



ARK Ageing Seminar

Population ageing affects all age groups

Pearl A. Dykstra

Queen's University Belfast, September 17, 2015



Inspiration comes from:

Gunhild O. Hagestad & Pearl A. Dykstra

Structuration of the life course: Some neglected aspects

In: *Handbook of the life course* (2nd edition, 2015)

J. T. Mortimer, M. J. Shanahan, & M. K. Johnson (Eds.)

Demographic change (increased longevity)

- New opportunities for intergenerational connections



6 generations of same family living in Ontario

Baby boy is introduced to 4 generations of grandmothers

CBC News | Posted: Jul 14, 2013 6:34 PM ET | Last Updated: Jul 14, 2013 10:14 PM ET



6 generations of same family living in Ontario 2:28



Demographic change (increased longevity)

- New opportunities for intergenerational connections
- Similarities in the needs of young and old







Demographic change (increased longevity)

- New opportunities for intergenerational connections
- Similarities in the needs of young and old
- Social worlds of children strongly altered





Distribution of deaths in England & Wales

	1901	2008
Age 0 - 14	40%	1%
Age >= 65	44%	83%

Source: Victor (2010)

Four surviving grandparents (US)

	1900	2005
Age 10	5%	40%

Source: Uhlenberg (1996)

Surviving mother (US)

	1900
Age 20	83%

Source: Uhlenberg (1996)

Surviving grandmother (US)

	2005
	91%

New insights from taking a multigenerational view of family ties across life phases: examples from research



Early retirement?

Grandparenthood speeds up retirement, particularly for older women

[compelling finding, given efforts to increase labour force participation in Europe]

Van Bavel & De Winter (2013), based on ESS

(See also Tanskanen et al., 2014 for retirement intentions)

Social mobility?

For both men and women: a strong and statistically significant net* association between grandparents'** and grandchildren's class positions

*controlling for parents' social class, educational attainment, wealth, and income

**maternal grandparents

Grandparents' effect in social mobility most striking in cases of upward countertermobility (not! regression towards the mean)

Chan & Boliver (2013), based on 1946, 1958 and 1970 British birth cohorts

Another child?

Greater likelihood another child 8 to 10 years later
if grandparents regularly provided childcare
at the time of the first measure

(= support for cooperative breeding hypothesis)

Kaptijn et al. (2010), based on NESTOR-LSN and LASA, 1992
– 2002

(See also Hank & Kreyenfeld, 2003; Aassve, Meroni, &
Pronzato, 2011)



Conclusion so far:

- Important to avoid a “chopped up” notion of what families are about



Generational interdependence is shaped by laws and policies:
examples from a cross-national overview

Interdependence: emotional, practical, financial, moral reliance on
and responsibility for family members



Focus on “intergenerational” laws and policies in

- EU-28 + Norway + Switzerland
- US, Canada
- But sometimes OECD, world



Derived benefits: Care leaves

Switzerland: only country that has statutory maternity leave only, no leave for fathers

(US: no statutory leave for mothers or fathers)

Increasing number of countries have father quotas/bonuses

Leaves to care for dependents: gender neutral descriptions, but women more likely to make use of leaves



Derived benefits: Care credits

- Pension benefits in recognition of the unpaid work of child rearing and family care
- In some countries flat-rated credits rather than earnings-related (disadvantage for better qualified women)
- Fixed flat rates are not applied in the more 'male' social security arrangements of unemployment, health or accident insurance (Marin, 2010)
- In some countries care credits only awarded to women or only to men when women waive their rights
- Care credits: source of debate between 'care feminists' and 'employment feminists'



Mandated interdependence (1)

- A' s duties are tied to B' s age (e.g., parents financially responsible until child reaches the age of 18)
- A' s rights are tied to B' s age (e.g., parents entitled to financial support until child turns 18)
- A' s rights are tied to B' s duration of role occupancy (e.g., father can qualify for leave only if the mother also meets work duration requirements)
- A' s duration has negative effects on B' s duration (e.g., if paid illness leave exceeds a maximum, the care provider may lose full pension rights)



Mandated interdependence (2)

- Power of attorney, authority of parents/guardians
- Maintenance responsibilities (wide variation across European nations regarding which family members are included)

Extreme example follows

Extreme form of mandated interdependence



1 July 2013 Last updated at 10:04 GMT



New China law says children 'must visit parents'

By Celia Hatton
BBC News, Beijing

Grown children in China must visit their parents or potentially face fines or jail, a new law that came into effect on Monday says.

China's new "Elderly Rights Law" deals with the growing problem of lonely elderly people by ordering adult children to visit their ageing parents.

The law says adults should care about their parents "spiritual needs" and "never neglect or snub elderly people".



China's elderly population is expected to double by 2030



Implicit versus explicit interdependence

Laws define rights and duties of family members towards each other (explicit), while policies (or their absence) reward or discourage particular family practices (implicit)

Challenge: examine how country-specific institutional frameworks impose *dependence* on family members and/or support individual *autonomy* (cf. O'Connor, 1996)



Allocation of responsibilities between state and family

Three possible policy patterns (Saraceno & Keck, 2011)

- *familialism by default*: no or few publicly provided alternatives to family care and/or financial support
- *supported familialism*: policies support families in keeping up their financial and caring responsibilities (e.g. paid leaves, child benefits, cash for care payments)
- *defamilialisation*: care and financial needs are partly answered through public provision (e.g. services, pensions)



Saraceno & Keck 2011: Importance of distinguishing *types* of public provisions (cf. Gornick & Meyer, 2008; Javornick, 2014; Leitner, 2003)

Different implications for gender and socioeconomic inequality

Cash for care payments: taken more easily by women than men, and by low paid women than high paid women

Services: better assist men and women in reconciling paid and unpaid work

Empirical evidence is now emerging, e.g.

ECHP data

Abendroth et al (2014): the motherhood occupational status penalty is

- lower in European countries where expenditures on public childcare are higher
- contrary to expectations: not exacerbated in countries with high spending on family cash benefits

SHARE data

Schmid et al (2012): imbalance in proportions of men and women providing intensive care is higher

- when aging parents receive cash for care payments (in addition to the care received from adult children)
- than when they receive services in kind





Conclusion, cont'd

- Overall: gender convergence in interdependence as structured by laws and policies
- Yet: strong contrasts between how men and women actually live their lives
- Levy (2013): men and women have different “master statuses”

A focus on intergenerational interdependence neglects those with no or limited vertical ties: a focus on the childless





The lives of the childless are not following ready-made scripts—contrary to those of parents (Dykstra, 2009)

Structuring influence of parenthood

Macro-societal level

- Regulation by law (duties)
- Distribution of public resources

Meso-level of communities

- Avenue toward social integration
- Informal social control

Micro-level of individual behaviour

- Children as constraints
- Parenthood as “transforming event”*



Policies block interdependence between the childless and their network members (Ivanova & Dykstra, 2015), e.g.

- Entitlements to care leaves restricted to parents, children and spouses
- No legal rights for non-relatives in health and care decisions
- Substantially higher inheritance taxation for non-relatives

Conclusion, cont'd

- Crucial to rethink the primacy of family members in current legal arrangements (medical decisions, care, inheritance, taxation)



Recall: opportunities for intergenerational connections

Pools of eligible 'others' shaped by

- Demographic shifts in proportions young and old (Matthews & Sun, 2006; Murphy et al., 2006)
- Societal age segregation (Hagestad & Uhlenberg, 2006)

Age segregation, i.e. separation of age groups in society

Neglected topic, apart from research on

- “generation gap” (’60s and ’70s)
- “age wars” (’80s onwards)

Separation of age groups is produced and reinforced by the “tripartite” life course (Kohli, 1985; Riley & Riley, 1994)

Reason for concern about age segregation: production and reproduction of ageism (Hagestad & Uhlenberg, 2005a, 2005b)

Turning argument around: ageism might be reduced through cross-age interaction (cf. Allport, 1954)





Key principle: durable interactions with people of different ages foster mutual understanding (e.g., Pettigrew, 1998)

Find out whether having friends who differ in age reduces ageist attitudes that young people [old people] have of old people [young people]



Appropriate data: round 4 of the ESS (2008)

50-item module on “experiences and expressions of ageism”
prepared by Abrams, Lima & Courdin

Cross-age friendship

“About how many friends, other than members of your family, do you have who are younger than 30? (aged over 70?)” (0, 1, 2-5, 6-9, 10 or more)

Ageism

“Overall, how negative or positive do you feel towards people in their 20s? (over 70?)” (0 = extremely negative, 10 = extremely positive)

25 EU countries (no ESS in IT, LU, MT)

Focus on respondents < 30 (N~8700), and ≥ 70 (N~6600)

Descriptive results

% reporting having two or more cross-age friends

< 30: 18% (range: 4% LT, 36% IE)

≥ 70: 31% (range: 6% LT, 50% FI)

M ageism score

< 30: 2.7 (range: 1.9 FI, 3.7 SK)

≥ 70: 3.1 (range: 2.0 GR, 4.0 UK)



Ageism and cross-age interaction (mean levels)

	Young towards old	Old towards young
	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
<u>Grand mean</u>	2.7	3.1
Has household member >70 [<30]	2.7	3.1
Discusses personal issues with family member >70 [grandchild]	2.6 ^{***}	3.0 ^{***}
Attends religious services at least monthly	2.6 ^{***}	3.1
Did paid or volunteer work past month	2.7	3.1
Worked with colleagues or volunteers in their 70s [30s]	2.7	3.1
Gender (female=1)	2.5 ^{***}	2.9 ^{***}
Age (years)	2.6 ^{**}	3.1
Lives with partner	2.7	3.1
Has ≥2 friends >70 [<30]	2.5 ^{***}	2.9 ^{***}



Conclusion, cont'd

- People who engage in cross-age interactions tend to be less ageist (as expected)
- Causality??



Wrapping up

- The consideration of both young and old is rather unique
- The challenge is to develop (and evaluate!)* “intergenerational” policies that do not reinforce gender inequalities and social class inequalities
- Ageing societies are not only about old people!

*natural experiments, combinations of longitudinal survey data and registry data, cross-nationally comparative data

Acknowledgments

Financial support for my research comes from

- European Research Council Advanced Investigator Grant (ERC, 324211) “Families in Context”



- EU 7th framework Large Scale Integrating Project (EC, 320116) “FamiliesAndSocieties”



Families*And***Societies**