FP7 - Design Study

Deliverable 22: Proposed new questionnaire module on social support networks

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Proposed new questionnaire module on social support networks

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Contents

1   Introduction

This deliverable summarizes the decisions reached by members of Work Package 8 – *Measuring Social Support Networks* – regarding the modification of the social network items in the GGS Wave 1 questionnaire. In Section 2, our general recommendations about the structure of questions that relate to intergenerational relationships and networks are presented. In Section 3, we present our proposed revamped module on support networks in detail.

2   General recommendations

a. Points of departure for the suggested social network modifications are:

- a substantive focus on (a) dependencies between genders and generations, (b) demographic decision making, and (c) policy relevance;
- a 20% reduction in questionnaire length ;
- a continued focus on the age group 18-79;
- the evaluations of existing measures that have been included in GGS Wave 1;
- the use of one core questionnaire (i.e. no optional modules), possibly using split ballots;
- changes in the formulation of existing items only if there is good reason to do so;
- administration of the questionnaire via CATI or WEB (i.e. no reliance on visual cues or tools); delineation of the social network via CATI and WEB involves considerably less time than administration via CAPI;
- comparability with other data collection efforts (e.g. SHARE).

b. The measures of intentions contain references to social network members. E.g. question 627 "Now suppose that during the next 3 years you were to have a/another child. I would like you to tell me what effect you think this would have on various aspects of your life". The listed aspects include references to network members:

- what people around you think of you;
- the closeness between you and your partner/spouse;
- your partner's/spouse's employment opportunities;
- the closeness between you and your parents.
- Members of WP8 would like to stress that the references to social network members in measures of intentions *be maintained.*

c. At present, social network measures are scattered throughout the questionnaire. WP8 suggests *integrating* the various support measures to achieve a more efficient administration of questions. More concretely WP8 suggests moving the questions on:

- people (other than the partner) providing childcare (see 201);
- providing childcare to other people (see 208);
- people (other than the partner) providing help with household tasks (see 403);
- people (including the partner) providing help with personal care (see 706),
- to a separate section entitled "network delineation" (see below). The changes will reduce interview time and respondent burden.

d. WP8 has carefully evaluated the various network delineation approaches that are used in survey research (see the memos written by the Ljubljana team and Christoph Bühler, and the chapter in the Blackwell encyclopaedia of sociology by Dykstra). WP8 continues to opt for network delineation by a so-called "functional approach" with a focus on actual support behaviour rather than perceived support. The difficulty with a measure of perceived support is that it often says more about the person involved than about his/her network. Moreover, for analyses of the interface between formal (i.e. publicly provided and purchased on the market) and informal support, a measure of actual support is more appropriate than a measure of perceived support.

e. We have a number of suggestions for the section on the Household grid (Q101-Q113). The present question asks for the first name of each household member. We suggest listing the first name *and* the first letter of the last name. For each household member, ask:

- role relationship (*Note* that we suggest further differentiating relationships in the category "non-relative" on Card 101, i.e. distinguishing friends, acquaintances, neighbours, and colleagues.);
- sex;
- age (including the month and year of birth, to maintain consistency with SHARE);
- activity status;
- disability status;
- temporary household membership.

For non-biological children ask: month and year of household entry.

f. We suggest to split questions on childcare (Q201-Q208) in a part for partners only, and a part for network members (where childcare will be one of the name generating questions). With regard to question 201 our suggestion is to:

- have the computer determine whether R has children ≤ 14 and a partner in the household;
- change the formulation of 201a to "Please tell me, to what extent you and your partner do these tasks. Choose your answer from the card.";
- drop 201b (reference to "other household members");
- maintain columns 1 thru 5 ("always R", "usually R", "R and P about equally", "usually P", "always P");
- drop columns 6 and 7;
- maintain columns 8 "children do it themselves" and 9 "not applicable".

Maintain: Q202 (satisfaction division of tasks).
Drop: Q203c (frequency of use formal childcare).
Drop: Q204 (help with childcare from family members, friends and other people for whom caring for children is not a job; this issue moves to the network delineation section).
Maintain: Q205 (costs of formal childcare).
Maintain: Q206 (parental leave R).
Maintain: Q207 (parental leave P).

Move: Q208 to the section on network delineation.

g. We did not discuss questions on non-resident children (Q209-Q237) in detail, as these are part of the WP on life histories. However, please *note* that the questions on geographic proximity, contact frequency, and relationship satisfaction must *be maintained*. Please *also note* that WP8 suggests a change in the manner in which geographic proximity is measured (here and in other sections), namely in terms of actual distance (see SHARE), and a change in which frequency of contact is measured, namely including contact by telephone, mail, e-mail, sms, and mms (see SHARE).

h. A number of proposals are developed with regard to the section on Grandchildren (Q238-Q242):
Maintain: Q238 (number of grandchildren).
Maintain: Q239-Q240 (month and year of birth).
Re Q241: See GGS Wave 3 questionnaire for questions of grandparental care. "Do you look after any?" "Which ones?" For each grandchild that is cared for: "How frequently?". *Note* that there must be a link to the middle generation.
Maintain: Q242a.
Drop: Q242b.

i. Proposals for the section on Household organisation (Q401-Q410):
As was the case for childcare (see above under f.), we suggest to split the questions in a part for partners only, and a part for network members (where household tasks will be one of the name generating questions).
Re Q401: our suggestion is to:

- have the computer determine whether R has a partner in the household;
- change the formulation to "Please tell me to what extent you and your partner do the following tasks in your household, choosing your answers from the card;
- drop Q401b;
- maintain columns 1 thru 5 ("always R", "usually R", "R and P about equally", "usually P", "always P");

- drop columns 6 and 7;
- maintain column 8 "not applicable".

Maintain: Q402 (satisfaction division of tasks).

Drop: Q403 (help with tasks from non household members; this issue moves to the network delineation section).

Maintain: Q404. *Note* that this question pertains to all respondents, not only to those living with a partner.

Add Q404a: How much do you pay? (See question 205 on payment for childcare).

Re Q405: our suggestion is to:

- Change the formulation to "To what extent do you and your partner make decisions about the following issues?";
- maintain columns 1 thru 5 ("always R", "usually R", "R and P about equally", "usually P", "always P");
- drop columns 6 and 7;
- maintain column 8 "not applicable".

j. Proposals for the section on Parents and parental home (Q501-Q577):

Maintain all questions, except question 572 (father's occupation at age 15 R), and question 574 (mother's occupation at age 15 R).

Add: question on current activity status to achieve greater consistency of information on network members (see household grid).

Add: question on country of birth.

k. Proposals on section on Personal care (Q704-Q712):

We suggest that this set of questions becomes part of the network delineation and support exchange questions. *Note* that the question on the receipt of personal care (question 706) should be asked only if the respondent has a disability (i.e. provides the answer "yes" to question 704). *Note also* that the examples to be provided (so that the respondent understands what personal care is) should be taken from SHARE. *Note further* that the

generated names should not pertain to professional or volunteer services. We suggest asking about formal care separately.

Re Q707 / Q711: the name generator format is to be used.

Maintain: Q709 (payment for care) to achieve consistency with questions on household help and childcare.

l. Proposals on section on Emotional support (Q713-Q718):

We suggest basing the formulation of "emotional support" on the core discussion network question used in the American General Social Survey.

Re Q714 / Q717: the name generator format is to be used.

m. Proposals on Monetary transfers and inheritance (Q1010-Q1018);

Again, we suggest that this set of questions becomes part of the network delineation and support exchange questions. *Note* that several name generator questions need to be used, namely for:

- regular payments;
- a large sum (specifying the amount, see SHARE for an example);
- inheritance.

n. Proposals on Formal and informal care (Q1110-Q1112):

Drop: Q1110 (the question is strongly correlated with the generosity of a country's welfare regime).

Maintain: Q1111 and Q1112.

As noted in the sections on childcare, personal care, and household organisation, we suggest asking separate questions about the use of formal care and the costs of formal care.

o. Proposals on Network delineation:

WP8 suggests a set of five network delineation questions. Both co-resident and non co-resident network members can be nominated. The supportive functions to be used in the network delineation questions are:

- childcare (receipt and provision; *Note*: the provision of childcare to grandchildren is not considered here, but in the section on grandchildren);
- practical help (receipt and provision);
- personal care (receipt only if R is disabled; provision);
- the discussion of personal matters;
- financial support (large sum, regular payments, inheritance) (receipt and provision).

See SHARE for the way in which examples of support/help are included in the questions. Regarding the financial support items, it is important to use a 12-month time framework. Regarding the discussion of personal matters, the use of the word "typically" is preferred. As noted earlier, WP8 prefers behavioural support measures to measures of perceived support.

p. Proposals on characteristics of network members:
WP8 suggests collecting the following information on each network member:

- if not household member: geographic distance (*Note*: measured in terms of actual distance);
- role relationship (*Note*: the non relative category needs to be split into friend, acquaintance, neighbour, and colleague);
- sex;
- age;
- relationship quality;
- frequency of contact (*Note*: all forms of contact are to be considered, i.e. face to face, telephone, mail, e-mail, sms, mms);
- partner status (i.e. information on official marital status and living with a partner).

Note: information on household membership is available through the household grid.
Note: information on age, sex, relationship quality, geographic proximity, and contact frequency for the partner, other household members, parents, siblings, and non co-resident children is collected in the respective sections of the questionnaire.

3 Proposed module on support networks

EMOTIONAL SUPPORT (DISCUSSING PERSONAL MATTERS)

1. From time to time, most people discuss things that are important to them with others. For example, these may include good or bad things that happen to you, problems you are having, or important concerns you may have. Looking back over the last 12 months, who are the people with whom you typically discuss important personal matters? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

CHILDCARE PROVISION

To be asked only if R has children ≤ 14 in the household

2. Over the last 12 months, have you received help with childcare from relatives or friends or other people for whom caring for children is not a job?

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 6***

3. From whom did you receive this help? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

4. How frequently did [listed person] help to look after your children?
    1. Almost daily
    2. Almost every week
    3. Almost every month
    4. Less often

5. Was [listed person] paid for the help?
    1 – yes
    2 – no

6. Over the last 12 months, have you given help with childcare to other people? If the provison of childcare is your job, please consider only the help you have given outside your professional activities.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 9***

7. To whom have you given this help? Please name the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

8. How frequently did you help to look after the children of [listed person]?
    1. Almost daily
    2. Almost every week
    3. Almost every month
    4. Less often

PRACTICAL HELP

9. During the last twelve months, did you regularly receive help with household tasks such as preparing daily meals, doing the dishes, shopping for food, vacuum-cleaning the house, doing small repairs in and around the house, paying bills and keeping financial records?   Please consider only people, who do not live in your household.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 12***

10. From whom did you get this help? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

11. Was [listed person] paid for the help?
    1 – yes
    2 – no

12. During the last twelve months, have you given regular help with household tasks to people who do not live in your household? If the accomplishment of household tasks is your job, please consider only the help you have given outside your professional activities.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 14***

13. To whom have you given this help? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

PERSONAL CARE

To be asked only if R has a disability (i.e. provides the answer "yes" to the question "Are you limited in your ability to carry out normal everyday activities, because of a physical or mental health problem or a disability?").

14. Over the last 12 months, is there any person inside or outside this household who has helped you regularly with personal care, such as washing, getting out of bed, or dressing? Interviewer: by regularly we mean daily or almost daily during at least three months. We do not want to capture help during short-term sickness of family members. Please do not consider assistance provided by professional persons from the public sector or from a private organisation.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 17***

15. From whom did you receive this assistance? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

16. Was [listed person] paid for the help?
    1 – yes
    2 – no

17. Over the last 12 months, have you give any person inside or outside this household regular help with personal care, such as washing, getting out of bed, or dressing? Interviewer: by regularly we mean daily or almost daily during at least three months. We do not want to capture help during short-term sickness of family members. If the provision of personal care is your job, please consider only the help you have given outside your professional activities.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 19***

18. To whom have you given this help? Please name the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

19. Over the last 12 months, have you [or] [your] [husband/wife/partner] received any financial or material gift from anyone inside or outside this household? Please consider only gifts of at least 250 € and do not count shared housing or shared food.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 21***

20. From whom have you received this support? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

21. Over the last 12 months, have you [or] [your] [husband/wife/partner] given any financial or material gift to another person? Please consider only gifts of a value of at least 250 € and do not count shared housing or shared food.

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → ***go to 23***

22. To whom have you given this support? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

23. Have you [or] [your] [husband/wife/partner] ever received a gift or inherited money, goods, or property worth more than 5000 euro (in local currency)?

    1 – yes ↓   2 – no → **go to 26**

24. In which year did you [or] [your] [husband/wife/partner] receive the large gift or inheritance?

    Year: _____

25. From whom did you [or] [your] [husband/wife/partner] receive this gift or inheritance? Please give me the first name and the initial of the last name of the person.

NAME INTERPRETERS

Note: information on household membership is available through the household grid.
Note: information on age, sex, relationship quality, geographic proximity, and contact frequency for the partner, other household members, parents, siblings, and non co-resident children is collected in the respective sections of the questionnaire.

Now I would like to learn more about the persons you have listed.

26. Is [listed person] male or female?
    Male
    Female

27. How old is [listed person]?

28. How far from you does [listed person] live?
    1. In the same building
    2. Less than 1 kilometer away
    3. Between 1 and 5 kilometers away
    4. Between 5 and 25 kilometers away

5. Between 25 and 100 kilometers away

6. Between 100 and 500 kilometers away

7. More than 500 kilometers away

8. More than 500 kilometers away in another country

29. How is [listed person] related to you?

1 – partner or spouse

2 – biological child with my current partner or spouse

3 – biological child with a former partner or spouse

4 – stepchild

5 – adopted child

6 – foster child

7 – biological or adoptive parent

8 – stepparent or foster parent

9 – biological or adoptive parent of current partner or spouse

10 – stepparent or foster parent of current partner or spouse

11 – grand- or great-grandchild (either mine or my partner's)

12 – grand- or great-grandparent (either mine or my partner's)

13 – brother or sister

14 – my partner's or spouse's brother or sister

15 – other relative of mine

16 – other relative of my partner or spouse

17 – friend

18 – acquaintance

19 – neighbor

20 – colleague

21 – somebody else (please specify) _____

30. How satisfied are you with your relationship with [listed person]?

    1   2   3   4   5

31. How frequently are you in contact with [listed person]? Please consider contacts face-to-face or by telephone, as well as letters, e-mails, SMS, and MMS.
    1. Daily
    2. Several times a week
    3. About once a week
    4. About every two weeks
    5. About once a month
    6. Less than once a month
    7. Never

32. What is the marital status of [listed person]?
    1. Single and never married
    2. Single and divorced
    3. Single and widowed
    4. Cohabiting unmarried
    5. Married