

INTERGENERATIONAL TRANSMISSION OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF RELIGIOSITY AMONG FAMILY MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT: In our study, we have examined the intergenerational transmission of religious self-identification of parents and their offspring. Data were collected among members of 600 large Hungarian families. In the research, we applied dyadic data analysis to explore whether the different types of religiosity would be transmitted with an equal probability, and which factors have a significant effect on the intergenerational process. Our data revealed that family is the prime field of religious socialization, and detected a significant correlation between the religiosity of fathers, mothers, and their offspring. Our results confirmed the hypothesis: that institutional religious practice facilitates the intergenerational transmission of religiosity. Similarly, children quite often take over the definite non-religious ideology of their parents. Fuzzy religiosity is the least likely to be transmitted.

KEYWORDS: Religiosity, value-transmission, intergenerational, cultural stereotype, large family

INTRODUCTION

There is a relative consensus among researchers that the most important field of religious socialization is the family. However, due to the differences between the methodologies used, we can find some contradictions in the scholarly literature (Roest et al. 2009). The variable-centered approach focuses exclusively on group-level analysis of the data, and only provides the opportunity to compare the religiosity of two successive generations (Kenny et al. 2005; Luo and Klohn 2005). The advantage of the variable-centered approach is that it does not require special data collection methods; the representative datasets of large nation-wide and international research studies are suitable for analysis. Although Hungary was one of the first Central European countries in which researchers had the opportunity to scientifically study religion, starting at the end of the 70's, these projects have mainly focused on macro-social processes. The most important results of social surveys have shown that in Hungary – as in most modern societies – traditional denominational religiosity has decreased, while the prevalence of private religiosity has increased. In general, it can be stated that younger generations are less religious than are members of older cohorts. About half of the population defines itself as being religious in its own way. An additional 20 percent of Hungarians follow

the Church's teachings. Individuals who are religious in their own way tend to keep their distance from denominations. Yet a significant proportion of these people are not hostile to churches (Rosta 2011).

There is much less information regarding the changes that have taken place at the level of micro-communities in recent decades. The suitability of variable-centered measurement is limited, when it comes to exploring the strength of the connection between parents' religiosity and that of their offspring. It is not clear how much of the correlation can be explained by family relationships, or by particular social processes that have the same effect on all members of the family. It is also questionable whether the position of an individual in the family might influence the transmission of parental religiosity or irreligiosity.

The other approach is dyadic data analysis (Kenny et al. 2005), which explores the similarities between two explicitly related people; e.g., parents and their children. The condition for applying this method is that the two people must form a real dyad. To our knowledge, this kind of data capture has not been made in Hungary since the end of Communism. At the end of 2014, when we carried out our research among large Hungarian families, our goal was to collect data from more than one member of each family to provide the opportunity for a dyadic analysis. The limitation on analyzing the information is that the data are not representative of the whole population of the country, but describe only a specific group within Hungarian society. However, due to the lack of similar projects, we consider our results to be of interest to the scientific community. While macro-level changes in the religiosity of Hungarian society's consecutive generations have been quite well-explored since the 1970's, the question of whether political and economic changes had an impact at the family level is much fuzzier. To reduce this gap, in this paper we explore the intergenerational transmission of religiosity with a dyadic analysis of a database that considers family as its research unit. Data were collected from several members of each of 600 large Hungarian families. While presenting the results, we use the term 'children' to refer to people's status as offspring in the family, not to their age. The two requirements, for a participant to be interviewed, were a minimum age of 15 years and living in a common household. When we use the term 'children' in this article, we're referring to adolescents or young adults. Another keyword of this paper is 'large family'. This term refers to families in which there are at least three children being raised or having been raised.

OVERVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

In the following section, we overview the relevant literature that inspired us to examine the correlation between characteristics of the family and the probability of intergenerational transmission of religiosity in this specific sample. As we consider our research to be a pilot study, we consider the relevant scholarly literature on the topic to identify factors that might have a significant effect on transmission.

Several research studies of parents and their children have detected similarities between consecutive generations' sets of values. Two successive generations of the same family have been shown to most likely hold similar views regarding religion (Spilman et al. 2013; Bengston et al. 2009; Uecker and Ellison 2012). In considering how close this correlation is, and what factors affect its strength, however, there is no consensus among researchers. In some cases, the effect of the family type, or of parenting methods, was identified (Myers 1996), while at other times these factors were not proven decisive (Nelsen 1980). Apart from the religiosity of the parents, the consistency between the parents' attitudes is also an important factor in the success of religious transmission (Bader and Desmond 2006). Another important factor, which can determine the religious characteristics of not only a particular family but of a whole

country, is that of parental and national religious socialization (Ruiter and Tubergen 2009). During the decades of state socialism in Hungary, institutional religious education was not supported. This meant that the family was the only field of religious socialization; thus, we hypothesized a significant correlation between parents' religiosity and that of their children.

In this paper, we explore the strength of this correlation. As noted, in modern societies the younger cohorts are usually less religious than their parents. However, in post-socialist countries, some changes may have had an opposite effect after the end of Communism. The socialist regime relegated religion to the private sphere, and those who publicly embraced faith or were religiously committed were threatened with disadvantages, small or large, because religion was incompatible with the official ideology. Although we cannot speak of explicit persecution of religion, the state administration tried to prevent the formation of small religious communities in several ways. For these reasons, the religious socialization of children and adolescents in Central and Eastern Europe became still more the task of parents and grandparents, than it was in western countries. Since two and a half decades ago, when the iron curtain fell, the religious educational system has undergone major changes; moreover, religious education has become an optional part of the curriculum in state-run schools. Additionally, many religious peer-communities exist nationwide. As a result of the above, it is conceivable that young adults from secular families are more religious than their parents. That would correspond with Kelley and DeGraaf's (1997) results, which showed that the overarching religious environment determines an individual's religiosity more strongly than does parental influence. In contrast, on the basis of Müller and co-workers' argument (2014), we can hypothesize that, in post-communist countries, society is not able to provide a strong context for religious socialization. In line with this, studies have shown that institutional religiosity has declined among Hungarian youth. At the millennium, more than half of the population aged 15-29 identified themselves as religious in some way. Twelve years later, this proportion did not exceed 38 percent (Rosta 2013).

Our study reveals how the studied families are characterized by religious homogeneity, what is the direction of the differences between parents and their children, and whether the different types of religiosity are inherited with the same probability.

In the scientific study of religion, the dominant thesis of secularization has considered the decline and setback of religiosity as an inevitable consequence of modernization. The literature of recent years reports that, apart from the previously exclusive forms of religion, a non-institutional religiosity that is often not connected to dogmas or rites has gained ground (Rosta 2002; 2007; Tomka 1991; Davie 2000). Those people who define themselves as religious in their own way are positioned between traditionally religious and non-religious groups. They do not form a homogeneous group, but the term instead covers several different kinds of religiosity. Storm's (2009) cluster analysis identified four different types of fuzzy fidelity: moderately religious, passive, believers without belonging, and believers without believing. Storm's international comparison shows that, in different European countries, the identified six clusters (the four types of fuzzy fidelity, plus the categories 'very religious' and 'secular') appear with varying relevance. To clarify why different forms of religiosity are transferred with different levels of efficiency, it is first important to understand how religious socialization takes place. The scholarly literature identifies three decisive factors in the process of socialization: the family, religious institutions, and peers. While some researchers consider the latter two factors to be of secondary importance, others think intergenerational transmission is facilitated by the process through which parents channel their children into communities that correlate with their religious beliefs (Himmelfarb 1980). If the channeling hypothesis is adequate to the context of our study, then it is assumed that – in those families where parents are religious in

their own ways – the influence of peers and institutions is lessened, so the transmission of this type of religiosity is less efficient.

Beyond the characteristics of the family of origin, the roles of social context and shared cultural values are crucial to clarifying the factors that significantly affect intergenerational transmission.

Research examining the intergenerational transmission of values often emphasizes that similarities in the value profiles of people living together are not only caused by successful transmission, but also by the set values of the broader social context and cultural experiences. The concept of cultural stereotypes as an important factor in intergenerational similarity was introduced by Kenny and Acitelli (1994). Operating within the same socio-cultural context accentuates the similarities between parents' values and those of their children (Barni et al. 2012; Roest et al. 2009). Several concepts, which were summarized by Barni and co-authors in their study (2014), have evolved over the past few years into an investigation of normative influence, which may contribute to intergenerational similarities within families. These various approaches consider the impact of social context differently.

The concept called *Zeitgeist* or *cultural stereotype* or *normative profile* considers the typical or normative responses of the members of a society or of a particular group to be a moderating factor, while exploring the strength of intergenerational correlation (e.g., Acitelli et al.; Kenny and Acitelli 1994).

During the comparison of the *overall parent-child value similarity*, the value-sets of the dyad's two members include the possible impact of the aforementioned factors (See Boenke et al. 2007).

The *distinctive or unique parent-child similarity* integrates the previous two models. (See in Friedmeier and Trommsdorf 2011). To determine the similarity between the two members of the dyad, the results were controlled by the average value of the whole sample, or by the scores of randomly assembled dyads. The study of Roest and co-authors (2009) provides an overview of the methodology and results of pioneering research regarding the effects of cultural stereotypes.

Since previous studies mainly operated with high-level measurement variables to describe general values or multiple dimensions of religiosity, our methods of analysis were selected in alignment. Our data processing had to adapt to the nominal variable of religious self-classification. Via the random sorting of parents and children, we tested whether the similarity between members of the random dyads differed significantly from that of the actual parent-child dyads.

The effect of birth order on the intergenerational process cannot be disregarded either. Studies dealing with intergenerational value-transfer often ignore the significance of children's position within the family, even though a large amount of the scientific literature confirms that the birth order of children living in the same family and household has a strong impact. Not only does birth order affect the child's development and risk-taking behavior, but also their whole personality and willingness to follow the parental model (Booth and Kee 2009; Sulloway and Zweigenhaft 2010; Krombholz 2006; Casher 1977).

The peculiarity of our research is that data were collected from up to three children per family, which provides the opportunity to examine the relationship between birth order and the transfer of religiosity. The minimal difference in age of those children who were born first, second, third or later precludes age as an explanation for the measured differences.

AIMS

Before presenting the results of our study, it is vital to clarify the aims and limitations of this essay.

The aim of this paper is to explore the correlations between some characteristics of the religiosity of consecutive generations of particular families. It is obvious that parental religious engagement can have a significant effect on the religiosity of the offspring. However, it is unclear whether the different types of religiosity are transmitted with equal probability, as well as which factors and variables have a significant effect on intergenerational transmission.

We hypothesized that institutional religious practice facilitates intergenerational transmission. Similarly, children quite often take over the definite non-religious ideology of their parents. Fuzzy religiosity is the least likely to be transmitted. The role of the child's position in the family and their birth order is not the core question of this study. But, due to methodological reasons and the need to provide independence of observation, the parent-child dyads had to be divided based on birth order. In the 'discussion' section, we reflect on the observed differences among siblings.

Our research has some remarkable limitations. The data were collected among a specific group of Hungarian society, so international comparison was not feasible. We aimed to explore the important role of some specific variables and the type of parental religiosity. We emphasize that our results cannot be generalized, but that it is still instructive to look at the correlations. We consider this research a pilot study, to prove that it is justified to apply dyadic analysis among family members in studies clarifying what type of religiosity may be inherited and to what extent. Our intention was to identify the relevant factors in religious transmission on the base of former empirical studies, not to set up a hypothesis on the basis of theoretical literature.

SAMPLE AND METHODS

In our analysis, we used the database of the research that took place among Hungarian large families in 2015. The sampling was conducted using the member registration of the National Association of Large Families (NOE)¹. From the random sample of 600 families, we selected those families that represented the whole group on the basis of residence. Our research differs from previous surveys in that, while usually only one person – most often the mother – responds to the questions, in our case more than one member of each family was interviewed. Optimally, both parents and all children aged 15 or older, still living in the same household, filled out the questionnaire. This means that one to five members answered the questions per family. For the study of the intergenerational process, we obviously only took into account those families in which both parent and offspring filled out the questionnaire.

We applied the dyadic method to the data analysis; in the case of parent-child dyads, the two-sided dyadic design was preferred (Kenny et al. 2005).

A nominal variable was used to determine the interviewees' religiosity. Respondents had to group themselves into the following categories: 'I'm religious, I follow the teachings of the church', 'I'm religious in my own way', or 'I'm not religious'. Although in previous studies participants' religious self-classification has incurred concerns due to being considered an ordinal variable, in this paper we assume that – whereas institutional religiosity and private religiosity differ in several ways – the terms are not designating the degree of religiosity, so it

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cannot be said that people who follow the church's teachings are more religious than those who believe without belonging. There is no doubt that religiosity is a more complex phenomenon than can be sufficiently described with only one variable. During the research we studied several areas of family life, although we had to choose to focus on a particular indicator of religiosity to keep the interviews from running too long. During the structured interview, a part of the pilot study that was carried out prior to the collection of data, we found significant differences between institutional religiosity, private religiosity, and irreligiosity. Thus, during data analysis people who classified themselves as 'atheist' or simply 'not religious' were merged.

Six types of dyads were formed, based on the birth order of the children. Offspring born first, second, and third or later were arranged into dyads with both of their parents. To preserve the independence of the observations, only the eldest child was included in the analysis if several children born third or later within the same family filled out the questionnaire.

Regarding the most relevant socio-economic characteristics, most families were nuclear (62%) and the average size of the households was 5.1 capita, which is almost twice the national average. The respondents were well educated: 33 percent of parents were university graduates, which is quite high compared to the 19 percent of the Hungarian population that have gained a university degree. Ninety percent of fathers and 56 percent of mothers had a full-time job.

Denominationally the sample was heterogeneous, with Roman Catholics slightly overrepresented and Calvinists underrepresented, as compared to the data of the 2011 Census. In contrast, 91 percent of the parent dyads were denominationally homogeneous.

The data was arranged in a cross table, to determine the extent to which people living in the same family were characterized by religious homogamy. For the parent-child dyads, odds ratios were calculated to examine how parents' religiosity influences that of their children. Our primary aim was to investigate the effect of the family on youth's religiosity, and therefore it had to be excluded that the similarity between siblings comes from the sample's homogeneity. This was especially of a high risk, because similar large families were investigated. From the five sub-samples (fathers, mothers, and oldest, middle, and youngest kids), pseudo-dyads were formed by a random number generator, so the children were paired with other parents in order to see if there was also a significant correlation between them.

As a statistical test, we applied Pearson's Chi2 test. The homogeneity of the crosstabs was measured with λ .

RESULTS

Regarding religious self-determination, the examined sample shares many similarities with the national representative survey results², while several differences have also been found. As in other modern societies, the dominance of private religiosity that is independent of institutions and communities is increasing in Hungary (Davie 2000; Tomka F. 1991; Tomka M. 2010). Among large families, non-traditional religiosity was also the most typical form both among fathers and mothers. The proportion of the fathers who were religious in their own way was 37.9%, while among mothers it was 40.3%. Comparing this result to the whole society, private religiosity is underrepresented in the sample. In contrast, the prevalence of traditional, denominational religiosity is more common in large families (25.3% of fathers and 31.6% of mothers). Of fathers, 36.9% were non-religious; among the mothers this rate was 28.1%. Parents were characterized by strong homogamy ($p < 0.001$): in nearly three quarters of the

² For more detail see Table 2 and Figure 1.

cases (72.6%), both parents gave the same response. In 16% of the couples, one of the parents described themselves as being religious in some way, while the other stated that they were not religious. Among these couples, it was four times more common that the mother was religious and the father was not. Only sixteen partners of the irreligious mothers were religious in their own way, while none were found to be followers of any church's teaching. Significantly more children were non-religious (48,5%). One and a half times more offspring were religious in their own way (30%) than were those who followed the disciplines of a church (21,5%). Breaking down offspring by birth order, it appears that first-born children are the least religious, while among children with higher birth number the likelihood of religiosity increases. This does not mean that the family becomes more religious as the number of children rises, since the same effect can be observed in three-child families.

When examining the intergenerational processes, it is clear that both parents have significant impact on their children's religiosity (in every case, $p < 0,001$). Comparing father and mother dyads, it is visible that, regardless of birth order, homogamy is stronger amongst father-child pairs. (see λ scores of Table 1). The discrepancy is quite similar in the three sub-samples. The difference in the proportion of homogeneous father-child and mother-child dyads was 2,7% amongst first-born offspring, 3,8% amongst second-born children and 3,9% amongst third- or later-born children. This seems to suggest that the father's religiosity influences their children's religiosity more strongly than does the mother's. If we take a closer look to the data, it is clear that the offspring of fathers, who are religious according to the church's teachings, are more likely to become institutionally religious when compared with those of similar mothers. Examining the parental homogamy, we also see that 94.2% of the partners of traditionally religious fathers are also institutionally religious, while only 72.9% of the mothers in this category can say the same.

The odds ratios suggest that, for first-born children, the traditional religiosity of the father and the irreligiosity of the mother are the strongest determining factors. Offspring of fathers who are following the church's teaching are 3.17 times more likely to be religious in the same way, than what we might expect based on random distribution. Mothers' denominational religiosity is less determining; although, in their case, the odds ratio is also greater than two. Irreligiosity also has a high chance of inheritance: the odds ratio is 2.59 for fathers and 3.75 for mothers. It is striking that private religiosity is inherited the least. This is the only type of parental religiosity in which the odds ratio is less than one; thus, children of parents who are religious in their own way will more likely be non-religious than we would expect based on the random distribution. However, neither can it be stated that the offspring of parents who are religious in their own way will become non-religious. In the cells of the crosstab, which might suggest that they will become non-religious, the odds ratio is just slightly more than one by both parents (1.09 for fathers and 1.36 for mothers). It can also be concluded that it is very unlikely that children of parents who are religious in their own way will follow the church's teaching. No case was found where an offspring of a parent who was non-religious would follow the church's teachings, and only seldom the child profess to be religious in his or her own way.

Examining the crosstabs of the second-born children and their parents suggests the same results. The most important deviation, compared with the first-borns, is that the second child of non-traditionally religious fathers will likely believe without belonging, despite the fact that the odds ratio is just slightly more than one. In the other categories of religiosity, the correlation is strong, so in traditionally religious or irreligious families the intergenerational transmission is also strong.

Within the dyads of third- or later-born children, traditional religiosity and irreligiosity are most likely inherited. Among the children of parents who believe without belonging, the

highest odds ratio was measured for those who are religious in their own way (fathers 1.26 and mothers 1.29).

By examining the relationship between the intergenerational transmission of religiosity and birth order, we found that homogeneity is stronger amongst dyads of later-borns. This similarity is proved by the diagonal figures of the crosstabs, and the λ scores. (See the relevant details in Table 1).

We created a dichotomous variable based on the religiousness of parents, distinguishing those families where both parents follow the teachings of a church from those families where at least one parent is religious in his or her own way, or is non-religious. The odds ratios have shown that, in families where both parents are religious according to the teachings of a church, children are 3.65 times more likely to become traditionally religious as well, compared with the random distribution. This significantly exceeds the measured scores of any parent-child dyad. In addition, it is very unlikely that an offspring of two traditionally religious parents defines him- or herself as non-religious.

Our data reveal that, regardless of birth order, there is a significant correlation between the religiosity of the two generations. To test whether this correlation is caused by the intergenerational transmission of parental religiosity or whether it is to be explained by the homogeneity of the sample, pseudo-dyads were created. In neither case did the pseudo-dyads showed a significant correlation: the average value of the Chi2-test was 0.209.

To eliminate any bias deriving from the randomness of pairing, we used the method proposed by Little and Rubin (1987): the test was repeated five times. The average values of the resulting odds ratios were calculated. The average value of odds ratio in the diagonal of the pseudo father-child crosstabs was 1.004, which means that the response of the offspring was virtually independent from the father's response. There was no significant difference in the case of the mothers; after five iterations, the average odds ratio was 1.108 in the diagonal. The detected differences between the offspring with distinct birth order cannot be explained by age difference, since the average age was similar in all three sub-samples. The average age of first-borns was 21.4 years (SD=5.9), second-borns was 21.3 (SD=5.6), and third- or later-borns was 20.6 (SD=5.6).

Father (N=227)							Mother (N=263)						
1st born	Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		
	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	
Institutionally	3.17	70.0	0.23	10.6	0.00	0.0	2.01	61.3	0.05	2.5	0.0	0.0	
In own way	1.18	26.0	0.86	39.4	0.51	16.4	0.86	26.3	81.2	36.5	0.31	7.7	
Not religious	0.18	4.0	1.09	50.0	2.59	83.6	0.41	12.4	1.36	61.0	3.75	92.3	
$\lambda=0,327$ $p<0,001$							$\lambda=0,317$ $p<0,001$						
Father (N=147)							Mother (N=177)						
2nd born	Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		
	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	
Institutionally	2.54	65.8	0.31	13.9	0.0	0.0	1.85	59.6	0.12	5.1	0.0	0.0	
In own way	1.22	31.6	1.18	52.3	0.53	15.9	1.09	35.1	1.07	46.8	0.38	9.3	
Not religious	0.10	2.6	0.76	33.8	2.80	84.1	0.16	5.3	1.10	48.1	3.73	90.7	
$\lambda=0,378$ $p<0,001$							$\lambda=0,320$ $p<0,001$						
Father (N=128)							Mother (N=150)						
3rd or later born	Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		Follow the church		Religious in own way		Not religious		
	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	OR	%	
Institutionally	2.71	74.3	0.24	10.7	0.0	0.0	1.62	60.7	0.13	5.2	0.0	0.0	
In own way	0.62	17.1	1.26	55.4	0.65	18.9	0.81	30.4	1.29	50.0	0.35	8.3	
Not religious	0.31	8.6	0.77	33.9	2.80	81.1	0.24	8.9	1.15	44.8	3.82	91.7	
$\lambda=0,431$ $p<0,001$							$\lambda=0,413$ $p<0,001$						

TABLE 1: The Crosstabs of religiosity of parents and their children (odds ratio and %)

DISCUSSION

Parent-child homogeneity

The results obtained during the investigation of the intergenerational process of religiosity confirmed the hypothesis that a strong correlation can be observed between the religious attitudes of parents and their children. Both fathers and mothers have been compared with each child, regarding religiosity, and a significant relationship was found. In parent-offspring crosstabs, the highest numbers can be found in the diagonal part, which means that most respondents categorized themselves in the same way as did the other member of the dyad. In addition to this close relationship it can also be stated that, among the younger generation, the proportion of those who are irreligious is much higher. It is hard to decide whether these data confirm the hypothesis of secularization – namely, that children are less religious than their parents – or whether the results can be explained by age (Rosta 2007), so that as the younger generations grow older, they will become more religious. However, the change in the social environment and the strengthening of those impulses that could promote the spread of religion did not have a noticeable effect on the young people in our sample. We

did not find any dyads in which the offspring of irreligious parents were religious according to a church's teachings. Because religious self-classification was considered the indicator of religiosity, the task of self-definition was passed on to the respondents. As previous research has pointed out, in an institutional religious environment (e.g., a denominational school), being religious according to the church's teachings means stricter standards, with a more consistent adherence to rituals and principles also being expected (Pusztai 2004). We cannot exclude with absolute certainty the possibility that the difference between traditionally religious parents' and their privately religious children's religiosity is not just a substantive definitional difference. However, considering that those who are religious in their own way attend church and religious gatherings less frequently than do those who follow a church's teachings, it is likely that there are real substantive differences among respondents who listed themselves in the various categories of religiosity.

Previous studies assessing the effect of birth order on religiosity have found a weak but existing connection. This was mainly explained by the fact that later-born offspring need to devise different strategies to adequately enjoy parental resources. In practice, this means that the oldest siblings usually take over and embrace parental values, while younger siblings often "rebel". Our results do not confirm this hypothesis; in most of the analyzed families, the religiosity of later-born children was more similar to their parents' religiosity than was that of the first-borns. This might present an alternative strategy for later-born children to access parental resources in families where earlier-born siblings' religiosity differ from their parents' religiosity.

Fathers and mothers

The meta-analysis of Clark and co-workers (1986), which examined the effect of parents' religiosity on that of their children, could not clarify how the gender of the parent influences transmission. In most cases, the mother's religion was dominant, yet the results of several studies show that the father's religiosity is more powerful. Furthermore, there are studies that show no significant difference between the two. Our findings seem to support the idea that the father's religiosity has a stronger effect on children than does the mother's. The number of cases is not high enough to break down the data by gender, but there were also many more male than female children among those analyzed, so it cannot be excluded that an alignment with the same-sex parent's religiosity is the dominant factor. Additionally, most of the parental couples can be described by religious homogamy: i.e., partners of religious fathers are usually religious themselves. This is especially true for those who follow church teachings. In those families where there is a difference between parents, it is nearly always the mother who is more religious. Thus, it can be said that mothers are less able to pass on religiosity in cases when their partner is not religious. Probably it is more correct to interpret the results in a way that shows parental homogamy as an influence on the efficiency of intergenerational transmission.

Types of religiosity

Analyzing the different types of religiosity, the results confirmed our hypothesis that these are not all inherited in the same way from parents to children. The odds ratios reveal that the highest probability of religious homogamy was found among secular parents and their children. Moreover, there is a substantial likelihood that offspring of parents who follow a church's teaching will claim to be denominationally religious as well. The results are the most contradictory in families where the parents are religious in their own way. In most of the crosstabs – though not in all – the children of parents who are religious in their own way are most likely to define themselves in the same way. Yet the odds ratios only slightly exceed the values that would be received by a random distribution. One possible explanation is that the religiosity of either a follower of a church's teachings or a non-believer is the most coherent, so

it can be more effectively transmitted than can the religiosity of a parent classified in the third category. This is consistent with the channeling hypothesis' statement (Himmelfarb 1980), that parent-child religious homogeneity is created as parents channel their children into peer groups and institutions that are consistent with the parents' values. In Hungary, this manifests itself in school choice and in joining small religious communities. By studying the religious backgrounds of the youth of denominational schools, Pusztai identified several types. In our sample, highly qualified parents who make the most informed decisions in choosing schools were over-represented. This is certainly true of strongly secular parents who choose schools of other ideologies for their children. Parents who are religious in their own way occupy a transitional position in this respect, as well. They channel their offspring the least consciously into peer groups.

Our data did not present whether, in accordance with Storm's 2009 results, private religion actually covers several different types of religiosity. If this is true, then it is possible that members of these sub-groups, who are religious in their own way, transfer their values to their children with different efficiency.

Common cultural environment

The significant correlation between the members of dyads indicates that family plays an important role in religious socialization. However, significant differences were observed in the religiosity of the two analyzed generations. As noted, to be able to determine to what extent the significant relationship between the religiosity of parents and children can be explained by the peculiarities of the family, pseudo-dyads were generated. If religiosity had remained significant between randomly paired parents and young people, there will be reason to believe that the similarity, in part, stemmed from the common cultural environment in which the families of our sample live. The statistical tests did not show any similarities regarding religiosity among the members of the random dyads. Overall, we were unable to prove that cultural stereotypes influence the efficiency of intergenerational transmission between parents and their children.

It is noteworthy that, despite the homogeneity of the sample – which makes the generalization of the results or their comparability in an international context impossible – the observed similarity of the consecutive generations disappeared when we paired members of different families randomly.

SUMMARY

In conclusion, we can say that a family is a decisive terrain of religious socialization. Both parents' religious beliefs have a significant effect on the religiosity of their offspring. The highest probability of successful value transmission was observed in families where there was a religious homogeneity between the two parents. The different types of religiosity were not transmitted with the same likelihood to the younger generation: less-institutionalized private religiosity was harder to transfer than was institutionalized religiosity. The degree of heterogeneity amongst a group of believers who do not follow institutionalized religion may be a subject for a more thorough study.

Our results support the idea that parental influence remains in the long-term, and that religious similarity amongst family members is maintained through adulthood. A limitation on interpreting the results is the fact that the tested sample describes only a special group within Hungarian society. Still, we think that – over the past decades since the ideological obstacles have been removed from the sociological study of religion, and apart from the

variable-centered analysis of the topic – too little attention has been paid to the dyadic analysis that would be suitable for the exploration of intergenerational changes at the family level. Thus, we believe that the results of our research may be of interest to sociologists of religion. The suitability of the dyadic approach has also been confirmed, and may inspire other researchers to apply this design as a contribution to highlight the directions of further research.

Our data revealed several research questions worth pursuing to explore a more detailed elaboration. To clarify the possible explanation of the correlations we have discovered, a more systematic exploration of the relevant literature is essential. To test the corresponding hypothesis, a more specific data collection would be necessary, one adequate to examine several aspects of religiosity.

APPENDIX

	Mother		Father		Child		Nationwide
Catholic	279	74%	233	75,6%	258	75%	71,3%
Calvinist	67	17,8%	49	15,9%	57	16,5%	21,2%
Lutheran	12	3,2%	9	2,9%	4	1,2%	4%
Hebrew	2	0,5%	2	0,7%	3	0,8%	0,2%
Other	17	4,5%	15	4,9%	22	6,5%	3,3%
Total	377	100%	308	100%	344	100%	100%

TABLE 2: Denominational Distribution of the Sample* (N; %)

*Only those who have declared a denominational engagement.

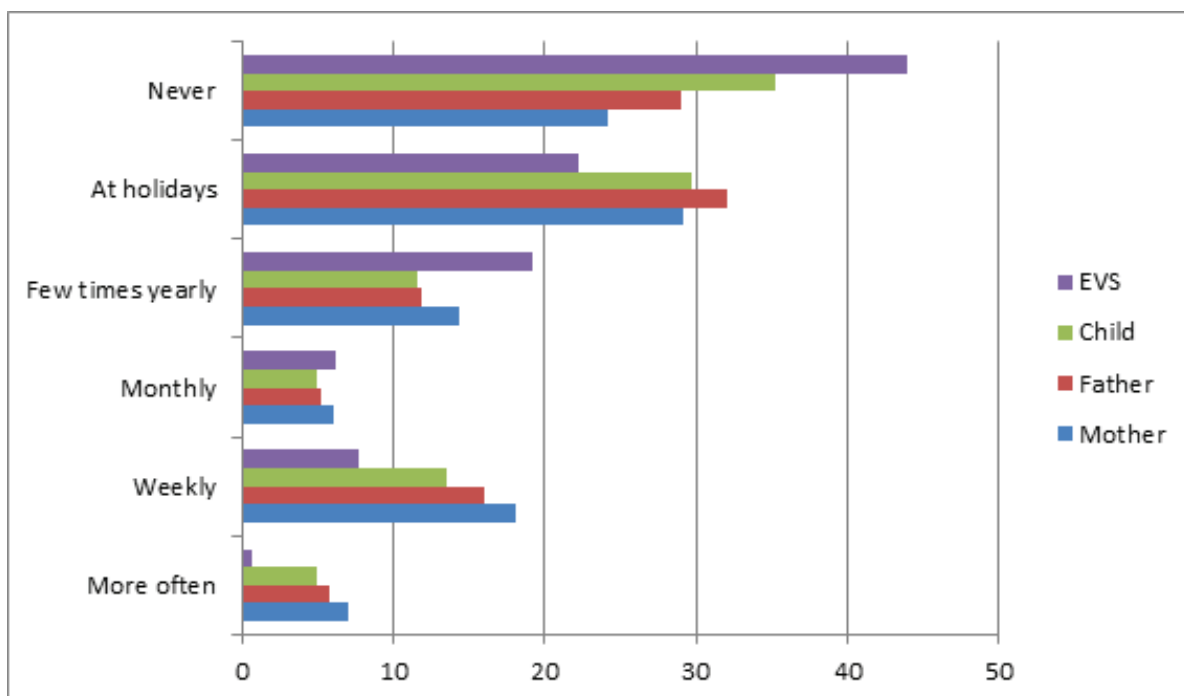


FIGURE 1: Frequency of Participation in Religious Ceremonies (%)

Own calculation and EVS 2008

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