

Differences in Young Adults' Relationship to Fathers in Gothenburg, Milan and Munich

YAGISS

Young Adults in Germany, Italy, Sweden and Spain
Life Design of Young Adults ages 20 to 30 in Munich, Milan, Gothenburg, Stockholm, and Barcelona between Vocational Training, Job and Family

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CONTENT

- Young adults' relationship to parents
- The YAGISS-Study: Method and Data
- A) Are there qualitative differences in the relationship to parents? Analysis of MITA and NRI dimensions
- B) Are there quantitative differences in young adults' relationship to fathers compared to mothers and compared by country?

Young Adults' Relationship to Parents

Early adulthood

➤ important: developmental tasks like family formation, starting a career, individuation in relationship to parents (Havighurst, 1950; Newman & Newman, 1987; Olbrich & Brüderl, 1998; Schmidtchen, 1992)

➤ problematic: extended economic dependence, prolonged co-residence (Goldschneider & DaVanzo, 1989; Graber & Dubas, 1996; Reitzle, 1999; Scabini, 2006)

→ Development of relationship to parents?
Especially little is known about **relationship to fathers**.

Theory

Individuation in Young Adults' Relationship to Parents

➤ Development of autonomy while maintaining relatedness (Allen et al., 1994; Blos, 1966; Walper 2003; Youniss & Smollar, 1985).

- **Relatedness:** sympathy, loyalty, mutual support
- **Autonomy:** becoming independent from thoughts and intentions of others
 - emotional autonomy
 - autonomy of behavior
 - cognitive autonomy
 - economic autonomy

☞ **Changes in Parental Control and Offspring Self-Regulation required**

➤ Individuation is a developmental task in adolescence as well as in early adulthood

Theory

Young Adults' Relationship to **Father...**

... differs from relationship to mother (Becker-Stoll, 2000; Berger & Fendt, 2005; Buhl, 2000; Laursen & Collins, 1994; Papastefanou, 1997; Youniss & Smollar, 1985):

➤ MOTHER

- higher physical presence
- stronger feeling of closeness
- more conflicts

➤ FATHER

- experienced as more distant
- more important for exploration and autonomy

Theory

Young Adults' Relationships: **Cultural differences**

- age, destination, reasons of **home-leaving** and economic circumstances: mediterranean vs. nordic countries (Bernardi & Nazio, 2006; Rusconi, 2006; Iacovou, 2002; Schizzerotto, 2003; Vogel 2003; Mills, 2006)
- “family welfare regime” with respective patterns like “**famiglia lunga**” in Italy vs. “institutional welfare state” in Sweden (Berthoud & Iacovou, 2003; Esping-Andersen, 1990; Vogel, 2003)
- In Italy:
 - satisfaction of young adults depends on mother's central role
 - Over-investigation in mother-child-relationships (Buhl, 2000; Laursen & Collins, 1994)
- ➔ **Differences of quality** of young adults' relationship to parents/fathers?
(*Structure of dimensions may differ between countries*)

Theory

Research Questions

Methodological Issues: Assessing Individuation as an cross-cultural comparison:

➤ A: Analysis of MITA and NRI Dimensions

- (1) MITA dimensions compared across countries
- (2) MITA dimensions: father in comparison to mother
- (3) NRI dimensions compared across countries
- (4) NRI dimensions: father in comparison to mother

➤ B: Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father

- (5) ... in comparison to mother
- (6) ... as compared across countries

Research Questions

YAGISS

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The YAGISS-Study

The YAGISS-Study: Method and Data

	Munich	Milan	Gothenburg	Total
N	547	572	202	1321
Students	59.0% (N=322)	38.1% (N=218)	93.5% (N=188)	61.4% (N=728)
Mean Age	24.44	25.02	23.96	24.62
Female	58.6% (N=320)	55.6% (N=318)	69.7% (N=140)	59.0% (N= 778)
Co-residing with Parents	29.1% (N=159)	81.3% (N=465)	14.9% (N=30)	49.5% (N=654)

The YAGISS-Study

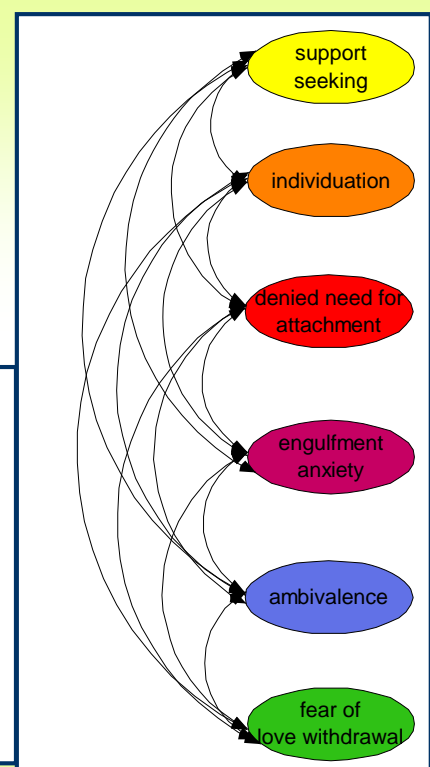
Munich Individuation Test of Adolescence

(MITA; Walper 1997, 1998)

- Based on *Separation-Individuation Test of Adolescence* (SITA; Levine, Green, & Millon, 1986; Levine & Saintonge, 1993), strongly revised
- Includes 6 scales (successful individuation; specific individuation problems)
- Similar versions for individuation RE: mother, father, best friend, romantic partner; slightly adapted version for young adults

The six original MITA-Dimensions

- **Support Seeking**
- **Individuation**
- **Denied Need for Attachment**
- **Engulfment Anxiety***
- **Ambivalence**
- **Fear of Love Withdrawal**



*) ~ being afraid that parents invade my private sphere

(1) MITA Dimensions Compared across Countries

AMOS/ CFA: slightly different structure of dimensions:

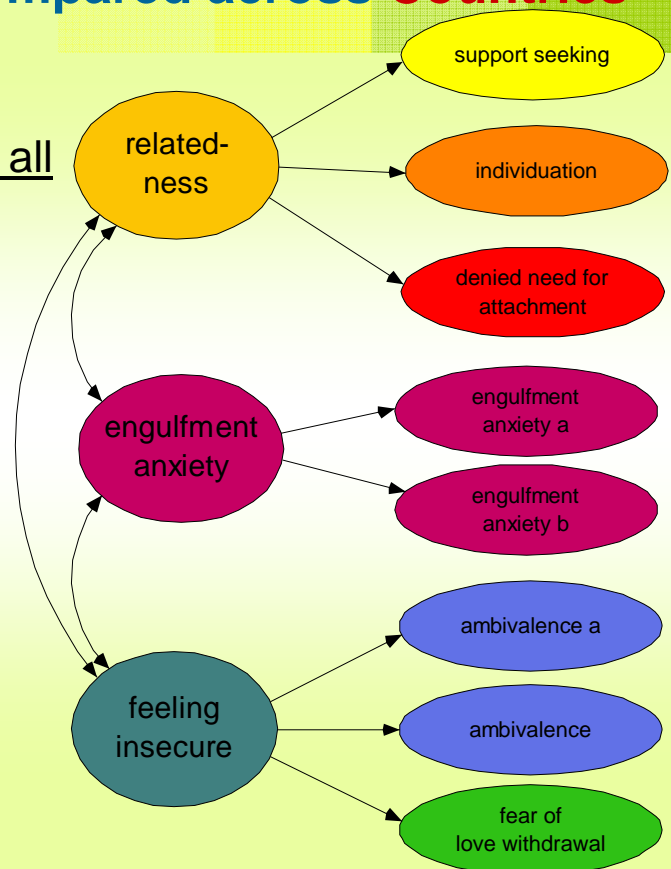
<u>In Milan:</u>	<u>In Munich:</u>	<u>In Gothenburg:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ relatedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ support seeking ➤ Individuation ➤ denied need for attachment ➤ engulfment anxiety/excited ➤ engulfment anxiety/worried & lack of self disclosure (part of ambivalence) ➤ ambivalence ➤ fear of love withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ relatedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ support seeking ➤ Individuation ➤ denied need for attachment ➤ engulfment anxiety ➤ ambivalence ➤ fear of love withdrawal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ relatedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ support seeking ➤ Individuation ➤ denied need for attachment ➤ engulfment anxiety ➤ lack of self disclosure (only to father) ➤ ambivalence ➤ fear of love withdrawal

MITA

(1) MITA Dimensions Compared across Countries

The new structure of MITA dimensions for comparisons of all 3 cities:

- **Relatedness**
- **Engulfment Anxiety**
- **Feeling Insecure**



MITA

(2) MITA Dimensions: Father in Comparison to **Mother**

Cronbach's Alpha (Total / Munich / Milan / Gothenburg)

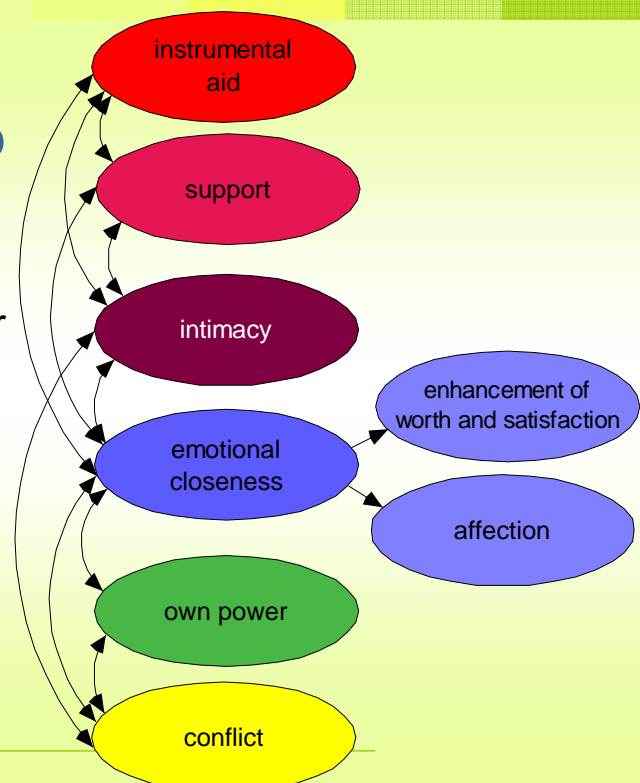
	<u>Mother:</u>	<u>Father:</u>
➤ Relatedness	(.83/ .86/ .84/ .77)	(.88/ .90/ .87/ .87)
➤ Engulfment Anxiety	(.82/ .84/ .78/ .76)	(.78/ .81/ .73/ .71)
➤ Feeling Insecure	(.76/ .76/ .71/ .62)	(.77/ .78/ .72/ .71)
N	(1321/ 547/ 572/ 202)	

MITA

(3) NRI Dimensions Compared across **Countries**

Network of Relationship Inventory (NRI)

- based on Furman & Buhrmester (1985)
- German Version based on Wittmann, Helm, Buhl & Noack (2000)



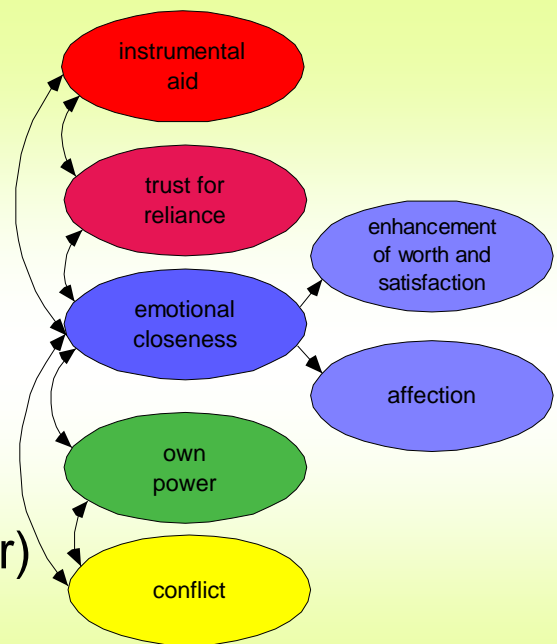
NRI

(3) NRI Dimensions Compared across Countries

Support & Intimacy
 → *Trust for Reliance*

Confirmative Factor Analysis:

- ☑ Munich (mother/father)
- ☑ Milan (mother/father)
- ☑ Gothenburg (mother/father)



NRI

(4) NRI Dimensions: Father in Comparison to Mother

Cronbach's Alpha (Total / Munich / Milan /Gothenburg)

	<u>Mother:</u>	<u>Father:</u>
➤ Instrumental Aid	(.67/ .70/ .67/ .59)	(.69/ .71/ .69/ .62)
➤ Trust for Reliance	(.90/ .88/ .91/ .88)	(.87/ .86/ .88/ .88)
➤ Emotional Closeness	(.92/ .93/ .90/ .92)	(.94/ .94/ .93/ .95)
➤ Power-Balance	(.75/ .78/ .73/ .74)	(.80 /.83/ .80/ .72)
➤ Conflict	(.91/ .90/ .92/ .82)	(.91/ .88/ .91/ .86)

N

(1321/ 547/ 572/ 202)

NRI

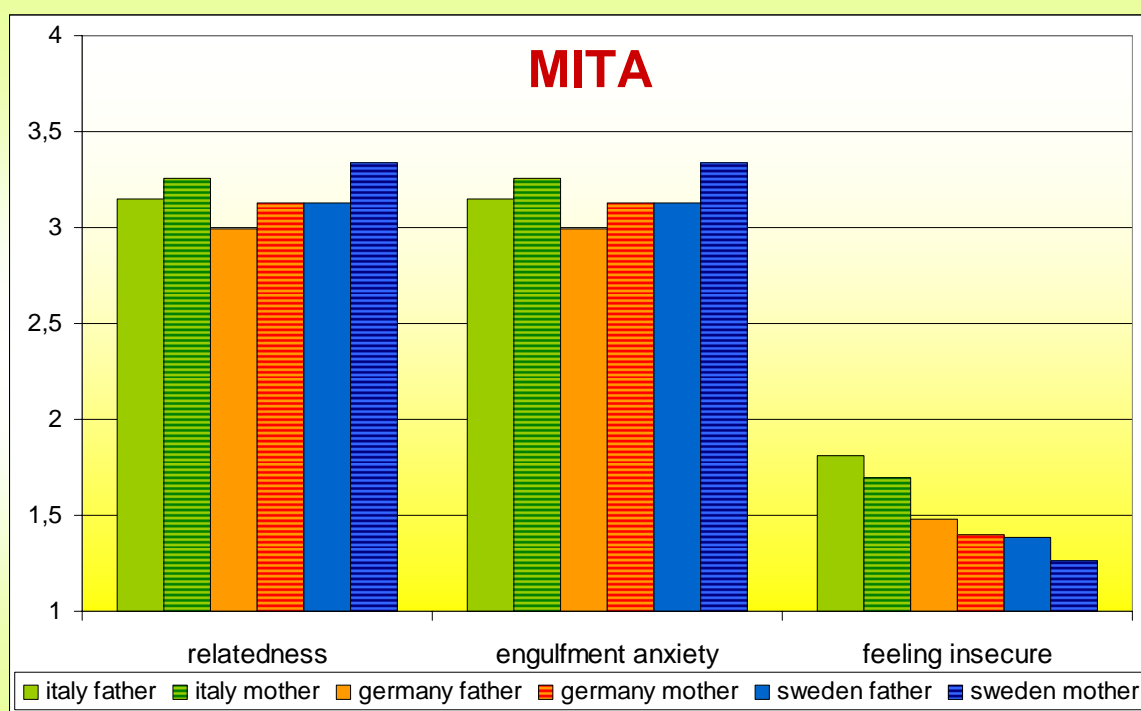
Research Questions

Methodological Issues: Assessing Individuation as an cross-cultural comparison:

- A: Analysis of MITA and NRI Dimensions
- B: Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father
 - (5)... in comparison to mother
 - (6)... as compared across countries

Research Questions

(5/6) Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father in Comparison to Mother, as Compared across Countries: **MITA**



MITA

(5/6) Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father in Comparison to Mother, as Compared across Countries: **MITA**

(5) ... father in comparison to mother

mother < father

➤ Feeling Insecure

mother > father

➤ Relatedness

➤ Engulfment Anxiety

(6) ... compared across countries

Italy > Germany > Sweden

➤ Feeling Insecure

Italy > Germany & Sweden > Germany

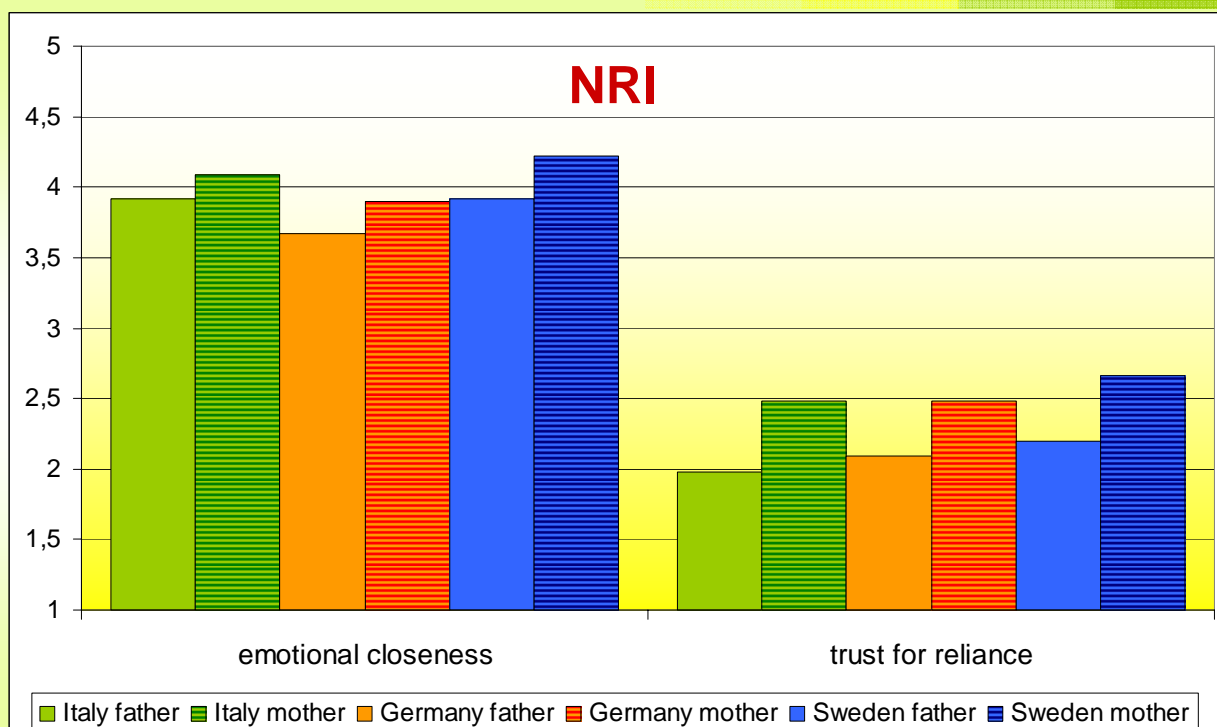
➤ Relatedness

➤ Engulfment Anxiety

All significant results

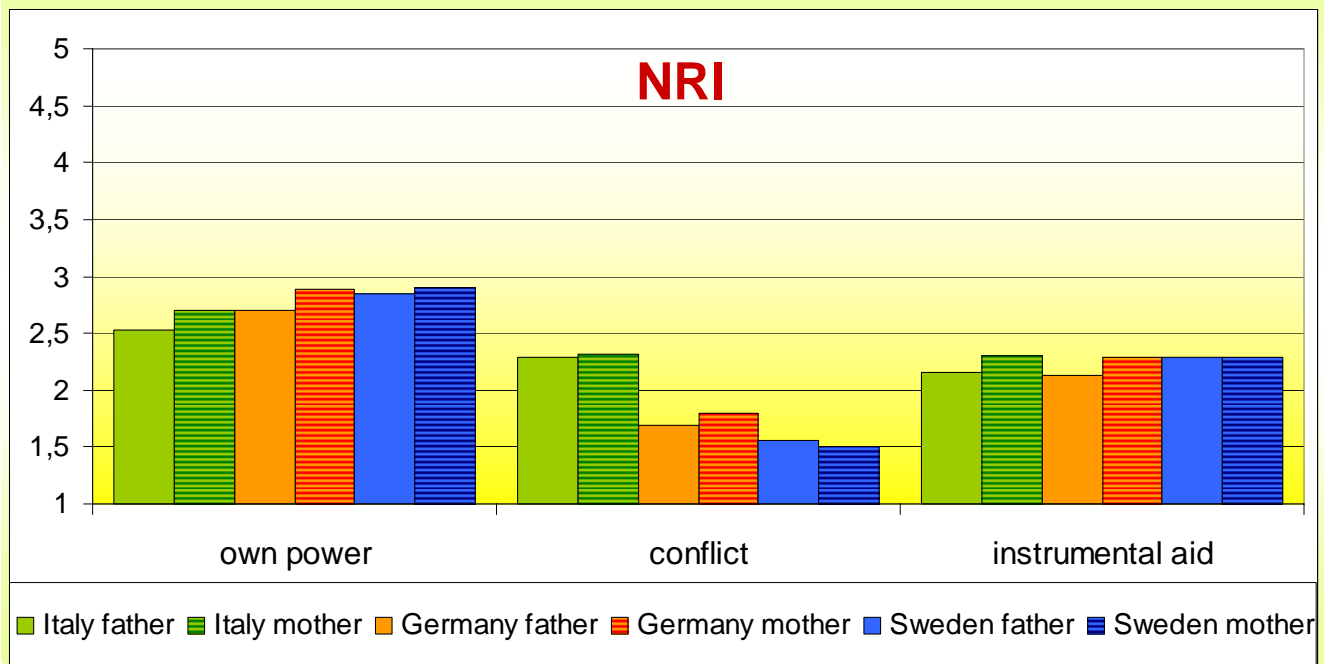
MITA

(5/6) Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father in Comparison to Mother, as Compared across Countries



NRI

(5/6) Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father in Comparison to Mother, as Compared across Countries



NRI

(5/6) Analysis of Young Adults' Relationship to Father in Comparison to Mother, as Compared across Countries: NRI

(5) ... father in comparison to mother

	Italy	Germany	Sweden
➤ Instrumental Aid	f<m	f<m	f<m
➤ Trust for Reliance	f<m	f<m	f<m
➤ Emotional Closeness	f<m	f<m	f<m
➤ Own Power	f<m	f<m	f=m
➤ Conflict	f=m	f<m	f=m

(6) ... compared across countries

	Italy (I) / Germany (G) / Sweden(S)
➤ Instrumental Aid	I<S G<S
➤ Trust for Reliance	I<G I<S
➤ Emotional Closeness	I>G S>G
➤ Own Power	I<G<S
➤ Conflict	I>G>S

All significant results

NRI

Summary (1)

- 1./2. Individuation in relationship to parents is slightly different between the three cities and between relationship to mother and relationship to father.

Therefore we modified the structure of the MITA dimensions for comparisons between countries: there are now three main dimensions: relatedness, engulfment anxiety and feeling insecure.

- 3./4. The structure of NRI dimensions is similar compared by country and parent, but slightly modified.

Dimensions are instrumental aid, trust for reliance, emotional closeness, own power and conflict.

Summary |

Summary (2)

5. In relationship to fathers, compared to mothers, young adults' relationship is less close and intimate, but feelings of insecurity are also higher.

The relationship to mothers is closer, therefore we have higher feelings of relatedness, but also more conflicts.

Summary |

Summary (3)

6. Differences of young adults' relationships to fathers between the three cities
 - In Italy, relationships are more intense with higher feelings of relatedness but also more conflicts and anxieties.
 - In Germany, relationship to father is defined by lower feelings of closeness and security on the one hand, but on the other hand also only little conflicts and anxieties.
 - In Sweden, young adults have highest feelings of security, of own power and also high feelings of relatedness, and only little conflict. But they have some anxieties.

Summary

Discussion

- Data Collection is still going on, this are only preliminary results.
- Little but significant differences, all pointing in the same direction.
- *The smaller number of participants (nearly all of them students) must be taken into account, when discussing the results of young people from Gothenburg.*

Discussion

Future Plans

- We still will have to do more analyses, controlling for several variables and predictors (gender of participant, living situation of participant, ...) .
- At the moment, age seems to have no influence, but we have to look at this more closely.
- For getting a wider view of the picture: Analyses of groups of individuals: Cluster Analysis

THANK YOU!