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Life satisfaction between private and occupational life

The mutual causal effects of Life domain preferences and satisfactions over the life course in the Cologne High school panel (CHISP).

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Overview

1 Design of study

2 Results

3 Conclusion

1 Design of study

1.1 Motivation, Questions, Hypothesis and Data

1.2 Causal model

1.3 Measurements

1.1 Motivation, Questions and Data

Motivation

Two *differences* to most research on life satisfaction

- Split into occupational and private life
- Preference for either one as a predictor

Agreement with most research on life satisfaction

- controlling for life success as its prime determinant.

Questions, Hypotheses, Data

1 Does the preference for private over occupational life affect satisfaction with private life *positively*, and satisfaction with occupational life *negatively*;

Preference Contingency hypothesis of life satisfaction

and reinforces satisfaction in a life domain the preference for it?

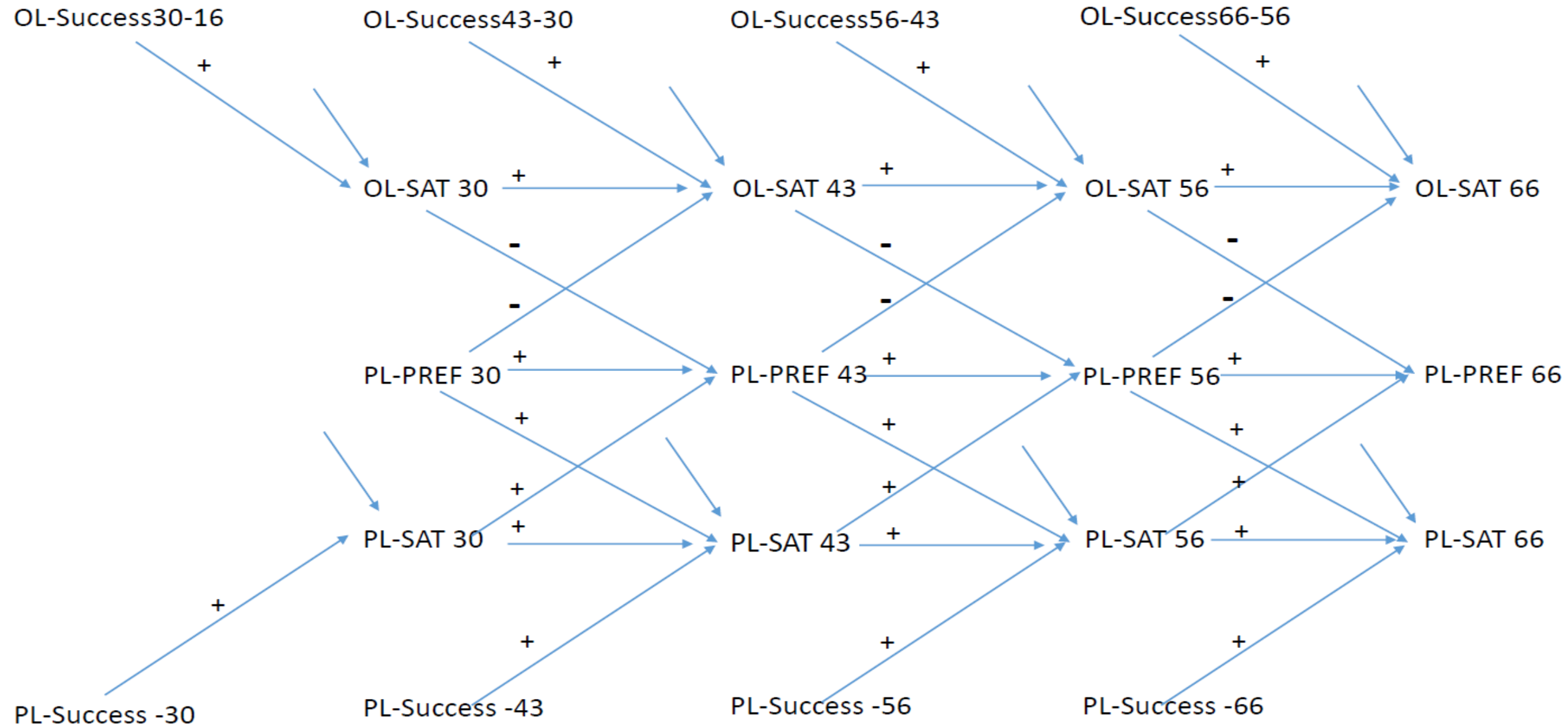
Reinforcement hypothesis of life domain preference

2 (a) Does success in each of the two domains increase satisfaction? (b) Do the effects of preference for private life persist even when success in both domains are controlled for?

Success hypothesis of life satisfaction

Cologne High School Panel (CHISP): cohort of former *Gymnasiasten* first interviewed at age 16 and re-interviewed at age 30, 43, 56, and 66.

1.2 Causal model



Satisfaction and Success model

Satisfaction model

- OL-SAT, PL-PREF, PL-SAT * 4 ages

= **12 Variables**

Variable = Indicator

Success model

- Added OL-Success and PL-Success
- OL-Success measured by 2, PL-Success by 3 Indicators
- HINCOME, MPS * 4 ages = 8 Variables
- PARTNER, MARRIED, CHILDN * 4 ages = 12 Variables

20

+ 12 (Satisfaction m.)= **32 Variables**

1.3 Measurement

Endogeneous variables: Life satisfaction

How satisfied are you today, taken all in all, with your life?

*And how satisfied are you with your **private development** and your **private life**?*

*And how satisfied are you with your **occupational development** and your **occupational life**?*

Please tell me according to this list (11 points from 0 to 10).

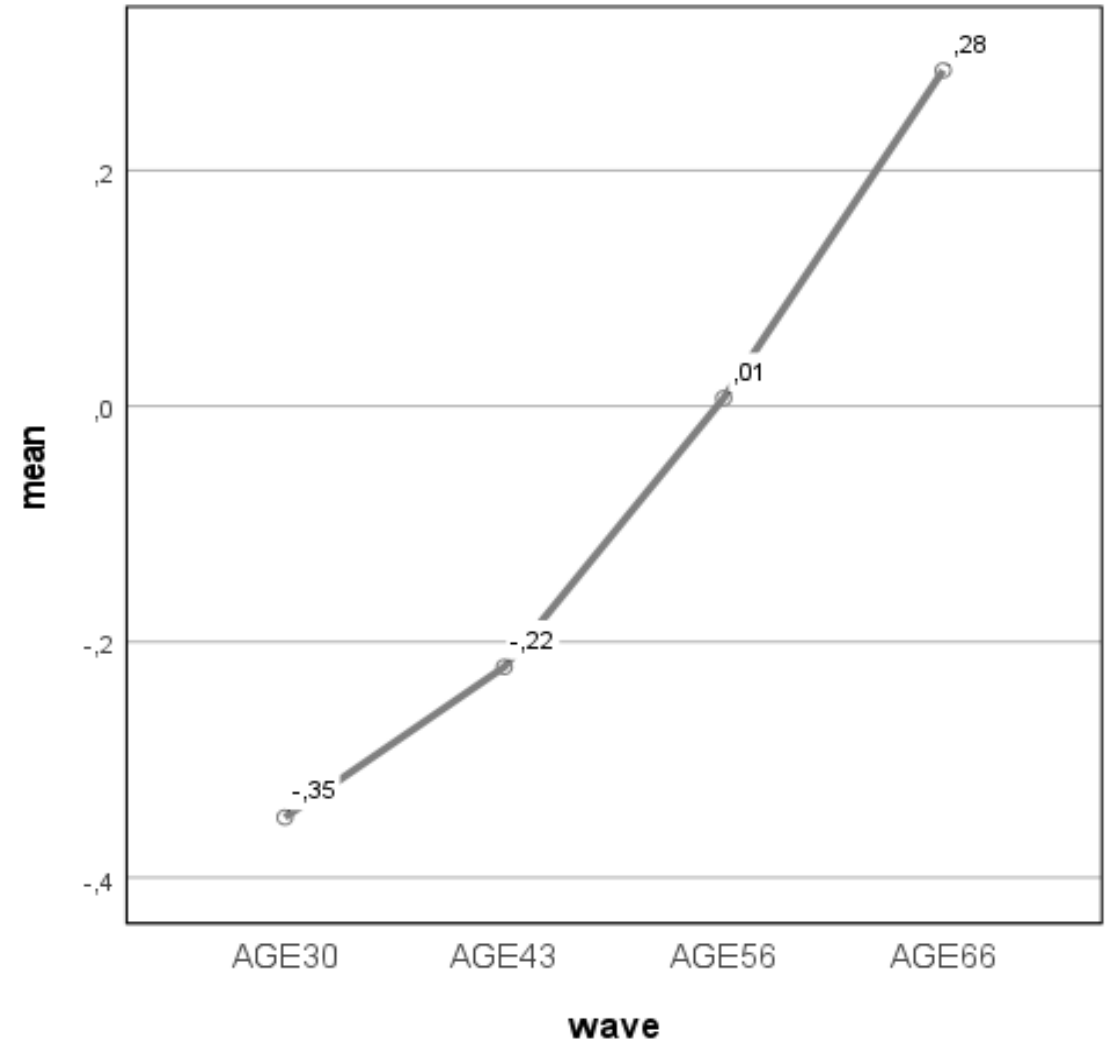
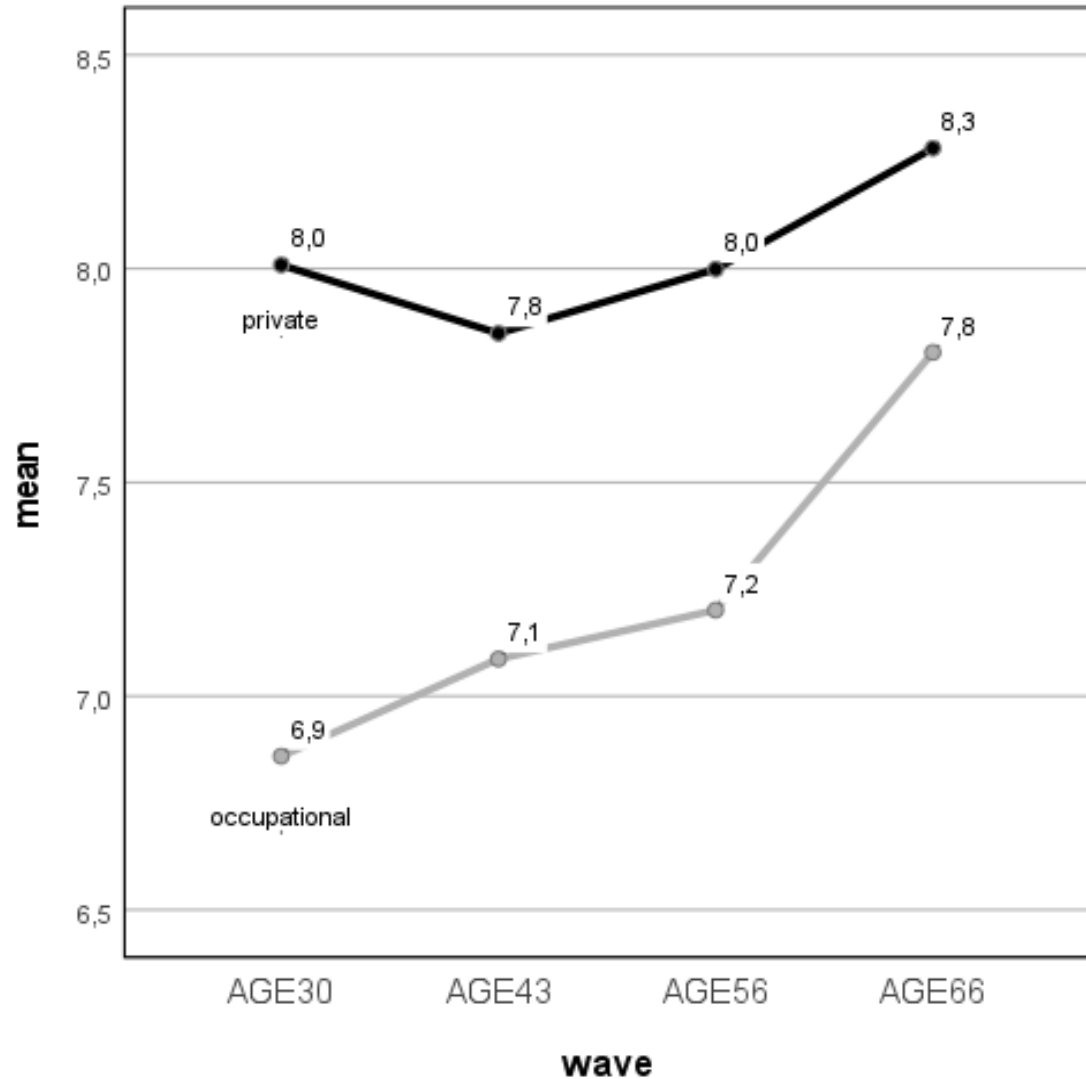
Endogeneous variables: Importance of life domains

On these cards, different life domains are listed. We would like to know from you, how important for you these different domains are. (between 0 unimportant and 7 very important).

A Marriage partner / life partner	Family life	
B Own family with kids	Family life	
C Occupation and work		Occupation
E Friends and acquaintances	Family life	
F Relatives	Family life	

Family (private) life *preference* = Mean of family life - Occupation

Means of life satisfactions (left panel) and family life preference (right panel) at age 30, 43, 56 and 66



Exogeneous variables: Occupational life success, cumulative, differences

Advances of MPS-prestige and of hourly income between periods

MPS30-16, MPS43-40, MPS56-43, MPS66-56

Prestige at age 16 was father's prestige.

Everybody starts from parents' status

HINCOME30-16, HINCOME43-30, HINCOME56-43, HINCOME66-56

Hourly income at age 16 was 0, such that $HINCOME30-16 = HINCOME30$.

Everybody starts with zero income at some time between 16 and 30.

Exogeneous variables: Private life success, not cumulative, absolute values

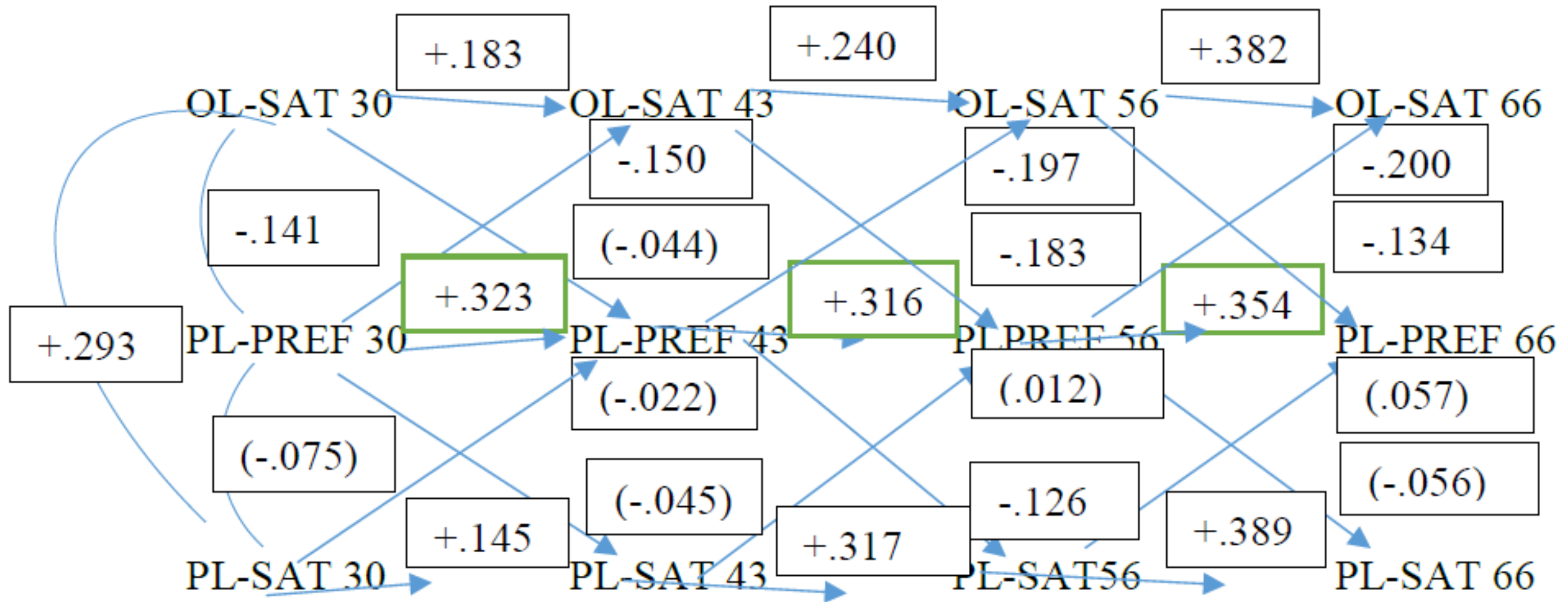
PARTNER30, MARRIED30; PARTNER43, MARRIED43,
PARTNER56, MARRIED56; PARTNER66; MARRIED66
(Single, widowed, separated, divorced) = reference

CHILDN30, CHILDN43, CHILDN56, CHILDN66
Range 0-10, restricted to 0-3

2 Results

- 2.1 Satisfaction model
- 2.2 Success model

2.1 Results: Satisfaction model



All coefficients $p < .001$, except the ones in brackets where $p > .01$

Satisfaction model: Hypothesis on **satisfactions and preferences** confirmed?

Mutual effects OL-SAT and PL-PREF (first and second row)

- Both negative
- contingency and reinforcement hypotheses confirmed

Mutual effects PL-SAT and PL-PREF (second and third row)

- PL-PREF on PL-SAT: if significant, negative rather than positive
- PL-SAT and PL-PREF: not significant
- Contingency and reinforcement hypotheses **not** confirmed

Conclusion: Occupational life and private life definitely different

Preference and Satisfaction: Answer to first question

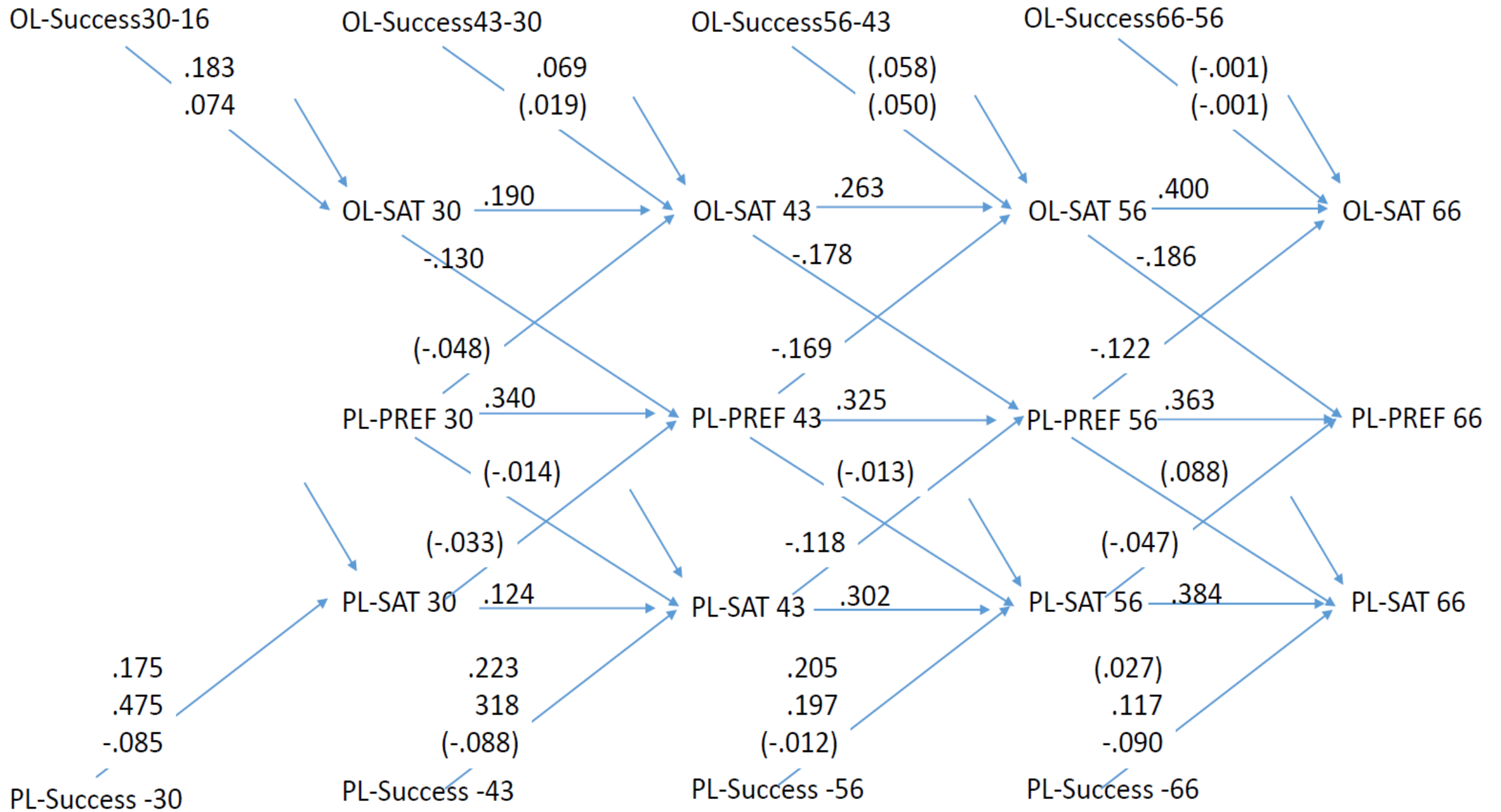
Does the preference for private over occupational life affect satisfaction with private life *positively*, and satisfaction with occupational life *negatively*; and reinforces satisfaction in a life domain the preference for it?

Preference contingency hypothesis of life satisfaction and reinforcement hypothesis of private life preference

- supported for occupational life, but not for private life

2.2 Results: Success model

- Presentation of success variables in figure in following order
- Occupation:
 - HINCOME
 - MPS-PRESTIGE
- Private:
 - PARTNER
 - MARRIED
 - CHILDN



Success model: Hypothesis on satisfactions and preference confirmed?

Mutual effects OL-SAT and PL-PREF (first and second row)

- Both negative

Mutual effects PL-SAT and PL-PREF (second and third row)

- PL-PREF on PL-SAT: if significant, negative rather than positive
- PL-SAT and PL-PREF: not significant

Preference contingency hypothesis of life satisfaction and reinforcement hypothesis of private life preference

- supported for occupational life, but not for private life

As in satisfaction model

Success model: Hypotheses on Occupational Life Success Confirmed?

From age 16 to 30

HINCOME and MPS increase OL-SAT significantly -
HINCOME more than MPS

success hypothesis confirmed.

After age 30

gains neither in income nor in prestige increase satisfaction.

success hypothesis not confirmed

Conclusion on transmission of social inequality:

- Inherited opportunities condition occupational life at its start, but no more later on.

Success model: Hypothesis on Private Life Success in Partnership Confirmed?

At each age

- PARTNER and MARRIED increase PL-SAT strongly and significantly
- MARRIED more than PARTNER
- *success hypothesis* supported.

Over life course

- PARTNER remains constant up to age 56, MARRIED decreases monotonously
- Marriage individually more constant: decrease = habituation.
- *No constant private life success effects*

Different processes in
occupational life and in partnership formation

Cumulation of occupational success

= abrupt break-off of effects on OL-SAT

Routinization of private life success in partnership

= slowly diminishing effects on PL-SAT

Success model: Hypotheses on Private Life Success in Parenthood Confirmed?

At each age

- CHILDN negatively on PL-SAT, except for age 56 significantly
- *success hypothesis* directly contradicted.

Over life course

- unexpected negative effects nearly identical
- *constant private life success effects*

Success effects: Answer to second question

(a) Does success in each of the two domains increase satisfaction?

Yes, but decreasingly over life course

- OL-Success only at 30
- PL-Success in Partnership at 30 and 43 more than at 56 and 66
- And: PL-Success in parenthood negative

(b) Do the effects of preference for private life persist even when success in both domains are controlled for?

Yes, results as in satisfaction model

- preference contingency hypothesis of life satisfaction and reinforcement hypothesis of preference only for OL-SAT, not for PL-SAT

3 Conclusion:

An explanation of the central result

Mutual *negative dependence* of PL-PREF and OL-SAT

Mutual *independence* of PL-PREF and PL-SAT

Summed up paradoxically

PL-PREF irrelevant for PL-SAT, because of its dominance in life generally, needs no preference

Is established as *the* life domain

OL-PREF taken away from PL-PREF

Must be established *on a certain level*, requires investment of attention and suffers when attention is withdrawn