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Longitudinal Effects of Fraternal Deprivation on Life
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Abstract

According to a widely accepted view in the social justice literature, fraternal deprivation causes protest, but does not impact the individuals' well-being, whereas egoistic deprivation impairs the well-being of deprived persons, but does not cause protest. We consider this view incomplete, predict that fraternal deprivation can impair well-being under certain conditions, and suggest that negative emotion and negative social identity are mediating mechanisms for this effect. As part of a longitudinal study of the psychological consequences of German unification, measures for fraternal deprivation, individual life quality, life satisfaction, and mental health were obtained on three occasions of measurement (1996, 1998, 2000) from a demographically heterogeneous sample of 1276 East German citizens. Model test and parameter estimation were performed with LISREL. In line with our theoretical predictions, longitudinal effects of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction and mental health were identified and these effects were independent of an individual's life quality. The longitudinal effect of individual life quality on life satisfaction ($beta = .10$) was about twice as large as the longitudinal effect of fraternal deprivation ($beta = -.06$) on life satisfaction. The effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation on mental health were equal ($beta = |.04|$). Reasons for the small effect sizes are discussed. It is concluded that fraternal deprivation is no less problematic for individuals' well being than is the quality of their personal living conditions.

1. Egoistic and Fraternal Deprivation

Well-being depends on need satisfaction and goal attainment. Primary needs, like hunger, have a biological basis and elicit a universal pattern of behavior. Secondary needs, such as the need for approval, are less closely linked to biological processes. Although the capacity for secondary needs is rooted in evolutionary processes, their manifestation and the ways in which they are satisfied depend greatly on learning and the cultural context (Diener & Suh, 2000). This is also true for the goals and aspirations that originate from secondary needs and serve individuals as guiding principles in their lives. Standards for achievement, social status, and prestige are social constructions that vary with historic time, social context, and culture. It follows from this matter of fact, that as long as primary needs are satisfied, the well-being of individuals does not depend directly on objective living conditions (Crosby, 1976). Rather, a person seems able to maintain a comfortable level of satisfaction across a wide range of environments that differ greatly in the availability of resources as well as in the burdens and challenges they impose on their inhabitants. In fact, social scientists have been puzzled by the considerable changes in objective life quality individuals can tolerate without substantial long-term changes in reported well-being (Brickman, Coates, & Janoff-Bulman, 1978; Ross, Eyman, & Kishchuk, 1986).

Some studies even found an inverse relation between objective and subjective indicators of life quality. In a classic study by Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star, and Williams (1949), job satisfaction of soldiers correlated negatively with their chances of being promoted. Stouffer et al. (1949) proposed the concept of *relative deprivation* to account for this paradoxical finding. They argued that, when objective quality standards are unavailable, satisfaction depends on how well reality matches with expectations. Expectations can originate from various sources of information of which social comparisons seem to be particularly important (Olson & Hazlewood, 1986; Pettigrew, 1967; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory specifies when social comparisons are employed for obtaining evaluation standards. Although this theory was not designed for explaining well-being, but for understanding self-assessments of abilities and opinions, research on the effects of life crises has shown that social comparisons play a major role in the coping process. Individuals who suffer a substantial loss of life quality, for instance due to a severe illness or injury, tend to shift their frame of reference and often use downward social comparison to maintain their emotional stability (Buunk & Gibbons, 1997; Filipp, Ferring, Mayer, & Schmidt, 1997; Wills, 1981; 1987).

Since Stouffer et al. (1949) coined the term, relative deprivation has become a key concept in sociology, social psychology, political science, and especially the field of social justice (Masters & Smith, 1987; Olson, Herman & Zanna, 1986; Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith, & Huo, 1997; Walker & Smith, 2002). The concept was applied to various social contexts, such as employee satisfaction and the collective behavior of minorities, and stimulated a large number of archival, survey, and experimental studies over the last 50 years. At the same time, relative deprivation theory itself changed (Pettigrew, 2002). It was reformulated by several scholars (Crosby, 1976, 1982; Davis, 1959; Gurr, 1970; Runciman, 1966) and combined with other theories, such as equity theory (e.g., Crosby & Gonzalez-Intal, 1984), social comparison theory (e.g., Olson & Hazlewood, 1986), social identity theory (Ellemers, 2002; Smith, Spears, & Hamstra, 1999; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984), self categorization theory (Wenzel, 2000), stigma theory (Corning, 2000), and theoretical models of discrimination (Dion, 1986; Duckitt & Mphuthing, 2002) in order to obtain a better understanding of relative deprivation

phenomena.

What are the conditions that create a sense of relative deprivation? It is self-evident that *wanting* an outcome is a necessary precondition for feeling deprived (Crosby, 1976). Some theories assume that the desire for an outcome derives from perceiving others who possess it (Crosby, 1976). Although not all theories make this assumption (Crosby, 1982). Davis (1959) suggested that individuals feel deprived only if they lack a desired good they perceive *similar* others to possess. *Similarity* is also a crucial element in Festinger's (1954) social comparison theory and in applications of self categorization theory (Turner, 1987) to distributive justice issues (Wenzel, 2000). *Deservingness* is as a third precondition of relative deprivation. Individuals feel deprived only or more strongly when they feel entitled to better outcomes (Olson, 1986; Feather, 1999). The deservingness component is important because it bestows the concept of deprivation with a notion of ought. This moral property discriminates relative deprivation from frustration (Folger, 1986).

Less consensus has been obtained in the literature on the *feasibility* of the desired outcome as a precondition of relative deprivation. Some authors have assumed that relative deprivation will be sensed only if individuals believe that it is possible to acquire the good they want (Runciman, 1966). To the contrary, Gurr (1970) predicted that relative deprivation will be stronger if individuals deem it impossible to obtain what they desire. Feasibility was considered a necessary condition in Crosby's (1976) first model of relative deprivation, but was later dropped because empirical evidence was not compelling (Crosby, 1982, 1984; Crosby, Mueherer, & Loewenstein, 1986). Folger's (1986, 1987) referent cognitions theory helps to clarify the feasibility issue by decomposing feasibility into two components with opposite effects on the sense of deprivation: (1) the psychological *distance or proximity between actual and referent outcomes* and (2) the *likelihood of amelioration*. The proximity of counterfactual cognitions to reality amplifies the sense of deprivation: The more easily deprived individuals can imagine that better outcomes could have occurred, the more resentful they are. In contrast, likelihood of amelioration attenuates the sense of deprivation: A permanent deprivation is more upsetting than a deprivation that will likely end (Olson, 1986). Finally, some authors have proposed that the *visibility* of comparison others contributes to the sense of deprivation, because the frequent exposure to privileged comparison others reminds deprived individuals repeatedly of their situation and keeps their sense of deprivation alive (Gartrell, 1982, 2002; Chester, 1976).

An important conceptual distinction was drawn by Runciman (1966) between *egoistic* and *fraternal* deprivation. Egoistic deprivation is sensed when individuals feel unfairly deprived in comparison to other individuals. Fraternal deprivation refers to an unfair difference between groups. Fraternal deprivation is felt by members of a group when they believe that their group as a whole is denied, without sufficient justification, a favorable outcome that another group or social category possesses. Although Runciman's (1966) distinction may lack completeness (Walker & Pettigrew, 1984) and conceptual precision (Rhodebeck, 1981), it has inspired the field for two reasons. First, it points to the possibility that group deprivation and egoistic deprivation are independent phenomena. For instance, individuals may perceive unfair disadvantages for their group as a whole but not for themselves individually. In fact, available research has shown that this pattern is more common than double deprivation (Crosby, 1982; Crosby, Cordova, & Jaskar, 1993; Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983; Kessler, Mummendey, & Lisse, 2000; Koomen & Fränkel, 1992; Walker & Mann, 1987). Second, Runciman's distinction suggests that fraternal and egoistic deprivation may have different psychological consequences. Indeed, several authors have assumed that fraternal deprivation generates collective action such as protest, but not stress, whereas egoistic deprivation leads

to stress and self esteem damage, but not to protest (Koomen & Fränkel, 1992; Mark & Folger, 1984; Martin & Murray, 1984; Walker & Mann, 1987; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984).

Predicting that fraternal deprivation causes protest and egoistic deprivation leads to stress is consistent with social identity theory and attribution theory. Social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) assumes that individuals will engage in intergroup behavior when group membership is a salient property of the situation and an important constituent of the person's identity (Kawakami & Dion, 1993). Both conditions are met when individuals realize that their group suffers from unfair disadvantages. Protest as a collective action is more likely in such intergroup contexts than in situations where the person feels uniquely deprived (Pettigrew, 2002; Smith & Ortiz, 2002; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984).

Higher levels of stress in egoistically deprived individuals than in fraternally deprived individuals can be expected on the basis of attribution theory (Kelley, 1973; Walker, Won, & Kretschmar, 2002). If an entire group is deprived (high consensus), a conceptual analysis of variance (Försterling, 1989) suggests external causes for the unfair situation such as historical events or powerful agents. By contrast, if the person feels deprived individually (low consensus), a conceptual analysis of variance will lead more likely to an internal causal attribution of deprivation (Abeles, 1976). Given that attributions of cause covary with attributions of responsibility and blame (Shaver, 1985), egoistically deprived individuals are more likely than fraternally deprived individuals to blame themselves and suffer from self-esteem damage. Furthermore, the fate similarity of fraternally deprived individuals signals a high probability of solidarity and mutual support among group members, whereas the uniquely deprived individual may not easily obtain social support and even risk secondary victimization and social exclusion (Lerner, 1980; Opatow, 2001).

A large number of studies have shown that relative deprivation is indeed related to protest (Crosby, 1976; Dion, 1986; Smith & Ortiz, 2002). Some of these studies have directly addressed the fraternal versus egoistic distinction and found that fraternal deprivation is more closely related to protest than is egoistic deprivation (e.g., Abeles, 1976; Caplan, 1970; Dubé & Guimond, 1986; Guimond & Dubé-Simard, 1983). The same conclusion can be drawn from a meta-analysis conducted by Smith and Ortiz (2002). However, these studies were cross-sectional and their results are therefore inconclusive in terms of causality. Relative deprivation may lead to or generate protest, but may also be used to justify protest. In the latter case, deprivation would not be a cause for protest but a post hoc excuse and thus a consequence of protest (Pettigrew, 2002).

Links between relative deprivation and well-being have been investigated less frequently than links between deprivation and protest (Smith & Ortiz, 2002). Of the studies reviewed by Crosby (1976, Table 5), three found a negative correlation between some component of egoistic deprivation and satisfaction. In her study of gender-related deprivation, Crosby (1982; Crosby, Mueherer, & Loewenstein, 1986) measured egoistic deprivation in two domains (job and housework) and psychosomatic well-being as an outcome. A significant positive correlation between egoistic deprivation and depression was found in the job domain, but not in the housework domain. A significant positive correlation between egoistic deprivation and stress was also reported by Corning (2000). Further, Keith and Schafer (1985) found a significant correlation between egoistic deprivation and depression in a sample of employed women. Finally, the meta-analysis of Smith and Ortiz (2002) included 12 studies that investigated links between relative deprivation and well-being. The results of this meta-analysis suggest, in line with the differential effect hypothesis, that egoistic deprivation is more closely related with well-being than is fraternal deprivation. However, all studies on

relative deprivation and well-being were cross-sectional. Therefore, the direction of causality remains unclear. Although a causal effect of relative deprivation on well-being is theoretically feasible, research on the mood congruency of judgment (Mayer, Gaschke, Braverman, & Evans, 1992) and cognitive biases in depression (Williams, Watts, MacLeod, & Mathews, 1997) suggests that well-being may also affect perceived deprivation.

To the best of our knowledge, the differential effect hypothesis was fully explored in only two studies. In the first study, Walker and Mann (1987) obtained two measures of egoistic deprivation and two measures of fraternal deprivation in a sample of unemployed men and women. Approval of protest and psychosomatic symptoms of stress were measured as outcome variables. Multiple regression analyses revealed that one of the egoistic deprivation measures predicted stress, whereas the two fraternal deprivation measures predicted protest. Thus, the pattern of results was entirely consistent with the differential effect hypothesis. In the second study, Koomen and Fränkel (1992) measured experienced discrimination, egoistic deprivation, fraternal deprivation, group militancy, and personal satisfaction in a sample of 81 Surinamese, a Dutch minority group. In line with the differential effect hypothesis, the personal satisfaction scale, which included a happiness item, depended only on egoistic deprivation whereas group militancy depended only on fraternal deprivation. However, both studies were cross-sectional and causal inferences are unsafe for this reason.

To summarize our review of available research, the widely accepted position that fraternal deprivation does *not* impair well-being has never been tested appropriately. Just like the remaining three components of the differential effect hypothesis (egoistic deprivation causes depression, egoistic deprivation does not generate protest, fraternal deprivation causes protest), this assumption can be tested properly only in longitudinal research. Despite their general superiority for the identification of causal processes, experimental studies can provide only limited evidence (Martin, 1986). Experiments can identify *transient* effects of *transient* relative deprivation on emotion, mood, and behavioral reactions such as protest after the experimental treatment. However, it is unlikely that these transient effects are equivalent to effects of *long-term deprivation* in real life contexts on *enduring* components of well-being such as life satisfaction and depression. The same argument applies to protest inclination, alienation, and deviance as possible outcomes of relative deprivation (Duckitt & Mphuthing, 2002). These variables are slowly changing attitudes and behavioral habits that cannot be generated by experimental treatments, but evolve slowly from interactions of individuals with the social context in which they live (Chester, 1976; Gurr, 1970).

2. Research Goal and General Hypothesis

The goal of the present research was to determine the effects of *fraternal deprivation* on well-being with data from a longitudinal survey of the German unification process. Before we describe the rationale for this application and the study in more detail, we outline our theoretical assumptions. According to a commonly held view in the relative deprivation literature, fraternal deprivation has no effect on well-being. Although this position is consistent with aspects of social identity theory and attribution theory, we submit that it is incomplete and possibly wrong. We predict that fraternal deprivation will have, at least under certain conditions, a negative impact on life satisfaction and mental health (see also Martin, 1986). Furthermore, we propose that at least two separate psychological mechanisms are responsible for such an effect: (1) negative emotion and (2) negative social identity.

2.1 Negative Emotion

Irrespective of whether it is conceptualized as a cold or hot cognition, relative deprivation is associated with emotions of disappointment, anger, resentment, indignation, moral outrage, despair, anxiety, and hopelessness (Martin & Murray, 1983; Pettigrew, 2002; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). Several studies found anger to be the most typical reaction to injustice and injustice to be the most frequent cause for anger (Mikula, Scherer, & Athenstaedt, 1998; Scherer, Wallbott & Summerfield, 1986; Törestad, 1990). Even if the moral aspect of deserving an outcome is not a necessary component of relative deprivation, anger and disappointment are likely consequences because every deprivation implies a frustration. If the moral notion of deserving is included in the concept of deprivation (Folger, 1986), moral emotions such as resentment and moral outrage can be expected in addition to frustration-related anger (Montada, 1993). Anger is phylogenetically aimed at fighting obstacles to goal attainment (Averill, 1982); accordingly, moral outrage is directed at reestablishing justice (Miller, 2001). However, the productivity of anger and moral outrage depends on control (Crosby, 1976, Dion, 1986). Ineffective efforts to eliminate obstacles and to establish justice will lead to learned helplessness and learned helplessness is a cause of depression (Seligman, 1975). In addition, when individuals lack control over their situation, they react with anxiety, hopelessness, and despair (Martin, 1986). The occasional experience of negative emotions will certainly not damage the person's emotional integrity. However, the *repeated experience* of these emotions will hardly remain without consequences for the person's well-being (Johnson, 1990).

2.2 Negative Social Identity

Tajfel (1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) defined social identity as that part of individuals' self concept that stems from their membership in groups. Because values are attached to many attributes of groups and because individuals have a need for positive self-regard, membership in groups who are superior to other groups on positively-valued dimensions is desirable (positive distinctiveness). Positively distinct groups supply their members with a positive social identity, and negative social identity originates from membership in status inferior groups. Furthermore, positively valued self-concept components enhance self-esteem, whereas negatively valued components attenuate self-esteem (Deusinger, 1986). It follows that membership in status inferior groups creates a threat to self-esteem.

These assumptions of social identity theory have important implications for our general hypothesis because relative deprivation and negative social identity often co-occur. Groups who have greater access to desirable resources and opportunities also tend to have higher status (Corning, 2000). As a consequence of this interrelatedness, fraternally deprived individuals encounter self-esteem threats due to negative social identity, whereas members of privileged groups do not. Given that self-esteem is an important component of well-being (Becker, 1995), fraternal deprivation should have a negative impact on well-being.

However, the magnitude of the impact of relative deprivation on well-being depends on a number of moderators. (1) A person usually belongs to various groups. Depending on the status profile of these groups, self-esteem will be affected more or less. (2) Groups differ in how relevant they are for their members' identity. Individuals identify more with some groups than with others, and the effect of group status on self-esteem varies accordingly. (3) Status inequalities differ in legitimacy and stability. Members of inferior groups tend to consider their low status more acceptable when it seems legitimate (Ellemers, Wilke, & van Knippenberg, 1993). This suggests, in line with relative deprivation theory (Olson, 1986),

that illegitimate status inferiority is more burdensome than legitimate inferiority. Stability of inequality is closely related to Folger's (1986, 1987) concept of amelioration likelihood and has the same effect as this precondition of relative deprivation. (4) Status inferiority is not accepted as an inevitable fate. Rather, members of inferior groups continue to strive for positive distinctiveness. Various coping mechanisms have been described in social identity theory and related identity management theories (Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke, & Klink, 1998a; van Knippenberg, 1989). Upward mobility (changing from an inferior into a superior group) is an individual strategy for obtaining positive distinctiveness. If it fails due to impermeable group boundaries (e.g., gender, ethnicity) or high costs, the individual will participate in group activities aimed at increasing status (Wright & Tropp, 2002). *Competing* with the outgroup and trying harder to get ahead on crucial dimensions is a straightforward and typical collective strategy, for instance in the domain of sports (Lalonde, 1992). If positive distinctiveness cannot be acquired via competition, groups will switch to creative strategies such as *changing comparison dimensions*. *Changing the comparison group* is a final self-protective mechanism if all other efforts to improve group status are unsuccessful. Obviously, the impact of relative deprivation on well-being will depend on the feasibility and effectiveness of these coping mechanisms.

3. Relative Deprivation in United Germany

For a number of reasons, the German unification created an excellent opportunity for testing relative deprivation, social identity, and deservingness theory in a realistic intergroup context (Kessler & Mummendey, 2001, 2002; Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999; Mummendey, Klink, Mielke, Wenzel & Blanz, 1999; Wenzel, 2000). These reasons are directly related to our theorizing and will be presented in the same order in which we presented the conditions of relative deprivation, the conditions of negative social identity, and the mechanisms to cope with negative social identity. More specifically, we presuppose on the basis of theory and available data that: (1) East Germans are objectively deprived, (2) want better outcomes, (3) compare themselves preferably with West Germans, (4) consider their disadvantageous living conditions as unfair, (5) can imagine a better fate, (6) perceive a low likelihood of amelioration, (7) are exposed frequently to West Germans as comparison others, (8) suffer from a negative social identity, (9) cannot easily employ upward mobility as a coping strategy, (10) have used realistic competition without much success, (11) cannot easily replace West Germans by other reference groups, but (12) can change comparison dimensions and do so in order to compensate for unfavorable outcomes.

3.1 Preconditions of Fraternal Deprivation

(1) Compared to West Germans, *East Germans are fraternally deprived* in an objective sense. Although the average standard of living has improved considerably in East Germany since the unification, it is still substantially lower than in West Germany even 12 years later (Noll & Habich, 2000). For example, the unemployment rate is twice as high in East Germany than in West Germany, the average East German income is about 20% lower than the average West German income, and the average savings per household is three times higher in West Germany than in East Germany. East Germans are also deprived in symbolic terms. The transformation of two German states into one nation has been a one-sided assimilation. The political, economic, legal, administrative, and educational systems of the (East) German Democratic Republic were replaced by the systems of the Federal Republic of (West) Germany. Furthermore, many East Germans who held high ranking positions in public institutions, companies, schools, and higher education were replaced by West Germans -- suggesting that

not enough qualified and politically correct East Germans were available for these positions. Finally, large amounts of money are being transferred from West Germany to East Germany in order to improve the infrastructure, fuel the economy, and reduce unemployment. Although this aid is appreciated by East German citizens, it conveys dependency and symbolizes inferiority in economic, technical, and scientific performance.

(2) The majority of East Germans *want* better living conditions and even living conditions equal to those in West Germany (Noll & Habich, 2000; Schmitt & Montada, 1999). The chronic shortage of consumer goods and status symbols played a major role in the East German revolution. Due to visits, West German television, and reports of those who had left the GDR prior to the revolution, East Germans were well informed about the West German standard of living and were thus continuously confronted with the shortcomings of their own economy. Reflecting the desires and hopes of East Germans, the equality of living conditions has been assigned highest priority by all political parties, has played a major role in elections after the unification, is a constant concern in the media, and serves many East German voters as a criterion for evaluating the quality of political decisions and political leaders.

(3) According to the *similarity* principle proposed by Davis (1959), Festinger (1954), and Wenzel (2000), West Germans should be the preferred comparison group for East Germans. East and West Germans share a common language and cultural roots, and they are now once again members of the same nation. One of the slogans shouted during the Monday marches in the Fall of 1989 brings the sense of sameness to the point: "Wir sind *ein* Volk!" (We are *one* nation). More systematic evidence comes from a study by Haeger, Mummendey, Mielke, Blanz, & Kanning (1996) who found that East Germans tend to compare themselves more with West Germans than with any other reference group or comparison standard included in their study.

(4) East Germans consider their relative disadvantages as *unfair* and feel *entitled to better outcomes* (Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999; Schmitt, Maes, & Schmal, 1999; Zapf, 2000). This result is in line with attribution theory (Shaver, 1985) and deservingness theory (Wenzel, 2000). Attribution theory predicts that individuals do not feel responsible for group differences when group membership is random. Given that the division of Germany after World War II was not based on individual characteristics of its citizens but on the military situation, the unequal long-term consequences the division had for East and West Germans can easily be perceived as a matter of bad and good luck and therefore as undeserved. Wenzel (2000) proposed on the basis of self-categorization theory that individuals feel entitled to equal outcomes when they perceive themselves to be members of the same social category. In line with this reasoning, Wenzel (2000) found that East Germans who self-categorized primarily as Germans resented the East-West difference in life quality more than East Germans who self-categorized primarily as East Germans.

(5) Empirical evidence on East Germans' *referent cognitions* (Folger, 1986, 1987) is not available. However, the voting behavior of East Germans suggests a high prevalence of counterfactual thinking. Voting behavior is less stable among East Germans than among West Germans (Gabriel, 2001). The percentage of votes for political parties and candidates varies substantially between elections in East Germany. This suggests dissatisfaction with political decisions and implies that a large proportion of East German citizens assume that things would be better if only better political decisions were made. Counterfactual thinking may also be due to reminiscing about predictions that were made shortly after the unification by some economists and high-ranking politicians, most importantly by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, who promised that East Germans would soon live in a flourishing part of Germany.

(6) Some empirical evidence is available on the perceived *likelihood of amelioration*. Schmitt et al. (1999) found that East Germans more commonly assume that the standard of living will decline, rather than improve, during the next three years. However, predictions vary between individuals, and some studies found less pessimistic views (Zapf, 2000).

(7) West Germans are a *highly visible* comparison group for East Germans. Direct and vicarious encounters (e.g., in the media) among East and West Germans are frequent and group membership is an issue in many of these encounters, especially at the beginning (Piontkowski, Öhlschlegel-Haubrock, & Hölker, 1997). Also, the categories of East and West are used frequently in the media for breaking down reports on the economic changes, political events, and the social situation. Furthermore, East-West differences in lifestyle, values, and habits are genuine themes in the media. As a consequence, East Germans are exposed to social comparisons with West Germans even if they do not choose to engage in such comparisons actively.

(8) Given the relative deprivation of East Germans on many comparison dimensions, it is likely that they suffer from a *negative social identity* in the German intergroup context (Kessler & Mummendey, 2001, 2002; Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999). Direct support for this conclusion can be maintained from polls showing that a large majority of East Germans feel as though they were second class Germans (Brunner & Walz, 1998). What identity management strategies can East Germans employ to cope with this negative distinctiveness and what is the likelihood that these mechanisms will be effective?

(9) *Upward mobility* as an individual identity management strategy was frequently chosen during the first years after unification. However, East Germans who stayed in East Germany or who returned after failing to succeed in material terms and achieve a positive social status in West Germany are submitted continually to self-esteem threat due to their inferior group status.

(10) *Realistic competition* as a straightforward collective strategy for acquiring positive distinctiveness has been unsuccessful during the first 12 years after unification. In fact, the East-West gap has become even larger, rather than smaller, on some dimensions of economic success and objective life quality indicators. Most profound, the unemployment rates in East and West Germany have become increasingly unequal with the current ratio being approximately 2 : 1 (East : West). Given the limited efficacy of upward mobility and collective competition, creative coping strategies seem more likely.

(11) *Change of reference group* as a first creative strategy does not seem easily possible. East and West Germans belong, in a political and legal sense, to a common superordinate social category, Germans. According to self-categorization theory (Turner, 1987) and social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), this communality makes East and West Germans more comparable after the unification than before. Accordingly, avoiding unfavorable social comparisons with West Germans is now more difficult for East Germans than it was before the unification, when they could engage in more favorable comparisons with, for instance, Eastern European neighbors such as Poland.

(12) *Change of comparison dimension* can be employed more easily, and several studies support this prediction. Haeger et al. (1996) asked East German participants how they scored compared to West Germans on material dimensions (standard of living, income, economic situation, employment situation) and on social dimensions (cooperation, social contact,

helping) and how important they considered these dimensions to be. In line with predictions from social identity theory, East Germans felt inferior on economic dimensions, but superior on social dimensions. Furthermore, they considered social dimensions more important than material dimensions. Similar results were obtained by Kanning and Mummendey (1993), Blanz, Mummendey, Mielke, and Klink (1998b), and Schmitt and Maes (2002).

Taken together, our analysis of the situation in united Germany suggests that East Germans feel relatively deprived. This conclusion has been supported by a large number of surveys and polls (e.g., Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999; Noll & Habich, 2000; Schmitt & Montada, 1999).

3.2 Individual Differences and Differential Change in Fraternal Deprivation

Causal analyses with longitudinal survey data are possible to the extent that the variables of the causal model exhibit interindividual variability and change differentially over time (Nesselroade, 1991). Individual differences and differential change are necessary prerequisites for causal analysis because a causal effect of X on Y can be concluded only if (1) X covaries with changes in Y , if (2) X occurs earlier in time than changes in Y , and if (3) the covariation of X with changes in Y is not spurious, that is, not due to a third variable confounded with both X and the changes in Y .

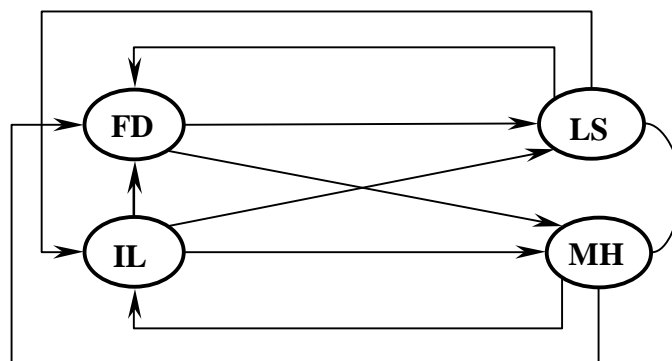
Both prerequisites, individual differences and differential change, are fulfilled for the constructs of our theoretical model and the specific application of this model to the situation in united Germany. The preconditions of fraternal deprivation and fraternal deprivation itself are not constants. Rather, they vary substantially between individuals due to differential exposure to information, due to individual differences in attitudes, values, and personality, and due to interactions among these factors (Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999; Mummendey, Klink et al., 1999; Schmitt et al., 1999). Fraternal deprivation and its preconditions also change differentially over time (Kessler & Mummendey, 2002; Schmitt & Maes, 2002). Differential changes in fraternal deprivation are due to the dynamic interaction between changes in objective living conditions and changes in subjective perceptions and judgments. Objective living conditions are changing markedly in East Germany and more rapidly than in West Germany (Bertram & Kollmorgen, 2001). Some East Germans live in regions where economic progress is above average, whereas others witness companies in their home towns going out of business and laying off large numbers of employees. Differential exposure to objective changes of this sort will affect subjective estimates regarding the preconditions of fraternal deprivation, such as the size of East-West differences or the likelihood of amelioration. In addition, individuals differ in how they integrate observed changes into their attitudes and beliefs. For example, some East Germans may react to ongoing deprivation by assimilating their standards of justice to the situation and thus becoming more tolerant of East-West differences. Others may lose their patience and become increasingly critical. Some citizens may shift their preference from the equality principle to the achievement principle and take productivity differences between East and West Germany into account when making relative deprivation judgments. Others may shift from a preference for the equity principle to a preference for the equality principle after discovering that rewards are not always contingent upon achievements (Bierhoff, 1999). Whatever the basis for individual differences and differential changes in the perception of fraternal deprivation, their occurrence is crucial in order for individual differences in relative deprivation at time 1 to predict intraindividual changes in well-being from time 1 to time 2. Replicating this pattern requires a third occasion of measurement and differential changes in relative deprivation from time 1 to time 2. Our hypothesis that fraternal deprivation affects well-being implies that well-being differs between

individuals and changes differentially over time. Both implications have been confirmed in many studies (Argyle, 2001; Diener & Suh, 2000; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 1999) and will again be tested in the present study.

4. Overview of the Study and Causal Model

Measures of fraternal deprivation, individual life quality, as well as life satisfaction and mental health as two components of well-being were obtained in 1996, 1998, and 2000 in a demographically heterogeneous sample of East German citizens. *Fraternal deprivation* was measured in five life domains: work and labor, prosperity, human relations, housing and cities, and the natural environment. Participants estimated the size of the East-West difference and suggested an East-West difference that they would consider fair based on personal justice standards. The difference between these two ratings was used as an indicator of fraternal deprivation. *Individual life quality* was measured quasi-objectively and in the same life domains as fraternal deprivation except the human relations domain. For each domain, participants were asked to provide a personal score on a number of life quality measures. Individual life quality was measured mainly to test whether fraternal deprivation is influenced by the person's standard of life and in order to rule out that effects of fraternal deprivation on well-being are spurious due to shared variance with objective individual life quality. *Life satisfaction* as the cognitive component of well-being (Diener, 1984, 2001) was measured in the same domains as fraternal deprivation with a German life satisfaction scale (Fahrenberg, Myrtek, Wilk, & Kreutel, 1986). *Mental health* as the emotional and psychosomatic compartment of well-being (Becker, 1995) was measured with a German version of the Beck Depression Inventory (Schmitt & Maes, 2000), a German version of the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and a German psychological health scale (Becker, 1989).

FIGURE 1

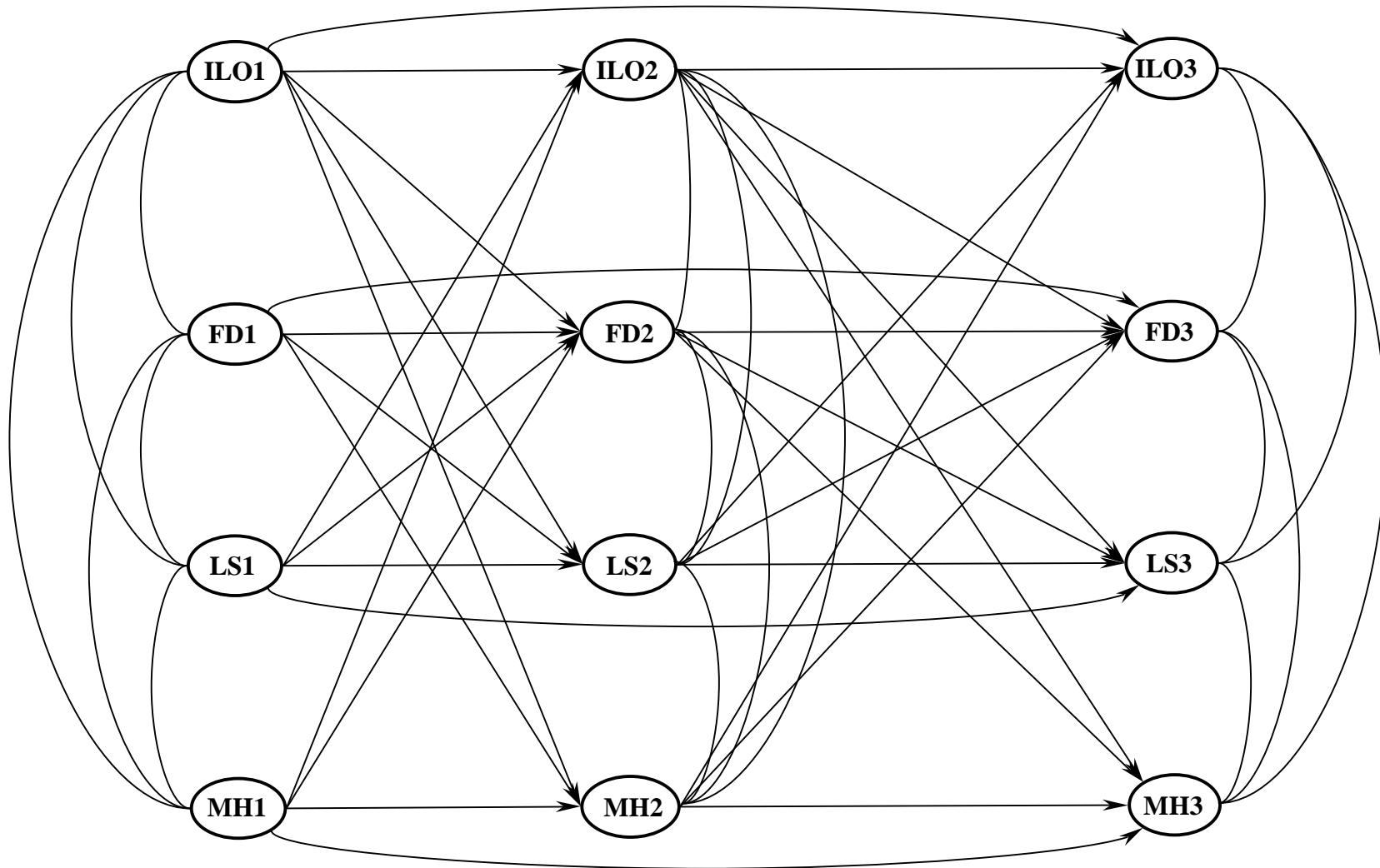


Causal model for individual life quality (ILQ), fraternal deprivation (FD), life satisfaction (SL), and mental health (MH).

Figure 1 depicts our causal model. It contains the four constructs and the assumed causal effects among them. The model contains five recursive paths, four non-recursive paths, and a correlation. The path from individual life quality (ILQ) to fraternal deprivation

FIGURE 2

Longitudinal path model for individual life quality (ILO), fraternal deprivation (FD), life satisfaction (SL), and mental health (MH) at three occasions of measurement.



(FD) was specified primarily to account for the possibility that individuals use their personal standard of living as an anchor for estimating the collective situation (Pettigrew, 2002; Tougas & Beaton, 2002). The effects of individual life quality on life satisfaction (LS) and on mental health (MH) were specified because well-being is not entirely independent of the person's objective living conditions, although the size of this effect has been surprisingly low in most studies and stronger on the macro level of societies than on the microlevel of individuals (Diener, Sandvik, Seidlitz, & Diener, 1993; Veenhoven, 1994). The potential effects of individual life quality on fraternal deprivation, life satisfaction, and mental health were specified in order to avoid biased estimates of the effects that were of primary interest in this study -- the effects of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction and mental health.

In addition to the five non-recursive effects we have introduced so far, the causal model also contains four recursive paths from the two well-being constructs on the two deprivation constructs. These effects can be derived neither from relative deprivation theory nor from social identity theory. However, they are plausible for three reasons. First, well-being is associated with individuals' capacity to master the tasks and challenges they encounter in their daily lives. Deficient robustness and efficacy due to impaired well-being may reduce the person's objective life quality, for instance due to job loss, loss of social support, or physical illness (Becker, 1995). Second, the affective nature of well-being is likely to affect information processing and produce mood congruent perceptions and judgments (Mayer et al., 1992; Williams et al., 1997). Third, ratings regarding individual and collective living conditions can be affected by life satisfaction judgments due to a confirmation bias (Nickerson, 1998).

The curved line between the two well-being constructs represents a correlation; that is, no causal priority between these two constructs is assumed. One could argue on the basis of cognitive emotion theory that satisfaction as the cognitive component of well-being is causally prior to mental health. However, assuming that impaired mental health depresses life satisfaction is no less reasonable. Because the causal relation between the two well-being constructs is of no interest in the context of our analysis and because we are not aware of appropriate longitudinal tests of the causal relations between these two constructs, the association among them was specified as a covariance.

Translating the causal model in Figure 1 into a longitudinal path model results in the model given in Figure 2. In this model, the causal effects appear as cross-lagged paths. In addition to these paths, the longitudinal model also contains autoregressive paths representing the stability of the constructs over time. Assuming that this stability is due partly to stable traits and partly to slowly changing traits (Kenny & Zautra, 2001; Nesselroade, 1987), first- and second-order autoregressive paths were specified. The curved lines represent correlations or covariances. At time 1, the correlations among the constructs cannot be explained by exogenous variables. At times 2 and 3, the correlations among the constructs are explained by the cross-lagged effects. However, it is unreasonable to assume that the correlations among the constructs can be explained entirely by our causal model. Rather, only part of the covariance will be accounted for by the assumed causal process and residual correlations will remain unexplained. These residual correlations are presented by the curved lines among the constructs at times 2 and 3.

5. Method

The data we used for testing our model were collected as part of a longitudinal survey on the psychological consequences of the German unification (Schmitt & Maes, 1998, 2002;

Schmitt et al., 1999; Maes & Schmitt, 1999).

5.1 Sample

In order to maximize the demographic heterogeneity and representativeness of the sample, participants were recruited on the basis of a geographical division of Germany into 18 cells (East/West x North/Middle/South x Large cities/Medium sized cities/Small cities). Registration offices of two communities in each cell provided random samples from the population of all inhabitants between 15 and 75 years of age. Additional respondents were drawn randomly from electronic telephone directories. A total of 3170 citizens agreed to participate in the study and were sent questionnaires. The present analysis is based on a sub-sample of participants who had lived only in East Germany after World War II. Of these, 1276, 713, and 397 participants provided measures for the constructs of the present analysis at the first, second, and third measurement occasions, respectively. Mean age of this sub-sample was $M = 51$ years ($SD = 15$; $min = 15$; $max = 83$) in 1996. The proportion of males was 57%. The sample was representative according to many, but not all demographic variables. Men and participants with higher education are overrepresented. A detailed description of the sample is available on the Internet (<http://sozpsy.uni-trier.de/forschung/gip/beri96.pdf>).

5.2 Design and Measurement

Data were collected in Spring 1996, Spring 1998, and Spring 2000. Questionnaires were sent by mail and answered anonymously. The scales for measuring the constructs of the current study were embedded in other sets of items measuring variables that are not of interest here. The total set of items was divided into five questionnaire booklets that were mailed to participants on a monthly basis. The main focus of the survey was on life quality in united Germany. Five life domains were specified: work and labor, prosperity, human relations, housing and cities, and the natural environment.

Individual life quality. Individual life quality was measured quasi-objectively via self-report estimates regarding objective life quality indicators. Life quality indicators were specified for four life domains (work and labor, prosperity, housing and cities, natural environment). The domain of human relations was excluded because the quality of human relations is a genuinely subjective matter and, for this reason, conceptually too close to life satisfaction as one of our two well-being constructs. For each of the remaining domains, participants were asked to report a number of indicators that have been used in life quality research (e.g., Korczak, 1995). The domain of work and labor consisted of four components (e.g., employed versus unemployed). The domain of prosperity had seven components (e.g., income of household). The domain of housing contained twelve components [e.g., quality of apartment or house in five steps (rented small apartment, rented large apartment, rented house, owned apartment, owned house)]. The domain of natural environment consisted of 26 items (e.g., distance to the nearest toxic materials dump more versus less than 25 km; distance in km to the nearest state park). Response scales were tailored for each indicator. Items were z-transformed on the basis of their distribution in the entire sample (East and West Germans) and combined to obtain a comprehensive index of objective life quality. This index is heterogeneous and not a scale in the sense of classical test theory. Accordingly, inter-item correlations were generally low, especially across domains, and sometimes even slightly negative. However, when items were combined into a "scale", all 49 corrected item-total correlations were positive and the internal consistency of this "scale" was .65, .67, and .72 at the three occasions of measurement, respectively. These numbers suggest that despite the heterogeneity of the indicators, the objective life quality of an individual is generalized across life-domains. Consequently, combining all indicators into an index that could serve as a comprehensive

measure of objective individual life quality is justified. It is important to note that the reliability of this index is higher than its internal consistency, because *Alpha* is a lower bound estimate of reliability and underestimates the reliability of heterogeneous item composites (Cronbach, 1951).

Fraternal deprivation. In order to measure fraternal deprivation, each life domain was divided into several quality components. The labor domain was divided into nine components (e.g., chances of being promoted), the domain of prosperity into seven components (e.g., amount of savings), the domain of human relations into 22 components (e.g., being respected), the domain of housing into 14 components (e.g., apartment quality), and the domain of environmental quality into seven components (e.g., degree of air pollution). Fraternal deprivation was defined as the difference between the perceived East-West difference (*IS*) and what would be a fair East-West difference according to individual standards of justice (*OUGH*T). The *IS*-component was assessed by having respondents estimate how much better or worse the quality of life was in East Germany compared to West Germany for each component of each domain. Bipolar seven-point rating scales were used for these judgments (+3/much better in the East/much worse in the West; -3/much worse in the East/much better in the West). The *OUGH*T-component was obtained by asking participants what they would consider to be a just East-West difference for each component of each domain. The same rating scale as for the *IS*-component was used. The *OUGH*T-*IS*-difference was computed for each component to obtain relative deprivation items. *Alpha* for the relative deprivation scale, consisting of all *OUGH*T-*IS*-differences from all five life domains, amounted to .89, .82, and .81 at the three occasions of measurement, respectively.

Life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was measured in the same life domains as was fraternal deprivation. A slightly modified version of the Fahrenberg et al. (1986) Life satisfaction-Scale was used. Satisfaction with work situation was measured with five items (e.g., I am satisfied with my success at work.), satisfaction with financial situation with five items (e.g., I am satisfied with what I own.), satisfaction with interpersonal relations with five items (e.g., I am satisfied with the respect I get from others.), satisfaction with housing and city was measured with three items each (e.g., I am satisfied with the size of my house/apartment. I am satisfied with the beauty of my city/town.), and satisfaction with environmental quality with four items (e.g., I am satisfied with the quality of our drinking water). Six-point rating scales were used (0/very dissatisfied; 5/very satisfied). *Alpha* of this 25-item life satisfaction scale was .85, .88, and .89 at the three occasions of measurement, respectively.

Mental health. Mental health was measured with a modified German version of the Beck Depression Inventory (20 items; Schmitt & Maes, 2000), a German version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (10 items; Rosenberg, 1965), and the Psychological Health-Scale of the Trier Personality Questionnaire (19 items; Becker, 1989). The constructs of depression, self-esteem, and psychological health were combined in order to represent mental health more comprehensively than any of these constructs would alone. *Alpha* of this 49-item mental health scale was .94, .95, and .94 at the three occasions of measurement, respectively.

5.3 Model Testing and Parameter Estimation

The model in Figure 2 was tested and its parameters were estimated using the LISREL 8.51 program (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 2001). LISREL was used instead of longitudinal multiple regression analysis for two reasons. First, we wanted to *test* the model and see how well the model was able to account for the entire pattern of variances of and covariances among our variables. Second, LISREL (8.51) uses direct fitting with full-information maximum likeli-

hood (FIML) estimation, and this method is the best method available for handling missing data. The parameter estimates obtained using this method are relatively unbiased and more efficient than parameter estimates obtained using other methods of estimation (Arbuckle, 1996). In our study, missing data were a problem because large percentages of participants dropped out over time, and this drop out probably could not be characterized as leading to data that were missing completely at random (MCAR). However, the missingness of data in the current study might satisfy the conditions of being missing at random (MAR) (cf. Arbuckle, 1996), and FIML estimation appears to be appropriate when data are either MCAR or MAR. Furthermore, even if data fail to meet strictly the assumptions associated with data that are MAR, FIML estimation is likely the method that best reduces bias in parameter estimates (e.g., Arbuckle, 1996; Muthén, Kaplan, & Hollis, 1987).

6. Results

Table 1 contains the means, variances, covariances, and correlations of the measures for the four constructs at the three occasions of measurement. Unlike the correlations, the means, variances, and covariances in Table 1 cannot be compared across constructs because the units of measurement differ.

6.1 Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Individual life quality is the average of 49 z-transformed items that were standardized in the total sample (including East and West Germans). The negative values for the means of this variable indicate that participants in the East German sample have a lower perceived personal standard of living than participants in the West German sample. If East and West Germans would perceive an equal individual standard of living, the means for both groups would be zero. In contrast to such a situation, the means scores of East Germans deviate between .25 SD units (3rd occasion of measurement) and .33 SD units (1st and 2nd occasion of measurement) from the point of equality, and so represent small-to-moderate sized effects (Cohen, 1988).

Fraternal deprivation was measured on a scale from -6 (maximum privileges) to 6 (maximum deprivation). A value of zero indicates a complete absence of fraternal deprivation, that is, a perfectly fair situation. In contrast to such a pattern, the means in Table 1 are positive and very large (cf. Cohen, 1988) in comparison to their standard deviations, with means falling between 1.25 SD units (3rd occasion of measurement) and 1.85 SD units (1st occasion of measurement) from the point of equality. This result supports the contention that East Germans feel substantially deprived on the group level. By contrast, mean relative deprivation scores for the West German sample (reported in Schmitt & Maes, 2002) are negative which means that West Germans consider their living conditions as privileged in comparison to East Germans.

Although *life satisfaction* and *mental health* were measured on six-point rating scales ranging from 0 (minimal life satisfaction/minimal mental health) to 5 (maximum life satisfaction/maximum mental health), their means cannot be compared directly. Nevertheless, all means are above the midpoints of the scale (= 2.5). Whereas mean life satisfaction exceeds this midpoint moderately, mean mental health exceeds it substantially.

TABLE 1

Means (Bottom Line), Variances (Diagonal, Italic), Correlations (Below Diagonal), and Covariances (Above Diagonal) of Individual Life Quality (ILQ), Fraternal Deprivation (FD), Life Satisfaction (LS), and Mental Health (MH) on Three Occasions of Measurement

| | Occasion 1 (1996) | | | | Occasion 2 (1998) | | | | Occasion 3 (2000) | | | |
|----------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | ILQ1 | FD1 | LS1 | MH1 | ILQ2 | FD2 | LS2 | MH2 | ILQ3 | FD3 | LS3 | MH3 |
| ILQ1 | <i>0.186</i> | -0.041 | 0.101 | 0.044 | 0.116 | -0.014 | 0.101 | 0.044 | 0.083 | -0.016 | 0.069 | 0.025 |
| FD1 | <u>-0.14</u> | <i>0.440</i> | -0.068 | -0.032 | -0.025 | 0.222 | -0.092 | -0.044 | -0.037 | 0.194 | -0.049 | -0.029 |
| LS1 | <u>0.36</u> | <u>-0.16</u> | <i>0.429</i> | 0.133 | 0.080 | -0.050 | 0.291 | 0.117 | 0.066 | -0.034 | 0.232 | 0.093 |
| MH1 | <u>0.18</u> | <u>-0.08</u> | <u>0.35</u> | <i>0.333</i> | 0.025 | -0.031 | 0.098 | 0.265 | 0.042 | -0.046 | 0.112 | 0.227 |
| ILQ2 | 0.60 | -0.08 | 0.27 | 0.09 | <i>0.201</i> | -0.028 | 0.116 | 0.047 | 0.103 | -0.007 | 0.075 | 0.039 |
| FD2 | -0.05 | 0.55 | -0.12 | -0.09 | <u>-0.10</u> | <i>0.373</i> | -0.090 | -0.053 | -0.024 | 0.212 | -0.026 | -0.039 |
| LS2 | 0.35 | -0.21 | 0.66 | 0.25 | <u>0.39</u> | <u>-0.22</u> | <i>0.448</i> | 0.136 | 0.094 | -0.083 | 0.278 | 0.101 |
| MH2 | 0.17 | -0.11 | 0.30 | 0.78 | <u>0.18</u> | <u>-0.15</u> | <u>0.34</u> | <i>0.348</i> | 0.051 | -0.051 | 0.133 | 0.250 |
| ILQ3 | 0.48 | -0.14 | 0.25 | 0.18 | 0.57 | -0.10 | 0.35 | 0.21 | <i>0.164</i> | -0.041 | 0.112 | 0.041 |
| FD3 | -0.06 | 0.45 | -0.08 | -0.12 | -0.02 | 0.53 | -0.19 | -0.13 | <u>-0.15</u> | <i>0.421</i> | -0.077 | -0.059 |
| LS3 | 0.23 | -0.10 | 0.50 | 0.27 | 0.24 | -0.06 | 0.58 | 0.32 | <u>0.39</u> | <u>-0.17</u> | <i>0.505</i> | 0.138 |
| MH3 | 0.11 | -0.08 | 0.26 | 0.71 | 0.16 | -0.11 | 0.27 | 0.76 | <u>0.18</u> | <u>-0.16</u> | <u>0.35</u> | <i>0.309</i> |
| <i>M</i> | -0.142 | 1.238 | 3.109 | 3.806 | -0.153 | 0.922 | 3.221 | 3.799 | -0.093 | 0.815 | 3.410 | 3.867 |

Note. Correlations in bold face are retest correlations of the variables. Underlined correlations are cross sectional correlations among the variables.

Coefficients below the diagonal of the matrix in Table 1 inform about (1) the stability of the variables, (2) the cross-sectional correlations among the measures, and (3) the time-lagged correlations among the variables. We will consider the coefficients in this order.

The stability coefficients (bold in Table 1) of all variables exhibit a simplex pattern, with retest correlations among adjacent occasions that were larger than retest correlations between time 1 and time 3. This is a frequent pattern in longitudinal data and reflects slowly changing traits. The lowest stability coefficients were found for *fraternal deprivation*. Given that the estimated reliability of the fraternal deprivation scale was much higher than the retest correlations in Table 1, true differential change occurred. This is an important prerequisite for detecting causal effects. Retest correlations for *individual life quality* were somewhat higher but not high in absolute terms. Assuming that the personal life quality measure had a high reliability due to its quasi-objective nature, the moderate retest correlations indicate differential change in this variable. Again, this is important for the identification of causal effects. The retest correlations for life satisfaction were somewhat higher than those for individual life quality. Given the high *Alpha* coefficients for the life satisfaction scale, differential change in life satisfaction is obvious. The highest retest correlations were obtained for mental health. Although these coefficients were high in absolute terms, they were clearly lower than the Alpha coefficients for the mental health scale. Consequently, mental health changed differentially and these changes can be explained. At the same time, the proportion of unstable variance of mental health was relatively small in comparison to the proportion of stable variance. In other words, variance in mental health is primarily stable trait variance. As a consequence, causal effects on this variable cannot be large, at least not for the time span we have considered in this study.

All cross-sectional correlations among the constructs (underlined in Table 1) were significant ($p < .05$, one-tailed) and consistent with our causal model. More specifically, the correlation of individual life quality with fraternal deprivation was negative and in line with our speculation that a person's objective standard of living might color his or her perception of relative disadvantages on the group level (Pettigrew, 2002; Tougas & Beaton, 2002). However, the correlation between both variables was small. The correlations of individual life quality with the two well-being measures were negative, as assumed and as found in previous research. As predicted, the correlations between fraternal deprivation and the two well-being components were negative. The correlations of individual life quality with well-being were consistently higher than the correlations of fraternal deprivation with well-being. Finally, the correlation between life satisfaction and mental health was positive, but not high in absolute terms.

The cross-lagged correlations among the constructs were also consistent with our model. Although smaller in size than the corresponding cross-sectional correlations and at times failing to reach statistical significance, the cross-lagged correlations mirrored the cross-sectional correlations. However, neither the cross-sectional correlations nor the cross-lagged correlations can be interpreted causally. The cross-sectional correlations cannot be interpreted as causal effects because a time order of two variables is needed to interpret their correlation causally. Although time-lagged correlations fulfill this criterion, they also cannot be interpreted causally because they confound the correlations among the variables with their stability (Rogosa, 1980). Both components must be separated, and this can be done by the type of model that we have specified in Figure 2.

6.2 Model Test and Parameter Estimates

The model in Figure 2 was tested using the covariance matrix in Table 1. Two types of restrictions were imposed on the parameter estimates besides the ones already implied in the path structure of the model (Figure 2). First, cross-lagged effects among the same constructs (e.g., the effect of individual life quality on life satisfaction) were constrained to be equal for the two two-year time lags (1-2; 2-3). This assumption seemed reasonable given the equal time distance between adjacent occasions of measurement. Second, residual correlations among the constructs were constrained to be equal at times 2 and 3. This assumption follows from our first set of equality constraints (equal cross-lagged effects across time) and from assuming that the stability of the variables does not differ significantly between time lags (1-2; 2-3).

The model fit the data very well: $\chi^2(33) = 35.61$; $p = .35$; $RMSEA = .008$. The estimated population covariance matrix implied by the parameter estimates differed only trivially from the sample covariance matrix.

Despite the very good fit of the model, several additional tests were performed before the model was accepted. *First*, the equality constraints on the cross-lagged effects were relaxed to test whether these constraints would improve significantly the fit of the model. This was not the case. The fit of the less restrictive model ($\chi^2(24) = 25.94$) was not significantly better ($\chi^2(9) = 9.68$; $p > .05$) than the fit of the original model with equality constraints.

Second, the equality constraints on the residual correlations of the variables at occasions 2 and 3 were relaxed in addition to relaxing the equality constraints on the cross-lagged effects. Again, the fit of this model ($\chi^2(18) = 16.57$) was not significantly better ($\chi^2(15) = 19.04$; $p > .05$) than the fit of the original model containing equality constraints.

Third, we tested whether the fit of the original model would be significantly worse if the cross-lagged effects of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction and on mental health would be constrained to be zero. Although these effects were significant, the additional test was performed because these effects are the most important effects in our theoretical model. In line with our theory, the fit of the model with zero effects of fraternal deprivation on well-being ($\chi^2(35) = 42.07$) was significantly worse ($\chi^2(2) = 6.46$; $p < .05$) than the fit of the original model in which effects of fraternal deprivation on well-being were freely estimated ($\chi^2(33) = 35.61$).

Fourth, we tested whether the cross-lagged effects of individual life quality on well-being were significantly larger than the effects of fraternal deprivation on well-being. The cross-sectional *correlations* and the cross-lagged *correlations* in Table 1 suggest such a difference. In order to test whether the cross-lagged *effects* differ significantly, two equality constraints were specified. The cross-lagged effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction were constraint to be equal and the cross-lagged effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation on mental health were constrained to be equal. This model ($\chi^2(35) = 38.59$) fit less well than did the original model ($\chi^2(33) = 35.61$). However, the difference in fit was not significant ($\chi^2(2) = 2.98$; $p > .05$).

Fifth, we tested whether life satisfaction was affected more by the two causal antecedent variables than was mental health. The cross-sectional *correlations* and the cross-lagged *correlations* in Table 1 suggest such a difference. In order to test, whether the cross-lagged

effects on these two outcomes differ significantly as well, two equality constraints were specified. The cross-lagged effects of individual life quality on life satisfaction and mental health were constrained to be equal and the cross-lagged effects of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction and mental health were constrained to be equal. This model ($\chi^2(35) = 41.26$) also fit less well than did the original model ($\chi^2(33) = 35.61$), although the difference in fit was only of marginal significance ($\chi^2(2) = 5.65$; $p > .07$).

Inspection of the parameter estimates for the cross-lagged effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation on well-being suggested that the larger effect on life satisfaction was due primarily to individual life quality. The cross-sectional correlations and the cross-lagged correlations in Table 1 also suggest that the difference in impact on the two well-being components is larger for individual life quality than for fraternal deprivation.

Therefore, a sixth variant of the model was tested. The two cross-lagged effects of individual life quality on life satisfaction and on mental health were constrained to be equal and no other constraints on cross-lagged parameter estimates were imposed. This model ($\chi^2(34) = 40.25$) fit the data significantly less well ($\chi^2(1) = 6.64$; $p < .05$) than did the original model ($\chi^2(33) = 35.61$).

TABLE 2

Cross Sectional Correlations among Residual Individual Life Quality (ILQ), Residual Fraternal Deprivation (FD), Residual Life Satisfaction (LS), and Residual Mental Health (MH) at Occasions 2 and 3

| | | Occasion 2 (1998) | | | | Occasion 3 (2000) | | | |
|------------|------|-------------------|------|-----|-----|-------------------|------|-----|-----|
| | | ILQ2 | FD2 | LS2 | MH2 | ILQ3 | FD3 | LS3 | MH3 |
| Occasion 2 | ILQ2 | | | | | | | | |
| | FD2 | -.11 | | | | | | | |
| | LS2 | .24 | -.13 | | | | | | |
| | MH2 | .11 | -.07 | .23 | | | | | |
| Occasion 3 | ILQ3 | | | | | | | | |
| | FD3 | | | | | -.11 | | | |
| | LS3 | | | | | .24 | -.13 | | |
| | MH3 | | | | | .11 | -.07 | .23 | |

Given that only individual life quality, but not fraternal deprivation, had a significantly different effect on life satisfaction than on mental health, it seemed most appropriate to accept the original model in which no equality constraints were imposed on the causal effects across antecedents (egoistic and fraternal deprivation) or across consequences (life satisfaction and mental health).

Estimates for significant parameters of the original model are provided in Tables 2 and 3 ($p < .05$, one-tailed). In order to ease the interpretation of these parameters, we report parameter estimates from the standardized solution. Table 2 contains the cross-sectional correlations among the residuals at times 2 and 3, that is, the correlations among individual

TABLE 3

Standardized Autoregressive and Cross-Lagged Effects among Individual Life Quality (ILQ), Fraternal Deprivation (FD), Life Satisfaction (LS), and Mental Health (MH)

| | | Occasion 1 | | | | Occasion 2 | | | |
|------------|------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | | ILQ1 | FD1 | LS1 | MH1 | ILQ2 | FD2 | LS2 | MH2 |
| Occasion 2 | ILQ2 | <u>.57</u> (.03) | | .09 (.03) | n.s. | | | | |
| | FD2 | .05 (.03) | <u>.55</u> (.03) | -.05 (.03) | n.s. | | | | |
| | LS2 | .10 (.02) | -.06 (.02) | <u>.62</u> (.03) | | | | | |
| | MH2 | .04 (.02) | -.04 (.02) | | <u>.77</u> (.03) | | | | |
| Occasion 3 | ILQ3 | <u>.18</u> (.05) | | | | <u>.48</u> (.05) | | .09 (.03) | n.s. |
| | FD3 | | <u>.21</u> (.05) | | | .05 (.03) | <u>.41</u> (.05) | -.05 (.03) | n.s. |
| | LS3 | | | <u>.21</u> (.05) | | .10 (.02) | -.06 (.02) | <u>.38</u> (.06) | |
| | MH3 | | | | <u>.31</u> (.05) | .04 (.02) | -.04 (.02) | | <u>.51</u> (.06) |

Note. Cross-lagged effects in bold face, autoregressive effects underlined. Standard errors are given in parentheses.

differences in the variables that were not explained by the cross-lagged effects among the constructs. As can be seen from the coefficients in Table 2, the residual correlations among the constructs match in sign with the correlations at time 1 (Table 1). Although the residual correlations cannot be interpreted as causal effects, they are consistent with our theory.

Table 3 contains the parameter estimates for the longitudinal effects, including both autoregressive and cross-lagged effects. These parameters correspond to the unidirectional arrows in Figure 2. The autoregressive effects (underlined) account for the stability of the variables across time. In addition to the first-order autoregressive effects (e.g., FD1 on FD2), the second-order autoregressive effects (e.g., FD1 on FD3) were also significant and substantial. This pattern suggests that individual differences in the constructs were due partly to stable traits and partly to slowly changing traits (Kenny & Zautra, 2001; Nesselroade, 1987). However, stable and slowly changing traits cannot explain the entire variance of the variables. Rather, all constructs changed differentially to some extent across time as well.

How can these changes be explained? According to our causal model, differential change in well-being is due to previously existing individual differences in individual life quality and fraternal deprivation. Furthermore, assuming that well-being feeds back into its causal antecedents, differential change in these antecedents is a function of previously existing individual differences in well-being. The parameter estimates for these cross-lagged effects in Table 3 (bold) are consistent with these assumptions. Individual life quality has a positive effect of .10 on life satisfaction. Fraternal deprivation has a negative effect on life satisfaction (-.06). And both, individual life quality and fraternal deprivation, had small but significant effects on mental health with the effect of individual life quality being positive (.04) and the effect of fraternal deprivation being negative (-.04). Regarding the recursive effects of well-being on its causal antecedents, significant effects were obtained only for life satisfaction but not for mental health. The recursive effects of life satisfaction on individual life-quality were positive and in line with our substantive feed-back hypothesis. One significant cross-lagged affect appears in Table 3 that had not been expected. Individual life quality had a *positive* longitudinal effect on fraternal deprivation. Given that the cross-sectional correlations between individual life quality and fraternal deprivation were negative (Table 1 and 3), the negative longitudinal effect is a suppressor effect. Possibly, some participants were aware that their evaluation of their collective situation might be influenced by their evaluation of their individual situation, tried to correct for this bias, and over-corrected for it.

7. Discussion

Our study shows that *individual life quality* has a positive effect on a person's well-being. This assumption was investigated and confirmed in previous life quality and life satisfaction research (e.g., Diener et al., 1993; Ross et al., 1986; Veenhoven, 1994). However, most life quality and life satisfaction studies used cross-sectional designs, and cross-sectional correlations are inconclusive with regard to the direction of causality. Because we used a longitudinal design, the results of our study provide more conclusive evidence and demonstrate more convincingly than previous research that lack of personal life quality does indeed have a negative impact on life satisfaction and mental health. However, in line with relative deprivation research (Crosby, 1976), this impact is small. We also identified a causal link between individual life quality and

well-being that operated in the opposite causal direction: Not only did life satisfaction depend on individual life quality, life satisfaction also had a causal feed-back effect on individual life quality. Although the psychological mechanisms of this effect were not explored in our study, it seems plausible to assume that individuals communicate their life dissatisfaction to their social environment and thereby change this environment in a way that is eventually to their own disadvantage. Perhaps, contact with individuals who complain about bad living conditions is unpleasant for friends, kin, employers, and other individuals that would otherwise be sources of social and material support. Evidence that directly supports this explanation is not available. However, coping research has shown repeatedly that individuals who complain about their unfortunate situation are less likely to obtain help than victims of critical life events who are optimistic (Schwarzer & Leppin, 1992). Whatever the mechanisms for the effect of well-being on individual life quality may be, the bi-directional causal links between these variables provides evidence for the causal ambiguity of cross-sectional findings and lends additional support for the need for longitudinal research.

Whereas the impact of *individual life quality* on well-being is consistent with the life quality and life satisfaction literature, the effect of *fraternal deprivation* on well-being contradicts the popular differential effect hypothesis according to which fraternal deprivation does not affect individual well-being. In contrast to this assumption, we suggested that fraternal deprivation may impair the life satisfaction and mental health of fraternally deprived individuals under specific conditions. We tested this hypothesis in the context of the German unification where these conditions are fulfilled. In line with our conjecture, fraternal deprivation had a longitudinal effect on well-being that was independent of the effect of individual life quality. We assumed that negative emotion and negative social identity are probably the basis for this effect. However, our study did not test this mediation hypothesis directly. Exploring whether negative emotion, negative social identity, and other psychological mechanisms mediate the effect of fraternal deprivation on well-being will be tasks for future research.

Although the results of our study support our causal model, the longitudinal effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation on well-being were fairly small. This is an important result that must be carefully considered. Furthermore, the causal effects we identified differed depending on which causal antecedent and which of the two well-being constructs was involved. As a general pattern, life satisfaction tended to be affected more than was mental health, and this tendency was due mostly to differential effects of individual life quality. Whereas individual life quality and fraternal deprivation had equal influences on mental health, life satisfaction was affected more strongly by individual life quality than by fraternal deprivation. We will discuss each of these results in more detail.

(1) Why were the effects on well-being so small in magnitude? A straightforward statistical answer to this question is that individual differences in well-being were remarkably stable across the time span considered. Accordingly, the magnitude of differential change was small and, as a consequence, longitudinal effects on change could not be strong. However, this statistical answer is not fully satisfactory because it provides no substantive explanation for the high stability of well-being, although this has also been found in other studies (e.g., Cole, Peeke, Martin, Truglio, & Seroczynski, 1998; Lovibond, 1998). We propose that a least four substantive explanations can be considered for the high stability of well-being and the relatively small effects of life quality and deprivation: (a) genetic factors, (b) active influence on and adaptive reaction to living

conditions, (c) multi-causality of well-being, and (d) the simultaneous operation of short-term (parallel) and long-term (sequential) effects of life quality and deprivation on well-being.

(a) *Genetic factors* play a major role in the stability of individual differences in well-being, with heritability coefficients being larger for emotional and psychosomatic components of well-being (mental health) than for cognitive components (life satisfaction) (e.g., Silberg et al., 1999; Lykken, 1999).

(b) Individuals *shape* their environment to make it compatible with their needs and desires (Caspi, 2000; Lerner & Walls, 1999). As a consequence, living conditions that differ between individuals according to *objective* standards of quality differ less in their *subjective* quality because they were actively chosen and shaped by individuals to some extent according to their personal preferences. Furthermore, if control over living conditions is limited, individuals tend to adapt to their environment by accommodating their expectations and goals (Brandstädter & Rothermund, 2002). These and other mechanisms of coping and self-regulation (Boekaerts & Pintrich, 2000) are responsible for the perplexingly low correlation between objective and subjective life quality. However, as our results and results from other studies show, well-being is not entirely independent of living conditions (Diener et al., 1993; Ross et al., 1986; Veenhoven, 1994).

(c) The *multi-causality* of well-being is a third reason for the low effects of life quality and relative deprivation. Behavior and psychological states usually do not depend on a single factor. Rather, most if not all psychological variables that have been studied in the history of empirical psychology were found to be multi-determined. This general law is also true for well-being. Many factors besides the ones we investigated have effects on a person's well-being. For this reason, strong effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation cannot be expected and much stronger effects than the ones we have found would more likely have raised concerns about the validity of our study than warranting the validity of our theoretical conjecture (for a similar argument regarding the effects of fraternal deprivation on protest, see Martin, 1986).

(d) Virtually nothing is known on the speed and pattern of change in our variables. We only know the extent of change during the time lags we considered. We do not know what happened between occasions of measurement. Theoretical predictions on the speed and pattern of change of our variables are difficult to make. In fact, this problem is a very general problem in developmental psychology (Baltes, Reese, Nesselroade, 1988). Appropriate spacing of time points in longitudinal studies requires that the process of change is well understood. This understanding cannot come from theory alone, but requires empirical studies. Often, it is unclear whether the time lags used in longitudinal studies are appropriate for the change processes investigated. As a consequence, change appears to be larger or smaller, faster or slower depending on how the occasions of measurement were chosen on the time dimension. Finding appropriate time lags for the psychological variables of interest is one of the most difficult issues in longitudinal research. The problem of appropriate timing is especially pronounced in *multivariate* studies with *different age* groups because the speed and pattern of change differs between psychological variables and between ages. A given time lag may be more appropriate for one age group than for another, or may correspond better to the speed of change in one variable than another. As a consequence, time lags are often defined more on the basis of intuition and practical considerations than on the basis of firm hypotheses or even knowledge regarding the dynamics of change. This is true for

our study as well. Two-year time lags seemed a reasonable compromise, but, certainly, two years lags are too long for some variables and too short for others. Deviations between the true periods of change and the time lags of the investigation necessarily attenuate longitudinal effects. Most likely, many studies suffer from such an attenuation. For example, Kessler and Mummendey (2002) investigated the effects of negative social identity on coping strategies. They used the same context, the German unification, for testing their causal model. The most important finding of that study was that no longitudinal effects could be identified. On the basis of this result, Kessler and Mummendey (2002) questioned the validity of social identity theory and concluded that the causal links between the constructs of social identity theory can better be conceptualized by a parallel process than by a sequential process. An alternative explanation for the Kessler and Mummendey results is that an improper selection of time lags failed to allow the identification of true effects of negative social identity on coping strategies. In contrast to the Kessler and Mummendey study, longitudinal effects were identified in the current study, but these effects may have been attenuated because the timing of true change in our variables did not match closely with the timing of our design. In fact, the residual correlations among our constructs at time 2 and time 3 (Table 2) may reflect this phenomenon and correspond to what made Kessler and Mummendey (2002) conclude that they identified parallel processes. If this interpretation is appropriate, the true causal effects of egoistic and fraternal deprivation are larger than our estimates, and the unexplained cross-sectional correlations among the constructs at times 2 and 3 reflect the result of causal effects that occurred asynchronously to our time schedule of measurement.

(2) Why did life satisfaction tend to be affected more than did mental health? Again, there is a straightforward statistical answer to that question: As in other research (Ehrhardt, Saris, & Veenhoven, 2000; Lovibond, 1998), differential change in our study was larger for life satisfaction than for mental health; as a consequence, more change variance was available to be explained in the former than in the latter component of well-being. But again, this statistical answer is not fully satisfactory from a substantive point of view. One explanation for the finding at issue draws upon the distinction between cognitive and emotional/psychosomatic components of well-being. Life satisfaction as the cognitive component of well-being may react more sensitively to changes in living conditions, and especially individual living conditions, because these changes can be appraised quickly and transformed directly into judgments of satisfaction. Depression, self-esteem, and psychosomatic symptoms are effected less directly by cognitive appraisals, although these appraisals are important (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). However, effects of appraisals on the emotional and psychosomatic compartments of well-being are probably slower and mediated more by biological processes than are effects of appraisals on satisfaction judgments (Johnson, 1990).

(3) Why did fraternal deprivation affect life satisfaction and mental health equally strongly, whereas individual life quality had a stronger effect on the former than on the latter component of well-being? We begin with the first part of the question. Perhaps, the equal effects of fraternal deprivation on both well-being measures was due to the simultaneous operation of two mechanisms, one of which implies a higher effect of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction whereas the other of which implies a higher effect of fraternal deprivation on mental health. (a) A stronger effect of fraternal deprivation on life satisfaction as the *cognitive* component of well-being could have been expected because fraternal deprivation was defined as the difference between two *cognitions*, an appraisal (*IS*) and a judgment (*OUGHT*). (b) A stronger effect of fra-

ternal deprivation on mental health could have been expected on the basis of the mediating variables we have assumed. Negative emotion and self-esteem threat are theoretically closer to the mental health construct than to the life satisfaction construct. Our results may reflect the fact that both mechanisms were effective: Appraisals of the collective living conditions in united Germany probably have an impact primarily on the cognitive component of well-being, and the repeated experience of negative emotion and self-esteem threat seems to impair primarily the emotional component of well-being.

Turning to the second part of our question, why did individual life quality have a larger effect on life satisfaction than on mental health, whereas the effects on both well-being components were equal in size for fraternal deprivation? This pattern may reflect differences in the extent of psychological overlap among the constructs in the sense of Brunswik's (1956) lens model. Individual life quality and life satisfaction refer, by definition of the constructs and the measurement instruments used, to the *self*, whereas fraternal deprivation refers to the *group*. Individual life quality and life satisfaction share a common focus (self) and a common theme (life quality), whereas fraternal deprivation and life satisfaction only share a common theme (life quality) but differ in focus (group, self).

So far, our discussion has been general in the sense that individual differences in the effects and in the underlying mechanisms of our causal model were not considered. In other words, we have considered only main effects and have not taken into account any moderator variables. Many moderators are theoretically conceivable and some of them have been mentioned earlier. Considering moderators is theoretically attractive and relevant for our earlier discussion on effect sizes. This is true because the effect sizes we have found are *averages* across a wide range of *conditional* effects with the individual score profile on the moderators being the condition. Effect sizes will be larger for individuals with high scores on moderators that amplify the effects of individual life quality and fraternal deprivation (risk factors) and lower for individuals with high scores on moderators that buffer these affect on well-being (protective factors). What moderators should be considered that operate in either the first or the second way? A first group of candidates consists of variables that are known to be general vulnerability factors, such as hardiness (Kobasa, 1979), or that affect the likelihood of coping success (Skinner, 1995). For example, individuals differ in their preferences for assimilative versus accommodative coping strategies and these strategies can be adaptive or maladaptive depending on the specific circumstances. Some individuals give up goals when these turn unrealistic whereas others adhere to expectations rigidly even if odds are clearly against their realization (Brandtstädter & Rothermund, 2002; Kuhl, 1992). Further, individuals differ in their belief in self-efficacy and control (Bandura, 1997, Skinner, 1995) and, as a consequence, in their optimism (Chang, 1998), and also in how they react to relative deprivation (Crosby, 1976). Last but not least, individuals differ in various identity management strategies that have been described earlier (e.g., Kessler & Mummendey, 2001, 2002; Mummendey, Kessler et al., 1999; Mummendey, Klink et al., 1999; Schmitt & Maes, 2002). Each of these coping strategies is a potential moderator that might influence the effect of deprivation on well-being. It will therefore not only be an important task for future research to test the mediating mechanisms of the effect of fraternal deprivation on well-being but also the moderators on which the strength of this effect depends.

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