

## Project B5

### Organizations and Life Conduct of Fathers

#### *Research objectives and interests*

This project examines the social mechanisms in work organizations and private life that influence fathers' participation in the family. It aims to analyze the reciprocal impact of organizations and employees on the realization of personal and professional life goals. The project focuses on the question of how heterogeneities among the members of an organization result in social inequalities with respect to their capabilities at work and in family life. It asks what role is played in this process by "old" and "new" lines of differentiation; how the underlying, gendered norms of availability and expectations of compatibility between work and family life are constructed; and the extent to which processes of the production of inequality reinforce or attenuate each other within the various fields of action. The project works with a model of social inequality that analyzes the unequal distribution of opportunities for participation in the various areas of life; it is oriented on Amartya Sen's "capability" approach.

#### *Levels of analysis*

On the *organizational level*, the project investigates how life conduct and the compatibility of family and career are discussed, which models and forms of legitimation acquire relevance, and how heterogeneity among the organization's members influences their capabilities at work and in family life. The analysis looks at micropolitical negotiation processes within organizations and the role of the actors participating in these, along with the ways that the life conduct of fathers is influenced by the framing conditions of the workplace and its organizational culture. The social construction of expectations of compatibility and norms of availability is examined in the context of organizational cultures and gender norms.

On the level of *private life*, processes of negotiation within the couple relationship are analyzed in terms of their impact on the compatibility of work and parenthood for fathers. Relevant aspects here are patterns in the intrafamilial division of labor; the economic, social, and cultural resources of the partners; time budgets; and gendered models of parenthood and employment. In addition, individual life choices and cultural models may influence capabilities at work and in the family, as may individuals' evaluation of their own capacity to act, their life skills, and the expectations of compatibility they place on work organizations.

#### *Project design*

In its first phase, the project is designed as a qualitative study, carrying out parallel case studies in selected companies. The case studies address the respective work organizations and their structural and cultural features, as the context for the investigation of fathers' life conduct, orientations, and strategies and the negotiation processes within the couple. The analysis of the organizational context deploys document analyses, expert interviews, and observation. For the analysis of individual life conduct and couple negotiation processes, the project will carry out problem-centered interviews with fathers and their partners, group discussions with fathers, and interviews with mothers in the company being studied.

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