

# PERSONALITY AND DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE

## The Impact of the Big Five on Preferences for Justice Ideologies

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*Abstract:* Attitudes concerning distributive justice are usually explained by social structure, neglecting personal characteristics entirely. To analyze the importance of personality for the formation of preferences for justice ideologies, a theoretical framework is set up, combining the primary ideology approach and value research. Predicting internal and external causes for the impact of traits, this framework is tested using German data from the International Social Justice Project (ISJP) 2006. The empirical findings show that the Big Five have a crucial impact on preferences for justice ideologies, although different effects can be observed for East and West Germany. Largely, the results support the theoretical framework; however, further fine adjustments are necessary.

## **1 Introduction**

The establishment and conservation of distributive justice is one of the basic goals of modern societies. The conceptions of social justice, however, can diverge widely. Social justice research analyzes causes and effects of justice attitudes in the population. One crucial finding is that justice attitudes are expressions of underlying normative belief systems, referred to as *justice ideologies*. Another crucial finding is one person can hold several, contradictory justice ideologies (Wegener & Liebig 1993). The *split consciousness theory* (Kluegl 1989) and the *primary ideology approach* (Wegener 1992, Liebig & Wegener 1995) attempt to explain this phenomenon. Both approaches assume that there is a prevalent justice ideology, which is anchored in the culture of a society on the one hand, and on the other hand competing justice ideologies held by specific subpopulations. The effect of *cultural* and *structural* effects on the preference for justice ideologies is relatively well explored.

To date, however, no attention has been paid to the impact of personality traits, although the assumption that personality determines the preference for ideologies is not new: in the middle of the last century, a team around Adorno analyzed the influence of personality on receptivity for fascistic ideology (Adorno et al. 1950). After a period of alienation, sociological interest in individual value orientations and traits has increased in the past few years (Hechter 2000, Hitlin und Pilivian 2004, Lindenberg 2006). On the one hand, controlling for individual characteristics can explain unobserved heterogeneity, while on the other hand the combined effect of personality and social environment is instructive. The study of traits is of interest to social justice research because it explores determinants of the homogeneity and heterogeneity of justice attitudes in a given society (Liebig 1997: 156).

This paper analyzes to what extent traits in the form of the *Big Five* have an effect on the preference for justice ideologies and how this effect can be explained. For this purpose, the concept of personality will be integrated into the primary ideology approach: a theoretical framework will be set up through a combination with findings of value research, describing

the personality-dependent formation of preferences for justice ideologies as an interaction of an affection for distributive outcomes and the acceptance of social institutions. Using multiple group analysis, the theoretical scheme will be tested on the East and West German data of the International Social Justice Project (ISJP) 2006. The paper will open by illustrating *justice ideologies*, the *primary ideology approach* and the *Big Five*.

## 2 Theoretical foundations

### 2.1 Illustration of the relevant concepts

#### 2.1.1 *Justice ideologies in social justice research*

Unlike political philosophy, which formulates normative ideas of distributive justice (Rawls 1971, Walzer 1983), social justice research analyzes what people perceive as just or unjust, what triggers their justice perceptions, and which consequences arise from their justice perceptions (Jasso & Wegener 1997). In this context, research on *principal justice* deals with preferences for certain regulations for the distribution of scarce goods (Wegener 1999).

Early approaches conceptualize order-related justice attitudes as orientations towards equality and inequality (Robinson & Bell 1978). This is problematic because equality is understood as equal opportunities on one occasion, but as equal distribution on another (Liebig 1997: 156). An improvement is the connection of justice orientations with research on social inequality, which results in the two justice ideologies of *egalitarianism* and *individualism* (Lane 1986, d'Anjou et al. 1995, Haller 1989). Justice ideologies are systems of normative ideas that influence the perception and the social behavior of individuals (Liebig 1997: 157). While *egalitarianism* or *political justice* prefers distributions according to the principles of equality and need and regards the welfare state as the instance responsible for the establishment of distributive justice, *individualism* or *market justice* emphasizes the principle of merit and believes in the self-regulating functions of the market.

In reference to Miller (1976), Wegener and Liebig (1993) note that a dichotomous conceptualization of justice ideologies is not sufficient. Apart from market processes and government interventions, people can regard distributive outcomes as just that are based on claims due to status or tradition. As a consequence, they link social justice research to the *cultural theory* developed by Douglas (1982), which states that attitudes and value orientations are decisively affected by the social context (Wegener & Liebig 1993). People aim to minimize inconsistencies between their beliefs and the social context and to justify advantageous actions through

their world-view. According to the *grid-group-paradigm*, there are two main factors that restrict free action (Douglas 1982: 190ff): the grid-dimension, which refers to the extent of hierarchy and regulations of a social configuration, and the group dimension, which refers to the degree of social incorporation, that is the extent to which individuals are part of a social entity. A combination of both dimensions results in four ideal types with specific world-views: *egalitarians*, *individualists*, *hierarchists*, and *isolated*. The corresponding justice ideologies are *egalitarianism*, *individualism*, *ascriptivism*, and *fatalism* (Wegener & Liebig 1993). While the first two are described above, *ascriptivism* prefers distributions according to accredited rights (standing, guild, profession), whereas *fatalism* is an expression of a resignative negation of social justice.

### 2.1.2 *The primary ideology approach*

Empirical evidence for the existence of all four justice ideologies has been found in several studies (Wegener & Liebig 1993, Liebig & Wegener 1995, Liebig 1997, Wegener 2003, i.a.). In this context, it was not only established that all four types exist in every society, but also that one and the same person can hold several contradictory justice ideologies. The *split-consciousness theory* states that individuals may not become aware of obvious tensions between ideologies because they are located in different regions of the consciousness (Kluegel & Smith 1986, Kluegel 1989, Kluegel et al. 1995). According to the approach, in each society the most privileged class propagates a *dominant ideology*, which justifies social inequality. At the same time there are *challenging beliefs* held by subpopulations such as the working class, which question the legitimacy of social inequality. Whereas the dominant ideology is imparted by institutions of socialization, challenging beliefs derive from everyday life.

Liebig and Wegener's (1995) *primary ideology approach* adopts elements of *split-consciousness theory* but does not believe in the idea of an elitist group that acts as a unit. Again, one central, *primary ideology* is confronted with several alternative, *secondary ideologies*. The first distinctive criterion is merely quantitative: the *primary ideology* is shared by the majority of the population, while *secondary ideologies* are held by specific subgroups. The second criterion is a qualitative one: while *primary ideologies* can be put down to the cultural background and represent the foundation for the legitimation of a society, *secondary ideologies* are expressions of interests and react to social, political and economic conditions (Liebig & Wegener 1995: 269). A number of studies have shown that justice ideologies stem from cultural as well as structural factors (Lane 1986, Haller 1989, Wegener 1992, Liebig & Wegener 1995, i.a.).

Secondary ideologies are *rational value orientations* (Parsons 1971) based on *position effects* (Boudon 1988). It is much more difficult to reconstruct the formation and conservation of primary ideologies. To accomplish this, justice ideologies have been linked in the past with three different theoretical traditions: a) with *cultural theory*, according to which the formation is a reaction of individuation and incorporation within a society (Wegener & Liebig 1993, Wegener 1999), b) with *path dependency*, which regards the formation as a result of historic developments caused by cultural values at a certain point in time (Liebig & Wegener 1995), and c) with *welfare state theory*, which understands the formation of primary ideologies as a result of normative value orientations implemented in the welfare state of a society (Lippl 2003, Mühleck 2008). These three approaches do not negate each other, but rather start at different points and imply different assumptions about the nature of primary ideologies. In contrast to the grid-group paradigm and welfare state theory, which provide structuralist explanations, path dependency is a culturalist approach, which has a broader range but is based on a number of assumptions: Whereas changes in primary justice ideologies can be ascribed from a structuralist point of view to changing conditions, path dependency finds it hard to formulate an explanation. As differences between societies cannot be attributed definitely to either structural or cultural factors, there has not yet been an empirical clarification of causes. Examining the trends in preferences for justice ideologies in East and West Germany in the period from 1991 to 2000, for example (see Wegener 2000), one might reason that significant differences in the beginning support the structuralist approaches. The process of gradual adjustment between both parts of the country that has taken place in the meantime could be interpreted as an effect of common, deeply rooted cultural values, and also as a reaction to changing social conditions. The following section is based on theoretical considerations and attempts to localize primary ideology and integrate the concept of personality. Before doing so, the paper introduces the *Big Five* personality approach.

### 2.1.3 *The 'Big Five' as an approach to describing personality*

The consideration of individual characteristics within social sciences is connected with the expectance of raising the explanatory power of conceptualized models due to a control of inter-individual differences among persons with the same socio-cultural background. In this context, the *Big Five* approach has gained interest in recent years (see Rammstedt et al. 2004, Lang & Lüdtke 2005). This approach claims to measure five crucial personality traits that allow to differentiate between individuals. The approach understands personality on the basis of Allport (1949), as “the dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his unique adjustments to his environment” (Allport 1949: 48). It is

assumed that traits are medium-term characteristics, which influence the perception and the behavior of individuals (Costa & McCrae 1985, 1992, Ostendorf & Angleitner 2004, Asendorpf 1996). A number of studies have proven that the development of the *Big Five* is caused by genetic as well as social factors, with the genetic part of variance placed at between 42% and 70% using the twin method and between 14% and 46% using the adoption method (Asendorpf 1996: 248ff). According to the *dynamic-interactionist paradigm*, long-term changes in personality traits triggered by a process of *dynamic person-environment-interaction* can occur during the whole life course (Asendorpf 1996). Amongst other factors, *critical life events* can cause personality developments in adulthood (Asendorpf 1996: 279ff). Critical life events are experiences in the life course that interfere with the person-environment fit (Holmes & Rahe 1967, Filipp 1981). Besides extreme incidents such as the death of a close relative or divorce, minor events such as a change of school or move are also examples of critical life events. The *Big Five* are the personality traits *conscientiousness*, *openness for new experiences*, *neuroticism*, *agreeableness*, and *extraversion*, which each consist of six facets and can be observed in concrete attributes in everyday life (see Ostendorf & Angleitner 2004: 34ff). Figure 1 presents the *Big Five*, their facets, and their observable attributes.

>>> Figure 1 <<<

Several scholars have linked the five personality traits with attitude research, whereas the recent focus has been on political attitudes. Iser and Schmidt (2005) find that the *Big Five* do not contribute to the explanation of preferences for political issue orientations if one controls for value orientations, while Rammstedt (2007) detects that openness is connected with a stronger consideration of international political interests (in contrast to national interests) and that agreeable persons perceive society as more open and permeable than non-agreeable persons. Schumann (2002) shows that people prefer and reject politicians and political parties due to ascribed personality traits, which he puts down to the attraction paradigm. Some findings are also available on the relation between the *Big Five* and justice attitudes, although various justice conceptions are used. The *belief in a just world* concept (BJW) from Lerner (1980) for example, has been correlated with the five personality traits in several studies. Whereas Heaven and Connors (1988) report a negative effect of neuroticism and among women a positive effect of extraversion, Wolfradt and Dalbert (2002) find a negative impact of openness and a positive impact of conscientiousness. Within a study about workplace retaliation, Skarlicki et al. (1999) observe a negative relation between neuroticism and per-

ceived procedural justice and a positive relation between agreeableness and perceived procedural justice, while neither trait has an effect on perceived distributive justice. Wrenn (2005) analyzes the impact of the *Big Five* on the procedural justice perception of employment testing. She arrives at the conclusion that extraversion increases all aspects of perceived procedural justice, while the other traits are correlated with single aspects.

Normally, one searches in vain for explanations of mechanisms of action and the relation between personality traits and attitudes respectively. This lack of theory enforces the impression that the findings are unconnected empirical fragments, and do not show a consistent picture. Up to now, there have been no findings about the relation between the *Big Five* and attitudes concerning distributive justice in society.

## 2.2 An integration of personality in the primary ideology approach

### 2.2.1 *An extension of the primary ideology approach*

In the following, the primary ideology approach will be the object of a closer examination and extension. In this context, the localization of ideology types within the societal frame on the one hand and the integration of personality on the other hand take center stage. Because the primary ideology approach shows an obvious affinity to Parsons' structural functionalism, it will be argued within this framework. Parsons defines ideologies as "a system of beliefs, held in common by the members of a collectivity, i.e., a society, or a sub-collectivity of one [...] which is oriented to the evaluative integration of the collectivity, by interpretation of the empirical nature of the collectivity and of the situation in which it is placed, the process by which it has developed to its given state, the goals to which its members are collectively oriented, and their relation to the future course of events" (Parsons 1991: 349). In ideologies, cognitive beliefs about the truth are combined with beliefs about rightfulness. The declared aim is the welfare of the collective.

Parsons also differentiates between two types of ideology (see Parsons 1991: 354ff): *common ideologies*, which are the institutionalized and established beliefs of a given society, legitimize the basic value orientations of this society, with the primary function of integrating the social system on the one hand; and *sub-ideologies* or *counter ideologies* held by societal subgroups, which are challenging interpretations of the basic value orientations, seek legitimation, and have the primary function of attaining specific goals to increase the welfare of the subgroup. While *common ideologies* correspond to *primary ideologies*, *sub-ideologies* correspond to *secondary ideologies*.

If one arranges the components of the primary ideology approach within the subsystems of the AGIL paradigm,<sup>1</sup> the following picture unfolds: On the level of the *cultural system*, abstract value orientations exist resulting from the cultural tradition of a society. Through the process of internalization, those values whose primary function is the foundation of meaning are shared by almost all members of society. On this level, the values do not exist in a systematized form, i.e. they do not exist in the form of ideologies.

The *primary ideology*, an interpretation of the shared value orientations, can be located within the *social system*. It is anchored in the institutions of the society and has the functions of integrating and legitimating the society. The primary ideology is internalized through socialization in a specific societal framework and is thus shared by the majority of the population. Through the process of internalization, it is transformed into a normative value system. The localization of the primary ideology within the institutions of a society means a renunciation of the idea of an everlasting justice ideology. A change of institutions always implies a change of primary ideology: e.g. in feudal societies the primary ideology is ascriptivism, in modern western societies it is individualism, and in socialist societies it is egalitarianism.<sup>2</sup>

*Secondary ideologies* held by societal subgroups can be located within the *personal system*. These are an alternative and challenging interpretation of shared value orientations of the society, with the primary function of enhancing the social position of the group members. This goal orientation turns secondary ideologies into rational value orientations.

Thus, the fourth field, representing the *organismic system* whose primary function is adaptation, remains unallocated. This subsystem is the place of primary human features and skills where the interaction with the physical environment takes place (Parsons 1971: 13). This is the suitable position for the integration of personality in the primary ideology approach. Personality traits are partly genetically determined and influence the perception and the behavior of individuals (Asendorpf 1996). Several findings show that they are dispositions for the acceptance of values and attitudes. Below it will be pointed out how personality traits in form of the Big Five influence the preference for primary and secondary ideologies.

### 2.2.2 *The Big Five as predictors for preferences for justice ideologies*

To explicate the effect of the Big Five on preferences for justice ideologies, the concepts *traits*, *values* and *attitudes* will be distinguished and brought into a causal relation. Through a

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<sup>1</sup> The AGIL paradigm is named after the four system functions *adaptation*, *goal attainment*, *integration* und *latency*, which (in the order of their mention) belong to the four subsystems *organismic system*, *personal system*, *social system*, and *cultural system* (see Parsons 1971).

<sup>2</sup> This is a starkly simplified example. As mentioned above, the justice ideologies are ideal types, which do not exist in pure form. In fact, institutions of western societies differ in their weighting of individualist, egalitarian, and ascriptivist elements. In comparative analysis, one usually has to deal with relative differences.

combination with the primary ideology approach, a theoretical framework will be set up to enable the derivation of concrete hypotheses.

In contrast to values and attitudes, *traits* are relatively stable, partly genetic dispositions, which describe how people are and can be negative or positive (McCrae & Costa 1990, Roccas et al. 2002, Hitlin & Piliavin 2004). *Values* are primarily positive, cognitive, trans-situational representations of desirable goals, which serve to justify own behavior and judge the behavior of others (Schwartz 1992, Roccas et al. 2002, Hitlin & Piliavin 2004). *Attitudes*, in contrast, are expressions of abstract values and are positive or negative evaluations of concrete social objects (Hitlin & Piliavin 2004).

There is basic agreement on the causality between values and attitudes: The latter are expressions of the former (Rokeach 1973, Klages & Herbert 1983, Sniderman et al. 1991).<sup>3</sup> The empirical relation between values and attitudes has been demonstrated in several studies (Rokeach 1973: 95ff, Kristiansen & Zanna 1991, Maio & Olson 1994, Maio & Olson 2000, i.a.). In contrast, scholars are still disagreed about the causality between traits and values (see Roccas et al. 2002). Are they interacting constructs that stand side by side or does one concept influence the other unilaterally? According to the dynamic-interactionist paradigm, it cannot be ruled out that values influence traits, because individuals aspire to act consistently in regard to their value orientations and are able to change their behavior if necessary. Nevertheless, it is argued here that the influence of personality traits on values is significantly greater than vice versa. This is explained by the fact that the genetically determined, non-cognitive traits are qua definition more deeply rooted than the socialized, cognitive value orientations (q.v. Rokeach 1973, Luk & Bond 1993, McCrae & Costa 1996). Bem's (1972) *self-perception theory* provides an appropriate explanation of the mechanisms of action. According to the *self-perception theory*, individuals "come to 'know' their own attitudes, emotions, and other internal states partially by inferring them from observations of their own overt behavior and/or the circumstances in which this behavior occurs" (Bem 1972: 2). In doing so, they are "functionally in the same position as an outside observer [...] who must necessarily rely upon those same external cues to infer the individual's inner state" (ibid: 2). Referring to traits and values, that means on the one hand that individuals derive what is important for them from their personality-related behavior. On the other hand, it can be assumed that individuals who feature certain personality traits are eager to hold values that justify their behavior (Roccas et al. 2002). Luk and Bond (1993) concentrate these thoughts: "We hypothesize that an individ-

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<sup>3</sup> With reference to MacIntyre (1981), Van Deth and Scarbrough (1995) point out that attitudes can also have an effect on individual value orientations. In this context, however, they are referring to attitudes located in the social environment of the individual.

ual's personality predisposes him or her to seek out certain end states or goal objects which in turn define what is desirable and should be valued. The stronger personality needs motivate the individual to behave in ways to achieve these end states or goal objects. Cognitive awareness of these preferences is functional in these attempts and is hence reflected in value endorsement" (Luk & Bond 1993: 430). With regard to the relation between the three concepts, it is assumed that traits in form of needs and dispositions influence the preference for abstract, individual value orientations, which find their expression in specific attitudes. Thus, personality traits also have an (indirect) effect on attitudes.

Several studies show empirical evidence for the relation between the Big Five and value orientations (see Herringer 1998, Roccas et al. 2002, Olver & Mooradian 2003, Aluja & García 2004). In these cases, individual values are operationalized by the theoretical model proposed by Schwartz (1992), which distinguishes between ten universal values ordered in a circumplex structure around the two central dimensions *conservation – openness to change* and *self-transcendence – self-enhancement*. Based on findings of Roccas et al. (2002), figure 2 presents the relation between the *Big Five* and the two value dimensions.

>>> Figure 2 <<<

To link personality traits with justice ideologies, conclusions from the relation between the *Big Five* and the two value dimensions are drawn. In this regard, two inherent features of justice ideologies seem to be crucial: the preferred *distributive output* on the one hand and the *ideology type* on the other hand. It can be assumed that persons who favor the value dimension *self-enhancement* (represented by the values *achievement* and *power*) prefer *unequal distributions* of scarce goods according to the principles of merit and status. In contrast, people who favor *self-transcendence* (*universalism, benevolence*) will prefer *equal distributions* according to the principles of equality and need. Individuals who favor *conservation* (*conformity, tradition, security*) will prefer the *primary ideology* anchored in the institutions of society. In contrast, persons who favor *openness to change* (*self-direction, stimulation*) will prefer *secondary ideologies*, which offer an alternative interpretation of the shared values. If one arranges the Big Five according to the preferences for distributive outcomes and the acceptance of the institutions of society, the following pattern emerges (figure 3):

>>> Figure 3 <<<

This theoretical scheme enables the drawing of concrete hypotheses about the preference for justice ideologies on the basis of personality traits for any given society. The predictive power of the scheme will be tested on the basis of West and East Germany.

### 2.2.3 Hypotheses

On the basis of the theoretical scheme, the following four hypotheses are formulated:

- 1.) *The stronger the occurrence of the personality traits conscientiousness, agreeableness and neuroticism, the higher the preference for the primary ideology.*
- 2.) *The stronger the occurrence of the personality traits extraversion and openness, the higher the preference for secondary ideologies.*
- 3.) *The stronger the occurrence of the personality traits extraversion and conscientiousness, the higher the preference for unequal distributions.*
- 4.) *The stronger the occurrence of the personality traits openness, conscientiousness and neuroticism, the higher the preference for equal distributions.*

It is possible that tensions may arise between the hypotheses concerning the ideology type and hypotheses concerning the distributive outcome. Because there is no information available about the weighting of the two dimensions *equal distribution – unequal distribution* and *primary ideology – secondary ideology*, it is assumed that both are independent and of equal importance. This assumption leads to the fifth hypothesis:

- 5.) *If tensions arise between the preference for the ideology type and the preference for the distributive outcome, both preferences cancel each other out.*

To test the hypotheses on the basis of concrete case studies – here West and East Germany – one has to assign the four justice ideologies to the dimension of *equal distribution – unequal distribution* on the one hand, and clarify which ideologies serve as primary ideologies in the given societies on the other hand. The first is simple: Egalitarianism prefers the distribution principles of equality and need and thus aims for equal distributions, while individualism and ascriptivism, which prefer the principles of merit and status respectively, represent legitimations of unequal distributions. As it generally negates the idea of just distribution outcomes, the “passive” justice ideology of fatalism cannot be assigned.

The identification of the primary ideologies is more complicated. As mentioned above, elements of all three “active” justice ideologies are anchored within the institutions of a society. Due to this fact, comparisons are always relative with regard to the similarities and differences between the societies under analysis. That means that the research is always focused on specific components of primary ideologies. If one compares the FRG with the GDR the greatest discrepancy concerns the economic system. The FRG features a (social) market economy

where scarce goods are primarily distributed according to the principle of merit and individualism is the primary ideology. In contrast, in the GDR a socialist planned economy can be found, which aims for equal distribution and holds egalitarianism as the primary ideology. If one were to compare the FRG and the GDR, one could deduce a set of concrete hypotheses on the basis of the five central hypotheses, which are not detailed in full here for lack of space, but are presented graphically in figure 4. However, one has to act on the assumption that the hypotheses set up for the GDR do not apply for today's East Germany. By now, the East Germans have been living within the institutional setting of the FRG for more than 15 years. That means that the people in East Germany have been confronted with a new primary ideology, namely individualism, for a relatively short period. Due to the fact that socialized orientations do not vanish overnight, one can assume that two contradictory systems of beliefs face each other in today's East Germany, which for different reasons are both attributed to the function of the primary ideology: the one because of the socialization background, the other because of the institutional setting. Presumably, this process of replacement will end with acceptance of individualism as the primary ideology in the long run. Empirical findings on the stability of justice ideologies support the assumption that East Germany has been going through a change of ideologies in the course of the transformation. Mühleck and Wegener (2008) detect a significant lower stability of egalitarianism and individualism among the East Germans than among the West Germans, which they regard as an expression of the two competing economic concepts of socialism and the market economy. The assumed coexistence of two quasi-primary belief systems in today's East Germany will be allowed for by treating both egalitarianism and individualism as primary ideologies. This is reflected in some changes of predicted effects in figure 4. As fatalism cannot be assigned on the dimension *equal distribution – unequal distribution*, concrete hypotheses for this justice ideology cannot be derived.<sup>4</sup>

>>> Figure 4 <<<

### **3 Operationalization: data, indicators, and methods**

#### **3.1 Data**

The analysis is based on the German sample of the International Social Justice Project (ISJP) 2006. The ISJP is an international collaborative research project, which works with opinion surveys to study popular beliefs and attitudes on social, economic and political justice. The

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<sup>4</sup> Whether fatalism in terms of the definition can be regarded as a secondary ideology or as an ideology at all will not be discussed here.

fourth wave in 2006 was carried out in Germany, the Czech Republic, Israel and Chile. In Germany the basic population is made up of all persons between 18 and 85 years of age who are entitled to vote, live in private households, and hold German citizenship. The sample was drawn on a disproportional basis<sup>5</sup>; 51% of the 3,059 respondents are female and 77% live in West Germany.

### 3.2 Indicators

The justice ideologies are measured on an 11-item-scale.<sup>6</sup> Egalitarianism, individualism and ascriptivism are represented by three items each and fatalism by two items, in the form of statements concerning distributive justice. The items are valued on a 5-point scale running from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Using a confirmatory factor analysis, four factors can be extracted (see table 1). Despite admitted external loadings, the factor solution indicates a simple structure. The fit indices attest a very good model fit, and the measurement model proves to be stable during the following analysis.

>>> Table 1 <<<

Table A1 in the appendix provides an overview of the independent variables. The Big Five are measured with the BFI-S (Big Five Inventory–SOEP), a 15-item short scale developed for use in surveys (Gerlitz & Schupp 2005). Each trait is represented by three items in the form of self-descriptions, which are valued on a 5-point scale running from “applies perfectly” to “does not apply at all”.<sup>7</sup> A confirmatory factor analysis leads to a 5-factor solution, which indicates a simple structure despite admitted external loadings, and shows a good model fit (see measurement model in table A2 in the appendix). This measurement model is also established as stable during the following analysis. The socialization background is indicated by the information on whether the respondent lived in the FRG or in the GDR in the summer of 1989.

Given that effects of culture and structure on the preference for justice ideologies were found several times, both concepts will be controlled for. Religiousness measured by church attendance frequency is used as an indicator for culture. CASMIN categories for education (see König et al. 1988), quartiles of the household equivalent income (net),<sup>8</sup> and the information as

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<sup>5</sup> The data is divided into the three age groups of 18-34 years, 35-59 years and 60-85 years, each containing around 1,000 cases.

<sup>6</sup> This scale is a modification and extension of an 8-item scale documented in the ZIS handbook of scales (see Stark et al. 2000).

<sup>7</sup> The scales of the indicators for justice ideologies and the Big Five ideologies have been reversed so that low values stand for refusal and high values represent agreement.

<sup>8</sup> In order to avoid a major loss of cases, a dummy “no income information” was added.

to whether the respondent is unemployed (registered) act as structural control variables. In addition, there will be controls for gender and age.

### 3.3 Methods

The study analyzes justice ideologies and the *Big Five*, a set of latent concepts. Structural equation models (SEM) are suited for this purpose. SEM combines elements of factor analysis (measurement model) with elements of regression analysis (causal model). The advantage over regression models with extracted factor scores consists in the simultaneous estimation of the relations between all variables, minimizing the differences between assumed and observed variance-covariance-matrix (Bollen 1989, Byrne 2001). A multiple group analysis (MGA) will be used to research the hypothesized effects of socialization, dividing the sample into West Germans and East Germans. MGA allows for simultaneous estimations broken down into predefined groups (Bollen 1989: 355ff). All indicators of the latent constructs feature an ordinal measurement level. Hence, the coefficients will be estimated using WLSMV estimators (weighted least-squares, mean and variance-adjusted), which are suitable for categorical, ordinal, as well as asymmetric and skew distributions (Finney & DiStefano 2006: 292ff). For the sake of completeness, fatalism will be included in the measurement model and the SEM, allowing for better estimations of the relations. Because of a lack of hypothesis (see above), the results for the “passive” justice ideology will neither be presented nor discussed. The analysis will be weighted to account for the disproportional sampling (see Lipsmeier 1999).

## 4 Empirical findings

The results of the multiple group analysis are presented in table 2. The model fit is acceptable and does not improve if factor loadings and thresholds are released. The structural control variables reflect the impact of socio-economic status on the preference for justice ideologies, displaying partly different effects of education and economic resources.

>>> Table 2 <<<

The effects prove to be stable after adding the Big Five (see table A3 in the appendix), while the explanatory power of the models increases significantly; the increase in variance explanation averages nine percentage points. At twenty percentage points, the explanation of individualism in East Germany reveals the strongest growth, while the prediction of egalitarianism in East Germany shows the weakest increase at five percentage points. A look at the coefficients confirms what the gain in explanatory power already indicates: The Big Five have

strong effects on the preference for justice ideologies. An examination of the fragmentation of explained variance into structure and personality shows that the explanatory power of structural variables normally prevails, holding values from 67% (ascriptionism, East) and 84% (egalitarianism, East). Exceptions are individualism in both populations and ascriptionism in West Germany. Possessing values between 70% (ascriptionism, West) and 87% (individualism, East), these justice ideologies emerge as highly personality-dependent.

Differences in the effect of personality on preferences for justice ideologies between East and West Germany can be observed. Both populations vary most apparently in the determination of egalitarianism. A comparison of assumed and observed effects will reveal the extent to which the developed theoretical scheme, which emphasizes the personality-dependent preferences for distributive outcomes and ideology types, is able to explain these differences. For each population the five traits were linked with the three “active” justice ideologies, resulting in thirty hypotheses. For better manageability, figure 5 presents a graphical comparison of expected and observed effects.

>>> Figure 5 <<<

In West Germany, nine of the 15 derived hypotheses prove true. In an additional case, the coefficient shows the correct prefix but is not significant. Three of the five unexpected effects can be explained by the domination of one dimension over the other. In the case of extraversion, the effects indicate that the distributive outcome prevails, while in the case of openness the type of ideology is more essential. Two effects remain in need of an explanation; both concern the prediction of ascriptionism. In East Germany, six of 15 expected effects can be found and a further four non-significant effects show the correct prefix. Two of five unexpected effects can be explained by an unequal weighting of the two dimensions. In the cases of agreeableness and individualism as well as openness and ascriptionism, the type of ideology seems to be predominant. Three effects remain in need of explanation: two concerning extraversion and one concerning conscientiousness.

All in all, the majority of derived hypotheses proves true, supporting the five basic assumptions: the positive effects of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and neuroticism on the preference for primary ideologies, the positive effects of extraversion and openness on the preference for secondary ideologies, the positive effects of extraversion and conscientiousness on the preference for unequal distributions, the positive effects of openness, agreeableness, and neuroticism on the preference for equal distributions, and the interaction between the preferences for ideology type and distributive outcome, which cancel each other out if tensions

arise. A clearer picture emerges in West Germany than in East Germany. This could be explained by the greater number of cases and the fact that the West Germans have not been through a transformation process and the accompanied change of ideologies. Two of the five effects that remain in need of explanation concern the trait of extraversion, while three concern the justice ideology of ascriptivism. It would appear that the impact of this personality dimension and the preference for this justice ideology are hard to predict.

## **5 Conclusions**

The empirical findings clearly support the assumption that personality has an effect on the preference for justice ideologies. This is indicated, amongst other factors, by the enormous increase in explanatory power after the inclusion of the *Big Five*. It can be noted that individualism in particular emerges as highly personality-dependent. It seems that the high degree of decoupling of this justice ideology from the social position is an indication of a broad consensus running through all social classes.

The theoretical frame set up to explain the relation between personality and justice ideologies, assigning preferences for distributive outcomes and for types of ideologies to the *Big Five*, proves to be quite effective. Thus, the integration of personality into the primary ideology approach can be regarded as successful. A matter of particular interest for future research is the finding that the socialization background – here modeled by the differentiation between East and West Germany – has an influence on the way traits effect preferences for (justice) attitudes. This seems to be an interesting starting point for the combination of psychological and sociological research questions.

However, the results indicate that the constructed theoretical scheme is still in need of improvement. Further fine adjustments concerning the weighting of the two central dimensions of preference appear to be necessary, as it seems that the ad hoc given equal weight does not apply in all cases. It can be assumed that the relatively poor predictive power for East Germany can be attributed to an insufficient reconstruction of the process of primary ideology replacement in the derived hypotheses. To optimize the prediction for transformation societies, it seems necessary to gain a better understanding of the process of ideology change. In this context, a more accurate description of primary ideologies and their composition could be required. Amongst others, the relatively poor prediction of ascriptivism in both populations could be due to the strong anchoring of this ideology in the welfare regimes of East and West Germany.

## Appendix

>>> Table A1 <<<

>>> Table A2 <<<

>>> Table A3 <<<

## Literature

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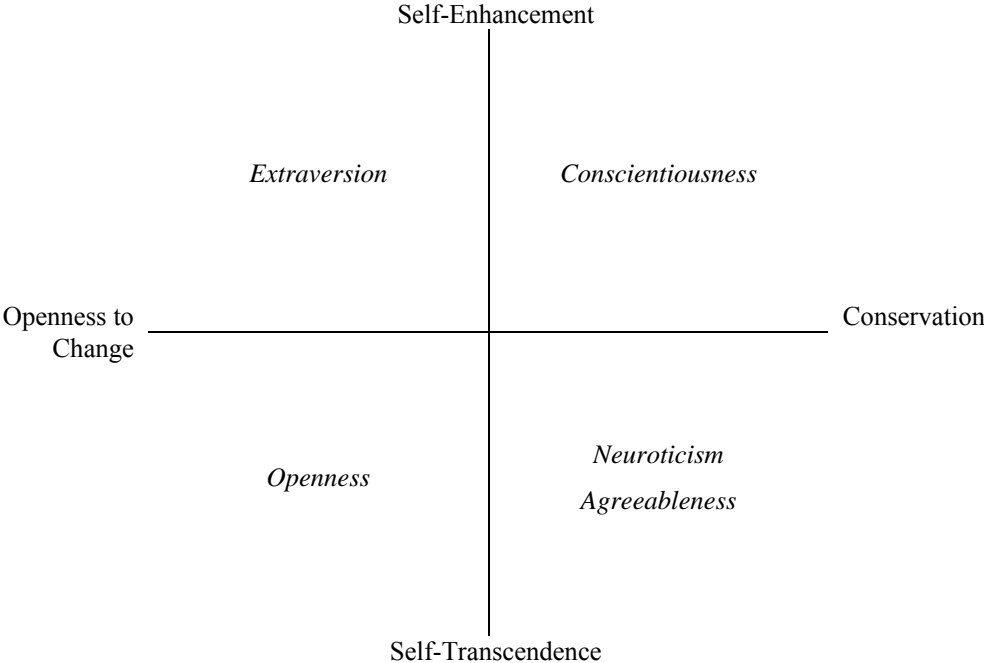
## Figures and Tables

Figure 1: The *Big Five*, facets and attributes

Dimension	Facets	Attributes
Conscientiousness	Competence	<p>high characteristic value: effective, circumspectly, organized, reliable, hard-working, single-minded, persevering, cool-headed</p> <p>low characteristic value: bumbling, neglectful, careless, unreliable, flighty, weak-willed, unthoughtful</p>
	Order	
	Dutifulness	
	Achievement Striving	
	Self-Discipline	
	Deliberation	
Openness	Openness to Fantasy	<p>high characteristic value: imaginative, artistic, sensitive, inquiring, dissenting, analytic, open-minded</p> <p>low characteristic value: convenient, down-to-earth, demure, inflexible, narrow-minded, tradition-conscious, blimpish</p>
	Openness to Aesthetics	
	Openness to Feelings	
	Openness to Actions	
	Openness to Ideas	
	Openness to Values	
Neuroticism	Anxiety	<p>high characteristic value: nervous, uncontrollable, sorrowful, thin-skinned, ashamed, feeling inferior, libidinal</p> <p>low characteristic value: relaxed, balanced, confident, optimistic, stress-resistant, self-possessed, thick-skinned</p>
	Angry-Hostility	
	Depression	
	Self-Consciousness	
	Impulsivity	
	Vulnerability	
Agreeableness	Trust	<p>high characteristic value: trustful, open-hearted, compliant, sacrificially, insightfully, modest, benevolent</p> <p>low characteristic value: distrustful, egocentric, rigid, arrogant, disingenuous, cynical, bossy</p>
	Straightforwardness	
	Altruism	
	Compliance	
	Modesty	
	Tender-Mindedness	
Extraversion	Warmth	<p>high characteristic value: effusively, dominant, energetic, thirsty for experience, gregarious, willing to take risks, talkative</p> <p>low characteristic value: reserved, submissive, passive, careful, undecided, unhurried, restrained</p>
	Gregariousness	
	Assertiveness	
	Activity	
	Excitement-Seeking	
	Positive Emotions	

Source: Ostendorf & Angleitner 2004: 34ff.

Figure 2: Localization of the *Big Five* on the value dimensions of Schwartz (1992)



Based on findings of Roccas et al. 2002: 795.

Figure 3: *Big Five* and the preference for justice ideologies

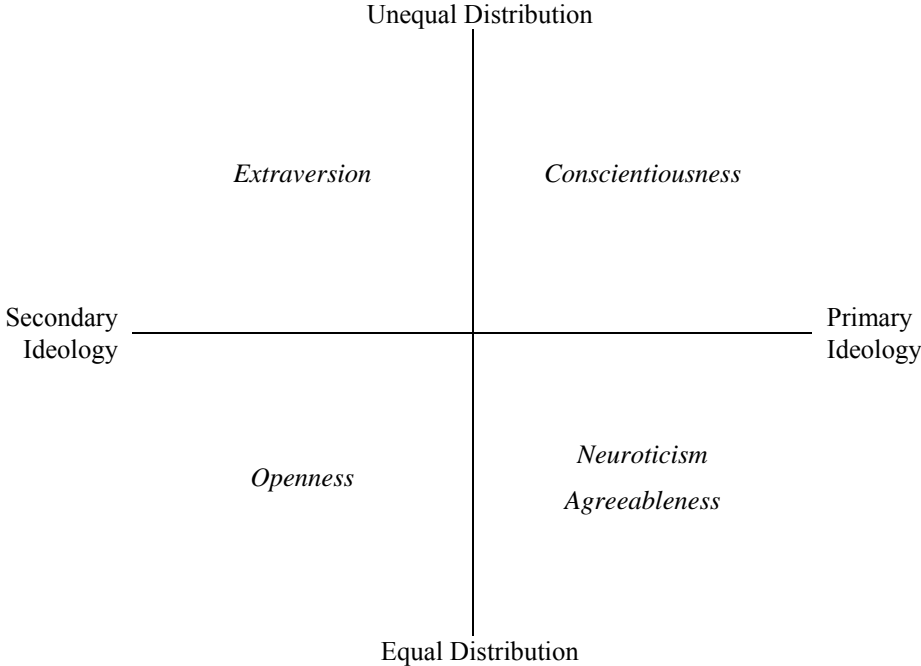


Figure 4: Hypothized effects of the *Big Five* on the preferences for justice ideologies in FRG, GDR, and today's East Germany

	Egalitarianism			Individualism			Ascriptivism		
	T	D	$\Sigma$	T	D	$\Sigma$	T	D	$\Sigma$
<i>FRG</i>									
Conscientiousness	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	.
Openness	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	.
Neuroticism	-	+	.	+	-	.	-	-	-
Agreeableness	-	+	.	+	-	.	-	-	-
Extraversion	+	-	.	-	+	.	+	+	+
<i>GDR</i>									
Conscientiousness	+	-	.	-	+	.	-	+	.
Openness	-	+	.	+	-	.	+	-	.
Neuroticism	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Agreeableness	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Extraversion	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>East Germany (today)</i>									
Conscientiousness	+	-	.	+	+	+	-	+	.
Openness	-	+	.	-	-	-	+	-	.
Neuroticism	+	+	+	+	-	.	-	-	-
Agreeableness	+	+	+	+	-	.	-	-	-
Extraversion	-	-	-	-	+	.	+	+	+

T = effect type of ideology, D = effect distributive outcome,  $\Sigma$  = total effect, + = positive effect, - = negative effect, . = no effect; total effects underlayed with black.

Table 1: Measurement model justice ideologies

Item	E	I	A	F	u <sup>2</sup>
Government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well-off [V50097]	<b>.74</b>				.45
The fairest way of distributing wealth and income would be to give everyone equal shares [V200]	<b>.62</b>			.13	.52
The government should place an upper limit on the amount of money any person can make [V130]	<b>.49</b>			.25	.58
The employee's individual effort should influence the level of pay [V117]		<b>.76</b>		-.11	.40
The responsibility held by the employee on the job should influence the level of pay [V119]		<b>.58</b>	.10		.64
People who work hard deserve to earn more than those who do not [V203]	-.14	<b>.36</b>	.24		.74
It is just that those who can afford it obtain better education for their children [V209]		-.16	<b>.64</b>		.60
It is just that people in some occupations are regarded more highly than people in other ones [V207]			<b>.56</b>		.68
It is just that people of means are able to get better pensions than others [V212]	-.33		<b>.49</b>		.57
The way things are these days, it is hard to know what is just anymore [V214]		.14		<b>.64</b>	.59
There is no point arguing about social justice since it is impossible to change things [V213]			.22	<b>.63</b>	.58
Factor correlations:	E	I	A		
Individualism	-.13				
Ascriptivism	-.27	.16			
Fatalism	.46	-.09	-.09		

E=Egalitarianism, I=Individualism, A=Ascriptivism, F=Fatalism;  
N = 2,470, ISJP 2006, German sample; confirmatory factor analysis, WLSMV estimation; standardized coefficients, not reported loadings fixed at zero; model fit:  $X^2_{(23)}$ : 152.233,  $p_X^2$ : .000; CFI: .970; RMSEA: .048.

Table 2: Justice ideologies on social structure and personality

	Egalitarianism		Individualism		Ascriptivism	
	west	east	west	east	west	east
female	.082* (3.10)	.067 (1.30)	.015 (.34)	.035 (.39)	-.039 (1.21)	-.093 (1.61)
age in years	-.003* (3.32)	.002 (1.24)	.001 (.96)	-.001 (.47)	.005* (4.90)	.001 (.43)
church going several times (ref.: rarely or never)	.012 (.45)	-.082 (1.10)	.092 (1.94)	.082 (.61)	.095* (2.78)	.208* (2.43)
CASMIN 2 (Ref.: CASMIN 1)	-.089* (2.58)	-.191* (2.86)	.055 (.95)	-.149 (1.23)	.041 (.96)	-.066 (.89)
CASMIN 3	-.199* (4.91)	-.385* (4.74)	.194* (3.15)	.047 (.34)	.016 (.38)	-.030 (.35)
2. quartile of hh-income (Ref.: 1. quartile)	-.113* (2.50)	-.145 (1.94)	.086 (1.09)	.143 (1.12)	.058 (1.04)	.165* (1.99)
3. quartile of hh-income	-.207* (4.44)	-.302* (3.43)	.019 (.25)	.067 (.43)	.096 (1.73)	.019 (.22)
4. quartile of hh-income	-.343* (6.72)	-.386* (3.56)	-.069 (.91)	.230 (1.28)	.185* (3.28)	.277* (2.32)
unemployed	.269* (4.32)	.335* (3.39)	.101 (.98)	-.113 (.73)	-.080 (1.09)	-.270* (2.61)
conscientiousness	-.105* (3.75)	.009 (.15)	.197* (4.54)	-.001 (.01)	.049 (1.47)	.041 (.57)
openness	.112* (3.54)	-.089 (1.05)	-.081 (1.43)	-.058 (.37)	.101* (2.54)	.247* (2.36)
neurotizism	-.001 (.03)	.134* (2.51)	.073 (1.48)	.035 (.40)	.039 (1.24)	-.073 (1.24)
agreeableness	.089 (1.45)	.273 (1.91)	-.060 (.57)	.844* (3.25)	.225* (2.83)	-.128 (.83)
extraversion	-.118* (3.98)	.028 (.61)	.186* (3.74)	-.068 (.84)	.077* (2.12)	-.021 (.41)
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	.24	.32	.12	.23	.20	.18

N = 2,470 (west = 1,840, east = 630), weighted analysis, data: ISJP 2006, German sample; Structural Equation Model, Multiple Group Analysis, WLSMV estimation, McKelvey & Zavoina Pseudo-R<sup>2</sup>; not standardized coefficients, Z-statistics in parentheses, \* significant at 5%; model fit:  $\chi^2_{(341)}$ : 1,130.457,  $p\chi^2$ : .000; CFI: .921; RMSEA: .043; effect of dummy „no income information” not reported.

Figure 5: Comparison of expected and observed effects of the *Big Five* on the preference for justice ideologies in West and East Germany

	Egalitarianism			Individualism			Ascriptivism		
	T	D	Σ	T	D	Σ	T	D	Σ
<i>West Germany</i>									
Conscientiousness	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	+	.
Openness	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	.
Neuroticism	-	+	.	+	-	.	-	-	-
Agreeableness	-	+	.	+	-	.	-	-	-
Extraversion	+	-	.	-	+	.	+	+	+
<i>East Germany (today)</i>									
Conscientiousness	+	-	.	+	+	+	-	+	.
Openness	-	+	.	-	-	-	+	-	.
Neuroticism	+	+	+	+	-	.	-	-	-
Agreeableness	+	+	+	+	-	.	-	-	-
Extraversion	-	-	-	-	+	.	+	+	+

T = effect type of ideology, D = effect distributive outcome, Σ = total effect;

+ = expected positive effect, - = expected negative effect, . = no effect expected;

observed (sig.) total effects underlayed with black, observed (n.s.) total effects underlayed with light gray, observed (sig.) partial effects underlayed with dark-gray.

Table A1: Description of the independent variables

<b>Personality</b>	
Conscientiousness	latent construct, see measurement model BFI-S
Openness	latent construct, see measurement model BFI-S
Neuroticism	latent construct, see measurement model BFI-S
Agreeableness	latent construct, see measurement model BFI-S
Extraversion	latent construct, see measurement model BFI-S
<b>Culture</b>	
Socialization (residence summer 1989)	0 = west 1 = east
Church going frequency	0 = rarely or never 1 = at least several times a year
<b>Social structure</b>	
Education	1 = CASMIN 1 (no primary, primary, primary a. vocational training) 2 = CASMIN 2 (medium, medium a. vocational training) 3 = CASMIN 3 (secondary, secondary a. vocational training, secondary a. tertiary)
Quartiles of hh equivalent income (net)	1 = 1. quartile 2 = 2. quartile 3 = 3. quartile 4 = 4. quartile 5 = no income information
Unemployed (registered)	0 = no 1 = yes
<b>Additional control variables</b>	
Sex	0 = male 1 = female
Age in years	continuous

Table A2: Measurement model BFI-S

Item (I see myself as someone who...)	C	O	N	A	E	$u^2$
does a thorough job [V50203]	<b>.86</b>					.27
tends to be lazy [V50209] (-)	<b>.62</b>		-.11	.09	-.15	.55
does things effectively and efficiently [V50213]	<b>.61</b>	.24				.45
has an active imagination [V50216]	-.26	<b>.87</b>				.36
values artistic experiences [V50211]	-.06	<b>.59</b>	.06			.68
is original, comes up with new ideas [V50206]		<b>.57</b>	-.04		.16	.56
gets nervous easily [V50212]	.04		<b>.78</b>			.41
worries a lot [V50207]			<b>.58</b>	.31	-.01	.63
is relaxed, handles stress well [V50217] (-)		-.39	<b>.53</b>			.54
is considerate and kind to others [V50215]				<b>.86</b>		.26
is sometimes somewhat rude to others [V50205] (-)	-.01		-.15	<b>.54</b>	-.28	.73
has a forgiving nature [V50208]		.11	.03	<b>.46</b>		.73
is outgoing, sociable [V50210]		.23			<b>.64</b>	.39
is communicative, talkative [V50204]		.27			<b>.63</b>	.36
is reserved [V50214] (-)			-.06	-.37	<b>.61</b>	.67
Factor correlations:		E	C	O	N	
Conscientiousness		.31				
Openness		.49	.41			
Neuroticism		-.22	-.19	-.08		
Agreeableness		.41	.58	.53	-.16	

C=Conscientiousness, O=Openness, N=Neuroticism, A=Agreeableness, E=Extraversion;  
N = 2,470, ISJP 2006, German sample; confirmatory factor analysis, WLSMV estimation; standardized coefficients, not reported loadings fixed at zero; model fit:  $\chi^2_{(48)}$ : 464.164,  $p_{\chi^2}$ : .000; CFI: .954; RMSEA: .059.

Table A3: Justice ideologies on social structure

	Egalitarianism		Individualism		Ascriptivism	
	west	east	west	east	west	east
female	.087* (3.08)	.064 (1.18)	.019 (.37)	.031 (.32)	-.037 (1.00)	-.106 (1.61)
age in years	-.003* (3.57)	.002 (1.23)	.002 (1.09)	-.002 (.48)	.005* (4.63)	.001 (.33)
church going several times (ref.: rarely or never)	.017 (.61)	-.083 (1.04)	.119 (2.27)	.109 (.78)	.118* (2.99)	.240* (2.45)
CASMIN 2 (Ref.: CASMIN 1)	-.094* (2.59)	-.189* (2.72)	.067 (1.04)	-.169 (1.32)	.037 (.75)	-.069 (.82)
CASMIN 3	-.202* (4.89)	-.392* (4.67)	.229* (3.29)	.038 (.26)	.006 (.13)	-.035 (.36)
2. quartile of hh income (Ref.: 1. quartile)	-.116* (2.41)	-.159 (2.01)	.107 (1.24)	.155 (1.16)	.072 (1.12)	.177 (1.88)
3. quartile of hh income	-.219* (4.44)	-.319* (3.41)	.030 (.36)	.064 (.40)	.102 (1.62)	.010 (.10)
4. quartile of hh income	-.355* (6.78)	-.405* (3.52)	-.044 (.53)	.251 (1.30)	.211* (3.28)	.303* (2.24)
unemployed	.282* (4.23)	.362* (3.50)	.111 (.99)	-.104 (.65)	-.073 (.87)	-.290* (2.46)
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	.17	.27	.03	.03	.06	.12

N = 2,470 (west = 1,840, east = 630), weighted analysis, data: ISJP 2006, German sample; Structural Equation Model, Multiple Group Analysis, WLSMV estimation, McKelvey & Zavoina Pseudo-R<sup>2</sup>; not standardized coefficients, Z-statistics in parentheses, \* significant at 5%; model fit:  $\chi^2_{(117)}: 271.443$ ,  $p_{\chi^2}: .000$ ; CFI: .951; RMSEA: .033; effect of dummy „no income information” not reported.