



Aalborg Universitet

AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Paternal jobloss and unemployment and the labour market trajectories of their sons – a gender perspective

Hansen, Claus D.; Møberg, Rasmus Juul

Publication date:
2022

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Hansen, C. D., & Møberg, R. J. (2022). *Paternal jobloss and unemployment and the labour market trajectories of their sons – a gender perspective*. Paper presented at Annual International Conference of the Society For Longitudinal and Lifecourse Studies, Cleveland, Ohio, United States.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.



(Unemployed) Fathers and Sons

A gender perspective on the long-term consequences of paternal jobloss and unemployment on labour market trajectories

Claus D. Hansen & Rasmus Juul Møberg
Department of Sociology and Social Work
Aalborg University, Denmark

Presentation at 11th SLLS Conference
Case Western Reserve University,
Cleveland, Ohio
October 24th 2022



Background

Parental job loss and unemployment

Parental job loss and unemployment impacts children in a variety of ways (Brand, 2015) and through **multiple causal pathways** (Andersen, 2013) both pecuniary and non-pecuniary (Young 2012).

In this paper, we focus mainly on the **non-pecuniary effects of job loss and unemployment** for children such as the **impact on their self-concept** and the **consequences for their educational and labour market trajectories**.

Few explicit gender specific analyses on this topic – the economic literature often conflates parental with either paternal or maternal unemployment.

While there are **generic consequences of jobloss and unemployment** regardless of which parent experiences it, the assumption behind this paper is that there are also important **gender specific consequences**.





Background

Paternal unemployment in a gender perspective

Paid work is very important for men's identity (e.g. Demantas & Myers, 2015) -> **unemployment constitutes a threat** not only to the livelihood of the family but **to the self-concept of the father and to the masculinity ideals** that are prevalent among both higher- and lower-educated men (e.g. Bloksgaard et. al., 2015)

Jimenez & Walkerdine (2011) show how **feelings of shame and embarrassment** are **shaping the relationship between fathers and sons** and their experiences of job loss and unemployment.

Unemployment may not be equally 'harmful' to all men -> theories of **intersectionality** suggests that multiple masculinities exists (e.g. Connell, 1995; Christensen & Jensen, 2014) for which views of work and unemployment may diverge



Background

Educational and labour market trajectories

Existing studies of the impact of parental job loss and unemployment **often focus on single educational events** (e.g. Lindemann & Gangl 2019; 2020) or labour market **outcomes based on a single time point** or accumulated over a **shorter period** (e.g. Mörk, Sjögren & Svaleryd 2020).

If parental job loss and unemployment is thought to impact children in a variety of ways, it becomes **crucial to study transitions** between compulsory school, secondary and tertiary education and the labour market as a period that **focus on the ‘entire sequence of changes in labour market as well as educational status’** (cf. Brzinsky-Fay 2007).

For this reason, we use **sequence analysis** to model educational and labour market trajectories from ages 16 to 36.





Background

Paternal unemployment - the case of Denmark

Earlier studies show **'remarkable small adverse consequences of parental unemployment in Nordic countries'** (Lindemann & Gangl, 2020) -> explained by two institutional mechanisms (opportunity and insurance) that reduces the pecuniary consequences of job loss and unemployment.

Universal free education and state grants for students + relatively generous unemployment benefits -> low perceived cost of education even for children whose fathers had precarious labour market trajectories

Denmark as a least likely case -> if an association exists here despite this institutional context an association will likely be even greater in other contexts where the institutional mechanisms does not work this way.



Theoretical estimands

The **'theoretical estimand'** (Lundberg, Johnson & Stewart, 2021) of the paper can be formulated like this:

RQ1: Difference in whether son i would have a certain type of labour market trajectory if his father had a long spell of unemployment during his formative years vs. his father having stable labour market participation during his formative years.

RQ2: Difference in whether son i would have a certain type of labour market trajectory if his father who had a long spell of unemployment during his formative years had a traditional form of masculinity vs. his father not having a traditional form of masculinity

The **target population** for whom we estimate **RQ1** is **sons (born in 1983) of fathers**, which means that we exclude girls as well as boys without information about their legal father. We compare the **labour market trajectories** of boys whose fathers did or did not experience unemployment in their **formative years**, i.e., when the boys was 10-14 years of age.

The **target population** for whom we estimate **RQ2** is **sons (born in 1983) of fathers who experienced unemployment** in their formative years **while working in male dominated occupations**. We compare the labour market trajectories of the former boys with boys whose fathers experienced unemployment while working in **female dominated occupations**. In order to reduce the risk that the differences in unemployment between male and female dominated occupations is caused by differences in educational status of the fathers, we narrow the target population to be **sons of unskilled fathers**.



Empirical estimands

We estimate the theoretical estimands by four different means:

1. We compare the **state distribution plots** of the comparison groups to each other in order to examine to what extent the trajectories diverge from each other.
2. We **construct a typology of sequences** and compare the extent to which the comparison groups tend to be members of the different types.
3. We calculate the **mean duration in each of the seven state spaces** for the comparison groups and the different types in order to examine to what extent the groups spend different amounts of time in the state spaces.
4. We calculate the **turbulence of the labour market trajectories** of the comparison groups in order to see whether the boys with unemployed fathers have more turbulent trajectories.



Methods, data, statistics

Information on labour market participation, educational events and public transfer payments from all Danish adults born in 1983 (n=54,575) were derived from three **population registers at Statistics Denmark**. In this analysis, only young men (n=26,430) were included in order to study the impact of paternal job loss and unemployment on their trajectories. In order to take into account the influence of paternal education for educational choices, we focus on the boys of unskilled fathers (n = 6,755).

The information was linked and coded in two different ways. For the basic analyses **7 distinct state spaces on a monthly basis** from age 16 to age 36 (January 1999 to December 2019) yielding sequences of 252 months. *In the extended coding, the employment state space was differentiated to 10 trades and the educational state spaces were reduced to two.*

Information on **paternal unemployment** was derived from the IDA register for the period 1993-1997, i.e. when the boys were **age 10-14**. This age period was chosen because Brand (2015) suggests that during adolescence the children of unemployed parents becomes conscious of the possible stigma associated with job loss and unemployment.



State spaces

Basic coding

1. Basic education
2. Upper secondary education
3. Vocational training
4. Tertiary education
5. Other education
6. Employed
7. Outside labour market

Extended coding

1. Basic/Upper secondary education/Tertiary education
2. Vocational training
3. Employed: Agriculture
4. Employed: Mining/Manufacturing
5. Employed: Construction
6. Employed: Wholesale and retail
7. Employed: Transport
8. Employed: Accommodation and food service
9. Employed: Information and communication
10. Employed: Financial service
11. Employed: Legal and accounting
12. Employed: Public administration
13. Employed: Education
14. Employed: Health services
15. Employed: Other services
16. Outside labour market



Methods, data, statistics

Cluster analysis (using Wards distance) on the sequences identified distinct groups of adolescents with similar labour market trajectories. The number of clusters were determined by ASW and HC partitioning measures following the procedure suggested by Studer (2021). These indices suggested partitioning the sequences into 2-4 clusters depending on the subgroups analysed. Multinomial regression was used to examine the association between paternal unemployment and cluster membership.

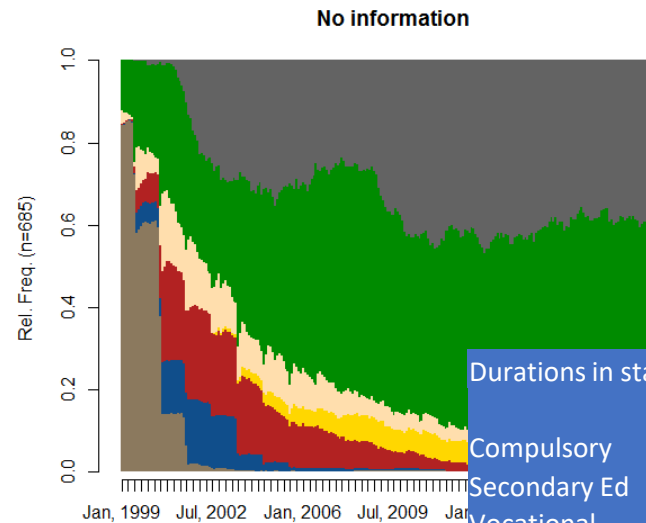
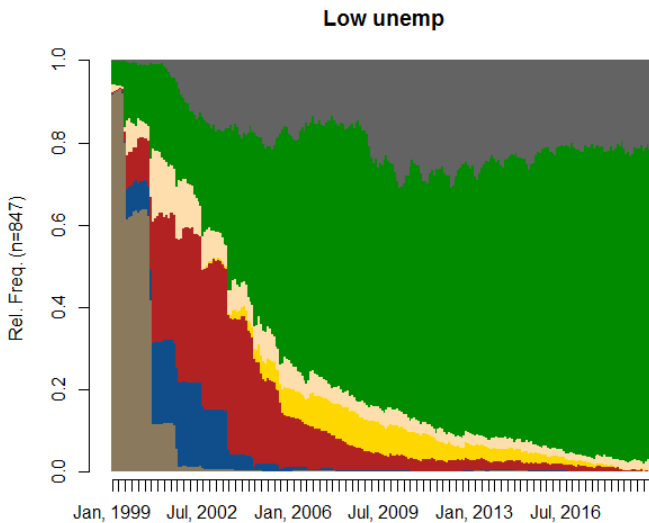
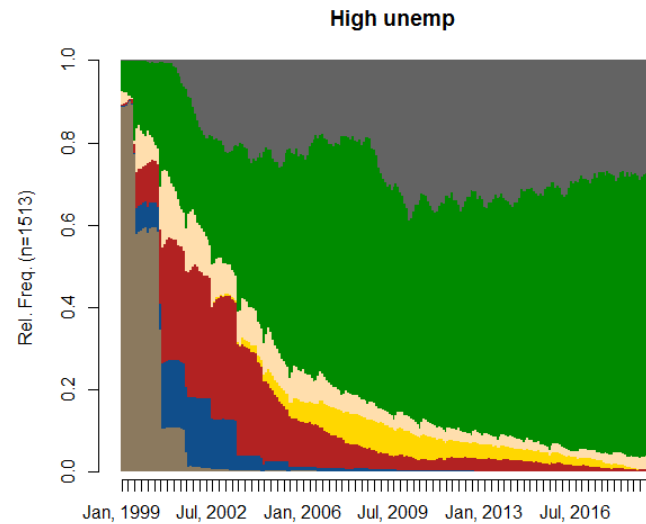
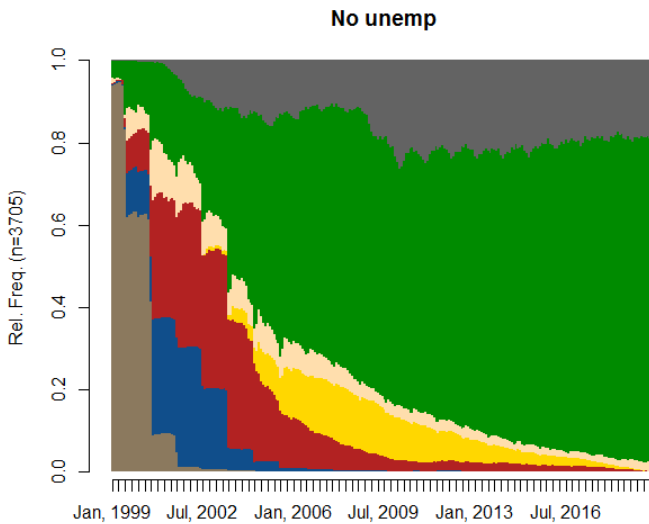
In order to evaluate the nature of the state sequences and the degree to which they are more complex or turbulent we employ Elzinga & Liefbroer's (2007) measure of turbulence T in its normalized version (suggested by Ritschard 2021). The level of turbulence was subsequently used as the outcome in a linear regression including paternal unemployment as well as paternal income.

The TraMineR package was used to generate and analyse the sequences (Gabadinho et. al., 2011).



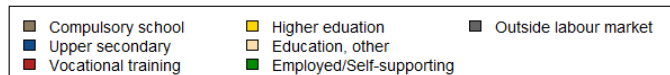
Results

State distribution plots by father's unemployment status



Durations in states (months) by father's unemployment status

	No unemp	High unemp	Low unemp	No info
Compulsory	15	14	15	15
Secondary Ed	11	7	8	7
Vocational Training	24	23	26	18
Higher Ed	13	7	8	7
Education, oth	11	13	11	14
Employed	140	128	137	113
Outside labour market	38	60	47	78
N	3,705	1,513	847	685



Results

Mean duration in state spaces (months) by father's occupation and unemployment status

	Male dominated			Female dominated		
	No unemp	Low unemp	High unemp	No unemp	Low unemp	High unemp
Compulsory	15	15	14	15	13	14
Secondary Ed	10	6	5	14	15	10
Vocational Training	25	28	25	22	18	21
Higher Ed	10	6	5	18	17	9
Education, oth	11	10	12	13	19	16
Employed	141	141	129	130	128	128
Outside labour market	41	46	61	40	42	55
N	853	355	403	179	54	78



Results

Turbulence T in labour market trajectories by paternal unemployment status

	All (1)	Male dominated (2)	Female dominated (3)
High paternal unemployment	1.341*** (0.226)	1.409*** (0.477)	1.047 (0.971)
Low paternal unemployment	0.935*** (0.265)	1.027** (0.469)	2.947*** (1.029)
Mean wage	-0.033*** (0.010)	-0.024 (0.024)	0.016 (0.053)
Constant	16.139*** (0.286)	16.193*** (0.658)	14.643*** (1.216)
Observations	6,065	1,611	311
Adjusted R ²	0.018	0.007	0.021

Note:

* p<0.1; ** p<0.05; *** p<0.01

No paternal unemployment is reference category

Adjusted for father's job category

Conclusion

The **labour market trajectories** of sons with unemployed, unskilled fathers **diverges** to some extent from the labour market trajectories of sons of unskilled fathers with no unemployment at all.

They spend **more time outside the labour market** themselves and to a **lesser extent** embark on **trajectories involving higher education**. In addition, the **trajectories are more turbulent** (i.e. involves more transitions and greater diversity in the length of spells).

Some **differences between** boys with fathers in **male dominated** and **female dominated occupations** were found: **more upper secondary and higher education** and **less turbulent trajectories** -> consistent with gender specific effects of paternal unemployment?



Thank you for your attention!

Questions/comments: clausdh@socsci.aau.dk

