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Dynamics of Inequality Across the Lifecourse: structures and process

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Work and family life courses among Jewish and Israeli-Palestinian Women in Israel

Zafer Buyukkececi[1], *Anette Eva Fasang*[2], *Vered Kraus*[3], *Asaf Levanon*[4], *& Evgeny Saburov*[5]

Abstract

We examine work and family trajectories among Israeli-women as a whole by considering single events in the context of others from early childhood to late 30s. We use sequence, cluster, and regression analyses on newly available data from the State of Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) that for the first time allow following family, and work experiences longitudinally. Findings show Jewish women's elevated likelihood to sort into all economically advantaged work-family life courses, whereas all groups of Israeli-Palestinian women are more likely to experience unstable low-paid employment or live courses combining unpaid care work with early and high fertility. We highlight a sizeable group of never-married childless women with irregular employment, mostly urban Jewish Israelis, who largely went unnoticed in previous research and reflect precarious and delayed work-family lives often associated with the Millennial generation. Ethno-religious differences in access to economically disadvantaged work-family life courses are largely, but not fully, accounted for by the family of origin characteristics and local structural opportunities. Yet, ethno-religious differences in sorting into economically advantaged life courses remain noticeably strong even after consideration of background characteristics suggesting that these life courses are accessible predominantly for Jewish Israeli women above and beyond the structural opportunities.

Keywords: ethno-religious differences, work-family life courses, Israel, multichannel sequence analysis

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Introduction

Many studies on women's life-courses focus on either the impact of employment events on subsequent fertility and union formation or the other way around, on how family events affect subsequent employment and earnings (e.g., Abendroth et al. 2014; Budig and England 2001; Budig and Hodges 2010; Carlson and England 2011; Glauber 2007). Informative as those studies are, they "overlook how work trajectories and family trajectories are interrelated across longer time spans of the life course" (Aisenbrey and Fasang 2017, pp. 1449–1450). Yet, single events in the life course only become meaningful in the context of others. To fill these lacunae, scholars recently began adopting a multidirectional approach utilizing multichannel sequence analysis to identify salient types of interrelatedness between work and family lives for different social groups. This approach enables documenting the timing, duration, and order of women's experiences across multiple work and family events, which together allow for an in-depth understanding of the dynamic work-family interplay from early adulthood into mid-life as a "process outcome" (Abbott 2005). As such, this method can uncover different work-family pathways that create distinct life course experiences or "life course classes", thereby reflecting a longitudinal measure of social inequality between various ethnic or social groups in a given society or across societies (Fasang and Mayer 2020). Most of the studies on the dynamic interrelatedness between women's work and family lives were conducted in highly secularized, affluent democracies with mature welfare states, including the US and Europe (e.g., Aisenbrey and Fasang 2017), with few studies additionally focusing on migrants residing in Western countries (Sirniö et al. 2017). Contrarily, we have limited insight into the work and family life-course of women living in other contexts.

Israel offers an interesting context in which to study work-family inequality over the life course. Female employment rates are high, fertility rates are equally high and increasing, and are combined with strong pro-natalist family norms and dramatic socioeconomic gaps between ethnic and religious groups (Okun 2013, 2017). Although Israel is an affluent country with a developed welfare state, ethnic and religious groups participate very differently in the economy and disparately benefit from state transfers. Israel, therefore, represents an interesting case to study social inequality in combined work family-life courses, with valuable lessons for other advanced economies and, regarding the Palestinian minority, potentially also for economically disadvantaged neighbor countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The main cleavage in Israel is the national division between Jews (the most privileged and dominant group) and Israeli-Palestinians. The latter are further divided into three religious' groups: Muslims, Christians, and Druze (which differ among themselves as well). It is well documented that Israeli Palestinian women differ from Jewish women in almost all aspects related to family formation, entering the labor market, and socioeconomic attainment in the paid market (Kraus and Yonay 2018).[1] The disadvantaged standing of Israeli Palestinians

[1] The Jewish population is also composed of distinct social groups. Among Jews, one may distinguish between first, second, and third generation Jews that originate from Europe and America countries (i.e., Ashkenazi)

characterizes all three religious' groups - despite some disparities among them (e.g., related to residency and citizenship).

Numerous studies documented differences in specific work and family events among various ethno-religious groups in Israel (Carmi and Rosenfeld 2010; Cohen 2003; Cohen et al. 2019; Gharrah and Cohen 2001; Khattab 2002, 2003; Khazzoom 2003; Kraus 2002; Kraus and Yonay 2018; Yonay and Kraus 2001; Yonay et al. 2015). Yet, it is not clear how different family and work events typically combine over the life course, in which order and timing they occur, and how ethnic-religious groups differ in the combination of work and family events over the life course. Israel is characterized by great population heterogeneity and strong conservative family values. Studying Israeli women's work-family trajectories "as an unfolding process" can identify prevalent combinations of specific work and family lives and how access to them is stratified by ethnicity and family background characteristics.

Adopting a life-course perspective, our goal is to uncover the dynamics of work-family profiles in Israel concerning family formation, educational attainment, employment, and earnings in the paid market, and relate them to ethnic affiliation while following a specific birth cohort over time. Specifically, we explore the work-family trajectories of Israeli women born at the end of the 70s and associate them with ethno-religious group membership and familial and structural background characteristics. To document social inequality in women's probability to experience different work-family lives, we address three research questions: (1) what are the typical long-term work-family life courses between ages 15 and 38 in Israel for women born between 1979 and 1981 (2) how does the probability of experiencing different typical work-family lives differ between ethno-religious groups? and, (3) to what extent are ethnic-religious differences associated with family and structural background characteristics? Answering these questions highlights the (dis)-advantage of the various ethno-religious groups in access to specific life courses and shows the limited openness of the Israeli society. We use sequence, cluster and regression analysis on newly available data from the State of Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), which for the first time allow us to identify Israeli women's family formation events as well as education and work experiences longitudinally over a long-time span.

Different approaches and previous research

The single directional approach

By and large, prior studies concerning the association between employment outcomes and family formation adopted a unidirectional approach. Studies on women's employment outcomes usually examine the impact of family formation processes, such as age at marriage or the number of children on employment and wages (Anderson et al. 2003; Budig 2003; Doren 2019; Kahn et al. 2014). Concerning the impact of work on the family, it is well documented that women's (including mother's) share in the paid market increased dramatically in the last

and Asia and Africa countries (i.e., Mizrahi). The share of women from these two ethnic groups are quite similar not so their achievements in the paid market (Ekert-Jaffe and Stier 2009).

decade in almost all Western countries coupled with increases in their educational attainment (Budig and Hodges 2010; Kraus 2002). Those increases contributed to a delay in family formation, especially among women achieving high educational attainments (Doren 2019; Kravdal and Rindfuss 2008; McCrary and Royer 2011).

The multidirectional approach

The single directional approaches above cannot capture how work and family trajectories dynamically affect one another and are interrelated across longer time spans of the life course (Bernardi et al. 2019). The interdependencies between work and family events over time are important for several reasons. First, a multidirectional approach is necessary to evaluate life as a whole and place single events in the context of others. A specific work or family event indicates varying degrees of (dis)-advantage depending on other preceding, concurrent and succeeding events. For example, a brief period of unemployment after holding a high-income job combined with a resourceful spouse and few dependents in the household is a different situation from recurrent unemployment between low paid jobs coupled with responsibility for many dependents residing within the household. Second, the timing and age range over which work and family events are spread in the life course can matter for later life consequences and the accumulation of (dis)-advantage over time (Jalovaara and Fasang 2020; Van Winkle and Fasang 2019). For example, the longer mothers stay out of the labor force after giving birth the higher their chances for subsequent downward mobility (e.g., Aisenbrey et al. 2009; Ruhm 1998), and later births are associated with lower motherhood penalties, at least for highly educated women (Doren 2019). Third, different degrees and types of interrelatedness between longer-term work and family life courses signify social advantage or disadvantage in themselves (Bernardi et al. 2019).

Studies adopting a life course perspective also observed different work-family trajectories between and within countries, depending on micro and macro characteristics. Aisenbrey and Fasang (2017) examined work-family trajectories in (West) Germany and the United States. The liberal regime in the United States, which is characterized by limited welfare state interventions, provides relatively equal access for men and women to work-family lives marked by high occupational prestige combined with parenthood in stable partnerships, compared to the gender conservative German model. However, access to this privileged life-course does not extend to Black men or women. Black women experience the most disadvantaged work-family life course, typified by precarious unstable low prestige employment combined with early single parenthood.

Another study provides a more in-depth analysis of intersectional differences by gender and race within the United States to show how work-family life courses are both gendered and racialized (Fasang and Aisenbrey forthcoming). If interrelatedness between work and family lives is weak, (dis-)advantages in one life domain operate relatively independent from the other. White men's work-family life courses are characterized by the "privilege of possibility" because work and family lives are only loosely related and (dis-)advantages in one domain operate largely independently from the other. In contrast, the interrelatedness between work and family events is moderate for Black men and White women, but notably highest for Black

women. Analyses further showed that a mutually supporting relationship of career success and parenthood in stable partnerships exists for Black men, whereas the opposite was the case for Black women. Yet, we know little about longer-term interdependencies in work and family lives in other contexts and for other social groups. Overall, recent studies thus suggest that a combination of high fertility and high prestige employment is relatively uncommon for women in advanced economies and that the paths ethnic groups experience are determined by their structural opportunities within a society. Before presenting our results, we elaborate on the special features of Israeli society, which determine structural opportunities for women to combine work and family life.

The Israeli setting

Israel differs from Western societies regarding the major determinants that shape work-family life courses. While work-family policies in Israel follow a male breadwinner logic found in several continental European welfare states; female employment, family formation dynamics, and the ethnic composition, differ sharply. The institutional context of women's family and work lives are similar to some other European countries (e.g., Germany and Austria): Israel offers 14 weeks fully paid (i.e., a 100 percent replacement rate) maternity leave for women who worked at least 10 out of the past 14 (or 15/22) months prior to giving birth. School attendance is mandatory and free from the age of three since 2016. Childcare, however, for children under the age of three is available selectively. In 2015, more than a third (37 percent) of Jewish children and 17 percent of Israeli-Palestinian children under the age of 3 were enrolled in formal childcare (Vaknin forthcoming), which is lower than the rates of Germany six years earlier (Aisenbrey and Fasang 2017). The preschool attendance of Israeli-Palestinian children has been remarkably low even for children age 3 to 4, before 2016 (when it became compulsory).

Regarding ethno-religious composition, Israeli society is composed of 74.8 percent Jews and 21.2 percent Israeli-Palestinians. It is well documented that Israeli-Palestinians occupy the lowest economic and social positions in Israeli society (Ayalon and Shavit 2004; Haberfeld and Cohen 2007; Khattab 2002, 2003; Khattab and Miaari 2013; Kraus and Yonay 2018; Levanon and Raviv 2007; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1993, 1994; Okun and Friedlander 2005; Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 1994). Discrimination against Arab-speaking residents in Israel is illegal but pervasive (Margaliot and Gitizadeh 2004; Mundlak 2009; Wolkinson 1999). Israeli-Palestinians are also geographically separated from the Jewish majority and are largely concentrated in peripheral underdeveloped districts of Israel (Falah 1996; Falah et al. 2000; Gharrah and Cohen 2001; Haidar 1995; Khalidi 1988; Khamaisi 2013; Kraus and Yonay 2018; Šnell et al. 1995; Yonay and Kraus 2001).

Israeli-Palestinians are further divided into Muslims (83.2 percent) Christians (9.2 percent) and Druze (7.6 percent) (Statistical Abstract of Israel No. 69. 2018 Table 2.3). Muslims occupy the lowest economic and social rung in Israeli society (Khattab 2003; Kraus and Yonay 2000; Kraus and Yonay 2018; Levanon and Raviv 2007; Lewin-Epstein et al. 2006; Yonay et al.

2015). Most Muslims live in separate localities, mainly in rural periphery localities with limited employment opportunities (Gharrah and Cohen 2001; Haidar 1995; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1994; Semyonov and Lewin-Epstein 1994; Šnell et al. 1995; Yiftachel 2006; Yonay and Kraus 2001).[2] Another Israeli-Palestinian group is the Druze, who reside in segregated localities in the North district of the country and have been singled out as the Palestinian group most loyal to the dominant Jewish group. The Druze are the only Palestinian group serving in the Israeli military, which opens economic opportunities that other Palestinians lack (Firro 2001; Frisch 1993). Finally, Christians represent the most affluent Palestinian group, as they are more likely than other groups to reside in urban areas, study in private (mostly church-run) schools, and have an occupational status that is considerably higher than that of Muslims and Druze (Kraus and Yonay 2018; McGahern 2013).

Although the Jewish group is the dominant and the most advantaged, it is also divided ethnically regarding the place of origin, with the main distinction being between descendants of immigrants from European-American (henceforth Ashkenazim) Jews and descendants of immigrants from the Middle East and North-Africa (henceforth Mizrahim), often referred to as Arab Jews (Yonay and Kraus 2017). The latter suffered from discrimination and prejudice, and their economic achievement was and is still lower, on average, than that of Ashkenazim Jews (Khazzoom 2003; Kraus and Yonay 2000; Shenhav 2006; Yonay and Kraus 2017). Over the years, Mizrahi and Ashkenazi became more similar socio-demographically (Yonay and Kraus 2017). However, huge socioeconomic gaps between Ashkenazi women and their Mizrahi counterparts persist in the second generation and even third generation in Israel (Cohen et al. 2019; Yonay and Kraus 2017).

Family formation and labor force experiences among the ethno-religious groups: The most traditional family-oriented group among Palestinian citizens are Muslim women, followed by Druze, at the end of the Israeli-ladder are Christian women. Muslim women marry the earliest (at the age of 20.9 among Muslim women residing in the North and Center); Druze women marry about six months later and Christian women who marry the latest (22.8 years), while Jewish women were 1.7 years older than Christian women at first marriage. The highest birthrates are observed among Muslim women, (3.32 children per woman), only slightly higher than among Jewish women (3.09 children per woman) (Central Bureau of Statistics, No. 67 2016 Table 3.13). The labor market participation of almost all Jewish women is noticeably high compared to that of their counterparts in other advanced economies (around 80 percent), but rates are relatively much lower for the Israeli Palestinian groups (around 30 percent).

When in the labor force these groups differ as well in terms of hourly wages and the economic sector they are enrolled in. Most Israeli-Palestinian women (75 percent) in the paid market are enrolled in the public sector, less so are Jewish women (only less than half among Jewish women). The public sector in Israel is less discriminatory, adheres more closely to egalitarian and formal bureaucratic procedures, and is subject to legal inspection (Kraus 2002; Yonay and Kraus 2013). Furthermore, most of the Muslim women work as schoolteachers,

[2] Muslims are further divided into 3 groups residing in different areas: (1) North and Central, (2) the Bedouin in the South who are an ex-nomadic group and (3) occupied East Jerusalem. The latter two groups are economically the most disadvantaged, compared to Muslim in the North and Central district (Kraus and Yonay 2018).

while Jewish women are overrepresented in diverse high white-collar occupations (Kraus and Yonay 2018; Yonay and Kraus 2013). Hourly wage gaps between Palestinian and Jewish women are also lower when they work in the public sector compared to their counterparts enrolled in the private sector (Bental et al. 2017; Kraus and Yonay 2018). As a result of these sectoral gaps, Jewish women attain the highest earnings, while Muslim women and Druze women have the lowest earnings (Kraus and Yonay 2018).

Expectations

Given the diverse ethnic composition, we expect a wide variety of both work and family life courses and different combinations of the two domains (research questions). Concerning our first research question, work-lives will range between complete withdrawal from employment and extensive periods out of the labor force disproportionally among Israeli Palestinians, to more permanent employment with moderate to high earnings, which will be more characteristic of Israeli Jews. Both high and low labor force attachment over early adult life courses might be coupled with different family lives ranging from very early marriage and high fertility and unpartnered childlessness. While we know the average tendencies among the ethno-religious groups from previous research, our analytical design allows documenting uncommon scenarios, such as women who combine labor market withdrawal with single childlessness or having many children early with very successful careers. Such life courses may not easily be visible when presenting single average indicators as the age at marriage or employment rates. Since the public sector enables mothers to reconcile their work and family duties, we expect that women with children would sort into the public sector and this would be more common for Israeli-Palestinian women.

Concerning our second research question, who is most likely to sort into which types of combined work and family life courses we have several expectations. For Israeli Palestinian women, especially for Muslims, the most likely scenario is a family life marked by early partnership and high fertility, coupled with withdrawal from employment or disrupted career patterns, similar to life-course dynamics of women in Southern, Eastern and some Central European countries (Gauthier et al. 2016). For this group, gender conservative norms are coupled with structural barriers for women to enter the labor market and they cannot afford to outsource household and childcare. For Jewish women, a dynamic life course characterized by continuous employment with only short maternity interruptions coupled with moderate to high fertility (especially for Jewish women from Ashkenazi origin) is more likely, reminiscent of typical life-course profiles of women in Northern European Countries in the past decades (Aisenbrey et al. 2009; Sirniö et al. 2017). Female employment is normatively encouraged and structurally supported with generous state provisions for childcare that are more locally concentrated in regions where they reside. The unique characteristics of Christian and Druze women leave greater uncertainty regarding their family and work trajectories, and to date little is known about characteristics of the work-family combinations for them.

Concerning our third research question on the role of family and structural background factors, we expect that parental education will be important for structurally disadvantaged Israeli-Palestinian women to access work family-lives that combine continuous employment with later marriage and moderate fertility. As the place of residence establishes educational and economic opportunities for their inhabitants, we expect that structural opportunity afforded by women's place of residence will also play an important role in determining women's combined work and family life courses.

Data variables and methods

Data and variables

Using the 1995 Israeli Census, which comprises 20 percent of the total population, we select a random sample of women born between 1979 and 1981, resulting in 15,000 respondents (i.e., 75 % of the total sample)[3]. We combine the Census data with yearly administrative register data collected by the tax authority, the ministry of education, and the population and immigration authority, from 1996 until 2017. This allows us to reconstruct work and family life courses of Israeli women from age 14–16 until age 36–38, for the three selected birth cohorts, respectively.

Work-Family Life Courses: We use the information on marriage, childbearing, education, labor force participation, sector of employment, and income. The family sequences are coded based on nine states: 1. "Single, no child", 2. Single 1+ children", 3. "Married, no child", 4. "Married, 1 child", 5. "Married, 2 children", 6. "Married, 3 children", 7. "Married 4+ children", 8. "Previously married, no children", 9. "Previously married 1+ children". Education and Work sequences are based on ten states: 1. "Received a B.A degree.", 2. "Received a degree in M.A. +". The employment categories are defined by combining the sector with income level: 1. "Out of the labor force", 2. "Public sector with low income", 3. "Public sector with medium income", 4. "Public sector with high income", 5. "Private sector with low income", 6. "Private sector with medium income", 7. "Private sector with high-income", and 8. "Self-Employed". The distinction between sectors is crucial in Israel because evidence shows that reconciliation of work and family life differs noticeably between the public and private sectors (Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Yaish and Kraus 2003). Furthermore, we distinguish between income categories to elicit inequalities between women. Low, medium, and high income are categorized based on the yearly income information in the census data. We use the whole population of men and women and create three income categories according to tertiles of the income distribution in a given calendar year. With this strategy, we identify individuals' relative income position.

Ethno-religious groups and control variables, the independent variables included in the logistic regression models that estimate the sorting into the different life-course profiles are **Ethno-religious groups** distinguishing between 4 Jewish groups: (1) Second generation

[3] Our sample included 20,500 women, for 20,000 of them we had the complete information. In the interest of expediting computation time, we reduced the sample size of 20,000 to 15,000.

Jewish women born to Jewish parents (the reference group)[4], (2) Second generation Jewish women parents born to Asian-African immigrants[5], (3) second-generation Jewish women whose parents were born in Europe-America[6], (4) second-generation Jewish women with a mixed origin, namely either father or mother belong to different ethnic groups, or one of them were Israeli born.

The Israeli Palestinians are divided into six groups, among them *three* **Muslim groups**: (1) Muslims residing in North and Central Israel (2) Muslims residing in the south of Israel (Bedouin); (3) Muslims residing in East Jerusalem. **Druze** are also divided into two groups: (4) those who are Israeli citizens and (5) Druze from the Golan Heights (non-citizens). Lastly, we include the (6) **Christian** women as a separate category.

We consider three indicators of **social origin**, which might explain ethno-religious differences in work and family life courses, as well as to explore the relationships of parents to daughters' association into the different clusters. First, we include **parental education**, as it is well established that parental background has consequences both for work (e.g., Erola et al. 2016) and family (e.g., Trent and South 1992) life courses and interdependencies between them. In our data, it refers to the mother's or father's highest degree of education measured in three categories: (i) Less than matriculation (the reference category); (ii) matriculation, and (iii) post-secondary and higher. Second, we include **the number of siblings in the household** when the respondent was 18 years old. Family size in childhood might be important for later family formation because parents' family formation preferences are strongly related to the preferences of the next generation (Axinn et al. 1994) and labor market outcomes are negatively related to being raised with many siblings (resource dilution hypothesis, Blake 1992). The number of siblings is entered as a categorical variable with the reference category being no siblings and the highest category being four siblings or more. Third, structural opportunities might be crucial in both work and family life courses, especially in the Israeli context where residential segregation is high and structural opportunities vary substantially by district (Falah 1996; Falah et al. 2000; Kraus and Yonay 2018). We thereby include **the socioeconomic status of parents' place of residence** in 1995. It is based on socioeconomic scores of places of localities published by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics.[7]

Methods

We document the life-course trajectories of the women in our sample using multichannel sequences analysis, combined with clustering techniques and identify salient combinations of work and family life courses (Gauthier et al. 2010). This method allows us to separate groups that share a similar family life (e.g., early marriage with 3 children), but diverge in their employment lives (e.g., polarizing into either precarious low-income work in the private sector,

[4] We were able to separate them into three additional groups: (1) Third generation Jewish women born grandfather born in Israel; (2) Third generation Jewish women grandparents born in Asian-African countries; (3) Third generation Jewish women grandparents born in European-American countries. For simplicity reasons we refer to the origins of the second generation only.

[5] The majority in our sample were born in Morocco (43 percent), Iraq (12.1 percent) and Iran (12.0 percent).

[6] The majority in our sample originated from the former Soviet-Union (40.5 percent), about 17.0 percent originated from Romania, 7.0 percent from Poland and additional 6.6 percent from the United-States.

[7] https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/publications/.aspx

or stable medium-income work in the public sector). For both work and family trajectories, we specify constant substitution costs of 2 and indel costs of 1 to ensure that the timing and order of the work and family states contribute to the calculation of similarity between sequences (Aisenbrey and Fasang 2010; MacIndoe and Abbott 2004).

To identify the appropriate number of clusters, we follow two steps. First, we use ward clustering. Based on the ward clustering results, we use partitioning around medoids (PAM) and obtain more discriminant groupings with this combined strategy (Studer 2013). To identify the optimal grouping, we use the average silhouette width (ASW) that is based on contrasting average within-cluster distances and average between-cluster distances (Studer 2013). Accordingly, the cluster-solution with the highest ASW value indicates that observations are most similar within their groups and most distinct from the other groups. The ASW indicates that the five, six and seven cluster-solution provided the best groupings quantitatively (cluster cut-off criteria in the Appendix, Figure A1). Our comparison between these solutions shows that the five-cluster solution qualitatively provides the best grouping in terms of substantive interpretability following the criterion of construct validity (Aisenbrey and Fasang 2010). Accordingly, we use the five-cluster solution in the main analyses (ASW=0.165). Note that this relatively low ASW is typical of multichannel cluster analyses is long sequences.

After the identification of typical work-family life courses, we use logistic regressions to estimate how sorting into specific life-course profiles is linked to membership in ethno-religious groups, structural opportunities, parental education, and the number of siblings in the household. We first estimate the predicted probabilities of sorting into each specific work-family cluster for the 10 ethno-religious groups of women. Following that, we introduce the three indicators of social origin explained earlier to test whether these indicators can account for ethno-religious differences in sorting into specific work-family profiles. We estimate separate logistic regression models for sorting into each cluster relative to all other groups, as this does not force us to choose a reference cluster as would be the case in a multinomial specification.

Note that there is a classification error in the clusters and some groups contain poorly classified cases that can be identified based on individual silhouette values that reflect how similar each case is to the core pattern of a cluster. In the regression analysis, we excluded women that were outliers based on a silhouette width below zero in each of the five clusters (see Jalovaara and Fasang 2020). Negative silhouettes reflect poorly classified individuals who might as well be sorted into another group. Consequently, our clusters as dependent variables comprise women who strongly reflect the main pattern of each specific cluster, following Kaufman and Rousseeuw (2009). In total, the remaining sample with positive silhouettes accounts for 81.4 percent of the total sample, whereas the remaining 18.6 percent can be understood as “outlier life courses”. These “outlier life courses” are substantively interesting and included in our description of the typology, but reflect classification error in the clusters, which we circumvent in the regression analysis by excluding them from the models. As a robustness check, we replicate the regression models including individuals with negative silhouette values. Findings are qualitatively similar to the main results and presented in Appendix Table A1.

Results

Multichannel sequence and cluster analyses

Figure 1 shows the five typical work and family life-course profiles as relative frequency (RF) plots (Fasang and Liao 2014) sorted by the individual silhouette values[8]. Individuals at the top of the graphs have the highest silhouette values and represent the main pattern of the profiles most strongly. The family and work trajectories are shown on the left and right-hand side respectively. Each row represents an individual's work and family life courses from the age bracket 14–16 to the age bracket 36–38. Descriptive statistics for the five clusters are presented in Tables 1 and 2.

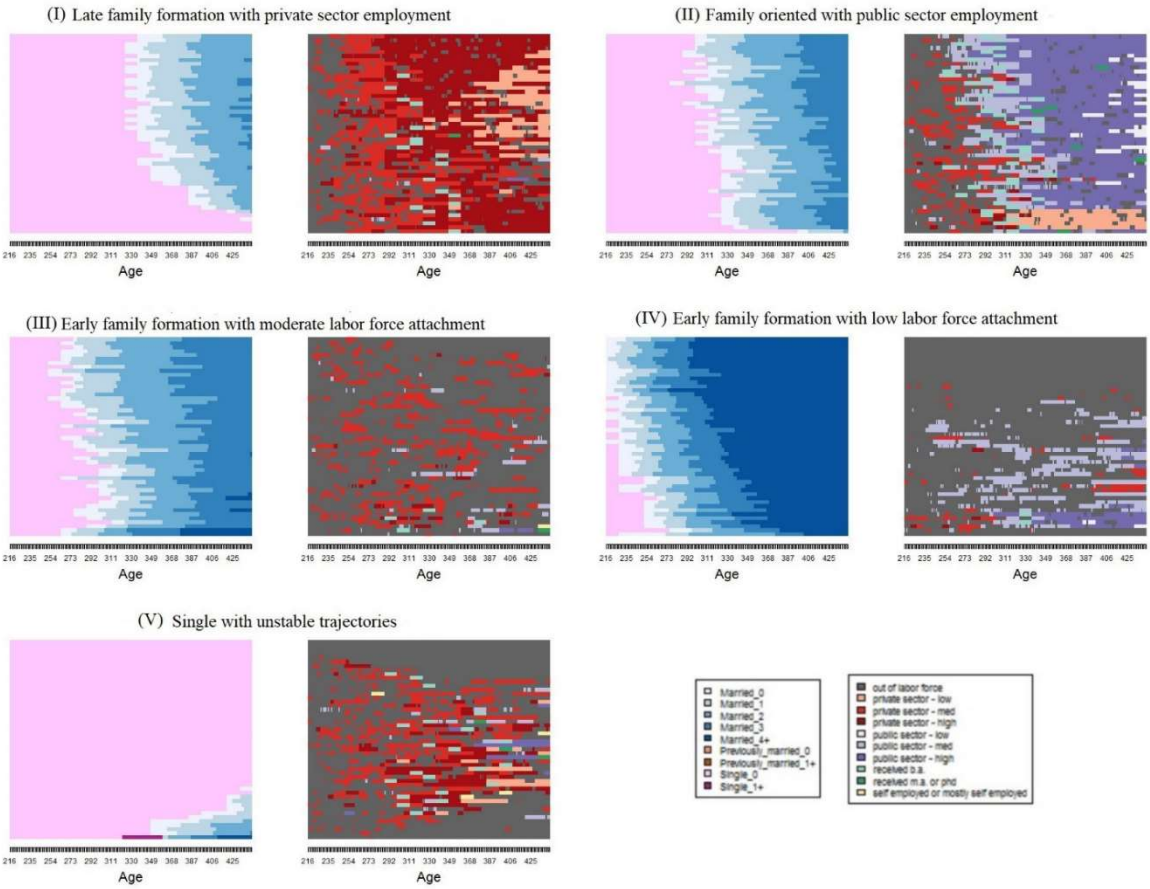

Figure 1 *Five work-family clusters in Israel with multichannel sequence analysis*

The *first two profiles* are characterized by stable jobs after obtaining higher educational degrees but differ in their family formation, possibly related to working in different economic sectors. The first group, *late family formation with private sector employment*, comprises 25.8

[8] These silhouettes reflect the distance of an observation from other observations included in the same group. These values vary between -1 (lowest coherence) and 1 (highest coherence). While sequences with higher silhouette values represent the main patterns of the allocated profile stronger, negative values are often referred to as poorly classified who might as well be sorted into other groups.

percent of the total sample (average cluster-specific silhouette width=0.108). Women in this group marry late (i.e., 28.1 years on average) and most have two children by age 36 to 38. Following graduate and postgraduate education, on average 90.8 percent of them work, mainly in private sector jobs (76.2 percent) with relatively high income, which enables them to purchase childcare on the private market. For the whole period, the person-year average annual earning is 42,913 Shekels per year and about 16 percent are concentrated in the highest income bracket.

The second group, *family oriented with public sector employment* comprise 14.2 of the population and is the smallest group (cluster-specific silhouette width=0.108). After obtaining a tertiary degree, they enjoy stable employment. On average, 90.8 percent of them are employed for the whole period. Their person-year average annual earning is 39,661 shekels. About 10.4 percent are concentrated in the highest income bracket. Women in this group mainly work in the public sector (76.2 percent), marry earlier than the former group (i.e., 25.8 years on average), and have three or more children, reflecting better opportunities to combine work and family offered in the public sector. As noted above the public sector is more likely to operate according to egalitarian and formal bureaucratic procedures. This is in line with a large literature showing the crucial role of strong public sectors for fostering women's employment and facilitating the combination of work and motherhood (Mandel and Semyonov 2006).

The following are two work-family life courses, which are characterized by women forming a family early but lacking tertiary education and stable employment. The third group, *early family formation with interrupted irregular labor force attachment* is the least homogenous profile according to the cluster-specific silhouette width (0.095). It comprises 19.8 percent of the total sample. The women in this profile form a family early (at age 23.6 years) and have on average three children. Their average age at first childbirth is 24.3. On average only, 56.9 percent of them are enrolled in the labor market. Labor force attachment is low and unstable. Many women in this group consecutively enter and drop out of the labor force. When they work, they are likely to work in private-sector jobs (almost 70 percent) with low income (person-year average annual earning is 22,167 shekels), only 4.32 percent of women in this group are concentrated in the highest income bracket.[9]

The fourth group, *early family formation with low labor force attachment*, makes up 17.9 percent of the population. This cluster has the highest cluster-specific silhouette values (0.271) indicating that women in this group have the most homogeneous work and family life courses compared to other profiles. Those women are likely to marry very early (age 21.0 on average), have their first child immediately after marriage (age 21.4), and have on average four or even more children. A very high share of them lacks tertiary degrees (93.1 percent). Almost half of those women do not work (49 percent) and if they do, they are likely to be in the public sector (59.7 percent) with low income, (their person-year average annual earning 26.244 shekels), but somewhat higher than among the previous group. Similar to the previous group, only a small share of women in this profile (4.85 percent) are concentrated in the highest income bracket.

[9] The first three groups identified in our analyses have very low cluster specific silhouette widths indicating that these groups comprise women with heterogeneous work-family profiles.

The last cluster, *single with unstable work trajectories* make up the second-largest group and comprise 22.2 percent of the sample. This is unexpected, given the high fertility and conservative pro-natalist family orientations in the Israeli society. It is one advantage of the sequential approach to identify profiles marked by the combined absence of either fertility or partnership events (see Jalovaara and Fasang 2020). This group is the second most homogenous group in our analyses (cluster-specific shilouette=0.241). It includes women who remain mostly single until age 36–38. Over 90 percent of them do not marry until age 36–38. The average age at first marriage for those who marry is 32.2 years. Similar to the first two groups, 23 percent of women in this cluster obtain a tertiary education; however, they also have more unstable employment trajectories than the other two groups with women moving in and out of fixed-term jobs. When they are in the paid labor force, they are likely to work in the private sector (71.2 percent) with relatively high income, (their person-year average annual earning is 39,274 Shekels), and 15.98 percent are concentrated in the highest income bracket. Note that this group might partly reflect an increasing prevalence of cohabitation, which is still relatively uncommon in Israel compared to OECD countries, and could include a small share of lesbian co-residential couples.

Overall, the first stage of our findings are in line with the expectation formulated above. We documented work-lives diverse work-lives ranging from permanent employment in the public or private sphere with moderate to high earnings to complete withdrawal from employment and extensive periods out of the labor force. Highlighting the unique features of our chosen methodology, we also documented an uncommon scenario characterized by women who combine labor market withdrawal with single childlessness.

Table 1 *Descriptive statistics for five work-family clusters (average over the years and standard errors in parentheses)*

	(I) Late family formation with private sector employment	(II) Family oriented with public sector employment	(III) Early family formation with moderate labor force attachment	(IV) Early family formation with low labor force attachment	(V) Single with unstable trajectories
Marital status					
Single (%)	48	35.7	21.3	7.6	90.6
Married (%)	48.4	61.4	74	91.1	8.1
Age at first marriage	28.1	25.8	23.6	21	32.2
Age at first birth	29.6	27.1	24.3	21.4	33
Education					
Post-secondary or higher (%)	28.4	45	11.6	6.9	23
Work					
Employed (%)	91.3	90.8	56.9	51	63.1
Public-sector worker (%)	9.1	76.2	30.5	59.7	28.8
Average annual income	42,913	39,661	22,167	26,244	35763
	(34.800)	(28.530)	(24.797)	(23.882)	(39.274)

Highest income distribution (%)	15.98	10.41	4.32	4.85	14.49
Lowest income distribution (%)	24.01	39.2	76.48	66.72	56.29
SES of respondent place of residence in 1995	0.554	0.141	-0.13	-0.582	0.353
Parents with post-secondary and higher (%)	39.8	45.5	21.9	26	44.5

Source: Administrative data for Israel, 1996–2017.

Ethno-religious groups and the five different work-family trajectories

Table 2 presents the distribution of the ethno-religious groups across the five work-family clusters. As shown in Table 2, Israeli-Palestinians women are mainly sorted into clusters characterized by early family formation combined with sporadic, unstable, or low labor force attachment. Specifically, Muslim women are mainly sorted into cluster IV, *early family formation with low labor force attachment*. Interestingly, despite more favorably treated by the Jewish state, the most Druze women are selected into cluster III, *early family formation with moderate labor force attachment*. The most exceptional group are Christian women. Unlike other Israeli-Palestinians, a high share of them is concentrated in cluster II, and to a lesser degree in cluster I, which mark relatively successful careers in either the private or public sector with high incomes combined with moderate fertility. Contrarily, the majority of Jewish women from all six ethnic groups are sorted into clusters that combine later family formation with work in the paid market whether in the private or public sector. For the fifth cluster V, *single with unstable work trajectories*, is mostly composed of Jewish Ashkenazic women of second and origin, and Muslim women from East Jerusalem and the south district. Below we further elaborate on the association between family background characteristics and structural opportunities in shaping the five work-family life-course profiles controlling for ethno-religious groups and family of origin characteristics. Overall, our findings are in line with our expectations concerning research question 2, which highlighted the gaps between early family formation and unstable employment expected for Israeli-Palestinian women, compared to delayed family formation combined with stable employment for Jewish women.

Table 2 *Distribution of the ethno-religious groups in the five work-family clusters (in percentages)*

	(I) Late family formation with private sector employment	(II) Family oriented with public sector employment	(III) Early family formation with moderate labor force attachment	(IV) Early family formation with low labor force attachment	(V) Single with unstable trajectories	N
Jews third generation born in Israel	33.2	13.7	12.8	16.2	24	3,703
Jews third generation grandparents Asian-African	36.8	14.4	17.6	12.2	18.9	1,274
Jews third generation grandparents European-American	33.4	14.6	8.4	16.2	27.4	1,224
Jews second generation grandparents Asian-African	34.3	15.7	18.4	11.5	20	1,586
Jews second generation grandparents European-American	30	15.7	15.8	11.8	26.3	848
Jews second generation parents mixed	33.4	14.4	14.9	12.4	24.8	3,116
Muslim residing North and Center	3.8	13.8	36.3	30.8	15.3	1,908
Muslim residing in the South District	0	9.3	7.8	59.3	23.6	140
Muslim residing in East Jerusalem	1	4.9	21.7	47	25.4	511
Christian	15.8	22.3	35.6	6.2	20.1	354
Druze	5.9	17.1	49.2	13.1	14.7	252
Druze residing in the Golan Height's	0	8.1	62.9	8.1	20.9	62

Source: Administrative data for Israel, 1996–2017.

Sorting into the five work-family clusters by ethno-religious groups net of background characteristics and structural opportunities

Above, we showed that the five work-family profiles vary by ethno-religious groups, who also differ in geographical location, education, and overall economic opportunities. To assess the driving forces of sorting into more and less economically advantaged work-family life-course profiles we estimated logistic regressions. Two regression equations were estimated, the first including only ethno-religious affiliation as a predictor, and the second adding variables gauging background characteristics and structural opportunities. For the comparability of the models with and without the background characteristics and structural opportunities, our findings are shown in Table 3. Figure 2 visualizes the ethno-religious effects as predicted probabilities of sorting into the different work-family profiles, both as gross and net predictors.

The socioeconomic standing of women's social origin plays an important role in Israeli women's life courses. As already shown, Israeli-Palestinian women are very unlikely to sort into the life course profiles that combine later family formation with continuous employment, either in the private or public sector. All Israeli-Palestinians, including Christian women, have significantly lower likelihoods to sort into cluster I (*late family formation with high income private sector employment*). For instance, Muslim women residing in the South district and Christians are 32.5 and 17.4 percentage points less likely to sort into this group respectively relative to second-generation Jewish Israeli born in Israel. These are in line with our expectations regarding our second research question. The difference is slightly reduced when including background characteristics but remains significant. Contrarily, the difference of sorting into this advantageous profile is insignificant among all Jewish groups. Women raised in large families and poor localities are less likely to sort into this profile.

In contrast, all Muslim groups are more likely to sort into the economically most disadvantaged work-family life course profile *early family formation with low labor force attachment* (Cluster IV). Muslims residing in the South have the highest probability of being in this profile. Compared to second-generation Jewish Israeli born in Israel, they are 42.6 percentage points more likely to sort into this group. Yet, when introducing family background characteristics and structural opportunities, this noticeable gap becomes insignificant. Moreover, the ethno-religious gaps in sorting into this profile change dramatically for Muslim women residing in the North and Central districts and East Jerusalem as well as the Bedouins. Muslim women residing in the North and Central districts become 3.5 percentage points less likely to sort into this group compared to the reference category (i.e., second-generation Jewish Israeli born in Israel) with the consideration of background characteristics. These findings indicate that Muslim women partly sort into this most disadvantaged life course profile due to their disadvantaged parental background and low structural opportunities. The probability of being in this economically disadvantaged group is higher for women whose parents have lower education, who lived in poorer localities during their childhood and grew up in large families where many siblings compete for scarce resources. These findings support the intergenerational transmission of family formation (Axinn et al. 1994) and resource dilution hypothesis (Blake 1992).

Given that the Israeli society is strongly family-oriented, the fifth cluster, *single with unstable work trajectories*, is the most unexpected one, especially considering the sizable 22 percent of women of our study cohorts represented in this group. Three ethno-religious groups are very unlikely to sort into this cluster: Mizrachi Jewish, Druze, and Muslims residing in the North and Central districts. Yet, when adding control variables these differences become insignificant (see Table 3 Model II), indicating that they are fully accounted for by differences in the family of origin and local structural opportunities concerning both labor markets and partner markets. Most of the women in this cluster are Jewish women of Ashkenazi origin, who disproportionately reside in the Tel Aviv area, the biggest financial center in Israel, with a large young unmarried population. The median age of Tel-Aviv residents is 34.1 and almost 48 percent of women in the age group 30–34 are never married[10]. Because our partnership indicator is based on official marriage records, this group may include women who cohabit

[10] https://www.tel-aviv.gov.il/Transparency/DocLib/tab 2.19

with a stable partner. However, it should be noted that cohabitation rates in Israel are much lower than the rates for advanced economies (CBS 2011): 4% for Israel, compared to 15% in OECD countries in 2008. Surprisingly, Muslim women residing in East Jerusalem and Bedouin women had a strongly elevated net probability to sort into this cluster. Accordingly, family background and local structural opportunities cannot account for their high probability to sort into enduring single childlessness. Instead, they might face low marriage opportunities starting in their 30th, as already observed in Kraus and Yonay (2018) and explained as a marriage squeeze, since on average brides are much younger than grooms (Kraus & Yonay 2018, p. 53). Possibly, information on registered marriages is also less accurate for Muslim women residing in this area, but it is highly unlikely to substantially distort our findings.

Figure 2 *Predicted probabilities of sorting into each cluster, by ethno-religious groups*

Table 3 *Estimated marginal effects from logistic regression for each Work-family cluster (standard errors in parentheses and controlled missing data for parent's education)*

	(I) Late family formation with private sector employment		(II) Family oriented with public sector employment		(III) Early family formation with moderate labor force attachment		(IV) Early family formation with low labor force attachment		(V) Single with unstable trajectories	
	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II	Model I	Model II
Ethno-religious group (ref: Jews second generation parents born in Israel)										
Jews second generation parents Asian-African	0.011	0.009	0.021	0.035 **	0.057 ***	0.038 ***	-0.047 ***	-0.060 ***	-0.041 ***	(0.019)
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Jews second generation parents Europe-America	(0.028)	(0.027)	0.020	0.012	0.030 *	0.042 **	-0.045 ***	-0.030 *	0.023	0.007
	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.009)	(0.015)
Jews second generation parents mixed	0.002	(0.002)	0.007	0.009	0.021 *	0.019 *	-0.039 ***	-0.040 ***	0.009	0.009
	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.009)
Muslim residing North and Center	-0.295 ***	-0.252 ***	0.001	0.018	0.235 ***	0.162 ***	0.145 ***	-0.035 **	-0.087 ***	0.023
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.011)	(0.015)
Muslim residing in the South District	-0.325 ***	-0.290 ***	(0.045)	(0.036)	-0.050 *	-0.088 ***	0.426 ***	0.006	(0.006)	0.230 ***
	(0.010)	(0.020)	(0.025)	(0.027)	(0.023)	(0.018)	(0.042)	(0.029)	(0.036)	(0.051)
Muslim residing in East Jerusalem	-0.323 ***	-0.294 ***	-0.088 ***	-0.075 ***	0.089 ***	0.058 **	0.307 ***	0.143 ***	0.015	0.114 ***
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.023)	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.023)
Christian	-0.174 ***	-0.148 ***	0.086 ***	0.088 ***	0.228 ***	0.191 ***	-0.101 ***	-0.139 ***	(0.039)	0.010
	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.026)	(0.025)	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.022)	(0.024)
Druze	-0.273 ***	-0.221 ***	0.034	0.050	0.364 ***	0.294 ***	(0.032)	-0.134 ***	-0.092 ***	0.010
	(0.017)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.022)	(0.014)	(0.023)	(0.031)
Druze residing in the Golan Height's	-0.286 ***	-0.207 ***	(0.060)	(0.055)	0.472 ***	0.435 ***	-0.086 *	-0.182 ***	(0.006)	0.074
	(0.027)	(0.054)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.061)	(0.064)	(0.034)	(0.013)	(0.050)	(0.063)
Number of siblings (ref: no siblings)										
1 sibling		0.015		(0.004)		0.009		(0.004)		(0.022)
		(0.011)		(0.009)		(0.011)		(0.009)		(0.012)
2 siblings		(0.004)		0.013		0.014		0.010		-0.029 *
		(0.011)		(0.010)		(0.011)		(0.009)		(0.012)
3 siblings		(0.021)		0.024 *		0.022		0.058 ***		-0.072 ***
		(0.013)		(0.011)		(0.012)		(0.011)		(0.013)
4+ siblings		-0.161 ***		(0.013)		0.005		0.220 ***		-0.123 ***
		(0.012)		(0.010)		(0.012)		(0.012)		(0.012)
SES of respondent place of residence in 1995		0.044 ***		-0.013 **		-0.021 ***		-0.076 ***		0.048 ***
		(0.006)		(0.005)		(0.006)		(0.005)		(0.006)
Parental education (ref: low education)										
Matriculation		0.000		0.040 ***		-0.053 ***		-0.024 *		0.031 *
		(0.013)		(0.011)		(0.012)		(0.011)		(0.013)
Post-secondary and above		-0.043 ***		0.076 ***		-0.085 ***		-0.021 *		0.065 ***
		(0.009)		(0.008)		(0.008)		(0.008)		(0.009)

Source: Administrative data for Israel, 1996–2017.

Conclusion

This study mapped the dynamic interplay of longitudinal work and family trajectories of Israeli women born in 1979 to 1981 from ages 14–16 until ages 36–38. We asked whether salient differences in work and family life courses exist among various ethno-religious groups and to what extent they are related to the socioeconomic standing of the women's family of origin. Studies conducted in Israel aiming at eliciting differences in ethno-religious groups' life courses so far adopted a unidirectional approach examining family events on employment or vice versa (e.g., Cohen et al. 2019; Kraus and Yonay 2000; Kraus and Yonay 2018). Although these studies improve the understanding of social inequalities in work and family lives, they conceptualize "point-in-time outcomes" in either the work or family domain that cannot capture the combination and temporal dynamics of work and family events over longer periods of the life course. In our study, we extended this literature by analyzing longitudinal work and family trajectories as interlocked life course processes (cf. Aisenbrey and Fasang 2017; Bernardi et al. 2019) and by directing attention to a unique setting characterized by both high employment and fertility rates, and stark differences in the ethnic diversity of Israeli society.

We identified five main groups of Israeli women, namely (i) *late family formation with private sector employment*, (ii) *family oriented with public sector employment*, (iii) *early family formation with moderate labor force attachment*, (iv) *early family formation with low labor force attachment*, and (v) *single with unstable work trajectories* using multichannel sequence and cluster analyses. Findings emphasized the importance of considering the combination of work and family life courses as "a process outcome". The *single with unstable work trajectories* cluster was especially noteworthy, as it combined unstable work and family trajectories with factors that often predict high work orientation, such as high education levels and being enrolled in high earning jobs. This unexpected work-family life courses would have been missed in conventional regression models focusing on average single outcomes, which would have pointed to the median age at marriage or the common rate of labor force participation. Possibly this group shows a new urban life course type that is rising for younger cohorts and was less prevalent in older cohorts of Israel, given the strongly pro-natalist normative context. The characteristics of this group, namely singlehood, and detachment from the labor market, are reminiscent of emerging trends in other advanced economies (Smock and Schwartz 2020; Yates et al. 2011).

The five work-family clusters were highly segregated with respect to ethno-religious affiliation. We documented a big gap between Israeli-Palestinian and Jewish women in the likelihood to sort into the different work-family profiles, but less diversity among the different Jewish ethnic groups. Overall, Jewish women were most likely to enjoy the highest incomes and most stable employment (i.e., *late family formation with private sector employment*), whereas Muslim women were less likely to sort into life courses characterized by stable employment, with Christians and Druze placed in the middle. In contrast, Muslims were overrepresented in life course trajectories with early family formation and moderate labor force

attachment. Importantly, ethno-religious differences in access to these life courses decrease when accounting for family of origin background characteristics. Both parental education and place of residence's socioeconomic status played an important role in women's life courses. Within the Jewish population, we observed some disadvantages for Mizrachi women, which are related to their family and structural characteristics. Ethnic differences in access to specific work-family life courses were related to economic opportunities that those women experience throughout their lives, including local demand for workers, childcare facilities, and geographical distance from economic centers, whereas we only measure neighborhood disadvantage in childhood. Nevertheless, family of origin characteristics and local structural opportunities only partly accounted for ethno-religious differences suggesting that the most advantageous cluster is distant to Israeli-Palestinians.

We conclude with limitations and suggestions for future research. Although the CBS data is exceptionally well-suited to trace various ethno-religious groups' family formation and employment life courses and for the first time allows this type of analysis in Israel, it has two deficits. First, we were only able to identify tertiary educational degrees obtained in Israel. Consequently, the degrees obtained abroad were missing in the analyses. Yet, evidence suggests that only a small share of Israelis obtain their degree abroad (about 6–7 percent).[1] Second, the marital information of Muslim women in East Jerusalem might be missing because it is not officially registered and a unique status of their Palestinian residence.[2]

In this study, we focused on women's work and family life courses, and how access to more and less economically advantaged work-family life courses differ by ethno-religious groups. With the increasing availability of register data in Israel, it is possible to extend this research to men and investigate the gender differences as well as ethno-religious differences in access to specific pathways. In addition, the cluster termed *single with unstable work trajectories* merits additional research exploring the characteristics and decision-making processes of women experiencing it, potentially using information from qualitative in-depth interviews. Finally, Muslim women in Israel live in a country with a developed economy compared to many other Muslim countries. At the same time, they hold a disadvantaged position within Israeli society. Accordingly, it would be interesting to compare Muslim groups in Israel with Muslim women in other countries to elicit the similarities and differences in life courses of Muslim women in different contexts.

[1] UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Outbound internationally mobile students by host region.

[2] Recall that Palestinian in East Jerusalem are not full Israeli citizen, which creates problem of registration. What is more, the city is divided by a separation wall, and hence separate about 30 percent of them from the main part of the city (for more see Kraus & Yonay, 2018 chapter 7).

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