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**PhD Project:**

**Investigating informal reasoning and epistemic beliefs of fifth-graders in the context of parental socialization**

In psychological literature, the research on children’s development of informal reasoning - a skill which in itself has intrinsic importance and also encompasses significance for life beyond formal education - or epistemic beliefs on issues not linked to science or technology has been sparse. In contrast formal reasoning of children in classroom settings have recently been widely explored and discussed. In the context of family, this research seeks to contribute an empirical model which explores this developmental trajectory of informal reasoning and beliefs with regards to parental socialization. Drawing on the work of parenting styles and dimensions, non-continuous systems of epistemic beliefs, family communication patterns and informal reasoning, a model is formulated for testing. Participants are 989 fifth-graders and parents from the project FUNDUS conducted in North-Rhine Westphalia, Germany. The main methodology deals with quantitative statistical analyses and structural equation modeling. This research expects to find higher informal reasoning competence of fifth-graders associated with authoritative parenting, a style characterized by high autonomy-support and responsiveness, and a low level of control. Family communication patterns are expected to mediate the relations of parenting style and reasoning competence, in which conversation-orientation will aid the development of reasoning just as conformity-orientation will hamper its growth. Parents of more sophisticated epistemic beliefs will exercise less control and more autonomy-support, and children via indirect or direct learning will thus display more sophisticated beliefs which results in better reasoning. Socioeconomic status, as with past educational research in Germany, is expected to hold an influence.

**Curriculum Vitae:**

2009-2012	Ph.D. Human Development (Scholarship; Work in Progress) Research School “Education and Capabilities” Bielefeld University, Germany	April – July’11	Seminar Teaching - “Parenting and its Effects” Bielefeld University Germany
		Oct ‘07- Oct’08	Student Mentor The Children’s Society, York, UK
2005-2008	BSc Psychology University of York. United Kingdom	March 2008	Casa Luminii Project Member at Slatina, Romania Lighthouse International Ministry Xpo Team
		July 2007	Internship (Educational Psychologist) Towner Gardens School Movement of the Intellectually Disabled Singapore

## **Publications and Presentations:**

### *Past Presentations:*

1. The International Social Work and Society Academy (TISSA) Conference. August 2009 at Vilnius, Lithuania  
Paper Presentation
2. European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) Pre-conference. August 2010 at Helsinki, Finland  
Poster Presentation
3. European Educational Research Association (EERA) Spring School. March 2011 at Dortmund, Germany  
Poster Presentation

### *Upcoming Presentations:*

1. European Conference of Developmental Psychology (ECDP) Conference. August 2011 at Bergen, Norway  
Poster Presentation
2. British Psychological Society (BPS) Developmental Section Conference. September 2011 at Newcastle, UK  
Paper Presentation
3. European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) Conference. September 2011 at Berlin, Germany  
Paper Presentations

## **Further Information:**

*Awards:* The York Award 2008  
ECER 2010 Best Pre-conference Poster  
BPS Developmental Section Conference 2011 Student Bursary Award