Career breaks of women due to family reasons:
A long-term perspective using retrospective data[*]

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Abstract

In this article, we analyse whether family-related quits present long-term effects upon women's careers, and the magnitude of such effects. For this purpose, the impact of family-related breaks in the first ten years of their labour careers on three measures of occupational prestige is examined, using the British Household Panel Survey. Women who are intermittently attached to the labour market are found to work, on average, in occupations associated to significantly lower prestige levels. In particular, additional family-related interruptions have a negative impact that becomes persistent and cumulative. Moreover, the observed decrease in prestige levels is enhanced by the length of job separations.

Keywords: career, family-related quits, occupation, occupational prestige

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1. Introduction

The objective of this article consists of analysing the long-term impacts of family-related quits on women's labour careers. To measure the impact of these types of career breaks[1] we do not use wage changes, but occupational prestige score changes. As Sicherman and Galor (1990) have previously remarked, using wage changes to measure (up)downward career mobility is troublesome. An increase in wages related to occupational mobility might only reflect a transition towards a job with negative characteristics compensated by a higher wage. In other words, a transition towards a worse job. Therefore, we need a measure which increases (decreases) with higher (lower) job quality. Here we follow one of the proposals of these authors: the use of occupational prestige scores. As we are interested in a long-term perspective we use the retrospective information on employment histories in the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). This data base allows us to analyse women's employment histories during the twentieth century in Great Britain (the North of Scotland is excluded from the survey).

The historical increase in women's participation in the labour market has been widely documented (Mincer and Polachek, 1974 and 1978; Corcoran and Duncan, 1979; Goldin, 1989; Hill and O'Neill, 1992). In spite of this, women not only spend less time overall in the labour market than men, but they are also less likely to work continuously. Therefore, it is not only important to consider total work experience during their life-cycle, but also their intermittent attachment to paid employment. It is not the same, for example, for a 45 year-old woman to have a continuous 15-year work experience since she was 30 years-old as to have a broken career as follows: working for five years from the moment she was 16 years-old, stop working at the age of 21 and until she is 35 years-old and, finally, go on to work for 10 years. The former case corresponds to a very delayed entry into the labour market but with a continuous attachment, while the second one seems to be a typical family-related break when the woman marries or brings up children. The impact of the career of such situations are potentially rather different.

We focus our attention on career breaks due to family reasons, because men and women have different mobility histories. Men are more often discharged and laid-off than women (Malo and Muñoz-Bullón, 2003), and women quit for family-related

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[1] Previous work focusing on the impact of women's mobility on their wages are, for example, Keith and McWilliams (1995) or Jacobsen and Levin (1995).

reasons more often than men (Keith and McWilliams, 1995). As men do not usually experience family-related quits, we will analyse the effects of this type of job separation only for women. Our results show that women with career breaks due to family reasons experience a long-term negative impact on their careers (in terms of a lower average occupational prestige), and this effect is different depending on the timing of this type of quits.

The remainder of the article is as follows. In the next section, we present a review of the literature on women's mobility due to family reasons. In the third section, we describe the main characteristics of the data base. The fourth section summarises the main characteristics of the occupational prestige scores used in the empirical analyses. In the fifth section, we present the econometric estimations. Firstly, the OLS regressions on the average occupational prestige of the whole career. Secondly, we proceed to present the fixed-effect estimations on the occupational prestige in each job held in the labour career in order to analyse how the negative long-term effect detected in previous estimations operates from one employment spell to the following one. The final section summarises the main conclusions of the article.

2. Women's Mobility Due to Family Reasons: a brief review

One of the most important historical changes in Western labour markets has been the increase in labour market participation of women during the twentieth century, mainly through the increase in labour-force participation of married women (Goldin, 1989). However, as many authors have stressed (Smith and Ward, 1984; O'Neill, 1985; Moulton, 1986; Goldin, 1989), average years of work experience of women have increased very little. The key of such strange combination of facts lies on the analysis of work experience along the life cycle. Goldin (1989) shows that the greater the tendency of women to remain in the workforce over the life cycle, the more increases in labour-force participation will decrease accumulated work experience among employed women. The reason lies on the fact that the more heterogeneous women are with regard to labour supply, the more increases in participation will bring less experienced women into the labour force.

Therefore, career interruptions become potentially very important in order to understand women's labour history from a long-term perspective. There is a huge

amount of literature stressing the importance of childbearing decisions, family formation and family caring to understand the labour supply behaviour of women (see, for example, Killingsworth and Heckman, 1986, for an overview).

One of the most important effects of family caring on women's labour supply is an intermittent attachment to the labour market (Mincer, 1962; Gronau, 1973; Corcoran and Duncan, 1979; Even, 1987). There is a relevant literature on the effect of intermittency on wages (Stewart and Greenhalgh, 1984; Mincer and Ofek, 1982; Stratton, 1995; Jacobsen and Levin, 1995, Keith and McWilliams, 1995). An important result from this literature is that wages fall when women return to employment after leaving the job for family reasons. Nevertheless, there is a non-closed discussion about whether or not there is a rebound effect.

However, the analysis of wage changes implies some disadvantages in order to analyze occupational mobility, some of which are discussed by Sicherman and Galor (1990). The main one is that upward occupation mobility might be masked through compensating wage differentials. As positive characteristics of jobs are compensated by negative wage differentials, upward occupational mobility may not be detected by computing wage differentials. One option to overcome this problem is to use occupational prestige scores as a resumed measure of the different positions held throughout the individuals' labour careers. These scores (widely used in Sociology as measures of social positions and social inequality)[2] have a direct relationship to occupational mobility: upward (downward) occupational mobility towards an occupation with better characteristics is always related to a higher (lower) score. Furthermore, there is a practical reason to prefer occupational prestige scores to wages in this research. As we are using retrospective data on the life course of individuals, wages are not available for every job held by individuals. Obviously, the explanation is that the quality of the answers would be very low because of the recall error. However, the only information needed to include the occupational prestige of each job is the type of occupation held in every past job, which is an information easier to remember than past wages for every past job.

In order to obtain robust results, we will use three occupational prestige scores: the Camsis score, the Hope-Goldthorpe score, and the Cambridge score. Out of these, the most widely known is the Hope-Goldthorpe one. We include the other two because

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[2] In addition to Sicherman and Galor (1990), occupational prestige scores have been also used in Economics in order to analyse the risk of fatal injury (Marin and Psacharopoulos, 1982)

they consider differences by gender (Camsis) or life-styles (Cambridge), which may potentially be important for our analysis. The three scores are described in Appendix B. It must be underlined that these occupational prestige measurements exhibit strong correlating indexes (correlation coefficients of 0.8 and 0.9 were found by Wegener, 1992). Moreover, occupational prestige indicators have a great stability along time: since the year 1925 the structure of occupational prestige has remained almost constant in Western countries (see Hauser and Featherman, 1977). Therefore, the use of an occupational prestige indicator seems specially convenient for our objective of detecting long-term effects with retrospective data covering the most part of the twentieth century.

3. Database and main variables' description

Our data come from the first three waves of the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). The first wave was designed as a nationally representative sample of the population of Great Britain living in private households in the Autumn of 1991 (the north of Scotland is not included). Approximately, 5,500 British private households (containing about 10,000 persons) were interviewed. These original sample respondents have been followed (even if they split off from their original households) and they, and their adult co-residents, interviewed at approximately one year intervals subsequently.

Information is recorded on labour market status at each interview, and for the period between 1st September a year before and the interview date. Thus, for respondents present at waves 1 to 3, we have a complete and detailed record of their labour market status from 1st September 1990 (or before: the start date of a job held at that date is known) to at least 1st September 1993. In addition, for our analysis, it is also necessary to have information on a woman's entire career. In order to fill the gap between leaving full-time education and the beginning of the panel-derived labour market history, retrospective data were also collected in waves 2 and 3. In wave 2 a complete employment status history was collected, recording non-employment states in detail, and in wave 3 a complete job history was collected with detailed information on every job held (see the Appendix, Table A.4, for documentation on the data sets from the BHPS used in this paper). Thus, we can construct a complete employment/labour

market status history for nearly every individual in the survey from his/her first job to the year 1993.

Our analysis uses a sub-sample consisting of all women aged at least 34 years-old at 1st December 1993, so as to avoid very short life histories. Given that most women's family-related breaks from work occur at the beginning of their labour career and that our interest lies in analyzing whether or not they have any long-term impacts on their occupational prestige, we will compare the group of women who have labour force breaks during their first ten years of labour experience with the group of women who do not. This way, sufficient time will exist for women to have at least one work interruption. Therefore, in order to be sure of comparing two groups of women who are actually different, we erase from the sample those women without family-related breaks during their first 10 years of labour market experience who have ever quitted from the tenth year onwards (they are only 90 women). Thus, the group of women with family-related quits must have at least one break from work due to family reasons between their first job held and their tenth year of labour market experience.

The sub-sample used in the empirical analysis consists of 2,172 women. We have considered the different cohorts as follows:

- First cohort: women who were born between 1906 and 1919.
- Second cohort: women who were born between 1920 and 1929.
- Third cohort: women who were born between 1930 and 1939.
- Fourth cohort: women who were born between 1940 and 1949.
- Fifth cohort: women who were born between 1950 and 1959.

Table 1 presents some cohort characteristics. Most women in the first two cohorts —and partially those in the third one— are above the mandatory retirement age. Thus, we are able to observe the complete life-cycle evolution of their employment status dynamics. On the contrary, life cycles must be considered as 'right-censored' in the remainder cohorts. In principle, recall bias is a problem for our analysis. However, in practice, previous research attempting to assess the magnitude of recall effects in the BHPS has not found in particular this kind of bias (Elias, 1997). Indeed, it has been argued that much of the recall error can be described as random error, the exception being for short duration events —especially unemployment. This can result in a biased and inaccurate account of cumulative experience, but need not be any worse than error inherent in data collected by panel methods. The BHPS has also attempted to minimize recall error by asking sample members to detail marital and fertility events (which tend

to be well remembered) prior to their employment histories, thereby providing a chronological ordering of personal histories aiding the recall of employment events. This procedure has been shown to work well in other surveys. Hence we argue that the recall error in the BHPS labour histories is less of a problem than in most other retrospective data sets.

Table 1 also presents some descriptive statistics of the set of variables collecting quits due to family reasons (i.e., leaving to have a baby, and due to children/home care): two dummy variables indicating, respectively, whether the woman has ever left the job during her first ten years of labour market experience and whether she has ever left the job from the year 10th of work force experience onwards; the number of quits, and, finally, the ratio of the number of quits over number of employment spells (this latter variable is taken as a measure of the 'frailty' of the labour career). As can be observed, around 70% of women on average abandon the job due to family reasons during their first 10 years of labour market experience, while only around 10% of women do so from the 10th year onwards. Besides, women have on average one quit, although there are some of them with up to nine quits (Figure 1 in Appendix B shows the frequency of the number of family-related quits). The ratio between the number of quits and the number of employment spells shows how frequent family-related quits are along women's labour career. The mean shows that the proportion of employment spells ending in quits is decreasing as we advance from the first cohort to the last cohort. This decrease is the joint result of a rather stable number of family related quits due to family reasons and a relevant increase (the double) in the number of employment spells. Thus, the pattern of quits has changed very little (from 1.11 to 0.98) in comparison to total women mobility (from employment histories with less than 4 employment spells to more than 6). This means that women in the youngest cohorts are less likely than in the past to interrupt their employment spells when they marry or have children.

One variable that is likely to become a relevant determinant of the potential occupational prestige losses arising from family breaks is whether or not women have ever been married. Comparing two similar women, one of whom has never been married, the ever-married one will naturally tend to have more family breaks along her career. This is confirmed in our data base. Table 2 shows the means and distributions of some of the family quit variables collected in previous Table 1. As can be observed, only 16.15% of never-married women have suffered at least one break due to family reasons during the first 10 years in the labour force, while this proportion rises up to

72.93% among women who have ever been married. There is, therefore, a vast difference between married and non-married women in the rate of occurrence of family-related quits. Moreover, the distribution of the number of family-related quits along the life-cycle is concentrated around very low values for the former group of women. However, this is not the case for ever-married women. Ever-married women have on average five times as many family-related quits as never-married women (the mean values are, respectively, of 0.21 and 1.07 quits). Finally, on average, the proportion of quits over the number of employment spells is clearly higher among the group of women who have ever got married.

4. Empirical results

4.1. The determinants of average occupational prestige scores

In this section we assess the role played by taking a break from work due to family reasons in the first 10 years of the labour career on the measures of women's occupational prestige described above. Since our focus is on the whole women's labour career, our occupational prestige variable of interest has been obtained by constructing the weighted average of each of the three prestige in the different occupations held along their lives. These weights are the proportions of time that sample members spend in the respective occupations[3]. Specifically, the dependent variable for each woman in the sample is the logarithm of the following weighted average:

$$\left(\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N} \left(\text{Prestige of Occupation}_i * \text{Time in Occupation}_i \right)}{\text{Total time occupied}} \right) \quad (1)$$

This average becomes meaningful if the occupational prestige changes across both subgroups of women. Figure 2 shows the evolution of this average measure for the Camsis scale score across the different employment spells, distinguishing between women who exhibit family-related breaks and those who have not. Women who have not abandoned any job due to family reasons in general enjoy a larger average prestige measure. In addition, this gap between both groups is larger at the first employment

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[3] Also arithmetic averages of the prestige scales in the different occupations held have been calculated. Results obtained with the arithmetic averages are similar to the ones presented in the paper, though the fitness of the different specifications of the empirical model is substantially lower.

spells had, i.e., at beginning of the career. Finally, the larger the number of employment spells experimented, the lower the average occupational prestige is. Therefore, women who experiment more employment spells seem to attain jobs associated, on average, with lower prestige levels.

As the distribution of quits at different moments of the career seems to be important, we have analysed whether there is a family-related quit in the first ten years of the career. While some women will have already had ten years of experience at the end of their second employment spell, others may not accumulate this experience until their third employment spell, or even later. Figures 3 and 4 plot the evolution of the average measure of the Camsis occupational prestige for women who accumulate ten years of labour experience at the beginning of the second and third employment spells, respectively. As can be observed, before accumulating this 10-year experience, women who eventually abandon the labour force enjoy a similar or even greater prestige than the other subgroup of women. However, this trend changes from that moment onwards, as the average measure of occupational prestige of those women who have previously exited the labour force due to family reasons frequently falls below the prestige curve of the other subgroup. As we can conclude from those figures, it is interesting to distinguish between the first 10-year period of labour market experience, and the one ranging from the tenth year of labour market experience until the end of the observation period. Therefore, some of the explanatory variables of the empirical model will be defined either for their whole life or from the tenth year of experience onwards.

The empirical model, in addition to the aforementioned variables collecting family-related quits, takes into consideration the following explanatory variables (those variables are described in Appendix A):

- Personal characteristics: dummies for ethnic origin, sex, birth cohort, educational level, whether or not the woman has ever been married, a dummy denoting whether or not she has reached the mandatory retirement age currently (i.e., at the date of interview) and women's age at their first spell.
- Labour market experience characteristics: continuous variables such as the proportion of time that women have spent in a situation of unemployment or inactivity.

In the empirical analysis, we must confront with a potential bias arising from the fact that in our sample there may some women who do not have any employment spell along the observed period. However, this is the case for only 98 women in the original

database. Therefore, this small sample size does not allow us to correct an eventual selectivity bias.

The OLS parameter estimates are presented in Tables 3, 4 and 5 for the three measures of prestige (Camsis, Hope-Goldthorpe and Cambridge scale scores). Five specifications of the model which explains the determinants of women's occupational prestige during their whole life are presented in each table. Those different specifications correspond to different variables collecting family-related quits described above.

The explanatory variables underlying the occurrence of family quits are, in general, statistically significant and with the expected negative sign. If we keep the remainder variables constant, those women who have quitted from their jobs due to family reasons during their first ten years of labour market experience suffer a reduction in their estimated prestige levels of around 11 percent along their life-course. Predictions of the dependent variable for reference women offer a Camsis scale score equal to 23.81 for women who have suffered no quits due to family reasons, and 21.14 for those have ever suffered at least one family-related quit. Looking up for the occupations leading to this predicted impact, according to the Standard Occupational Classification, the change from the occupation named as "Textiles & tannery process operatives" (with a Camsis Scale score of 21.1 in group 81) to that named as "Shot blasters" (with a Camsis Scale score of 23.1 in group 844) is the one which better approximates the 11-percent reduction in the average occupational prestige. Finally, Figure 5 illustrates the histogram of the average camsis scale score by family-quit status. As can be observed, this distribution is more concentrated around lower values for the group of women who have ever quitted from work due to family reasons during their first ten years in the work force.

In a similar way, significant negative impacts are also associated both with the ratio of quits over the number of employment spells and with the number of quits. As observed in Table 3, for instance, a unit increase in the number of family-related quits presents a negative impact on the Camsis scale score of nearly 10 percent. For the reference women, the predicted Camsis prestige score equals 26.66 when no quits due to family reasons are suffered, and 24.13 when one quit is suffered. The nearest associated occupations according to the Standard Occupational Classification correspond to those named as "Food, drink and tobacco process operatives" (with a Camsis Scale score of 26.7 in group 80) and "Other textiles, garments and related

trades" (with a Camsis Scale score of 24 in group 559). Moreover, this effect implies a 15-percent reduction when we analyze only the number of quits during the first ten years of labour market experience (fourth specification of the model). This result, therefore, implies that the effects of family-related quits depend on the existence of additional quits following an initial workforce gap. Finally, we would like to remark that the results are very similar for the other two prestige scales.

Those never-married women have a significant higher average occupational prestige: around 18 percent more. This result is very interesting, because we are discounting the effects of family-related quits (which were 5 times lower among these women than among those ever-married ones). Apart from their intermittent attachment, the fact of having ever been married presents a slightly higher effect than that corresponding to whether or not the woman has experimented a quit due to family reasons along her first ten years in the labour force. Probably, this isolated effect of being ever married reflects that family influences their decisions on which jobs are chosen: taking up jobs with a lower occupational prestige might be more compatible with family work (which usually rests on women) or the job search of married women is conditional on the job search of their husbands (Frank, 1978). Even in case that these women became separated or divorced in the future, their average occupational prestige remains negatively affected in a permanent way. Therefore, family and marriage decreases women's average occupational prestige in two ways: first, by means of family-related breaks and, second, through marriage itself.

As regards the remaining explanatory variables, the fact of having no education constitutes a significant contributor to smaller average prestige levels, as well as the proportion of time spent unemployed or inactive. In fact, the highest education levels — especially university education and higher and first degree education— are associated to larger prestige levels. In addition, the average prestige scale score is reduced when belonging to the birth cohorts 1906-19 and 1920-29. No significant differences in prestige levels can either be attributed to ethnic origin (the only exception is constituted by the model in Table 5 where the Cambridge scale score is the dependent variable) or to having reached the mandatory retirement age, while eldest women at the beginning of their careers are able to achieve significantly higher levels of occupational prestige (this latter effect is non-significant for the Camsis and the HGS scale scores)

To summarize, family quits present a long-term effect on the labour career through a reduction in the average occupational prestige. This disruption is more

relevant when suffering more and more quits, given the existence of a cumulative effect on the average occupational prestige. In addition, we have seen that ever married women have a significant lower average occupational prestige. This negative effect is even higher than the effect of breaks mentioned above.

4.2. The effects of family-related quits on the following employment spell: controlling for unobserved heterogeneity

In this section, we take another approach to assess the effects of leaving the job due to family reasons on women's occupational prestige levels. Specifically, we wish to estimate the effect of quitting from the previous job on the occupational prestige associated with the current job. Here, our objective consists of analysing how the long-term effect detected in the last section operates from one employment spell to the next one. We would also like to find out whether decreases in prestige levels are affected by the length of quits and whether time spent in re-employment may erode that prestige penalty.

For this purpose, we exploit two of the main strengths of our data set: it covers a long period of time and contains information on all employment spells for each woman. As stated in Section 3 above, information is recorded on respondents' entire careers (from their first job to the year 1993). Therefore, for each job held, we gather its duration, the individual age at the beginning of that job, the duration of the intermediate non-employment spell existing between the previous employment and the current job, and whether or not the woman has quitted from the previous spell due to family reasons. Our approach is, then, to use a fixed-effects estimator to control for unobserved women characteristics that may be correlated with displacement probabilities. For instance, if less able or less labour market motivated women are more susceptible to quits due to family reasons, estimates of displacement effects that fail to control for individual-specific heterogeneity will be biased toward finding larger prestige losses[4].

More specifically, given longitudinal data on women's prestige scores and employment histories, the effects of family quits due to family reasons observed for woman i at moment $t-1$ on prestige levels associated to the following occupation at moment t can be modelled in the following way:

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[4] In fact, without including fixed effects, the predicted negative impact of the dummy for family quits is even larger (results of the pooled regressions are available from the authors upon request). However, this pooled-OLS regression does not take into account the unobserved heterogeneity present in the data.

$$Ln(P_{it}) = X_{it}\,\beta + Z_{it-1}\,\alpha + \lambda_{it} + \varepsilon_{it} \qquad\qquad (2)$$

where P_{it} is the individual i's prestige score associated to the current job; X_{it} and Z_{it-1} are two vectors of observable variables associated to, respectively, the current and the previous job, which potentially influence a woman's prestige at the present occupation; λ_{it} is a time invariant individual specific error that captures the effects of unobservable characteristics; and ε_{it} is assumed to have a constant variance and to be uncorrelated across individuals and time. The parameters of interest (α, β, λ) are estimated using the within-group technique. This estimation method is equivalent to a simple least squares estimation of the model in which the variables are defined as deviation from their means (it consists of a generalisation of the "differences in differences" technique). In estimating the model, some of the terms in X_{it} and Z_{it-1} such as education or ethnic origin have been eliminated from the equation since they do not vary with time[5].

The following variables are included as determinants in X_{it}. First, we include the length of time spent into non-employment after a quit takes place (less than 1 month, from 1 month to 6 months, from 6 months to 18 months, and above 18 months). We expect a larger prestige loss the longer the permanence in non-employment. This coefficient would reflect, then, the persistence of the quit effects over time. Second, dummy variables collecting tenure at the current job —up to 2 years, from 2 to 4 years, from 4 to 6 years, and above 6 years— are included in X_{it} to reflect time spent later in re-employment: we expect that the longer the time spent with the following employer, the larger the prestige gains will be. Finally, we also include dummies collecting the age at the beginning of the current employment spell as another determinant of the prestige score associated to that occupation (up to 35 years, from 35 to 45 years, above 45 years), as well as dummies for three different temporary moments for the beginning of the current occupation (up to the year 1950, from 1950 to 1975, beyond 1975). The vector Z_{it-1} includes two variables. First, we include tenure in the previous job (up to 2 years, from 2 to 4 years; from 4 to 6 years; and above 6 years of tenure). The underlying idea is that the occupational prestige in the current position may be positively correlated with the duration of the previous job. Second, we include a dummy variable indicating whether or not the woman has quitted from her previous job, and a continuous variable

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[5] Given that the variable collecting marital status (whether or not women have ever been married) would also be eliminated from the equation, we estimated separate equations for each group of women: those women who have never been married, and those women who have ever been married. However, the former subgroup of women does not contain enough observations so as to offer confidence in the estimation results.

collecting the accumulated number of quits due to family reasons up to the actual employment spell.

Table 6 provides the estimation results of the prestige equation (2) for both group of women and the three different prestige scales used (the Hope-Goldthorpe scale score, the Cambridge scale score and the Cambridge scale score). As explained above, the estimation is by ordinary least squares, using a mean-differenced form to control for individual-specific effects. We find significant negative impacts associated to the variables collecting quits. In particular, women who have left their previous jobs due to family reasons present a significant reduction in the prestige level associated to the current job. This reduction is approximately 3 percent when the Hope-Goldthorpe scale is used, and nearly 2 percent in case that the Camsis scale is taken as dependent variable. In any case, the occupational prestige effects of family quits exist and they are significant, with the only exception of the model which takes as dependent variable the Cambridge scale score. Moreover, not only is the fact of having abandoned the previous job important in terms of prestige levels, but also the accumulated number of quits. As shown in Table 6, as the number of accumulated quits increases, the reduction in the prestige levels from the previous to the actual job is larger (for the three prestige scales).

Tenure in the previous job presents a positive impact on the prestige gains in the current occupation. For instance, compared to women with less than 2 years of tenure in the previous job, a woman who remained with her employer during more than 4 and less than 6 years is estimated to enjoy an occupation with a higher prestige level — which is around 1 to 5 percent, depending on the prestige scale score used. Therefore, a positive relationship is found between tenure in the previous position and actual prestige gains.

Moreover, the longer the permanence in non-employment, the larger the relative prestige loss that women incur in. Compared to those women who only remain 1 month in non-employment, results indicate that those who remain more than one and a half years in non-employment are estimated to get an occupation characterised by lower prestige level; this reduction ranges from 2 to 5 percent. However, at the same time, the longer the time spent with the current employer, the larger the prestige gain is. Compared to women with short job tenure (2 years or less), those who keep working more than 6 years are estimated to enjoy occupations with an increase in their associated prestige ranging from 2 to 4 percent (depending on the prestige scale considered). Note that this prestige gain is generally higher the larger the tenure of the current job, as

expected. Therefore, though the impact of past non-employment duration implies the existence of prestige losses, this non-employment incidence is found to have a temporary penalty effect, since it tends to disappear after women re-enter into employment.

Finally, compared to the youngest women (those up to 35 years-old), those above 35 are able to enjoy occupations associated to significantly higher prestige levels, and especially those above 45 years-old. This improvement ranges from 2 to 5 percent for those aged from 35 to 45 years-old, while it reaches even a nearly 8 percent increase for the eldest women.

To summarise, these short-term effects obtained controlling by unobserved heterogeneity are coherent with those obtained in the previous section for the long-term (when we could not introduce such a control).

5. Conclusions

In this article we have used work-history data from the British Household Panel Survey in order to empirically analyse the effects arising from interruptions in women's labour careers due to family reasons. Several occupational prestige scales have been applied — in particular, the Camsis Scale, the Hope-Goldthorpe Scale and the Cambridge Scale— as measures of the different positions held throughout the life-cycle. We have estimated the determinants of the average occupational prestige along the whole women's career. In addition, we have presented a fixed-effects model in order to control for the existence of unobserved heterogeneity. Results with different variables collecting family-related quits show that women who have experienced at least one career break tend to have a significantly lower prestige level across their whole work-life career. This effect becomes even larger for women without studies and for those who have stayed more time unemployed or inactive. We remark that this effect is a bit lower than being ever married, showing that even discounting breaks for family reasons, family has a negative impact on the whole labour career of women (in terms of their average occupational prestige). Moreover, we have found that additional family-related interruptions present a cumulative negative effect on the prestige variables, and eventually lead to larger decreases in the occupational prestige. Our empirical findings when implementing panel estimation techniques in order to control for unobserved heterogeneity go in a similar direction. Even after controlling for individual fixed effects, women who have quitted

from the previous job due to family reasons tend to be subsequently employed in occupations associated with lower prestige levels. Therefore, our research casts new light on the long-term effects of family-related quits, given our focus on the prestige associated to the occupations held by women along their life-cycle, which complements in a fruitful way the previous negative impacts of family-related quits on women's wages found in the literature.

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Table 1. Birth cohort characteristics

	Cohort 1 (1)	Cohort 2 (2)	Cohort 3 (3)	Cohort 4 (4)	Cohort 5 (5)
Age at 3rd wave	74-87	63-73	53-63	43-53	33-43
Starting average year of 1st spell	1920	1930	1940	1949	1957
Avg. age at starting year of 1st spell	15	15	16	17	17
QUIT VARIABLES (std. dev. in parentheses)					
Ever quitted due to family reasons:					
During 1st 10 years in work force	.71	.74	.72	.71	.68
	(.456)	(.442)	(.452)	(.453)	(.467)
From year 10th in work force onwards	.15	.14	.10	.08	.07
	(.362)	(.352)	(.299)	(.273)	(.250)
Avg. number of quits due to family reasons	1.11	1.08	1.03	1.03	.98
	(1.052)	(1.012)	(.872)	(.890)	(.902)
Avg. ratio of quits/employment spells	.5278	.4366	.4103	.3778	.3236
	(.410)	(.356)	(.343)	(.324)	(.300)
Avg. number of employment spells	3.71	4.54	5.77	6.31	6.41
	(1.508)	(2.084)	(2.722)	(2.725)	(2.587)
Number of observations	241	387	440	606	498

Notes: "Avg." means Average; (1) 1906-19; (2) 1920-29; (3) 1930-39; (4) 1940-49; (5) 1950-59.

Table 2. Family quit variables by marriage status

		Never-married women	Ever-married women
Ever quitted due to family reasons during first 10 years in work force (%)		16.15 %	72.93 %
Distribution of family-related quits			
	0	83.85%	27.07%
	1	12.25%	47.85%
	2	2.68%	18.82%
	3	1.22%	4.71%
	4	-	0.92%
	5	-	0.49%
	6	-	0.09%
	7	-	-
	8	-	-
	9	-	0.06%
Avg. number of quits due to family reasons *		0.21	1.07
		(0.55)	(0.93)
Avg. ratio of quits/employment spells *		0.04	0.22
		(0.11)	(0.20)

Notes: *(std. dev. in parenthesis)

Table 3. Prestige variable: Log(Camsis Scale).

	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t
Ever quitted due to family reasons (1=Yes)	-0.119	-5.270	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits	-	-	-0.104	-5.230	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2	-	-	0.005	0.920	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.151	-4.910	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2 (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.050	4.410	-	-
Number of Employment Spells	-	-	0.151	11.780	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Employment Spells)^2	-	-	-0.007	-8.210	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	-	-	-	-	-0.406	-3.540	-	-	-	-
(Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells)^2	-	-	-	-	-0.275	-1.780	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,326	-11,160
Age at first spell	0.067	1.320	0.051	1.060	0.078	1.580	0.062	1.220	0,071	1,430
(Age at first spell)^2	-0.001	-0.700	0.000	-0.310	-0.001	-0.910	-0.001	-0.600	-0,001	-0,780
White (1=Yes)	0.127	1.590	0.076	1.000	0.114	1.460	0.144	1.790	0,106	1,360
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	-0.395	-8.400	-0.266	-5.840	-0.317	-6.810	-0.396	-8.390	-0,369	-8,000
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	-0.136	-3.150	-0.071	-1.730	-0.110	-2.610	-0.138	-3.200	-0,142	-3,360
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	0.008	0.230	-0.016	-0.490	0.007	0.200	0.004	0.110	0,006	0,170
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	-0.006	-0.170	-0.040	-1.200	-0.011	-0.310	-0.008	-0.240	-0,021	-0,600
Higher and First Degree Education	0.471	8.450	0.381	7.150	0.439	8.060	0.474	8.490	0,454	8,320
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	0.362	10.760	0.315	9.810	0.347	10.560	0.363	10.780	0,348	10,580
GCE A level Education	0.193	3.860	0.171	3.590	0.177	3.620	0.197	3.930	0,188	3,840
GCE O level or equivalent	0.285	9.470	0.253	8.830	0.264	8.970	0.287	9.540	0,279	9,480
Vocational Training education	0.328	8.900	0.290	8.250	0.296	8.200	0.329	8.920	0,315	8,720
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	-0.035	-0.760	-0.012	-0.270	-0.024	-0.530	-0.038	-0.830	-0,016	-0,350
Proportion of time unemployed	-0.602	-2.560	-0.643	-2.880	-0.643	-2.800	-0.571	-2.430	-0,685	-2,980
Proportion of time inactive	-1.517	-2.610	-1.622	-2.930	-1.640	-2.890	-1.513	-2.600	-1,567	-2,750
Never married	0.194	3.520	0.180	3.450	0.169	3.170	0.206	3.740	0,159	2,980
Constant	2.354	5.120	1.937	4.420	2.278	5.080	2.367	5.150	2,385	5,310
R^2	0.309		0.377		0.343		0.308		0,339	

Reference individual: Not white; birth cohort 1930-39; no studies; below the mandatory retirement age
(65 for men and 60 for women), and ever married. **Source:** British Household Panel Survey.

Table 4. Prestige variable: Log(Hope-Goldthorpe Scale).

	Coef.	t	Coef.	t	Coef.	t	Coef.	t	Coef.	t
Ever quitted due to family reasons (1=Yes)	-0.119	-5.070	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits	-	-	-0.107	-5.110	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2	-	-	0.007	1.340	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.162	-5.090	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2 (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.057	4.830	-	-
Number of Employment Spells	-	-	0.156	11.600	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Employment Spells)^2	-	-	-0.007	-8.590	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	-	-	-	-	-0.442	-3.680	-	-	-	-
(Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells)^2	-	-	-	-	-0.146	-0.900	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,302	-9,880
Age at first spell	0.064	1.210	0.048	0.960	0.073	1.410	0.058	1.110	0,066	1,280
(Age at first spell)^2	-0.001	-0.810	-0.001	-0.450	-0.001	-0.970	-0.001	-0.710	-0,001	-0,860
White (1=Yes)	0.102	1.220	0.053	0.670	0.090	1.100	0.123	1.470	0,082	1,000
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	-0.436	-8.900	-0.312	-6.540	-0.367	-7.520	-0.437	-8.910	-0,411	-8,510
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	-0.179	-3.990	-0.118	-2.730	-0.155	-3.520	-0.182	-4.040	-0,184	-4,170
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	0.011	0.320	-0.011	-0.340	0.010	0.290	0.007	0.190	0,009	0,260
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	-0.012	-0.330	-0.046	-1.300	-0.017	-0.470	-0.015	-0.410	-0,026	-0,730
Higher and First Degree Education	0.483	8.340	0.398	7.110	0.455	7.960	0.487	8.390	0,469	8,220
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	0.393	11.220	0.348	10.330	0.379	11.000	0.393	11.240	0,381	11,040
GCE A level Education	0.100	1.920	0.081	1.630	0.086	1.680	0.106	2.020	0,096	1,870
GCE O level or equivalent	0.200	6.390	0.170	5.660	0.182	5.890	0.203	6.490	0,195	6,330
Vocational Training education	0.198	5.160	0.162	4.390	0.170	4.480	0.200	5.200	0,185	4,910
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	-0.006	-0.120	0.016	0.340	0.004	0.080	-0.009	-0.180	0,011	0,230
Proportion of time unemployed	-0.737	-3.010	-0.775	-3.300	-0.773	-3.210	-0.705	-2.880	-0,807	-3,350
Proportion of time inactive	-1.207	-1.990	-1.318	-2.270	-1.312	-2.210	-1.201	-1.980	-1,253	-2,100
Never married	0.165	2.880	0.153	2.800	0.144	2.570	0.177	3.090	0,138	2,460
Constant	2.317	4.850	1.895	4.130	2.258	4.800	2.331	4.870	2,349	4,990
R^2	0.269		0.330		0.295		0.269		0,293	

Reference individual Not white; birth cohort 1930-39; no studies; below the mandatory retirement age (65 for men and 60 for women), and ever married. **Source:** British Household Panel Survey.

Table 5. Prestige variable: Log(Cambridge Scale).

	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t	Coef,	t
Ever quitted due to family reasons (1=Yes)	-0.114	-4.220	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits	-	-	-0.099	-4.150	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2	-	-	0.002	0.370	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.139	-3.830	-	-
(Number of Quits)^2 (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.046	3.410	-	-
Number of Employment Spells	-	-	0.154	10.020	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Number of Employment Spells)^2	-	-	-0.007	-6.940		-	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	-	-	-	-	-0.364	-2.660	-	-	-	-
(Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells)^2	-	-	-	-	-0.345	-1.870	-	-	-	-
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,330	-9,480
Age at first spell	0.122	2.040	0.107	1.850	0.135	2.280	0.118	1.950	0,127	2,150
(Age at first spell)^2	-0.002	-1.190	-0.001	-0.880	-0.002	-1.390	-0.002	-1.110	-0,002	-1,280
White (1=Yes)	0.268	2.820	0.214	2.340	0.255	2.730	0.283	2.960	0,247	2,640
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	-0.430	-7.670	-0.296	-5.400	-0.348	-6.260	-0.430	-7.670	-0,403	-7,320
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	-0.146	-2.840	-0.078	-1.580	-0.119	-2.370	-0.148	-2.870	-0,152	-3,020
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	0.010	0.250	-0.014	-0.350	0.009	0.240	0.006	0.160	0,009	0,220
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	-0.004	-0.100	-0.039	-0.960	-0.009	-0.210	-0.006	-0.150	-0,019	-0,460
Higher and First Degree Education	0.672	10.150	0.578	9.020	0.639	9.810	0.675	10.180	0,653	10,030
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	0.471	11.790	0.423	10.940	0.456	11.610	0.472	11.810	0,457	11,620
GCE A level Education	0.303	5.090	0.280	4.870	0.286	4.900	0.307	5.150	0,298	5,090
GCE O level or equivalent	0.376	10.520	0.343	9.940	0.354	10.070	0.378	10.570	0,370	10,520
Vocational Training education	0.444	10.140	0.404	9.560	0.411	9.530	0.445	10.150	0,431	9,990
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	-0.004	-0.070	0.021	0.390	0.008	0.150	-0.007	-0.130	0,017	0,310
Proportion of time unemployed	-0.997	-3.560	-1.044	-3.880	-1.038	-3.780	-0.966	-3.450	-1,087	-3,950
Proportion of time inactive	-1.960	-2.840	-2.069	-3.110	-2.088	-3.080	-1.956	-2.830	-2,011	-2,960
Never married	0.177	2.710	0.161	2.560	0.152	2.370	0.190	2.900	0,138	2,170
Constant	1.073	1.970	0.644	1.220	0.990	1.850	1.086	1.990	1,103	2,050
R^2	0.339		0.388		0.363		0.338		0,360	

Reference individual: Not white; birth cohort 1930-39; no studies; below the mandatory retirement age (65 for men and 60 for women), and ever married. **Source:** British Household Panel Survey.

Table 6. Log prestige equations (within-group technique).

	CAMSIS				HGS				CAMBRIDGE			
	Coef.	T-ratio	Coef.	T-ratio	Coef.	T-ratio	Coef.	T-ratio	Coef.	T-ratio	Coef.	T-ratio
Quitted from previous job	-0.016	-2.350	-	-	-0.032	-3.420	-	-	-0.017	-1.270	-	-
Accumulated number of quits	-	-	-0.016	-2.040	-	-	-0.040	-3.670	-	-	-0.046	-2.930
(Accumulated number of quits)^2	-	-	0.006	2.950	-	-	0.005	1.880	-	-	0.017	4.050
Tenure previous job												
<=2 years												
>2 & <=4 years	0.013	2.280	0.013	2.220	0.006	0.780	0.005	0.700	0.013	1.180	0.012	1.110
>4 & <=6 years	0.031	4.430	0.030	4.360	0.010	1.050	0.008	0.830	0.047	3.400	0.046	3.340
>6 years	0.013	2.300	0.014	2.340	0.028	3.580	0.027	3.440	0.018	1.620	0.018	1.610
Tenure current job												
<=2 years												
>2 & <=4 years	0.016	2.870	0.016	2.770	0.019	2.450	0.019	2.490	0.029	2.590	0.027	2.470
>4 & <=6 years	0.022	2.950	0.021	2.870	0.009	0.950	0.010	1.050	0.032	2.210	0.030	2.100
>6 years	0.027	4.570	0.026	4.400	0.031	3.900	0.036	4.500	0.046	3.980	0.046	3.880
Non-employment duration												
<=1 month												
>1 & <=6 months	-0.021	-2.190	-0.024	-2.460	-0.044	-3.380	-0.049	-3.740	-0.028	-1.450	-0.028	-1.490
>6 & <= 18 months	-0.027	-3.230	-0.031	-3.860	-0.043	-3.830	-0.050	-4.650	-0.034	-2.120	-0.033	-2.150
>18 months	-0.018	-2.710	-0.026	-4.800	-0.042	-4.590	-0.054	-7.270	-0.042	-3.140	-0.046	-4.300
Age current job												
<=35 years-old												
>35 & <= 45 years-old	0.025	4.020	0.027	4.220	0.041	4.800	0.052	5.970	0.041	3.360	0.045	3.590
> 45 years-old	0.038	4.030	0.039	4.130	0.064	4.990	0.076	5.890	0.079	4.280	0.080	4.280
Constant	3.807	349.460	3.809	348.000	3.658	248.190	3.654	246.820	3.312	155.370	3.315	154.920
Number of observations	9871				9871				9871			

Notes: regressions control for individual fixed effects. as well as for three different temporary periods (up to the year 1950. from 1950 to 1975, beyond 1975). **Source:** British Household Panel Survey.

APPENDIX.
Table A.1. Whole Sample

	N	Mín.	Max.	Average	Std. Dev.
Ever quitted due to family reasons	2172	0	1	.71	.454
Number of Quits	2172	0	9	1.04	.931
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	2172	0	4	0.91	0.752
Number of Employment Spells	2172	2	22	5.62	2.650
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	2172	.00	1.00	0.211	0.202
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	2172	.00	1.00	.3990	.34418
Age at first spell	2172	6.90	28.10	16.2436	2.11818
White (1=Yes)	2172	0	1	.98	.127
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	2172	0	1	.11	.314
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	2172	0	1	.18	.383
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	2172	0	1	.28	.449
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	2172	0	1	.23	.421
Higher and First Degree Education	2172	0	1	.05	.224
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	2172	0	1	.16	.368
GCE A level Education	2172	0	1	.05	.212
GCE O level or equivalent	2172	0	1	.19	.390
Vocational Training education	2172	0	1	.09	.284
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	2172	0	1	.36	.481
Proportion of time unemployed	2172	.00	.75	.0096	.04267
Proportion of time spent inactive	2172	.00	.36	.0026	.01751
Never married	2172	0	1	.04	.185
Average HGS occupational prestige	2172	0.72	73.18	25.80	12.68
Average Cambridge occupational prestige	2172	0.35	75.70	21.31	12.45
Average Camsis occupational prestige	2172	0.97	85.69	31.09	14.56

Source: British Household Panel Survey.

Table A.2. Women who leave the workforce due to family reasons.

	N	Mín.	Max.	Average	Std. Dev.
Ever quitted due to family reasons	1540	1	1	1.00	.000
Number of Quits	1540	1	9	1.46	.775
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	1540	1	4	1.29	0.56
Number of Employment Spells	1540	2	22	5.74	2.636
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	1540	.05	1.00	0.2979	0.1782
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	1540	.09	1.00	.5627	.27371
Age at first spell	1540	6.90	28.10	16.1077	1.92987
White (1=Yes)	1540	0	1	.99	.115
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	1540	0	1	.11	.313
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	1540	0	1	.18	.388
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	1540	0	1	.28	.450
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	1540	0	1	.22	.414
Higher and First Degree Education	1540	0	1	.04	.193
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	1540	0	1	.15	.353
GCE A level Education	1540	0	1	.05	.212
GCE O level or equivalent	1540	0	1	.19	.395
Vocational Training education	1540	0	1	.09	.292
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	1540	0	1	.38	.485
Proportion of time unemployed	1540	.00	.64	.0070	.03384
Proportion of time spent inactive	1540	.00	.26	.0024	.01654
Never married	1540	0	1	.01	.090
Average HGS occupational prestige	1540	0.72	72.54	24.25	11.32
Average Cambridge occupational prestige	1540	0.53	69.38	19.93	11.07
Average Camsis occupational prestige	1540	0.97	85.69	29.31	13.11

Source: British Household Panel Survey.

Table A.3. Women who do not leave the workforce due to family reasons.

	N	Mín.	Max.	Average	Std. Dev.
Ever quitted due to family reasons	632	0	0	.00	.000
Number of Quits	632	0	0	.00	.000
Number of Quits (1st 10 years in labour force)	632	0	0	.00	.000
Number of Employment Spells	632	2	17	5.35	2.664
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells	632	.00	.00	.0000	.00000
Ratio Quits/Empl. Spells (1st 10 years in labour force)	632	.00	.00	.0000	.00000
Age at first spell	632	10.06	27.61	16.5745	2.48968
White (1=Yes)	632	0	1	.98	.150
Birth Cohort 1906-1919	632	0	1	.11	.315
Birth Cohort 1920-1929	632	0	1	.16	.369
Birth Cohort 1940-1949	632	0	1	.28	.447
Birth Cohort 1950-1959	632	0	1	.25	.435
Higher and First Degree Education	632	0	1	.09	.281
Teaching. nursing and other univ. ed.	632	0	1	.20	.400
GCE A level Education	632	0	1	.05	.212
GCE O level or equivalent	632	0	1	.17	.376
Vocational Training education	632	0	1	.08	.264
Currently above mandatory retirement age (1=Yes)	632	0	1	.33	.470
Proportion of time unemployed	632	.00	.75	.0157	.05847
Proportion of time spent inactive	632	.00	.36	.0031	.01968
Never married	632	0	1	.10	.304
Average HGS occupational prestige	632	1.01	73.18	29.566	14.847
Average Cambridge occupational prestige	632	0.35	75.70	24.690	14.773
Average Camsis occupational prestige	632	1.63	85.68	35.441	16.838

Source: British Household Panel Survey.

Table A.4.   Files in the BHPS database used for the empirical analysis

Filename	Wave	Start of field work	Description
AINDRESP	1	Sept 1991	The main individual respondent file, containing *inter alia* detailed information on current status at the date of interview
AJOBHIST	1	Sept 1991	Information on all employment status spells between 1/9/90 and the date of interview
BINDRESP	2	Sept 1992	Wave 2 equivalent of AINDRESP
BJOBHIST	2	Sept 1992	Inter-wave history: details of all employment status spells between 1/9/91 and the date of interview.
BLIFEMST	2	Sept 1992	Information on all employment status spells since first leaving full-time education until the date of interview
CLIFEJOB	3	Sept 1993	Information on all jobs held since first leaving full-time education until the beginning of data collection

APPENDIX B. Measures of occupational prestige

As other sociological stratification measures, the *Camsis Scale* uses occupational groups as its basic unit. The crucial assumption of this scale is that occupation is the single most significant indicator of individual's location in the overall social structure. The *Camsis Scale* scores represent an occupational unit's relative position within the national order of social interaction and stratification. Since the Camsis scales are derived within the context of gender groupings, different scores are obtained for men and women. The male scales represent the ranking of the male occupations in a hierarchy of social interaction, and the female scales are a ranking of those of females. Thus, for instance, there is no necessary relationship between the values of an occupation on its male and female scales (although they are likely to share similar relative locations). The minimum value (13.1) in this scale is assigned to "glass and ceramics, furnace operatives" (group 823 in the SOC), while the maximum valueis achieved for "university and polythecnic teaching professionals" (group 230). The Camsis Scale is part of a wider project about an internationally comparative assessment of the structures of social interaction and stratification across a number of countries. Detailed information on the CAMSIS (Cambridge Social Interaction and Stratification) project can be found in the following address: http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/CAMSIS)

The *Hope-Goldthorpe Scale* (HGS) score was derived from a survey on the social standing of occupations, whereby jobs were ranked in terms of their social desirability by the interviewees. The underlying assumption behind the prestige measure by Goldthorpe and Hope (1974) is that judgement of occupations is based on various dimensions such as the living conditions it provides, the necessary knowledge it requires, the income earned in each occupation, and its social usefulness[6]. Individuals were asked through a survey about the desirability of occupations. The minimum (value 0) was set up for domestic housekeepers and related occupations (group 670 of the Standard Occupational Classification[7]). Individuals were asked to assign numerical values to the remainder of occupations. The maximum (value 82.05) corresponds to medical practitioners (group 220 of the Standard Occupational Classification). This scale is included in the original BHPS data base in each wave and in all employment spells of the individuals' employment histories.

Whereas the HGS score is a reputational evaluation, the *Cambridge Scale* is an associative one. Based on the scaling of survey respondents' occupational friendship and marriage scores, the

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[6] Goldthorpe and Hope (1974, p. 5) define the occupational prestige as "the position of an individual or group within a structure of relations of deference, acceptance and derogation, which represents a distinctive, 'symbolic' aspect of social stratification; occupational prestige, therefore, can be viewed as the symbolic status or reputation of an occupation."
[7] The information about the Standard Occupational Classification in the BHPS has been obtained from Taylor et al. (2001).

Cambridge Scale is regarded by its originators as a broad measure of social stratification and social inequality. It consists of a measure of differential advantage as indicated by the tendency of those enjoying similar life-styles to interact socially on the basis of equality. It uses occupational groups as the basic units (for details, see Blackburn and Stewart, 1975). The minimum in this scale score (value 0.56) corresponds to "glass products and ceramics makers" (group 590 of the Standard Occupational Classification), while the maximum corresponds to "other social and behavioural scientists" (value 85.04, for the group 291 in the SOC).
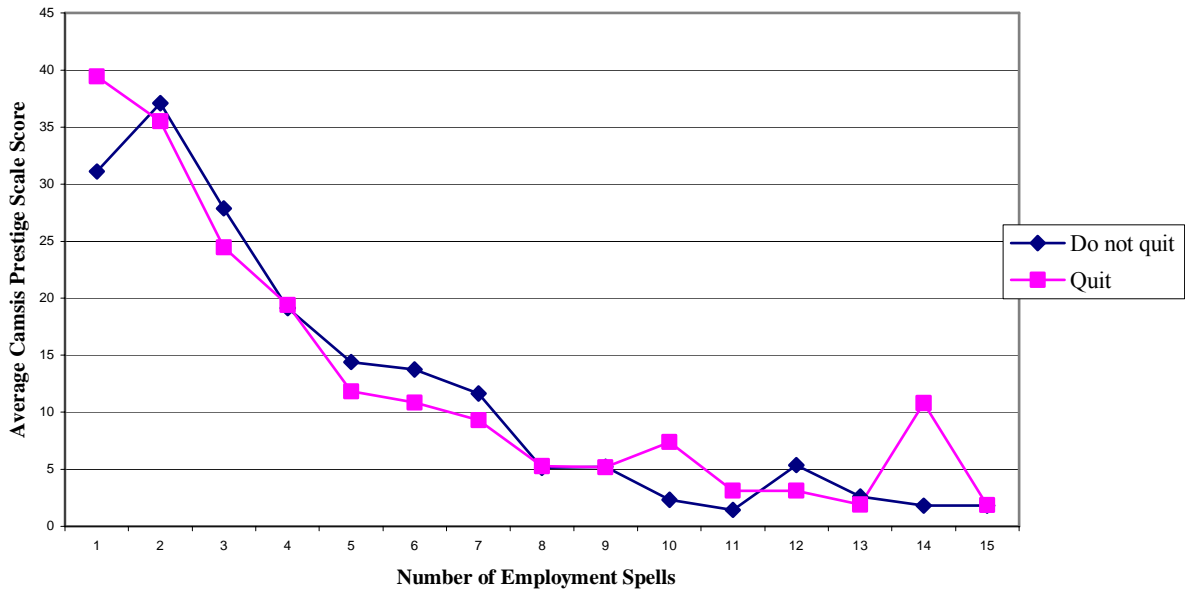
Figure 1. Frequencies of number of quits
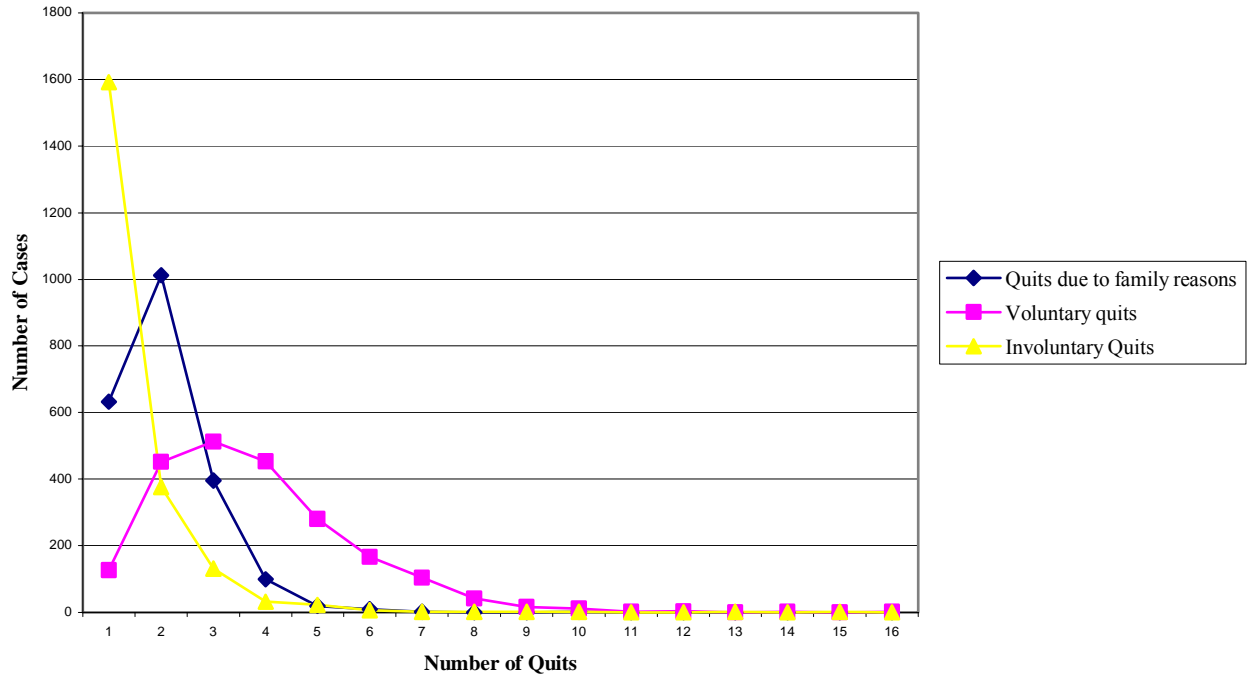
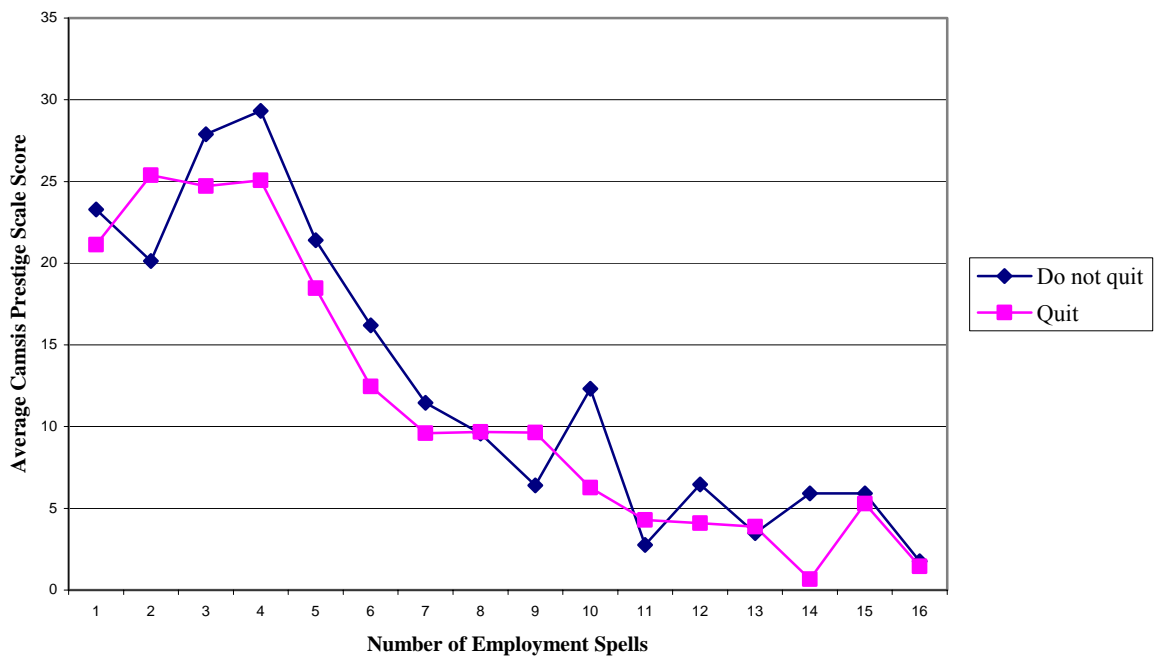# Figure 2. Average Camsis Prestige Score by Employment Spells
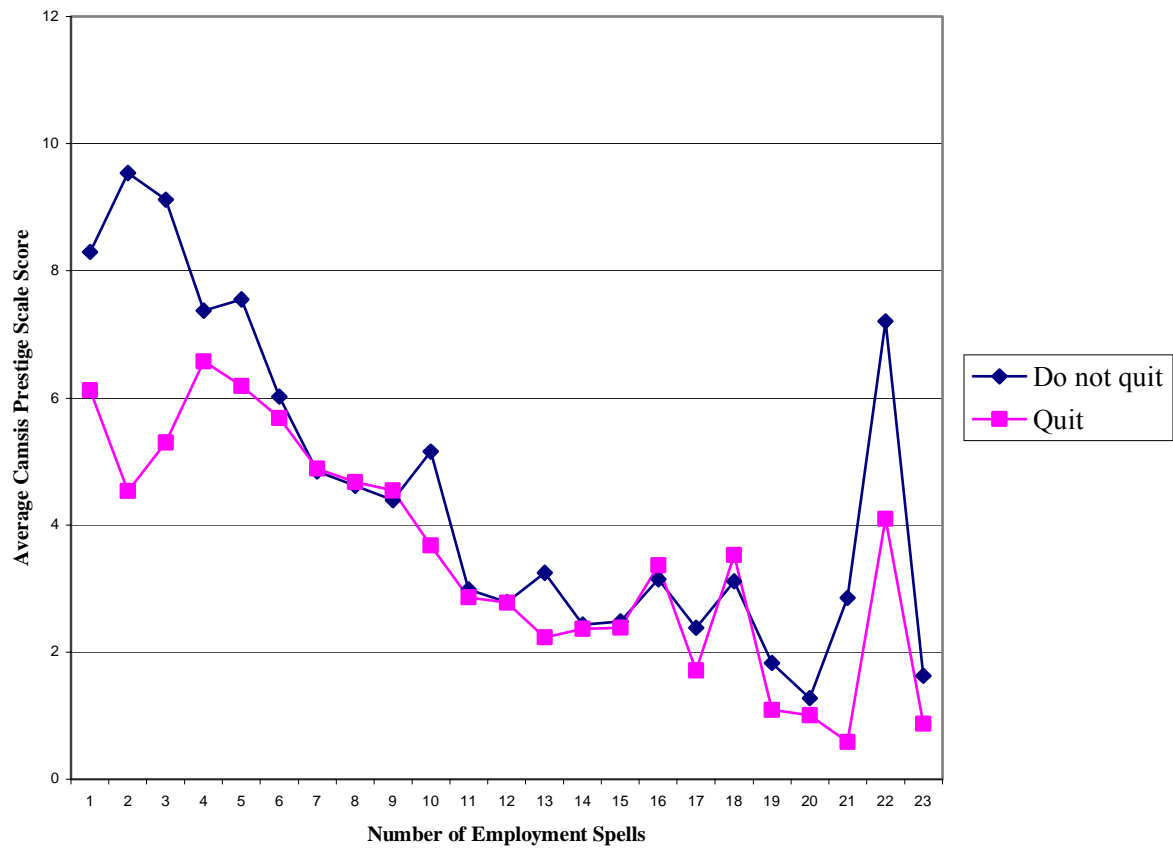
Figure 3. Average Camsis Prestige Score by employment spells for women with 10 years of labour experience at employment spell no. 2

Figure 4. Average Camsis Prestige Score by Employment Spells for Women with 10 years of labour experience at amployment spell no. 3

**Figure 5. Histogram for Average Predicted Camsis Scale Score
by separation status**

Women who did not quit during the first 10 years in work force due to family reasons

Women who quit during the first 10 years in work force due to family reasons

Average Predicted Camsis Scale Score