First child and first job transitions in Italy[1]

ABSTRACT

In Italy the timing of the various steps of the transition into adulthood have been postponed and the overall process of becoming an adult results to be lenghtned: end of studies, entry into the labor market, formation of a stable union and having a child. Particularly younger birth cohorts are facing with atypical working conditions that are more spread among women than among men and that increase the fragmentation of career paths.

In this context, the aim is to explore the relationship between having the first child and entry into the labor market and study to what extent the two phenomena are correlated. Particular attention is paid to the influence of the characteristics of the family of origin and gender differences in the transitions of individuals. The data used come from the Multipurpose household survey (Istat, 2009).

The family of origin palys and important role on the transition to first child: it is especially the family dimension that play an influence and the level of education of the father. The social class of origin play a less relevant role.

Also the family of origin is important for the transition to first job: in this case specifically, the father's level of education and the social class of origin.

1 – Introduction

In Italy the timing of the various steps of the transition into adulthood have been postponed and the overall process of becoming an adult results to be lenghtned: end of studies, entry into the labor market, formation of a stable union and having a child. Particularly younger birth cohorts are facing with atypical working conditions that are more spread among women than among men and that increase the fragmentation of career paths. Atypical workers at first job have risen from less than 20% for people born before '60s, to al 23,2% for those born during the '60s, to 31,1% during the '70s, up to 44,6% during the '80s (Istat, 2012, p.253). Moreover, this condition prevail among female workers.

In Italy female labour force participation is among the lowest in the European context and the male participation to the family tasks is very low (Reyneri 2009, Istat 2011, p.157, Mencarini, Solera, 2011, Matysiak, Vignoli, 2009).

2 - Aim, method and data

In this context, the aim is to explore the relationship between having a child and entry into the labor market and study to what extent the two phenomena are correlated. Moreover, thanks to the type of data used is possible to study the sequence and the temporality of the events. We apply proportional hazard models to predict the risks of becoming parent and of entry into the labor market. The model is also checked for those covariates that may influence the phenomenon of study, but that can not be measured, therefore controlling for unobserved heterogeneity.

The variables considered in the models relate both to the characteristics of individuals, such as birth cohort, sex , level of education and area of residence, and to those of the families of origin, such as the social class of origin, the level of education attained by the parents and the siblings dimension, i.e. the number of brothers and sisters ever had. In addition, we include the time-dependent covariates for the completion of the studies, leaving the family of origin, first consensual

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union and first marriage to highlight the possible causal effects of life-course events experienced on the transitions studied. Finally, to take into account the mutual interference between the two phenomena under study, we include a time-dependent covariate on the experience of entry into the labor market, in the case of the analysis of the transition to the first child, and a time-dependent covariate on the transition to parenthood, in the case of the analysis the transition to the first job. We carry separate models for males and females and we look at the risk of transition to the first job and the first child by age 50 and for the generations born until 1980, which at the time of the interview are older than 30 years.

The data used come from the the Multipurpose household survey (Istat, 2009).

2 – Analysis of the results

From the relationship between fertility and work in the life courses of individuals at 30th birthday, we observe that on the one hand the work experience has become meaningful also for women's life-courses and, at the same time, there is a postponement of the transition to parenthood for both men and women.

2.1 – Having the first child

Shortly the time-dependent covariates provide a useful interpretationt to the transitino to first child. Indeed, they show a more rapid transition to the first child for individuals who have completed their studies and have made some major transitions from the point of view of autonomy from the family of origin and the establishment of a relationship. If the end of the studies leads quicker to the first child, even greater is the effect of having left the family of origin. Also having a couple relationship implies a greater chance of childbearing; however, the effect of a consensual union is significantly lower than that of a marital union. Thus, marriage has a central role in the transition to parenthood that acts in the same direction for men and women. Instead, the absence of a work experience makes women more prone to childbearing, on the opposite the men: for men the absence of an employment lower the risk of having a child . Therefore the transition to the paternity is strongly dependent acquisition of a work experience, and that is such as to ensure a certain degree of stability , since the atypical work reduces the probability of this transition.

2.2 – Entry into the labor market

Shortly, among the time-dependent covariates introduced, leaving the parental home does not exert any effect on the first job, for both men and women. Instead, the experience of union is important and highlights the effects of different signs. If marriage lower the transition to first job for women, the experience of a consensual union pushes to enter the labor market. In a sense , other conditions being equal, this type of union, being more balanced in gender roles, facilitates women also play an active role in the labor market. Compared to the the effect of having children is even more important: in fact , the absence of children for women facilitates entry into employment .

For men, however, so much as the conjugal union and , in particular, that consensual increase the propensity to first job.

Table - Effects on the probability of transition to the first child and the first job. Proportional hazard model. Females - Year 2009

Variable (reference value)	Fertility		Job	
	B	Sig.	B	Sig.
Fertility duration				
<=20 years	0.346	***		
21-25 years	-0.034	***		
26-30 years	0.031	***		
>=31 years	-0.162	***		
Job duration				
<=18 years			0.342	***
21-22 years			0.046	***
>=23 years			-0.012	***
Cohort (1940-49)				
<=1940	-0.083	**	-0.564	***
1950-59	0.042		0.061	
1960-69	-0.080	**	-0.109	**
1970-79	-0.140	***	-0.126	**
Father's social class (Collar middle class)				
Bourgeoisie	0.016		0.114	
Petty bourgeoisie	0.036		0.129	**
Working class	0.021		0.078	
Geographic region (North)				
Centre	0.169	***	-0.596	***
South	0.164	***	-1.660	***
Education (Middle Schools)				
University degree	-0.200	***	0.925	***
High Schools	-0.167	***	0.479	***
<= Primary	0.015		-0.594	***
Atypical work (Not employed)				
No	-0.144			
Yes	0.081	***		
Part-time (Not employed)				
No	0.107			
Yes	0.011			
Work in the public sector (Not employed)				
No	0.026			
Yes	0.091	**		
Mother's education [1] (Low)				
High	0.028		-0.091	
Middle	0.015		-0.042	
No degree	0.031		-0.120	**
Father's education [1] (Low)				
High	-0.083		-0.247	***
Middle	-0.091	**	-0.142	***
No degree	-0.025		-0.135	***
N° siblings (0)				
1	0.251	***	0.385	***
2	0.331	***	0.494	***
3+	0.478	***	0.491	***
Separated parents (No)				
Yes	0.110	*		
Finished studying (No)				

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Variable (reference value)	Stima	Sig.	Stima	Sig.
Yes	0.364	***	1.839	***
Leaving the parental home (No)				
Yes	1.026	***	0.076	
In couple (No)				
Yes	0.748	***	0.348	***
Wedding (No)				
Yes	3.136	***	-0.532	***
First job (Yes)				
No	0.094	***		
First child (Yes)				
No			0.573	***
SigDelta	0.597	***	1.277	***

Sig.: *=10%; **=5%; ***=1%
[1] High: High Schools 4-5 years, University degree, Postgraduate. Middle: Middle Schools, High Schools 2-3 years. Low: Primary

Table - Effects on the probability of transition to the first child and the first job. Proportional hazard model. Males - Year 2009

	Fertility		Job	
Variable (reference value)	Stima	Sig.	Stima	Sig.
Fertility duration				
<=20 years	0.653	***		
21-25 years	0.019			
26-30 years	0.046	***		
>=31 years	-0.123	***		
Job duration				
<=16 years			0.468	***
17-20 years			0.153	***
>=21 years			0.018	***
Cohort (1940-49)				
<=1940	-0.009		-0.215	***
1950-59	-0.066	*	-0.134	***
1960-69	-0.281	***	-0.210	***
1970-79	-0.350	***	-0.304	***
Father's social class (Collar middle class)				
Bourgeoisie	0.000		0.011	
Petty bourgeoisie	0.148	***	0.101	**
Working class	0.066		0.141	***
Geographic region (North)				
Centre	0.219	***	-0.367	***
South	0.287	***	-0.962	***
Education (Middle Schools)				
University degree	-0.004		-0.560	***
High Schools	-0.047		-0.339	***
<= Primary	-0.044		-0.248	***
Atypical work (Not employed)				
No	-0.203			
Yes	-0.060	*		
Part-time (Not employed)				
No	-0.106			
Yes	-0.027			
Work in the public sector (Not employed)				
No	-0.003			
Yes	0.031			
Mother's education [1] (Low)				

High	-0.046		0.030	
Middle	0.025		-0.018	
No degree	0.016		0.027	
Father's education [1] (Low)				
High	-0.158	**	-0.151	**
Middle	-0.072		-0.015	
No degree	0.005		0.026	
N° siblings (0)				
1	0.307	***	0.267	***
2	0.430	***	0.351	***
3+	0.554	***	0.350	***
Separated parents (No)				
Yes	-0.057			
Finished studying (No)				
Yes	0.205	***	1.364	***
Leaving the parental home (No)				
Yes	0.532	***	0.002	
In couple (No)				
Yes	0.697	***	0.479	***
Wedding (No)				
Yes	4.232	***	0.282	***
First job (Yes)				
No	-0.179	***		
First child (Yes)				
No			0.339	***
SigDelta	0.728	***	1.136	***

Sig.: *=10%; **=5%; ***=1%
[1] High: High Schools 4-5 years, University degree, Postgraduate. Middle: Middle Schools, High Schools 2-3 years. Low: Primary

Riferimenti bibliografici

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