

Summary

Job loss and unemployment have long-lasting consequences for an individual's working life trajectory, household disruption, family formation, and mental health outcomes. However, not all individuals and families are similarly affected by adverse employment shocks, such as job loss or employment uncertainty, based on individual factors and the social and economic context. This thesis examines how these individual factors and the regional socio-economic context moderate these effects in isolation, and how they interact and create disparate effects. My thesis consists of four empirical investigations that employ German data in Article 1, Norwegian administrative data in Articles 2 and 3, and Indian data in Article 4. These papers are organised under two separate themes of the thesis. Articles 1, 2, and 3 examine the impact of job loss and employment uncertainty on family outcomes such as union dissolution and fertility. Article 4 examines the association between adult children's unemployment and parental risk of depression and the moderating effects of social and economic factors.

The first article focuses on the impact of job loss on union dissolution (divorce or separation) in Germany. This article examines the heterogeneities in the effects by individual gender attitudes for men (based on men's contribution in household work and childcare within their partnership over time), and also depending on the gender norms in the region (men residing in East vs West Germany in 1989). In particular, drawing on data from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study from 1986 to 2019 for individuals aged 20-65, who were married and cohabiting and were employed in the year before they experienced involuntary job loss. Using a difference-in-differences approach with propensity score matching, I examine the impact of involuntary job loss due to plant closures and involuntary dismissals on union dissolution risk. The results show that experiencing involuntary job loss increases union dissolution risk by 65 % within three years of the job loss compared to individuals who do not experience involuntary job loss. Individual-level gender attitudes of men have a protective effect on union dissolution risk for the liberal half of the men experiencing job loss. However, regional gender norms based on location in 1989 do not moderate the effect of involuntary job loss on union dissolution risk. Family life satisfaction and household income mediate the impact of male involuntary job loss on their union dissolution risk.

The second article focuses on the impact of job loss and employment uncertainty due to plant closure on first or second birth outcomes in the Norwegian context. After the financial crisis of 2008, Norwegians increasingly viewed stable employment as a prerequisite for family formation. This study examines how experiencing job loss and employment uncertainty following plant closures affects fertility outcomes in Norway, using workplace closures as quasi-experimental shocks. Drawing on Norwegian register data from 1999-2014, I apply event history analysis to tempo effects (first and second birth outcomes within three years of closure). I also assess quantum effects on fertility outcomes by examining the total number of children by age 49. I find that experiencing job loss due to plant closure has a gendered impact on fertility outcomes, as experiencing plant closure for men does not lead to any significant changes in the probability of first (second) birth for them, while there is negative anticipation effect on birth outcomes for women before closure happens, but a positive impact on their birth outcomes after workplace closure. The Great Recession did not

exacerbate the fertility response to plant closure, as the probability of birth remains the same for men and women before and after the Great Recession. I also find no significant differences in the number of children at age 49 for both men and women based on their exposure to plant closure in their life course. Therefore, I conclude that experiencing plant closure has neither a quantum nor a timing effect on men's fertility decisions. In contrast, for women, it first has a negative effect due to the anticipation of plant closure, but then a positive effect on their fertility decisions after experiencing plant closure.

The third article also focuses on the impact of job loss and employment uncertainty due to plant closures in the Norwegian context by taking a couple's perspective. I focus on plant closures as an exogenous shock and explore whether the effects differ by gender, parity, and economic downturn. I use the Norwegian population and employer-employee registers from 2005 to 2017 and apply discrete-time event history models to estimate the likelihood of childbirth within three years of plant closure. My findings indicate that experiencing plant closure reduces the likelihood of having a first child for couples, when the female partner experiences plant closure, while the likelihood of having a second child declines when the male partner experiences plant closure. Employment uncertainty plays a substantial role in shaping decisions about the onset of parenthood for women and decisions about family expansion for men. Household income does not play a mediating role in explaining reduced fertility. However, it plays a moderating role, with the negative effects of job loss being more pronounced among lower-income couples.

Finally, the fourth article examines the association between adult children's unemployment and parental risk of depression in India, and the moderation by social and economic factors. Using data from the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India conducted in 2017-18, I apply the Inverse Probability Weighting method to balance the socio-economic and demographic characteristics in the treatment and control groups. I further examine the moderating effects of older adults' social capital and income inequalities on this relationship. I observe a positive association between the adult children's unemployment and their parents' risk of depression. Parents with high social participation did not experience an increased depression risk associated with their adult children's unemployment. Also, parents residing in low or medium-income inequality states experience a weaker negative association between their adult children's unemployment and their own risk of depression.

This thesis illustrates that experiencing employment uncertainty due to job loss, unemployment, or workplace closure can lead to adverse family outcomes, including union dissolution and delayed childbearing, and also poorer mental health of parents. These adverse health and family outcomes are further shaped by individual characteristics, regional and contextual factors, and their interactions. Labour market inequalities adversely affect the family and health outcomes of disadvantaged subgroups more than those of advantaged subgroups. Given that the primary focus of this thesis is Norway and Germany, which are characterised by relatively stable labour markets and extensive welfare states, the implications suggest that in less favourable economic and welfare contexts, the adverse effects of employment uncertainty on life course outcomes may be even more pronounced.