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COPING PATTERNS IN CHALLENGING NEIGHBORHOODS: THE EXAMPLE OF COLOGNE-CHORWEILER¹

This study investigates the patterns of perception and coping strategies of residents of a segregated neighborhood through an explorative design. It contributes to the growing body of literature on neighborhood effects. After a short overview about the state of the art with an emphasis on the vulnerability and exposure hypotheses, the challenging neighborhood Cologne-Chorweiler (Germany) is described using socio-demographic data at neighborhood level (N=86) and interviews with experts (N=10). Afterwards, the perception and coping strategies are analyzed through qualitative interviews with residents (N=44). The results show that Chorweiler is a challenging neighborhood in the perception of its residents. Coping strategies are frustration and resignation as well as avoiding and distance, with different subtypes.

Key words: urban sociology; neighborhood effects; coping strategies; deviant behavior; learning.

Introduction

Social inequality and spatial segregation have increased in many European cities over the last three decades. While the degree of segregation in Europe is not as high as in other parts of the world, it nonetheless has consequences for residents of its poorest and most disadvantaged neighborhoods, in the form of limited job opportunities and health problems. Residents of these neighborhoods have to spend more resources on coping with the restrictions and requirements of the space, for example to avoid violent situations. The consequences of segregation on individuals have received increased attention since the late 1980s (e.g. Jencks and Mayer 1990) and developed into the growing body of literature on so-called *neighborhood effects*.

However, the discussion about neighborhood effects often adopts a top-down perspective, explaining individual outcomes in terms of neighborhood attributes

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like poverty. A growing alternative body of work focuses on the individual level in segregated neighborhoods (Friedrichs and Blasius 2000; Blasius et al. 2008; Goffman 2014; Pinkster 2014) and attempts to explain neighborhood effects such as changes in parenting strategies after moving out of a segregated neighborhood (Clampet-Lundquist et al. 2011) or the perception of danger (Lin and Reich 2016). The present study adopts this alternative approach and connects it to the community psychology literature, which also focuses on the issue of neighborhood effects (e.g. Brodsky 1996). It attempts to identify patterns of perception and coping patterns in a segregated neighborhood using an exploratory design. Coping consists of “cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands (and conflicts between them) that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person” (Lazarus 1991: 112). The research questions are:

- How do residents of a segregated neighborhood perceive their neighborhood?
- How do residents of a segregated neighborhood cope with its challenges in everyday life?

The study engages with the discussion regarding segregated neighborhoods in Germany, which are referred to as *Soziale Brennpunkte* (“social hotspots”) (Blasius et al. 2008, p. 7) or *Benachteiligte Wohngebiete* (“disadvantaged residential areas”) (Friedrichs and Blasius 2000). In this debate, segregated neighborhoods are studied in terms of social change (Friedrichs and Triemer 2009; Strohmeier et al. 2015), their impact on the integration of migrants (Farwick 2014; Blasius et al. 2008; Häußermann 2007) and the disadvantage effects of spatially concentrated poverty (Friedrichs and Balsius 2000; Strohmeier 2010). Based on ethnographic research, Tobias and Böttner (1992) describe the coping patterns of poor German residents of a former industrial neighborhood in Duisburg-Bruckhausen. They show that a common pattern of coping with poverty in a poor neighborhood is avoiding contact with others (Tobias and Böttner 1992: 35-38). Jahoda et al. (1975) studied poverty in an industrial city in Austria in the early twentieth century and found that poor families reacted to poverty through resignation (e.g. reduced demands, no expectations for the future), unbrokenness (e.g. plans for the future), apathy (e.g. surrendering to what is required to survive), and desperation (e.g. feelings of hopelessness) (Jahoda et al. 1975: 70-71).

This study addresses the coping patterns of residents in a high-rise housing estate in Cologne-Chorweiler, a segregated neighborhood in western Germany. The research questions are in line with the debate regarding the everyday challenges faced by residents of poor neighborhoods. As in the classic approach of the Chicago School of sociology and many later studies (e.g. Agnew 2006; Galster and Santiago 2006; Goffman 2014; Sharkey 2006; Thrasher 2000[1927]),

the study focuses on a specific neighborhood on the assumption that the social patterns that can be found in one poor neighborhood will also be observable in other.

State of the art

Interest in neighborhood effects can be traced back to Shaw and McKay's (1969) study of the ecological correlation between deviant behavior, poverty, and health problems. The topic became more prominent with the seminal work of Wilson (1987). Since the early nineties, a growing body of work has interpreted neighborhood effects in different ways, ranging from an ecological perspective (Sampson and Raudenbush 1999; Sampson 2012) to ethnographic approaches (Goffman 2014). In urban studies, the impact of neighborhoods on deviant behavior has been discussed extensively, beginning with the classic work of Thrasher (1927[1927]), on gangs in the U.S. Later, in a quantitative study about the connection between neighborhood and delinquency, Imcha-Fagan and Schwartz (1986) showed, based a random sample of male juveniles (N=553) in 12 New York City neighborhoods, that the level of neighborhood organization and the existence of local criminal subcultures are important predictors of crime: "The level of organizational participation appears to more directly affect those aspects of adolescent deviant behavior which are within the realm of the community's own control. The community's vulnerability to social disorder-criminal subculture, on the other hand, is more directly related to official reaction" (Imcha-Fagan and Schwartz 1986: 695). Anderson's seminal *The Code of the Street* (1999) addresses the relationship between a neighborhood and individuals' deviant behavior. Based on ethnographic research in Philadelphia, Anderson demonstrates that a poor environment that is also perceived as dangerous can require special coping patterns from its residents, and that some male juveniles develop a set of delinquent norms and rules in order to obtain status within a violent community. Anderson's argument has been verified and developed in various studies (e.g. Allen and Celia 2010; McNeeley and Wilcox 2015; Parker and Reckdenwald 2008). Kart (2014) has shown that male juveniles in poor neighborhoods in Bremen (Germany) perceive discrimination, for example in their treatment by the police, and that a neighborhood's poor reputation acts as a perceived disadvantage (Kart 2014: 189-199). Based on qualitative interviews with experts and juveniles, Kart has formulated factors of exclusion (e.g. stigmatization, segregation, and a problematic relationship with the police) and inclusion (e.g. social control, possibilities for participation, and neighborhood development) of juveniles in a segregated neighborhood.

Two interlinked hypotheses regarding perceptions of disadvantaged neighborhoods and coping patterns can be found in the literature: the vulnerability hypothesis and the exposure hypothesis. Both are based on the (implicit) assumption that differences between personal and perceived collective norms produce cognitive dissonance, which causes stress. Social psychology has demonstrated a clear link between the environment and individuals' patterns of coping with stress. The "transactional stress theory" identifies two types of coping patterns with stressful situations: emotional and problem-based coping patterns (Lazarus and Folkman 1984). In regard to the research questions in this study, the emotional pattern is especially helpful. This pattern is observable in situations in which individuals cannot change their environment, and it manifests as avoidance, acceptance, or demand for support. This pattern also explains the link between neighborhood characteristics and health outcomes, such as depression (Brenner et al. 2013; Friedrichs 2017; Latkin and Curry 2003).

Vulnerability hypothesis

According to the *vulnerability hypothesis*, individuals must exhibit emotional openness to influences in the social environment if they are to adopt norms from it. Where personal resources are inadequate to handle the challenges of the social environment, alternative norms and behavior patterns are considered.

Two types of empirical evidence for this hypothesis have been found. The first is an indirect *institutional effect*. Using three years of longitudinal data (N=845) from parents and children in two inner-city neighborhoods in Milwaukee, Jocson and McLoyd (2015) have shown that housing disorder causes parenting stress, which is manifested as harsh and inconsistent parenting strategies and decreased parental warmth. The second is a direct *personal effect*, based on the lack of emotional resources to handle the challenges of the neighborhood. Personal behavioral scripts are not adequate to interpret the environment. This lack of coping patterns causes stress, which in turn leads to openness to alternative norms, like the acceptance of deviant behavior, or to depression (Arcaya et al. 2016; Friedrichs and Blasius 2005). Together, these studies show that the neighborhood has an effect on individuals who are open to influences that are not related to alternative contexts, like schools.

Exposure hypothesis

According to the *exposure hypothesis*, norms are influenced by regular and frequent exposure to the neighborhood, and individual norms develop through confrontation with perceived deviant behavior in the neighborhood. If there is no possibility of moving out of the neighborhood, patterns of coping with the perceived behavior in the neighborhood need to be developed. These patterns may include acceptance of deviant behavior.

Exposure is measured in different ways in the literature on neighborhood effects. Three general strategies are common. The first is a *time effect*. A longer period of residency in a neighborhood can lead to the adoption of norms from that neighborhood (Chetty et al. 2015; Galster 2014; Musterd et al. 2012). The second is a *network effect* (Crane 1991; for an overview, see Topa and Zenou 2015), according to which the norms of peers are adopted. The network effect has been well documented (Matuseda 1998). The third is the *local attachment effect*, which leads to the acceptance of local norms. Taylor (1996) argues that emotional investment in a neighborhood is higher in neighborhoods with low levels of fluctuation. All of these effects demonstrate that interaction between the individual and their environment is necessary for the development of coping patterns, which could lead to a development of personal norms.

Implications for empirical research

Both the vulnerability and the exposure hypotheses suggest that individuals develop a process of negotiation with their social environment. The gap between individuals' norms and beliefs and the perceived norms and beliefs in the environment causes individuals to adapt to the latter in a process of negotiation.

This process is also addressed by the person-environment fit model (Edwards et al. 1998), according to which the norms of a collective are more stable than those of an individual, and the individual is thus more likely to adopt the norms of the collective than vice versa. The driving force behind this process is the effort to make personal and collective norms congruent. Blau (1987), for example, shows that employees are more satisfied and productive if the perceived values of the company are congruent with their own. Brodsky (1996) analyzed the perception of high-risk neighborhoods among single mothers in a predominantly African-American neighborhood in Washington D.C. Using data from qualitative interviews with ten women from the community, she showed that these women perceived their neighborhood as a challenge and adopted different coping patterns, such as drawing social boundaries or becoming involved in community activities in the interest of their children. Whether such processes also occur in Western European contexts is not clear, especially because ethnic diversity in segregated neighborhoods is much higher and the level of violence much lower. The following conclusions can be drawn from the literature:

1. A neighborhood with challenging characteristics, like poor housing or physical disorder in the public space, causes stress.
2. A stable neighborhood has a greater impact on the norms and beliefs of its residents than a less stable neighborhood.
3. The higher the level of stress, the greater the openness to influences from the social environment.

These implications are not hypotheses for the empirical research and will not be tested in the empirical section. Instead, they serve as tools to interpret the interviews. They also highlight the need to determine whether a neighborhood does indeed constitute a challenging environment before analyzing possible coping patterns.

Research design

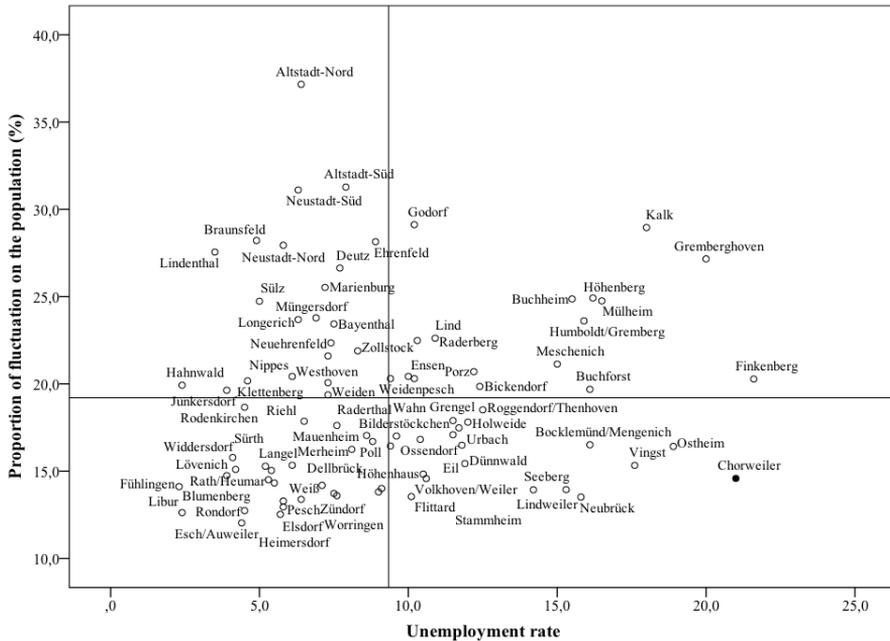
To answer the research questions, a case study was conducted in the neighborhood of Cologne-Chorweiler (Germany). In a first step, the neighborhood is described to demonstrate the ways in which it is a challenging neighborhood. Then 44 interviews and memory minutes from interviews with residents are analyzed. The interviews were conducted between January 2014 and July 2015. Data is described in greater detail in the relevant sections. The character of the study is exploratory; its purpose is to identify patterns of perception and patterns for coping with challenging neighborhoods. The interview guidelines are included in the appendix.

Description of the neighborhood

Chorweiler is a suitable case for the study of neighborhood effects because it is socially segregated and stable over time. This combination means that the neighborhood is a disadvantaged and challenging social field of experience for its residents, with a lack of social control, positive role models, and supporting opportunities, which limits the possibility of developing deeper place attachment. To describe the case, neighborhood-level data from the municipality of Cologne is employed. Afterwards, ten interviews with experts are used to describe the neighborhood from a more institutional perspective.

Relative social status of the neighborhood

Cologne is an economically thriving German city on the Rhine. Numerous international and regional companies and several universities provide a wide range of employment possibilities. The city has grown in recent years, despite the shrinking and aging of the German population as a whole. However, Cologne is also a socially polarized city. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the unemployment rate and the proportion of the sum of in- and out-moves in 86 neighborhoods in 2013.

Figure 1. Scatter plot, Cologne 2013

The lines represent the mean of the two indicators. Chorweiler is one of the poorest neighborhoods and has a low fluctuation rate. Further data comparing Chorweiler with the city of Cologne as a whole is supplied in Table 1. Chorweiler is an ethnically and demographically segregated neighborhood with a high proportion of public housing and low voter turnout in municipal elections.

Table 1. Characteristics of Chorweiler and Cologne

Indicator	Chorweiler	Cologne
Population	13,070	1,044,070
Residents per km ²	6,813	3,834
Percentage of population under the age of 6 (%)	8.1	5.6
Mean age	39.6	42.5
Proportion of migrants (%)	77.3	35.0
Residents per household	2.5	2.0
Proportion of public housing (%)	81.9	8.3
Unemployment rate (%)	21.0	9.3
Youth unemployment rate (%)	13.8	6.3
Election turnout 2014	23.8	47.7

Ten experts – local politicians, social workers/church employees, and a media expert – were interviewed regarding Chorweiler. Politicians were interviewed in order to understand political assessments of the neighborhood. Social workers and experts from churches were asked to provide insight into community-based problems. The journalist was interviewed in order to obtain a perspective from outside the neighborhood. All interviews were single interviews and were conducted by appointment. A detailed list and description of the interviewed experts is provided in the appendix. All interviews were transcribed and coded.² Based on the literature, the dimensions of deviant behavior (e.g. Anderson 1990, 1999), living conditions (e.g. Friedrichs and Blasius 2000), neighborhood relations (e.g. Sampson and Raudenbush 1999) and image (e.g. Kart 2014) were identified in advance as relevant interview topics. The dimensions of policy and social work emerged out of the material. The results are presented per dimension and not per interview. Table 2 shows the frequency of codes per interview.

Table 2. Frequency of the codes in the interviews with experts

	Social work	Policy	Poverty	Image	Neighborhood relations	Living conditions	Deviant behavior	Sum
IE 1: Former local mayor	5	10	5	8	0	11	5	44
IE 2: Social worker (private foundation)	4	0	5	0	6	4	8	27
IE 3: Local mayor	6	13	3	5	6	6	0	39
IE 4: Deacon (Catholic Church)	3	5	4	3	5	6	2	28
IE 5: Head of the community center (municipality)	3	5	2	0	6	2	3	21
IE 6: Community organizer (Catholic Church)	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6
IE 7: Protestant parson	1	5	8	4	5	5	8	36
IE 8: Local journalist	2	2	2	1	5	4	2	18
IE 9: Member of the regional parliament (Social Democrat)	1	3	3	2	1	1	2	13
IE 10: Social worker (Catholic Church)	1	2	2	2	5	13	2	27

Deviant behavior: While none of the experts said that Chorweiler is a criminal neighborhood, six mentioned that deviant behavior is common there. Two denied the presence of deviant behavior and two said nothing about it.

² MAXQDA 12 was used for the qualitative data analysis.

Unfortunately, neighborhood-level crime data is not available. One expert reported deviant behavior as limited to the private sphere: “Once there was a situation of domestic violence, but this is unexceptional” (IE 7). However, the expert interviews suggest that latent forms of deviant behavior are observable in the neighborhood, especially in particular places like Pariser Platz, the central square. “The junkies are at Pariser Platz. It is more a question of whether they [children living in the neighborhood] are accepting them as role models” (IE 2).

Living conditions: The state of the apartment blocks was described as very poor by all experts. Although some are in good physical shape, this is outweighed by the problems in the rest. According to the experts, landlords are responsible for the poor living conditions in some apartment blocks. Their criticisms concentrate on two of the five main landlords in Chorweiler: an international investment company and an insolvent owner whose properties had been in receivership for nine years at the time of the interviews. These two owners account for more than two-thirds of Chorweiler’s housing. While the reasons for the poor conditions differ between the two landlords, the problems are similar, in particular problems with mold: “But it’s obvious when you have single glazing and aluminum windows that you’re going to have problems with mold” (IE 1).

Neighborhood relations: The relations within the neighborhood were described as ambivalent. Some relations between neighbors are obviously strong, especially between relatives, but the different language and migrant groups were described as having only marginal relations with each other. As one expert put it, “We do have a good coexistence of the many different nationalities, religions and cultures in the neighborhood, but ultimately not a great sense of togetherness” (IE 7).

Image: All the experts mentioned the poor image of the neighborhood, and especially its criminal reputation. The reasons for this reputation are diverse, ranging from a history of criminal behavior to stereotypes about high-rise blocks. “Of course, when you see these blocks they are scary at first glance” (IE 3). However, the experts say that while Chorweiler is not as bad as its image, the poor reputation has consequences for its residents. “There are young people who don’t get an apprenticeship because of their address. There are also small businesses, one entrepreneur told me that he almost lost an order because he was from Chorweiler” (IE 1).

Poverty: All the experts mentioned that poverty is widespread in Chorweiler, and that it causes additional problems for the families. “Many children have to fend for themselves within their families. Problems within families range from poverty and unemployment to lack of food, which is why we offer children water and fruit. It was a big topic a couple of months ago, when we noticed that children were going hungry” (IE 5).

Policy: The experts draw an ambivalent picture of policies regarding the neighborhood. The member of the regional parliament is satisfied with the political work, while the other experts are not. Along with low voter turnout, the other experts noted that the problem is a result of the marginal political attention paid to the neighborhood's problems. The politician appeared to have given up on the area: "We decided not to campaign in Chorweiler anymore [...]. This isn't where our voters live" (IE 2). There was also skepticism over the residents' interest in politics. "Let's say that a large proportion of potential voters are resigned and do not see any connection to their lives, or any advantage or disadvantage" (IE 10).

Social work: The necessity of social work in the neighborhood was mentioned by all the experts. The limited resources and social workers' short employment contracts were criticized. "You have to finance social workers in permanent posts. You can't say, I'll finance a project for two years and that's it. The problems are as big as before after two years" (IE 1). Resignation was another challenge mentioned by the experts. "I try to organize as few meetings as possible, and instead find individuals to work with. In Chorweiler, I struggle with the residents' feelings of exclusion" (IE 6).

Altogether, experts confirm that the residents struggle with poverty and poor living conditions, and that there is a lack of mutual support and social work/policy intervention. However, crime is not widespread in the neighborhood, although there is latent deviant behavior and a general sense of resignation. As these observations show, Chorweiler is a challenging neighborhood. We now consider whether the residents share this perspective.

Perception of the neighborhood

The perception of the neighborhood and coping patterns were investigated using four different qualitative data sets. The quality of the data sets differs, and the analysis can only describe the neighborhood and coping patterns. Deep psychological insights on perceptions and interpretations of the environment cannot be provided. Nonetheless, the data sets make it possible to approach coping patterns from a sociological perspective for a better understanding of neighborhood effects.

Data description and analysis

The first data set (D1) consists of thirty memory minutes from field interviews conducted by B.A. social science students at the University of Cologne. These interviews were conducted without standardized interview guidelines and were centered on everyday life in the neighborhood. This data set provides a first

overview of perceptions and coping patterns. Unfortunately, the data is relatively weak and supply only a rough orientation. The second data set (D2) comprises eight semi-structured interviews with residents from the neighborhood. The purpose of the interviews was to understand the neighborhood's reputation. These transcripts are useful for identifying coping patterns. The third data set (D3) comprises three semi-structured interviews with long-term residents and provides a better understanding of perceptions of the neighborhood and coping patterns. The fourth data set (D4) comprises three semi-structured interviews with members of one vulnerable group, unemployed single mothers with poor health. This data set provides insights into the challenges of the neighborhood for a highly vulnerable group that cannot leave. All interviewees were chosen randomly, but the sample is not representative of the whole population, e.g. because no children or people over the age of 65 were interviewed. As well, it is not clear whether members of all ethnic groups in the neighborhood are included. A more detailed description of the data sets is included in the appendix.

The data was coded in an open-ended manner, framed by two dimensions: perception of the neighborhood and coping patterns. The transcripts were analyzed and inductively categorized in sub-codes. This methodology treats the different data sets equally and develops an integrated perspective, independent of the type of transcript or record. The sub-codes help in analyzing the perception and coping patterns of the interviewed residents. Table 3 provides an overview of the sub-codes. The phrases presented are translated from German.

Table 3. Sub-codes used

Perception	N	Coping pattern	N
Identity and identification	11	Identification and identity	10
Trapped or disadvantaged	18	Trapped and disadvantaged	11
Use of public space	6	Behavior of own children	7
Violence, crime, and deviant behavior	30	Violence, crime, and deviant behavior	15
Language boundaries and cultural diversity	24	Language boundaries and cultural diversity	6
Local contacts and neighborhood relations	15	Local contacts and neighborhood relations	6
Change in the neighborhood	22	Sanctioning of deviant behavior	3
Poverty	10	Avoidance and distance	16
Physical environment	11	Family relations	4
Image	22	Loneliness and isolation	3

Infrastructure	18	Use of public space	3
		Frustration and resignation	7
		Mobility outside the neighborhood	7
		Social organizing	1
Total	97		44

Neighborhood perception

Analysis of the sub-codes shows that perceptions of the image, deviant behavior, infrastructure, physical environment, and cultural diversity of the neighborhood provide a deeper understanding of the view of the residents on their neighborhood. The other sub-codes are not discussed in detail.

The *image* of the neighborhood was the central interest of the interviewer for the second data set. In the eyes of most interviewees, Chorweiler has an unfairly poor reputation in the city. The reasons given for its poor reputation are the architecture (e.g. D2_5), past behavioral problems (e.g. D1_10, D2_1, D2_7), and the media (e.g. D1_12): “I think the media hates Chorweiler. That’s why anything that happens in Chorweiler appears in the papers” (D3_3). Only a minority feels that the current residents share responsibility for the neighborhood’s reputation (e.g. D2_1). For some, the poor reputation of the neighborhood leads to perceived discrimination in the labor market (e.g. D1_12, D2_5, 2_6, D2_8, D3_2, D4_1). The neighborhood’s poor reputation makes the residents feel passive: they are at the mercy of the media, employers, or unknown third parties. The experience of unfair treatment is widely shared, but the will to stand up to it is not.

Crime and deviant behavior in the neighborhood are noted, but regarded as an exception. Social disorder is perceived in Chorweiler, but limited to only a few groups, which are visible in the public space (D2_5, D2_6): “Alcohol and drug addicts, there are also junkies” (D2_6). Nevertheless, some interviewees perceive the neighborhood as threatening. “I hear shots. I don’t have any idea what kind of shots they are. Often, even at night. And when I go out on the street, I’m afraid of the dogs. They have these fighting dogs; they let them run free in the evening and at night, and I’m afraid to pass by. And when a dog sees a person, it raises its ears. I have palpitations” (D3_1). Frequent suicides in the neighborhood are also mentioned – people jumping to death from the highest balconies (up to 22 floors) (D1_5, D1_10, 3_) or overdosing on drugs (e.g. D4_3). “Well, I saw someone jump off there” (D4_1). All these different dimensions describe a neighborhood in which deviant behavior (but not crime) is observed frequently. This latent social disorder leads to mistrust and fear of victimization. Altogether, the interview statements give an impression of defenselessness in the face of

perceived deviant behavior in the neighborhood.

The interviewed residents appreciate the *infrastructure* of the neighborhood. Two aspects are mentioned. The first consists of social infrastructure, like neighborhood associations. These exist, but they are not widespread enough, especially for young people (D1_28). The second consists of the many different stores in the shopping mall in the center of the neighborhood and the good public transport. “For sure, in Chorweiler we do have good shopping opportunities, City Center, sure. You can get everything here. There is a library for the children, so they can be educated” (D2_7). This combination reinforces the view of Chorweiler as an independent part of the city. “We are our own city here! We have everything we need” (D2_1). Altogether, the infrastructure of Chorweiler is rated positively.

The *cultural diversity* of the neighborhood is perceived differently, with two opposing positions identifiable. One group perceives diversity negatively as a threat. (D1_2). At one end of the scale are concerns about possible disadvantages for one’s children: “Honestly, I don’t have anything against foreigners, but I don’t want my child to be in a kindergarten where only two children in the whole group are German and all the others are foreigners. I don’t want that. I don’t have anything against them, but it should be a healthy mix” (D2_6). But there are also more significant statements against non-Germans: “When you feel like a foreigner in your own country” (D3_3) or “Sometimes, you can see it on television, all these demonstrations. One day it will escalate. Germans won’t accept that anymore; it’s growing” (4_2). A second group makes positive statements about the perceived cultural diversity of the neighborhood: “It’s not important. For example, an Ethiopian family lives over there; they are really, really nice. They have three children and it’s always interesting when we meet” (D2_4).

Altogether, perceptions of the neighborhood are complex. Chorweiler has its positive attributes, like good infrastructure, but is also a challenging neighborhood for its residents. They perceive the neighborhood’s poor reputation and latent deviant behavior in everyday life, and some perceive the cultural diversity as a threat. The challenges and restrictions of the neighborhood also appear to cause stress, especially in regard to deviant behavior and cultural diversity. This finding is in line with prior research. Time or place attachment, in contrast, was not particularly important, except in descriptions of how the neighborhood has changed. Through these intermeshing aspects, Chorweiler encourages the development of specific coping patterns to handle a context perceived as challenging.

Coping patterns

In addition to the sub-codes regarding the perception of the neighborhood are those regarding coping patterns. Here, we focus on the sub-codes that are helpful in developing a deeper understanding of the neighborhood.

One type of response to the challenges of the neighborhood is *resignation and frustration* – an inability to withstand the challenges and restrictions of the neighborhood and a rejection of social requirements. “You are frustrated. You don’t find anything and you don’t get anything. Why should I work hard, why should I accept discrimination, when I want to go the legal way? But there are obstacles on all sides. You start to think, fuck that, I’ll do my own thing” (D1_10). This frustration could also be one causal explanation for the weakness of local neighborhood relations, as the following statement suggests: “As a result, when two people do not understand each other, it comes to an end. No one can bear anyone else anymore” (D3_1). Even if the number of statements concerning this dimension is relatively small, they do suggest that frustration and resignation are plausible coping patterns. Although the empirical evidence is not deep enough to formulate strong causal pathways, it seems that multiple restrictions, like discrimination and failure, lead to this reaction. This observed pattern is in line with the literature (Jahoda et al. 1975; Keller 2005).

Most evidence is found for *avoidance and distancing* as a coping pattern. Three different, but parallel, patterns can be distinguished. The first is avoiding the neighborhood. Residents try to avoid contact with neighbors or leave the neighborhood as often as possible (D2_5, D4_2). This pattern provides safety and limits exposure to the disadvantaged neighborhood. The second is self-positioning on identity and identification. Here, personal identity is distinguished from perceived behavior in the neighborhood and often seen as better (D4_1). However, this does not mean that people feel they are positive role models; this pattern serves instead to create distance between one’s own (good) behavior and the (bad) neighborhood. The third is the creation of social boundaries, which is manifested through the (re)formulation of rules for the social environment. The creation of “good” and “bad” groups in the neighborhood also helps create a feeling of safety (4_3). Altogether, avoidance and distancing is the clearest coping pattern, which reveals that the individual is in a negation process with their environment, as the exposure and vulnerability hypotheses suggest. This finding is also in line with the literature (e.g. Tobias and Böttner 1992)

The analysis of coping patterns shows that resignation and frustration are one possible response to challenging neighborhoods. This response entails rejection of the requirements of the perceived majority and withdrawal to a very limited private sphere. Avoidance and distancing is the coping pattern with the clearest empirical evidence. The purpose behind this coping pattern is to create social distance between the self and the perceived negative or challenging environment

by avoiding the latter and drawing boundaries. All these actions are part of the negotiation between the individual and the environment. In the center of this process is the contrast between the individual's own norms and beliefs and those of the perceived neighborhood. However, personal norms could be developed to cope better with the neighborhood and have a less stressful everyday life. The vulnerability hypothesis suggests that individuals with low emotional resources are more likely to adopt the neighborhood's norms than those with higher resources. While the present study finds initial evidence for this hypothesis, longitudinal studies will be needed for more consistent proof.

Conclusion

The goal of this paper has been to identify patterns of perception and coping patterns in a segregated neighborhood. The paper has reviewed the literature on neighborhood effects, with an emphasis on the vulnerability and exposure hypotheses. The discussion shows that it is necessary to understand perception and coping patterns in order to understand dynamics beyond neighborhood effects. Therefore, an exploratory research design was chosen. In a first step, the chosen neighborhood, Chorweiler-Cologne, was examined on the basis of local statistical data. This analysis shows that Chorweiler is an outlier in the city-wide distribution in that it has a high degree of stability and a high level of social segregation. Second, ten interviews with experts provided a further description of the neighborhood, which showed that residents struggle with poverty and poor living conditions, and that they exhibit latent deviant behavior and resignation. This data provided initial evidence that Chorweiler is a neighborhood that presents restrictions and challenges for its residents. Afterwards, 44 interviews and memory minutes of interviews with residents were analyzed. This step was divided into perceptions of the neighborhood and patterns for coping with the neighborhood.

The first research question considered the residents' perceptions of their neighborhood. Here, the analysis revealed an ambiguous picture. There are some positive assessments – of the infrastructure, for example – but the social environment is perceived as a threat or a restriction because of the neighborhood's negative reputation, cultural diversity, and deviant behavior. Such a mix of different aspects is unsurprising, but it also creates an ambivalent relationship between the space and residents' expectations. Such ambivalence is reflected in everyday routines: groceries and other items can be bought easily within walking distance, but the social aspects of the neighborhood are often rated poorly and perceived as dangerous and unpleasant. Additionally, the negative reputation is perceived as unfair, and earlier generations or constructed groups like junkies,

juveniles, or foreigners, are blamed for it. This mix creates a challenging neighborhood, which leads to the development of coping patterns.

The second research question examined coping patterns. Here, only tentative findings can be provided. Two patterns are observable. The first is frustration and resignation. Although this pattern was rarely expressed in the interviews, that does not mean it does not exist, partly because resigned people are less likely to participate in interviews. This pattern is characterized by a rejection of the expectations of the perceived majority. However, more research is needed on this point. The second coping pattern, with the most empirical evidence, is avoidance and distancing. Three dimensions of this coping pattern were identified. First, residents try to avoid contact in and with the neighborhood, leaving it as often as possible. This can be interpreted as a pattern to create stability and safety, but it can also lead to isolation and loneliness. The second involves self-positioning, where personal norms and values are distinguished from those of the social environment. This pattern places the individual in opposition to an environment perceived as deviant, which could cause stress. Here, the relation between closeness and distance is a process of negotiation between the individual and the perceived norms of the neighborhood. The third involves the drawing of boundaries between the individual and the neighborhood. Socially constructed rules and boundaries create a fragile bubble that needs to be continuously renewed in an ongoing process. Here too, a negotiation between the individual and the environment is necessary, which is a marker for all coping patterns involving avoidance and distancing. The findings are in line with those of community psychology (Brodsky 1996).

Based on the exposure and vulnerability hypotheses, the paper shows that the essence of neighborhood effects lies in a negotiation process between the individual and their environment. The exposure hypothesis assumes that an individual must be exposed to a context for a longer period of time or is emotionally attached to the neighborhood; otherwise, the individual would not have to develop coping patterns. However, the exposure hypothesis only becomes evident when the context is a challenging one. Support for this hypothesis is provided by the results of this study. The vulnerability hypothesis suggests that an individual must be open to influences from the environment. If a coping pattern is insufficient or no longer fits the challenges, it must change. In this process of repositioning, norms are developed, which is the neighborhood effect itself. Altogether, the causes of neighborhood coping patterns are a challenging neighborhood and a lack of resources to move away. The principal coping patterns are frustration and resignation, on the one hand, and avoidance and distancing, on the other.

The findings contribute to the state of the art in that the perceptions of and coping patterns in Chorweiler verify the findings of other studies within a

multi-perspective design. As was the case in Kart's (2014) study, an ambivalent picture of the perception of the neighborhood was drawn. Residents appreciate the infrastructure, but the perceived danger and stigma lead to an ambivalent sense of belonging to the neighborhood. Also in line with the state of the art is the finding that avoidance (Tobias and Böttner 1992) and resignation (Jahoda et al. 1975) are coping patterns. The results of the study suggest that coping patterns are observable in poor neighborhoods, even if the specific preconditions need to be formulated more in detail.

The study is not free of limitations. It is only a cross-sectional study using the example of one neighborhood. It can say nothing about whether and how the same social mechanisms are observable in other neighborhoods. Also, the quality of the data is limited, because some interviews were not tape recorded and exist only as memory minutes from interviews with residents.

Further research is needed, especially to take better account of ethnic diversity. The ambiguous results in this area show that the role of inter-group contact should receive attention in relation to coping patterns in a challenging neighborhood. Also, other coping patterns may exist, like social organization, which was only marginal in Chorweiler. In a more comparative design, the individual and spatial causes for the existence of social organization should be investigated. Furthermore, the role of neighborhood relations in coping with the restrictions of a challenging neighborhood should be taken into account as well. This study has provided a largely individual-centered point of view, but a closer look at local networks can provide a broader perspective of resources for coping with the restrictions of a challenging neighborhood.

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Postrzeżenie sąsiedztwa i strategii radzenia sobie z jego wyzwaniami. Przypadek Cologne-Chorweiler

Streszczenie

Badania, poprzez eksploracyjne studium przypadku, podejmują zagadnienie wzorów postrzegania segregowanego sąsiedztwa oraz strategii radzenia sobie z jego wyzwaniami przez jego mieszkańców. Artykuł włącza się w ten sposób w dyskusję na temat „efektu sąsiedztwa” (*neighborhood effects*). Po zaprezentowaniu stanu badań, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem hipotez wrażliwości i ekspozycji, artykuł prezentuje przypadek osiedla Chorweiler w Kolonii. Opis bazuje na danych społeczno-demograficznych z poziomu osiedla (N=86) i na wywiadach z ekspertami (N=10). Kolejną część to analiza postrzegania i strategii radzenia sobie, przeprowadzona na podstawie wywiadów jakościowych z mieszkańcami (N=44). Rezultaty analizy wskazują, że

w opinii mieszkańców osiedle Chorweiler jest sąsiedztwem trudnym/wymagającym. Strategie radzenia sobie z wyzwaniami obejmują frustrację, rezygnację oraz unikanie i dystans, z różnymi podtypami.

Główne pojęcia: socjologia miasta; efekt sąsiedztwa; strategie radzenia sobie; zachowanie dewiacyjne; uczenie się.

APPENDIX

ID	Organization/position	Date
IE 1	Former local mayor	07 April 2014
IE 2	Foundation Leuchtfeuer e.V.	11 November 2014
IE 3	Local mayor	18 November 2014
IE 4	Catholic Church; Holy Pope Johannes XXIII.	19 November 2014
IE 5	Community center, municipality	14 November 2015
IE 6	Catholic Church	17 March 2015
IE 7	Protestant Church	30 March 2015
IE 8	Newspaper <i>Kölner Stadtanzeiger</i>	31 March 2015
IE 9	Politician, member of the regional council of North-Rhine-Westphalia (SPD)	22 April 2015
IE10	Office for social affairs; Holy Pope Johannes XXIII.	22 June 2015

Description of Data Set 1

ID	Group size	Gender	Age
1	1	male	25 (estimated)
2	2	female, male	12, 14 (estimated)
3	2	female	unknown
4	2	male	20 (estimated)
5	1	male	25
6	1	male	65 (estimated)
7	1	male	70 (estimated)
8	1	female	unknown
9	2	male	primary-school age
10	3	male	20 (estimated)
11	1	male	27
12	2	male	20 (estimated)
13	3	male, 2 x female	50/45/5 (estimated)
14	1	female	unknown
15	1	female	55 (estimated)
16	1	female	80 (estimated)
17	1	male	75 (estimated)

18	1	male	35 (estimated)
19	1	female	50 (estimated)
20	1	male	22
21	2	female, male	17, 16
22	1	male	60 (estimated)
23	1	male	unknown
24	1	female	56 (estimated)
25	1	female	unknown
26	1	male	unknown
27	3	female	70 (estimated)
28	3	male	13
29	1	male	37

Description of Data Set 2

ID	Group size	Gender	Age
1	3	2 x male, female	45 (estimated)
2	2	female	75 (estimated)
3	1	male	45 (estimated)
4	1	female	65 (estimated)
5	2	male	21
6	2	female, male	35 (estimated)
7	2	female, male	35 (estimated)
8	1	female	43

Description of Data Set 3

ID	Group size	Gender	Age
1	4	3 x female, 1 male	26/31/32/53
2	1	male	35
3	2	female, male	45/65 (estimated)

Description of Data Set 4

ID	Group size	Gender	Age
1	1	female	45 (estimated)
2	1	female	38
3	1	female	65

Perception	Description of the sub-code
Identity and identification	Mention of identification with neighborhood, or lack thereof
Trapped or disadvantaged	Mention of feeling trapped or disadvantaged in the neighborhood
Use of public space	Mention of use of public space
Violence, crime, and deviant behavior	Mention of violence, crime, or deviant behavior in the neighborhood
Language barriers and cultural diversity	Mention of violence, language barriers, or cultural diversity
Local contacts and neighborhood relations	Mention of violence, perceived local contacts, and neighborhood relations
Change in the neighborhood	Mention of perceived change in the neighborhood
Poverty	Mention of poverty in the neighborhood
Physical environment	Mention of the physical environment of the neighborhood
Image	Mention of the image of the neighborhood
Infrastructure	Mention of the infrastructure of the neighborhood

Coping pattern	Description of the sub-code
Identification and identity	Mention of using identity or identification to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood
Trapped and disadvantaged	Mention of feeling trapped or disadvantaged because of the neighborhood
Behavior of own children	Mention of the behavior of interviewee's children in relation to coping with the challenges of the neighborhood. Includes parenting patterns in opposition to perceived deviant behavior in the neighborhood
Violence, crime, and deviant behavior	Mention of deviant behavior touching on interviewee's neighborhood-coping behavior
Language barriers and cultural diversity	Mention of language barriers and cultural diversity touching on interviewee's neighborhood-coping behavior
Local contacts and neighborhood relations	Mention of use of neighborhood relations to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood
Sanctioning of deviant behavior	Mention of sanctioning deviant behavior as personal pattern to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood
Avoidance and distancing	Mention of avoiding or creating distance to the social environment to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood

Family relations	Mention of family relations in relation to coping with the challenges of the neighborhood
Loneliness and isolation	Mention of loneliness and isolation in relation to coping with the challenges of the neighborhood
Use of public space	Mention of use of the public space as a pattern to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood
Frustration and resignation	Mention of frustration and resignation to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood
Mobility outside the neighborhood	Mention of mobility outside of the neighborhood to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood (as opposed to moving away permanently)
Social organizing	Mention of social organizing as a personal pattern to cope with the challenges of the neighborhood

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES: EXPERTS

Please describe your personal background and your job here in Chorweiler. What issues do the residents come to you for?

How do you perceive community life here in Chorweiler? What potential and what problems do you observe?

Request: Do people help each other?

Migrants make up 77.3 percent of the neighborhood's population. How do you perceive the community life of the different groups here in Chorweiler?

Request: Migrants are disadvantaged by the education system. Is Chorweiler the "almshouse" of Cologne? How can segregation be addressed?

Many families live here in Chorweiler. What is your perception of their everyday life? Are there some special challenges for them?

Chorweiler frequently receives attention for its low voter turnout. What is your explanation for this phenomenon?

Nearly 1,200 apartments are under receivership, and they are obviously in poor shape. In addition, apartment blocks owned by an international investment company are also in poor shape. What should be done to solve the construction challenges in the neighborhood?

What do you expect for the future of the neighborhood?

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES: RESIDENTS

How did you come to Chorweiler? (Why did you stay here?)

Would you recommend moving to Chorweiler?

Request: Do you know someone who moved to Chorweiler recently?

Please describe a normal day here in Chorweiler. What does it look like?
(Friends, family, shopping, leisure time.)

Request: Is everyday life here different from that in other neighborhoods?

What is important for you in regard to the education of children? Do you think others here in the neighborhood share your point of view?

Do you have friends or relatives here in the neighborhood?

Do you know your neighbor? Do you wish to have more contact with them?

Request: Do you notice if someone is not from Chorweiler?

Do you have the impression that people in the neighborhood behave poorly?

Do you visit any clubs or institutions frequently?

Request: Why these?

What do you say to people who speak negatively of Chorweiler?