The demise of the family meal? Evidence from the Antipodes

Suzanne Dziurawiec
School of Psychology, Division of Health Sciences, Murdoch University,
Murdoch, Western Australia 6150
S.Dziurawiec@murdoch.edu.au

Farida Tilbury
Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, Sociology & Community Development, Division
of Arts, Social Science and Humanities, Murdoch University.
Murdoch, Western Australia 6150
F.Tilbury@murdoch.edu.au

Danielle Gallegos
Centre for Social & Community Research, Division of Arts, Social Science and
Humanities, Murdoch University,
Murdoch, Western Australia 6150
D.Gallegos@murdoch.edu.au

Loraine Abernethie
Economics and Industry Standing Committee, Legislative Assembly,
Parliament House, Perth, Western Australia 6100
labernethie@parliament.wa.gov.au

Abstract

Popular discourse suggests that family meals are becoming increasingly rare and that
their disappearance is contributing to the rising level of childhood obesity and to
diminished family functioning, with negative psychosocial outcomes for children and
adolescents. Evidence from research studies on the function of family mealtimes has
failed to support such strong claims. What little is known about the social, cultural,
nutritional and psychosocial impact of family meals is based on the mealtime practices of
American families. This paper presents data from a survey of 625 adolescents drawn
from schools in the metropolitan region of Perth, Western Australia . Using an online
questionnaire, adolescents were asked about their current family meal practices and their
ideas about family meals, as well as about their own activities, their health and well-
being, and their sense of family connectedness. Relationships between various
demographic factors, family and individual level variables, health indicators and eating
practices are presented and issues regarding the methodology are described.

The image of the ideal family meal pervades our everyday life from television advertising and programming to literature and beyond. This image presents a 'family' sitting down at a table being served food by a mother wreathed in smiles. It is a traditional, nostalgic image of a cocooned family, safe from the disorder and uncertainty of the outside world. This image is continually validated by a media focus that gives credence to the importance of family meals as a cornerstone of society, connecting individual/s with community and effecting socialization.

Nevertheless, despite these enduring images, there is growing national and international concern regarding the apparent demise of the family meal. Moral panic and fear has set in as eating moves from being a social to a more individual practice (Fischler 1980: 947). The loss of the family meal has been linked to psychological, social and physical effects resulting in, for example, low self esteem, family dysfunction, social unrest and obesity. However, little research exists on the continuing significance, or otherwise, of the family meal as a site where 'community' and communication occur.

This paper presents findings from research aiming to address the significant lack of knowledge regarding the family meal and its role in the current Australian context. This research indicates that concerns about the demise of the family meal are premature, although the form it takes may not necessarily conform to the nostalgic image to which we are exposed.

The literature on meals is divided into three main categories: socio-cultural, psychological and nutritional. The cultural encompasses aspects such as gender and

3

labour divisions, the influence of class, the constitution of a 'proper meal' in terms of

food and preparation as well as types of activity, and the impact of the meal on belonging

(Beardsworth & Keil 1997; Grieshaber 1997; Hupkens et al. 1998; Lupton 2000;

Murcott 1982, 1997, 2000).

The psychological literature has some overlaps, in particular with the meal as a key

facilitator of socialisation. Psychological treatises on the meal tend to focus on

socialization, health and mental health of adolescents and the development of self-esteem,

processes of family communication, and issues of intimacy and trust (Compañ *et al.*

2002; Coveney 1999; Eisenberg et al. 2004; Erwin et al. 2002; Neumark-Sztainer *et al.*

2004; Soliah et al. 2003).

The nutritional literature focuses on the influence of the family meal on food intake and

its nutrition quality, childhood obesity and child-parent interactions around food (Burke

et al. 2001; Campbell & Crawford 2001; Gibson et al. 1998; Oliveria *et al.* 1992).

Just as definitions of 'family' have become more fluid and inclusive, so too has the

definition of 'meal' (Mäkäla 2000). What it is, how it varies with different life phases and

what impact this has on the social fabric of our communities is unknown. Most of the

above studies are based on white, American, middle-class families and the few Australian

studies which exist have produced contradictory findings (Skatssoon 2003). Campbell

and Crawford (2001: 23) suggest that 'in the Australian context we have few insights

regarding the family food environment in which our children learn their food habits, or

4

how this might differ across social groups'. There has been no attempt to bring together

findings on food and family research from a range of disciplines, despite the fact that

'such an integration has the potential to throw light on a number of issues from different

methodological angles' (Coveney 2002: 114).

Part of the definitional problem in identifying the 'family meal' involves the conflation of

actual practice with ideal representation. Murcott (1997) argues that representations of

the family meal reflect an ideal to which people aspire, rather than a reality, and suggests

we need 'to separate reports of frequency from articulations of an idealised image' or

'actual activities' from 'images of family living to which people aspire' (Murcott

1982:693).

The current research was undertaken by a multidisciplinary team consisting of a

psychologist, two sociologists and a nutritionist to try to begin answering some of these

questions: What, where and how are people eating their evening meals? How is this

related to age, class, ethnicity, gender, family composition, and employment status? What

is considered to be a 'family meal'? Who prepares and cooks food in the household?

Does food intake differ between those who do and don't engage in 'family meals'? Is

eating 'family meals' related to psychosocial well-being?

Research Plan, Methods and Technique

After considerable deliberation about the most appropriate methodology, a compromise

position was arrived at which saw Year 10 students from eight secondary schools in the

Perth metropolitan area invited to participate. Being at a critical stage of development in terms of their own nutritional choices, eating habits and health/obesity concerns, the adolescents constitute a relevant sample. Schools were selected to provide a range of socio-economic backgrounds. For convenience of application and to ensure all students (regardless of access to computer and internet access at home) were able to participate, schools were asked to include the survey as part of the Year 10 Health or Science program. Participants were encouraged to complete an online questionnaire. Measures of family connectedness, health and well-being were also included.

Sample

The sample consisted of 314 males (50.2%) and 311 females (49.8%), making a total of 625 Year 10s, 90.4% of whom completed the web-based version and 9.6% the paper-based. We estimated the socioeconomic status of the participants generally through SES bands based on median weekly household income by suburb (2001 ABS data). 40.2% of participants were from schools in suburbs in the high band, 13.4% in the medium and 46.4% in the low.

Household Characteristics

The average number of people living in respondents' houses was 4.5; 92.6% were living with mothers and 1.8% with stepmother, 71.8% with fathers and 9.3% with stepfathers. 9.0% had relatives other than siblings living in the house. Father/stepfather was employed in 92.0% of households, and mother/stepmother employed in 68.7%. Of respondents, 42% were the eldest child in the family, and 35% the youngest.

6

The cultural diversity of the sample broadly reflects that of the population in general. The vast majority of the sample was born in Australia (78.6%), with 3.7% of the sample being from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background. The top six other countries of birth were England (14.9% of other countries), Singapore (9%), New Zealand (8.2%), and Malaysia, Scotland and South Africa (all 5.2%). A large proportion of the sample (73.1%) spoke English at home. The top six other languages spoken at home were Vietnamese (11.4% of other languages), Cantonese and Chinese (7.8%), Serbian (7.2%), Macedonian (6%) and Italian (5.4%).

Family meals: experiences and expectations

In terms of general eating habits, a majority of respondents reported that they ate and drank whatever they wanted, although almost as many were a little careful about eating habits. Few reported that they were 'sometimes' or 'always' on a diet.

Table 1: *Distribution of responses regarding usual eating habits (N=625)*

I eat and drink what I want, whenever I want	274 (43.8%)
I am a little careful about what I eat and drink	284 (45.4%)
I am sometimes on a diet	53 (85%)
I am almost always on a diet	14 (2.2%)

Just over half (52.7%, N=329) reported that they always ate breakfast on weekdays with just over 80% (81.6%, N=510) eating breakfast on the weekends.

7

We asked participants to provide as much detail as they could about the meal they ate the previous night. When coded for the type of food eaten, 72% ate "home-made" meals, 10% instant meals at home (such as instant noodles or frozen complete meals) and 22% fast food such as McDonald's, Hungry Jacks, fish and chips, Chicken Treat etc. Interestingly, over a quarter (27%) of the adolescents reported that they had decided what they were going to eat that night. 15% prepared their own evening meal, but for the majority it was the mother (50%) or father (14%) who had prepared the meal.

Participants were asked to provide more detail about the meal they ate the previous night – what it consisted of, where it was eaten, and whether all household members ate it in the same place.

Meals consisted of a wide variety of foods eaten – from the well balanced to the less nutritional (e.g. 'ice-cream' as a meal). The art of 'home cooking' does not seem to have disappeared, with meals including 'veggie bake and lamb chops'; 'freshly baked pasta with cheese sauce, fried pork schnitels [sic] with a cream sauce, freshly baked capsicun [sic] with a bit of garlic and oil'; 'crumbed fish, mashed potato, fresh peas, fresh corn, fresh carrot, salad'; the ubiquitous 'spaghetti with meat sauce'; and more exotic options such as 'stir fry (noodles, chicken)'; 'satay chicken (sauce from packet) and rice with onions capsicum and carrots'; 'lamb curry with potatoes in it and rice with safron [sic] in it'; and the eclectic 'chiken [sic] curry with rice salad n fries' or 'rice, scrambled eggs with pepperoni, bok choy with potato'. There were also the more traditional 'chops, chips, salad and 2 rolls' and 'sausages mashed potatoes and peas'.

8

Of the 579 responses to the question, 'Where did you eat your meal last night?' almost half ate at a dining room table, with another quarter eating in the lounge and family rooms. A small group (6%) ate in their bedrooms.

Table 2: *Distribution of responses regarding eating site for last night's meal (N=579)*

Dining room table	279 (48.2%)
Lounge room	100 (17.3%)
Kitchen	57 (9.8%)
Family room	48 (8.3%)
Bedroom	35 (6%)
Car	5 (0.9%)
Backyard	4 (0.7%)
Park	1 (0.2%)
Other	50 (8.6%)

76.7% reported this was at the same place as everyone else, and 78.6% that the meal was eaten at the same time as everyone else.

We were also interested in activities undertaken during mealtime (or while eating). As Table 3 indicates, talking was engaged in by almost eight out of ten participants, and while the TV was on in 61.3% of households, only about three quarters of these respondents were actually watching it.[i]

.

9

Table 3: *Activities while eating (total numbers and percentages)*

	Yes	No
Did you talk with others while you were eating? (N=579)	449 (78.1%)	126 (21.9%)
Was the television on while you were eating? (N=579)	355 (61.3%)	224 (38.7%)
If the TV was on, were you watching television? (N=347)	253 (72.9%)	94 (27.1%)

-

70% of the sample perceived their meal the previous night as a 'family' meal. Their reasons were mainly based around the sociality of the event – that everyone was collected for the meal event (48.7%). However, almost 40% used a nutritional definition of the family meal, suggesting it was a family meal because it was home cooked or included meat and vegetables.

Table 4: *Previous night's meal was a family meal because (respondents could tick more than one option; N=645 responses)*

Everybody was there	195 (30.2%)
We were all sitting at a table	119 (18.5%)
The meal was cooked at home	141 (21.9%)
The meal included meat and veggies	117 (18.1%)
The television was off	47 (7.3%)
Other	26 (4.0%)

Of the 30% who felt it was not a family meal, again the focus was on the social aspect of not everyone being together (see Table 5), with the meal not being cooked at home not a

10

major factor (although a number of the 'other' answers indicated that since different family members were eating different foods, this was what precluded it from being a 'family meal').

Table 5: *Previous night's meal was not a family meal because (respondents could tick more than one option; N=164 responses)*

Not everybody was there	58 (35.4%)
We were not sitting at table	35 (21.3%)
The meal was not cooked at home	17 (10.4%)
The meal did not include meat and vegetables	9 (5.9%)
The television was on	12 (7.3%)
Non family members were there	13 (7.9%)
Other	20 (12.2%)

Of course our aim had been to identify not only current eating patterns, but the degree to which these reflect ideals of the family meal and whether having family meals was important to adolescents. In response to the question, 'Is having family meals important to you?' 55.2% of the 625 gave affirmative answers, and 44.8% negative. This almost equal split is fascinating, and we suspected that it reflected a gender difference, but of those who said that family meals were important 49% were male and 51% were female – almost equal proportions.

Of the 215 who said yes (see Table 6), the most common theme in their explanations in the qualitative section of the question, was framed around the opportunity provided by

2007 HICSS Proceedings
Page 719

the meal for communication with other family members. This was related to the second

most frequent theme, that of spending time together.

Table 6: *Why family meals are important (N=455; participants could give more than one response)*

	N	%
all together/bonding	215	63.4
catch-up/talk about issues	170	50.1
love/like each other/family important	25	7.4
it's what families do	21	6.2
food tastes nicer	14	4.1
not specific	12	5.9
fun/happy times	10	2.9
stay healthy	8	2.4
no response	5	1.5
don't know	4	1.2
need food	1	0.3
misc	1	0.3

The following few examples of written responses indicate the overwhelming similarity of

the discourse.

> Yes, because it's the only time everyone gets to sit down and catch up especialy [sic] during the week.

> Yes because you can discuss problems to [sic] your parents.

> Because we can spend quality time together and talk about what is on our mind.

> Because we all sit down and talk.

> It gives us a chance to converse and communicate as a family.

> Because you van [sic] talk about the events that took place in that day and have some family time together.

12

> It's comfy and nice to have the family all together. Having a family meal in the evening is very important to me because I get to talk to my family all together at the same time. We also try and solve problems we may be having. We have a good time and we can all relax while enjoying a good meal.

Those who did not feel the family meal was important gave answers which clustered around the general theme of not caring, or not seeing the point, although one in ten found mealtime an opportunity to take a break from the family or to enjoy their own solitude. One in ten found they had other opportunities for family time or to talk, and that the family meal itself was less important for this aspect of family life.

Table 7: *Those who felt it was not important (N =266; participants could give more than one response)*

	N	%
don't care	64	24.1
not specified	31	11.7
see and talk to my family enough	27	10.2
just a meal	26	9.8
too busy	19	7.1
more important things to do	17	6.4
dislike/hate my family	14	5.3
don't know	11	4.1
prefer to be alone	10	3.8
I'm used to it	8	3.0
overrated	8	3.0
rather not eat with my family	8	3.0
no response	8	3.0
don't need everybody there	6	2.3
just don't feel like it	6	2.3
don't like people watching me eat	3	1.1

13

The qualitative responses for the negative were far less forthcoming with many providing single or a few words in answer. Some examples follow:

> No it doesent [sic] matter.
>
> Because.
>
> No.
>
> Why is it important.
>
> Because its [sic] nothing just eating dinner.
>
> Because I see my family members during the day and I need some space which is at dinner time.
>
> Not really because you get annoyed [sic] with your family. They ask to [sic] many questions.
>
> Because I dislike my sister.
>
> BECAUSE IT IS JUST EATING.
>
> 5RY5RTYR5TY5RT.[ii]

Health and Well-Being

In general, the adolescents reported that their health was good or very good with only about 16% indicating that it was 'fair' or 'poor', although there was moderately high medicine and alcohol use for this age group. Reported use of other drugs was low. When asked to report on their feelings of stress, anxiety or depression during the past week, less than 10% of the sample reported frequent occurrence of such feelings, but another 25% had experienced these feelings 'a few times'. Physical activity levels were very good for about 90% of the group, averaging between one and two hours for the

reporting days. However, there was also a reasonably high level of television viewing throughout the day, with between two and three hours of viewing for the majority of the adolescents. Just over 40% of the adolescents also had part-time jobs, averaging just over 12 hours per week.

The adolescents also had reasonably positive views of themselves, especially in terms of their achievement at school, with more than 93% of those responding describing themselves as 'average' to 'above average' in this area. More than half (54.8%) thought that looks were 'important' and just under half (44.5%) thought that they were at least 'good looking', with about a quarter of the group (27.6%) indicating that they were below average in this regard.

Family Connectedness

A strong finding of the study was the degree to which the adolescents felt that they were connected to their families. More than 70% indicated that family members were 'supportive of each other during difficult times' and more than 65% felt that their family members were 'very close and get along very well'. However, this did not necessarily translate into enjoying 'doing things together', with a slightly reduced proportion of the sample (57.8%) endorsing this type of connectedness and just over a quarter of the sample (26.1%) indicating that their families didn't really enjoy doing things together. However, when adolescents were having problems, parents and other family members were consulted 'quite a bit' or 'very much' by 51.4% and 47.5% of the sample,

respectively. Friends were consulted only slightly more (57.2%). By contrast, teachers were avoided by 57% of the sample.

Conclusion

These results indicate that the moral panic about the demise of the family meal is premature. Our findings fall in between a recent poll by a pasta sauce manufacturer which indicated, 'meal times have become a recipe for food rejection, stress, stand-offs and bribery' with 95% of children rejecting home-cooked meals (Skatssoon 2003), and a Meat and Livestock Australia commissioned study (2003) which indicated that 86% of families sit down to an evening meal and the television is switched off 60% of the time. Similar to Neumark-Sztainer and co-workers' (2000) focus group based research on family meal patterns of adolescents attending seventh and tenth grade in the US, we found a great diversity in family meal patterns, including both the 'sit down regular meal' and the 'eat and run' scenario. We were surprised that almost half of the respondents reported eating around a dining room table, a more traditional image of family interaction than many might expect. Likewise it appears the gendered division of labour is still common, although significant proportions of fathers and of adolescents themselves were preparing meals (one in three of our sample). Home made meals were common, with almost three quarters of our sample reporting eating a meal cooked at home the previous night.

Our findings also support Neumark-Sztainer and colleagues' conclusion that watching television is a relatively common, though by no means universal, activity while eating a

16

meal. Concerns about the impact of television watching suggest that if everyone's eating is done in front of the television set without the scrutiny of adults, 'children might never learn to cut and chew neatly, how to notice what it is that other people need or are saying, or any of the other marks of being "well brought up"' (Visser 1991: 55). Our study indicates that while the television may be on, not everyone is watching it, and for those who are, this does not preclude communication – 80% reported talking during the meal. It is this communication aspect which seems to define it as a 'family meal' for the majority of adolescents. While Neumark-Sztainer and co-workers (2000) found that key reasons for not eating a family meal were busy schedules, dissatisfaction with family relations and a dislike of the food being served at family meals, many of our respondents challenged the value of the 'family meal' itself .

Our findings appear to support Otnes' (1991: 105) argument that meals potentially assemble groups and 'may signify unity and sharing', with almost 75% of our sample indicating that they ate in the same place as other family members on the night in question, and over 70% reporting they ate together 4 or more times a week. Certainly many valued the family meal as an opportunity to come together and share with other members of their families. However, for almost equal numbers, the ideal of the family meal meant little, and was seen as unimportant to them.

The family meal has long been considered a strong marker of, and a vehicle for, promoting family connectedness, being an opportunity to develop a sense of family belonging and a site for transferring not only a food heritage (Soliah et al 2003), but other

17

aspects of socialisation. The findings of the current study go some way to dispelling the myth that traditional notions of the family meal no longer exist. It also suggests that socialisation can still occur in non-traditional meal practices.

References

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2002). *Census of population and housing: Selected social and housing* characteristics for suburbs and postal areas for 2001 census. Catalogue 2029.5 (electronic format). Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Beardsworth, A. and T. Keil (1997) *Sociology on the Menu: An Invitation to the Study of Food and Society*. London: Routledge.

Burke, V., L.J. Beilin and D. Dunbar (2001) 'Family lifestyle and parental body mass index as predictors of body mass index in Australian children: A longitudinal study', *International Journal of Obesity and Related Metabolic Disorders* 25: 147-57.

Campbell, K. and D. Crawford (2001) 'Family food environments as determinants of preschool-aged children's eating behaviours: Implications for obesity prevention policy. A review', *Australian Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics* 58.1: 19-25.

Compañ E., J. Moreno, M.T. Ruiz and E. Pascual (2002) 'Doing things together: Adolescent health and family rituals', *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 56.2: 89-94.

Coveney, J. (1999) 'The government of the table: Nutrition expertise and the social organisation of family food habits', pp. 259-75 in J. Germov and L. Williams. (eds) *A Sociology of Food and Nutrition* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

18

Coveney, J. (2002) 'What does research on families and food tell us? The implications

    for nutrition and dietetic practice', *Nutrition and Dietetics* 59.2: 113-19.

Erwin, P.G., A. Burke and D.G. Purves (2002) 'Food sharing and perceptions of the

    status of a relationship', *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 94.2: 506-08.

Eisenberg, M.E., R.E. Olson, D. Neumark-Sztainer, M. Story and L. Bearinger (2004)

    'Correlations between family meals and psychosocial well-being among

    adolescents', *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine* 158.Aug: 792-96.

Feiring, C. and M. Lewis (1987) 'The ecology of some white middle class families at

    dinner', *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 10.3: 377-90.

Fischler, C. (1980) 'Food habits, social change and the nature/culture dilemma', *Social

    Science Information* 19.6: 937-53.

Gibson, E.L., J. Wardle and C.J. Watts (1998) 'Fruit and vegetable consumption,

    nutritional knowledge and beliefs in mothers and children', *Appetite* 31: 205-228.

Grieshaber, S. (1997) 'Mealtime rituals: Power and resistance in the construction of

    mealtime rules', *The British Journal of Sociology* 48.4: 649-66.

Hupkens, C.L.H., R.A. Knibbe, A.H. van Otterloo and M.J. Drop (1998) 'Class

    differences in the food rules mothers impose on their children: A cross-national

    study', *Social Science Medicine* 47.9: 1331-39.

Lalonde, M. (1992) 'Deciphering a meal again, or the anthropology of taste',

    Social Science Information 31.1: 69-86.

Lupton, D. (2000) 'The heart of the meal: Food preferences and habits among Australian

    couples', *Sociology of Health and Illness* 22.1: 94-109.

19

Mäkäla, J. (2000) 'Cultural definitions of the meal', pp. 7-18 in H.L. Meiselman (ed)

> *Dimensions of the Meal: The Science, Culture, Business and Art of Eating*,

> Gaithersburg: Aspen Publishers.

Meat and Livestock Australia (2003) *Mealtime Habits in Australian Households*.

Murcott, A. (1982) 'On the social significance of the "Cooked Dinner" in South Wales',

> *Social Science Information* 21.415: 677-96.

Murcott, Anne. (1997) 'Family meals – a thing of the past?' pp. 32-49 in P. Caplan (ed)

> *Food, Health and Identity*, London: Routledge.

Murcott, A. (2000) 'Invited presentation: Is it still a pleasure to cook for him? Social

> changes in the household and family', *Journal Consumer Studies and Home*

> *Economics* 24.2: 78-84.

Neumark-Sztainer, D., P.J. Hannan, M. Story, J. Croll and C. Perry. (2003) 'Family meal

> patterns: Associations with sociodemographic characteristics and improved

> dietary intake among adolescents', *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*

> 103.3: 317-22.

Neumark-Sztainer, D., M. Wall, M. Story, and J.A. Fulkerson. 2004. 'Are family meal

> patterns associated with disordered eating behaviors among adolescents?' *Journal*

> *of Adolescent Health* 35.5.Nov: 350-359.

Oliveria, S.A., R.C. Ellison, L.L. Moore, M.W. Gillman, E.J. Garrahie and M.R. Singer

> (1992) 'Parent-child relationships in nutrient intake: The Framingham children's

> study', *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 56: 593-98.

Otnes, P. (1991) 'What do meals do?' pp. 97-108 in E.L. Fürst, R. Prättälä, M. Ekström,

L. Holm and U. KjAErnes (eds) *Palatable Worlds: Sociocultural Food Studies*,

Oslo: Solum Norvag.

Skatssoon, J. (2003) 'Kids' meal habits are pasta joke, claims poll', Courier-Mail. 30

September.

Soliah L., J. Walter, S. Barnes (2003) 'Meal planning in the 21st century home',

Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences 95.1: 68-72.

---

[i] We also asked about daily TV watching, and found that respondents reported watching on average close to 4 hours of television a day. But students also overwhelmingly (89.1%) reported undertaking some physical activity such as Phys Ed classes, walking, running, football/soccer/hockey, netball/basketball over the past week, averaging an hour on week days and two hours on weekends. This indicates that students are not simply sedentary television and video game viewers.

[ii] This answer indicates the methodological difficulties of inviting adolescents to participate in a school setting where the question of their consent is perhaps a moot point, since teachers agreed that their classes would participate. Since this was one of the compulsory questions, past which students could not move on the WEB based survey until they had entered something, this student simply hit random keys on the keyboard in order to move through the questionnaire. The various methodological issues arising from the research design will be taken up in a separate paper.