

Navigating the social world - A cross-cultural and developmental perspective on social norms: Freigeist module project proposal

Initiative: Freigeist-Fellowships

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Humans are not born as full members of their societies but spend considerable time during their first years of life acquiring the norms, values, beliefs and habits of their cultural groups. This is a crucial developmental period both from the infant's perspective, who has to learn cultural knowledge, and from the parents' perspective, who have to teach cultural knowledge. In order to shed light on how humans develop into normative beings in their first years of life one thus needs to integrate the two perspectives, and thereby take into account that modes of cultural knowledge transmission vary across cultures. Specifically, we will investigate across four studies how infants' biological need to learn cultural knowledge is shaped by parents' culture-specific modes of teaching. Across these studies, we will integrate physiological, neuronal, and behavioural measures, and combine them with naturalistic observations across diverse cultures worldwide. By focusing on the first formative years and by integrating a biological perspective (biologically prepared learning mechanisms) with a cultural perspective (culture-specific socialisation), this project will make an important contribution to the study of human normativity.

Projektbeteiligte

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