Social Capital and Fertility

Christoph Bühler
Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock

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Structure

- Motivation
- Theoretical prerequisites
  - household economics
- Social capital
  - reciprocal exchange
- Empirical evidence
  - child care
  - economic resources
- Deficits
Motivation

- Tradition of social networks in fertility research:
  - fertility transitions rest on diffusion processes
  - interpersonal communication provide the channels
  - transmission of norms as a side effect
  - processes of social learning and social influence

- However: what about resources, i.e. goods and services?
  - elementary part of social networks
  - incomplete understanding
  - social networks and economic situation
Household Economics

- Households produce commodities
- Determinants:
  - preferences
  - budget for buying production goods
  - time for production

$\uparrow$ budget $\Rightarrow$ $\uparrow$ commodities
$\uparrow$ budget $\Rightarrow$ $\uparrow$ t(work) $\Rightarrow$ $\downarrow$ t(commodity production)

- solutions:
  - division of labor
  - buying time
  - separation or moderation of the relationship budget and t(work)
Theoretical Prerequisites

- Significant contribution to household budget
  - quantitative
  - key resource

- Influence on relationship budget and t(work)
  - separation or moderation of intervals
  - alternative currencies
**Theoretical Prerequisites**

- Significant contribution to household budget
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- Prospective character or fertility decisions

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**Social Capital: Definition**

- All relationships that give access to resources
  - experienced access
  - expected access
### Social Capital: Definition

- All relationships that give access to resources
  - experienced access
  - expected access

- Access via primary network partners
  - ownership of resources
  - secondary network partners

- Goals convert goods and services to valuable resources
  - goal-specific
  - general (fungible)
Network partners need to be motivated to give resources
- agreement with actor's goal
- reciprocal exchange relationship ⇒ future or past profit

Direct reciprocity in individual relationships
- ↑ relationship quality ⇒ ↑ resources
- ↑ relationship quality ⇒ ↑ postponement of reciprocity
- dual character:
  - access to resources
  - definition and maintenance of the relationship
Social Capital by Interpersonal Exchange (2)

- Indirect reciprocity in groups
  - two different network partners
  - postponed reciprocity
  - mechanisms: norms, individual collective ideas of fairness, altruism, fixed channels
  - Establishment of a relationship structure
    - members are credit-worthy
    - independence from individual members

Matching the Prerequisites

- Prospective character or fertility decisions
  - exchange → lasting relationships and networks
  - evaluation of future access to resources
Matching the Prerequisites

- **Prospective character or fertility decisions**
  - exchange → lasting relationships and networks
  - evaluation of future access to resources

- **Influence on budget and t(work)**
  - separation or moderation of intervals
    - influence on timing
    - postponed reciprocity
  - alternative currencies
    - barter

- **Significant contribution to household budget**
  - great variety of resources possible
  - significant constraints: time, economic resources
Empirical Evidence

- Traditional societies
  - ↑ mother’s health and feeding, ↓ workload ⇒ ↑ supply of children

- Modern societies
  - ↓ costs of children ⇒ ↑ demand for children
Empirical Evidence: Child Care

- Traditional societies
  - childcare as a collective task
  - child care by family members and kin ⇒ ↑ fertility

- Modern societies
  - child care by institutions and kin ⇒ ↑ fertility
Empirical Evidence: Economic Resources

- Traditional societies
  - ?

- Modern societies
  - not much insights up to now
  - Central and Eastern Europe
    - long tradition of exchange and support
    - coping strategy during transition period
  - Russia: second jobs and family agriculture $\Rightarrow \uparrow$ fertility
  - Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria: exchange of support
    $\Rightarrow \uparrow$ fertility intentions, $\downarrow$ intended postponement
Deficits

- Theory
  - what about information?
  - what about selection processes?
  - social networks versus reproductive decision-making
  - fertility intentions versus fertility outcomes

- Empirical methods
  - fertility outcomes: no information about reproductive decision-making \(\Rightarrow\) no insights about social capital
  - fertility intentions: no information about reproductive outcomes \(\Rightarrow\) no insights about significance of social capital
  - retrospective measurement of social capital