

Mothers' Career Processes in Germany

PhD Proposal

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Field V - Life course and life span dynamics

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Abstract:

The rise of maternal employment poses the question to what extent professional careers at the labor market and child care obligations can be reconciled by women in Germany. Numerous research has investigated the adverse impact of children by comparing childless women to mothers. Also, mothers' attachment to part-time and full-time employment has been outlined. However, *little research has been reported on the internal stratification of mothers' careers*, which will be dealt with in my PhD project. I ask *in what way the entry into motherhood as a crucial life event shapes women's occupational prestige*. As explaining factors I focus particularly on the division of labor in the family and regional child care availability. So far, I plan to use theories of intra-family time allocation, "doing gender", and rational-choice theory.

I use quantitative methods to analyze the SOEP. In a first step, I apply sequence analysis to find typical trajectories of mothers' careers since the 1980s. In a next step, I use multi level event history models to conduct causal analysis. First, I estimate the transition from parental leave to upward, lateral or downward job mobility in relation to the last job before childbirth. This is the short-term perspective. Then, I estimate the work status shift in the course of the first job change after childbirth. This is the medium-term perspective. Finally, unobserved heterogeneity due to work and family preferences will be tackled methodologically within the event history framework.