

Parenthood and life satisfaction. Russia in comparative perspective

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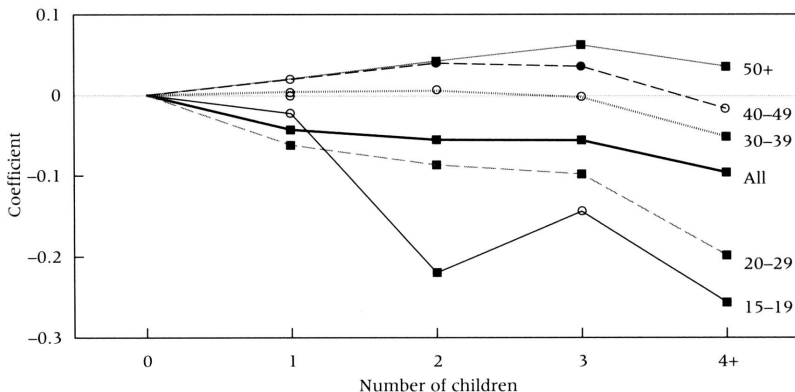
UCL, Louvain-la-Neuve & LCSR, HSE Moscow



April 4th, 2014, HSE, Moscow



Children = happiness?



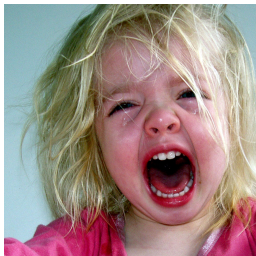
NOTE: Lines connect coefficients from regression models predicting happiness—measured on a linear scale from 1 (not at all happy) to 4 (very happy)—with number of children (0, 1, 2, 3, 4+), controlling for sex, socioeconomic status, income, marital status, country, and year.

■ $p < .05$ ● $p < .10$ ○ $p \geq .10$

SOURCE: World Values Surveys 1981–2005, N = 201,988.

Source: Margolis & Myrskylä (2011)

Challenge

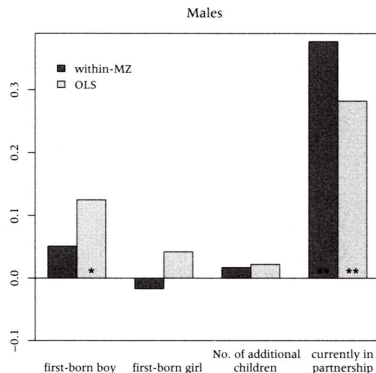
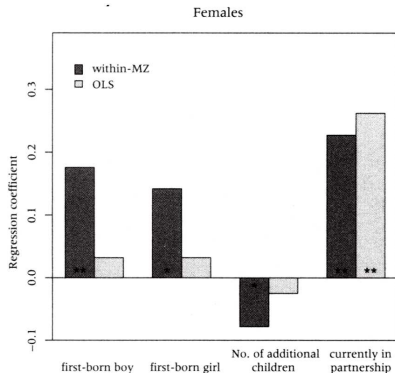


Parenthood
paradox?

Focusing illusion?



Twins study, men and women 25-45 ys



Source: Kohler, Behrman, & Skytthe (2005)

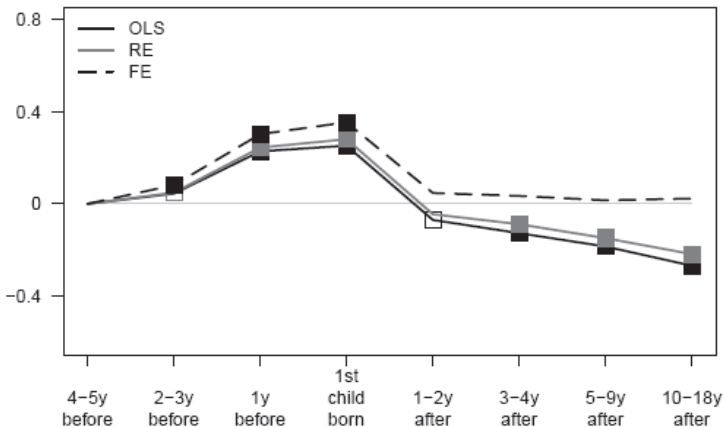
Good news!



PARENTING

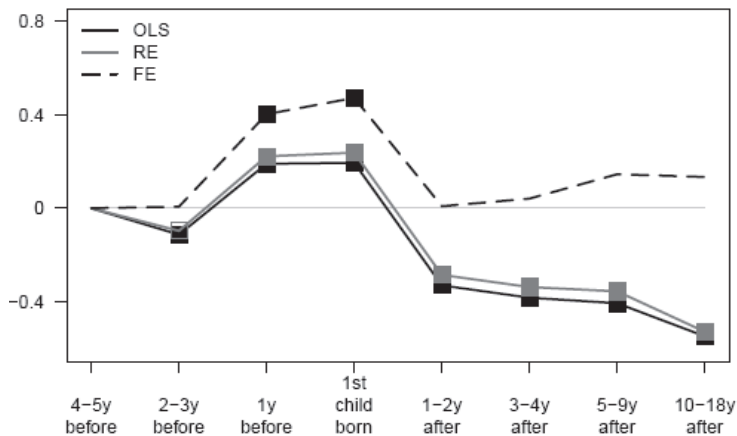
Who Says It Has To Be Difficult?

DIYDESPAIB.COM



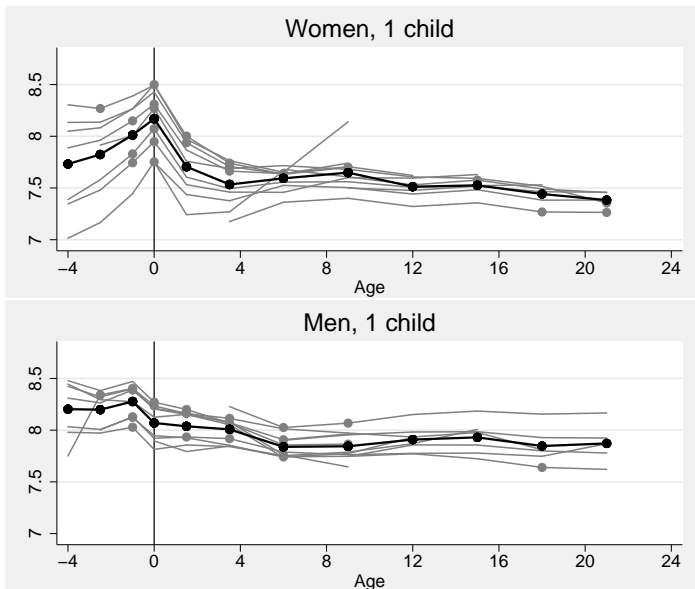
Source: Myrskylä & Margolis (2012)

British Household Panel Study



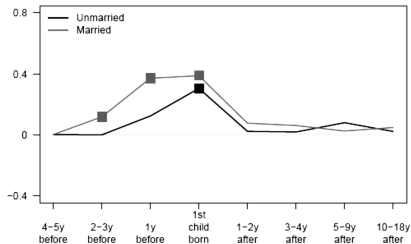
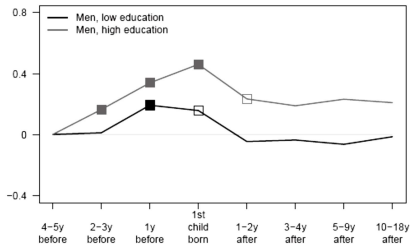
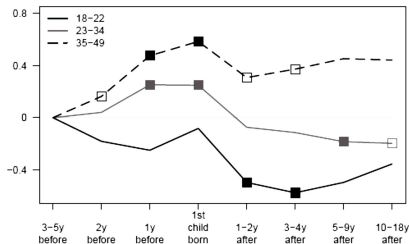
Source: Myrskylä & Margolis (2012)

Swiss Household Panel



Source: Rizzi & Mikucka (forthcoming)

Older, educated, married



Source: Myrskylä & Margolis (2012)

2 conclusions

Panel data are more reliable source for analyzing the effects of
parenthood on well-being
(unobserved heterogeneity & self-selection)

* * *

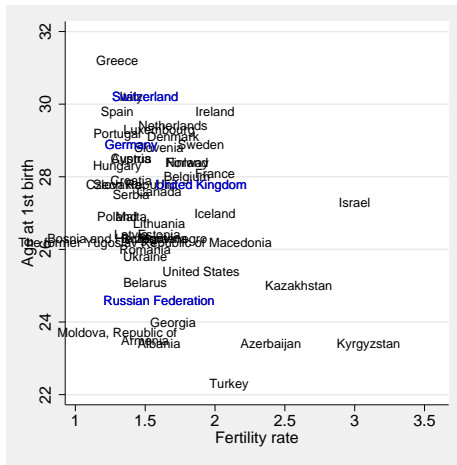
People may actually be happy to have children

More so if they are:

women

older, married, more educated or wealthy

The case of Russia



young
parenthood
low childlessness
limited 2nd and
3rd births

Questions

Do children contribute to life
satisfaction in Russia?

Is there the anticipation effect?

Is the strength of the effect comparable
with the West?

Under which conditions?

Education & income?

Positive effect for younger ages?

Weaker effect of marriage?



Why bother?



effects on fertility

conditions for parenthood for
specific groups



RLMS-HSE

The Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey-Higher School of Economics

- ▶ 17 waves (II Stage of the program), initiated in 1994
- ▶ *To what extent are you satisfied with your life in general at the present time?*
5 – fully satisfied, 1 – not at all satisfied
- ▶ sample: persons who experienced their first child born during the panel
- ▶ comparisons of parents and non-parents?



Thank you!