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Fertility assimilation over generations for Turkish migrants in Germany. Evidence from pooled Mikrozensus data

Migration from Turkey to Germany marks the third biggest migration corridor in the world¹. About 3 million people with Turkish background are living in Germany, representing 3.6 percent of the total population. Around half of them migrated themselves and was thus socialized in Turkey. The other half was already born in Germany and grew up in between the German and Turkish culture. Examining the fertility behavior of Turkish migrants is not only highly relevant for the development of the German population. In addition, studying migrants' fertility behavior is one way to measure the extent of their integration into the host society. The more migrants are integrated, the less their demographic behavior should be distinct from the native population.

For the Turkish migrants who arrived in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s, studies have shown significantly higher fertility levels than for native Germans (Nauck, 2007; Stichnoth and Yeter, 2013). While the total fertility rate (TFR) in Germany was 1.45 in 1990, the TFR among women who migrated from Turkey reached a level of 3.0 (Nauck, 2007). A study on the fertility of second generation migrants shows lower birth risks for this group than for first generation migrants (Milewski, 2010). However, this analysis had to deal with small sample sizes. The fertility behavior of 1.5th generation migrants, i.e. those who migrated as children, was often neglected in studies on Germany.

The aim of this paper is to explore fertility assimilation over the 1.5th and 2nd generation female Turkish migrants in Germany. Using a newly available, large dataset (German Mikrozensus) allows us to compare Turkish migrant generations to German natives. We study the transition to motherhood to identify different timing patterns in female life courses. Furthermore, the transitions to 2nd and 3rd births are examined.

Based on the concept of socialization, differences regarding fertility behavior by migrant

¹Following the flow from Mexico to the US and from Bangladesh to India (Héran, 2013).

generation can be expected. Fertility preferences are shaped during early childhood by the predominant fertility norms and values of the social environment. In comparison to first generation migrants, the following generations experience their childhood socialization not in their country of origin but in the host society. Migrants of the 1.5th generation, meaning those who entered the country of destination before adolescence, are on the one hand socialized by the host society as they partly grow up there. On the other hand, their parents (first generation migrants themselves) and other family members might stick to different norms and values regarding fertility preferences which are passed on to their children. As a result, the 1.5th generation grows up in between fertility attitudes of the host society and those of their parents' country of origin. The 2nd generation of migrants not only grows up but is also born in the country of destination. Therefore, socialization takes place completely in the destination country. We expect 2nd generation migrants to obtain fertility more similar to the one of native Germans. By contrast, 1.5th generation migrants should have a considerably higher fertility than the host population.

The concept of assimilation is used to understand the process by which migrants integrate into the host society over time resulting in similarity between migrants and the host population. The segmented assimilation approach (Portes, 1995; Portes and Zhou, 1993) assumes assimilation to happen in different dimensions. For the socioeconomic dimension, characteristics such as education, wages and labor force participation are of major importance. In fact it has been shown that 1.5th generation migrants on average attain higher education than 1st generation migrants and 2nd generation migrants are more highly educated than 1.5th generation migrants. But for Turkish migrants educational assimilation takes place slowly. The 2nd generation improved only slightly compared to the 1.5th generation and differences between the 2nd generation and native Germans are still existing (Segeritz et al., 2010). To examine in what way the socioeconomic status is related to fertility, we investigate the impact of educational attainment on fertility behavior and its assimilation. Migrants with low levels of education might show more distinctive fertility patterns compared to natives. More highly educated migrants, on the other hand, can be expected to resemble the natives more and thus show more similar fertility patterns. In addition, the highly educated class can be seen as the forerunner of demographic change, going ahead with a postponement of fertility and a lower number of children.

Our analyses are based on pooled cross-sectional data from the German Mikrozensus (waves 2005 and 2009). This dataset is a one-percent sample of the population residing in Germany and it covers standard socio-demographic characteristics such as age, nationality, region of residence, educational attainment, etc. In the years 2005 and 2009, the question program of the Mikrozensus was extended and includes several specific items not only on respondents' but on parents' migrant status. Based on this information, we can distinguish 1.5th and 2nd generation migrants. The large sample size allows us to differentiate between migrant groups according to country of origin. Therefore, respondents with Turkish ethnic background can be considered as a single group. However, the dataset has some drawbacks. First, it does not provide the fertility histories of respondents. We determine births on basis of the "own child method", i.e. based on the number of children living in the household. Second, respondents' characteristics refer to only the time of interview so we cannot account for time-varying covariates. In the multivariate analyses, we control for the level of school attainment, the citizenship of a woman, the migration status of her partner, and the existence of a mixed marriage of parents.

In order to identify different patterns of timing and spacing of childbearing, we plan to analyze the transition to first, second and third births of women in the age group 18 to 40 years using survival curves. In order to analyze the effect of individual level characteristics on childbearing, we will run a proportional hazard model including migrants and native Germans for each birth transition. Our key independent variable will be the educational attainment of respondents. Preliminary descriptive analyses of our data show that native Germans have the highest level of education compared to 1.5th and 2nd Turkish migrants (see table 1). The second migrant generation has higher educational attainment than the 1.5th generation. In the multivariate models, we expect to find a negative effect of higher educational attainment on the transition to first birth. For higher parities, the effect of education is more complex. For some western European countries, it has been shown that highly educated women had higher risks to have a second and/or third birth than women with lower education (Kreyenfeld and Konietzka, 2008; Lappegard and Ronsen, 2005; Tesching, 2012). For Turkish migrants, our aim is to examine to what extent fertility differences over migrant generations are due to the educational composition of the sample and if education can explain different fertility behavior compared to native Germans.

Table 1: Data description. Female respondents between 18 and 40 years. German Mikrozensus 2005 and 2009. Births occurring between 1980 and 2008. Author's own calculation.

education	Germans	1.5 generation Turkish migrants	2nd generation Turkish migrants
low	22%	71%	52%
middle	38%	20%	29%
high	40%	9%	19%
n	66788	1037	981
number of events	32099	846	602

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