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Labor mobility and intergenerational transmission of self-employment in Mexico

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Resumen

En este artículo se explora la influencia del entorno social y doméstico inmediato en la elección del trabajo autónomo o por cuenta propia en México. Concretamente, se conjetura que junto a los aspectos estructurales de la economía que han impedido la creación de puestos de trabajo formales, existen algunos elementos socioculturales que promueven dicha elección, los cuales pueden relacionarse con las generaciones de los trabajadores, dado que los padres ocupados suelen transmitir cierto capital humano informal a sus descendientes: primero, mediante la herencia de las habilidades para desempeñar un oficio específico y segundo, a través de los conocimientos administrativos generales, así como de la capacidad de autonomía e independencia necesarios para desarrollar tal oficio. A falta de una fuente de datos (encuesta) longitudinal lo suficientemente amplia que permitiera seguir la trayectoria generacional de los trabajadores por cuenta propia, metodológicamente se consideró un universo más reducido de éstos: padres G1 e hijos

G2, pertenecientes a la misma unidad doméstica provenientes de la Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE) 2010.

Palabras claves:
movilidad laboral/ transmisión intergeneracional de la ocupación/ autoempleo/ trabajo por cuenta propia.

Introducción

In recent years, one of the most significant aspects of the Mexican labor market has been the insufficient creation of stable, well-paid, full-time jobs with benefits. The market has been unable to meet the growing labor demand, especially in regards to young people and women. This has been linked to the demographic changes that the country has experienced.[1] In large part, the oversupply of workers who have been unable to insert themselves into the formal labor market has created the need for potential workers to find their own sources of employment and income. This has led to the creation to a large network of both formal and informal micro

1 This demographic transition has been characterized by a rapid decline in birthrates beginning in the 1970s. The decline has caused rapid and substantial changes in the age structure of the population. Particularly, the increase in the working-age segments of the population also increased the productive potential. However, it also widened the demand for employment. The economic model adopted since the early 1980s limited job generation and altered hiring practices. This then led to an increase in precarious salaried employment in reference to job and income stability. Since that period, there has been a notable increase in informal micro businesses as well as independent or self-employment (Castillo y Vela, 2005; Vela, 2007).

businesses.

The immediate social environment is a principal element that has a decisive influence on an individual's choice of certain economic activities. The domestic network plays an extremely important role here. There are certain socio-cultural factors, along with structural aspects of the economy, which promote the choice of self-employment. Autonomous or self-employment does not necessarily imply "precarious" labor conditions consisting of low-quality opportunities and low salaries. Rather, it can be marked by professional activities in areas of technology or management and administration or entrepreneurship with access to capital and technological resources. This places it in an occupational category which is highly heterogeneous. Due to these factors, it is worth investigating the potential that autonomous and self-employment could have on employment generation as well as socio-labor structural innovation.

The intergenerational transmission of occupations is linked to workers' professional skills, as well as familial or domestic factors. In addition, social, macroeconomic, structural and individual circumstances all have an influence on labor market participation. Opportunity structure also plays a defining role in occupational choice and social mobility; according to Samper, "The social phenomenon of the persistence of certain occupations points to the continuation of certain basic traits in the socio-economic structure" (Samper *et al.*, 1999: 55). Traditional analyses regarding career choice and labor mobility tend to emphasize the economic determinants of labor structures. However, other socio-cultural factors define the available occupational positions and environment in relation to intergenerational changes and labor

mobility. In light of this, work activities can be considered to be associated to a great extent with parents in the same occupational category influencing their children's career choices. Parents transmit a certain type of informal human capital to their descendants by teaching them skills to work in a specific type of occupation, such as the endowment of the basic administrative knowledge necessary to develop autonomous or independent work.

In accordance with these facts, this article's principal objective is to explore changes in the younger generation's labor structure in relation to their parents' current occupation in the Mexican labor market. This article will establish the effects of what could be called the "inheritance" of labor status by taking into account other socio-demographic, socio-economic, and human capital factors on the intergenerational labor mobility of adult children. Specifically, the article will attempt to answer the central question regarding the form in which adult children ($G-_2$) and their parents ($G-_1$) who work in the previously established categories, follow in the occupational footsteps of the prior generation in the labor market. The article hypothesis is that the occupational category of parents has an important and decisive effect on the labor mobility (or reproduction) of working adult children in the Mexican labor market. However, the variables of gender, age, acquisition of human capital, social context, salary limits and economic fulfillment all have varying impacts on adult children's occupational choices.

Background

In a broad sense, social mobility results from stratification, the social class system and individual differentiation, as well as the permeability of the social structure. Mobility in the labor market can be studied as structural mobility which derives from the expansion of certain occupations in relation to others that have different social status and individual mobility. These occupations are represented by the possibility of social ascent, given the structural choices available and the individual conditions to achieve it. Intergenerational individual mobility is not only considered as an indicator of development but also as a prerequisite for it. According to Filgueira y Geneletti (1981: 18), the idea prevails that "a low grade of status inheritance from parents to children" is a fundamental trait of contemporary modern society. Nevertheless, the same societies do not admit to a universal treatment of social and labor inclusion-exclusion (De Giorgi, 1998).

Following the ideas of Kessler and Espinoza (2003:17), it seems essential to point out that "Changes in occupational distribution are indicators of change in the opportunity structure." Labor mobility and intergenerational occupational transmission result from changes in a social structure. In this sense, it is important to consider the element of a dynamic mobility system in a society. The opportunity of social ascent or mobility from "long distance" implies a dynamic system or high mobility. Alternately, the possibility of social decent or stagnation can result in a null, rare or stagnated mobility system. These systems determine the social basis of the distinct social classes' living conditions. Today, the benefits derived from

increased social class and status are relatively minor compared to those of the past and do not automatically lead to improved living conditions. However, given the barriers to achieving certain goals, increased access to formal education is an important benefit. The widening of the opportunity structure is greater in modern times, but in the context of greater socio-labor competencies.

The new labor market demands that workers be increasingly better trained, multi-skilled and able to adjust the dynamics of new labor processes. Using this logic, sociologically, older people dismiss the younger generation for their youth and lack of experience while young people distain their elders for their age and obsolescence (Bourdieu, 1990: 173; Lenoir, 1993). In terms of human capital, young people are generally better educated than their predecessors, but face the situation of *devaluation due to inflation* of their credentials (Bourdieu, 1990). Young people will always obtain less for the same diploma than previous generations, complicating labor competition. To a certain degree, this is a struggle not of two different demographic segments, but rather of two generations.

Education is a relevant factor which intervenes in the choice of specific occupations, beginning with the benefits that this choice offers individuals. According to Fitoussi and Rosanvallon (1996: 82), socio-labor career paths were historically relatively defined and predetermined. This can be simplified into the following phrase: "Tell me what your 'human capital' is- or, for those who dislike this concept, the qualifications you achieved- and I will tell you the probability that you have to be employed." However, according to the authors, "The era of career path equality which guaranteed equally

capable individuals (coming from similar educational and social backgrounds) equivalent positions and salaries now belongs to the past."(Fitoussi and Rosanvallon, 1996: 88)

The contemporary labor market is characterized by the existence of heterogeneous criss-crossed career paths that are fragmented and can consist of both precarious and stable, steady jobs. Fitoussi and Rosanvallon state, "Previously, each universe reproduced itself and its own movements, going from a precarious world to a secure one."[2] In the contemporary socio-labor environment, occupational mobility can shift from one to the other. The authors point out, "The co-existence of this world with the one of precarious or independent labor is not new, but rather the character of this seems to have changed so that the assignment to one or the other worlds appears to have become arbitrary." (Fitoussi and Rosanvallon, 1996: 88).

Access to professional and technical jobs has been an indicator of rise in the occupational structure, but not necessarily the change occurs unidirectional. Cortes and Escobar (2005) analyze the absolute and relative opportunities of workers access to upper strata of the urban occupational structure in Mexico, showing a striking decline in opportunities for promotion to the strata of professionals, managers and employers. However, Kessler and Espinoza (2003) point to Argentina two antagonistic tendencies: first, the increase in professional and technical positions in parallel way a downward mobility characterized by the loss of wage-workers jobs.

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2 According to Zubiri (2008) "The flexible organization of production implies the proliferation of a new type of *urban day laborers*. These workers have career paths that are uncertain, disordered and unstable, This has left workers' expectations of increasing dangerously tied to the needs of the market."

Labor mobility has been studied extensively from different perspectives. Based on the above, this study has been done from a social-occupational mobility point of view and includes an analysis of the labor market. Here, it can be understood that there is great diversity as well as unclear career paths. Furthermore, the disparity between individuals' aspirations and their actual opportunities must be taken into account. These facts have led the authors to analyze socio-labor conditions on the one hand and on the other, human capital conditions. According to Bourdieu (1990: 170), the aspirations which arise with successive generations (parents to their children) "Exist in relation with different states of economic distribution structures and the access that one has to diverse resources."

Social and occupational mobility are directly tied to social and labor stratification. Education has experienced accreditation devaluation in relation to human capital. This has been caused by simple inflation and the increase in formative competition due to the changes in labor market demands regarding qualified workers. One central tenet of this, as studied by Bourdieu (2006) in France and supported by Boado *et al.* (2007 y 2010), is the idea that social mobility does not exist. To the contrary, the reality is that what exists are "*mechanisms of perpetuation*," or in other words "the reproduction" of different social classes, groups and factions. These groups have been generated by social division of labor dynamics. This fact allows us to assume that the important factor is not socio-labor mobility but rather, the mechanisms of perpetuation of socio-labor inequality.

Recent economic and demographic transformations have operated in diverse forms. Changes in the labor market have been increased by changes

in the family. The widening of the age of "youth" (including a later marriage age and leaving the family home) in the social imagination has allowed parents to raise their hopes for a better life for their children, affecting the transmission of parents' inheritance. In many cases, occupational continuity from one generation to the next not only rests on the transmission of certain skills and abilities but also on the inheritance of resources and infrastructure to develop adult children's economic activities. Family (understood here to be based on blood ties) and the relationships which exist within it play a determining role in the intergenerational transmission of occupation or the labor positions of new workers. It is necessary to point out that this transmission does not only occur between parents and their children but it can also include other family members and affect the extended family as well.

One of the most significant changes in the labor mobility structure derives from the growing incorporation of women in the labor market. This has had effects and consequences on intergenerational occupational transmission. The transformations created by this opening for women are reflected in diverse aspects of life. We have seen changes in family relationships, new divisions of labor both outside and within the family, the diversification of power relationships, the opening of new positions in the labor market, the erosion of gender-based work and changes in gender relationships in general, among others. These changes led to a drastic decline in the birth rate and made it possible for women to have access to education and competitive employment. They created a generation of highly qualified women in salaried positions as well as formal and informal self-

employment.

Self-employment, in particular, has been a kind of "refuge" space for women with an increased possibility for female employment creation. This is in large part true due to the traditional, gender-based division of labor. Given the fact that women have historically been regulated to their homes doing private, unpaid labor, self-employment was a generally viable option available to women. In general, it allowed women to fulfill their domestic duties while integrating into new occupations.

The incorporation of women into the salaried labor market has been particularly favorable because of their relatively high levels of education, although there are still factors which create disadvantages for women and favor men. This continues to be true in terms of women's access to certain labor sectors and has had consequences regarding salary discrimination. Women's insertion into the labor market also has two other causes; market demand and family entrepreneurial strategies in the face of economic necessity generated by recurrent economic crises. This has gone hand in hand with a notable change in the career trajectories and aspirations of female workers, especially in relation to their predecessors. Nonetheless, there has been a tendency toward a female-based convergence in informal and precarious activities. According to Beck (2000), "If women should integrate into normal jobs, men should integrate into not-normal ones." The author goes on to argue (2000: 76) that the convergence within the new labor conditions reflects a general deterioration of the occupations and expresses the "new creation of gender teams in precarious conditions."

As stated before, education is one of the principal factors in the

intergenerational transmission of human capital. To a certain extent, the educational level of parents sets the stage for their children's access and education. Education is not only limited to formal, institution-based forms, but also includes the transmission of interests, expectations and professional skills from parents to their children. This can occur in the home environment or in situations where children work directly with their parents on a part-time or full-time basis. This transmission can begin in the early stages of a young person's development, although the age at which parents pass on the business and /or children inherit these positions is increasingly later. This is due to a delayed marriage age, children leaving the home later and the increase in life expectancies for parents.

However, we must suppose that increasing life spans also raise the probability that a person will become self-employed. This is due to the processes of *social aging* in the "conventional" labor market[3] and the limitations that individuals face in reaching salaried positions that meet their expectations. The reasons for this can be diverse and are associated with socio-labor characteristics, restrictions imposed by the labor market, and the educational demands of a given career. According to Colombier and Masclet (2006: 11), this can be a result of:

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3 These changes have modified population demands in the context of growing social inequality. The decline of the birth rate has had obvious consequences regarding family size and subsequently, we have seen a weakening of family solidarity networks. In societies such as ours, domestic support has operated as an important life strategy. An aging demographic and its consequences regarding old-age security coincide with *social aging*. This is a result of structural changes in the labor market and the work-place preference for a young workforce at the expense of older workers (Castillo, 2009).

> being self-employed requires abilities that need several years of experience in the labor market to develop the need to save before starting a business [...]. Another explanation might be that by doing salaried work, people discover their own preferences for self-employment.

Along with the above, the hypothesis maintains that intergenerational mobility in the occupational structure from one generation to the next is dependent on parents' labor positions (relative to their social class) and on the domestic context in which they can generate opportunities for their children to acquire human capital. Social origin appears to be a decisive factor in career paths and intergenerational occupational transmission. Bourdieu (1990) argues that social class and the environment that an individual finds himself in are decisive factors in defining preferences and finding a place in the occupational structure. Nevertheless, opportunities that are extraordinary privileges for parents lose relative value for their children. In other words, what represents a conquest for $G-_1$ is a birthright for $G-_2$, but with a lower value. Education, in certain circumstances, operates as prime factor. However, its importance has become somewhat relative given the high level of labor supply and workplace competition. Other individual factors such as family, familial life cycles and the socio-labor context have become important as well.

Occupational tradition is also a fundamentally important factor in defining career paths. According to a study done by The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Work Conditions (1998: 1 y 2) in 15 member states of the European Union and Norway, "The motivations of autonomous workers are different that those who work for others.

Autonomous workers not only value their ability to work (because they like their jobs) but they also appreciate it independently from economic remuneration." The study shows that "Autonomous workers value their ability to work for intrinsic reasons and for the satisfaction that they obtain from their jobs and curiously, they value this aspect more than the economic one."

Contemporary research regarding labor mobility in Latin America and Mexico has focused on analyses of individual mobility and has tended to emphasize the conditions of social ascent and descent of children relative to their parents. According to Filgueira y Geneletti (1981: 19), "Research has attempted to evaluate if status has changed from the original paternal one, to what degree and if its direction has been one of 'ascent' or 'descent'" instead of studying the family unit more deeply, these studies have tended to focus on "the separation of children from their parents' social status." In Mexico, social and occupational mobility and intergenerational transmission studies are relatively rare.[4] Existing research has tended to focus on two dimensions of intergenerational mobility: the occupational mobility of social classes and education. Nonetheless, Torche (2007: 7) states that the body of research suggests certain characteristics of a "stationary society"[5] which is not dynamic and that can be perceived to have had, at least in part, "a possible reduction in the opportunities for mobility that were available in

4 In particular in Mexico, the problem of intergenerational mobility has been studied using these perspectives by Binder and Woodruff (1999), Valero and Tijerina (2003), Zenteno and Solis (2006), among others.

5 This is a concept of Friedman, cited by Torche (2007: 1), which refers to a society with high income inequality, and rigidity, with limited social mobility and few opportunities to ascend in the labor structure.

Mexico's recent past." She goes on to state "there is a relatively high tendency that intergenerational inheritance affects all social classes equally in Mexico and other Latin American countries (Torche, 2007: 30).

The dynamics of independent work suggest convergent tendencies of increasingly precarious situations for both genders although with unique characteristics when compared to other countries. During the last several decades, men had greater participation, but during recent years women's participation in this sector has increased to a majority as a result of economic crisis and instability, creating a greater effect on women. During the 1990s and the first half of the decade of 2000, the proportion of self-employed men was notably higher than that of women. However, this gap was breeched and even surpassed by women. In urbanized areas, male self-employment passed from 18.3% to 19.0% during the period of 1995 to 2004 and by 2010, it had decreased to 18.3%. In contrast, female self-employment increased from 15.9% to 18.1% and to 19.7% during the same period (INEGI, The National Survey of Employment, ENE, and The National Survey of Occupation, and Employment, ENOE, several years).

Intergenerational status transmission implies the reproduction of individuals, domestic, family and social class socio-economic conditions. However, a relatively high "individual" occupational mobility from one generation to the next does not necessarily correlate with high social mobility. To the contrary, given unstable and rotating conditions, this occupational mobility can serve as an indicator of opportunity inequality. Mexican tendencies are suggestive of this fact. The data in The Encuesta de Movilidad Social (2006) (The Social Mobility Survey) sponsored by the Espinosa Rugarcia Foundation

support this idea. The survey found that social mobility for half the population has been insignificant from one generation to the next. This is especially true for those people at the extreme ends of the socio-economic scale. The study found that 48% of Mexicans in the lowest income sector (20% of the population) have been unable to improve their economic situation while 59% of the highest income group has not suffered any economic declines (*La Jornada*, October 18th, 2008). Cepal (2009: 59; Author A, 2011) reports that unequal income distribution throughout Latin America has shown relative advances during the last decade, in spite of the 2007 and 2008 crisis, with one exception: "Mexico was the only country that showed a clear tendency of distribution decline." In addition, poverty grew faster in Mexico than other countries in the region. Cepal (2009: 10) informs us that, "the only country which registered an increase in poverty was Mexico. There, poverty increased 3.1% between 2006 and 2008, displaying the early effects of the economic crisis which began at the end of 2006.

According to a global human resources study done by Randstad Holding, an international human resources firm in the second trimester of 2011, "Mexico is the country with the second highest labor mobility index in the world. It is only surpassed by first-place India." Labor mobility in Mexico is much higher than the average of other countries surveyed including Japan, The USA and Argentina. It is very close to India and China. The reasons given in the study for this high mobility in Mexico are primarily related to "the search for better employment conditions and organizational circumstances" as well as "job dissatisfaction due to employers." They also give reasons

tied to professional careers, personal aspirations, and the desire for a change, among others. An analysis of the results for each variable allows us to infer that, at least for the time being, "The search for a new job is principally motivated by the hope of better labor conditions..." (Mexican Business Web, 2011: 1).

In an environment of great heterogeneity and recurrent economic crises, career paths are generally characterized by a great deal of instability and diverse possibilities which are generally precarious in nature. Coubés (2009 166) maintains:

> These transitions to micro-businesses are associated with sector and occupational changes in any direction. They demonstrate an erratic search for alternate occupations and incomes, probably during times of great career instability, distancing individuals from a successful or consolidated career. 'In every sense,' the changes we observe that are associated with this transition give an image of an erratic search for opportunities, employment and income.

In light of this, the intergenerational transmission of abilities, work experience, and human and financial capital are decisive factors in the increase of self-employment. Normally, the fact that one's parents are self-employed greatly increases the probability of the offspring reproducing their parents' labor activities. This can be mediated by family factors, opportunities that exist in the labor market and the particular labor cycle of workers. Nevertheless, this is not the only career path available to laborers throughout their working life. Market logic imposes restrictions on them. Pries (1993) reviews Lopez's model (1990), in which he describes a labor

cycle of workers' career paths composed of "the smallest micro-businesses, salaried employment and independent labor" (López, 1990: 183), he points out that:

> [···] young people enrolled in (or expelled from) the educational system begin as workers in micro-businesses with precarious labor conditions. Later, between the ages of 20 and 35, the same people change to medium and large companies where they are salaried and have more stable and less precarious conditions. In the third phase of their labor cycle, they become independent-or are forced to do so because they can't find formal, salaried labor-and begin their own business, almost always due of a lack of other alternatives (Pries, 1993: 477-478).

The labor cycle reaches its maximum potential due to the restrictions of workers' *social aging*, determined by the limitations imposed by the salaried labor market. Using empirical evidence, Pries (1993: 489) states that:

> [...] after the age of 40, there are almost no changes (either voluntary or involuntary) from self-employment to salaried positions: the doors to these kinds of jobs close with time. After about the age of 20, there is a prevalence of DEP (salaried-dependent) changes to one of SEW (self-employed worker). This is actually the most common type of change.

There has been an increase in the responsibility that working-age parents have to support both their younger and older children due to the delay in the marriage age and children leaving the parental home later. These changes have increased the average marriage age of adult children and are

associated with a reduction in fertility rates and increased female labor force participation. There has also been a rise in the number of female-headed households, which also affects the functional and economic structure of families. As a result, certain paradoxes or tendencies can be observed. On one hand, the delay in the marriage age has led to growing social individualization and the postponement of family responsibilities. Furthermore, economic reasons have, to a certain degree, assured interdependence among family members (adult children contribute economically) and created a strategy to collectively face the limitations and resource demands of the domestic unit. On the other hand, there has been a growing reconfiguration of extended families. It is more common that adult children's offspring are integrated as dependents into the original family home and the grandparents are recognized as the heads of the household.

Given the fact that it is highly heterogeneous, labor mobility tends to be highly erratic and is generated by labor inequality and occupational instability. According to Coubés (2009: 166), under such circumstances, career paths are limited "in their opportunities and confined to precarious work situations in diverse sectors." Coubés observes "a very rapid rotation between precarious salaried labor, micro-businesses, unemployment and under-employment." Labor mobility which allows the worker to ascend to a higher position is scarce in an "immobile society." The intergenerational transmission of occupation acts as a viable alternative and resource in the face of "formal" labor market restrictions. This is a direct result of the low quality, stability, work hours, and expected salaries of available jobs.

Methodology

In order to meet the goals of the study, the following empirical validation strategies were followed. The study was limited by the fact that there is no available long-term data source with sufficient depth and width which allows self-employed workers to be studied over several generations. Subsequently, a smaller sample of only parents and children belonging to the same household was analyzed. The subjects were employed in a variety of different occupations. The data was taken from the Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo, or The National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE) 2010 (INEGI, 2011a).

The individual samples were composed of households and the employed head of the family was the primary source of information regarding $G-_1$ (parents). The children lived in the same household and reported to be employed. They are represented as $G-_2$. The analysis included all working children. The number of families considered in this study was 30 753. The cases included in the study were restricted to those families that reported that both parents and children were employed and living in the same household. This is due to the fact that ENOE did not include direct questions regarding the principal occupation of the head of household in relation to their working children.

The category of self-employment adopted in the study is defined by the International Work Organization (IWO) as similar to "works for self" or "independent worker." It is defined as an individual who works independently, without a boss and paid employees (IWO, 1992: 12). However, they could

benefit from unpaid family labor. The study only considers self-employed workers in "precarious" labor conditions whose principal occupation does not correspond to the following: "professional, technical and similar occupations", "owners, administrators and management positions," "office employees and similar positions," and occupational groups 1 to 4 (INEGI, 2011b) consisting of public sector, private or social employment.

The study includes all self-employed children who share the same home as their parents in any occupational category (owners, salaried workers, etc.). To control for age differences, it was decided to select working heads of household that are at least 30 years old and have working children no younger than 15. The focus is on the head of household (HOH) ($G-_1$) who is self-employed and transmits his or her occupation to their child ($G-_2$) in relation to other family, individual and contextual factors. To achieve this goal, a labor mobility matrix was developed comparing parents' occupations to those of their children. Then, a logistical regression model was applied, controlling for the following variables: sex, age, level of education, place of residence, income level, as well as the HOH's conditions of self-employment (neither professional nor managerial) in relationship to the dependent variable of the current self-employed child (SEC).

This model estimates the probability (p) that the working child will be self- employed and uses the following formula:

$$\ln[OP_h / 1 - OP_h] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SEX_h + \beta_2 AGE_h + \beta_3 EDU_h + \beta_4 POR_h + \beta_5 IL_h + \beta_6 OP_p + \varepsilon \quad [1]$$

where:

OP_h = Dichotomous variable corresponding to the occupational position of $G-_2$. It has a value of 1 if the child is self-employed (neither professional nor managerial) and 0 for any other occupation.

SEX_h = Dichotomous variable for the sex of $G-_2$, with a value of 1 for male and 2 for female.

AGE_h = Numeric variable referring to the age of $G-_2$, with values of 15 or more.

EDU_h = Variable corresponding to the completed levels of education for G-2, with values of 0 for no education; 1 for primary school completed; 2 for 9^{th} grade completed; and 3 for high school completed and/or higher education.

POR_h = Dichotomous variable referring to place of residence for $G-_2$, where 1 equals more urbanized areas (100,000 or more inhabitants) and 0 is equivalent to less urbanized areas (fewer than 100,000 inhabitants).

IL_h = Variable referring to the income levels of $G-_2$, measured by the number of daily minimum salaries (MS) where: 0 is equivalent to no salary; 1, to one MS.; 2, from one to two MS; 3, from two to three MS.; 4, from 3 to 5 MS; and 5 represents greater than 5 MS.

OP_p = Dichotomous variable corresponding to the occupational position of $G-_1$, with values of 1 for a self-employed worker (neither professional nor managerial) y de 0 for any other category.

ε = Random error

The results of the intergenerational mobility matrix and the application of the logistical regression model to estimate probabilities of the effects of the variables are presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

Results

The transmission of children's occupational positions in relation to that of their parents could be examined in two ways. The first would be to consider the total number of self-employed parents ($G-_1$) who pass on the "inheritance" of their occupation to their children living in the same home. The second option is to count the total number of children ($G-_2$) who share the same household and are self-employed and "reproduce" the parent's occupation. The first option would be better if there were longitudinal data sources available allowing us to follow the career paths of both generations ($G-_1$ and $G-_2$). However, due to the limitations mentioned above, the second option was chosen. It would be impossible to know the number of self-employed parents who transmit their occupational activity to their children with the necessary precision since only data regarding complete households is available. Fortunately, we can only know the occupational precedents in cases of shared households. However, we can estimate the occupational background of adult children living at home working in distinct occupational categories in relation to the head of household.

Normally, the occupational mobility matrix classifies interviewees according to their occupation by taking into account two reference points. The point of origin is called "Origin" and the most recent is the "Destination." In the analysis of intergenerational mobility, the origin variable is defined as the parent's occupation while the destination variable is the first or current occupation of the child. For the purposes of this study, the origin and destination variables were selected and defined by the occupational position

of parents and their children. A study of the percentages by rows and columns on the matrix is a basic step to analyze this relationship. The row percentages are defined by the exit flows and registered the destination distributions (occupational destination of the children) for each category of origin (occupational position of the parent). The column percentages are defined by the entrance flows and record the origin distribution (occupational position of the parents for each destination (occupational position of the child).

Table 1 represents the second type of flow. We can demonstrate the percentage of self-employed interviewees whose origin (parental occupational position) was also self-employment. The table shows the occupational point of origin of the children (G-2) in different occupations cross-referenced with their parents. The principal diagonal of the table allows us to observe the children who maintain the same occupational category as their parents. Here, 61.4% of children working as subordinate, paid workers keep the same labor status as their parents. Similarly, 28.2%, 10.4% and 1.9% of children whose occupations were employers, self-employed (professional and managerial) and unpaid laborers kept the same position as their parents. It is worth noting that 50.6% of self-employed children (neither professional nor managerial) followed in their parents' footsteps. This statistic represents the second highest number in the labor reproduction model analyzed here.

Table 1. Labor Mobility from G1 to G2

Occupational position of working adult child / Occupational position of the head of household (parent)	Salaried and Subordinate Workers	Employers	Professional and Administrative Self-Employed Workers	Non-professional, Non-administrative Self-Employed Worker	Unpaid Workers	Totals
Subordinate and salaried workers	14,144 (61.4)	2,657 (11.5)	353 (1.5)	5,696 (24.7)	171 (0.7)	23,021
Employers	158 (44.5)	100 (28.2)	7 (2.0)	73 (20.6)	17 (4.8)	355
Professional and administrative self-employed workers	177 (43.9)	59 (14.6)	42 (10.4)	113 (28.0)	12 (3.0)	403
Non-professional, non-administrative self-employed workers	744 (37.8)	124 (6.3)	31 (1.6)	996 (50.6)	72 (2.7)	1,967
Unpaid workers	824 (16.5)	479 (9.6)	81 (1.6)	3,526 (70.4)	97 (1.9)	5,007
Total	16,047 (52.2)	3,419 (11.1)	514 (1.7)	10,404 (33.8)	369 (1.2)	30,753

Source: Self-elaboration based on ENOE, 2010.

Table 1 demonstrates that having a self-employed parent increases the probability that the child will continue the cycle. Self-employed children (neither professional nor managerial) generally follow in the footsteps of their self-employed parents (neither professional nor managerial). This is followed by children who have parents that are subordinate and in paid jobs and/or are employers. This group is composed 40% of self-employed children. This statistic is indicative of the relative intergenerational deterioration

in the Mexican labor market. If we assume that the majority of self-employment activities are unstable and low-paying, this demonstrates a regression in labor conditions for the new generation.

The applied econometric model provides results suggestive of the factors leading to the reproduction-and /or permanence-of children's occupational activities ($G-_2$) in relation to those of those of their parents ($G-_2$). Table 2 allows us to analyze the statistical results using the control variables.[6] Here, the statistical significance or insignificance of the variables or co-variables in the analysis can be observed. For the children ($G-_2$), the most significant variables were: age, level of education, place of residence, and income level. In the case of the origin ($G-_1$), the occupational position of the parent was important.

The interpretation of the estimated regression coefficients can be stated in f percentages, taking into account the multiplying factors.[7] By directly

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6 One of the most common problems in estimating logistic regression models lies in the adequate selection of the co-variants to consider. This is associated with the problem of model specification. According to some authors, (Menard, 2010; Hosmer y Lemeshow, 2000), one possible strategy would be to decide within a wide group of co-variants which should be included to estimate distinct simple or univariate models where each possible predictor is associated with the analyzed variable. This allows us to determine the contribution of each variable to the model. The criteria to determine the inclusion of variables to a model are basically the following: the probability value (p-value) and the expected sign of the coefficient in the analysis. It is also possible to utilize some of the methods taken from stepwise or *forward* regression. Using these procedures, six simple binary logistical regression models were estimated (but not presented here) for our model. Each one of the independent variables (sex, age, level of education, place of residence, income level, and head of household's self-employment) were considered using the stepwise method. Using both procedures, the obtained results were consistent with the results presented below.

7 It is common knowledge that there are distinct ways in which to interpret a given model's estimated coefficients. In terms of the *logit* units (directly from the column of

considering the *B* coefficients, it is possible to see the positive or negative direction of the *Exp B* variables in relation to the category of variables taken in reference or contrast. If the magnitude is greater than one, this is indicative of an increase in the odds ratio. This allows us to assume an increase in the propensity that the given variable assumes a value of = 1 in the case of the self-employed child (neither professional nor managerial) ($G-_2$). The coefficients with negative directions and less than a unit show a relative decrease of the same odds ratio. In order to facilitate the interpretation of the results the probabilities (p) were calculated, adjusting for the considered model in order to compare the values of (p) to the distinct categories of the corresponding values. In Table 2, the statistical behavior of the variables is analyzed. Table 3 presents the probability for each variable and category. The results show the following:

Table 2. Results of the multi-variable logistical regression variable to estimate the probability of being self-employed in G2

Variables	*B*	*S.E.*	*Weight*	*Exp (B)*
Sex	0.055	0.055	1.014	1.057
Age	0.076*	0.003	527.00811	1.079
Level of Education				
Completed Elementary	− 0.286*	0.107	7.123	0.751
Finished Jr. High School	− 0.326*	0.099	10.865	0.722
High School and Above	− 0.795*	0.105	57.377	0.452

estimations in Table 2), as an odds ratio or the multiplying effect of the odds ratio (applying the exponential on each of the estimated coefficients) or in the percentages of the multiplying factors (calculating) $(\exp^{\beta_i}-1)*100$.

Place of Residence	−0.177*	0.055	10.189	0.838
Income Level				
To 1 Minimum Salary (M.S.)	3.536*	0.151	547.948	34.328
1 to 2 M.S.	2.271*	0.151	227.397	9.688
2 to 3 M.S.	1.894*	0.156	146.621	6.644
3 to 5 M.S.	1.959*	0.164	142.599	7.094
More than 5 M.S.	2.439*	0.188	167.603	11.460
Self-employed parent (Head of Household)	0.833*	0.054	234.962	2.300
Constant	−6.633*	0.194	1171.0321	
*Significance: p < 0.000	Chi squared in the model: 2062.35 (12 gl)			Sig. 0.000
	−2loglikelihood:=			
	Pseudo R2=	0.1570		
	N=	28364		

Source: Self-Elaboration based on ENOE, 2010.

Note: After evaluating the global consistency of the model, the test of Hosmer-Lemeshow (2000) adjustment was considered. This contrast is maintained in the count of zero values and some observed and expected effects which, in theory, should be very close. The test statistics used, based on H-L, make reference to to a measured summary corresponding to these numbers and according to Hosmer and Lemeshow (2000) follows a distribution of $\chi 2$. In calculating the probability value of the H-L statistic, the values of p greater than 0.05 offer evidence of an adequate adjustment of the model. These test results generated a value of p equal to 0.2243, which indicate a good adjustment of the data model.

The interpretation of these coefficients in relation to the considered hypothesis is the following:

- The variable of Sex turned out to be statistically insignificant, in spite of the fact that male children showed a slightly greater probability than female ones to continue the cycle of their parents' self-

employment with probabilities of 3.8% and 3.6% respectively. This is contrary to what was expected. Using a gender perspective, it was expected to find a differential effect between the generational occupational transmission of men and women. On the one hand, it was expected that this transmission was determined by the weight of traditional female domestic activities on economic ones in the domestic setting. On the other hand, in the case of men, it was believed that we would see an influence from the infrastructural resources available to develop self-employment. However, this turned out to not be the case.

- A positive relationship was observed between the age of the children and the reproduction of parents' self-employment. Older children were more likely to be self-employed. A child was 1.1 times more likely to be self-employed for every year of age. The older the child, the greater the possibility that he /she would work in the same occupation as the parent. The probability analysis confirms this. Within the age range of 15 to 40, a constant increase can be observed, going from 1.9% to 11.7%
- The analysis of the level of education is congruent with this study's hypothesis. Here, we can see evidence that this is an important factor in occupational mobility. Actually, increased education leads to an eventual rupture in the self-employment cycle. When compared with children (G2) who did not finish primary school, those with completed primary and secondary were 0.75 to 0.45 less likely to follow their parents into self-employment. It is worth noting that this

is even more significant in the case of children who have at least a high school education. Our analysis demonstrates that higher levels of education decreases the probability of being self-employed, going from 7.5% for workers who did not complete primary school to 2.3% for those who have a high school and /or university education.

- Place of residence can be seen as an indirect indicator of levels of modernization, urbanization and social development. The results here were what was expected given the particular socio-cultural contexts of urbanized and less urbanized areas. Living in a less urbanized area increase the possibility that children will follow their parents into self-employment. The statistics show that urban workers in the study are 8.4 less likely to be self-employed than their rural counterparts. Less urbanized areas present a probability of 4%, while urbanized ones present one of 3.4%.
- Level of income is a factor in the self-employment cycle. The data shows behavior in a U-shaped distribution curve. Children who have no income to one minimum salary (M.S.) are more likely to be non-professionally self-employed than those who receive 2 to 3 M.S. The likelihood of self-employment increases again for those who receive 5 or more M.S. When compared to those who receive 2-3 M.S., the lower income worker is 6.6 times more likely to be self-employed as compared to 3.43 times for the latter. In addition, a worker that receives 5 or more S.M. is 11.5 times more likely to be self-employed. It is probable that extremely low-income earning children are confined to the "solutions" offered in the domestic

environment. In contrast, if they can earn more, they look for other labor alternatives. At the other end of the spectrum, once incomes reach certain higher levels, it is more probable that capitalized self-employment is an attractive alternative.[8] If we look at the labor cycle of retention-exit-retention, we can see that these results are to be expected. Self-employed workers are either trapped by extremely low income or they are able to achieve the desired profitability to stay in the sector.[9] The probability that a child with no income is non-professionally self-employed is 0.01%, while those who receive up to 1 M.S. have a 1.3% probability of self-employment, the percentage of those who receive 1-2 M.S. is 0.07%, 2-3 M.S. is 0.04%, a number which is constant to 5 or more M.S.

- Table one shows that self-employed children can come from families where the parent works in any occupational category. However, as expected, we see that having a self-employed parent is a relevant factor in the child's self-employment. This shows that there is a tendency for intergenerational occupational transmission. When compared to individuals whose parents were not self-employed, we see that

8 This behavior in the form of a bell curve could be due to the fact that level of education is endogenous in the equation. Income is not a previous factor in the incorporation into self-employment but rather, a result of it. It is important to consider that the self-employed child (G2) contributes to an increase in family income.

9 Income levels in the informal sector are not necessarily inferior to those of the so-called modern sector. Payment in sectors like home repair, industry and transportation in the informal sector tend to be comparable to the modern one. Under certain circumstances, non-professional, non-managerial self-employment can behave in a matter that is count-cyclical with the economic dynamics and the possibility of relative "capitalization" (Castillo, 2009).

having a self-employed parent makes it 2.3 times more likely that a child will also be an independent worker. Here, the probability that the cycle of self-employment is continued is 6.2%, while the possibilities of a rupture or change of occupation is 2.8%.

Table 3. Probability that the adult working child be self-employed, according to the estimated model (percentages)

	P	*1 -P*
VARIABLE	SELF-EMPLOYED	OTHER OCCUPATION
Sex		
Male	3.8	96.2
Female	3.6	96.4
Age (years)		
15	1.9	98.1
20	2.8	97.2
25	4.1	95.9
30	5.8	94.2
35	8.3	91.7
40	11.7	88.3
Education		
Incomplete elementary	7.5	92.5
Elementary completed	3.0	97.0
Jr. High school completed	2.9	97.1
High School and above	2.3	97.7
Place of Residence		
More urbanizad	3.4	96.6
Less urbanizad	4.0	96.0
Income		
No income	0.01	99.9

To 1 minimum salary	1.30	98.7
Between 1 to 2 M.S.	0.07	99.93
Between 2 to 3 M.S.	0.04	99.96
Between 3 to 5 M.S.	0.04	99.96
More than 5 M.S.	0.04	99.96
Occupational Position of parent (head of household)		
Self-employed Yorker	6.2	93.8
Other	2.8	97.2

Source: Self-elaboration based on ENOE, 2010.

Conclusion

Labor mobility exists in relation to the general dynamic structure of a society. There are mechanisms which promote or limit labor market participation. Workers must conform to market demands in an environment of growing labor competition. As a result, the intergenerational transmission, reproduction and perpetuation of unfavorable aspects of this structure derive from both structural opportunity limits and socio-cultural conditions. These factors have shaped occupational traditions and have given rise to the continuity or rupture of the intergenerational occupational cycle.

The central idea of this study focused on the occupational position of children ($G-_2$) in relation to that of their parents ($G-_1$) in the Mexican labor market. The possibility of labor status "inheritance" was analyzed by controlling for socio-demographic and socio-labor characteristics which could affect adult, working children living in the same household as their parents. The focus was on the cycle of non-professional, non-managerial self-

employment transmission from parents to their children. Specifically, the study attempted to answer the question of how parents' occupational category affected their children's mobility or labor reproduction. The study controlled for sex, age, the acquisition of children's human capital, place of residence and income level. The following results were found:

It had been expected that intergenerational occupational transmission would be more visible in men than women. This would be due to the sexual division of labor and the growing incursion of women into the salaried sector. Traditionally, goods, capital, traditions and cultural inheritance have been passed on from father to son and from mother to daughter in patriarchal societies. Although inheritance can be given across genders, the most common situation is the one above. This makes daughters' mobility more dynamic than that of sons', especially given their growing access to formal education and relatively competitive salaried jobs as well as self-employment. This access has given women more varied possibilities than in the case of men. Nevertheless, while women are less likely to be non-professionally, non-managerially self-employed than men, the variable of sex actually turned out to be statistically insignificant to intergenerational occupational transmission. This leads to the idea that there is a convergence of "precarious" labor conditions for both men and women.

Age is a factor that notably increases the likelihood of intergenerational occupational transmission. The higher the age of the child, the more likely it is that they continue the cycle of non-professional, non-managerial self-employment. The age at which family inheritance is passed on is increasingly later due to parents' longer life spans and a delay in the

marriage age of the children. However, a later marriage age is not necessarily a negative factor in the transmission of occupation since it occurs "within" the family unit. Thus, children who stay in the parental home longer could be encouraged to follow in their parents' footsteps.

Although educational levels have been relatively "devalued" for other occupations, they are an important factor in status change or breaking the cycle of self-employment for children with non-professional self-employed parents. Of course, one's level of education is directly affected by other factors such as social origin and influence, complicating its relationship to labor mobility. Many of the skills required to become an independent worker or micro-business owner are generally not obtained from the formal educational system. Rather, these skills can be learned from occupational traditions within the family system. This is suggestive of the fact that the transmission of the necessary skills for self-employment depends more on informal human capital teaching than on the formal educational system. Subsequently, the immediate social environment is more important than a formal education. However, the study results affirm that formal education is also extremely important in breaking the cycle of self-employment. Education is perhaps the variable with the greatest influence on family poverty and well-being. The more education that a person has, the less likely they are to be non-professionally self-employed. Education has a significant impact on all aspects of life and above all, the possibilities that an individual has to enter the labor market under favorable conditions. It plays a basic, but not definitive role.

The social environment is a factor that influences occupational continuity

from one generation to the next. It defines and gives weight to occupational traditions in a society. It sets the limitations, demands and ease of entry to the labor market in both urban and non-urban areas. These factors are important in the occupational transmission that occurs between parents and their children, especially in light of the opportunities available to them and the need to increase family incomes to meet basic needs. While rural incomes tend to be lower than their urban counterparts, it is important to remember that there are other types of non-monetary remuneration in rural areas that promote self-employment and create an incentive to learn a trade. In this case, the "inheritance" of human capital, material and financial resources are important to the development of autonomous economic activities.

A basic indicator of the quality of a job is the salary. Normally, there is a strong correlation between occupational structural and quality and salary levels. Income, or its deterioration, is one of the essential indicators to measure precarious employment conditions. However, the relationship between the two is not always consistent or inclusive. It is important to highlight the importance of access to financial capital for self-employed individuals, especially business owners. Here, the family plays an essential role as a "substitute bank" in order to reduce the risks of the capitalist market. Thus, immediate social networks provide financial support while reducing the costs of a business. The stronger the social and domestic networks, the greater the possibilities or incentives for micro-business self-employment or family businesses. Subsequently, income is an essential factor in the decision to become self-employed given the fact that the

sectors with the highest and lowest incomes have the highest probability to work in this sector. High income sectors possess the necessary capital and work in the business world and the most productive and capitalized micro-businesses. In contrast, the lowest income groups are consigned to non-professional self-employment activities that are marked by precarious labor conditions subject to limited family resources.

Above all we should not forget that self-employed parents transmit informal human capital to their offspring. In certain circumstances, this can play a much more important role than financial capital in their children's decisions to become self-employed. Intergenerational occupational continuity not only translates to the transmission of specific skills to practice a self-employment "career," but it also signals an autonomous way of thinking. Parents' employment category appears to be a decisive factor in intergenerational labor reproduction. This study affirms the high propensity of the children of self-employed parents to continue this cycle, generally under unfavorable conditions.

The study supports the original hypothesis. In the Mexican labor market, non-professional, non-managerial self-employed children largely come from families where their parents were also independent workers and largely had a similar socio-labor status. They may or may not be on the margin of existing economic and institutional pressures. This is indicative of the cultural importance in the occupational reproduction cycle. If we assume that the majority of these activities are characterized by unstable, informal, low-paying conditions, this supports the fact that there has been a stalling of and /or relative deterioration of current labor conditions for the new

generation of workers.

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Movilidad Laboral Y Transmisión Intergeneracional del Autoempleo en México

Abstract

The immediate social and domestic influences on occupational or self-employment choices in Mexico are explored in this article. Specifically, this article proposes that structural aspects of the economy have impeded the creation of formal jobs. In addition to a lack of formal employment, certain socio-cultural factors have led to the promotion of self-employment choices. These choices tend to be to be multi-generational due to the fact that working parents tend to transmit certain informal human capital to their offspring in two ways; first, through the inheritance of skills related to specific occupational choices, and secondly, through their general administrative knowledge such as the ability to work independently in an occupation. Due to the lack of data sources (studies) which are sufficiently wide and -term to allow us to follow self-employed workers for several generations, methodologically, we must analyze a smaller sample size: parents G1 and children G2 from the same family. The data is taken from the National Study of Occupation and Employment (ENOE) 2010.

Key Words: labor mobility/ intergenerational occupational transmission/ self-employment/ independent labor

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