



Social change, timing and gender in school-to-work transitions

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Overview

- Theory: A contextualist life course perspective
- Tightening age norms
 - Early School Leaving
 - “Gap years”
- Gender in transitions to work
 - Early school leavers
 - Skilled workers
- Wider context of practical work = unnecessary, outdated



A contextualist life course perspective

Precursors

- American pragmatism (esp. Mead) + Chicago school sociology (T&Z, Blumer)
- C. Wright Mills (1959, *The Sociological Imagination*)
 - History – biography

Glen Elder (1974, *The Children of the Great Depression*)

- Period-specific institutional context – life course patterns
- Individual attributes do not “determine”
- Early experiences can be crucial, but never universal “mechanisms”



Definitions of a life course perspective

Example II

- 'As a proper methodological basis for the analysis of social processes, it [the life course approach] denotes an **interrelationship between individuals and society that evolves as a time-dependent, dynamic linkage between social structure, institutions, and individual action from birth to death** (Heinz et al 2006, p. 15).



Definitions of a life course perspective

Example I

- The life course approach is developmental and historical by its very nature. Its essence is the synchronisation of ‘individual time’, ‘family time’, and ‘historical time’ (Hareven 1994, p.493)
 - (1) The timing of life transitions over an individual life path in the context of historical change
 - (2) the synchronisation of the individual life transitions with collective familial ones
 - (3) the impact of earlier life events, as shaped by historical circumstances previously encountered, on subsequent events’ (2000, p. 129)

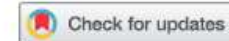


Definitions of a life course perspective

Example III

- Elder et al (2003) see the life course perspective as a *theoretical orientation*. Drawing on this definition
 - '[they] view the life course as consisting of age-graded patterns that are embedded in social institutions and history. This view is grounded in a contextualist perspective and **emphasizes the implications of social pathways in historical time and place for human development and ageing.**' (p. 4).





Age norms and early school leaving

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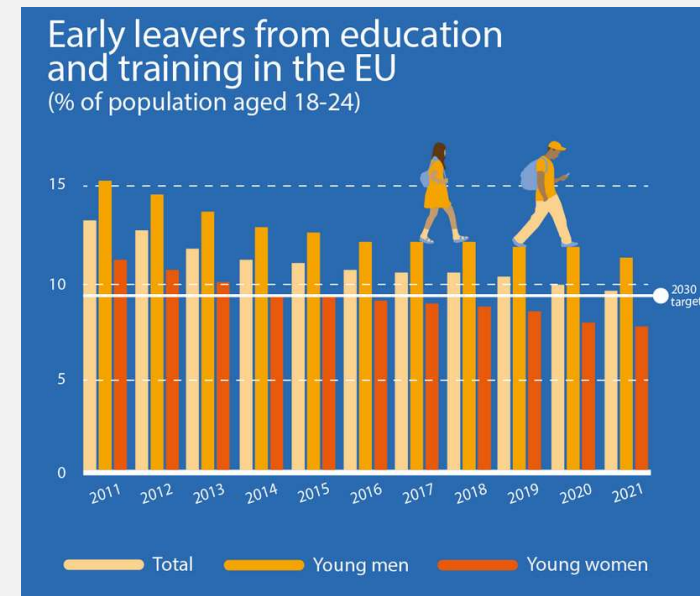
ABSTRACT

This article examines the issue of early school leaving from upper secondary education in light of life course theory on age norms. Based on existing literature, it examines how definitions of early school leaving relate to chronological age in indirect and direct ways, and thereby express historically specific norms concerning the ideal timing of events over the life course. The article suggests that by the rise of early school leaving on the international policy agenda in the 2000s, young people's pathways are increasingly measured against the academic track as 'normal' – the ideal of prolonged and orderly school to work transitions. Transition patterns long within the bounds of normality within vocational education, often resulting in qualifications gained later in life, may thus appear as problematic. Pupils in vocational tracks tend to follow routes that are less orderly and less standardized according to age. Early school leaving can be seen as a new form of deviance, created by the universalization of age norms that conform better to academic routes through education. The historical, conceptual and theoretical discussion in this article indicates that age norms are a seldom addressed, but potentially constraining, feature of contemporary school to work transition contexts.



ESL – tightening age norms

- Theory: life course age norms (Neugarten et al 1965)
 - Cultural age deadlines («too early» and «too late»)
 - Prescriptive and proscriptive
- Age-based definitions of ESL
 - EU
 - Norway
- Take more education, ... do so *quickly!*
- Vocational tracks... *when* you need a break
 - Academic; «gap years», vocational; «dropouts»?
- Stigma – self-fulfilling prophecy?



«Our impatience with young people»

- Most downloaded article ever in Journal of Social Science (in Norwegian)

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Vår utålmodighet med ungdom

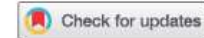
Our impatience with young people

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Frafall i videregående opplæring blir i dag betraktet som ett av det norske samfunns hovedproblem når det gjelder ungdom. Selv om frafallsstatistikken har vært overveiende stabil over de siste to tiår, har den vært gjenstand for økende bekymring. Et stort antall forskningspublikasjoner viser at frafall har betydelige kostnader, både for individ og samfunn. Basert på et bredt utvalg av foreliggende forskning og kilder, analyserer denne forskningskommentaren den norske forståelsen av frafall i videregående opplæring i historisk og internasjonal kontekst. Siktemålet er å bidra med et kritisk perspektiv på den måten frafall har blitt definert og diskutert på i Norge over de siste to tiårene.

Den norske definisjonen av frafall er streng i internasjonal sammenheng, og har helt siden den ble skapt på 1990-tallet vært rigget i yrkesfagenes disfavør. Når vi snakker om ungdom ut fra denne definisjonen, forutsettes og formidles et bestemt ideal for timing av utdanning over livsløpet, et ideal som alltid har passet bedre for middelklassens utdanningsløp. For å forstå bakgrunnen for den norske forståelsen av frafall, må periodespesi-





The timing of a time out: the gap year in life course context

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ABSTRACT

Based on biographical interviews from a three-generation study in Norway, this article examines the place of the contemporary 'gap year' within life course transition trajectories and intergenerational relations embedded in wider patterns of social inequality. Under the heading of taking a gap year, young people on *academic transition trajectories* are often granted a time out after upper secondary, during which they can recuperate from competitive school experiences and resolve uncertainties about which type of higher education to pursue. For those following *vocational transition trajectories*, in contrast, a gap year appears irrelevant and out of the question. The timing of their educational decisions in the life course does not coincide with arrangements for a legitimate break. Whereas a gap year before university may be seen as understandable and even beneficial, a person taking a break before or during vocational education is more likely to be described as a 'dropout' or an 'early school leaver'. Based on empirical analysis, the article discusses similarities and differences between contemporary gap years in Norway and what Erik Erikson described as the institutional moratorium. Young people's access to the moratorium of a gap year appears to be a privilege unequally distributed in the population.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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KEYWORDS

Gap year; life course;
transitions; class



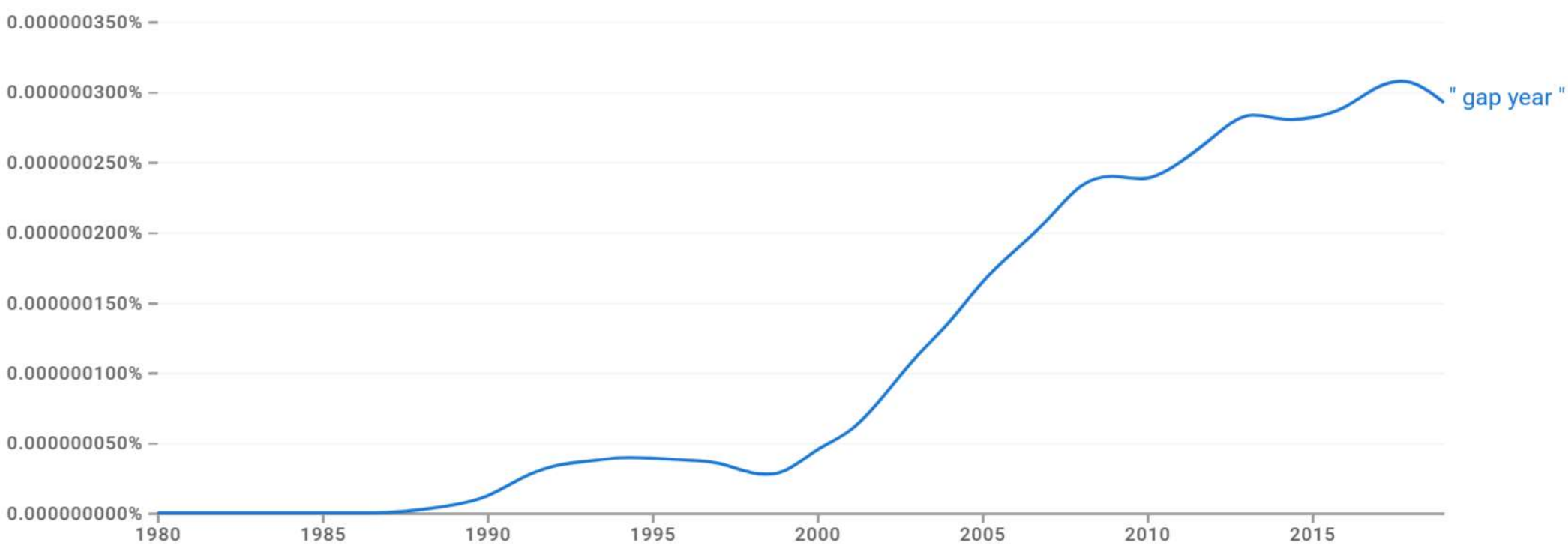
Search: "gap year" [Close] [Help]

1980 - 2019

English (2019)

Case-Insensitive

Smoothing



(click on line/label for focus)



★★★★★
0 Anmeldelser
Skriv anmeldelse

princes. it was a terrible day for the British royal family.

William left Eton in the summer of 2000, but he did not go to university at once. He had a gap year – a year between school and university. He did a lot of different things in his gap year, and some of them were not very usual for a prince. He went to Chile for ten weeks and worked as a teacher.

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After work every day, he cleaned the rooms and cooked with the other teachers. He also helped to make new buildings. Later, he also worked in England on a farm with animals; he got up very early in the morning, and he did not get very much money for his work.

At the end of summer 2001, William was ready to go to

EN



William working in Chile



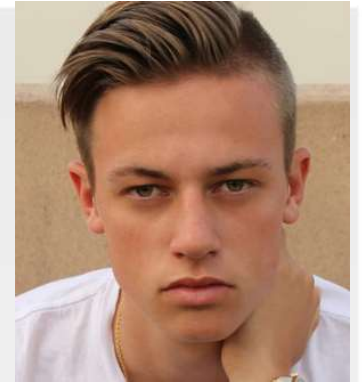


Data

- *Intergenerational transmissions in the transition to adulthood in Norway* (financed NRC, PI Ann Nilsen)
- 23 families (+ 10 in UK)
- Variety and diversity of *intergenerational transmissions*
- Biographical interviews provide insight into the *processes* behind outcomes (Bertaux, 1981)
- Anchor cohort born 1960-65 (+one parent, one "child")
- Gap years came up



Peter



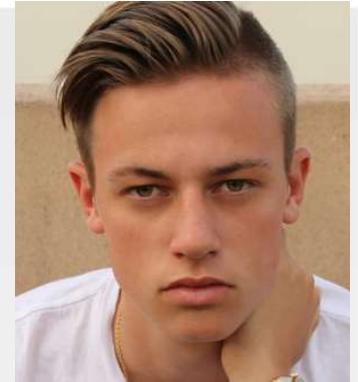
- Born 1995
- Parents professionals
- Older brother in medical school
- In last year of academic upper secondary education, planning gap year
- *Not* expected to pay while living at home
- «Actually, I think they my parents would quite like us to stay at home for as long as possible»

Peter

- *«I haven't planned any studies, what direction to take after upper secondary. So the plan is to take a gap year and work for a year. And then see if I find something that I want to.»*



Peter

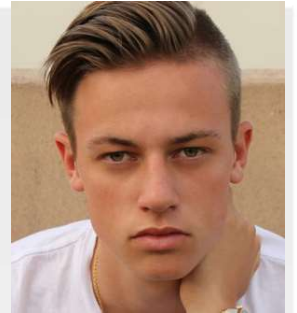


Grandmother (b. 1930)

- Academic upper secondary education in 1949 (rare)
- Considered 'natural' in her family
 - ‘I was the youngest of the siblings and all the others had done it so then...’

Mother (b. 1960)

- Academic upper secondary education in 1979 (then on to HE)
 - «in a way it was on the cards, without anything being said explicitly. maybe it was uttered explicitly too, but anyway... it wasn't really necessary to say it really, because it was taken for granted. Actually there was no question about going to the gymnasium or not. It was just the done thing (in our family)”



Peter (in sum)

- In Peter's family, HE was taken for granted
- *Which* higher education to pursue...
- Planned to use gap year to resolve uncertainty
- Mother's advice to Peter and siblings had been
 - “follow your dreams. Do what you want, don't think about what's rational (fornuftig) or not”
- Peter planned low-skill service work during gap year
 - But out of the question in long-term (not “interesting”)

Steinar

- Born 1989
- Parents working class
- None of siblings had taken HE
- Started vocational upper secondary (mechanics)
- Quit after a year of preparatory schooling
- unskilled temporary jobs since (on and off)
- had not taken, and never considered, a gap year



Steinar

- “Yeah, well, a gap year. I guess that’s a year where they don’t go to school and work. Or go to a folk high school. I don’t really have any more thoughts about it than that..»
- “It’s a very vague concept”
- **“I don’t know what I would have taken a gap year from”**



Steinar – expectations in family

- Expected to pay while living at home
- Advice from Steinar's father (builder):
 - «get skilled in a trade».
 - “We are making a big mistake. The idea that every one should take higher education. I think it's plain stupid (helt på trynet). Vocational education, that's great as far as I'm concerned. To take vocational education in a trade, get one's hands dirty. Who cares? As long as you get a job!”



Steinar (in sum)

- Steinar and his siblings were not expected to pursue higher education
- Vocational education, if any
- The notion of taking a gap year appeared out of the question (foreign)
- Mentioned only when asked directly
- Useful contrasting case





Discussion

- The influence of **period-specific** historical context in transitions from school to work, **class-specific**
- Even today, not all **need** an excuse for a slight deviance from the old (male) middle class norm of linear and protracted transitions
- Steinar (WC): “I don’t know what I would have taken a gap year from”

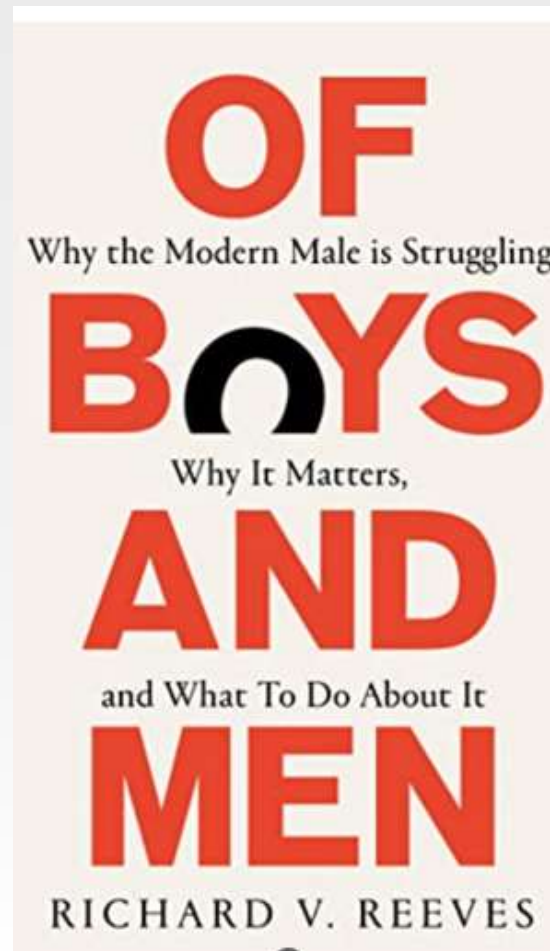
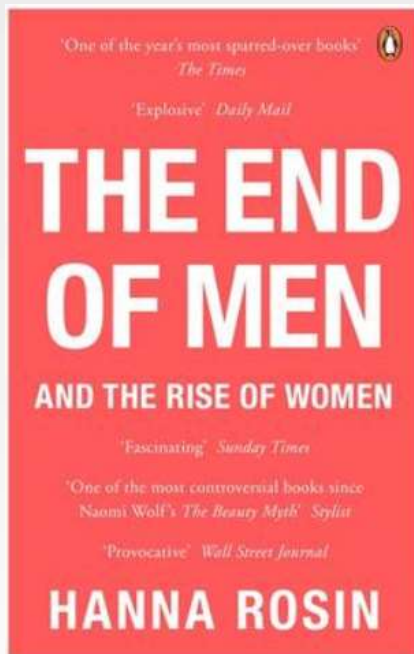




Conclusion

- Gap years can be considered as a version of Erikson's "moratorium", if we take account of the class- and period-specific context
- Do gap years perhaps exemplify a form of freedom (tolerance) granted to contemporary middle class young people?
- Trend toward growth of gap years; examine the class- and period-specific 'great expectations' that fuel them







Spesialutgave Mannrollen Mannefall

Uthengt og utskjelt. Hvordan er det å være mann etter #metoo?



> LES: Jentene fortsetter å rase fra guttene på skolen

– Vi ser det i skolen, vi ser det i NAV-systemet, vi ser det blant innsatte i fengslene. Gutter er overrepresentert på veldig mange av de dårlige statistikkene vi har, sa daværende kunnskapsminister Torbjørn Røe Isaksen (H) da han nedsatte ekspertutvalget i august i fjor.



– Guttebarn er de dummeste i hele verden



Støre advarer: - Menn i sin beste alder faller utenfor arbeidslivet

Ap-leder Jonas Gahr Støre mener statsminister Erna Solberg bør være



DTVP: Kunnskapsminister Øystein Djupedal mener skolen er for feminin. Er ingen vei å gå å tilpasse skolen til en utdatert maskulinitetsform, mener Bjerrum Nielsen.

opptagelse, at barna må ha tilpasset ne er feminine og oppfølging for å komme på nivå med trykke? Den ukritt



Are low-skilled young people increasingly useless, and are men the losers among them?

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ABSTRACT

Claims that low-skilled young people, and especially the men among them, are being excluded from the labour market have been influential over recent decades, contributing to an increasing concern over the issue of early school leaving. In this study, we use high-quality administrative data and sequence analysis to investigate the school-to-work trajectories of three birth cohorts of early school leavers in Norway between the ages of 16 and 26. Our observation period (from 1994 to 2015) covers several structural transformations of the Norwegian economy, such as increased migration, labour market polarisation and automatisisation, widely held to have worsened the prospects of low-skilled young people. In accordance with expectations, we find some signs of increased labour market exclusion among early school leavers, relating to changes in welfare policy. However, the majority still follow trajectories characterised by employment and/or further education. Contrary to discourses on low-skilled men as losers, but in accordance with previous research, we find that male early school leavers consistently predominate in trajectories leading to middle and high incomes. Even in the comparatively gender equal country of Norway, the gender-segregated labour market consistently appears to be providing low-skilled men with more economically rewarding life course trajectories.

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KEYWORDS

Early school leaving; school to work transitions; life course; labour market exclusion; gender



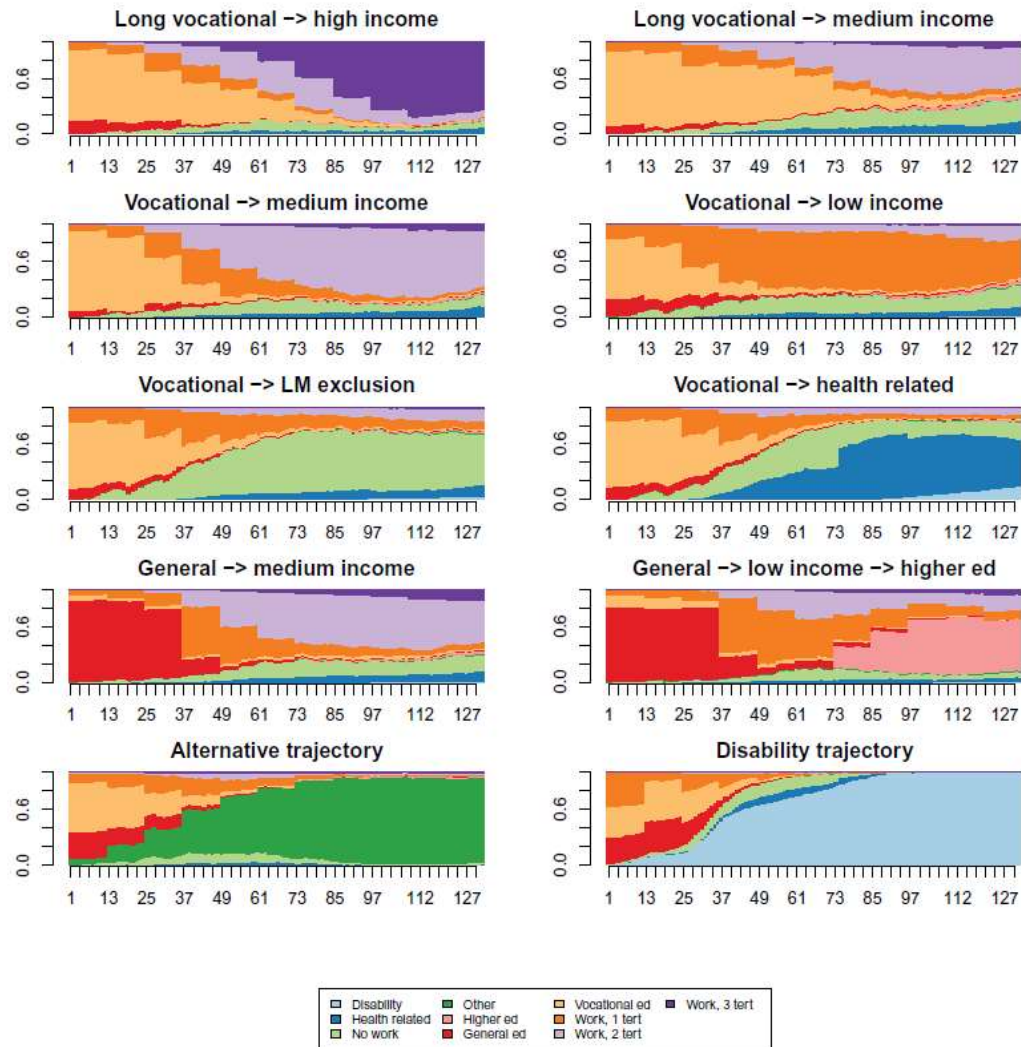


Figure 1. Cluster-specific chronograms, with all three cohorts pooled.



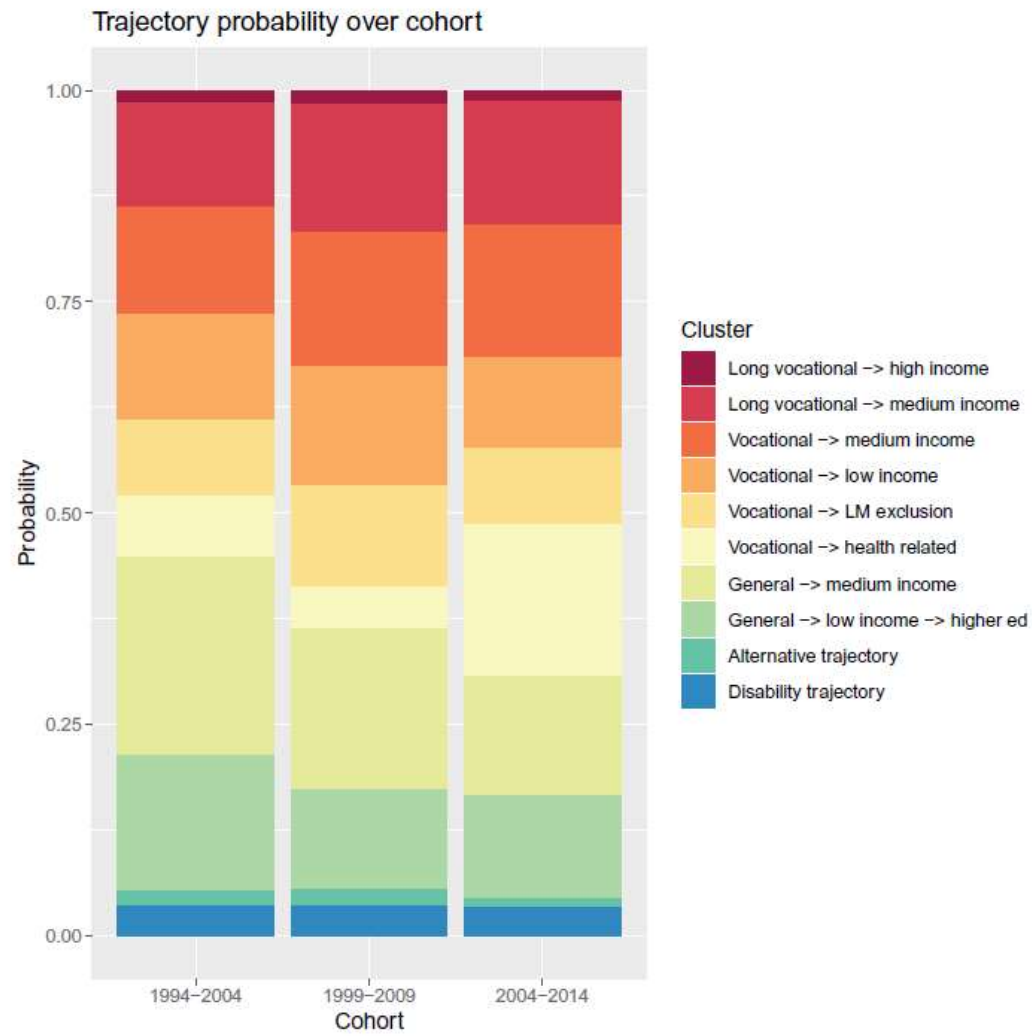


Figure 2. Predicted probabilities of cohort and cluster membership.



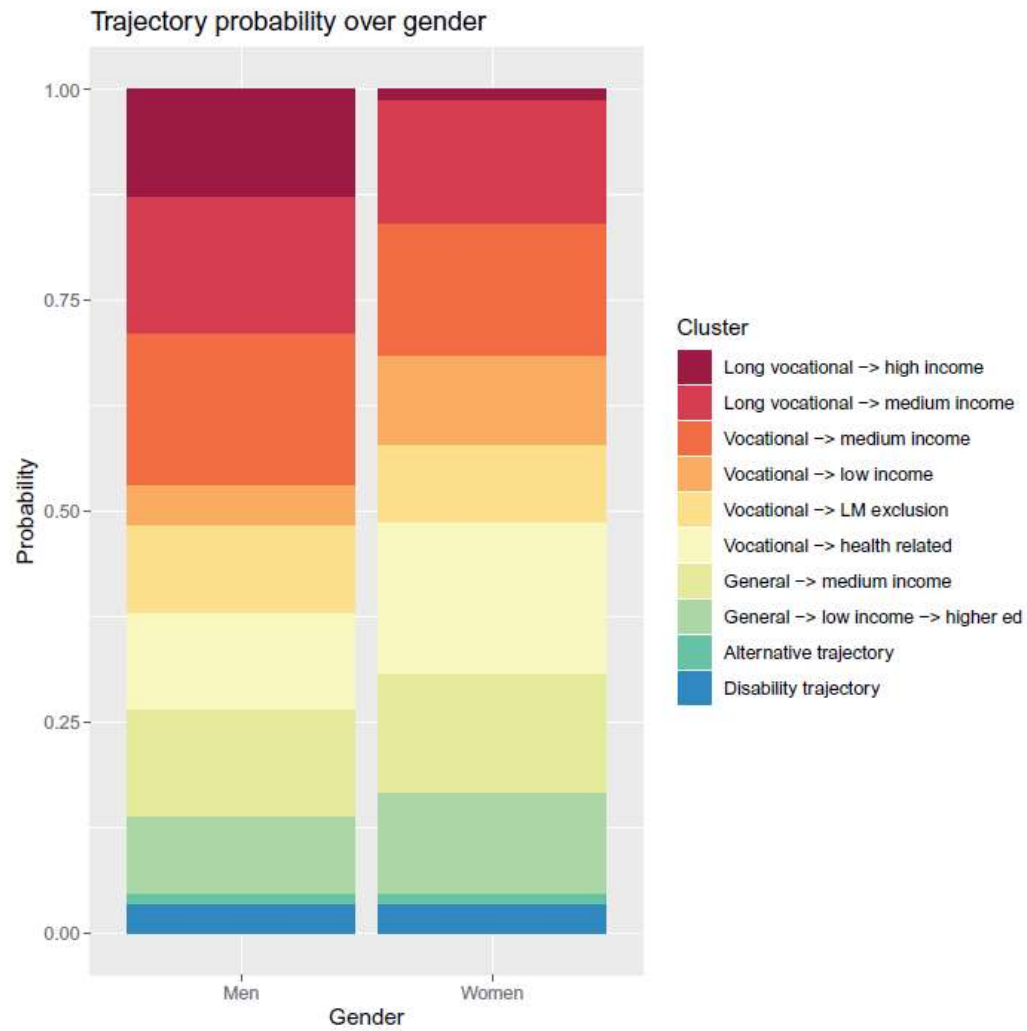


Figure 3. Predicted probabilities of gender and cluster membership.



Dropouts?



Fra lagermedarbeider til direktør i samme firma: Slik klatret Cato Johnsen

Hvordan klatre fra ansatt til sjef? Cato Johnsen klarte det hos Hansa Borg. Her er hans tips.

Publisert for mindre enn 3 timer siden



Som 21-åring startet han på laeret. Nå er han direktør i samme selskap. Foto: Iver Daaland Ase

Droppet ut av skolen – lever av å kjøre Porsche



Christian Bloom

– Han er en ustudert røver

Et hoppet av videregående, solgte dusjkabinett og mislyktes med å drive reisebyrå og kunstgalleri. Nå satser Bjørn Tore Larsen (53) høyt med flyselskapet Norse Atlantic Airways.

Uten utdanning kjøpte han kafeen «ingen» ville ha, for 1 krone. Nå er den en internasjonal suksess.

Et kafebesøk gjorde Einar Kleppe Holthe til daglig leder i en alder av 20 år og administrerende direktør like etter. – Jeg har aldri trengt å studere.



ØKONOMI FRA E21

Gründeren var alt annet enn skoleflink. Nå er han mangemillionær på salg av luksusbåter.



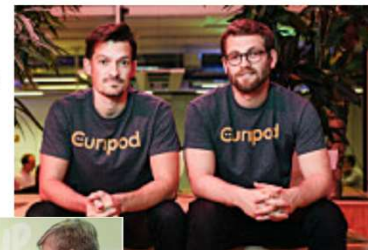
Administrerende direktør Jan Frode Tobiassen i kjøkkenet begynte å hjelpe til i familiebedriften allerede i 10–12-årsalderen. FOTO: KJARTAN BJELLAND

Feide gulv og tømte søppel i flere år



STUDENT

Fra «drop out» til suksess



ÅRETS UNGE LEDERTALENT – Å bygge lag og utvikle kultur i bedriften er det viktigste i mitt lederarbeid, sier Erik Samsøen (34), som vant prisen som årets unge ledertalent. FOTO: SÅRD BØE

Droppet utdanning etter videregående – nå er han årets unge ledertalent

Erik Samsøen (34) vant prisen «årets unge ledertalent» i bergensregionen: – Jeg har hatt et veldig langt frår etter videregående nå.



Var skoletaper - nå bader han i luksus

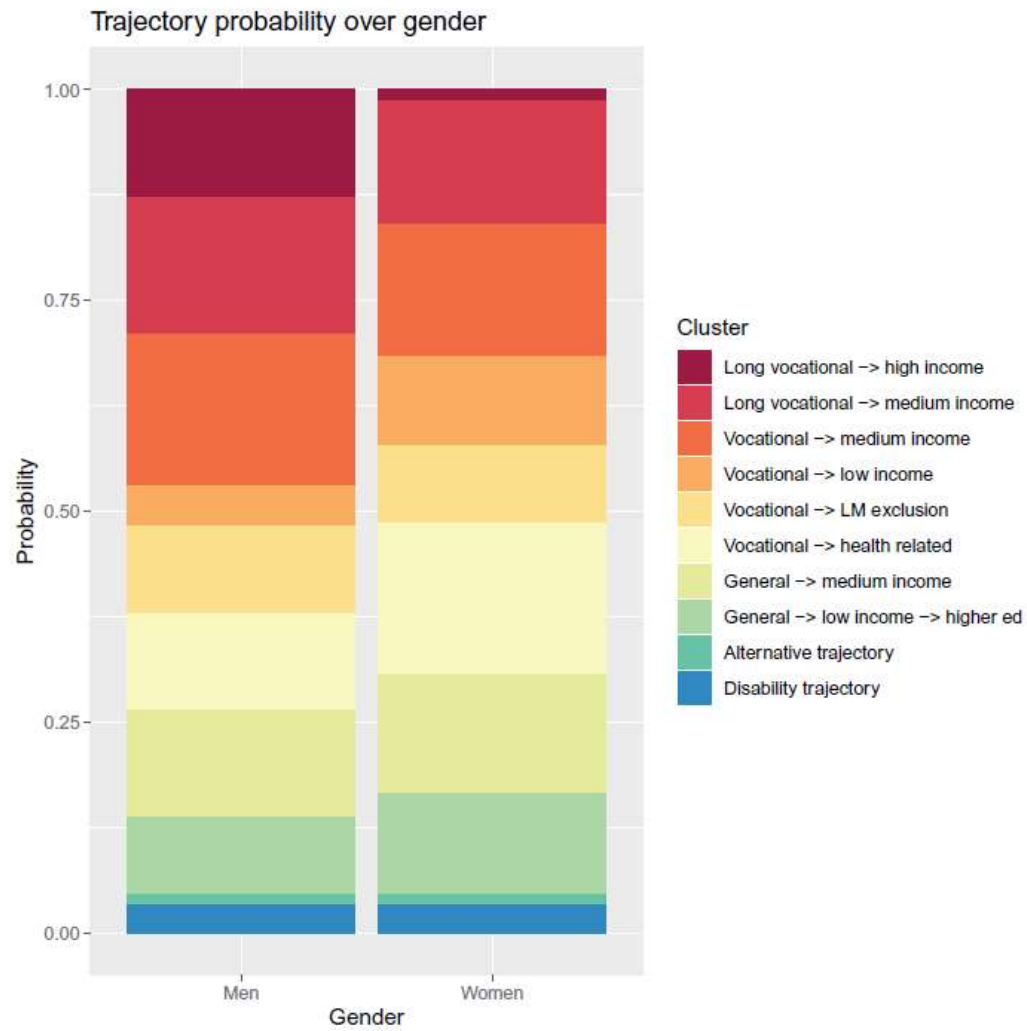


Figure 3. Predicted probabilities of gender and cluster membership.



Gendered transition structures: life course patterns after completion of gender-segregated vocational education in Norway

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ABSTRACT

In this article, we present the results from a sequence analysis of two cohorts of young people skilled in gender-segregated vocational education in Norway. By using administrative data on monthly statuses in education, employment and welfare, we map life course trajectories during the 11 years after completion. The results suggest that men skilled in male-dominated trades experience the most favourable trajectories in terms of labour market inclusion and income progression, whilst women skilled in female-dominated tracks have the least favourable trajectories. More surprisingly, the two gender minorities appear to ‘meet in the middle’, displaying strikingly similar life course pattern. We interpret these results as indicating *gendered transition structures* which confront vocationally inclined youth. Though we cannot draw conclusions concerning underlying selection processes, our findings may inform discussions on why young men overall have remained more reluctant towards taking gender-untraditional paths through education and employment over recent decades.

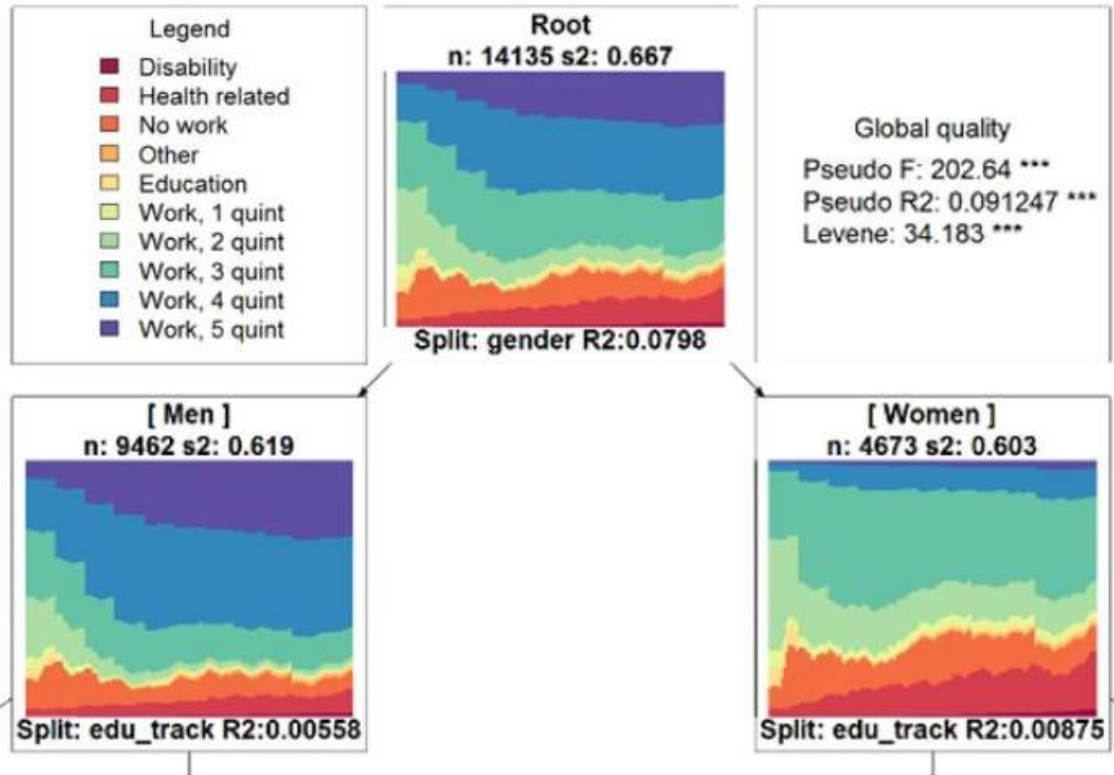
ARTICLE HISTORY

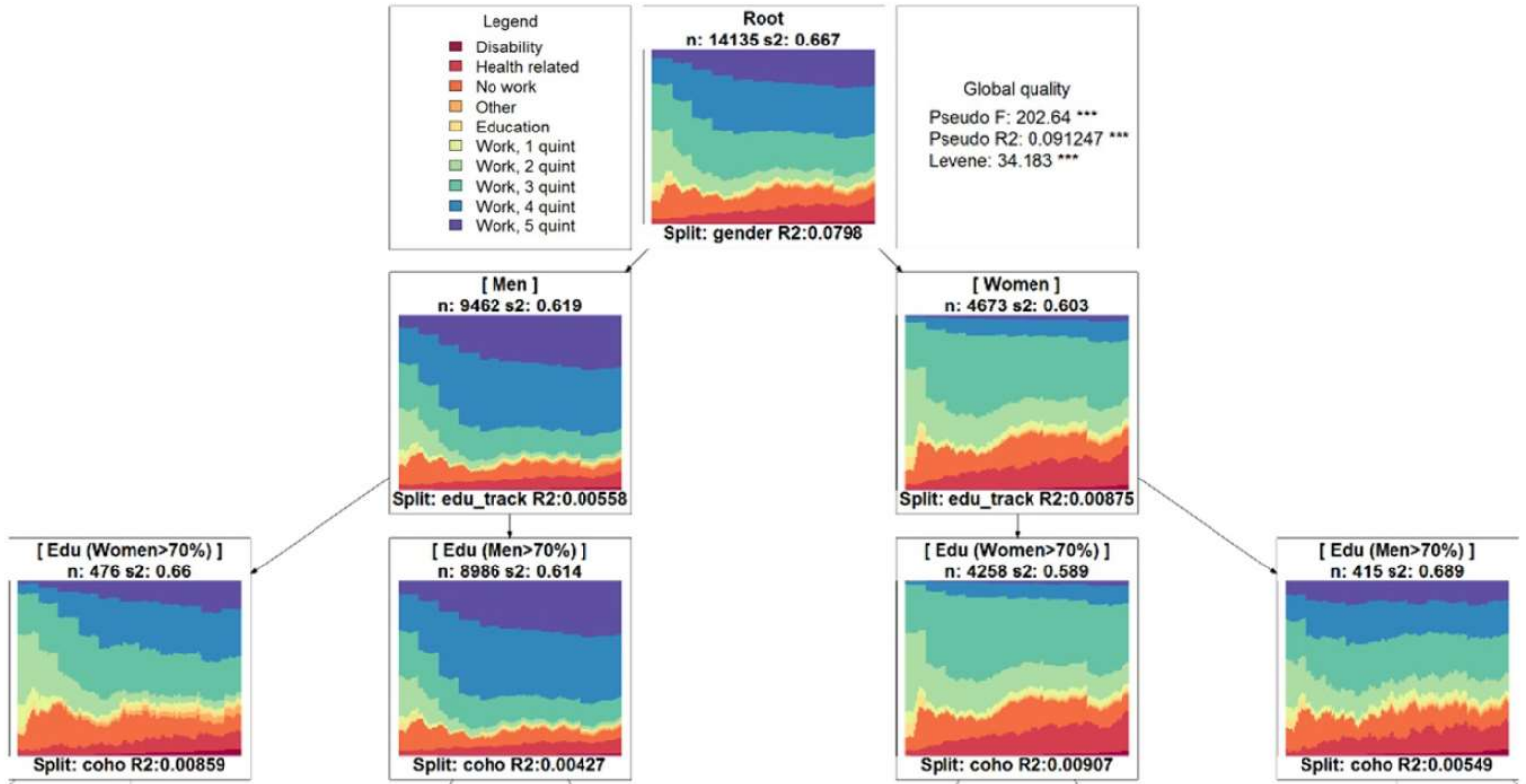
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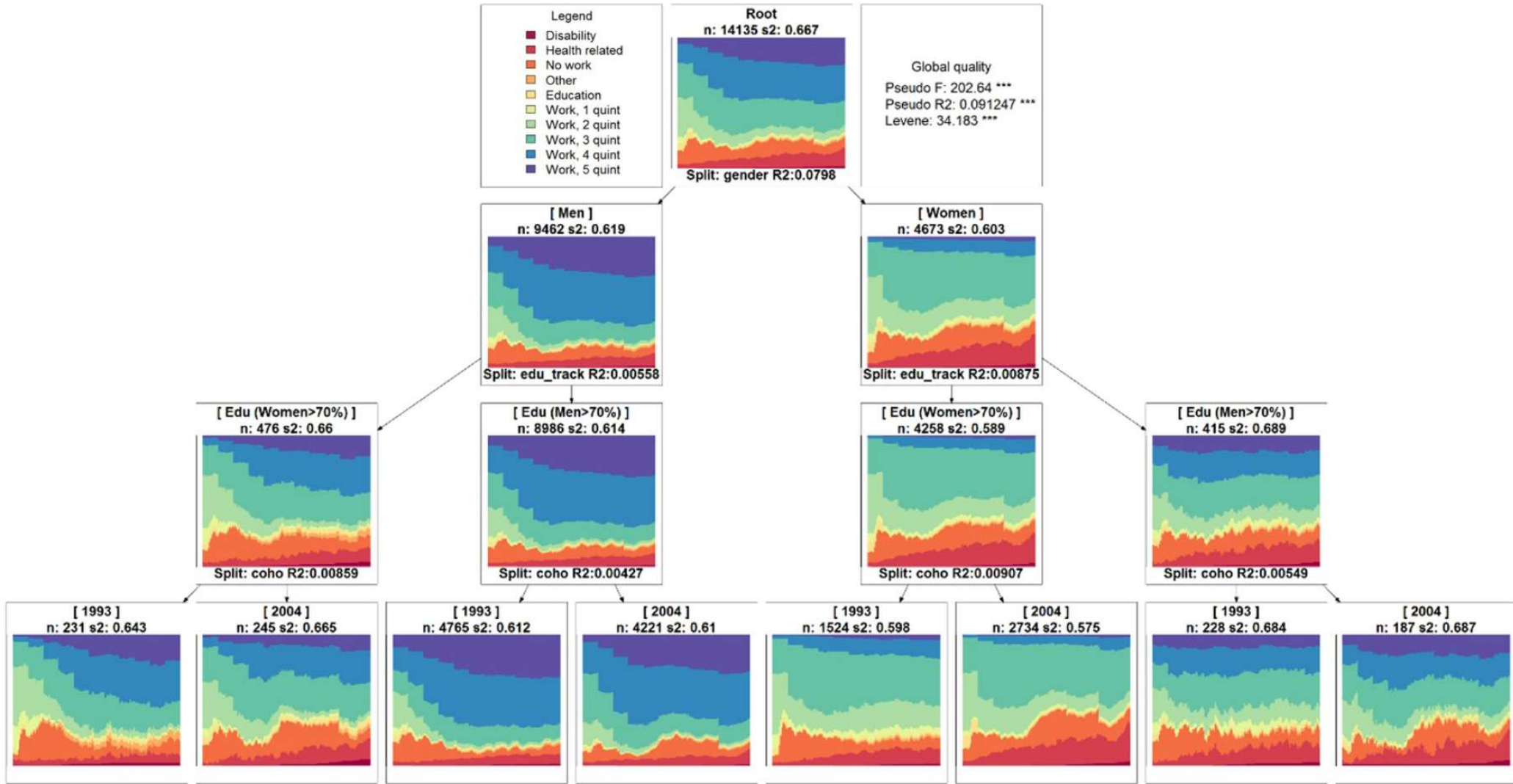
KEYWORDS

Gender segregation;
transitions; life course;
vocational; opportunity
structures









Gendered transition structures

(among workers skilled in gender-segregated vocational tracks)

- Greatest disparities between the two gender majorities
- The two gender minorities have **strikingly similar** work/welfare trajectories

Who has the most favourable trajectories?

Depends on reference group

- Comparison with same-skill group – men always do better
- Comparison with gender peers – untrad. men do worse, untrad. women do better

Implications:

- Comparing minority trajectories with majority trajectories provides information on wider social context
- Part of the context for the unfinished gender revolution?

Wider context: practical work = gone?

- No/vague criteria
- In whose interest?
- Unintended consequences?
- May have contributed to image of useless low-skill *men*

Debates and controversies



The post-industrial society: from utopia to ideology

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wes.sagepub.com



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Abstract

Theories of post-industrial society have since their earliest formulations had a questionable relation to actual processes of social change. This article explores why they nonetheless continue to hold influence. Drawing on Mannheim, it argues that theories of post-industrial society were originally formulated as utopia – hopeful speculations about the future. When their core concepts are used to describe *present* conditions, however, they take on the role of ideology, in Mannheim's sense of this term. The ideology of post-industrial society represents a specific world view in relation to work, knowledge and education. It elevates and celebrates 'knowledge work' and renders invisible existing forms of industry and workers' knowledge necessary for practical work. When the present is viewed through the lens of these theories, practical work is cast as the work of yesterday and the people who do it as yesterday's people.

Keywords

ideology, knowledge society, knowledge work, Mannheim, post-industrial society, practical work, utopia

Conclusions

- History – biography (Mills 1959)
- Contextualist life course perspective (Elder et al 2006)
 - Lives take place within period-specific institutional context (*partly* national)
- Tightening age norms
 - Vocational «dropout» vs academic «gap year»?
- Gender
 - education = employment, 1 to 1
 - Men get greater returns for education (ESLs and skilled, i Norway)
- Political-economic context... knowledge / power





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