Mothers matter!

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The Blau-Duncan model (1)

• BD-model refers to men, …
• … relative to their fathers

The Blau-Duncan model (2)

• What about women:
  – respondents
  – mothers?

BD-model for women

• Usual results / expectations for women:
  – Women’s occupation is more strongly determined by their education than men’s;
  – Women’s career mobility less strong than for men [more continuity]; low SEI women have stronger tendency to quit employment than high SEI women;
  – Father’s occupation has smaller effect on women’s occupation than on men’s occupation.

Mothers occupations in the Netherlands (and elsewhere)

• Incidence varies dramatically (10%-65%) among surveys due to question format: “at R age 15” / “ever” (Table 1).
• Many mothers (in the Netherlands) are not gainfully employed when respondent “was growing up / age 12-16”; however, many were employed before that time (Table 2b).
• Underlying assumption (ESS!): mother’s occupation does not matter when she did not work in this occupation when respondent was growing up.

Valid M-Occ in ISMF 1977-2006
However: theory

- Resources: mother’s employment / occupation matters to respondent’s status attainment because it brings additional (financial, social) resources to the household.
- Time-budget: mother’s employment has a negative effect on respondent’s status attainment because she has no time left to help her children (in school).
- **Corollary:** the best mother is a former teacher.

Mother’s effects in ISMF-NL

- ISMF: Intergenerational mobility data harmonized in standardized format [EDUCYR, ISEI].
- Some 23 ISMF files for the Netherlands contain a valid measure of mother’s occupation.
- Table 1b shows effects on (A) education, (B) current/last occupation, with gender-role model.
- Conclusions: Mothers matter, in particular for women.

Research questions

- Does mother’s occupation matter for educational and occupational status attainment?
  - How do size of and trends in social background effects change when mother’s occupation into account?
- Do maternal occupations matter for mothers who were not gainfully employed when respondent was growing up?

Conclusions

- Yes, mothers occupations matter, for both educational and occupational attainment in first and most recent job.
- Gender-role modelling: fathers matter more for men, and (in particular) mother matter more for women.
- Mother’s occupation also matters, when mother did not work at Resp. age 15 (but some time earlier).
- (No conclusions on trends yet).

Data & design: ISSP-NL

- Occupation (father – mother – first – current / last) measured with two independent indicators: (A) “crude” [showcard] measure and (B) detailed occupations. Both are expressed in ISEI metric.
- Question on mother is about her occupation ever. An additional question asks when she worked last.

ISSP1987: self-classification

Here is a list of different types of jobs. Which type did your father have when you were 16 years / [did you have in] the first job you had after you finished your full-time education / [do you have]

1. Professional and technical (for example: doctor, teacher, engineer, artist, accountant)
2. Higher administrator (for example: bank manager, executive in big business, civil servant, business manager)
3. Clerical (for example: secretary, clerk, office manager, civil servant, handymen)
4. Sales (for example: sales manager, shop owner, shop assistant, insurance agent,_Argent_)
5. Salaried (for example: restaurant owner, police officer, waiter, baker, secretary)
6. Skilled worker (for example: foreman, motor mechanic, painter, tool and die maker, bookkeeper)
7. Semi-skilled worker (for example: bricklayer, bus driver, january worker, semi-skilled worker)
8. Unskilled worker (for example: labourer, porter, unskilled factory worker)
9. Farm (for example: farmer, farm labourer, tractor driver)

How your father / [were you / did you self-employed, or did he / did you / do you work for someone else?]

1. Self-employed, own business or farm
2. Work[ed] for someone else
Design: a fully error-corrected occupation measure

- Double measurement of occupations allows for the detection / repair of:
  - Random measurement error: residual / total variance.
  - Systematic measurement error:
    - Method effects: correlated error between similar measures of occupational status.
    - Education bias: correlated error between crude occupation measures and education of the incumbent.

- See Ganzeboom (2005) and De Vries & Ganzeboom (2008) for a similar analysis.

SEM / MTMM model

Results – Table 3

- Mothers matter:
  - For educational attainment, effects of mother’s occupation is as large as father’s, for both men and women.
  - For occupational attainment, the effect of mother’s occupation is basically restricted to women. Father’s occupation influences occupational attainment of both men and women (gender role modeling).
  - Effect of father’s occupation is clearly larger when mother does not report an occupation.

Results – Table 4

- Many respondents report mother’s occupation, despite claiming that she never worked!
- For educational attainment, mothers occupations worked before respondent was around age 15, matter just as much as her occupations reported before that age. However, not more…
- In the occupational career, mothers occupations worked before respondent was age 15, matter, but not as much as when she worked when respondent was age 15.

Conclusions

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- Gender-role modelling: fathers matter more for men, and (in particular) mother matter more for women.
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