

Labor Market Integration of Immigrants' Children in France: The effects of Gender and Origin on the Access to the First Job

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Introduction

Within Europe, France is characterized by its long history of immigration; since the nineteenth century, France has been a “country of immigrants in a continent of emigrants” (Blanc-Chaléard, 2001, 9). The children of immigrants, also called the “second generation”, are defined as people who were born in France and have at least one immigrant parent. Their number is estimated to 6.5 million which corresponds to 11% of the entire French population (Borrel and Lhommeau, 2010). For some decades, the descendants of immigrants have been reaching the age of leaving school and entering the labor market. Currently, children of immigrants coming from non-European countries are reaching this crucial step of the transition to adulthood. Consequently there is a growing concern regarding their integration into the labor market. Furthermore, several studies have shown that they encounter more difficulties on the labor market than the children of natives: they face high unemployment rates, limited social mobility, ethnic penalty and even sometimes occupational segregation (Frickey and Primon, 2004, Meurs et al., 2005, Meurs et al., 2006, Silberman et al., 2007, Simon, 2003). While researches agree on the existence of discrimination that disadvantages the professional trajectories of the second generation, few of them take into account the influence of gender and even less the combined influence of gender and origin. A first research that goes in that direction shows that although racial discrimination disadvantages more men of the second generation than women, the latter are more penalized on the labor market because of the potential combination of gender and racial discrimination (Meurs and Pailhé, 2008). Thus, this result supports the “double discrimination” hypothesis which states that the daughters of migrants face two kinds of discrimination –as women they are confronted to gender discrimination and as people “having a migration background” they are confronted to racial discrimination – and therefore they are more disadvantaged than the sons of migrants.

The school-to-work transition corresponds to a crucial step of the general concept of “transition to adulthood”. The standard model of transition to adulthood includes different transitions like leaving the educational system, entering the labor market, getting a job, leaving the parental residence, forming a

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family, having children... (Corijn, 2001). Today, in France, these steps are reached later in life but the transitions from one step to another are more rapid than before (Galland, 2001). Here we will concentrate on the economic aspect of this transition: the integration into the labor market. The French economic context is characterized by a high unemployment rate for youths; according to the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), the unemployment rate of people aged 15 to 24 was equal to 19% in 2008. It corresponds both to long periods of unemployment and repeated unemployment periods (Recotillet and Werquin, 2003).

Research framework

This research focuses on the influence of gender and origin on the access to the first job after leaving the educational system. The existence of disadvantages according to origin and according to gender in the labor market is no longer in doubt. In light of these facts, our main research question is to determine what is the situation of the daughters of migrants: are they concerned by a double disadvantage when integrating the labor market? Do they combine disadvantages based on gender and on origin? This research question is based on the idea that gender and origin are two power relations that influence each other and therefore an intersectional approach is needed. Our analysis takes into account the specific effects of gender, the specific effects of origin and the combined effects of gender and origin.

In a first part we study the characteristics of the first job to determine whether second generation obtains comparable jobs to those obtained by the children of natives and whether there are differences according to gender. The second part concentrates on the time required to get a first job and on the explanatory variables that influence the differences in this access to employment.

Data and Methods

We use data coming from the *Génération 2004* survey. This is a French survey performed by the Research Centre on Qualifications (Céreq, "Centre d'études et de recherches sur les qualifications"). *Génération 2004* is based on a cohort of youths who left the vocational or educational system in 2004 for the first time and at least for a whole year. The interview took place in 2007 on a sample of 34,000 individuals which corresponds to 4.6% of the 737,000 young people who left school in 2004. Hence the occupational situation of the youths can be analyzed over their three first years of active life. The *Génération 2004* survey contains a detailed job calendar where employment statuses are monitored month by month. This is a continuous calendar which starts the month when the individual left school and ends the month of the interview.

The analysis is based on a comparison between the second generation (i.e. the persons who were born in France and have at least one immigrant parent) and the "children of natives" (i.e. the persons born in France with their two parents born in France or their two parents born abroad with the French nationality). The sample contains 28,090 children of natives and 4,043 children of immigrants. Because of

the size of the samples, only two geographical areas of origin will be distinguished: the children of South European immigrants (Italy, Spain and Portugal) and the children of North African immigrants (Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia).

In a first part, we focus on the characteristics of the first job found after leaving school in order to better understand what are the conditions of the labour market integration of these youths. Different characteristics are analyzed: the type of contract (fixed-term vs. open-ended contract), the length of the job spell, the working time (part-time vs. full-time jobs), the wage, the business sector... so that we can make a typology of the jobs according to their degree of security. Furthermore, for all these indicators, we make distinctions by gender and origin.

In a second part, we take advantage of the monthly calendar of the survey to deepen this descriptive analysis by a longitudinal approach. Using event history analysis, we model the duration of the time taken to find the first job. In a first step, a Life Table method (or Actuarial method) is used to describe the process of the time taken to find the first job. This non-parametric estimation method is based on the calculation of a risk set on different intervals of time. Here the risk of finding a first job will be calculated month by month. Then a proportional hazard model (Cox) is implemented to calculate the impact of the covariates on the risk of experiencing the event over time. In this second part, comparisons are made between different definitions of first job: any first job, first long job (last at least 6 months) and first open-ended contract job.

Preliminary results

First results show that the children of immigrants are disadvantaged when integrating the labor market. However, the magnitude of the disadvantage varies according to gender and origin. While the situation of the children of South European immigrants is very similar to the one of the descendant of natives, the children of North African immigrants experience more difficulties. Their first job is more often an insecure job (temporary work) and is less often transformed in an open-ended contract during the spell. Regarding the type of contract, men of the North African second generation seem more disadvantaged: their first job is more often a fixed-term contract than their women counterpart whereas for the other origin groups it is the contrary. On the other hand, women of the North African second generation are those who report the most to have a part-time job whereas they would like a full-time job.

Regarding the time to first job, there is no significant difference between children of South European immigrants and children of natives while on average the North African second generation takes more time to obtain a first job. However differences must be made according to the definition of first job: if the gap between the children of North African migrants and the two other groups is significant for the time to any first job, it is even higher for the time to the first long job or the first open-ended job. Besides, while there are very few differences between men and women for the time to any first job, men of the North African second generation have a longer time to the first long job and the first open-ended job than women. The

Cox regressions show that the variables that explain the larger part of time to first job are educational attainment and the fact of having worked during the studies, whatever the definition of first job.

Concerning women descendants of migrants' situation, preliminary results do not conclude to an addition of disadvantages which would lead them to the most unfavorable situation in the labor market. In fact, there are very few differences between the daughters of South European migrants and the daughters of French natives (their less favourable probabilities of obtaining their first open-ended contract is mainly due to gender negative effect). Finally, regarding women and men children of North African migrants, it appears that they face penalties of the same magnitude when looking for their first open-ended job.

These results will be deepened to better understand what are the effects of gender and origin (specific effects and combined effect).

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