the participants (such as perceived probability of environmental problem occurrence and perceived severity of adverse impacts) were not significantly related to PEB. This finding confirmed Chen et al.’s (2013) study, which indicated that higher perceived exposure is associated with a higher level of engagement in PEBs. In this way, if provided with information related to individuals’ exposure to environmental harm or pollutants, well-educated people might be more inclined to act environmentally.

The results of the investigation provided some implications for the development of policies and strategies which can promote well-educated people’s behavioral changes. Information strategies, being aimed at changing people’s attitudes, cognition, motivation, and knowledge, should be established. First, informational strategies should be aimed at enhancing people’s knowledge, particularly knowledge related to environmental phenomena and action strategies, in order to enhance their awareness and capability to perform PEB. It is assumed that new environmental knowledge may result in changes in attitude and capability, which in turn will affect behavior. Second, the information strategy can be aimed at strengthening people’s altruistic and ecological values as well as enhancing people’s commitment to perform PEB. Commitment strategies became successful in encouraging PEB (Lehman and Geller, 2004). Third, persuasion can be aimed to enhancing people’s motivation to act environmentally. Though people have capability, good attitude, and active intention, they may be reluctant to act environmentally because of the lack of motivation.

Based on the result of surveys, the study proposes three main specific communication strategies. First, sense of obligation and outcome expectancy are both significant in bridging the gap between people’s environmental awareness and decisions to perform environmental actions. To increase sense of obligation and outcome expectancy, frequent communication as well as communication with specific information, such as the contribution of human behavioral changes to environmental quality improvement, the significance of PEBs in environmental management, and environmental values should be carried out. As suggested by Farrior (2005), individuals’ sense of obligation could be enhanced by communicating information related to environmental values, including egoistic concerns, social altruistic concerns, and biospheric concerns. In the cities where educated people lives such as the city of Bangkok, local environmental values and environmental problems occurring in the area can be communicated through the local media. Second, providing environmental knowledge related to environmental actions and environmental phenomena such as air pollution, climate change, and biodiversity degradation is essential, since the result of this investigation showed that people in possession of higher environmental knowledge reported higher engagement in PEBs. These two types of knowledge could be included in schools’ curriculum, or dispersed through other communication channels that are often accessed by well-educated people, such as the
internet, newspapers, and television. For instance, in the city of Bangkok, the phenomenon of urban heat island can be communicated with the public since many people are experiencing this situation. Third, communicating environmental risks could also encourage people’s engagement in PEBs. As found in this study, if people perceive a high probability of being affected by environmental problems such as climate change and environmental pollutants, they tend to be more engaged in PEBs. Therefore, information related to individuals’ vulnerability to each type of environmental harm or pollutant should be communicated.

Finally, the study would like to suggest that policy makers should pay more attention to PEB of male educated people than one of the female. Males are more hesitate to act environmentally. In addition, promoting PEB of the older group should be more emphasized by the policy makers since the result showed that the older group significantly reported less engagement in PEB than the younger group. These two issues should be further studied in order to provide concrete strategies for enhancing PEB.

6. Conclusion
This study developed an integrated exploratory model to investigate the relationship between well-educated people’s engagement in PEB and potential predictors that were selected based on the purpose-to-propose environmental education and communication improvement strategies. Five types of variables – dispositional, attitudinal, motivational, environmental knowledge, and psychosocial – were investigated to see if they had a significant effect on PEB. According to the result of the multiple regression analysis, a sense of obligation was the most significant variable positively influencing well-educated people’s engagement in PEB. Sense of obligation could play a crucial role in bridging the gap between environmental awareness and environmental action. Besides sense of obligation, outcome expectancy was positively related to PEB. To increase both sense of obligation and perceived outcome expectancy, the study suggested frequently communicating information related to environmental values and the significance of PEB in environmental quality improvements. The multiple regression analysis also revealed a positive correlation between PEB and two types of environmental knowledge: knowledge related to environmental phenomena and environmental action strategies. These two types of knowledge could enable people to form environmental awareness and could enhance tendencies to be involved in PEB and inform decisions to act environmentally. Moreover, well-educated people’s perceived probability of receiving impacts from a damaged environment or pollutants significantly influences PEB; whereas, people’s risk perception based on other viewpoints, perceived probability of environmental problems occurring and perceived severity, are not significantly related to PEB. It could be suggested that communicated with information related to individuals’ vulnerability to environmental problems, well-educated people would be more actively engaged in PEB. Other factors that had a less significant relationship with PEBs than those mentioned above were environmental worldviews, life satisfaction, gender, and age. Policy makers should also pay attention to these factors when improving environmental education and environmental risk communication.

References


**Further reading**


**Corresponding author**

Piyapong Janmaimool can be contacted at: Piyapong.jan@kmutt.ac.th
Welfare governmentalities: pastoralism and parties’ youth wings in Mexico

Edgar Zavala Pelayo
Institute of Latin American Studies, Stockholms Universitet, Stockholm, Sweden

Abstract
Purpose – From a micro-macro perspective, the purpose of this paper is to analyze the welfare-related criteria reported by the heads of political parties’ youth wings in Mexico, the implicit and explicit religious beliefs that inform some of those criteria and the (Foucauldian) pastoral genealogy of both the criteria and beliefs.
Design/methodology/approach – The paper draws on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with a group of 32 heads of three political parties’ youth wings in Mexico. The interpretation of the data builds on a previous genealogical analysis of Foucauldian pastoralism in colonial Mexico.
Findings – The respondents’ criteria on a state that should aim at procuring “material-spiritual” and “material-transcendental” types of well-being and politics as “help,” are partly informed by religious values. Such criteria and religious values have been partly constructed out of a pastoralism which was deployed during the Spanish colonial regime and included “temporal” and “spiritual” teleologies of government and the practice of charity as (self-)governmental technique.
Originality/value – The literature on welfare/social policies of Latin American countries like Mexico tends not to problematize issues of secularity other than the religions’ undesirable intrusions in the political field. Governmentality studies also tend to bypass Foucault’s discussion of pastoralism. An empirical study of the pastoral genealogy of contemporary political rationalities in a constitutionally secular country such as Mexico can prompt further research on the gaps above and comparative analyses of pastoral and welfare governmentality across Latin American and other world regions.
Keywords Mexico, Governmentality, Charity, Political parties, Pastoralism, Welfare governmentalities, Salvation, Youth wings
Paper type Research paper

Introduction
Former President of Mexico Felipe Calderon Hinojosa (2006-2012) began his political career in the second half of the 1980s serving as the first President of the Partido Acción Nacional’s youth wing. One year earlier, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional had also created an organization for the training of its young cadres. In the early 2010s, the Partido de la Revolucion Democratica established a parallel organization. These youth wings today represent the official organizations in charge of the ideological and technical training of the Mexican three most voted parties’ young cadres. The discussion below will draw on data collected from semi-structured interviews with a group comprised of heads of the aforementioned youth wings. Although no forecast is presented – or implied – in this paper, the discussion below addresses the political rationality of a generation of young individuals who will likely be part of the country’s political establishment from 2020 on.

From a governmentality approach, the paper analyzes some of the heads’ political criteria concerning why and how to procure society’s welfare. Unlike works that adopt a governmentality viewpoint without a genealogical analysis (e.g. Newberry, 2012; Waring and Latif, 2017; Wool, 2007), this paper builds on findings from previous genealogical analyses of Foucauldian pastoralism in the viceroyalty of New Spain[1] (Zavala-Pelayo, 2016a; Zavala-Pelayo, 2016b). Furthermore, it uses some of those findings to account for the governmentality of welfare (Cloke et al., 2007; Henman, 2006) that can be observed through the above respondents. The two sections below summarize the state-centered literature on welfare/social policies in Mexico and Foucault’s governmental-genealogical approach,
respectively. In the latter, the emphasis of Foucault on a constitutive connection between the macro and micro levels of governmental realities is highlighted. After a summary of the methodological guidelines of the empirical study, a micro-level analysis is presented in the fifth section. It includes the respondents’ statements on “material-spiritual” and “material-transcendental” types of well-being (why to procure welfare); their notions of politics as help (how to procure welfare) and an evidence-based discussion of the substantial links between some of the above criteria and some of the respondents' religious values. An overview of colonial pastoralism in New Spain – with its “spiritual” and “temporal” teleologies of government and its use of charity as governmental and self-governmental technique – is presented afterwards from a macro perspective. Acknowledging complementary genealogies and the ruptures and transformations of colonial pastoralism, the paper then argues that the respondents' welfare-related criteria above and the religious self-governmental values that inform them at the micro level, have been partly constructed out of the aforementioned colonial pastoralism, its spiritual and temporal governmental teleologies and its practice of charity as (self-)governmental technique. The paper concludes by endorsing the analysis of macro governmentalities of welfare through empirically based analysis of political realities at the micro level. It also suggests that a governmentality approach to welfare and a focus on the pastoral components of governmentalities can be used to supplement state-centric literature on welfare/social policies and to further comparative studies of welfare governmentalities and governmental pastoralisms across regions in and beyond Latin America.

State-centered perspectives

The literature on welfare and social policies in Mexico specializes in poverty (Castillo and Arzate, 2013; Portilla, 2005; Tetreault 2012), social inequalities (Brachet-Márquez, 2010; Fernandez, 2010), public health policies (Barquera et al., 2001; Gonzalez and Scott, 2010), social policies design (De la Rosa, 2004; Martinez, 2006) and policies' assessment or revision (Acosta, 2010; De Buen, 1993; Torres and Rojas, 2015). In the majority of these works, there are more or less extended sections on the historical context of welfare/social policies in Mexico, which tend to trace the birth of welfare in the country back to the early nineteenth-century, post-revolution Mexican state (Brachet-Márquez, 2010; Portilla, 2005; Torres and Rojas, 2015). In some works, this chronological datum is extended further by tracing the background of such initial policies back to the nineteenth-century post-independence Mexican state (Brachet-Márquez, 2005, 2007), and by pointing out in passing some international developments, such as nineteenth-century historical materialism and “utopian socialism” (De Buen, 1993, p. 196) or England’s nineteenth-century (New) Poor Law (Martinez, 2006, p. 25). Only a few researchers go further back and point out the colonial background of welfare policies in Mexico. Diaz (2000) focuses on “the protection of and assistance to the marginal classes” (2000, p. 43) by three charitable colonial institutions: religious and work guilds, pious mounts and hospitals. The latter, established and managed by the Catholic Church, served as the means not only for charitable work and evangelization but also for “the control and care of the labor work force” (Diaz, 2000, p. 45). Alvarez (2005) notes the work of the Franciscans, Jesuits, Augustinians, Dominicans and the secular priests who offered basic education in parishes; nuns who offered education for girls in convents; and beatas — women from the laity who “took less formal religious vows” (2005, pp. 366-367) — who sheltered abused women and single mothers in beatarios. In Alvarez’ words, the Catholic church and social welfare became “inseparable during the colonial period” (2005, p. 366) and divorced, institutionally, in the 1850s after the passing of secular reforms and the taking over of the welfare (proto)system by the newly independent Mexican state.

Both the synchronic and diachronic studies of social/welfare policies in Mexico are doubtless valuable contributions to the understanding of welfare systems. Although differing in chronological scope, disciplinary frames and theoretical base, both types of
literature are based on analytical perspectives that usually converge upon both their methodological institutionalism and their normative positioning. As in several segments within the mainstream literature that analyzes welfare systems in other regions (e.g. Eißel et al., 2014), these works adopt a direct or indirect focus on the state or de-centralized public agencies as institutions that must provide the population with adequate welfare – however such an adequacy is defined. These studies take a more or less critical stance in order to contribute to reforms, or debates leading to reforms, regarding the welfare state and its policies.

The governmentality-genealogy approach
Adopting a Foucauldian-genealogical approach in the study of welfare does not so much indicate a different conceptual base as a different theoretical-analytical perspective (Foucault, 1977, 1993, 2007; see also Dean, 2010). The main theoretical-analytical contribution of this view is a simultaneous de-centering of three methodological conventions: the institution, its “proper” functions, and the (study) object the institution itself puts forth. A governmentality approach has to move beyond the institution in order to identify the wider socially constructed, historically specific network of “technologies of power” (Foucault, 2007, p. 119) or arena of political and non-political “government regimes” (Bröckling et al., 2011, p. 13), in which such an institution is embedded. It also requires the analyst to leave momentarily aside the ideal “functions” of the institution and grasp instead the extra-institutional “strategies and tactics” (Foucault, 2007, pp. 117-118) that govern those internal functions from outside. The third de-centering relates to the (study) object, or series of such, to which the institution is related, be it sexuality, crime, or health; the analytical focus is not the object per se nor the institutional definition of it, but the heterogeneous “field of truth” (2007, p. 118), or the “plurality of governmental rationalities” (Bröckling et al., 2011, p. 11), that constructs it. To carry out these simultaneous de-centerings a genealogical approach becomes necessary. Unlike historical studies that, however critically, focus their attention on the institution, its functions and/or object, genealogies draw on historical material to trace back the non-essentialist “emergence” (Foucault, 1977, pp. 148-152) of these elements in and across historical networks of power technologies and regimes. As Takács (2004) puts it, a Foucauldian genealogy is not as an exercise of historicism (cf. Hearn, 2012, p. 91) but a “philosophical reflection” based on historical research and a break with the “obviousness of the present” and the past (2004, pp. 879-880).

Drawing on more or less extensive genealogies, some authors have studied different elements related to welfare governmentality. Ewald (1991), for instance, analyzes the genealogical development of insurance as an institution, an abstract technology and, more importantly, as a malleable “insurantial imaginary” from the nineteenth-century onwards (p. 198). Larsen (2011) discusses the moral and bio-political governmental technologies behind health care programs focused on diseases related to lifestyles in Denmark and the USA. Withworth and Carter (2014) discuss the “underlying rationalities, subjectivities, power relations and ‘truths’” (p. 114) of the welfare to work program that was launched in the UK in 2011. One of the genealogical components that these works do not analyze, and which tends to be neglected in other governmentality studies (Petterson, 2014, p. 10), is Foucauldian pastoralism.

Pastoralism and (self-) governmentality
Pastoralism, or pastoral power, represents the ways of governing that were modeled upon the role of the Christian pastor and applied in Europe by the Catholic church from the fourth century onwards (Foucault, 1982, 2007). It is indeed the religious ingredient of governmentality, and it operates alongside the more secular technologies of power found
in liberalism (Foucault, 2008), biopolitics, the military and the early (seventeenth-eighteenth centuries) concept of police (Foucault, 2007). The main characteristic of pastoralism is its discursive and practical deployment of an other-worldly salvation as a strategic governmental teleology (Foucault, 2007, pp. 166-167; 1982, pp. 782-783; see also Kersbergen, 1995, pp. 197-204). In Foucault’s view, pastoralism also developed a series of governmental principles such as a “reciprocal responsibility,” which entails the community’s responsibility for having a good destiny and the pastor’s permanent responsibility for the whole community and the individual throughout his/her life (2007, p. 168; 1982, p. 783). Pastoralism also institutes an “analytical responsibility,” that is, the pastor’s obligation to know “everything that every single sheep has done” (2007, p. 170) – a governmental principle conveniently operationalized by the practice of confession (Foucault, 2014). These and other complementary principles – e.g. the management of faults and good deeds, subordination as obedience, a permanent spiritual direction (Foucault, 2007, pp. 170-185) – can be concisely defined as a Foucauldian technology of power (Foucault, 1993)[2] that embraces both techniques for governing, or “how” to govern, as well as its general logics, including those on “why” to govern (Dean, 2010, pp. 30,40; Self-reference 2).

Foucault’s attention in later works[3] goes from technologies of external domination to “self-technologies,” or procedures “through which the self is constructed or modified by himself” (1993, p. 204; 2014). For Foucault the repertoire of self-technologies in early Christianity, which can be traced back to the types of “antique conscience” in the Greek, Hellenistic and Latin cultures (2010), represent a key genealogical input of “modern subjectivity” (1993, pp. 204-5). These self-technologies are constituted by the individual’s reflexive production of truth through the Christian exercises of self-examination and confession. The subject not only has to know and evaluate his or her “faults” (1993, p. 211) but also has to speak those faults and the resulting self-analysis out in a confessional setting. In Foucault’s view (2014), the type of monastic confessional setting was particularly relevant because it involved a continuous vigilance over one’s conscience. This subjectifying facet of pastoralism connects with the external governmental principles accounted for above, making Foucauldian pastoralism an efficient technology of external government and self-government (McKee, 2009; Mutch, 2017; Waring and Latif, 2017). Considering this theoretical and analytical micro-macro link (Brockling et al., 2011, p. 12), the discussion below addresses some of the welfare-related criteria of a group of heads of political parties’ youth wings in Mexico and some of the Christian, namely Catholic, precepts some of these respondents themselves identified as important values for political behavior.

Methodology

Drawing on the idea of pastoralism as self-government, the section below presents a qualitative analysis of welfare-related criteria and religious values of some of the heads of three political parties’ youth wings in Mexico. The textual data below were collected through a series of semi-structured interviews[4] conducted in 2015 with 32 local, regional and national coordinators, secretaries, and presidents[5] of the youth wings of Partido Acción Nacional, PAN (right-oriented), Partido Revolucionario Institucional, PRI (center-oriented) and Partido de la Revolución Democrática, PRD (left-oriented[6]). To increase the non-statistical relevance of the research findings, respondents were sought in two regions of Mexico that are apparently divergent: the country’s Central-West – perceived as culturally and politically conservative – and the Mexico City Metropolitan Area – perceived as more liberal and progressive in cultural and political terms. After the full transcription of the interviews, the qualitative analysis begun with a literal reading and a preliminary coding of the textual data set (Mason, 2002). The analysis then moved to a series of interpretative readings and a theoretically informed (Foucault, 1982, 1993, 2007; Self-reference 2) data coding aimed at
identifying the respondents’ criteria on how and why to procure well-being and the respondents’ religious beliefs explicitly, or implicitly (Henman, 2006, p. 25), related to those criteria. A series of comparisons were carried out to identify patterns by region and by political party. No substantial differences were observed after the comparisons by region. The variations by political party will be discussed below.

**Well-being, help and “helping thy neighbor”**

The respondents’ statements on why and how to procure well-being included relatively differing criteria. Interviewees from the left-oriented party, for instance, suggested a progressive political agenda of welfare that included gay marriage and legalization of abortions –topics whose frequency was rather incidental in the statements by interviewees from the other parties. An interviewee from the right-oriented party did not emphasize the type of “charitable help” that will be accounted below, but a type of help “that really change people’s lives” (Female, Right). However, besides the respondents’ relatively diverse opinions, the most frequent notions within and across the political parties were the material-spiritual and material-transcendental types of well-being (why to procure welfare) and the notions of help in pragmatic and charitable versions (how to procure welfare), as discussed below.

*Why: “material-spiritual” and “material-transcendental” well-being*

Although a minority of respondents from the right-oriented party described “the common good” as a secondary political criterion, the majority of respondents from this party granted political primacy to the concept. These respondents agreed on the idea that the common good guides their role as politicians and represents the state’s ultimate aim or the main condition for accomplishing the latter. Such a common good was defined by the respondents from integralist positions and included a “spiritual” dimension. One of the interviewees described the common good as “the set of political, social, economic, spiritual and cultural conditions that help men to develop in fullness” (Male, Right). In less formal terms, another respondent stated that the fulfilment of the common good means that “society” has achieved a “decent [digna] way of life” in such a way that “all of us have access to education, health, a good economy […], and a spiritual wellbeing” (Male, Right).

Some of the respondents from the center- and left-oriented parties did also refer to the common good as a political goal – as a respondent put it, one of the “fundamental duties” of politicians is procuring “that wellbeing, that peace […], the common good of the people” (Male, Center). However, the majority of respondents from these parties suggested the pre-eminence of a “material-transcendental” type of well-being. An interviewee, for instance, stated that the Mexican state is “looking for a moral, if not a spiritual, salvation, *but it is failing on that,*” and later on specified that “there should be procurement of moral values based not on religious morals but on a morals of co-habitation [convivencia], on an ethical exaltation of the human condition” (Male, Left, my italics). Similarly, another respondent from the same party asserted that politicians have to avoid “mundane” roles and adopt instead a “mythic” persona which would allow them to give “a transcendental mission to their political action” and to convey to the people the idea “that there is something beyond the material, not [something] spiritual, but metaphysical, transcendental” (Male Left).

For another respondent, the type of transcendental aims the Mexican state has to achieve in addition to material targets, include “hope” because it represents “the most important thing a government must give” (Male, Center).

*How: charitable and pragmatic help*

One of the activities systematically mentioned by the respondents when they referred to the role of politicians and the task of governing was “helping.” Two types of helping were
identified: charitable and pragmatic. The former entailed a notion of political action as assistance and (individual) “neighbourly love” (Kersbergen, 1995, p. 188) toward the needy; the later a more utilitarian notion of (mutual) help. The majority of respondents from the right-oriented party referred to the charitable type of help while describing their political roles. For instance, one respondent stated that a sense of professional accomplishment comes after “you go out to society and hand [people] in food for their pantries; it is then that it [being a politician] is worth it because of what you worked for, […] for the good of the people” (Female, Right). The idea of politics as charitable help was found in interviewees from the other parties as well. In the view of one of them, the role of politicians “is not about sitting and passing laws that do not help” but “saying hi to your neighbor every day, shaking hands with him, hug somebody [in the street] who asked you for change […]” (Female, Left). According to another respondent “[i]f somebody knocks on your door, it is because [he/she] needs your help,” which may only mean “standing up in one’s office and holding [people’s] hands, having a conversation” because “sometimes people just want to be heard” (Male, Center).

Statements about pragmatic help were found mostly in the respondents from the center- and left-oriented parties. One respondent, for instance, stated openly that his party’s support for minority causes means “help” that entails neither “joining fully” the minority cause nor “opposing what they do;” a good politician, he then added, “positions the idea” that he or she is “open to listen to the people and help them as far as possible” (Male, Left). For some interviewees such a pragmatic type of help entailed a degree of reciprocity. As one respondent put it, one of the ruler’s main concerns must be to form “citizens […] who support each other, who do not see each other as enemies but as friends”; a ruler, he said, “must know how to promote mutual help” (Male, Center).

Respondents welfare-related religious beliefs
Despite having different views regarding how politicians should approach religions (or not), all the respondents vocally advocated the secularism of the Mexican State, in particular the principle of church-state separation. This secularism, or laicismo, was also a core element of the respondents’ professional identities and part of their reported “selves,” or the criteria by which they reportedly conduct themselves (Foucault, 1993). As one of the interviewees put it unambiguously during the interview, “we should not mix politics with our religious beliefs” (Male, Right). The evidence suggests, however, that those selves were constituted by some particular religious values too.

The majority of the respondents from the three parties expressed disagreements with some of the traditional Christian, mostly Catholic, values – particularly those that address sexual and reproductive matters. However, the evidence suggests that some of the welfare-related political criteria of the respondents, such as their idea of politics as the deployment of charitable and pragmatic types of help, are substantially linked to religious precepts(9). One respondent from the right-oriented party who talked about his political “vocation of service” in terms of putting his “virtues to work,” stated somewhat diffidently:

I am Catholic; not that it has influenced it [vocation of service], but at home I grew up with this idea of serving […] of helping. I was [also] in Catholic groups […] [and there] somehow I learnt about being helpful to society […] (Male, Right).

A similar explicit link was also found in respondents from the other parties. For instance, a nominal-Catholic interviewee who asserted that politicians should above all “help the rest of the people” stated openly afterwards that the Catholic religious value she agrees with “and must be applied in politics is helping your neighbor” (Female, Center). Referring to the idea of pragmatic help, another respondent asserted that the “ideas […] of peace, of helping each other […] that Catholicism has” can also be “translated into” the “political systems, even the bureaucratic systems” (Male, Center).
The respondent above also stated that the “political and governmental systems” in Mexico “are totally based upon a religious system”; for him, religions and governmental systems alike “create an order […] amidst the human chaos, […] and a paradigm for the future, goals, the why and how of things,” (Male, Center). Other than these explicit statements – and those on a push for an open “alliance” between the country’s “left” and the Catholic social teachings by the respondent who endorsed “mythic” politicians and “metaphysical, transcendental” teleologies (Male, Left) – no evidence in the data set proves the influence of religious precepts upon the respondents’ notions of why to procure material-spiritual and material-transcendental types of well-being for society[10]. But a genealogical analysis that goes beyond the respondents’ “self-descriptions” (Henman, 2006, p. 25) does confirm significant links between pastoral rationalities in colonial and post-colonial Mexico and the two types of well-being, and help, held by the respondents.

**Mexico’s colonial pastoralism**

The paragraphs below build on what has been discussed elsewhere (Zavala-Pelayo, 2016a; Zavala-Pelayo, 2016b) regarding the simultaneously spiritual and pragmatic governmental teleology of colonial pastoralism in New Spain and one of its governmental techniques – charity.

Why to govern: spiritual and temporal happiness

Pastoralism in colonial Mexico clearly had a spiritual and (putatively) transcendental objective. Shaped by the messianic eschatology of Catholicism and (crypto)Judaism in the Iberian peninsula (Lafaye, 1997, pp. 27-46), the (Spanish) Catholic Church in the colonial Americas took on the ambitious task of securing the spiritual salvation of the Americas’ population through Christianization. The Church worked actively toward the fulfillment of this goal through its number of (sub)institutions – mainly religious orders, missions and networks of parishes and bishoprics. However, the fulfillment of such an other-worldly objective required as well the accomplishment of a rather worldly goal (cf. Foucault, 1982, pp. 782-784; 2007).

According to the Catholic Church, the target was both the Christian and the “human” conversions of the native population; the latter meant working “on making political and human men” (Lorenzana, 1769, p. 148). This represented the means for spiritual conversion as well as a parallel ultimate goal of the Church’s regime. The “teaching” of the “good doctrine” (Foucault, 2007, pp. 180-181) was not the only action required to fulfill such an ambitious double teleology. The task ahead was the “civilizing” (Bolton, 1917; Elliot, 1984) of the “unassuming, long-suffering, unassertive and submissive” natives (Las Casas, 2004/1552, p. 53). Since such humans were regarded as “able children” (Mills and Taylor, 2006, p. 172), the civilizational enterprise was accordingly an all-encompassing and thorough project meant to transform radically the religious beliefs and habits of the natives as well as the communicational, sexual, vocational, communal and familial dimensions of their everyday lives. In sum, the purpose was to make them human beings with a properly civilized “way of life and customs” (Encinas, 1596, pp. 272-273). At times such a radical transformation was rather an adaptation of the Spanish religiosity and civility to the natives (Gonzalez and Gonzalez, 2008; Wilde, 2009), but this did not prevent the Church and its phalanx of missionaries and secular clergies from teaching Catechism and the Spanish (or Castilian) language; training the native population on agricultural and farming methods (Bolton, 1917), trades, music and singing skills (Mills and Taylor, 2006, p. 175); and planning and constructing entire villages, which “were entirely in the hands of the religious, even their temporal affairs” (Ricard, 2000, p. 139). The Church also regulated the native’s community and family life. It urged families to live in properly separated huts and instructed family members on sleeping in different beds within the household (Lorenzana, 1769, p. 392). In addition, the Holy Inquisition in New Spain policed what it considered “bad habits” (Chinchilla, 1953, p. 197) in the Spanish, creole and indigenous population, such
as unmarried co-habitation, sex out of marriage, incest, and other civic-sexual offenses (Chinchilla, 1953, p. 198, pp. 214-220).

Arguing that there was a concept of welfare in New Spain might be misleading; there was, however, a sound notion of an ideal, “utopian” society (Lafaye, 1997) conceived as the fulfillment of people’s “spiritual and temporal happiness” (Lorenzana, 1769, p. 392). In governmental terms, the Catholic church not only ruled over people’s spiritual lives but also what was by then considered the people’s material well-being. In sum, pastoralism in New Spain was not necessarily Foucault’s monastic, self-reflexive and “absurd” pastoralism (Foucault, 2007, p. 176); it was rather a putatively “rational” (Lorenzana, 1769, p. 7) pastoralism whereby individuals were instilled “civilized” reasons on why to pray as much as why to conduct their everyday lives in specific ways. Pastoralism in New Spain was from the outset spiritual and temporal, supernatural and pragmatic (Mutch, 2017, Zavala-Pelayo, 2016a; cf. Foucault, 1982, p. 784).

How to govern: charity as technique of government and self-government

The Catholic church built and run a network of organizations to achieve the aforementioned governmental teleology, from missions and reducciones to parishes and charitable organizations. The latter, e.g. Catholic hospitals, orphanages, shelters for widows, asylums, religious guilds, mounts of piety – were particularly relevant in governmental terms. These institutions, alongside others such as the missionary priesthood, embodied and deployed a particular governmental technique – charity itself. Some authors have noted that charitable organizations in New Spain not only assisted the needy but also contributed to evangelization and thus the spread of the dominant “ideology” (Díaz, 2000, p. 47); moreover, it eased “the control of the indigenous and creole population and the preservation of the colonial social order” (Guadarrama, 2004, p. 9). Such cumulative effects were not a collateral consequence but the aim and intrinsic rationale of charity as a governmental tool, which answered the question of “how to govern” (Foucault, 2007, p. 88) both a population and one-self by instituting, respectively, the use of an asymmetric (collective) and a horizontal (inter-personal) “beneficence” (Acosta, 1952/1589, p. 207).

Although short-lived, bishop of Michoacan Vasco de Quiroga’s town-hospitals established in the first half of the sixteenth century have been regarded as predecessors of social security in Mexico. One of those sui generis hospitals is described as a “refuge” with an “infirmary, nursery room, cemetery, shelter for pilgrims, [and a] house for the convalescent” (Cardenas, 2004, p. 97). Quiroga commands himself that the hospitals’ users do not indulge in idleness and instead learn trades that are “necessary” for the hospital’s “common good” – weaver, stone mason, carpenter, blacksmith (Quiroga, 1538/1776, p. 1). In Quiroga’s disciplinary view the hospital’s dwellers shall see in those trades the “benefits” for their “souls and bodies, […] good police and prudence,” virtues which, in his view, the dwellers “lack very much” (1538/1776, p. 3). Charity was also part of the specific instruments of evangelization taught to and used by missionaries. Acosta, a Jesuit missionary active in South America, noted that charity had been historically a “custom” among the apostles as well as a fundamental precept in the letters by Ambrose (ca. 340-397 a.D.) and Chrysostom (ca. 349-407 a.D.); hence, it was a legitimate tool which “easily defeats and captivates the [individual’s] spirit” (1952/1589, p. 399). According to Jesuit historian Charlevoix “the most efficient way to retain [the Indians] and induce them to listen to the teachings of our holy mysteries, was to persuade them with softness and gifts” (1910/1757, p. 317). Whether deployed by a missionary or a Catholic religious institution, such an asymmetric charity constituted one of the governmental techniques of colonial pastoralism in New Spain.

In addition, charity was one of the “theological virtues” – together with “faith” and “hope” – taught systematically by evangelizers and regular priests to the natives during Catechism (Betanzos and Torres, 1556/1905; Feria, 1567/2002). This horizontal type of charity urged not priests but believers “to visit the sick,” “to feed the hungry,” and to
perform other altruist deeds (Feria, 1567/2002, p. 377). These were rules of conduct that the Catholic Church generally tried to instill in the native population by commanding them to assist the sick with "some chickens, tortillas or eggs" (Lorenzana, 1769, pp. 392-3). While this charity was meant to be an inter-personal selfless act, it was not detached from governmental functions. It reinforced the governmental charity deployed asymmetrically by the Church and its number of agents by turning the act of being charitable into an expected, normalized behavior. It was a governmental technique "of the self" whereby individuals "effect [...] a certain number of operations on their own bodies, [...] souls, [...] thoughts, on their own conduct" (Foucault, 1993, p. 203). Less contemplative than Foucault's Christian technique of the self (1993), horizontal charity in New Spain joined the asymmetric charity exerted by the priest or charitable institution and, alongside other pastoral and non-pastoral self-governmental techniques, produced an equivalent Foucauldian "subject" (1993, pp. 215-217). Charity was then a principle of both government and self-government.

**Genealogical complements, ruptures and continuities**

The above governmental rationales in, and practices by, religious institutions in New Spain are indeed only one among a series of genealogical components of (proto)welfare governmentality(ies) in formerly colonized regions such as Mexico. Political "rationalities" that combined teleologies of material and spiritual nature, and governmental practices that included a control-oriented "beneficence," were not monopolized by religious institutions. Alongside the millenarism of the Spanish Catholic Church, Lafaye (1997, p. 86) notes the persistence of indigenous millenarisms that longed for a divinity-led liberation, not so much of souls as of the daily life burdens of the native population. In passing, this historian notes as well the development by Mexico's "creole" population of a material yet utopian "myth" based on a (merely discursive) revival of the pure Indian and a religion-like indigenism (Lafaye, 1997, pp. 90-92). In terms of rationales and practices of (pragmatic, asymmetric) charity, alternative genealogical threads can also be noted. Although the institution of the pre-colonial cacique – or regional chief – was confronted and transformed by the political-administrative apparatus of the colonial regime, evidence from the Jesuit guaraní missions in South America suggests that the local caciques remained "the base" of some colonial settlements and, more importantly, kept on "fulfilling central and economic political functions" such as the partial management of tributes from, and gift giving to, their vassals (Wilde, 2009, pp. 83-85). Whether governmentally stimulated by the (pre-)colonial cacicazgo or detached from it, the rationale and practices of the caudillo as a colonial political institution partly based on patron-client dynamics also included "calculated gift-giving to favored individuals who are expected to reciprocate with loyalty" (Wolf and Hansen, 1967, p. 175). At any rate, and at times challenged by instances of monastic religiosity[11], the spiritual and the material happiness of the population as governmental teleology, and the governmental deployment of charity, remained as elements of colonial pastoralism in New Spain. This state of affairs was partly transformed after the region gained Independence from the Spanish Regime.

One of the major political transformations that the independence from Spain brought to the post-colonial Mexican state was the latter's secularization, pushed by liberal political factions in the 1850s. By passing a series of liberal bills collectively named as "the Reform," the Mexican state terminated the Catholic Church's jurisdiction over civil matters, including the registry of birth, marriages and deaths; it also expropriated the church's properties that were not used for strictly religious purposes, and set a limit for the fees the church charged for administering sacraments (Gonzalez and Gonzalez, 2008, pp. 141-142). Whereas this church-state disconnection took place at the bureaucratic-administrative and institutional levels, there was not necessarily a parallel cessation at the level of pastoral governmentalties (Zavala-Pelayo, 2014). As Blancarte (2004) points out, the new liberal state sacralized itself; the Catholic saints were "replaced with the heroes of the independence
movement and the Reform, and the religious altars were replaced with the fatherland’s altars” (p. 21; my translation). To this, we can add the deployment of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Mexican liberalism’s Comtean positivism and its material-utopian teleology of progress as elements of Mexico’s new political regime – an utopia that materialized itself in a bible-like constitutional text, a holy parliament house (Lafaye, 1997, pp. 7-10, pp. 92-93) and “catechisms of the fatherland’s history” (Krauze, 2014, p. 317). During the same period, the deployment of governmental asymmetric charity did not cease, this time exercised by private organizations whose (bio-political) inspiration was a Catholic “civic piety” that saw the needy’s “redemption through labor” (Blum, 2001, p. 34).

Governmental charity and material and utopian-transcendental teleologies did not fade entirely away after this early post-colonial period. The Mexican revolution in the 1910s – partly lead at the beginning by the caudillo Francisco Madero, also known as the “apostle of democracy” (Krauze, 2014, p. 45) – put forward a creational myth (Hanai, 2011) as well as a liberationist teleology in which the faith on a coming material yet transcendental future was paramount (Lafaye, 1997). In addition, the Catholic church in the first half of the nineteenth-century strengthened its charitable, and doctrinal, activities through a new network of organizations lead by a Mexican lay Catholic Action[12]. Pushed by the Vatican’s doctrinal-political repositioning vis-à-vis the challenges of modernity and communist ideologies in Europe, and urged by papal encyclicals such as Leo XIII’s Rerum Novarum and Pious XI’s Firmissimam Constantiam and its “principles of justice and charity” as (yet again) the means “to reach the souls” (cited in Aspe, 2008, p. 137) of alienated believers, the Mexican Catholic Action aimed at re-Christianizing society by “alleviating [people’s] pains” (Aspe, 2008, p. 158), among other means.

The paragraphs above cannot offer an exhaustive account of the transformations of colonial pastoralism in Mexico yet do suggest that the respondents’ generalized understanding of politics as the deployment of charitable and pragmatic types of help are not only informed by their individual religious values – and secular professional identities. The respondents’ endorsement of the religious (Catholic) value of “helping thy neighbor” and the translation of such value into the political field and welfare governmentalities is the result of the complex and ever-changing deployment of charity as (self)governmental principle since colonial times in the region. Likely reinforced by non-religious patron-client political strategies, which in principle can be traced back to the (pre-)colonial cacicazgo and caudillaje, both the asymmetric (governmental) and the horizontal (self-governmental) charities of colonial pastoralism remain in the respondents’ pragmatic and charitable versions of “helping” others/thy neighbor because both have been steadily deployed by the colonial, early post-colonial, and the twentieth-century, socially oriented Catholicisms and their period-specific discourses and (sub)organizations. The temporal and spiritual types of happiness procured by the Catholic Church during the colonial period are no longer an explicit element in the teleologies of government of the institutionally secular Mexican state. However, it is possible to say that the respondents’ notions of material-spiritual and material-transcendental types of well-being are informed by the simultaneously temporal and spiritual teleologies of government of colonial pastoralism in New Spain because both were adopted, and adapted, by positivistic, revolutionary and other nominally secular transcendental imaginaries (Ewald, 1991) after the colonial period in Mexico.

Conclusions

A governmentality approach to welfare can shed light not only on “how the governable subject is discursively constituted” but also on how the subjects who govern and operate welfare systems are “produced through particular strategies, programs and techniques” (McKee, 2009, p. 468). Foucault’s theoretical-analytical suggestion about approaching contemporary macro governmentalities by analyzing “the politics of ourselves” (Foucault, 1993, p. 223) is pertinent and productive. The governing selves of the respondents above have been doubtless
constituted by the state’s discursive principle of church-state separation. But pastoral governmental principles still remain, acknowledged or not, and often in tension with their secular counterparts.

The above does not mean to take for granted the specific semantics of Foucault’s (European) pastoralism as a component of governmentality. Whereas Foucault argued that the spiritual salvation put forth by pre-modern pastoralism had been replaced by a “worldly” type of salvation in contemporary societies, e.g. by a secular paradigm of “well-being” or “health” (1982, p. 784), it is safe to argue that colonial pastoralism in Mexico included from the outset other-worldly and worldly teleologies of government. Moreover, what remains today in the above respondents is not only a re-configured variety of the worldly teleologies, or temporal happiness, of colonial pastoralism but also its other-worldly companion, in more (material-transcendental well-being) or less (material-spiritual well-being; the common good) transformed versions. The governmental charity of the colonial Catholic regime has also proved to be flexible and enduring. Acknowledged or not at the individual level, it has shaped what the respondents above understand about their role as providers of welfare. Charity not as an institution or a discreet practice but as a governmentality technique and the variable relations this specific technique has had with the political clientelism, systematic inequality and weaknesses in, and struggles for, social rights (Kersbergen, 1995) in Latin America and other world regions, are topics worth addressing in future work.

The findings above differ significantly from the findings of the state-centered works introduced in the second section since the latter are ultimately based on paradigms of progress, and by extension on more or less explicit notions of a secular modernity in which religious forces are not supposed to be the central object of the debates. A governmentality approach sensitive to pastoral technologies of government can problematize these approaches. Furthermore, if the two strands of literature are theoretically and methodologically reconciled through “realist” (McKee, 2009) or other empirically based research approaches, the descriptive and explanatory power of the resulting analyses could be significantly enhanced. In association with state-centered approaches or on their own, genealogical-pastoral approaches to welfare can then advance comparative studies of welfare and pastoral governmentalities across other formerly colonized societies in Latin America and other world regions.

Notes

1. One of the territories in the Americas that were colonized by Spain (sixteenth-nineteenth centuries) and today comprises Mexico, Central America and southwestern USA.

2. Foucault does not necessarily distinguish between techniques and technologies of (self)government (1993, p. 203). Withworth and Carter (2014) and Henman (2006) use the term “technology” to refer exclusively to governmental practices; their definitions of governmentality, however, are also applicable to pastoralism as technology of power – the direction of human behavior by the combination of “practices of governance” on the one hand and “political rationalities” (Henman, 2006, p. 24) or “regimes of truth” on the other (Withworth and Carter, 2014, p. 109).

3. For a substantial analysis of Foucault’s early and later approaches to religious themes see the thorough work by Carrette (2000).

4. The interview questionnaire comprised questions about general themes which included the interviewee’s views of ideal societies, his/her stance on religion and politics in Mexico, and his/her religious beliefs and values.

5. Except for two respondents, the interviewees’ ages ranged from 20 to 30 years – twelve interviewees from PAN, ten from PRI and ten from PRD; eight women and 24 men. All were selected by two non-probabilistic methods: a purposive sampling technique aimed at interviewing only the youth wings’ top heads via gatekeepers and a snow-ball sampling procedure whereby the first interviewees were asked to introduce the interviewer to other heads. Three pilot interviews were conducted prior to the interviews above.
6. These political-ideological orientations are used only as illustrative markers, not as exhaustive descriptors.

7. The PAN’s official statutes (Partido Acción Nacional, 2013) declare that the organization shall achieve “the political subordination of individual, social and state activities to the realization of the common good”.

8. All the interview quotations were translated by myself.

9. Half of the respondents, the majority from the right-oriented party, but also some from the left- and center-oriented parties, described themselves as practicing Catholics. One-third of the respondents described themselves as nominal Catholics. Four respondents declared themselves (religious) “believers.” One respondent described himself as an Evangelical Christian and another one agnostic. For a more detailed analysis of the respondents’ religious affiliations and beliefs, please see Zavala-Pelayo, 2015.

10. The influence of the Catholic social teachings over the right-oriented party’s integralist concept of the common good, as well as its principles of solidarity, subsidiarity and respect for human dignity, has been previously documented (Reynoso, 1996, pp. 151-157).

11. The Franciscans, the first religious order that arrived to New Spain in the 1520s, were trained as practitioners of a particular “eremitic spirituality” (Turley, 2016) that made indoors contemplation and not the civilization of the natives the core of their occupations. The Augustinians built convents in New Spain’s cities in order to carry out their pastoral work but also their contemplative duties (Melvin, 2012). Though less visible, the contemplative function of cloistered nuns in New Spain (Lundberg, 2015) also added up to a colonial religiosity focused more on the individual’s personal “relationship with the divine” (Lundberg, 2015, p. 47) than on Christianization and civilization. However, after the first generation, creole Franciscans in New Spain were also trained in pastoral and field activities (Turley, 2016, p. 117; Melvin, 2012, pp. 25-26) and nuns in New Spain reportedly suffered for the missionary and charitable work they fervently aspired to do but could not by decree carry out alongside their male peers (Lundberg, 2015, pp. 67-95).

12. For example, the Asociacion Catolica de la Juventud Mexicana, Union de Catolicos Mexicanos, Juventud Catolica Femenina Mexicana, and the Union Nacional de Estudiantes Catolicos.

References

Acosta, J. (1952/1589), De Procuranda Indorum Salute (Predicacion del Evangelio en las Indias), Ediciones España Misionera, Madrid.


Chinchilla, E. (1953), *La Inquisición en Guatemala*, Editorial del Ministerio de Educacion Publica, GT.


Martinez, G. (2006), *El Estado Mexicano de Bienestar*, Miguel Angel Porrua, Mexico DF.


Further reading

Na. (1841), Recopilacion de las leyes de los reinos de las Indias, Tomo primero, Ignacio Boix, Regencia Provisional del Reino, Madrid.

About the author

Edgar Zavala Pelayo is a Postdoctoral Researcher based at the Institute of Latin American Studies, Stockholm University. He holds a Master’s and Doctoral Degree in Sociology from the University of Edinburgh. He is the Author of the research articles (2014) “Pastoral power outside Foucault’s Europe: public education and the ‘epistemic authority’ of social scientists in Mexico” and “Colonial pastoralism in Latin America: new Spain’s bio-political religious regime.” Edgar Zavala Pelayo can be contacted at: ezpelayo@gmail.com

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:
www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm
Or contact us for further details: permissions@emeraldinsight.com
Abstract
Purpose – Previous research leads to contrasting hypotheses about the relationship between extra effort of employees and the level of job security. According to agency theory, job security leads to lower levels of extra effort and social exchange theory argues that extra effort requires job security. The purpose of this paper is to formulate a set of hypotheses based on these theories. Besides considering them as mutually exclusive, they are integrated into a single theoretical framework that argues that both theories can apply, depending on the conditions and social context (in terms of the social security system).
Design/methodology/approach – Data from the International Social Survey Program (2005) including 22 countries from around the globe are analyzed using multilevel analysis.
Findings – The study provides evidence that social security moderates the relationship between job security and extra effort.
Originality/value – This study differs from previous research as it focuses on two sides of insecurity in the workplace and because it analyzes a large data set to include institutional factors.
Keywords Organizational citizenship behaviour, Employee attitudes, Welfare state, Job security, Social security, Extra effort
Paper type Research paper

Introduction
Even though several theories imply that the security that workers experience affects their work behavior, there is disagreement concerning at least two questions, namely: is there a negative or positive relationship between job security and employee effort? And what are the theoretical mechanisms explaining this relationship? These two questions are interrelated and in the existing literature two sides of the debate can be identified. On the one hand, there are economic approaches to employee behavior and motivation, like agency theory (Eisenhardt, 1989; Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Shapiro, 2005). Proponents of such economic approaches argue that security drives out motivation, thus decreasing the effort that workers put into their work. Therefore, insecurity may motivate employees and gives them an incentive to work. On the other hand, there are authors adhering to sociological and social-psychological theories like social exchange theory (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) arguing that ongoing and secure employee-organization relationships are a necessary requirement for worker motivation and that increasing job insecurity therefore decreases work effort.

Clearly these two approaches of worker motivation differ in quite a number of respects, for example with regards to the behavioral assumptions on which they are based. Nevertheless, what seems to be most relevant if they are applied to the impact of job security are their basic assumptions about the interactions taking place between employers and employees. Future interactions between employees and organizations are central to the arguments underlying agency theory as it emphasizes the motivating role of future rewards that employees may receive if they work hard. In contrast, social exchange theory is more...
concerned with how past interactions in the employee-organization relationship affect
employee behavior, thus focusing on the disruptive effect that job insecurity can have.
In other words, while the agency argument regards job insecurity as instrumental and
motivational, social exchange theory views job insecurity as part of the employment
relationship that can drive out motivation. Therefore, examining the relationship between
job security and work effort helps to shed a light on the relative importance of these facets of
employee-organization relationships and along with that on the opposing theories
concerning employee motivation and behavior. What is more, although these positions may
seem contradictory at first sight, it can also be the case that they both apply and only hold
under certain conditions or differ across social contexts. The present study investigates to
what extent this is the case.

With regard to job security, there is a debate among researchers and policy
makers whether one should look at its objective or subjective characteristics (Boeri and
Van Ours, 2008; De Cuyper et al., 2010; Klandermans et al., 2010; Scheve and Slaughter,
2004). Both aspects – having a secure position through a permanent contract and the
individual’s perception about the continuation of the current job – are at the core of the
security that employees face. They do, however, entail different experiences (Jacobson,
1991; Saloniemi and Zeytinoglu, 2007; Sverke et al., 2002) and may lead to different
outcomes for employees (Beard and Edwards, 1995; Kochan et al., 1994; Koster, 2005).
This means that objective and subjective job security do not overlap completely. It is
possible that employee with permanent positions (are objectively secure) face job
insecurity (are subjectively insecure), for example because of organizational restructuring.
Despite the differences between the contractual employment relationship and the level of
job security that employees experience, their theoretical predictions are closely related.
This is particularly clear in the studies that regard temporary contracts as a source of job
insecurity. In the present study, the focus is not on comparing the outcomes of objective
and subjective job security. To take into account that temporary contracts may lead to
insecurity, the emphasis is put on subjective security in the empirical analyses.

As suggested by both agency theory and social exchange theory, job security may
have consequences for the amount of effort employees put into their work. Work effort is
investigated under different headings and in this study the focus is on a particular kind of
work effort, namely the willingness to work harder to make the organization succeed. This
kind of preparedness is closely related to what is known as organizational citizenship
behavior (OCB), a term that refers to different kinds of extra effort that employees are
willing show in their work situation (Organ, 1988). Most of the empirical research of OCB
concentrates on the individual or team level, using data from a single organization
(Podsakoff et al., 2000). This study contributes to OCB research as it examines the
willingness to show extra effort at work using data of a large number of respondents from
several countries. Investigating data from 22 countries provides the possibility to
investigate the link between job security and extra effort. Besides that, it enables to take
into account whether institutional characteristics, in terms of the level of social security
that is present within a country, affect the extra effort of employees either directly or
indirectly.

In summary, the present paper aims at providing the following contributions to the
literature. First, it aims at shedding more light on the relationship between security
and work effort by elaborating two theoretical positions that lead to opposing predictions
and explanations about this relationship at first sight. Second, it aims at providing a
better understanding of how the institutional context may affect the relationships between
job security and work effort. By doing so, the analyses also aim at contributing to the
field of OCB, and similar concepts, as it using cross national rather than organizational
level data.
Extra effort

Showing extra effort at work refers to the willingness of employees to do more tasks than those stated in their formal job description. This kind of behavior is often defined and conceptualized as one of the core dimensions of OCB (Organ, 1988). With regard to the extra effort that employees show, it makes sense to distinguish in-role behavior from extra-role behavior. According to this distinction, extra effort refers to behavior that can be regarded as extra-role behavior as it concerns behavior that is not specified in the employment contract (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Furthermore, to define extra effort more strictly, another distinction of work effort is in place. It is also important to explore whether extra effort can be regarded as involuntary work effort or as voluntary work effort instead (Ollo-Lopez et al., 2010; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). While the first kind of effort refers to the minimal effort that employees need to show in order not to get fired and to stay with the organization, the second kind of effort includes those types of behavior that go beyond the formal requirements. As such, there seems to be a close relationship between voluntary work effort and discretionary work efforts like extra-role behavior (Macky and Boxall, 2007).

Although researchers have made such theoretical distinctions, the question remains to what extent they hold in reality. It turns out that defining and separating in-role and extra-role behavior is not always easy in practice, for example because the opinions of employers and employees diverge about what is part of the contractual obligation and what does not (Koster and Sanders, 2006; Pond et al., 1997). This clearly applies to extra effort as employees may view this as doing something extra for the organization, while employers can expect from their employees to do some extra tasks if this is necessary for the survival and success of the organization. Furthermore, it can be argued that the extent to which tasks are performed voluntarily varies across organizational settings. This is also likely to hold for extra effort. Whereas there are many situations in which employees will volunteer to help others in the organization, it is not difficult to imagine situations in which employees feel they are forced to do so, for example because there is competition between employees. Hence, although extra effort can be thought of in terms of both extra-role behavior and voluntary work effort, there are instances in which it is regarded as in-role behavior (in particular by employers) and there are situations in which it is shown involuntarily (if the employee has very little possibilities to do otherwise).

The (de)motivating effect of job insecurity

The issue of voluntary and involuntary work effort is relevant for understanding part of the difference between the two broad theoretical frameworks explaining employee effort examined in this study. Agency theory, like other economic approaches of organizations, assumes that employees are reluctant to work and as such it seems to view work effort as being involuntary. Social exchange theory, and other sociological and psychological approaches based on a broader set of work motivations, is based on the assumption that employees can show effort at work in response to the behavior of employers, leaving more room for the possibility of voluntary work effort. This means that agency theory and social exchange theory have different interpretations of work effort and provide different explanations why employees show it. These interpretations are further elaborated by theorizing its relationship with job security.

Agency theory

Agency theory is a general framework that can be applied to relationships in which one actor (the agent) operates on behalf of another actor (the principal) (Shapiro, 2005). The core assumptions of this theory are that the interests of the principal and the agent diverge, that the relationship is characterized by asymmetric information (the agent has more information about how much effort is put in the task than the principal), and that the agent
is risk averse (Eisenhardt, 1989; Petersen, 1993; Shapiro, 2005). Applied to the employment relationship, this means that employers (principals) hire employees (agents) to perform certain tasks and that the employer has incomplete information about the effort shown by the employee. A potential solution from the employer perspective is to create a contract that directly links the level of pay to the effort of the employee. The problem, however, is that many jobs involve tasks that cannot be easily measured and besides that, there are many jobs in which the outcomes do not perfectly depend on the effort of the employee but also on random factors. Given that employees are risk averse, they will not accept a contract that is completely based on their own performance. On the other hand, principals may not be willing to offer contracts with a flat-rate payment as it may decrease the effort of employees. Hence, employers may use other mechanisms to motivate employees and to increase their performance. One means of doing that is by promising future rewards in return for extra effort. Receiving a secure position is among these potential rewards; in particular, if employees have to compete for a limited number of secure positions. According to this framework, making the transformation from an insecure to a secure position dependent on the effort of employees, is an effective means to motivate employees to show extra effort.

Prior research investigated the consequences of agency theory’s assumptions for work effort by applying it to the duration and the status of the employment relationship. In part, this research focuses on the effect that job insecurity, in terms of having a temporary contract, has on the behavior of employees. The outcomes of some of the empirical studies are in line with agency argument. For example, starting from the assumption that temporary jobs are of lower quality than permanent jobs (Booth et al., 2002), it can be expected that employees have a strong incentive to show extra effort to achieve a better position. This expectation is confirmed in studies focusing on unpaid overtime and employee absenteeism (Bradley et al., 2007; Engellandt and Riphahn, 2005). Hence, there is research evidence confirming the theoretical notions of agency theory applied to temporary contracts. Therefore, from this literature, it can be argued that job insecurity may be one means to achieve extra effort. Or, the other way around, too much job security may take away the incentive to show extra effort for employees. These considerations lead to the following hypothesis:

H1a. Extra effort is negatively related to job security.

**Social exchange theory**

Social exchange theory provides a general framework for analyzing relationships within organizations (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). This framework brings together different strands of the organizational literature, such as research on psychological contracts and the employee-organization relationship (Rousseau, 1995; Tsui et al., 1997). While the literature on psychological contracts concerns the perceptions that employees have about the employment relationship, the employee-organization relationship literature focuses more on the actual and formal exchange relationship between employees and their organization. These different research traditions can shed a light on the question to what extent and how the employees’ willing to show extra effort relates to organizational practices and employer behavior (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). The basic assumption of social exchange theory is that behavior can be understood by focusing on the interactions between actors and that reciprocity is a central part of social exchange relationships (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1961). This implies that the behavior that individuals show is a response to past behavior of others. An important aspect of the reciprocity principle is that individuals are willing to cooperate with those who are cooperating with them, but also that they are not cooperative toward those who do not cooperate with them. This principle then results in
balanced relationships. Following this logic, it can be understood why violation of the psychological contract is likely to lead to less employee effort and may even result in deviant employee behavior (Turnley et al., 2003; Zhao et al., 2007).

The principle of reciprocity also underlies the fourfold model of employee-organization relationships based on the expectations that employees and employers have about how much effort they should put into their relationship (Tsui et al., 1997). This model distinguishes the quasi-spot relationship (both parties have low expectations about each other’s investments), the underinvestment relationship (the organization expects high effort of the employee, but is not willing to invest in the employee), the over-investment relationship (the organization invests a lot in the employee, without expecting extra effort in return), and the mutual investment relationship (the organization is willing to invest in the employee and expects the employee to show extra effort). For the present analyses, a twofold distinction suffices to understand extra effort based on social exchange theory. The first two employee-organization relationships are likely to lead to little extra effort, while the latter two are likely to lead to higher levels of extra effort (even in the over-investment relationship).

The provision and withholding of job security can be applied to the social exchange relationship between employers and employees. While not providing job security will be perceived as an underinvestment on part of the employer, the provision of job security is part of the over-investment and mutual investment relationship. Hence, job insecurity can affect the relationship between employers and employees (Ashford et al., 1989; Barling and Kelloway, 1996; Hartley et al., 1991; Lim, 1996). And, this may explain why studies find that job insecurity is negatively related to the well-being of employees and increases stress at work (Chirumbolo and Areni, 2010; De Witte, 1999; Ferrie et al., 1998; Hansen and Ingebrigtsen, 2008; Heaney et al., 1994; Hellgren et al., 1999) and that OCB is higher among employees with more job security (Organ and Ryan, 1995). This leads to the next hypothesis:

\[ H1b. \text{Extra effort is positively related to job security}. \]

Combining agency theory and social exchange theory
Although \( H1a \) and \( H1b \) seem contradictory, since they lead to contrasting predictions about the relationship between job security and extra effort, it is also an option that both of them apply but that the outcomes depend on the conditions or contexts in which they appear. In the following, these conditions and contexts are further explored, first by focusing on how different levels of job security may relate to extra effort and then by hypothesizing how social security (as a characteristic of an employees’ social context) may affect the relationship between job security and extra effort.

For that purpose, the difference between extra effort as voluntary or involuntary work effort is relevant. Whereas agency theory predicts that any kind of work effort is shown involuntary and needs to be externally motivated, social exchange theory focuses on voluntary work effort resulting from productive exchange relationships between employers and employees. As a result, instead of arguing that there is a linear relationship between job security and extra effort, the following can be hypothesized as well. On the one hand, the employees facing the highest level of job insecurity may show higher levels of extra effort as predicted by agency theory. The reason for this is that working extra hard may be the only way for them to achieve a somewhat more secure position (or it can be a way to avoid unemployment). Here, it can be argued that employees involuntarily show extra effort. At the same time, there are employees facing high levels of job security. For this group of employees, the predictions from social exchange theory may hold. They are in the position that is required to establish a mutual investment or over-investment employee-organization relationship in which they are willing to voluntarily show extra effort in response to the investments that their employer offers.
These theoretical considerations show that both arguments can apply. The agency argument applies to the most insecure workers and social exchange arguments to the employees having a secure position. This raises the question what may happen to the employees that have a moderate level of job security. Based on agency theory and social exchange theory, the expectation is that they are too secure to be externally motivated (the agency argument) and experience a quasi-sport or an underinvestment employee-organization relationship preventing them from showing voluntary work effort (the social exchange argument). Combining these arguments leads to the next hypothesis:

\[ H2. \] Extra effort is curvilinearly (U-shaped) related to job security.

**The role of the welfare state**

The employment relationship, and the level of job security and employee effort associated with it, is part of a wider set of institutions that may affect its functioning and outcomes (Marsden, 1999). The welfare state consists of institutional arrangements to assure that citizens have a reasonable standard of living, even if they are not able to earn their own income (Lindbeck, 2006). Such arrangements are based on a set of rights and obligations and are financed with public resources (Swank, 1998). Parts of the welfare state arrangements are specifically related to employment and the labor market, for example government rules concerning the dismissal of employees (e.g. employment protection) and the benefits that employees receive if they become unemployed (Boeri and Van Ours, 2008). More in general, welfare state arrangements concern social policies related to schooling, pensions, health, and housing. Together, the social policies aimed at protecting the public against misfortune can have an impact on their attitudes about work as well as the level of job insecurity that people experience (Andersson and Pontussen, 2007; Erlinghagen, 2008). What is more, it may also have a direct effect on people’s work effort (Ichino and Riphahn, 2005; Johansson and Palme, 2005). Besides that, the welfare state and the level of security it offers to citizens may moderate the relationship between job insecurity and extra effort. This is also suggested by theories focusing on labor-management conflicts (e.g. Korpi and Palme, 2003). The extent to which these conflicts are present in society, arguably depends on the level of social security. And, in turn, a reduction of such conflicts may affect the extra effort shown by employees. Given the hypotheses stated above, different hypotheses can be formulated.

The first possibility is that the welfare state can strengthen the relationship between job security and extra effort. In line with the agency hypothesis, stating that insecurity is positively related to extra effort, this means that social security leads to even lower levels of extra effort. Or, the other way around, employees show more extra effort if they experience job insecurity and live in a country with low levels of social security. The hypothesis based on social exchange theory predicts the opposite and leads to the expectation that extra effort requires security. Extending this to the welfare state, the expectation is that extra effort is the highest among employees experiencing high levels of job security and who live in country with high level of social security. Hence, the perspective that the welfare state can strengthen the relationship between job security and extra effort leads to the following two hypotheses, which depend on the initial relationship between job security and extra effort (as stated in \( H1a \) and \( H1b \)):

\[ H3a. \] The negative relationship between extra effort and job security is stronger as the level of social security at the national level is lower.

\[ H3b. \] The positive relationship between extra effort and job security is stronger as the level of social security at the national level is higher.

These two hypotheses are based on the assumption that job security and social security add up to more security for the individual employees. And, therefore, having more of it
leads to less or more extra effort, depending on the theoretical starting point. In contrast to that, it can also be that job security and social security have opposing effects. This cannot be excluded beforehand given the contrasting theoretical positions of agency theory and social exchange theory. Considering that social security, just like job security, may be negatively or positively related to extra effort, but that these outcomes are not necessarily similar to those of job security, two other hypotheses can be formulated. These hypotheses are based on the theoretical possibility that the relationship between job security and extra effort may be the opposite of the relationship between social security and extra effort:

\(H4a.\) The negative relationship between extra effort and job security is weaker as the level of social security at the national level is lower.

\(H4b.\) The positive relationship between extra effort and job security is weaker as the level of social security at the national level is higher.

\(H3\) and \(H4\) include the effect that social context has on the relationship between job security and extra effort, which were formulated in \(H1a\) and \(H1b.\) In a similar fashion, it is possible to add the moderating effect of social context to \(H2.\) According to \(H2,\) combining agency and social exchange arguments, the effect of job security on extra effort depends on the level of job security: both employees facing the lowest and those experiencing the highest level of job security show more extra effort compared to employees experiencing moderate levels of job security. Also in this case, the level of social security may have an impact on this relationship. The same possibilities as in \(H3\) and \(H4\) are explored, meaning that the welfare state either strengthens or weakens the curvilinear relationship between job security and extra effort. If social security strengthens the curvilinear relationship, it leads to the prediction that in countries where there is more social security, the insecure and secure show more extra effort compared to those in countries with lower levels of social security. And, if the relationship is weakened, it means that extra effort is particularly high among the insecure and secure employees living in insecure countries. \(H5a\) and \(H5b\) summarized these two theoretical positions:

\(H5a.\) The curvilinear (U-shaped) relationship between extra effort and job security is strengthened by social security at the national level.

\(H5b.\) The curvilinear (U-shaped) relationship between extra effort and job security is weakened by social security at the national level.

**Data and method**

**Data**

To test the hypotheses, data from two sources are combined. The individual level data are gathered through the International Social Survey Programme (2005), which is an international comparative survey that is held each year since 1985. In every round, the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) investigates a specific topic. In 2005, a module called “Work Orientations” was included in the survey. This model includes a list of items asking employees questions about their work situation. These individual level survey data are combined with national level data that are available through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2005). Some of the countries that were investigated in the ISSP round of 2005 could not be analyzed in this study. In some countries, the dependent variables were not measured and other countries dropped out because information about the country level independent variable are missing. The total data set includes information about 19,731 employees from 22 advanced countries around the globe.
Measures

Dependent variable: extra effort. The dependent variable of this study, extra effort, is measured with the following question: “I am willing to work harder to let the firm succeed.” The answer categories range from (1) strongly agree to (5) strongly disagree. The item is reverse coded to ensure that higher scores reflect higher levels of extra effort.

Independent variable: job security. The variable, job security, is measured with responses to the item: “My job is secure.” Respondents could score between (1) strongly agree and (5) strongly disagree. The answers are reverse coded and a higher score means more job security.

Moderating variable: social security. The level of social security in a country is measured with the level of spending on social security as a share of GDP.

Control variables. Several variables are included that may influence the level of extra effort that employees are willing to show. These control variables measure a standard set of background characteristics of the respondents, namely gender (0 = male; 1 = female), age (in years), educational level (0 = no formal qualification; 5 = university degree completed), characteristics of the work situation, namely hours of work (the number of hours that the respondents works weekly), supervisory job (0 = no; 1 = yes), and the labor market position of the respondents. This latter variable is measured with an item asking about the ease with which someone can find a job of the same quality as the current one. Respondents can score between 1 (very easy) and 5 (very difficult). The variable is recoded as such that a higher score indicates a stronger labor market position (meaning that someone can more easily find a similar job). Furthermore, characteristics of the organization are controlled for by including a variable measuring organization type, indicating whether the respondent works for the government, is employed at a public organization, or works for a private firm.

At the national level, the variable GDP per capita is included to account for the possibility that prosperity may decrease the willingness to show extra effort at work.

Method

Multilevel analysis (DiPrete and Forristal, 1994; Goldstein, 2003; Snijders and Bosker, 1999) is applied because the data set includes information belonging to two different levels of aggregation, namely the individual level (level 1) and the national level (level 2). The analyses are performed in a number of steps. First, an empty model (model 0) is computed. This model does not include independent variables and serves as baseline to compare the rest of the models. Second, the individual and national levels control variables are added (model 1). The next model includes the effects of job security and social security (model 2). Then, in model 3, the squared term of job security is added to investigate whether extra of is curvilinearly related to job security. In model 4, the cross-level interaction between job security and social security is added to investigate whether the welfare state weakens or strengthen the relationship between job security and extra effort. And, finally, the cross-level interaction effect of social security with the squared term of job security is added (model 5). The cross-level interactions are investigated following procedures offered by Aguinis et al. (2013). Particularly, we grand mean centered the predictors (except the dummy variables) and graph the interaction effects to ease the interpretation of the findings.

The parameters of the models are estimated by the maximum likelihood method (Goldstein, 2003) and the regression coefficients are tested by Wald tests (Snijders, 2003). The deviance between the models (the differences in $-2 \log$ likelihood) evaluates the fit of the different models. The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) is calculated by computing the variance at level 2 as a share of the total (level 1 and level 2) variance. The data are analyzed using STATA.
Results

Descriptive results

Table I shows the number of respondents, the country level means of extra effort and job security, and the level of social security per country. Extra effort ranges from 2.56 in France to 4.05 in the USA. On average, the employees in Denmark report the highest level of job security ($m = 3.95$) and the employees in South Korea experience the lowest level of job security ($m = 3.28$) across this sample of countries. Furthermore, Table I shows that the lowest level of spending on social security is found in South Korea and that Sweden has the highest level of social security of the countries in the data set.

Multilevel analyses

Table II presents the outcomes of the multilevel analyses. From the empty model can be read that about 9 percent of the variation in extra effort is due to between-country variance (ICC = 0.09). Adding the control variables (model 1) significantly improves the fit of the model (deviance = 184.953; $p < 0.001$). The results show that extra effort is related to a number of the control variables at the individual level, but not to the economic wealth of a country (effect of GDP per capita is not significant). Extra effort is higher among men, higher educated employees, those who work more hours, supervisors, employees with a weaker labor market position, and employees working in the private sector (compared to employees in government and public organizations, these employees report higher levels of extra effort).

Model 2 includes the two kinds of security central to this study. Adding job security and social security to the model significantly improves its fit (deviance = 65.155; $p < 0.001$). The ICC drops to 0.052, indicating that these two variables account for about 40 percent of the country variance in extra effort. Model 2 shows that job security and social security have an opposite relationship with extra effort. While job security is positively related to extra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
<th>Extra effort</th>
<th>Job security</th>
<th>Social security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>20.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>15.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>22.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>15.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>21.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>751</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>29.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>19.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>21.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>18.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>742</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>27.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>423</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>18.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>21.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>931</td>
<td>2.56</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>29.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>886</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>22.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>27.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>20.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>26.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>6.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19,731</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>20.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: ISSP and OECD
Table II. Results of the multilevel analysis of extra effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP per capita</td>
<td>0.004 (0.008)</td>
<td>0.010 (0.006)</td>
<td>0.010 (0.006)</td>
<td>0.010 (0.006)</td>
<td>0.010 (0.006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security</td>
<td>-0.034*** (0.009)</td>
<td>-0.034*** (0.009)</td>
<td>-0.035*** (0.009)</td>
<td>-0.031*** (0.009)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-level interactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security × Job security</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.005*** (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.007*** (0.002)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security × Job security × ²</td>
<td>-0.003* (0.003)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security</td>
<td>0.088*** (0.008)</td>
<td>0.086*** (0.010)</td>
<td>0.088*** (0.008)</td>
<td>0.088*** (0.010)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job security × ²</td>
<td>0.017* (0.009)</td>
<td>0.012* (0.009)</td>
<td>0.012* (0.009)</td>
<td>0.012* (0.009)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (1 = female)</td>
<td>-0.053** (0.019)</td>
<td>-0.056** (0.019)</td>
<td>-0.056** (0.019)</td>
<td>-0.056** (0.019)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td>-0.001 (0.001)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational level</td>
<td>0.034*** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.031*** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.031*** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.030*** (0.007)</td>
<td>0.030*** (0.007)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of hours</td>
<td>0.002* (0.001)</td>
<td>0.002* (0.001)</td>
<td>0.002* (0.001)</td>
<td>0.002* (0.001)</td>
<td>0.002* (0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisory job</td>
<td>0.052*** (0.020)</td>
<td>0.050*** (0.020)</td>
<td>0.050*** (0.020)</td>
<td>0.050*** (0.020)</td>
<td>0.050*** (0.020)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor market position</td>
<td>-0.047*** (0.008)</td>
<td>-0.050*** (0.008)</td>
<td>-0.050*** (0.008)</td>
<td>-0.050*** (0.008)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>-0.129*** (0.023)</td>
<td>-0.160*** (0.023)</td>
<td>-0.161*** (0.023)</td>
<td>-0.159*** (0.022)</td>
<td>-0.161*** (0.023)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>-0.067* (0.032)</td>
<td>-0.087* (0.032)</td>
<td>-0.088* (0.032)</td>
<td>-0.085* (0.032)</td>
<td>-0.086* (0.032)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private (reference)</td>
<td>- (⁺)</td>
<td>- (⁺)</td>
<td>- (⁺)</td>
<td>- (⁺)</td>
<td>- (⁺)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>2.497*** (0.068)</td>
<td>2.498*** (0.053)</td>
<td>2.483*** (0.050)</td>
<td>2.498*** (0.053)</td>
<td>2.483*** (0.053)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviance</td>
<td>184.953***</td>
<td>65.155***</td>
<td>2.122</td>
<td>7.708***</td>
<td>4.629*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance level 1</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance level 1</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.001</td>
<td>1.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intraclass correlation</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.052</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: n = 19,731 respondents in 22 countries. Statistics for the empty model: −2 log likelihood = 18,559.400; intercept = 2.527 (0.069); variance level 1 = 1.031 (0.013); intraclass correlation = 0.092. *Models 3 and 4 are compared with model 2; *model 5 is compared with model 4; unstandardized regression coefficients are reported; standard errors between brackets. *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001

Sources: ISSP and OECD

In addition to that, model 3 tests whether there is a curvilinear relationship between job security and extra effort. It turns out that adding this variable does not improve the fit of the model (deviance = ns). Furthermore, the variable itself is also not significantly related to extra effort. The outcomes from the analyses reported in models 2 and 3 provide support for $H1b$ (based on social exchange theory) and lead to a rejection of $H1a$ (based on agency theory). Furthermore, $H2$ (stating that the relationship between job security and extra effort is U-shaped) is rejected (as the pattern is a reversed U-shape).
depending on the level of social security of a country. A further visual inspection of this effect (represented in Figures 1 and 2) leads to the following insights about it. While in countries where there is more social security, the level of job security does not have an effect on the level of extra effort that employees are willing to show, there is a curvilinear relationship between job security and extra effort in countries with lower levels of social security. Therefore, it is concluded that social security does not strengthen the curvilinear relationship between job security and extra effort, but that this relationship is weakened by it. With the outcomes of models 4 and 5 it is possible to assess H3–H5. While model 4 provides evidence in support of H4b, the results of model 5 show that adding the squared term of job security leads to a better fit of the model. Hence, it is not concluded that there is a linear interaction effect of job insecurity and social security on extra effort, as predicted by H4b. Instead, the results are more in line with the expectation of H5b. The hypotheses and the empirical results are summarized in Table III.

**Conclusion and discussion**

This study has brought together different parts of the literature to advance and test a theory of the relationship between job security and extra effort. Based on two seemingly conflicting

---

**Figure 1.** Interaction effect of job security and social security on extra effort

**Figure 2.** Curvilinear interaction effect of job security and social security on extra effort
approaches to the employment relationship and employee behavior – agency theory and social exchange theory – the results show that they may complement each other in some respects. Examining the direct relationship between job security and extra effort, the outcomes are supportive of social exchange theory. Nevertheless, acknowledging that agency theory and social exchange theory may focus on different sides of the relationship between job security and employee performance and taking into account the social context of this relationship, the analysis shows that combining these theories improves our understanding of the functioning and outcomes of the employment relationship. These results have a number of theoretical and practical implications and also lead to new questions for future research.

First, the two broad theoretical frameworks guiding this research are not necessarily in conflict with each other, hence suggesting that they may apply to different situations. This finding leads to the conclusion that there may be different interpretations to what extra effort means. While the two theoretical frameworks may seem to focus on similar behavior, it may be that in reality there is a further distinction underlying employee behavior. This distinction itself is not new, but relating it to different theoretical frameworks can lead to new insights. Agency theory takes effort evasion as the starting point and focuses on the means that employers have to motivate their personnel. Therefore, the class of behavior it investigates can be regarded as involuntarily work effort. Social exchange theory, in contrast, leaves more room for voluntary work effort as it argues that employees may respond with such behavior if they believe that their employer is taking their well-being into consideration by fulfilling the psychological contract or investing in them. To understand this distinction additional research is needed in which more attention is paid to issues such as why employees show certain behavior and that investigates how this behavior depends on the circumstances. Ideally, such research can be performed using different methodologies. With additional survey research it is possible to relate employee behavior, like extra effort, to other independent variables than the ones investigated here to see whether involuntary and voluntary work effort can be distinguished. Using experimental research enables to gather more information to test whether the arguments about security hold. And, finally, qualitative research will be of importance to ask employees about the meaning of the extra effort they show and what role they assign to voluntary work effort in relation to job insecurity and job security.

Second, this study expands research on employee behavior, like OCB, by using a large sample of employees working in different institutional settings. Instead of focusing on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a: extra effort is negatively related to job security</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b: extra effort is positively related to job security</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: extra effort is curvilinearly (U-shaped) related to job security</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: the negative relationship between extra effort and job security is stronger as the level of social security at the national level is lower</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b: the positive relationship between extra effort and job security is stronger as the level of social security at the national level is higher</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a: the negative relationship between extra effort and job security is weaker as the level of social security at the national level is lower</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b: the positive relationship between extra effort and job security is weaker as the level of social security at the national level is higher</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a: the curvilinear (U-shaped) relationship between extra effort and job security is strengthened by social security at the national level</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b: the curvilinear (U-shaped) relationship between extra effort and job security is weakened by social security at the national level</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cultural differences (Tsui et al., 2007) between these countries, the focus is on the way in which the welfare state (in terms of the level of social security) affects employee behavior. About the impact of social security, several conclusions can be drawn based on the results of this study. Although it was not the main part of the theoretical discussion investigated in this study, the negative relationship between social security and extra effort is worth mentioning. That levels of extra effort are lower in countries with more social security suggests that there are fewer incentives to do so. This interpretation is basically in line with the agency argument. Seemingly, there is less at stake for employees in these countries. This is either because the existence of a social safety net softens the effects of job loss, for example employees experience a less severe drop in income if they become unemployed, or employees in these countries are able to find employment more easily if they become unemployed, for example because they live in a country with passive and active labor market policies (Van Vliet and Koster, 2011) that assist them to find a job. In that sense, the welfare state protects people against exploitation, as they are less dependent on the organization they work for. Instead of being in a position that makes them work as hard as possible to attain their job, as is the case with employees in countries with low levels of social security, employees in countries with extensive social security experiences far less pressure to show extra effort. Hence, this study underlines the importance of the welfare state with regard to the security that employees face. While the positive relationship between job security and extra effort is shown across welfare states, the analyses show that the impact of job security differs depending on the security offered by the social security system. In countries with extensive social security systems, the extra effort of secure and insecure workers differs far less than in countries offering less social security. This means that there is a welfare state effect with regard to the effort that employees show at work. This effect is present in two ways: directly, as the level of extra effort is lower in countries with more extensive social security; and indirectly, since higher levels of social security dampen the effects of job security.

The influence of the institutional context also puts agency theory and social exchange theory in a different light and has consequences for prior research. The curvilinear relationship between job security in countries with low levels of social security indicates that employees assign extra weight to the level of job security that they experience. For those with low job security, this means that they have an extra incentive to work hard, even though they are in an insecure position, to make sure that they do not get in a situation that is even worse. And, those with a secure position seem to be more willing to reciprocate cooperative behavior by showing extra effort. For the study of organizations and employee behavior this part of the research suggests that it is fruitful to go beyond single country studies (which most of these studies are). Researchers are therefore strongly encouraged to focus on how employee behavior and organizational strategies depend on national characteristics. By doing so, future research will shed more light on issues like citizenship behavior and human resource practices. With its focus on the micro-level, a large part of the management literature overlooks the question how macro-level circumstances play out. Recent research, however, provides evidence for such links (e.g. Koster and Wittek, 2016). While this body of research is growing, there are many roads to explore, ranging from economic circumstances, social policies, and cultural differences. Focusing on these aspects will also have theoretical implications in line with the present study. As theoretical mechanisms may depend on social contexts – as is the case in this study – additional cross-national work incorporating these contexts will inform us about the conditions under which these mechanisms work.

The results of the multilevel analyses can be summarized as follows. Overall, there is a positive relationship between job security and extra effort. This relationship is linear and not...
Besides that, the analyses show that social security moderates the relationship between job security and extra effort, in the sense that in countries with lower levels of social security, both secure and insecure workers are willing to show extra effort. While these results provide support for the hypotheses based on social exchange theory, there is also some evidence in support of the predictions of agency theory. Nevertheless, this seems to apply only to the situation in which employees experience insecurity both in their job and in their country in general (in the sense of low levels of social security).

References


Job security, social security, and extra effort


**Further reading**


**Corresponding author**

Ferry Koster can be contacted at: koster@fsw.eur.nl
Emerald is excited to announce a recent partnership with Peerwith, a platform that provides authors with a variety of services.

The Emerald Peerwith site can be found here: https://authorservices.emeraldpublishing.com/

Peerwith connects academics seeking support for their work with a relevant expert to get their research submission-ready. Peerwith experts can help with the following: language editing, copy editing, scientific editing, translation services, statistical support, funding application support, visuals, video, publication support, literature search, peer review and indexing services. Authors post their assignments on the Peerwith site, experts provide a quote, and the fee and conditions are then agreed upon directly between the author and the expert.

While we are not, of course, guaranteeing publication upon use of Peerwith, we hope that being able to direct academics to this resource either before submission or during the peer review process will help authors further improve the quality of their papers and increase their chances of positive reviews and acceptance.

Academics with relevant expertise can sign up as an expert on the Peerwith system here: https://www.peerwith.com/services/offer
Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

EDITOR
Colin C. Williams
Professor of Public Policy, School of Management, University of Sheffield, UK
E-mail c.c.williams@sheffield.ac.uk

ISSN 0144-333X
© 2017 Emerald Publishing Limited
Access this journal online
www.emeraldinsight.com/loi/ijssp

Quarto trim size: 174mm × 240mm

Volume 37 Number 13/14 2017

International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy

Number 13/14

713 Editorial advisory board
714 Risk factors of social assistance transitions: a case-control study for Germany
  Benjamin Fuchs
729 The country of origin as a preparation stage: towards a holistic approach to migrant exclusion
  Nikolaos Xypolytas
743 Participation and Chinese non-government organization accountability
  Ling Zhong and Karen R. Fisher
  Jeffrey Kentor and Andrew Jorgenson
773 Informal economies and scholastic epistemocentrism: a reflexive rethinking
  Anna Danielsson
788 Investigating pro-environmental behaviors of well-educated people in Thailand: implications
  for the development of environmental communication
  Piyapong Janmaimool
808 Welfare governmentalties: pastoralism and parties’ youth wings in Mexico
  Edgar Zavala Palayo
823 Under pressure: an international comparison of job security, social security, and extra effort
  Ferry Koster and Maria Fleischmann