

Second-generation migrants leaving the parental home in France: how does context matter?

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Introduction

Leaving the parental home is one of the crucial steps of the transition to adulthood (Marini 1985). Compared to previous generations, the pathways to residential independence for young adults in Western countries occur later in life (Brückner and Mayer 2005). The younger generations are facing growing labour market insecurity, high unemployment rates, and increasing housing costs (Blossfeld et al. 2006). Previous studies on transition to adulthood in France have observed a delayed exit from the parental home of descendants of immigrants with respect to natives (Ferrari & Pailhé 2015). This phenomenon might be due to two main determinants: first structural constraints, as some groups of descendants of immigrants have hardly access to high educational levels, face unfavorable economic conditions and discrimination in the labor market and suffer from high unemployment levels (Meurs et al. 2006; Okba 2014; Cusset et al. 2015). Second cultural norms, as specific family values and norms can persist among descendants of immigrants, depending on their parents' and their own socialization process (East 1998). The two reasons are strictly linked to contextual factors characterizing the place of residence, such as the unemployment level and the immigrant's concentration rate.

Aim

The objective of this study is to investigate whether intentions to leave the parental home within a year are affected by 1) structural constraints, such as education and employment status, and if this effect is stronger in contexts of low educational levels and high (young) unemployment rates; 2) cultural norms, linked to the socialization process of the family of origin. We assume that a low socioeconomic background will depress young adult's intentions to leave. Living in a segregated area (i.e., with high concentration of immigrants) might reinforce this pattern, since it reduces contact with the mainstream population and thus adaptation to prevailing norms.

Data, methods and variables

We used data from the *Trajectories and Origins* survey collected in 2008 by the French Institute for Demographic Studies (INED) and the French National Statistical Office (INSEE). The survey investigates residential, working, and family trajectories of 22,000 French residents, oversampling the immigrant component (Beauchemin, Hamel, and Simon 2010). In particular, it contains information on the intention to leave the parental home within one year. The survey also contains standard socioeconomic data and very detailed information on family background, e.g.: individual and parents' level of education, religious affiliation, number of siblings, language skills, etc.... Detailed information on migration origin is also available: individual's and parent's place of birth and nationality at birth.

Our sample represents young adults aged 18 to 30 still living in the parental home at the time of the survey, born in France and whose at least one parent was immigrant. The empirical analysis compares the main individual and contextual determinants of intention to leave the parental home for several countries of origin (namely, Maghreb, other African countries, South East Asia, Turkey, South Europe, DOM -French overseas departments- and other countries) as well as for natives. Our sample is composed of 3,480 young individuals, 57.8% females and 42.2% males. The empirical analysis is made up of two parts: the first describes the sample distribution of the main variables of interest; we show percentage distribution of people prone to leave the parental home by age, sex and origin and contextual factors. The second investigates whether the relationship observed between the covariates and intention to leave the parental home is statistically significant.

Our dependent variable represents intentions to leave the parental home within the next year and takes two values only (1 if young adults intend to leave, 0 if they do not intend or if they don't know). As we are dealing with a dichotomous variable, we analyze the probability of success (i.e., being intentioned to become residentially independent) by means of a logistic regression model. Explanatory variables are included in a stepwise fashion, to investigate whether differences in intentions depend on individual socio-demographic and family background characteristics, as well as on contextual aspects. The first model (M1) accounts for demographic variables (sex, age, and age square) and detailed origin, keeping the descendants from North Africa as our reference category, as previous research has showed they are particularly late leavers (Ferrari & Pailhé 2015). We further include socioeconomic characteristics (namely level of education and occupation), whether the individual is in a partnership and the number of siblings she/he actually has (M2). The third model (M3) adds to M1 a set of characteristics of the family of origin, such as the importance of religiosity during one's childhood, parents' highest level of education, a dichotomous variable for disagreement with parents about religion / friends and education / work when they were adolescent. Model 4 accounts for two contextual variables, such as young people (15-24) unemployment rate and percentage of immigrants in the area of residence¹. The fifth model includes all individual and background characteristics, while the last (M6) is the full and complete model with contextual determinants as well. Then we test for interaction between contextual variables and origin.

¹ The two contextual variables are defined at the neighborhood level, the information coming from the Census. Both indicators are measured on a scale from 0 to 9 based on their percentile's ranking.

Results: descriptive analysis

The first result that we show (Figure 1) regards the age and sex frequency distribution of the positive intentions to leave the parental home within one year from the time of the survey. The percentage of people who would like to become independent from their parents increases with age but at a decreasing pace, as starting from around age 25 the curve becomes flatter. We do not observe marked differences by sex, with the exception of the fact that females intend to leave the parental home some years earlier than males, so their frequency of positive intentions are higher than those for males at least up to about age 26.

Figure 2 represents the frequency distribution of positively intentioned to leave the parental home by age and area of origin of descendants of immigrants as compared to natives (for the seek of clarity we divided the figure in two parts, each representing four different origins). Although results do not show pronounced differences, we see that French natives have higher frequencies of positive intentions to exit in almost every age considered; second-generation migrants from DOM are also more frequently intentioned to leave the parental home, especially up to age 21 and between 26 and 27. Those whose parents came from other African countries express positive intentions with a higher frequency up to age 22 and between 26 and 28, while those whose parents came from South-East Asia rank first between ages 23 and 26.

We finally considered the relationship between two contextual variables and the observed phenomenon (Figure 3). The first plot represents the pattern between positive intentions and young people unemployment rate: as expected and stated among the aims of the analysis, the relationship is inverse: as the level of young unemployment rate increases, the frequency of positive intentioned leavers decreases, signaling the importance of structural factors in shaping young adults' expectations to live independently from parents. The same pattern exists concerning the relationship between concentration of immigrants and positive intention to exit the parental home, although it is slightly weaker. This indicates the presence of a cultural influence of the context in which people are living in.

Results: multivariate analysis

Table 1 represents the coefficients of logistic regression models performed on the probability that young people are positively intentioned to leave the parental home in the short term. Women are on average more likely than men to be prone to exit in the next year. The relationship existing between the observed phenomenon and age found in the descriptive analysis is confirmed by the multivariate models: the probability to be intentioned to become residentially independent increases with age but at a decreasing pace. Parents' area of origin significantly affects the dependent variable as well: compared to second-generation migrants coming from North Africa, all other origins show significantly higher probabilities to desire to leave the parental home within one year, with the exception of descendants of South-East Asian and Turkish immigrants, who do not significantly differ from the reference category. As far as individual socioeconomic characteristics are concerned, having achieved a high level of education (above upper secondary degree) significantly increases the likelihood of being positively intentioned to leave with respect to lower levels. The occupational status plays a crucial role as well: compared to students, young people who are either employed or unemployed are more likely to wish to become residentially independent from parents. As expected, being in a partnership significantly increases the probability to achieve a positive outcome, as young people might choose to exit the parental home to cohabit with the partner.

Other background characteristics show a significant impact: people who received a religious education during childhood are less prone to leave parents' house, and this holds true even after the inclusion of individual variables (M5). Parents' high level of education (above upper secondary degree) increases the likelihood to be positively intentioned to exit, while having had discussions with parents about religion, friends, education and work depress the observed outcome. The inclusion of socioeconomic individual and background characteristics (models M5 and M6) neutralizes the existing differences between South European descendants and North African ones, returning not significant coefficients.

Finally, all things being equal, contextual factors significantly affect the observed probability, confirming the above shown descriptive patterns. As the level of young people unemployment rate and the percentage of immigrants in the area of residence increase, young men and women are less likely to be intentioned to leave the parental home, confirming our assumptions.

Discussion and future work

The aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between the intentions to leave the parental home within one year and crucial individual, background and contextual variables, comparing second-generation immigrants from several areas of origins and natives in France. We assumed that the observed probability is affected by structural constraints, as educational achievement and a stable employment status, and that this effect depends also on labor market condition of the area of residence. Our empirical findings actually support this assumption. Further, we also hypothesize that the cultural and social dimension where people grew up influences the observed outcome: parents' low education and religiosity but also a high level of segregation in the area of residence have a significant depressing impact on the likelihood to be intentioned to leave the parental home in the short term.

This is a work in progress: we plan to further develop the analysis, among other things, including other explanatory variables, such as the household income level, size and typology of living arrangement, and language spoken at home. We also intend to add other contextual measures, such as the concentration of low educated people, the unemployment rate of immigrant population and the amount of social housing provision. Moreover, we would like to consider key interaction terms, such as those between areas of origin and contextual variables. Finally, the issue of selection of young people still living in parental home will be addressed.

References

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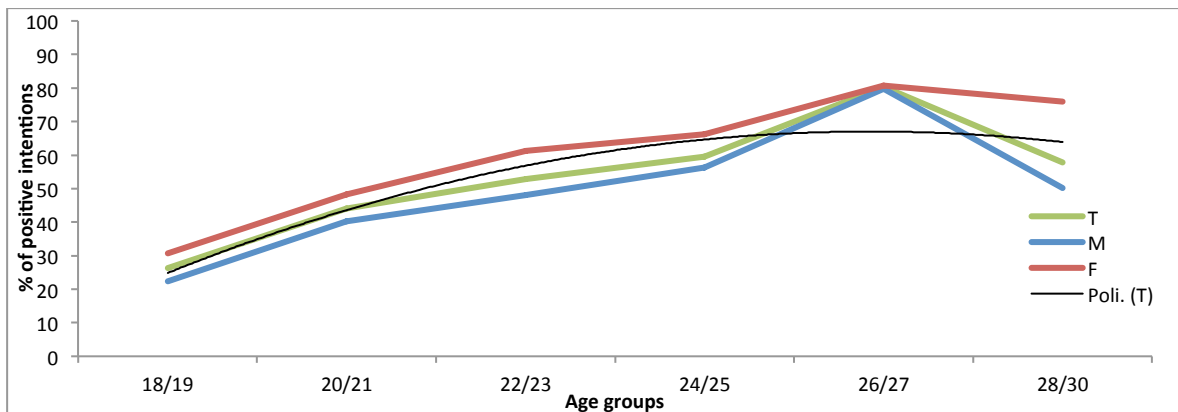
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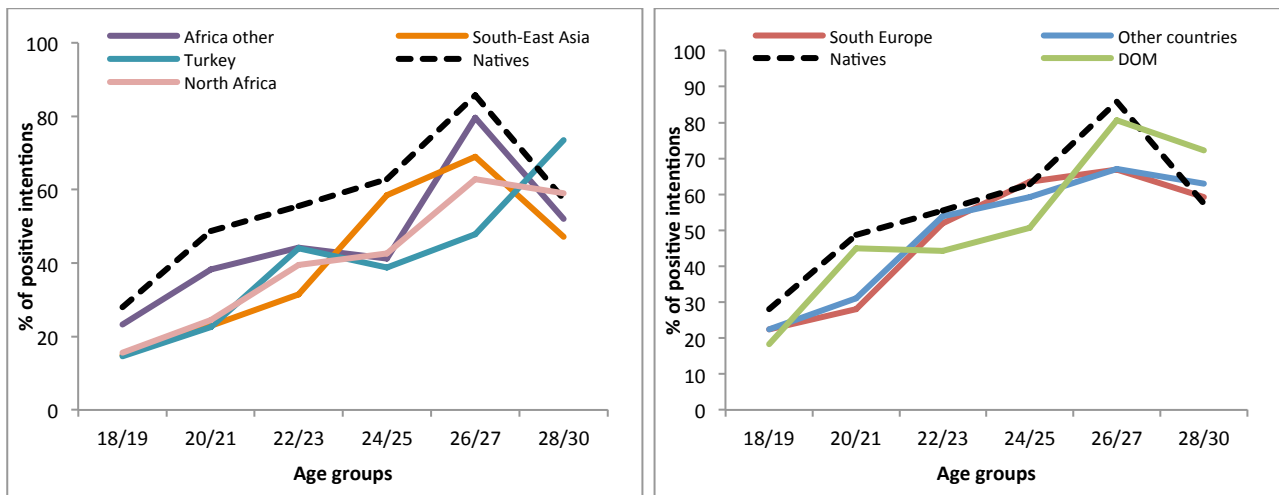
Figure 1: Positive intentions to leave the parental home within 1 year: weighted percentage distribution by age group and sex.



Source: Calculations based on Trajectories and Origins survey (TeO), INED-INSEE, 2008

Coverage: Native French and descendants of immigrants aged 18–30.

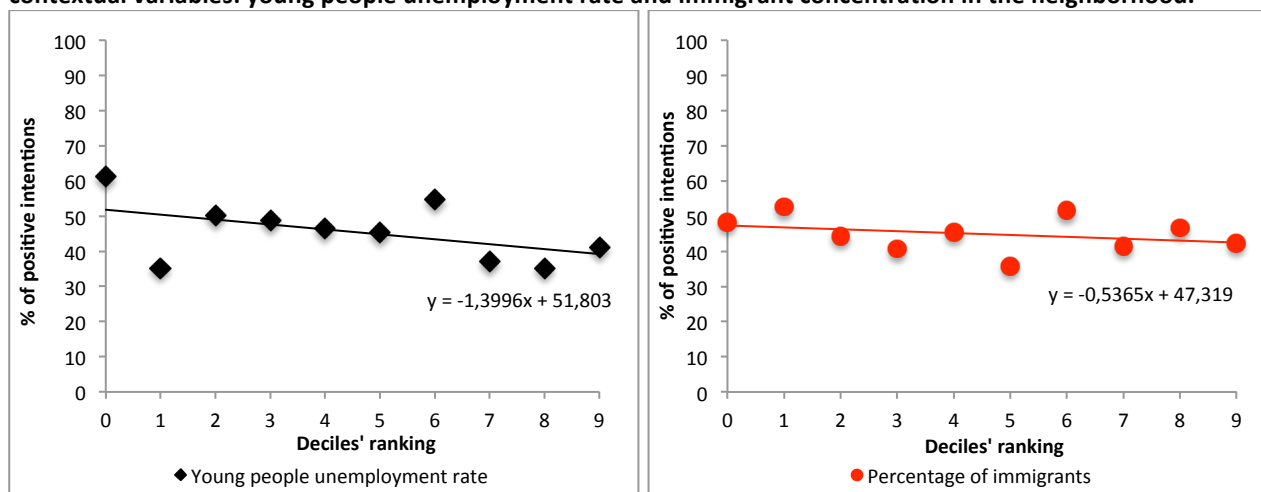
Figure 2: Positive intentions to leave the parental home within 1 year: weighted percentage distribution by age and detailed origin.



Source: Calculations based on Trajectories and Origins survey (TeO), INED-INSEE, 2008

Coverage: Native French and descendants of immigrants aged 18–30.

Figure 3: Positive intentions to leave the parental home within 1 year: weighted percentage distribution of contextual variables: young people unemployment rate and immigrant concentration in the neighborhood.



Source: Calculations based on Trajectories and Origins survey (TeO), INED-INSEE, 2008
 Coverage: Native French and descendants of immigrants aged 18–30.

Table 1: Probability to be intentioned to leave the parental home within 1 year: logistic regression's coefficients.

		M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Individual characteristics	Sex (Ref: Males)	0.25***	0.25***	0.28***	0.27***	0.27***	0.30***
	Age	1.13***	0.82***	1.16***	1.13***	0.83***	0.84***
	Age ^2	-0.02***	-0.01***	-0.02***	-0.02***	-0.01***	-0.01***
	Origin (Ref: North Africa_2G)						
	Africa other_2G	0.42***	0.42***	0.40***	0.44***	0.39***	0.39***
	South East Asia_2G	0.24	0.23	0.12	0.22	0.12	0.12
	Turkey_2G	-0.01	-0.05	0.02	-0.11	0.02	-0.07
	South Europe_2G	0.38***	0.29**	0.26**	0.27**	0.19	0.12
	Other countries_2G	0.52***	0.54***	0.39***	0.44***	0.42***	0.38**
	Natives	0.79***	0.75***	0.61***	0.59***	0.57***	0.43***
	DOM_2G	0.58***	0.54***	0.47***	0.53***	0.44***	0.42**
	Ed. Level (Ref: ISCED 1/2)						
	ISCED 3		0.05			0.10	0.08
	ISCED 4/5		0.23*			0.31**	0.28**
Occupational status (Ref: Students)							
Stable employed		0.59***			0.60***	0.60***	
Unstable employed		0.46***			0.44***	0.41***	
Unemployed, others		0.64***			0.64***	0.62***	
In a partnership (Ref: No)		0.50***			0.48***	0.48***	
Number of siblings		0.01			0.02	0.03	
Background characteristics	Importance of religiosity (Ref: Any or little) Highly			-0.26***		-0.27***	-0.23**
	Parents Ed. Level (Ref:1/2)						
	ISCED 3			0.08		0.08	0.08
	ISCED 4/5			0.22**		0.26***	0.25***
	Discussions with parents about religion & friends (Ref: No)			0.54***		0.52***	0.50***
Discussions with parents about education & work (Ref: No)			0.45***		0.42***	0.42***	
Context	Young people unemployment rate of the area of residence				-0.04**		-0.03**
	Percentage of immigrants in the area of residence				-0.08***		-0.07***

Source: Calculations based on Trajectories and Origins survey (TeO), INED-INSEE, 2008

Coverage: Native French and descendants of immigrants aged 18–30.

Note: *** significant at 0.01 level; ** significant at 0.05 level; * significant at 0.1 level