

# Mittelbau

# Werkstattgespräch

June 06, 2023, 12:30-14:00, Meeting Room, 4th Floor,  
hybrid

## The dynamic interplay between older adults' depressive symptoms and intergenerational proximity: Patterns across the United States

Lisa Jessee

(joint work with Valeria Bordone and Karsten Hank)

Intergenerational proximity dynamically evolves across individuals' life courses. Older adults' depressive symptoms may be an important factor of changes in intergenerational proximity, as adult children and their aging parents might move closer to each other when the aging parents' mental health deteriorates, in order to provide social support. However, conversely, intergenerational proximity may affect older adults' depressive symptoms. This could be particularly the case when intergenerational proximity increases, as solidarity exchanges (e.g., emotional or instrumental support) can then occur more frequently and intensively. Against the background of population aging and rising care needs, intergenerational proximity and older adults' mental health gain importance, but their interrelationship across individuals' life courses is still poorly understood. Using 6 waves (2004 -2014) from the Health and Retirement Study, we investigate dynamic patterns between intergenerational proximity and older adults' depressive symptoms by applying dynamic panel models with fixed effects. Results suggest that across later life, intergenerational proximity is not associated with changes in older adults' depressive symptoms. However, conversely, older adults' depressive symptoms are significantly associated with changes in intergenerational proximity. In particular, when older adults' depressive symptoms increase, intergenerational proximity decreases. The results can, for instance, be explained with the mobilization hypotheses, which suggest that older adults and their adult children move closer to each other when parental health declines.

**Lisa Jessee** is a predoctoral researcher at the Institute of Sociology and Social Psychology at the University of Cologne and currently a visiting scholar at our department. Her research interests include the sociology of ageing, intergenerational relationships, ageing and health.

**On-site:** Meeting room, Rooseveltplatz 2, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

**Online:** Meeting-ID: 675 3512 6245; Password: 252865

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