Fertility of Latin American and Maghrebi Immigrants and Their Descendants in Their Early Twenties in Spain

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Spain is currently the third country in the OECD with the lowest TFR (1.26) and the second with the highest average age at childbearing (31). Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants in Spain originate from a very different fertility context, where TFRs are much higher and average ages at childbearing are much lower. Existing reasearch concludes that first generation Maghrebi and Latin American immigrants in Spain show a fertility regime characterized by a higher and earlier fertility, these differences with respect to the native population are reduced in the case of Latin Americans (Castro Martín & Rosero-Bixby, 2011; Roig Vila & Castro Martín, 2007). However, little is known about the fertility regime of the descendants of Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants.

This study uses a new database and leverages the alluring oportunity to investigate the early childbearing of the Maghrebi and Latin American immigrants and their descendants (1.5 and 2nd generations) in Spain between 2011-2015. We set out to answer two questions: 1. Do Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants descendants converge towards the Spanish native pattern characterized by a very reduced early fertility? And 2. What are the reasons causing the differences in early childbearing between Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants in Spain?

We use a database that links Natural Movement of the Population Records for the period 2011-2015 to a 10% sample of the 2011 Spanish Census. The sample is made up of 54363 women born between 1990 and 1992, who at the beginning of 2011 were between 18 and 20 years old. The early transition to motherhood, between 18-20 and 23-25 years of age, is therefore studied. Women are classified according to their origin (native, Latin American and Maghrebi) and in the case of immigrants according to the generation to which they belong and the age of arrival in Spain (arrived with more than 15 years old, with between 15 and 13, with between 12 and 7, with less than 7, and belonging to the 2nd generation of immigrants).

In order to answer the first question, regarding intergenerational convergence towards the native norm, Poisson Regression models are applied. The dependent variable is the number of children that these women have had between January 2011 and December 2015. The information for the explanatory variable, on origin and generation, and for the independent variables is taken from the 2011 Census. Three models are run including different sets of controls to study the extent to which differences between groups are due to different distributions in key variables with respect to early motherhood: Model 1 controls for year of birth and number of children had before 2011; Model 2 adds employment status and educational status; Model 3 adds a variable controlling for household composition. In these models Latin American immigrants are subdivided into two categories depending on the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of the origin cuntry being above or under 2.1 children per woman for the year 2011.

To answer the second question, comparing Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants, we use a multivariate decomposition for nonlinear response models. This technique allows the decomposition of the mean number of children that these two groups have had between 2011 and 2015 in a component attributable to compositional differences and a component attributable to differences in the effects of characteristics. Specil attention is paid to the differences in the effects of the employment status, the educational status and the household composition.

Figure 1 shows the results in the form of Incidence Rate Ratio (IRR), with the 95% Confidence Intervals, of the Poisson Regression models for the number of children had between 2011 and 2015. The results show a sharp contrast between Latin American and Maghrebi women in Spain and their descendents. Model 1 shows that Latin Americans arriving in Spain with more than 6 years of age have a significantly higher propensity to have children at an early age than natives and that there are no significant differences between the 2nd generation and natives. Models 2 and 3 indicate that a large part of the magnitude of these differences is due to the different composition of these groups in the control variables. Maghrebi immigrants arriving in Spain at over 16 years of age have a much higher propensity to have children than natives, with an IRR of 9.6 in Model 1. This difference is considerably reduced as the age of arrival in Spain decreases but the 2nd generation has an IRR of 3 in Model 1. The inclusion of the control variables in Models 2 and 3 reduces the differences especially between Maghrebi immigrants arriving in Spain at over 15 years of age and natives, but all categories continue to show a higher propensity to have children than natives.

Table 1 displays the summary of the decomposition results. The mean number of children had between 2011 and 2015 is 0.12 for Latin American and 0.32 for Maghrebi immigrants. Differences in measured characteristics account for 39.72% of this difference and differences in effects for 60.28%. The differents educational status and household compostion of these two

groups are the most relevant differences in their composition. Specifically, 14.4% of the difference is caused by the fact that Latin American immigrants are studying in the university more often than Maghrebi immigrants. Also, 13.8% of the difference is caused by the fact that Latin American immigrants have a higher tendency to live with their families. Two differences in the effects of the measured variables stand out. Estar inactiva reduce más la fecundidad of Latin American immigrants que de las Magrebíes. Specifically, if the effect of being inactive on Maghrebi women was the same as that on Latin American women, the differences between them would be reduced by 13.5%. Living with the family reduces fertility more among Maghrebi women than among Latin American immigrants. Specifically, if the effect that living with the family has on Latin American women was the same as that on Maghrebi women, the differences between them would increase by 14.7%.

We conclude by answering the two questions that have led the analyses. First, while there is a process of intergenerational convergence in the case of Latin American immigrants that eliminates the differences of the first generation with respect to the native population, in the case of Maghrebi immigrants the great difference that exists in those who arrive in Spain at more than 15 years of age is reduced but does not disappear in the 2nd generation. Second, Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants have a different pattern of early childbearing both because of their different composition and their different behavior.

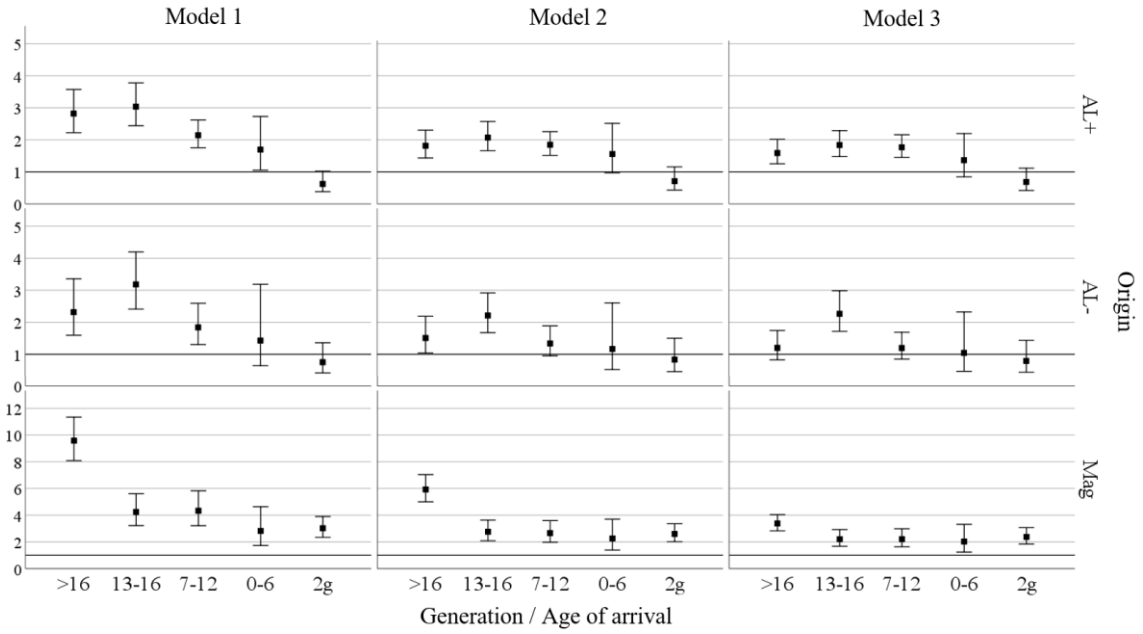

Figure 1. Poisson Regression models results for the number of children born between 2011 and 2015. Reference category: Native women. IRR with 95% Confidence Intervals.

		Mean number of children between 2011-2015	
Latin American		0,12	
Maghrebi		0,32	
		Nº of children	% of the difference
Due to compositional differences		0,08	39,72
Due to differences in the effects of characteristics		0,12	60,28
		Characteristics (%)	Coefficients (%)
Generation/Age of arrival	16-20	2.2*	3,2
	13-15	0,1	-5.4*
	12-7	-0,4	-2,8
	6-0	-0,1	-1,0
	2ªG	-6,0	6.8*
Educational status	Not studying and have no educational attainment	7.5*	-1,9
	Not studying and have primary education	2,6	-2,9
	Not studying and have secondary education or more	-3,3	3,0
	Studying, complementary courses	-1,0	0,5
	Studying, high school studies	0,4	-1,4
	Studying, university studies	14.4*	6,5
Labor status	Inactive	-0,2	13.5*
	Unemployed	1,8	-3,1
	Employed	1,4	-2,9
Household composition	Family	13.8*	-14,7
	Partner	1,4	-1,3
	Other (alone, friends…)	-0.3*	0,7
Year of birth	1990	0.8*	4,2
	1991	0,3	-3,4
	1992	0,1	-0,5
Nº of previous children		4,0	-1,0
		39,7	60,3
_cons			64,4

Table 1. Decomposition for the difference in the mean number of children had between 2011 and 2015 between Latin American and Maghrebi immigrants, results summary. P-valor < 0.05: *.

References

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