

# Parents' Cultural Resources, Gender and Young People's Reading Habits – Findings from a Secondary Analysis with Time-Survey Data in Two-parent Families.

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Drawing on the theoretical concept that parents are crucial for children's informal reading socialisation, the aim of this article is to explain the impact of parents' cultural resources on school-aged children's reading habits by controlling for children's gender. Parents' cultural resources, here, comprise 'parents' cultural practices' (defined as parents' reading habits and parents' interactions with their children) as well as parents' education. The article draws on data from the German Time Use Survey including time-use data in two-parent families from 757 school-aged children (between ten and 19 years of age) and their parents. Controlling for children's gender, the findings indicate that parents' cultural resources have a stronger impact on daughters' reading habits. For sons, only 'fathers' reading habits', among other cultural resources, turns out to be significantly associated with sons' reading habits. In general, parents' reading habits have a stronger impact on children's reading compared to family interactions and parent's education. The validity of the indicator 'family interaction' (operationalized by time parents use on joint meals and family conversations) to predict children's reading habits is limited. Overall, the findings may have implications for reading interventions that in particular address the family as an informal institution for reading socialisation.

*Keywords:* reading socialisation, parents' education, parents' cultural practices, gender, time-diary analysis.

## Introduction

In Germany and other European countries, policymakers are aware of the problem of an increasing number of compulsory school graduates with insufficient reading skills to meet the requirements of today's 'knowledge society'. The publication of international comparative studies, e.g. the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), has initiated an ongoing discussion on how to improve students' reading literacy, reading motivation and reading engagement, not only in school settings, but also in informal settings like in the family.

Reading socialisation refers to the process and the contexts in which young people develop reading habits and reading engagement (Kraaykamp, 2003). Amongst the contexts or institutions for reading socialisation are the family, the school and the public library.

Although the school is in charge of formal reading socialisation, it is the *family* that is labelled the 'fundamental institution' of reading socialisation (Van Peer, 1991: 540). In the family parents familiarize their children with 'cultural practices' (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), 'cultural practices' here defined as parents' reading habits and parents interactions with their children, e.g. during family meal conversations (family interactions).

Whereas many studies have focused on the parents' role as 'educators' (Schaedel, Hertz-Lazarowitz & Azaina, 2007) or 'reading teachers' (Sabatino & Abbott, 1974; Ahuja, 1984; Hourcade & Richardson, 1987; Cuckle, 1996; Kloosterman, Notten, Tolsma, & Kraaykamp, 2010) and on parents' impact on young people's media use and

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reading habits in general (Kraaykamp, 2001; Kraaykamp, 2003; Notten & Kraaykamp, 2009), few studies have investigated the importance of *both* parents for school-aged children's reading habits after school, here defined as time spent on recreational reading. Using data from Time Use Surveys in France, Germany and Italy, Cardoso, Fontainha and Monfardini (2008) investigate associations between parents' time use and children's time use. Comparing the three countries they found that the association between parents' reading and young people's reading is strongest in Italy (in particular the association between mothers' and children's reading). Further, they found significant associations between mothers' reading time and young people's reading time in France and significant associations between fathers' reading time and young people's reading time in Germany.

Drawing on data from the United Kingdom Time Use Survey 2000-2001, Mullan (2010) has explored the association between fathers' reading and mothers' reading and young people's reading. In households with parents spending more than 30 minutes on reading a day, he identifies a strong association between parents' reading and children's reading habits. Besides, he shows that mothers' reading is strongly associated with girls' reading, whereas fathers' reading is strongly associated with boys' reading.

Whereas these studies exclusively have investigated the primary impact of the parental role model in reading on children's reading, this article uses a broader approach and investigates the impact of 'parents' cultural resources' on school-aged children's reading habits, controlling for children's gender. 'Parents' cultural resources', here, comprise parents' education and 'parents' cultural practices', the latter defined as parents' reading habits and parents' interaction with their children (family interactions). According to McElvany et al. (2009), this article refers to parents' education as 'structural aspect' and parents' cultural practices as 'process aspects' of parents' cultural resources (e.g. Van Steensel, 2006). The definition of 'parents' cultural resources' is inspired by scholars like DiMaggio (1982), De Graaf (1986), De Graaf et al. (2000), Lareau & Weininger (2003) and Kloosterman et al., (2010) who emphasise the significance of parents' education and parents' reading practices as well as parents' attitudes towards reading for young people's reading socialisation.

This article draws on data from the German Time Use Survey 2001/2002. Respondents of the German Time Use Survey who were household member aged ten years and older, were asked to complete a time diary recording the sequence of their daily activities in ten minutes intervals for two weekdays and one weekend day, among them activities like reading time and time spent with children (family interactions) (e.g., for joint meals and conversation time).

Linear multiple regression analyses are used to investigate the impact of different forms of parents' cultural resources on children's reading habits, children, here defined as school-aged children between ten and 19 years of age. Controlling for children's gender, we calculated separate regressions for sons and daughters.

One might criticize the use of the term 'children' for over 13 years-olds adolescents. In this article, however, this term is primarily used to denote the kinship relation between parents and their (biological) children living in the same household. Thus, the term 'children', here, does not refer to children's age. If appropriate, the terms 'daughter' and 'son' and 'young people' are used as synonyms for the term 'children'.

## Theoretical framework

### Reading socialisation in the family

In many European countries scholars have discussed the role of the family for children's reading socialisation (e.g., Taylor, 1983; Limmroth-Kranz, 1997; Baker, Scher, & Mackler, 1997; Groeben & Hurrelmann, 2004; Hurrelmann, Becker & Nickel-Bacon, 2005; Bucher, 2004; Pinto, Accorti Gamannossi & Cameron, 2006; Denessen, 2007; McElvany & Van Steensel, 2009; Mullan, 2010). They investigate reading socialisation by focussing on different age groups and by using different methodologies (quantitative, qualitative), different perspectives (cross-sectional, longitudinal) and different theoretical approaches. In sum, they all conclude that parents, in particular mothers play a central role for young people's reading socialisation.

Because research on reading socialisation is inspired by different theoretical approaches from sociology, psychology, pedagogy or linguistic, main terms, amongst them reading and family background, are defined inconsistently. The term 'family background' may include a variety of dimensions, such as parents' education, parents'

reading habits, parents' reading for children (joint-book-reading), books at home, and family conversations related to reading (Van Peer, 1991).

On the one side, there is a large body of research on the enduring importance of family interactions for children's language acquisition and reading socialisation. Such family interactions are joint-book-reading and story-telling with smaller children (Bus, Van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995; Pinto, et al., 2006), teaching specific literary skills to smaller children (e.g., Sénéchal, 2006; Silinskas et al., 2010), general conversations (e.g. during mealtime) and, more specific, conversations about books or literature between parents and older children. The scope of this article, however, is limited to time spent on family interactions between parents and older children and does not take into account qualitative aspects of conversations (e.g., topics of conversations related to reading). In line with Lesemann and De Jong, (2001:72) this article argues 'that also ordinary [...] conversations and instructional talk' can influence reading socialisation. This argument is derived from theoretical approaches of language acquisition and communication in the tradition of Vygotsky (1964) and Oevermann (1972), approaches which consider language acquisition and communication as antecedents for reading socialisation. In their groundbreaking longitudinal *Home-School Study of Language and Literacy* Dickinson and Tabors (2001) found that children's vocabulary, which is strongly associated with family interactions, is a reliable predictor of children's reading literacy in primary and secondary school, which in turn may affect children's recreational reading habits. The predictability of vocabulary knowledge of reading comprehension later on has also been supported by other studies (e.g., Cunningham & Stanovich, 1997).

On the other side, a large body of research has shown significant importance of the parental role model in reading for young people's reading (Sénéchal & LeFevre, 2002; Kraaykamp, 2003; McElvany & Van Steensel, 2009; Mullan, 2010), research that is inspired by social learning theory (Bandura, 1986). Acting as reading models, parents are modelling not only reading per se, but in addition, enjoyment, enthusiasm and interest in reading (e.g., Topping, 1985). Thus, a parent who is a habitual reader automatically reveals an interest and enjoyment in books and reading, which might be, in turn, have an impact on young people's reading habits, e.g. time amounts young

people spend with reading (Mullan, 2010; see also the review of Van Dahl, 2011). In an overview of research, Clark and Rumbold (2006) highlight the importance of parents acting as reading models to stimulate their children to read for enjoyment. A German study on reading habits shows that parents' reading habits, among other factors, e.g., family interactions and parents' education, has the strongest impact on young people's reading practices (Tullius, 2001).

Hence, this article assumes that the parental role model has a stronger impact on children's reading habits than family interactions do.

Another factor which has been shown to be highly associated with young people's reading is parents' education, here defined as a structural aspect of parents' cultural resources. Bråten et al. (1999) found children living with higher educated parents spend more time on recreational reading. Both, international comparative studies and national studies have shown that students living with higher educated parents significantly score higher on reading literacy compared to those with parents with low education (Mullis et al. 2007, 2003; Van Steensel, 2006; 2003; Jungbauer-Gans, 2004).

This article argues that parent's education (as structural dimension of family's cultural resources) has an independent impact on children's reading habits, in addition to 'parents' cultural practices', i.e. parents reading habits and family interactions (see also Nagel, 2009). The following hypothesis will be tested: First, both parents' reading habits have a positive impact on children's reading, second, family interactions (both parents' interactions with their children) have a positive impact on children's reading in addition to parents' reading habits and third, parents' education has a positive impact on children's reading.

### **Differences in reading socialisation related to gender**

Other scholars have addressed significant gender differences in young people's reading habits. Mullan (2010: 417) argues that gender 'is a significant issue to consider when thinking about young people's reading and the potential impact of their parent's reading'. A large amount of national and international studies show that girls read more frequently compared to boys (e.g., Elley, 1992; Clark & Forster, 2005) and that they score higher on reading literacy (e.g., Lietz, 2006; Marks, 2008) and reading motivation (e.g.,

Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) in particular in terms of fictional literature (Mullis et al. 2003; OECD, 2009). Time-diary studies have consistently shown that girls (on average) spent more time reading than boys (Bianchi & Robinson, 1997; Hofferth & Sandberg, 2001). Although these studies clearly reveal gender differences in reading literacy, reading motivation and reading habits, however, theoretical explanations of these differences remain inconsistent (Logan & Johnston, 2010).

Addressing parent's gender, many studies indicate that mothers more than fathers play a crucial role for young people's reading socialisation (Lynch, 2002; Clark, Torsi & Strong, 2005; Goldman, 2005; Hurrelmann, Becker & Nickel-Bacon, 2005), as the former on average spend more time on care-giving and less time on paid-work. Reading researchers (e.g. Mullan, 2010) have asked whether girls read more because mothers and other female role models (e.g., primary teachers, grandmothers) on average are more involved in young people's reading socialisation compared to male role models ('gender stereotype hypothesis').

During the last decades, however, the importance of fathers for young people's socialisation and education in general (Lamp, 1976; Yeung, Sandberg, Davis Kean & Hofferth, 2001; Ray, 2002; Green, 2003), and reading socialisation more specifically (Stile & Ortiz 1999; Clark, 2005; Goldman, 2005; Elias, 2009), has gained in importance. Drawing on data from a representative survey of pupils in primary and secondary school in the UK, Clark and Foster (2005) show that around 70 percent of children state that their fathers encourage them to read compared to 80 percent, who state that their mothers do so. In a German case-study Elias (2009) has identified both, families with mothers as main reading role models for children and families with fathers as main role models for children.

Addressing the importance of the same 'gender' of the parent for the child's socialisation, some suppose that fathers play a more crucial role for boys' development of reading habits (Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Goldmann, 2005). Using time-diary data for the UK, Mullan (2010) find empirical evidence that fathers play a more important role for boys' reading socialisation than mothers do.

When investigating reading socialisation, scholars have in so far paid little attention to relations between family background – family background here conceptualised as 'parents'

cultural resources' – and gender, related to parents and children. Mickelson (2003) argues for simultaneously considering gender and socio-economic status when explaining differences in early schooling between boys and girls. Entwisle, Alexander and Olson (2007) show that boys in economically disadvantaged families score lower on reading literacy than their female counterparts. His finding indicates that family's economic resources have a higher impact on boys' reading literacy compared to girls.

We assume that 'parents' cultural resources' consisting of structural and process dimensions have a different impact on daughters' and sons' reading habits.

This article investigates young people's reading socialisation from a cross-sectional perspective. Drawing on the assumption that children have developed relatively stable reading habits at the end of primary school this article does not consider children younger than ten years of age. This allows the use of the German Time Use Survey data which are collected for all individual family members who are at least ten years of age. Development psychological approaches assume that young people's reading habits are underlying some change during particular developmental stages. These approaches draw on the assumption that young people's reading amount breaks down at two important stages, after the first reading stage, at the age around ten, and then at the age between eleven and fourteen (Schön, 1990). There is empirical support, that young people's reading time declines with increasing age (e.g., Sainsbury & Schagen, 2004) because reading as a recreational activity is more and more displaced by other activities (Geulen, 2007).

At the same time, there is evidence that parents' influence on young people's cultural habits is relatively stable over time. Nagel and Ganzeboom (2002) who studied the participation in legitimate culture for individuals in two different age stages found that parents' influence on young people's cultural participation, cultural participation comprising visiting museums or classical concerts, going to the theatre or the opera, is relatively stable between the age of 14 and 30 (see also Nagel, 2009).

To sum up, the aim of this article is to investigate the impact of parents' cultural practices, including parents' reading and family interactions, and parents' education on young people's reading habits after primary reading socialisation by controlling for gender. The

following working hypotheses are tested: 1) Parents' cultural practices, in particular parents' reading habits have a positive impact on children's reading habits. Parents' reading habits has a stronger impact on young people's reading habits than family interactions. 2) Parents' education as a structural aspect of parents' cultural resources has an impact on young people's reading habits. 3) The impact of parents' cultural resources is assumed to be different for sons and daughters.

### Methodology

Empirical studies capturing reading socialisation either ask adults retrospectively on their own reading socialisation in childhood (Köcher, 1988; Stiftung Lesen 2001, 2008), they ask children directly on their own reading habits and on their parents' role in reading promotion (Clark & Foster 2005; Clark, Torsi & Strong, 2005), or they ask one parent, mostly the mother, on her role for children's reading socializing (e.g., Hurrelmann, Hammer & Nieß, 1993; Schaedel, Hertz-Laxarowitz & Azaiza, 2007). Although most scholars implicitly agree upon the importance of *both* parents for children's (reading) socialisation, few have simultaneously investigated the role of mother *and* father for children's reading socialisation (e.g. Mullan, 2010).

With few exceptions (Cardoso et al. 2008, Mullan, 2010), we assume that no other European study has used time use survey data to investigate 'reading socialisation' in the family. 'Reading' and 'reading socialisation' are highly normative topics. Hence, *directly* asking people on their reading habits may lead to unreliable answers (Groeben, 2004; Hofferth, 2006). By using half-structured time diary data on reading, we can avoid the problem of 'overestimated' activity accounts on reading. More generally, Robinson (1985: 60) concludes from his studies on time-use that 'the burden of evidence clearly points to the strong likelihood that time diaries are the only viable method of obtaining valid and reliable data on activities.'

### Data and sample

This paper draws on a secondary analysis of data from the German Time Use Survey 2001/2002. The German Time Use Survey was administered by the Federal Statistical Office Germany. The survey has a sample of 5,171 households in Germany. All individuals in the

household aged ten years and over (N = 12,012) were asked to provide information about their main and secondary activities, their location and the other people they were with in 10-minute intervals for two weekdays and a weekday.

The sample comprises N=757 two-parent families including parents and children living in the same household, school-aged children between ten and 19 years of age. All family members had completed a diary on three days. The analytical unit of the paper is the individual child, contrary to time-use studies that draw on the 'diary day per person' as unit of analysis. This article considers time-budgets on reading for all family members (reading habits) and parent's time spent on interacting with their children (family interaction). For the regression analyses data for both parents were matched with data for children (the first child in the household was selected) in one row in a SPSS data file. 757 two-parent families could be identified unambiguously.

Reading surveys indicate that around two third of the population read at least once a week (e.g., Stiftung Lesen 2001, 2008; Clark & Foster 2005). Given that reading habits rather follow weekly than daily rhythms (Bucher, 2004; Clark & Foster 2005), the present study uses average means (over three days) on reading and family interaction time of mother, father and child.<sup>1</sup>

### Measures

*Parents' education* is measured by highest educational attainment on a four point scale ranging from 1 to 4 reflecting the structure of the German educational system. The first category stands for 'Hauptschulabschluss' which can be described as extended primary education (consisting of nine years of schooling) to prepare students for vocational training apprenticeship, the second category refers to the qualification 'Realschulabschluss' that consists of ten years of schooling and is a form of lower secondary education. This qualification prepares students either for attending vocational training or for attending higher secondary education (Gymnasium). The third refers to the qualification 'Abitur/Fachabitur' that consists of twelve years of schooling, and is a form of higher secondary education preparing students for attending a

<sup>1</sup> Information on reading related activities for mothers, fathers and children' was matched to information on parents' education. Time-use diary data was supplemented by data from individual questionnaires.

university. Finally, the fourth category refers to either a college or university degree. Both, father's and mother's education is included in the analysis.

**Parents' cultural practices.** *Parent's reading habits* is measured by average values on reading as main activity over three days, separately for mothers and fathers.

*Family interactions* is measured by average values over three days, defined as time mothers and fathers spent on talking with their children (main and secondary activity) and having meals with their children (main activity).

*Children's reading habits* is measured by average values on reading as main activity over three days, in analogy to parents' reading habits.

This strategy was led by the assumption that the average 'reading time' over three days reflects children's and parent's reading habits; at the end of primary reading socialisation (around the age of ten) young people's reading habits is supposed to be relatively stable over time (see also Mullan 2010).

*Young people's age:* Three age categories were defined: 10 to 12 years, 13 to 15 years, and 16 to 19 years of age. The mean of young people's age is 13.9 (SD = 2.49).

Table 1. Characteristics of the sample.

Education	Father		Mother	
	N	%	N	%
Extended primary education	223	29.5	146	19.2
Lower secondary education	215	28.5	368	48.5
Higher secondary education	83	10.9	116	15.3
College or University Degree	236	31.1	129	17.0
Occupation				
Fulltime working	691	91.3	100	13.3
Part-time working	13	2.9	290	60.3
Not in paid work	53	5.8	367	26.4
	M	ds	m	ds
Daily working hours (in minutes)	320	182	110	142
	N	%		
Sons	376	49.7		
Daughters	381	50.3		
10 to 12 (age)	250	32.9		
13 to 15 (age)	298	39.3		
16 to 19 (age)	211	27.8		

Note: N = 757 families

Table 1 provides a description of the sample for the distribution of the following variables: Young people's gender and age, both parents' education level and working hours and occupational status of both parents'.

For parents' education, Table 1 shows that mothers with a degree of lower secondary education are overrepresented in the sample with 48.5 per cent, whereas fathers with a degree of tertiary education, i.e., college or university degree are overrepresented in the sample with 31.1 per cent. Mothers with a degree of tertiary education are underrepresented in the sample, with 17 per cent. For working hours (on average over two weekdays and one weekend day) and occupational status, Table 1 shows a clear difference in terms of working hours and fulltime working status in favour of fathers.

*Analyses:* First, we provide a descriptive univariate analysis of all included variables to illustrate the context of young people's reading socialisation in the family. Second, we conduct linear regression analyses to investigate the impact of 'parent's cultural resources' on young people's reading habits. The linear regression models include young people's reading time as dependent variable; the predictors in the regression model include mother's reading time, father's reading time, mother's interaction time with children, father's interaction time with children, mother's education and father's education. Separate regression analyses are run for sons and daughters. The analyses are conducted with the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 12.

## Results

### Descriptive analysis

Table 2 (see Appendix) presents a description of the variables included in the regressions, i.e. dependent variables, predictors and control variables. The mean of individual family member's reading time is around half an hour. Mothers spend on average 17 minutes more time on family interaction compared to fathers, with 77 minutes (SD = 45) vs. 60 minutes (SD = 41).

For parents' education, Table 2 depicts differences according to level of education for fathers. On average, fathers with College or University Degree spend 39 minutes on reading (SD = 37), whereas those with the lowest degree (extended primary education) spend 24 minutes

(SD = 29). Mothers with different educational degree show only minor differences in reading time on average.

Further, Table 2 reveals difference in average reading between sons and daughters as well as a difference in reading between different age groups. Sons spend on average 23 minutes on reading (SD = 36), whereas daughters on average spend 32 minutes on reading (SD = 38). In terms of age, 16 to 19 years-olds spend on average 20 minutes on reading (SD = 30). In contrast, younger children spend on average around ten minutes more on reading, 10 to 12 years old 32 minutes (SD = 41), and 13 to 15 years old 29 minutes (SD = 37).

### Regression analyses: The impact of parents' cultural resources on sons' and daughters' reading socialisation

The results of three linear regressions on children's reading socialisation are presented in Table 3. The first regression model (Regr. 1) includes all children, whereas the second and third regression models include either sons or daughters.

For all children (Regr. 1), the regression model can explain 9.1 per cent of the overall variance ( $R^2 = 0.091$ ,  $F_{6, 751} = 1.2422$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Table 3 shows that both mother's reading (Beta = 0.154,  $p < .01$ ) and father's reading (Beta = 0.124,  $p < .01$ ) significantly predict their children's reading, as well as mothers' (Beta = 0.087,  $p < .05$ ) and fathers' education (Beta = 0.084,  $p < .05$ ). Among all predictors, however, parents' reading time explains a larger share of the overall variance in their children's reading.

Controlling for children's gender, we found a clear difference in the explained variance of children's reading for sons and daughters, in favor of daughters. In case of sons only 6.4 per cent of the variance in reading time could be explained by reading time, family interaction time as well parents' education ( $R^2 = 0.064$ ,  $F_{6, 363} = 4.157$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Among all six predictors, only two of them significantly explain some of the variance in sons' reading: fathers' reading time (Beta = 0.128,  $p < .01$ ) and fathers' education (Beta = 0.109,  $p < .10$ ). The remaining predictors including family interaction, mothers' reading and mother's education, however, had no significant impact on sons' reading time.

Table 3. Regression Results for Son's and Daughter's Reading Time.

	All		Sons		Daughters	
	Regr. 1		Regr. 2		Regr. 3	
	B	Beta	B	Beta	B	Beta
Constant	-1.502		1.929		-3.351	
	-4.387		-6.386		-5.968	
Interaction Father – Child	0.016	0.017	0.041	0.045	-0.003	-
	(0.044)		(0.064)		(0.060)	0.003
Reading – Father	0.136***	0.124	0.144**	0.128	0.119**	0.111
	(0.041)		(0.061)		(0.056)	
Interaction Mother – Child	0.054	0.065	-0.041	-	0.121**	0.147
	(0.040)		(0.059)	0.050	(0.054)	
Reading - Mother	0.177***	0.153	0.087	0.076	0.258***	0.225
	(0.043)		(0.061)		(0.059)	
Education Father	2.599**	0.084	3.286*	0.109	1.748	0.056
	-1.231		-1.718		-1.737	
Education Mother	3.336**	0.087	2.981	0.077	4.056*	0.107
	-1.510		-2.175		-2.085	
R <sup>2</sup>	0.091		0.064		0.138	
R <sup>2</sup> adjusted	0.084		0.049		0.125	
N	750		370		380	

In the case of daughters, 13.8 per cent of the variance is explained by the regression model ( $R^2 = 0.138$ ,  $F_{6, 373} = 9.989$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Mothers' reading (Beta = 0.225,  $p < .01$ ), mothers' time for family interaction (Beta = 0.147,  $p < .05$ ), fathers' reading (Beta = 0.111,  $p < .05$ ) as well as mothers' education (Beta = 0.056,  $p < .10$ ) significantly predict daughters' reading time. Fathers' educational level and fathers' time for family interaction, however, have no significant impact on daughters' reading habits.

Thus, these findings clearly support the gender-stereotype hypothesis: fathers' cultural practices and fathers' education are significantly associated with son's reading time and thus appear to have an impact of moderate scope on son's reading habits. For daughters, mothers' cultural practices and mothers' education are stronger associated with daughters' reading time than with fathers' cultural practices and fathers' education are; therefore, mothers' cultural practices appear to have a stronger impact on daughters' reading.

Further, separate regressions for three different age groups (in the range of 10 and 19 years) were calculated, and corresponding results

for all three age groups were found. Thus, no regression results for different age groups were presented.

### Discussion and Conclusions

In general, the findings indicate that parents' cultural practices, in particular parents' reading habits, have a positive impact on young people's reading habits. Parents' reading habits have a stronger impact on young people's reading habits than family interactions do, the latter having only a statistically significant impact on daughters' reading habits.

Given time-use survey data, the validity of the construct 'family interaction' might be questioned. Family interaction was operationalized by the time amount either mothers or fathers spent on conversation and family meals with their children. However, we do not have any additional information on the 'quality' of family interactions, e.g., the themes discussed during family meals, the socio-emotional quality of parent-child relation, information which we assume to be more crucial to have an impact on young people's reading habits than just time amounts on 'family



interactions' have. In a meta-analysis, Leaper et al. (1998), e.g., found that mothers generally talk more and use more supportive speech in conversations with their daughters than they do in conversations with sons. Thus, qualitative differences in family interactions might help to explain why family interactions have a different impact on boys' and girls' reading habits.

Further, the findings clearly provide evidence for differences in the impact of parents' cultural resources on young people's reading in terms of gender. For sons, only two predictors, i.e. fathers' reading time and fathers' education, could explain a relatively low share of the variance in reading time. For girls, however, four predictors explained around twice as much of the variance in reading time compared to boys. These predictors were mothers' reading, fathers' reading, mothers' time for family interaction and mothers' education. Consequently, the findings indicate that parents' cultural resources in general have a stronger impact on daughters' reading socialisation.

Finally, parents' education defined as structural aspect of parents' cultural resources appear to have an independent impact on young people's reading habits (see also: Nagel, 2009); however, the results indicate that the impact of parents' education on children's reading habits is weaker than parents' reading habits, the latter making up one dimension of 'parents' cultural practices'. This result is also in line with findings from a previous study in the Netherlands showing that parents' cultural participation measured as an index for participation in 'high brow culture' (e.g., going to the theatre, visiting a museum, visiting a classical concert) is more important for young people's cultural reproduction than parents' education is (Nagel, 2009).

There are several limitations to this study with the aim to investigate the impact of parents' cultural resources on young people's reading socialisation. First, the study draws on cross-sectional data to investigate the impact of parents' cultural resources, comprising parents' cultural practices like reading and family interactions and parents' education, on young people's reading habits at one point in time. The findings presented in this article, therefore, do not allow conclusions on a causal relationship between parents' cultural practices on young people's reading habits, as we do not have longitudinal data on the family members which would allow such conclusions.

Second, the underlying data are limited to time amounts on reading print material and family

interaction and do neither provide any 'qualitative' information on reading material (e.g., fiction, non-fiction), reading modus (e.g., reading on the screen vs. reading print) and family interactions (e.g., topics of conversations) nor on reading engagement and motivation.

Finally, using data from 2001-2002, the present study draws on a narrow definition of reading that is limited to printed material. It has insofar excluded reading on the screen, which has likely increased during the last years, in particular amongst the younger children and their parents.

In sum, the findings of this article indicate that parents' reading generally has a stronger impact on daughters' reading habits than on sons' reading habits, a finding which might have implications for future reading promotion schemes that in particular address the family.

Female students in families with restricted cultural resources might have a greater advantage from reading promotion schemes or 'family literacy schemes' that aim at enhancing family interaction and parents' reading; in contrast the advantage of such schemes may be scrutinised for male students with similar family background. To enhance reading engagement of boys in families with few cultural resources, other contexts than the family might be an alternative for reading promotion, e.g. youth clubs or football clubs, informal contexts where boys meet role models they can easily identify themselves with, also with respect to recreational reading. Reading promotion schemes that conceptualises reading in broader terms, including reading on the screen and reading material that, might rather address boys, in particular those with lowly educated parents, than reading promotion schemes resting on a more narrow understanding of reading (reading of books, reading fiction).

Limitations notwithstanding, the present study has shown a clear link between parents' cultural resources, gender and children's reading habits and can hence inspire the debate on reading promotion in informal settings. Further research could focus on single groups, e.g. boys in families with lowly educated parents, and explore relations between cultural resources in other informal contexts (e.g., youth clubs) and boys' reading socialisation. Moreover, qualitative studies on family interactions and parents' reading modelling could further elaborate the association between parents' reading interests and strategies and children's reading socialisation.

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**Appendix**

Table 2. Descriptive analyses of the variables included in the regression analysis.

Sample N=757 families	M	SD
<b>Dependent variable</b>		
Reading – Child	28	37
<b>Predictors</b>		
Reading - Father	31	34
Reading -Mother	33	32
Interaction: Father - Child	60	41
Interaction: Mother - Child	77	45
<b>Reading – Father, according to Education</b>		
Extended primary education	24	29
Lower secondary education	27	31
Higher secondary education	36	40
College or University Degree	39	37
<b>Reading – Mother, according to Education</b>		
Extended primary education	32	29
Lower secondary education	32	35
Higher secondary education	37	30
College or University Degree	35	30
<b>Control variables: Gender and Age</b>		
<b>Gender: Children</b>		
Reading: Son (N=370)	23	36
Reading: Daughter (N=380)	32	38
<b>Age: Children</b>		
10 to 12 years	32	41
13 to 15 years	29	37
16 to 19 years	20	30