

**Headwind or Tailwind —
Do Partner's Resources
Support or Restrict a Promotion to a
Leadership Position in Germany?**

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DFG Research Center (SFB) “From Heterogeneities to Inequalities”

Whether fat or thin, male or female, young or old – people are different. Alongside their physical features, they also differ in terms of nationality and ethnicity; in their cultural preferences, lifestyles, attitudes, orientations, and philosophies; in their competencies, qualifications, and traits; and in their professions. But how do such heterogeneities lead to social inequalities? What are the social mechanisms that underlie this process? These are the questions pursued by the DFG Research Center (Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB)) “From Heterogeneities to Inequalities” at Bielefeld University, which was approved by the German Research Foundation (DFG) as “SFB 882” on May 25, 2011.

In the social sciences, research on inequality is dispersed across different research fields such as education, the labor market, equality, migration, health, or gender. One goal of the SFB is to integrate these fields, searching for common mechanisms in the emergence of inequality that can be compiled into a typology. More than fifty senior and junior researchers and the Bielefeld University Library are involved in the SFB. Along with sociologists, it brings together scholars from the Bielefeld University faculties of Business Administration and Economics, Educational Science, Health Science, and Law, as well as from the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) in Berlin and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. In addition to carrying out research, the SFB is concerned to nurture new academic talent, and therefore provides doctoral training in its own integrated Research Training Group. A data infrastructure project has also been launched to archive, prepare, and disseminate the data gathered.

Research Project A3 “Gender-Specific Patterns of Opportunity in Employment”

This project aims to identify the mechanisms of inequality of occupational opportunities for men and women. The research is investigating different areas and phases of life and considering the role of cumulative disadvantage in family and social networks as well as in the family of origin both before and during employment. Empirically, the project is applying a cohort sequence analysis based on panel data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP).

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Headwind or Tailwind —

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Abstract

This article examines the extent to which people's partners' social capital and processes that take place at the inner couple level influence gender-specific probabilities of obtaining a leadership position.

First, well-established theories are examined that offer different assumptions as to how a partner's resources can influence occupational career. This article adds to research by applying a relational perspective on partners' resources beyond looking only at the individual's and partner's resources. To resolve the research question, data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (waves 1984 to 2010) were used in a longitudinal design employing event history analysis (N=11,050 men and N=8,988 women). The results show different outcomes for women and for men. For women, the relation of resources between partners plays a significant role in their promotion to the top, especially their own comparative advantage; whereas for men, their own resources—independent of women's resources—seem to be more relevant.

Key words: Labor market, couples, gender, inequality, social capital

"There is no greater excitement than to support an intellectual wife and have her support you. Marriage is a partnership in which each inspires the other, and brings fruition to both of you."

Millicent Carey McIntosh (1898-2001, First President of Barnard College)

1 Introduction

Even though there has been a considerable move forward with regard to women's education and political participation, the proportion of women in leadership positions in business and politics remains low in comparison to men across all countries (Pande & Ford, 2011). This gender inequality holds also true for Germany, where in the year 2008 only 27% of all managerial positions in the private sector were held by women (Holst & Busch, 2010). Women hit the so-called *glass ceiling*, decreasing their chances of entering managerial occupations (see Morrison & von Glinow, 1990).

Earlier research has predominantly examined the extent to which individual characteristics such as human capital or characteristics of the labor market determine the career advancement of men and women (for an overview see Blossfeld & Drobnič, 2001; Achatz, 2008; Born & Krüger, 2001). Over the last two decades, more effort has been made to explore the dynamics of "multiple, interdependent pathways" (Elder, 1994, p. 5) instead of single careers. Following Moen's concept of coupled careers, Rusconi and Solga (2008) provide a theoretical framework by systematically integrating research results in a multilevel analytical model. Occupational careers of partners are described at the three following levels (see Rusconi & Solga, 2008, p.4): (i) individual level (processes affecting each partner's individual occupational advancement independent of living in a partnership) (ii) external couple level (career opportunities or restrictions for each partner arising from living in a partnership) (iii) inner couple level (processes of negotiation and coordination taking place within the partnership concerning occupation and family that shape career opportunities of both partners).

Following this line of thought, the interest of this article does not lie in gender inequality with regard to leadership positions in general, but on the role the inner couple level plays in this gender disparity. The question asked here is whether partners support each other's career advancement and create "tailwind," or if they instead hinder their partner's occupational career, thus creating "headwind"? Therefore the extent to which the social capital of the partner affects occupational mobility is examined, measured by a partner's resources (e.g. income, education, occupation) as well as partner's social support. The empirical analysis concentrates on the last step of the labor hierarchy—the promotion to top positions in Germany.

The importance of a partner's social capital for individual chances of upward occupational mobility has only been tested in some studies to date (Baerts, Deschacht, & Guerry, 2010; Bernasco, de

Graaf, & Ultee, 1998; Róbert & Bukodi, 2002; Verbakel & de Graaf, 2008) or it has been investigated under the aspect of “dual career couples” (for an overview see Blossfeld & Drobnič, 2001) in which both partners pursue a professional career as opposed to dual-earner couples or families with a traditional breadwinner model.

In most studies on individual careers, the partner is treated only as a context variable (see Solga & Wimbauer, 2005, p. 17). This study adds to research by not only taking partner’s resources into account, but by also looking at the relation of resources between partners. Different partnership constellations and negotiation processes that take place at the inner couple level are discussed, and their impact on promotion to top-management positions is analyzed using data from the interview waves 1984 to 2010 of the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP.v27; see Wagner, Frick, & Schupp, 2007).

In the next section, the theoretical framework is presented, complemented by a deduction of the research hypotheses. This discussion is followed by a description of the data, variables, and statistical method used in the analysis. The main section of the article is the empirical analysis of the impact of partner’s resources and the relation between partners’ resources on the chance of entering a top executive position. The final section summarizes the results and makes suggestions for future research.

2 Theoretical framework

Social capital can be understood as “the number of people who can be expected to provide support, and the resources those people have at their disposal” (Boxman, de Graaf, & Flap, 1991, p. 52). This stock of resources increases individual’s chances of, among other things, getting a job, being promoted, or earning a high income (Burt, 2000; Lin, 2000). As such, social capital is closely associated with social inequality as resource-rich individuals have higher chances of goal achievement (Lin, 2000; Lin & Dumin, 1986). Both close and weaker personal ties can provide social support. The resources of weaker ties have been shown to be particularly fruitful for occupational careers (Granovetter, 1983), but other scholars stress the importance of interdependence with the partner’s life course and posit that it is also essential to take into account resource allocation and social support within partnerships (Bernasco et al., 1998, p. 18; Golsch, 2012; Sonnert, 2005). This is a complex venture, because on the one hand the resourcerichness of a partner can enhance sources of support and, on the other hand, it can also create a competitive situation at the inner couple level, thus leading to less support.

Following the first line of thought, social capital and labor market experience are not only meaningful resources for an individual's career. They also constitute—if shared with the partner—an important stock of resources for the occupational advancement of the partner and offer, to some extent, different resources than weak ties. As Róbert and Bukodi put it, married people “can be expected to be more willing to provide resources to a spouse than to others, to whom they are less closely related” (Róbert & Bukodi, 2002, p. 221). Along these lines, partners' social support can be separated into instrumental support and emotional support (Perrewé & Carlson, 2002) and is assumed to have a positive effect on occupational careers. For example, resource-rich partners (e.g. persons with high educational attainment, a high income or a good occupational position) provide not only an economic basis that allows their partners to strive for career objectives, they also show more egalitarian attitudes and understanding for the professional career of their partners. Spouses can help to solve work-related problems, discover suitable career opportunities, and give career advice.

One specific form of instrumental partner support is considered by the literature to be quite central: help with housework (see for example Mickelson, Claffey, & Williams, 2006) or, as it is often defined in the literature, the *division of domestic labor* (Gershuny, 2000). If one partner does a greater share of the housework, the other one has more freedom to concentrate on the occupational career.

Summarizing the different notions about social capital, it can be stated:

Hypothesis 1: High social capital of the partner leads to higher chances of an individual to be promoted to the top.

In addition it can be expected that social capital can be shared in an especially efficient way in homogamous partnerships, in which the partners share similar interests and preferences (i.e., value homogamy) and a similar socio-economic background (i.e., status homogamy) (Blossfeld & Timm, 2003; Kalmijn, 1998; Liao & Stevens, 1994). Due to occupational similarity, partners can profit from parallel work-related knowledge and resources as well as access to important social networks. Moreover, in homogamous partnerships the probability is higher that partners share similar values, work related preferences (Busch, 2011), and career ambitions as well as workplace experiences (on *experiential similarity* see Sutor, Pillemer, & Keeton, 1995), leading to a higher support and understanding of the other's career. Earlier research has provided some evidence that occupational homogeneity increases the chances of pursuing a dual career (Rusconi & Solga, 2007; Wallace & Jovanovic, 2011). Similar effects can be expected for educationally homogamous partnerships. Thus, it can be hypothesized:

Hypothesis 2: *Persons can profit from a partner's high social capital especially in homogamous partnerships, increasing individual chances of promotion to the top.*

Previous research on the influence of partner's resources has indeed found a positive impact on occupational mobility. Male partners' labor market resources in form of occupational status (Baerts et al., 2010; Róbert & Bukodi, 2002; Verbakel & de Graaf, 2008) or educational attainment (Baerts et al., 2010; Bernasco et al., 1998; Róbert & Bukodi, 2002) facilitate women's occupational careers. For men, the study by Baerts et al. (2011) showed that a female partner's labor market and financial resources ease a raise to leadership position. Róbert and Bukodi (2002) and Verbakel and de Graaf (2008) also located a positive impact of women's occupational status and educational attainment on men's probability of rising to a status position.

However, the studies also uncovered some negative effects of partners' resources. Baerts et al. (2010) observed that men's high number of working hours reduces women's probability of promotion. Bernasco et al. (1998) detected a negative effect of the husband's economic resources on the wife's labor market (re)entry, while Verbakel and de Graaf (2008) showed that a successful partner reduces the probability of also having a successful occupational career.

These findings indicate that deeper processes are at work than merely the transfer of social capital between partners and—in line with the above mentioned idea—that one's partner's resources can restrict the other's occupational career. One explanation for this is that couples often negotiate whose career will take precedence. An important factor determining these negotiation tactics for men and women within a partnership is bargaining power, which depends on the availability of resources (see Ott, 1993; Streckeisen, 1993). Thus a partner's bargaining power arises from his or her occupational opportunities on the labor market. The person with the largest employment and income opportunities, and thus the larger marginal productivity, concentrates on his or her occupational career, whereas the partner concentrates on household and family work. This specialization in either paid or unpaid work leads to utility maximization within a household as described by the *economic theory of the family* (Becker, 1991).

Emerging differences in investments and opportunities in the labor market career of men and women over the life course can hence be traced back to a comparative advantage of one partner over the other on the labor market. Consequently, if one partner's resources are much larger than those of the other, high resources can also negatively influence the partner's occupational career. To capture comparative advantage, it is necessary to focus on the *relation* of economic resources between partners (as opposed to absolute resources), measuring who has more and who has less resources. Accordingly, it is assumed:

Hypothesis 3: *A partner's comparative advantage lowers individual chances of promotion to the top.*

Over the past decades, women's investment in human capital accumulation and growing career aspirations has increased their earning power. This has profoundly changed the availability of resources, power structures, and also negotiation patterns within couples (Blossfeld, Drobnič, & Rohwer, 2001). Nevertheless, even if both partners invest in their occupational careers and share household and childcare tasks, one partner can have more bargaining power due to a higher earning capacity and therefore greater financial resources. Keeping in mind the well documented finding of a gender pay gap (Holst & Busch, 2010; Kunze, 2008) it is clear that women will often have less bargaining power than their spouses. An additional, congruent observation is the gender inequality with regard to the division of domestic labor, which has remained quite stable over time. In partnerships, women still do a greater share of the housework than their partners (BMBF, 2008, p. 17; Lachance-Grzela & Bouchard, 2010). Research has also demonstrated that women's better negotiating position does not lead to greater restriction of the professional improvement of their male partners to the same extent as is true the other way around (for an overview see Solga & Rusconi, 2011). Sociological approaches explain this asymmetry with processes of *doing gender* (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The traditional division of labor within the family thereby represents an important function for maintaining gender stereotypes. The departure from the traditional male breadwinner model may call men's gender identity into question and, as a reaction, men may want to invest even more into their own careers so that the traditional order of gender is restored (on the compensation hypothesis see Brines, 1994). As Blossfeld and Buchholz (2009, p. 608) stated, "gender role change has been generally asymmetric, with a greater movement of women into the traditional male sphere than vice versa."

Gender asymmetry also appears in the context of social networks. Women and men often build networks with people of the same gender and with others who are as similar as possible with respect to sociodemographic characteristics (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Because women are less often in influential occupational positions, it can be expected that they can provide less useful information than men (Ibarra, 1992). *Occupational sex segregation* (see Busch, 2011, for a general discussion of occupational sex segregation) plays a central role: Typical male occupations, meaning those that are dominated by men, imply higher economic advantages through higher wages and better promotion opportunities (for an overview see European Commission, 2010; England et al., 1988). These male occupations provide more useful networks than female occupations—an advantage that can be transferred to the partner as well. Thus, for women the (often male-

dominated) networks of their partners may be more beneficial for their careers than their (often female-dominated) networks are for their male partners. Earlier research failed however to take occupational sex segregation into account as an indicator for partners' resources and social capital.

The studies cited above also uncovered gender asymmetry while looking at the occupational mobility of persons. Róbert and Bukodi (2002) and Verbakel and de Graaf (2008) both found that men's upward occupational mobility seems to be more independent of women's resources, whereas women depend more on men's resources. Brynin and Schupp (2000) revealed intracouple transfers of the benefits of the partner's resources, as measured by education and labor market participation, that seem to be more advantageous for the man than for the woman. For men, Bernasco et al. (1998) found that women's resources had only a slight effect. A husband's career advancement is predominately influenced by his own resources; whereas for women the authors observed a positive impact of men's social capital. Thus for women, better resources (as compared to their partners) are even more important to strengthen their negotiation power within their partnerships. It can therefore be stated:

Hypothesis 4: A comparative advantage is especially important for women to heighten their promotion opportunities to a top position.

Last but not least, it should not be overlooked that negotiation models within a partnership are not static, but may change over the course of the partnership in one direction or another (Rusconi & Solga, 2008). Of particular importance is the family cycle: marriage or the birth of a child is often linked to the traditionalization of work/family arrangements within partnerships, indicated by a more traditional division of domestic labor and labor market arrangements (Baxter, Hewitt, & Haynes, 2008; Grunow, Schulz, & Blossfeld, 2007). This leads to more gender inequity at home; it also has long-term penalties for women's careers (see for example Aisenbrey, Evertsson, & Grunow, 2009). Married couples often show stronger traditional gender roles, and hence resource-based negotiation may get visible for married partners, in particular. Therefore, it is important to compare effects of partner's characteristics between non-married and married couples:

Hypothesis 5: A comparative advantage of the partner lowers promotion opportunities to a top position within marriages in particular.

3 Method

The following analysis uses longitudinal data from 27 waves of the German SOEP (SOEP.v27), covering the period from 1984 to 2010 (Wagner et al., 2007). The sample includes employed indi-

viduals with full interviews who were at least 18 at the date of the annual interview. Furthermore, the analysis is restricted to individuals who live together with a partner in the same household. The partner may be unemployed or employed part-time or full-time and must have completed a full interview as well. Same-gender partners are excluded.

Measures

The analysis focuses on promotions to managerial positions. In scientific studies, the definition of the terms "manager" or "leadership" is usually rather vague and is often confined to the information available in the particular data source without a conceptual classification of the term (Körner & Günther, 2011). To capture leadership positions as precisely as possible, in this article a definition is used that combines occupational position and occupational job classification. This is oriented towards the definitions used by Kleinert, Kohaut, Brader, and Lewerenz (2007) and Körner and Günther (2011). Upward mobility into managerial positions is defined as occurring when a respondent (a) enters a managerial position in the company as indicated by occupational position, (b) becomes self-employed with more than nine employees as indicated by occupational position, (c) enters a specific occupation according to the job classification of the German Federal Statistical Office (3-digit), version 1992 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 1992), (d) becomes a higher civil servant as indicated by occupational position, or (e) becomes a master craftsman or foreman in employment with a highly qualified or leadership position in the company (a combination of specific occupations in job classification and occupational position). If at least one of the five indicators applies, the respondent is considered to be in a leadership position.

All available panel waves for the selected individuals were pooled, and the data were organized as a person-period record file. If individuals experienced several promotions to top position, only the waves up to the first promotion were included in the analysis. The sample consists of 11,050 men and 8,988 women. In all, 1,178 men and 446 women experienced a first promotion during the observation period.

Table 1 shows the descriptive values of the explanatory variables at the inner couple level by sex for the time in which respondents are at risk of being promoted to a top position. The independent variables all are included as time-lagged variables from the year $t-1$. For all variables, an extra dummy variable includes the missing cases and is controlled for in the models. The coefficients of the dummy indicators for missing values will not be reported in the tables.

The variables measuring partner's resources are described in more detail in the following.

Educational attainment. The educational attainment of the partner is measured with three dummies according to the International Classification of Education (ISCED): low education (ISCED categories 1 and 2), middle education (ISCED categories 3 to 4), and high education (ISCED categories 5 and 6). The relation of educational attainment specifies whether either the woman or the man or both partners are highly educated.

Segregation. Information on occupational sex segregation is not included in the SOEP. Year-specific values for each year of the observation period have been taken from a special evaluation of the German Microcensus (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2008) conducted by the German Federal Statistical Office, and merged with the SOEP via the job classification (Busch, 2011). As a next step, this continuous variable was categorized using three dummy variables for *typical male job* (portion of women in job between 0 and 30%), *typical female job* (portion of women in job between 70 and 100%), and *integrated job* (portion of women in job between 30 and 70%). The constellation within partnership concerning occupational sex segregation combines the information on the gender typicality of the current occupation of both partners. Constellations within partnerships are categorized as *traditional constellations* (the man works in a male job and the woman works in a female job), *occupational similarity* (both work in a typical male, female or integrated job), *slightly atypical constellations* (the man works in an integrated and the woman in a female job, or the man works in a male job and the woman in an integrated job), *atypical constellations* (the woman works in an integrated and the man in a typical female job or the woman works in a male job and the man in an integrated job).

Income. Income is measured as the monthly gross income from labor, divided by 100. The relation of incomes provides information on whether the respondent or the partner has a higher monthly gross income from labor. The partner whose portion of the partners' combined gross income from labor exceeds 60% is considered to be the partner with the higher income. Because questions on income are more often subjected to nonresponse than other questions, this nonrandom item-nonresponse can skew results. If income measurements are missing, the imputed values of gross income from labor as provided by the SOEP (see Grabka & Frick, 2003) are used in the analysis of this article, controlling for imputation using a dummy variable.

Domestic labor. To quantify domestic labor, the hours used for errands (shopping, trips to government agencies, etc.) and housework (washing, cooking, cleaning) on a typical weekday are summed up for each respondent. Partner's hours for domestic labor are measured with four dummies: 0

hours, 1-2 hours, 3-4 hours and 5 and more hours. To compute the division of domestic labor, the respondent's hours for errands and housework are set into relation with his or her partner's hours. The division of domestic labor is then categorized using three dummy variables for *respondent does all, both do same, partner does more.*

Although the following discussion focuses on the impact of the inner couple level, it is important to study these effects in the context of some other influences. On the individual level, explanatory variables include a dummy variable on high educational attainment, years of total work experience, current gross income from labor (divided by 100 and controlled for imputed income values), working overtime, working in a typical male, typical female or integrated job, being married and living together with children under the age of 6 years or between 7 and 16 years.

The indicators at the external couple level contain the provision for childcare for children under three years of age, the rate of part-time work, institutionalized gender role beliefs (each indicator split along gender and the German federal states), and geographical mobility due to occupational reasons.

Further control variables include: age, sample region, occupational position (worker, self-employed, employed, and working in civil service), migration background, duration of marriage, and unemployment of the partner. Additionally, the analysis is controlled for members of the high income subsample (Schupp et al., 2003) and the years in which there was only a partial survey of job questions. The control variables will not be listed in the tables.

Methods

The analysis employs discrete-time event history models in which the dependent variable in the logit models is the occurrence of promotion to a leadership position between two panel waves (Allison, 1982). Separate models are estimated for men and women as well as for married and cohabiting men and women. The relations of partners' resources are included separately in the model to avoid problems of multicollinearity. All models are estimated (i) for persons with labor market entry starting from 1984 onwards (in the data observation period of the SOEP) and (ii) for all observed job episodes (left censored spells). Because the results remained stable across these two groups (besides terms concerning duration such as labor market experience), only the results for all observed job episodes are reported. Using these episodes, it is possible to subdivide models into groups of interest such as married partners versus partners living in cohabitation.

As explained in more detail in Mood (2010) (and Auspurg & Hinz, 2011), it is not possible to compare coefficients from separate logistic regression models (e.g. for men and women), because the

coefficients are dependent upon unobserved heterogeneity, even if the unobserved variables are not correlated with the variables in the models. To take this problem into account, *average marginal effects* were also estimated, which express the average effect of the independent variable when all other variables are held constant at their mean values. For estimating the average marginal effects, the coefficient is averaged over all observations in the sample (see Mood, 2010, p.75). Because the number of events in this sample is quite low as compared to the number of person wave observations, the marginal effects become rather small in our analysis.

4 Results

Estimates of the logistic regression models for promotions to top positions are reported in Table 2 and Table 3. The tables show selected results of separated models for married and cohabiting women and men respectively. Table 2 presents the effects of partners' individual resources, whereas Table 3 displays the effects of the relation of partners' resources.

Educational attainment. Social capital is first measured by the educational attainment of the partner. Both men and women seem to benefit from their partners' high educational attainment, but evidence for a transfer of social capital is found more for men. As seen in Table 2 (Model 1a), men have higher chances of gaining a leadership position if their female partners attained middle or high educational levels. However, this effect turns out to be significant only for married men. Women's chances of being promoted to the top are significantly higher if the partner is highly educated compared to low educational attainment. Looking at different partnership constellations with regard to the partners' education in Table 3 (Model 1b) can bring more information to light. Compared to constellations in which both partners attained low or middle education, men profit from their own comparative advantage as well as from their female partner's comparative advantage. If only the woman is highly educated or if the man's education is higher than that of the woman, men have higher chances of rising to a leadership position. For these two groups, in which one partner has a comparative advantage, significant effects are only detected for married men (though only on the 10% significance level) and not for cohabiting men. Their comparative advantage can be explained by men's higher bargaining power within the partnership, as assumed by the economic theory, while the benefit for men of women's comparative advantage indicates a transfer of the woman's social capital. For the total group of women, only the woman's own comparative advantage, but not their partners' comparative advantage, heightens her chances of upward mobility, again in line with the ideas of economic theory. Comparing married and cohabiting respondents, a striking difference

is found for women with regard to the effects of relative educational attainment on the chances of being promoted to a top position. Although the overall effect of the constellation in which only the man is highly educated is not significant, a highly significant positive influence can be detected for women's chances of gaining a leadership position when they are unmarried and cohabit. For married women there is no such effect; however, when the woman is highly educated—independent of the man's educational attainment—it proves to have a significant impact on upward occupational mobility. Thus, it can be concluded that a transfer of the social capital of men's higher educational attainment takes place for unmarried women, but not for married women—whereas for married women educational relation is an important resource for negotiation processes. For married or cohabiting men, respectively, the influence of relative educational attainment differs only slightly from the results reported for the total group of men. The lack of significance for the group of cohabiting men may however be due to lower observation numbers in that group.

According to Hypothesis 2, transfers of social capital should take place in particular within homogamous partnerships. Regarding educational attainment, educational homogamy has a significant positive influence on gaining leadership positions for both men and women (Table 2, Model 1a). Compared to educationally heterogamous partnership constellations, homogamous partners seem to profit from one another's resources, and provide support and have understanding for career ambitions and choices. To fully capture the effect of homogamy, an additional model was specified (results not shown in the table) in which educational homogamous partners are compared with all heterogamous partnership constellations, combined as a reference group. For women, the model shows a significant increase in the probability of being promoted to a top position due to educational homogamy. This effect can mainly be ascribed to married women, because they seem to profit most from educational homogamy; for cohabiting women, educational homogamy is not of major importance for gaining a leadership position. Men living with an educationally homogamous partner have higher chances of moving to a top position as compared to all other partnership constellations with regard to educational attainment. This holds true for both married and cohabiting men.

Occupational segregation. It is assumed that a transfer of social capital also takes place with regard to the occupational segregation of the partner's job. Jobs with a high proportion of men are supposed to provide better resources due to wage and promotion opportunities and a resource-rich male social network. Table 2 (Model 2a) indeed shows higher chances for men to move to a top position if their female partner works in a typical male job. Men living in cohabitation do also better if the woman works in an integrated job compared to have her work in a typical female job. Women profit as well with regard to promotion to a top position if the man works in a typical male job, which is

true only for married women. Looking at partnership constellations can provide a more precise picture. By setting the level of occupational segregation of partners' jobs into relation, it shows (Table 3, Model 2b) that women get the best of the bargain in an atypical partnership constellation in which she works in a more male-dominated job than her male partner. All constellations deviating from this atypical constellation have a negative impact on women's promotion to the top. This holds true particularly in the traditional constellation in which the man works in a typical male job and the woman works in a typical female job. Here, women's chances of rising to the top are lowest. The better outcome of the atypical constellation again follows economic theory in that the woman seems to take advantage of her higher negotiation power. Looking at the separate models for married and cohabiting persons (Table 3, Model 2b) it becomes clear that the significant negative effect in the overall model for women in the traditional constellation can be traced back to married women, whereas the negative effect for the homogamous group with occupational similarity can be ascribed to cohabiting women. Here again, comparative advantage seems to predominantly back married women's power of negotiation.

For men no significant effects are found within the total group. Thus the comparative advantage of the female partner neither lowers nor heightens chances of gaining a leadership position. Cohabiting men show a greater likelihood to move to the top if the partner's job reflects occupational similarity compared to a traditional constellation. Comparing occupational similar with an amalgamation of all other categories describing the relation of occupational segregation between partners taken together as reference group (results not shown in the tables), no significant impact for women is found—neither in marriage nor in cohabitation—but the effect for men, which can again be traced back to cohabiting men, turns out to be significant. Consequently, women do not seem to profit from occupational similarity, but men do.

Income. Partner's gross income from labor does not significantly influence promotion opportunities for men or for women (Table 2, Model 3a), thus indicating that partners' economic resources lead neither to a considerable advantage nor disadvantage. To the contrary, the relative income distribution within a partnership plays a significant role. A comparative advantage of economic resources is important for women's rise to a top position, whereas this is not the case for men. Taking into account that in the course of a partnership, increasing traditionalization takes place (Schulz & Blossfeld, 2006), one suspects that especially for married women, having greater economic resources than their male partners is very important to backing their negotiation power and should therefore heighten their chances of experiencing an upward occupational move. But a comparative advantage with respect to income affects the chances of gaining a top position in particular for unmarried

women who are cohabiting with their partner (Table 3, Model 3b). Maybe these cohabiting partnerships in which the woman earns more than the man are “special” partnerships with egalitarian gender roles, made visible by the high promotion opportunities for women. Women’s chances to rise to a top position are also lower if both partners earn about the same compared to the group where the woman earns more than the man, a finding that can again be led back to cohabiting women only.

Domestic labor. The next question considered how a partner’s instrumental support in the form of housework eases or decreases the other partner’s chances of gaining a leadership position. Looking at partner’s hours spent for domestic labor no clear pattern is found. For married women there is a significant decrease in chances to obtain a leadership position if the partner spends 1-2 hours as compared to the group where the partner is not involved at all in domestic labor. In contrast, cohabiting women are more likely to move to a top position if the partner does 1-2 hours of housework compared to no hours. But here again, one gets a more precise picture by setting the work done by both partners’ into relation. The results (Table 3, Model 4b) indicate higher chances for men and women to promote to the top if their partner does a greater share of domestic labor, but the effects are not significant. Differentiating between respondents living in marriage and partners living in cohabitation it becomes clear that the division of domestic labor plays a significant positive role for promotions to the highest job positions for married women only. Their partners’ social support helps them to gain leadership positions, whereas a lack of social support leads to the opposite outcome.

To sum up, in all results reported above an interesting pattern can be observed with regard to chances of promotion to the top: Women—married women in particular—seem to profit most from atypical or slightly atypical constellations. This is especially true with respect to relative educational attainment, the constellation of occupational sex segregation, and the division of domestic labor. Thus a comparative advantage of one’s own resources proves to be especially important for married women. This implies that for a wife, resource advantage in negotiation processes is more important to her promotion opportunities than her husband’s social capital—with the exception of status homogamous relations in which case women also partially profit from their partners’ high resources. Effects for a transfer of social capital do however become visible for cohabiting women with regard to their partners’ educational resources.

These results lead to the following principal conclusions: For women, individual resources play an important role, especially if they have a comparative advantage within the partnership. For men, the relation of resources between partners seems to be less relevant to gaining a top position. Instead,

their own resources seem to be more relevant. If anything, one trend can be noticed for men: Traditional partnership constellations or homogameous partnerships pay off for them

5 Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of partners' resources on the chances of being promoted to a top position in Germany, using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study. Most research so far has focused on individual resources or, if they take the partner's resources into account, has not looked at the additional information using a relational approach as was done here. The analysis considered the role of (a) a partner's social capital, (b) the relation of partner's resources, (c) social support, and (d) homogamy. Results reveal that their own comparative advantage turns out to be significant for women's rise to leadership positions, but not for men. A transfer of social capital takes place primarily in favor of men with regard to educational attainment. For women, some evidence was also found for the importance of a transfer of social capital, but greater individual resources as compared to men are more important to upward occupational mobility—this is especially true for married women. Social support by the partner increases the likelihood of promoting to the top predominantly for married women only. For both genders, educational homogamy plays a positive role in obtaining a leadership position. Occupational similarity seems to pay off more for men than for women.

The results are partly unexpected. Following the idea of the doing gender approach, a comparative advantage of resources should turn out to be more helpful for men than for women, but concerning promotions to the top it is the other way around. Having greater resources than their male partners is most important for women. According to network theory, one would also expect women to benefit more from men's social capital than vice versa. But again, results indicate that men profit in part from women's social capital, whereas there is less evidence that women profit from their male partners social capital. One explanation for these findings is that people, especially women, who are promoted to the top seem to be quite divergent from other people. Apparently, gaining a leadership position involves being unconventional in more than one dimension. Future research should therefore also study the effects of social capital transfer on upward occupational mobility at a more general level.

The finding that social capital is less important when it comes to promotion should however be taken with caution, because social capital was not measured directly. Further research therefore should measure social capital more directly as the mechanism behind those resources to better uncover its role, as also stated by Verbakel and de Graaf (2008, p. 94).

Summarizing the influence of partners' resources on promotions to a leadership position, women experience "tailwind" in more atypical partnership constellations in which they have a comparative advantage. The more traditional partnership constellations are, and the less distinctive women's own comparative advantage is, the more "headwind" women experience. Men's chances of gaining a leadership position appear in contrast to be more or less independent of women's resources.

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Table 1: Statistics of independent variables on the inner couple level for women and men

Variables	Women			Men			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	
Partner's educational attainment	low	.13	0.34	0 – 1	.22	0.42	0 – 1
	middle	.64	0.48	0 – 1	.62	0.49	0 – 1
	high	.23	0.42	0 – 1	.15	0.36	0 – 1
Occ. segregation of partner's job ^a	typical male job	.57	0.49	0 – 1	.07	0.26	0 – 1
	integrated job	.22	0.42	0 – 1	.23	0.42	0 – 1
	typical female job	.05	0.22	0 – 1	.31	0.46	0 – 1
Partner's income (Euro) ^b	current gross labor income	2,251.08	2,288.39	0 – 101,599	835.13	1,090.31	0 – 43,155
Partner's hours for domestic labor	0 hours	.29	0.45	0 – 1	.03	0.17	0 – 1
	1-2 hours	.56	0.50	0 – 1	.18	0.38	0 – 1
	3-4 hours	.12	0.32	0 – 1	.38	0.49	0 – 1
	5 and more hours	.03	0.18	0 – 1	.41	0.49	0 – 1
Relation of educ. attainment	both low / middle	.69	0.46	0 – 1	.73	0.44	0 – 1
	man high, woman lower	.11	0.31	0 – 1	.11	0.32	0 – 1
	woman high, man lower	.08	0.27	0 – 1	.06	0.23	0 – 1
	both high	.12	0.32	0 – 1	.09	0.29	0 – 1
Relation of income	partner earns more	.50	0.50	0 – 1	.03	0.44	0 – 1
	both earn same	.32	0.46	0 – 1	.23	0.42	0 – 1
	respondent earns more	.19	0.39	0 – 1	.74	0.18	0 – 1
Relation of occ. segregation ^a	traditional	.30	0.46	0 – 1	.22	0.41	0 – 1
	occupational similarity	.21	0.41	0 – 1	.15	0.36	0 – 1
	slightly atypical	.30	0.46	0 – 1	.21	0.41	0 – 1
	atypical	.04	0.19	0 – 1	.03	0.16	0 – 1
Division of domestic labor ^c	partner does more	.06	0.24	0 – 1	.76	0.43	0 – 1
	both do same	.18	0.39	0 – 1	.16	0.37	0 – 1
	respondent does more	.72	0.45	0 – 1	.03	0.18	0 – 1
Number of events			446			1,030	
Number of respondents			8,988			8,754	
Number person wave obs.			51,644			71,126	

Notes: ^a Rest category: partner is unemployed. ^b Controlled for imputed values. ^c Rest category: overall hours for domestic labor of both partners equal 0.

Source: SOEP.v27, own calculations.

Table 2: Predictors of partner's individual resources for entering a top position (marginal effects of logistic regression)^a

Variable	Women			Men		
	Total	Married	Cohabiting	Total	Married	Cohabiting
<i>Model 1a</i>						
Partner's educational attainment ^b	(Ref.: low)					
middle	0.00266	0.00117	0.03185	0.00379*	0.00346*	0.00857
high	0.00503*	0.00267	0.06637	0.00853***	0.00794**	0.01653
<i>Model 2a</i>						
Occupational segregation of partner's job ^b	(Ref.: typ. female job)					
typical male job	0.00390*	0.00337†	-0.00582	0.00670**	0.00434†	0.02573*
integrated job	-0.00145	-0.00070	-0.00511	0.00301*	0.00227	0.00970†
<i>Model 3a</i>						
Partner's income (Euro) ^{bc}						
current gross labor income	0.00002	0.00013	-0.00248	0.00115	0.00111	0.00108
<i>Model 4a</i>						
Partner's hours for domestic labor ^b	(Ref.: 0 hours)					
1-2 hours	-0.00094	-0.00182†	0.00639†	0.00129	0.00029	0.00439
3-4 hours	-0.00049	-0.00084	0.00198	0.00080	0.00035	0.00064
5 and more hours	0.00264	0.00143	0.01367	-0.00153	-0.00208	-0.00030
Number of events	446	361	85	1,178	1,030	148
Number of respondents	8,988	6,943	2,045	11,050	8,754	2,296
Number person wave observations	51,644	45,376	6,268	71,126	63,924	7,202

Note: ^aControl variables not listed. ^bControlled for missings. ^cControlled for imputed values.

†p < 0.1 *p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

Source: SOEP.v27, own calculations.

Table 3: Predictors of partners' relative resources for entering a top position (marginal effects of logistic regression)^a

	Women			Men		
	Total	Married	Cohabiting	Total	Married	Cohabiting
<i>Model 1b</i>						
Relation of educational attainment ^a	(Ref.: both low / middle)					
man high, woman lower	0.00110	-0.00112	0.02369*	0.00420*	0.00364 †	0.01267
women high, man lower	0.01486**	0.00976*	0.06628 †	0.00516 †	0.00499 †	0.00787
both high	0.01610***	0.01242**	0.05006 †	0.00788**	0.00714**	0.01799
<i>Model 2b</i>						
Relation of occupational segregation ^a	(Ref.)					
atypical	(Ref.)			0.00425	0.00347	0.01963
slightly atypical	-0.00233	-0.00112	-0.00827	-0.00058	-0.00070	0.00193
occupational similarity	-0.00293 †	-0.00144	-0.01132*	0.00286	0.00085	0.01918*
traditional	-0.00710***	-0.00661***	-0.00818	(Ref.)		
<i>Model 3b</i>						
Relation of income ^{ab}	(Ref.: respondent earns more)					
both earn same	-0.00263 †	0.00054	-0.01343**	-0.00088	-0.00070	-0.00232
partner earns more	-0.00337*	-0.00134	-0.01175**	0.00397	0.00250	0.00700
<i>Model 4b</i>						
Division of domestic labor	(Ref. respondent does more)					
partner does more	0.00271	0.00369 †	-0.00405	-0.00048	-0.00110	0.00012
both do same	0.00047	-0.00016	0.00278	-0.00233	-0.00395	0.00266
Number of events	446	361	85	1,178	1,030	148
Number of respondents	8,988	6,943	2,045	11,050	8,754	2,296
Number person wave observations	51,644	45,376	6,268	71,126	63,924	7,202

Note: ^aControl variables not listed. ^bControlled for missings. ^cControlled for imputed values.

†p < 0.1 *p < 0.05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001

Source: SOEP.v27, own calculations.

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