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Is there a gender satisfaction gap?

Occupational and private life satisfactions of men and women over the life course in the Cologne High school panel (CHISP).

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Overview

1 Study design
2 Descriptive Results
3 Multivariate analysis
4 Summary, limitations, and perspectives

1 Study design

Questions

Two steps: univariate and multivariate analysis

Data and variables

First question and analysis step

Gender gap of life satisfaction

- General?
- Occupational?
- Private?

And: vary over the life course?

Gender specific preferences of private over occupational life?

And: vary over the life course?

Descriptive analysis

- Distribution of satisfaction and of private life preference by age and gender

Second Question and analysis step

IF gender satisfaction gaps detected in first step

- explained by
  - gender specific preferences of private over occupational life
  - and by life succes?

Causal analysis: Regression of Satisfaction on

- gender (time constant) and
- preference & success (time variant)

Generalized Linear Mixed Models (GLMM) with random factor needed

SEM inappropriate:

- time constant predictors only first time point

Data and variables

CHISP 30, 43, 56, and 66: n=1013

Life satisfactions: 0 to 10 ”very satisfied” with (in this order) of

- “your life all in all”
- “your private development and your private life”
- “your occupational development and your occupation life”

Almost exclusively higher values above 5

“How important for you these different domains” from 0 to 7 “very important”.

- Occupational life: “Occupation and Work”
- Private life: mean of
  - “Marriage partner / life partner”
  - “Own family with kids”
  - “Friends and acquaintances”
  - “Relatives”.

Preference for private life: private minus occupational life importance

- mean slightly above 0 with a range from -7 to 7

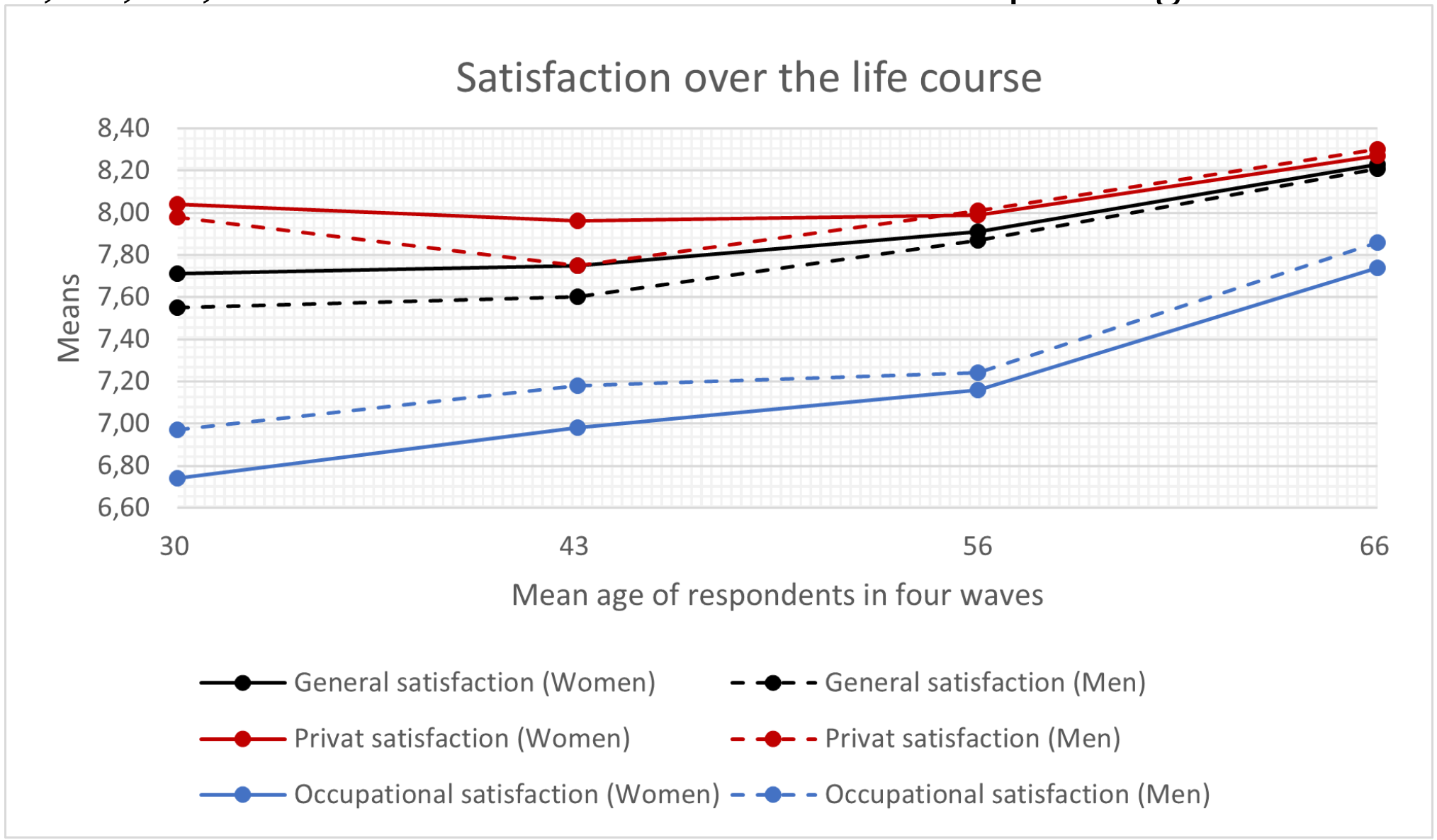
2 Descriptive analysis:
Satisfaction and preference in gender groups over the life course

2.1 Life satisfaction

2.2 Private life preference

2.1 Life satisfaction

Means of the occupational, private and general life satisfaction at age 30, 43, 56, and 66: 529 men and 482 women responding in each wave



Agreement between genders:

Rank order of three satisfaction at each age:

private > general >> occupational

Developmental Direction:

All three increase monotonously

Disagreement between genders: Difference and developmental form

General: men < women at age 30 and 43, but almost zero at age 56 and 66. Gender differences weaker than time developments, overridden by developmental forces.

Private: men = women. Differences switch sign and minimal in comparison to SD. Gender differences disappear behind developments.

Occupational: men > women; dwindles from age 56 onwards.

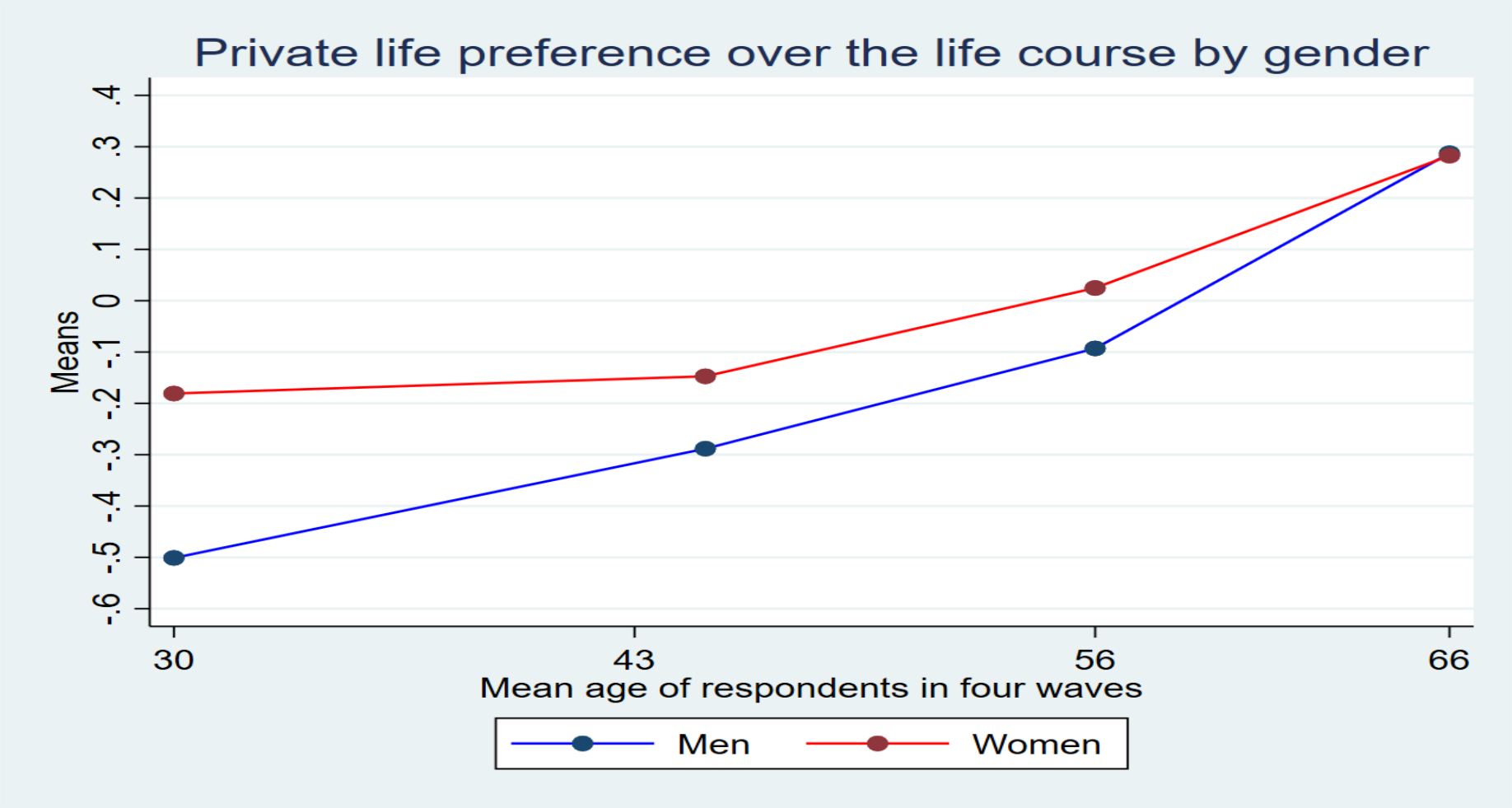
In sum gender differences

- minimal compared to developments
- sufficiently big only for occupational life satisfaction.

Does disadvantage of women in occupational life satisfaction reflect a reduced interest?

2.1 Private life preference

Means of private life preference at age 30, 43, 56, and 66: 529 men and 482 women responding in each wave



Agreement and disagreement between genders

Agreement in direction of development

- Increase: strong and monotonous 30 - 66.

Disagreement in form of development

- male disadvantage dwindles from -0.42 to -0.14 between age 30 and 43, negligible later on.

Thus: Some of female disadvantage of occupational life satisfaction at age 30 and 43 may reflect a female disinterest in occupational life at age 30 and 43.

Two conclusions from descriptive analysis

- gender gap of occupational life satisfaction only worth further analysis

- private life preference promising candidate for its explanation beyond age and life success.

3 Causal analysis:
Occupational life satisfaction over the life course by gender, age, preference and life success

Analysis method: broad data format, n= 4*1013

Correlations of measurements due to unobserved subject qualities: random factor u_i

Ordinal dependent variable > multinomial distribution

AIK-Information-Criterion = R^2 with correction for df

$$\text{Log}\ (p_i/(1-p_i)) = \text{beta0} + \text{beta1}*\text{Gender} + \text{beta2}*\text{age} + u_i$$

No error term for the j measurements within individuals e_{ij} in equation.

Logits and corresponding beta0's computed for successively higher values. First two values:

$$\text{Log}\ (p_1/p_0), \text{ for the second Log } ((p_{2\,+}\,p_1)/(p_{1\,+}\,p_0))$$

Altogether 10 beta0 intercepts = threshold for advancing from lower to higher value. If dependent variable ordinal, intercepts monotonously bigger

Independent Variables

Gender: 1 men, 0 women

Age metric: 30, 43, 56, 66

Private life preference: private – occupational

Occupational Life Success

- Hourly income

- MSP prestige

Occupational Life Satisfaction at age 30, 43, 56, and 66: Fixed Effects of gender, age, private life preference, and occupational life success in mixed models of ordered logistic regressions with subjects as random effects

Model: number, predictors	N * 4	Male	Age: 30-56	Male * Age	Private life prefe-rence	Hourly Income	MPS-Prestige	AIK
1 Male, Age	4029	.072	.011***	.000				106327
1a Age	4029		.011***					106352
2 Age, Preference, Success	3457		.009***		-.086***	.001	.003***	9380
2a Preference, Pestige	3855				-.068**		.004***	104031

Model 1: age, and gender?

n = 4029, almost all of 1013*4 measurements.

Model 1: age and gender

- Only positive age effect. Male and Male*Age not significant.
- no gender gap of occupational life satisfaction, general increase

Model 1a: only age

- regression coefficient same
- but AIK (R^2 corrected for df) increases

According to AIK model 1a more efficient than model 1

Model 2: Age, private life preferences and occupational life success, but not gender

Model 2: Age, preference, income and prestige, n= 3457

Occupational life satisfaction

- Decreases with private life preference
- Increases with prestige, but not with income
- AIK does not increase in comparison with model 1a.

Model 2a: Age, preference and prestige, but not income, n= 3855

- Preference and prestige effects as in model 2
- AIK still lower than the ones of the models 1 and 1a

Lesson of the four models

Time-variant preference and success compete significantly and substantively with age

But

- hard to beat age as predictor of development

- difficult to find an exhausting set of predictors

- impact of age remains, not identifiable analytically

4 Summary, limitations and perspectives

Summary: Descriptive analysis

Satisfaction

- Gender differences:
  - general and private M = F
  - occupational M > F
- Development: All satisfactions increase monotonously M and F

Conclusion: Only occupational life satisfaction worth analysis

Private life preference

- Gender difference *and* development:
  - M < F at 30 and 43, not 56 and 66.

Conclusion: Private life preference promising predictor of a female gap of occupational life satisfaction

Summary: Causal analysis of occupational life satisfaction on age, gender, preference, success

Predictors Gender and age (model 1):

- age: positive; gender and gender*time: no effect.

Predictors age, private life preference and occupational life success (model 2):

- age: positive as in model 1

- private life preference: negative, as expected

- prestige: positive as expected; income: no effect

Age best predictor, none of the further predictors reduces its predictive power.

Limitations

Socially selective sample. German High School Students have better occupational opportunities than general population, plan and act accordingly already in 1969 and up to 2010.

Effects may be stronger in general population: Women

- may prefer private over occupational life more strongly
- be more strongly satisfied with private and less strongly with occupational life than men.

Perspectives: Predictors competing with age?

Age beats *domain preference* and *domain success* in predicting occupational life satisfaction.

Two further competitors have been analysed in the still bigger CHISP-sample up to age 43 – unfortunately with inconsistent results.

- **Internal causal attribution of success** should and did increase occupational life satisfaction – but its counterpart, the **external attribution**, did as well and even more strongly so.

- **Flexible adjustment of goals to capabilities** should and did increase occupational life satisfaction (Brandtstädter 2007) – but its counterpart, the **tenacious goal pursuit**, did equally strongly so.

Given the sociologist's intention to explain the effects of natural categories by social mechanisms, disappointing. What else may beat age?

Thank you for your attention