

THE FAMILY FORMATION POSTPONEMENT AND THE WOMEN INCREASE IN EDUCATIONAL ENROLLMENT IN MEXICO AND SPAIN

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1. Introduction

Generally speaking, the impact that education has on family formation patterns manifests in two ways: the change of preferences associated with getting a higher level of education and educational enrolment associated to the postponement of the formation of a family.

The first way is the most widely studied and it focuses on measuring how women with higher education value marriage or motherhood in a different way than women with less education, for example, these women can prioritize their professional careers and postpone their family formation. Most of the studies examining the effects that education has on family behaviors make use of this perspective.

The second way is the least analyzed and takes into consideration the duration since the completion of education or the prolongation of the time spent by a person studying which can explain the delay when starting family formation and thus causing a reduction of final proportions events such as the first union and the first motherhood (Liefbroer & Corijin, 1999; Hoem, 1986). A reason for this could be that a greater number of student years imply, for example, a delay of the transitioning phase towards economic stability and insertion into the labor market, habitual requirements before starting a family (Oppenheimer, 1988). Authors like Blossfeld & Huinink (1991), Skirbekk *et al.* (2004) and Ní Bhrolcháin & Beaujouan (2012) point out that the changes in tempo of family formation are a consequence of the prolongation of the educational enrolment. As mentioned before, the literature related to this way of affectation is limited in comparison to the literature that studies the first way, that of preferences, and so, the present study aims to be a scientific contribution to the second way.

The aim of this investigation is to determine the contribution of rising enrolment to the postponement change in fertility tempo at which two events take place: the first union and

the first motherhood in Mexico and Spain. In addition, this study focuses on the age at completing education rather than on educational attainment.

In Europe, investigations that analyze the impact that duration since the completion of education has on the family formation tempo are rare and in developing countries they are almost non-existent. This is one of the reasons why this study should be carried out in both Mexico and Spain.

2. Data and Methods

The data source used for Mexico is the National Survey of Demographic Dynamics conducted in 2009 and for Spain we used the Fertility, Family and Values Survey conducted in 2006.

First we study the evolution and the educational differences among the women from Spain and Mexico. We analyzed the distribution percentage of educational years of the female population, by group of age, based on the age at which they completed their education.

Furthermore, we examine if the first union and the first motherhood postponement are due to educational expansion of women. We carried out this through calculation *Age-specific first union and first motherhood rates* and *First union and First motherhood rates by time since completing education*, stratified by education level and adjusted through parametrical models.

Lastly, we analyze the effect that education has on the transition rates for the first union and first motherhood after having completing their education. For this objective we adjusted a logistic regression model for each event and calculated two indicators: the transition rate to first motherhood and to first union since end of education by education levels.

3. Results

The question that we analyze is whether or not women in Mexico and Spain nowadays form their first union or have their first child slightly later due to the rising educational participation. To answer this we examined the profile of the rates by chronological age and duration since completion of education, for the first union and first motherhood.

3.1 First Union

As we can see in Figure 1, there are important differences in the family formation profile between Mexico and Spain, when comparing age-specific first-union rate profile we can see a shift rightwards at older ages, which can be translated as a delay in the calendar of women's first union of a higher education level in both countries although more especially in Spain. Visually, the Figures also demonstrate that the first union is in a great deal associated with the completion of the education. First-union rates by duration since the completion of education are more stables and present fewer differences for both countries. In general, we can say that women with a higher education have more similarities with the less educated women in the duration scale, and much less similar in woman age scale.

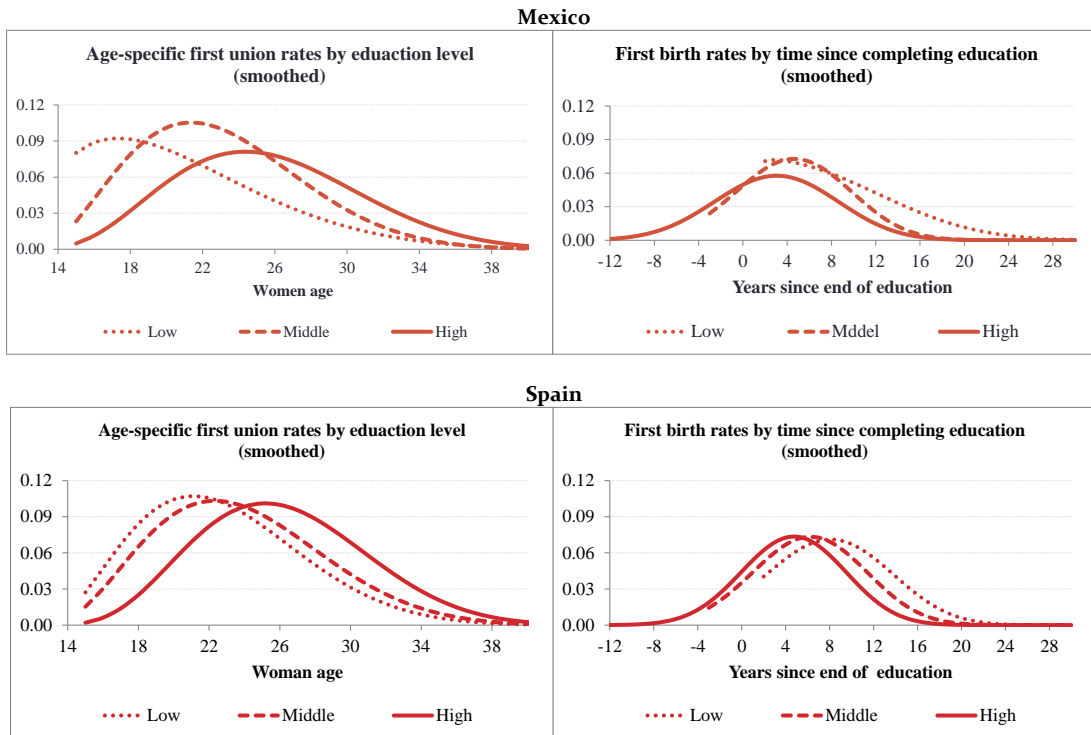
3.2 First Birth

As we can see in Figure 2, there is less contrast between women from the different education levels when we see first-birth rates by duration since the completion of education in both countries. The profile of age-specific first-birth rate in both countries shows a shift rightwards at older ages by education level, although said shift of the curves is much less pronounced in the duration scale than in the age scale, which could be explained by the increase of the education level of women. So, independently of which is the degree or highest educational qualification achieved by women in Mexico, they tend to wait almost the same time to have their first child after having completed their studies.

4. Conclusions

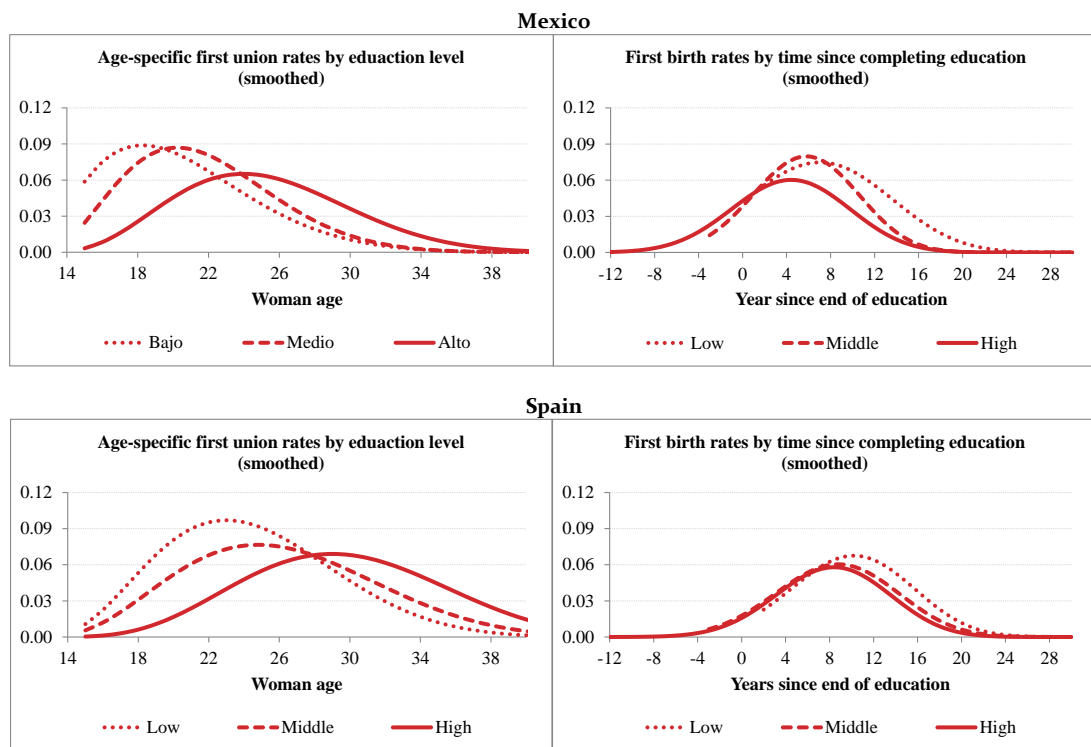
The first results show that the age at completing education is a more important point in the family formation in Mexico than in Spain. Given that, we have been able to confirm that Mexican women go through a smaller interval of wait between the completion of their studies and the occurrence of the first union and first motherhood in comparison with Spanish women.

Figure 1. First union rates by education level



Source: Own calculations based on ENADID and EFFV

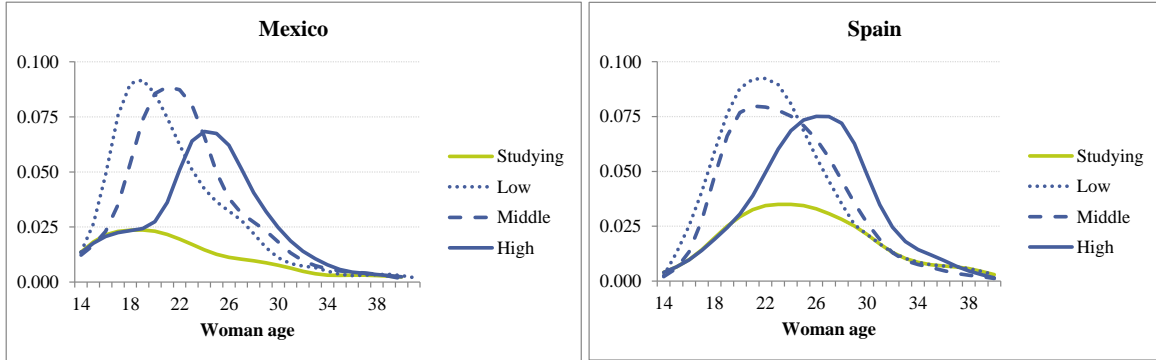
Figure 2. First motherhood rates by education level



Source: Own calculations based on ENADID and EFFV

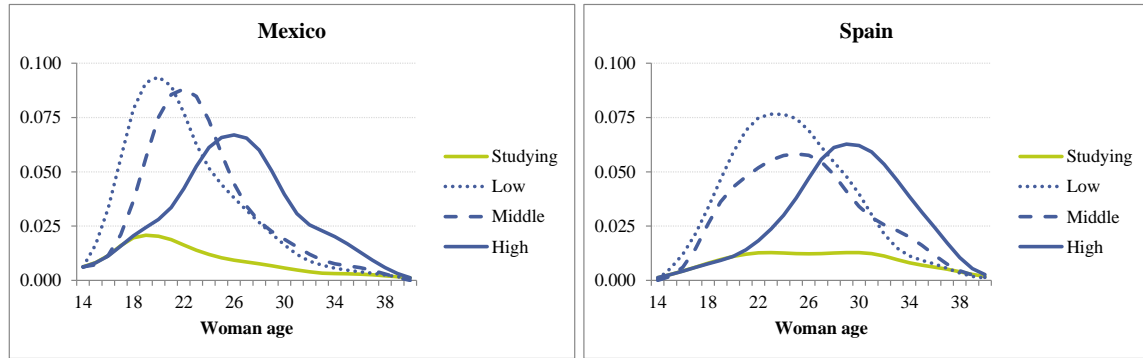
Others results...

Figure 3. Transition to first union: effects of time elapsed since end of education by education levels



Source: Own calculations based on ENADID and EFFV

Figure 4. Transition to first motherhood: effects of time elapsed since end of education by education levels



Source: Own calculations based on ENADID and EFFV