

Stratification and values - potential for an integrated measure of societal position?

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Outline

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Theoretical considerations

...[T]hose who deny any significant relationship between culture and welfare policy take a lonely position. (...) [T]his does not mean, however, that at present the relationship between culture and welfare state has developed into an adequately theorized coherent field of study (Van Oorschot, Opielka, & Pfau-Effinger, 2008).

My suggestion is an integrated measure of social stratification and values.

Point of departure

Values \Rightarrow political attitudes

Kulin and Svallfors (2013) show that higher classes have stronger value-attitude links compared to lower classes.

Simultaneously, social groups are relevant for lay conceptualization of political attitudes (Staerklé, 2009; Staerklé, Likki, & Scheidegger, 2012).

Is it plausible to assume that value mechanisms work similar across societal groups? Or could values be a mean for distinction?

Social class: Traditions

Social class is a concept of social stratification with two traditions:

- Marxist: Overarching conflict between capital and labor inflicting all life spheres.
Class members share economic living conditions and class consciousness.
- Weberian: "class situations" based on property and employment situations constitute life chances (Scott, 2002).
Social class is only one dimension of strata and is defined exclusively by economic circumstances (Breen, 2005).

Measurement of social class

Occupation is the most common measure for social class, e.g.:

- Wright developed a 3+9-level class scheme in the Marxist tradition based on power, authority and skill with strong emphasis on exploitation (Wright, 2000; Rose & Harrison, 2009).
- EGP/CASMIN/NS-SEC scheme combines market (chances to generate income, economic security and career opportunities) and working (autonomy and authority) situation (Erikson, Goldthorpe, & Portocarero, 2010).

Criticism on social class

The general critique:

- Beck (1986) suggest that groups lose importance as formative factors for individual behavior.
- lifestyle researchers (Otte, 2008; Rössel, 2007) see the variety of living conditions not reflected.

The measurement critique (EGP scheme):

- Too abstract from job conditions (Grusky & Weeden, 2001).
- Oesch (2006) introduced a new class scheme based on working conditions and work logic.

BBC's 2011 Great British Class Survey (Savage et al., 2013, p. 230)

Table 6. Seven latent classes.

	Elite	Established middle class	Technical middle class	New affluent workers	Traditional working class	Emergent service workers	Precariat
Household income	£89,082	£47,184	£37,428	£29,252	£13,305	£21,048	£8,253
Household savings	£142,458	£26,090	£65,844	£4,918	£9,500	£1,138	£793
House value	£325,000	£176,834	£163,362	£128,639	£127,174	£17,968	£26,948
Social contact score	50.1	45.3	53.5	37.8	41.5	38.3	29.9
Social contact number	16.2	17.0	3.6	16.9	9.8	14.8	6.7
Highbrow cultural capital	16.9	13.7	9.2	6.9	10.8	9.6	6.0
Emerging cultural capital	14.4	16.5	11.4	14.8	6.5	17.5	8.4

Source: GfK nationally representative survey (with GBCS respondents included and weighted at 161,400th of a case).

Stratification and Values?

- Social class needs some revision beyond occupation still applicable for cross-sectional research.
- Most critique on the social concept is based on the lack of accountability for individualism.
- Values as subjective measure of evaluation could revitalize the idea of heterogeneous groups in societies.
- Combining the objective and subjective measure leads to a measure of distinction/group defined cleavages.

Aim of the measurement / hypotheses

Capturing a two-dimensional space of stratification (status) and subjective motivations (values) to explain variance inside countries across groups and similarities across countries along similar groups.

- H1** The number of groups extracted is expected to be similar across all samples.
- H2** The constitution of the patterns along values and ISEI is expected to be similar across different societies.
- H3** These patterns are not random but show a stability in their relative position over time.

Data and method

ESS 1-5 including all (124) samples available (33 different countries).

obj.: International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI) of occupation status (Ganzeboom, De Graaf, Treiman, & Graaf, 1992). (min=16 to max=88)

subj.: Parts of the the Human Value Scale (HVS, see Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004) - namely, Hedonism, Openness to Change and Conservation (12 items)

Latent class analysis (LCA) in R version 3.0.2 with the package polCA by Linzer and Lewis (2011).

Strategy

1. Run for each of the 124 samples multiple LCAs under the condition of 1-8 classes. Each of the 8 models per sample was estimated 10 times to avoid local minima.
2. Define the preliminary best fitting model by the minimum BIC across the estimated models per sample.
3. Assess profile plots to interpret patterns
4. Further steps:
 - Invariance across samples
 - Testing predictive power

Results of latent class analysis

Table 1: Groups by ESS round based on minimum BIC

Groups by round	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Countries
ESS1	0	0	7	13	0	0	0	20
ESS2	1	1	10	13	0	0	0	25
ESS3	0	2	6	13	2	0	0	23
ESS4	0	1	7	15	3	2	1	29
ESS5	0	0	10	11	5	1	0	27
Sum	1	4	40	65	10	3	1	124
(Share in %)	(.8)	(3.2)	(32.3)	(52.4)	(8.1)	(2.4)	(.8)	(100)

HVS wording Openness to change and Hedonism

- HE10 Having a good time is important to him. He likes to "spoil" himself.
- HE21 He seeks every chance he can to have fun. It is important to him to do things that give him pleasure.
- ST6 He likes surprises and is always looking for new things to do. He thinks it is important to do lots of different things in life.
- ST15 He looks for adventures and likes to take risks. He wants to have an exciting life.
- SD1 Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him. He likes to do things in his own original way.
- SD11 It is important to him to make his own decisions about what he does. He likes to be free and not depend on others.

HVS wording Conservation

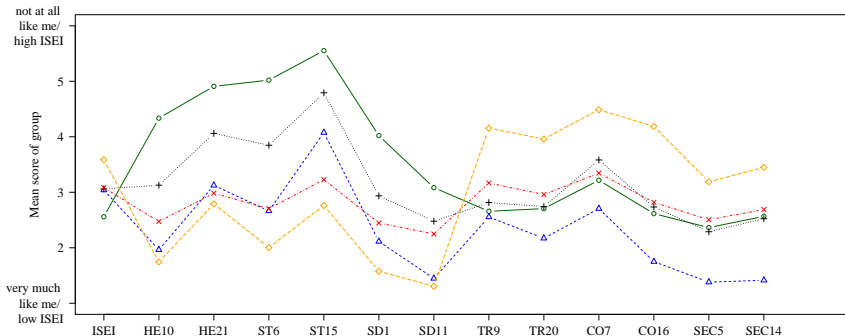
- TR9 It is important to him to be humble and modest. He tries not to draw attention to himself.
- TR20 Tradition is important to him. He tries to follow the customs handed down by his religion or his family.
- CO7 He believes that people should do what they're told. He thinks people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching.
- CO16 It is important to him always to behave properly. He wants to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong.
- SEC5 It is important to him to live in secure surroundings. He avoids anything that might endanger his safety.
- SEC14 It is important to him that the government ensures his safety against all threats. He wants the state to be strong so it can defend its citizens.

Results I/III

Single Case: Austria ESS 1-3

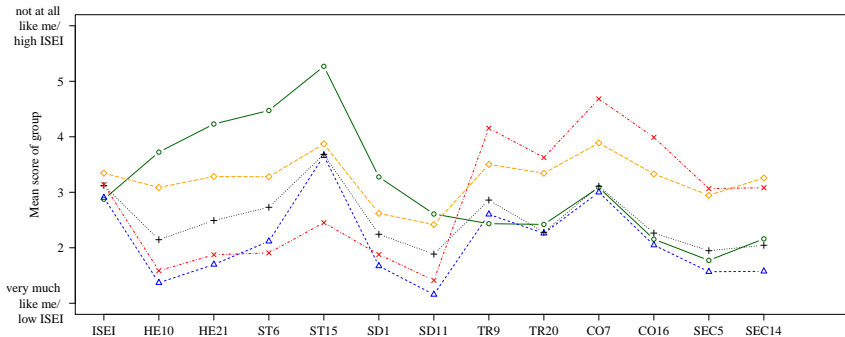
Assessment of profile plots ESS1-AT (H2)

Profile Plot ess1.AT



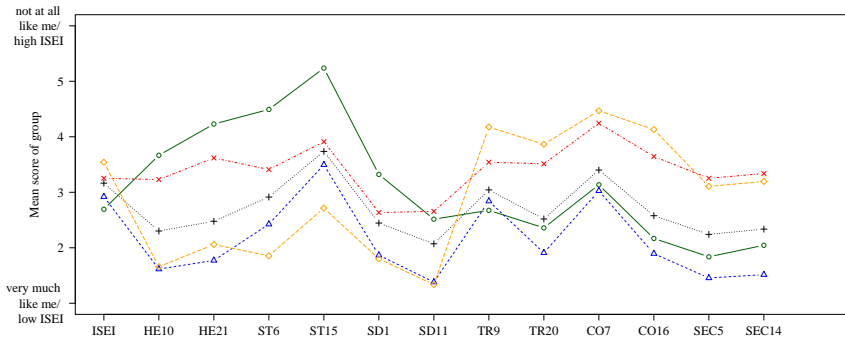
Assessment of profile plots ESS2-AT (H2)

Profile Plot ess2.AT



Assessment of profile plots ESS3-AT (H2)

Profile Plot ess3.AT



Lessons from the Austrian case

Good news

- There seems to be some stable pattern.
- Two clearly identifiable groups: Material deprived & progressive performers.
- A group of rationalists?!

Problems

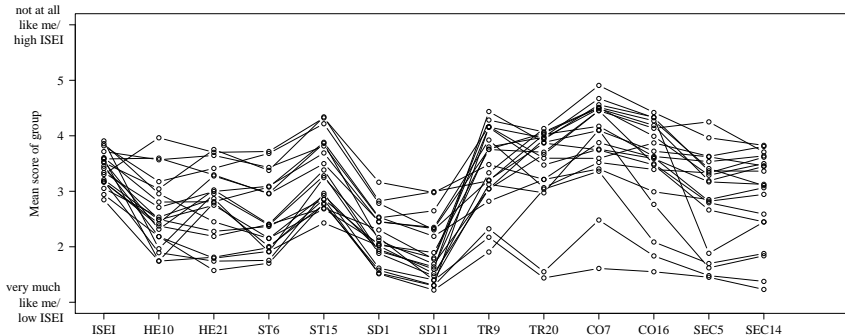
- The middle groups are less clear cut.
- ISEI as anchor is not always perfect.

Results II/III

Single Classes across Countries for ESS 1

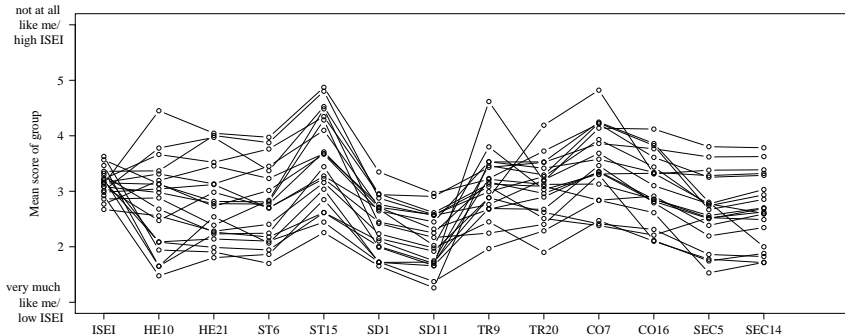
Assessment of profile plots across countries (H2)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI5



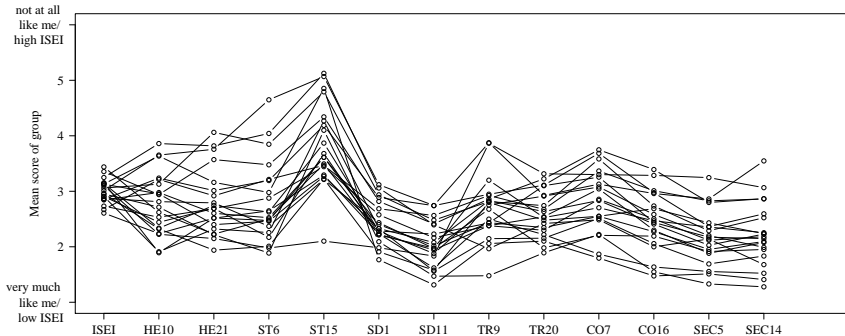
Assessment of profile plots across countries (H2)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI4



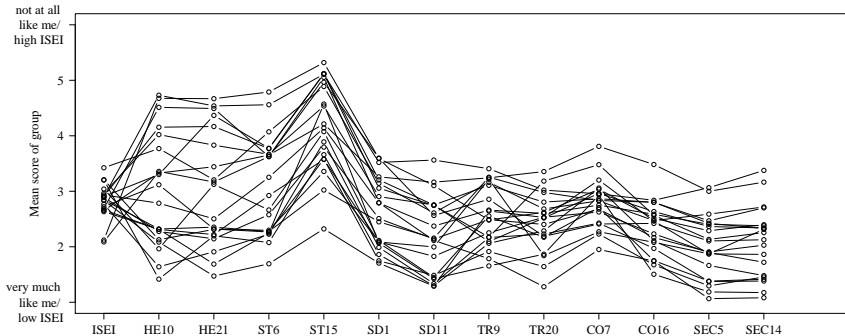
Assessment of profile plots across countries (H2)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI3



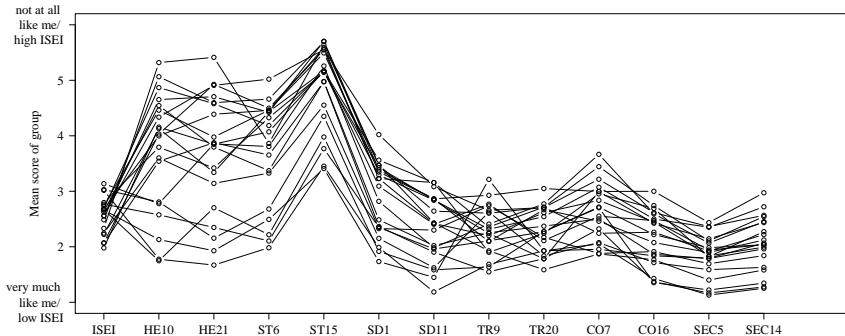
Assessment of profile plots across countries (H2)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI2



Assessment of profile plots across countries (H2)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI1



Lessons from cross-country differences

Good news

- The different group patterns seem to reproduce in a good share of countries

Problems

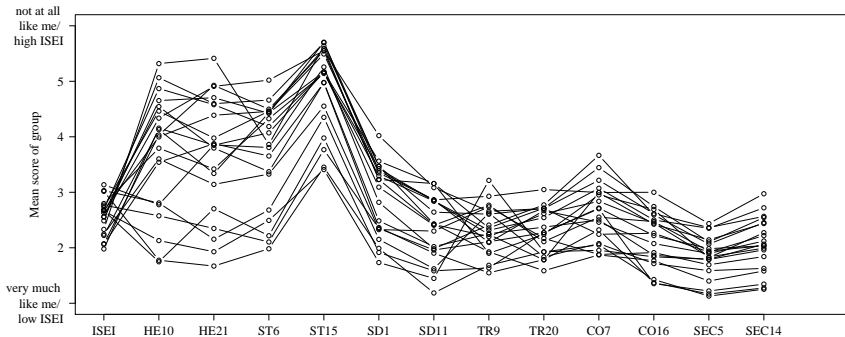
- The variance across countries is partially (HE) very high.
- Exclude countries or consider alternative pattern in modeling?.

Results III/III

Single Class across time (ISEI 1)

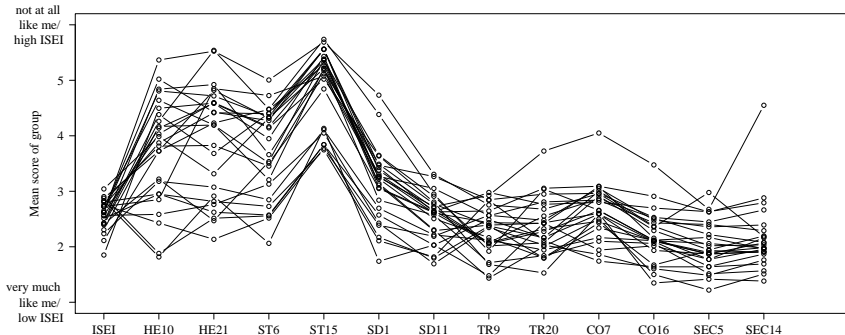
Assessment of profile plots across time (H3)

Profile Plot ESS1 and ISEI1



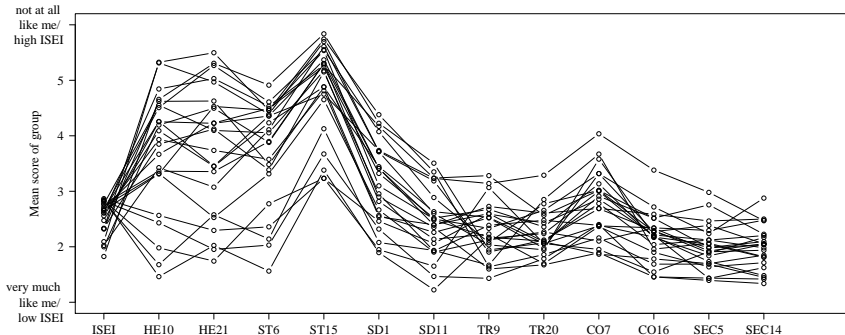
Assessment of profile plots across time (H3)

Profile Plot ESS2 and ISEI1



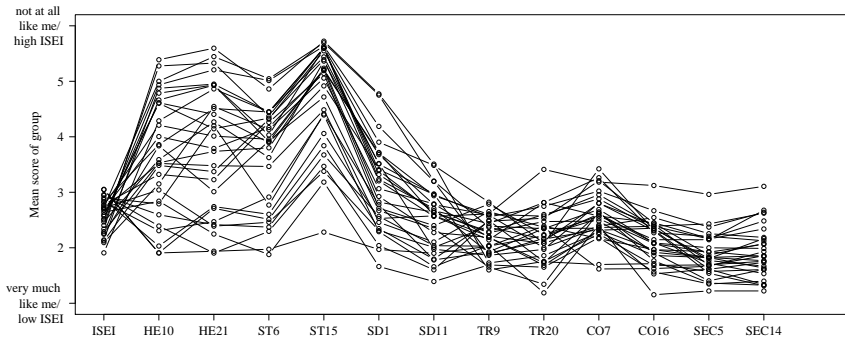
Assessment of profile plots across time (H3)

Profile Plot ESS3 and ISEI1



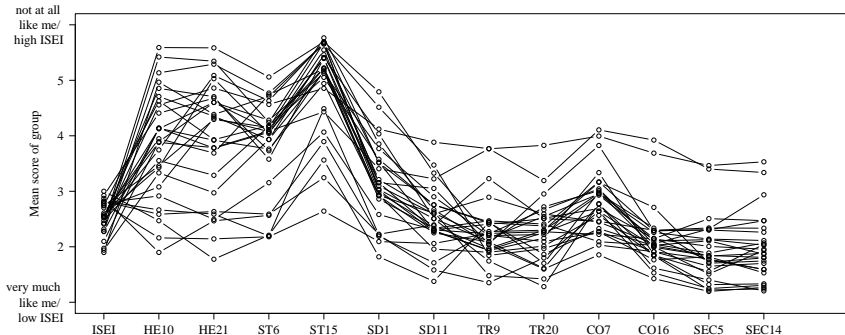
Assessment of profile plots across time (H3)

Profile Plot ESS4 and ISEI1



Assessment of profile plots across time (H3)

Profile Plot ESS5 and ISEI1



Lessons from about cross-time differences

Good news

- The pattern seems stable over time for a majority of countries.

Problems

- Again a few outliers (excluding vs. modeling).

Conclusions

- Solid evidence that strata and value patterns go hand in hand.
- The patterns seem reproducible across time and a majority of countries.
- Anchoring needs an alternative mechanism besides ISEI.
- Further steps are necessary to validate the findings (socio-demographics for groups, explanatory power).

**Thank you for your attention
&
any comments are welcome!**

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