Gendered Migration Patterns within a Sex Segregated Labor Market

Maria Brandén
Abstract

When a couple moves, the woman is often placed at a disadvantage. Moves are more often motivated by men’s career advancement opportunities, and men tend to gain more economically from moving. In this thesis, these patterns are examined with an eye on the role of sex segregation on the labor market. Results from the four studies indicate that there exist gender differences in couples’ migration patterns in Sweden. These differences cannot be completely explained by occupational sex segregation or by traditional gender ideologies.

I. Compared to men, women are more willing to move for the sake of their partner’s employment opportunities. Further, fathers move for the sake of their own career more often than mothers. Gender differences in these patterns are greater among individuals with gender traditional attitudes, but also exist in more egalitarian relationships.

II. In a couple, the man’s educational attainment affects couples’ mobility more than the woman’s. This is because highly educated men’s occupations have more career advancement opportunities and larger differences in wages between regions, whereas women’s occupations have higher geographic ubiquity. Both partners’ occupational characteristics have an equal impact on the couple’s mobility.

III. When a couple moves, the man benefits more financially than the woman. This differential cannot be wholly explained by occupational differences. Some of the lag in women’s earnings development can be accounted for by childbearing following a move. Occupations’ with greater geographic ubiquity correlate with more positive financial outcomes for both men and women following a move.

IV. At the start of co-residence, it is more common that the woman moves to the man than vice versa, and women generally move longer distances than men. Age differentials between partners explain part of these migration differences. Furthermore, men’s migration propensities and distance moved are more affected by labor market ties than women’s.
Sammanfattning

När ett par flyttar till en ny ort får kvinnan ofta en ofördelaktig position. Par flyttar oftare för mannens karriärmöjligheter än kvinnans, och män tenderar att tjäna mer ekonomiskt på flytten. I denna avhandling undersöks detta samband med ett särskilt fokus på betydelsen av könssegregeringen på den svenska arbetsmarknaden. Studierna visar att det finns könsskillnader i hur par flyttar även i Sverige. Dessa skillnader kan inte förklaras helt av varken könssegregeringen på arbetsmarknaden, eller av traditionella jämställdhetsattityder.

I. Kvinnor är mer villiga än män att flytta för sin partners karriärs skull. Dessutom är fäder mer benägna att flytta för sin egen karriär än mödrar är. Könsskillnaderna är störst för individer med traditionella jämställdhetsattityder, men existerar även för jämställda individer.

II. Mannens utbildningsnivå styr pars regionala rörlighet mer än kvinnans. Detta beror på att högutbildade män arbetar i yrken som har större karriärmöjligheter och större regionala löneskillnader än kvinnors, medan kvinnors yrken är mer jämnt utspridda över Sverige. Mannens och kvinnans yrkeskaraktärstistika har samma effekt på parets rörlighet.


IV. När ett par börjar bo ihop så flyttar kvinnan oftare till mannen än vice versa, och kvinnor flyttar i genomsnitt längre än män. Åldersskillnader mellan mannen och kvinnan i paret förklarar en stor del av könsskillnaderna. Mäns benägenhet att flytta och flyttsträcka påverkas mer av hans arbetsmarknadsanknytning än vad som gäller för kvinnor.
This thesis consists of the following empirical studies


Tack


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Introduction

The overarching aim of this thesis is to examine how gender is related to heterosexual couples’ regional mobility. The project started out as an attempt to understand why couples seem to move to a new place with the man’s career in mind rather than the woman’s (for a comprehensive overview, see Cooke 2008a), and why this pattern continues to hold in relatively egalitarian countries, like Sweden (Hedberg 2005). For instance, research has found that in Sweden men’s income generally increases after a couple has moved while women’s income does not. This is especially true for couples with children (Nilsson 2001; Åström and Westerlund 2009). Further, couples seem to move more in response to the man’s possibilities on the labor market (Lundholm 2007). Moving to a new place constitutes a dramatic life-event, and even when it is a voluntary, migration often involves leaving friends, family and networks behind. As such, moving to a new place for the sake of a partner is a large sacrifice that may have consequences for the economic independence of the trailing partner (Lundberg and Pollak 2003). Because there are indications that women are systematically more likely to make this sacrifice than men, the aim of this study is to disentangle why.

One main goal of this thesis is to examine whether the commonly found non-egalitarian migration patterns, as described above, can be attributed to the crowding of men and women into different kinds of occupations, with different incentives for moving (Halfacree 1995). For example, women often work in occupations that have fewer advancement opportunities, exist evenly all over the country and have more minor wage differentials between regions (Brandén 2013). Individuals working in these kinds of occupations are not tied to a particular location. I am interested in whether the concentration of women in these types of occupations can help explain why couples seem to move to a new place with the man’s career in mind rather than the woman’s. This thesis, therefore, examines whether it is gender inequality within the couple, or if it is gender inequality on a more structural level, that accounts for the differential outcomes for men and women associated with moving.
All studies in this thesis examine gender and couples’ migration within Sweden, but from different perspectives.

In Study I, I examine gender differences in the willingness to move for the potential career advancement of a partner, and gender differences in the likelihood of moving for one’s own career, when living with a partner. I then examine whether sex differentials can be explained by traditional gender ideologies, such as work- vs. family orientation and norms around sharing work and care.

In Study II, I examine the importance of occupational characteristics for a couple’s propensity to move. It is common for researchers to find that men’s educational attainment is a more important predictor of couples’ migration than women’s. This is often interpreted as indicating that couples adapt more to the man’s human capital investments. In this study, I test whether the differential effect of education can be attributed to different kinds of occupations held by men and women, even when they have the same level of education.

In Study III, I turn to outcomes of moving to examine whether men’s earnings increases more than women’s following couple migration, and how a woman’s economic dependence on her partner changes following couple migration. I then examine whether these outcomes, too, can be explained by occupational differences between women and men.

Finally, in Study IV, together with Karen Haandrikman, I examine migration in the context of union formation and cohabitation. This is a much understudied dimension of couple migration. In this study, we examine whether sex differences in migration occur at the start of cohabiting relationships: specifically, whether women are more likely to move to their partner, and whether women are more likely to move over longer distances. We examine the importance of age differences between partners, local, labor-market and family ties, educational differences, occupational differences and income differences for explaining the observed sex differences.

In this introduction, I will briefly introduce the main theoretical starting points I use in the four empirical studies, and argue for the importance of acknowledging the sex segregation that exists within the labor market when examining couples’ migration decisions and their outcomes. I then present the state of the field, with particular attention to the ways in which a study of Sweden adds to a research field that, to date, has mainly focused on the US, the UK and the Netherlands. This is followed by a discussion of some of my main data concerns, especially about using population registers for research and about how to measure long-distance migration. Here, I also present how
I measure occupational characteristics. Finally, I include a brief summary of the four empirical studies, followed by a concluding discussion of the dissertation project.
Theoretical framework

Why individuals move – gains and ties

The most common starting point for understanding migration is a rational choice approach. From this perspective, migration is understood as a utility maximizing process where individuals move when they have something to gain from it (Sjaastad 1962; Lee 1966). If an individual considers herself to be in a bad position in her current location, and believes she would have a better life in another place, she is likely to move. This is under the assumption that no large intervening obstacles, such as legislation, shortage of housing, *et cetera* exists, as those obstacles may hinder a potentially beneficial move (Lee 1966). Most theories emphasize monetary rational decisions as driving migration decisions (Lee 1966), but other kinds of utility maximization, including the quality of schools and health care services, can also be included in this concept (Cadwallader 1992).

In terms of understanding why most individuals do not move, the concept of local ties is useful (Fischer and Malmberg 2001). Somewhat simplified, the term “local ties” denotes links between an individual and a place. These ties can be associated with monetary or non-monetary factors. What these factors have in common is that they tend to make migration less attractive, as ties most often cannot be transferred to a new region. Being married, having school-aged children, having lived in a particular location for a long time or having stable employment are all things that increase the strength of an individual’s ties to his or her current location of residence, and tend to make staying more rewarding than moving. Therefore, having strong ties to a region tends to decrease migration propensities, as exhibited by the fact that individuals have their highest mobility when they are young, childless, unemployed or in other ways more loosely attached to their current region of residence (Rossi 1955, Clark and Onaka 1983).

The strength of ties also tends to vary by the location specificity of one’s human capital. Human capital theory suggests that individuals act so as to maximize the returns from their previous human capital investments. In order
to do this, individuals will sometimes move to new regions (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1962; Bowles, 1970). Different human capital investments can have different levels of location specificity, and hence they may imply ties of different strength. For instance, being self-employed with many location-specific networks is likely to be associated with a location specific kind of human capital that is not easily transferrable to a new region. Conversely, having a long tertiary education is often argued to be a human capital investment that is easily transferrable between regions (Fischer and Malmberg 2001). Working in an occupation that exists all over a country, such as in the healthcare sector or in teaching, may also imply possessing human capital that is easily transferrable between regions, whereas other occupations that are not as easily transferrable, such as being a miner, imply human capital that to a large extent would be lost in the event of migration.

Why couples move – couple gains, bargaining power and gender ideology

One question that arises if migration is seen as a rational and utility maximizing process is how to view structures that limit the maneuver. Not everyone can act in accordance with what is most beneficial for them individually, and there are structures in society that makes some groups less able to act in accordance with their own individual best interest (Massey et al. 1993). This is particularly true for couples. If both partners have preferences that make them choose the same region as their preferred region, couple migration can be understood in the same way as migration for individuals, in general. Under those circumstances, the couple is likely to move to the region that both partners perceive to be optimal. But if the two partners cannot expect the same benefit from moving, other explanations are needed.

Mincer (1978) was one of the first to develop a theoretical model for couple migration rather than individual migration. His theory was developed in response to the decreasing migration propensities of couples at a time when an increasing number of women were starting to enter the labor market in the US (Cooke 2008a). Mincer suggested that couples make their migration decisions as a unit, where the two partners pool their predicted gains and losses when deciding where to live. If the total expected gains from moving to a certain place are larger than the total expected losses, the couple is likely to move. This means, that a couple will move even if one of the part-
ners is disadvantaged by the move, provided that the other partner’s gains offset those losses such that the total couple utility still is positive. Mincer also developed the tied mover and tied stayer concepts, used to denote the partner who moves or stays even though s/he will not benefit from it, individually.

From Mincer’s perspective, it does not matter if it is the woman or the man who benefits from moving; it is the sum of the two partners’ expected gains that is essential. This is hence a gender blind assumption, and Mincer has been criticized for this. Lundberg and Pollak (2003) argue that couples generally do not consider the total couple gain as their primary goal. Both partners will strive with their own interests in prime consideration, and the partner with the greater bargaining power will be the one who determines where the couple will live. Therefore, migration will not be utility maximizing at the couple level, but rather benefits the partner with the greater bargaining power (also see Blood and Wolfe 1960; England and Kilbourne 1990).

An example may highlight the differences between Mincer’s (1978) and Lundberg and Pollak’s (2003) approaches. Imagine a couple where the woman is currently employed while her partner is unemployed and having difficulties finding a job in the current region of residence. The man gets a job offer in a region quite far away, and the partners now have to decide whether they should move to this region or not. As the woman’s current job involves quite place specific competence, she is unlikely to get as good of a job in the new region. However, moving would increase the total couple income. Mincer (1978) would argue that this couple would move, because of the gain in the total couple income. The woman will be a tied mover, not moving for her own gains but for the total couple gain. Lundberg and Pollak (2003) on the other hand, would argue that being the sole provider of the family, the woman is in the best bargaining position. As a result, it is unlikely that the couple will make a move given that it does not benefit her. Therefore the couple is likely to stay.

This example can also be used to highlight another important aspect of how couples make migration choices – namely the importance of gender ideology. Not only do women generally earn less than their partners, giving them less bargaining power, but men’s paid work is often seen as more important than women’s. This has been emphasized by Bielby and Bielby (1992) who argue that because of traditional gender ideologies; couples generally see the man’s job as more important than the woman’s. This, they argue, is central for understanding why couples more often move to pursue
men’s career advancement opportunities. Gender ideology (Davis and Greenstein 2009), can be defined as “individuals’ levels of support for a division of paid work and family responsibilities that is based on this notion of separate spheres” (Davis and Greenstein 2009, p.88). That is, the notion that women are more suited to care and family responsibilities while men are better suited for wage-earning employment outside the home. Because of these socially constructed gender norms, men are likely to have more power in decisions on traditionally “male” issues, such as paid work (Agarwal 1997) and, by extension, moving for paid work. Similarly, Bielby and Bielby (1992) argue that, “whether or not a spouse assumes (or shares) responsibility for the provider role may shape the value placed on that spouse's earnings potential in bargaining over the division of family roles and responsibilities” (Bielby and Bielby 1992, p.1245).

Based on the example above, Bielby and Bielby would come to the same conclusion as Mincer: that the couple would move. However, Bielby and Bielby would not come to this conclusion because of the total couple gain, but because of the man’s wage increase would be seen as more important for the couple than the woman’s. Further, if the situation had been reversed and it was the woman who was unemployed whereas the man would not have benefited from the move, Bielby and Bielby would predict that the couple would not move, while Mincer would predict that the couple would move, given that the total couple gain would have been the same regardless of which partner was unemployed.

Occupational sex segregation and couples’ migration

One of the primary interests of this dissertation is to examine the role of occupational sex segregation in explaining findings which suggest that couples move more often in pursuit of men’s career advancement opportunities.

In Sweden, on average women and men have similar levels of educational attainment. In recent years women’s mean level of educational attainment has even exceeded men’s (Statistics Sweden 2008a). However, this does not imply that women and men work in occupations with similar career possibilities or geographic attributes. Sweden has high levels of female employment, but also a strongly sex segregated labor market (Charles and Grusky 2004; Magnusson 2010). It is common to distinguish between vertical and horizontal segregation. Vertical segregation is manifested in women’s underrepresenta-
tion in managerial positions and relative disadvantage in reaching top positions at companies. Horizontal segregation manifests in that even within the same level of qualification, women and men are crowded in different occupations. Typically female dominated occupations include secretaries, midwives, and nurses, and are often in the public sector. In 2001, more than 90 percent of those working in these occupations were women (Löfström 2004).

Female dominated occupations differ from male dominated occupations in a number of ways. One fundamental difference is that they have lower wages than male dominated occupations, even when required qualifications are the same (England 2005; Magnusson 2010). Female dominated occupations are often in the public sector (le Grand et al. 2001) and often have lower status than men’s (Kilbourne et al. 1994). When it comes to geographic attributes, female dominated jobs exist quite evenly all over Sweden, and wage differences between regions are small (Brandén 2013). This is the case for female dominated jobs in the US, as well (Shauman and Noonan 2007).

As migration often functions as a way of matching skills with a suitable employer (Quinn and Rubb 2005), occupational characteristics and especially career possibilities in occupations are likely to be important for understanding gender differences in migration propensities. Accordingly, occupational differences between women and men have been proposed as a potential explanation for the relative importance of men’s career possibilities in couples’ migration decisions (Halfacree 1995). The underlying assumption is that if women work in occupations that do not have many opportunities for career advancement, and that exist all over a country, it would likely increase the likelihood of moving for the sake of a partner. It would also imply that women who move with their partner would not exhibit an increase in earnings regardless of whether the couple had stayed or moved.

In the example above, perhaps what we did not know about our hypothetical couple is that the woman is employed as a nurse. As a nurse, she would be able to find a job quite quickly in any region the couple moves to, which would make the move quite beneficial for both partners if the man got a job. This would make them likely to move. However, if roles were reversed, and the man was the one employed, he would have been more likely to be employed in an occupation that is not as geographically ubiquitous, which would make moving for the sake of a partner’s unemployment more problematic.
Gender and couples’ migration

Over time, research on couples’ regional mobility, and gender differences in who drives a move and who gains from a couple moving, has become quite extensive (for a very nice overview, see Cooke 2008a). Generally, research has shown that couples tend to move to accommodate men’s, rather than women’s economic advancement. For example, men’s education affects a couple’s likelihood to move more than the woman’s. This could indicate that couples are more likely to consider men’s career possibilities when deciding on where to live (Shihadeh, 1991 for Canada; Jacobsen and Levin, 2000 and Swain and Garasky, 2007 for the US; Nivalainen, 2004 for Finland). Couples are also more likely to move for the man’s work than for the woman’s (Markham and Pleck, 1986 for the US; Shihadeh 1991 for Canada; Gordon, 1995 for the UK). Furthermore, partnered men’s income increases more than partnered women’s income following a move. Men are also more likely to be employed following a move (Shihadeh 1991 for Canada; Smits 2001 for the Netherlands; Cooke 2003 and Cooke and Bailey 1996 for the US; Cooke et al. 2009 for the US and UK). There are indications that observed wage differentials between male movers and male stayers can be attributed to unmeasured characteristics like motivation and career orientation (Smits 2001; Cooke and Bailey 1996, see however Cooke et al. 2009 for contradicting results, where patterns of positive gains remain even after adjusting for movers differing from stayers in non-measured ways).

Only a few studies have examined the importance of gender ideology in explaining why couples tend to move to accommodate men’s employment opportunities. In the US, in 1977, couples were more likely to state that they would relocate for the benefit of the man’s career than for the woman’s, even if such a move would negatively impact the woman’s career. The pattern was much stronger among couples with traditional views on men and women’s work and family roles (Bielby and Bielby 1992). Similar patterns have been found in Germany (Jürges 2006) and for more recent US data (Markham et al. 1983; Cooke 2008b), indicating that in these countries, gender roles play a
crucial role in understanding why men seem to benefit more from moving than women.

A few studies have examined whether gender differences can be explained by differences in occupations held by men and women. Most studies have focused on vertical sex segregation; that is, that men more often hold managerial positions or occupations with higher status. These studies generally find that migration negatively impacts women’s earnings and employment status in ways that cannot be explained by differences in occupational status (Lichter 1983 and Boyle et al. 1999 for the US and the UK). Shauman and Noonan (2007) were the first to account for horizontal segregation, by constructing measures of occupations’ migration friendliness. The authors suggest that within the same occupational level, male and female dominated occupations are likely to differ in ways that may make it easier or more difficult to migrate. The authors of the US-based study however find that even after adjusting for occupational characteristics such as migration prevalence, wage trajectories, unemployment, and geographical ubiquity, women are more likely to become unemployed and gain less economically from migration as compared to their male counterparts (Shauman and Noonan 2007, also see Perales and Vidal 2013). Findings from the US also indicate that the migration rate in the man’s occupation has a negative effect on his wife’s earnings (McKinnish 2008).

The occupational characteristics seem to affect couples’ migration propensities differently depending on country studied. Men’s occupational characteristics tend to affect a couple’s migration propensity more than women’s in the US and the UK (Duncan and Perucci 1976; McKinnish 2008; Shauman 2010). In the Netherlands, occupational characteristics have a more gender symmetrical effect on couples’ migration propensities (Smits et al. 2003).

For Swedish couples, men’s education tends to drive couple’s migration propensities (Axelsson and Westerlund 1998; Lundholm 2007). Also, men’s income generally increases following a move, while women’s income does not. Women only gain from migration if they are highly educated and married or cohabiting with a lower educated male partner (Åström and Westerlund, 2009). The gender differences are especially pronounced for individuals with children (Nilsson 2001). To date, no Swedish studies have examined the importance of occupational characteristics or gender roles in explaining these patterns.

The first migration for a couple happens at the start of co-residence. While this initial migration has garnered less attention among researchers
compared to the migration of already established couples, results indicate that women migrate to accommodate their partners in these kinds of moves, as well. Couples tend to live closer to the man’s parents than to the woman’s (Malmberg and Pettersson 2007 for Sweden; Blaauboer et al. 2011 for the Netherlands; Huang 2012 for Taiwan; Løken et al. 2013 for Norway) and women more often move the year they marry (Mulder and Wagner 1993 for the Netherlands; Fischer and Malmberg 2001 for Sweden). This could indicate that women move more often, and move longer distances, at the start of co-residence. A study from Statistics Sweden (2012b) found that among couples that had a child in 2001, it was more common that the co-residence started with the woman moving in with the man than vice versa. This is however the only study that examines who moves to whom at the start of co-residence, and up until now, no study has examined the distance moved at the start of co-residence.
The Swedish case

Gender relations in Sweden

The majority of research on gender and family migration is conducted in the US, the UK and the Netherlands. Findings in these countries generally indicate that moves more often accommodate men’s careers. These kinds of patterns remain also after adjusting for occupational sex segregation and are reduced after adjusting for gender ideology.

Sweden is, however, quite different from these three commonly studied countries. Magnusson (2010) and Fahlén (2013) have created, respectively comparative tables of labor market characteristics and gender attitudes for a number of countries. Table 1 presents extracts from these tables, including descriptions of Sweden as compared to the UK, the US and the Netherlands.

From Table 1 we see that Sweden has the highest rate of female employment; 82 percent of all Swedish women were employed in 2000, compared to around 70 percent of the women in the other countries. The difference in employment rates between women and men is also smaller in Sweden as compared to the other countries. Among the employed, women and men are equally likely to work part-time in Sweden as in the US. Conversely, women in the UK and the Netherlands have much higher levels of part-time employment. In the Netherlands, men have higher levels of part-time employment, whereas in the UK, men’s part-time employment is roughly that of Sweden and America. Sweden stands out when it comes to attitudes regarding gender roles. When asked whether they agree on the statement “A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family”, only 8 percent of Swedish respondents agree, compared to 19 percent of British respondents, 12 percent of Dutch respondents and a striking 23 percent of the American respondents.
Table 1
Gendered labor market characteristics and gender role attitudes for Sweden, the UK, the US and the Netherlands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women’s employment rates (gender gap)*</th>
<th>Women’s (and men’s) part-time employment rates**</th>
<th>Non-egalitarian attitudes***</th>
<th>Sex segregation ****</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>Association index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>82 (4)</td>
<td>23 (8)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The UK</td>
<td>73 (14)</td>
<td>40 (8)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The US</td>
<td>74 (15)</td>
<td>19 (7)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>71 (21)</td>
<td>57 (13)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Magnusson (2010), from OECD employment outlook 2002
** OECD employment outlook 2002
*** Proportion agree/strongly agree on the statement “A man’s job is to earn money; a woman’s job is to look after the home and family”. Fahlén (2013), from ISSP (International Social Survey Program) 2002. Figures for the US from Fahlén in request.

Despite high female labor force participation, low levels of part-time work, and generally egalitarian views on gender, Sweden exhibits a similar or even slightly higher degree of occupational sex segregation than do the other three countries (Charles and Grusky 2004). With regards to occupational sex-segregation, Sweden sits between the US and the UK, but when compared to a larger number of OECD countries Sweden is in the upper middle (Magnusson 2010).

Despite Sweden’s high levels of female employment and relatively egalitarianism views on gender roles, couples are more likely to move to accommodate men’s than women’s career advancement opportunities (Åström and Westerlund 2009; Nilsson 2001; Lundholm 2007). One possible explanation for this finding is Sweden’s relatively high sex segregation within the labor market as compared to other countries. This makes Sweden an interesting and important case for examining how sex segregation on the labor market may explain why couples migration decisions advantage men’s careers.
Migration in Sweden

On average, Swedish women and men move 11 times during their lives. Although the mean number of moves is the same for women and men, the number of women that ever leave their home region is higher than for men (Statistics Sweden 2012a). In 2007, 1.3 million changes of residence took place in Sweden. 70 percent of these were within the same municipality, and only 15 percent were between counties. Figures 1A and 1B are based on the 6,693,142 women and men aged 16-75 who lived in Sweden in December 2006. The figures show the percentages of these individuals who moved during 2007, according to age. The figures distinguish between (1) overall residential mobility, (2) moves between municipalities and (3) moves between local labor markets. Local labor markets are clusters of municipalities that are distinguished by together being more or less self sufficient in terms of the work force (see description below).

Figures 1A and 1B show that the absolute majority of all moves are within municipalities, but that only a fraction of all moves are between local labor markets. The highest mobility is found among young individuals, aged 20-35, before they have established strong ties to their current particular location (Fischer and Malmberg 2001). Among the women and men aged 20-22 years in 2007, between 30 and 35 percent moved during that year. The mobility rate is slightly higher for young women as compared to young men.
Figure 1A
Migration patterns of men in 2007, by age. Percentages

Figure 1B
Migration patterns of women in 2007, by age. Percentages

Source: Swedish population registers, author’s calculations
Figures 2A and 2B include the same individuals as Figures 1A and 1B, but instead of distinguishing between age groups they distinguish between civil status (married, in union, single) and parental status (children, no children). The structure of the Swedish registers allows for defining couples only by marriage or by having common children and living in the same building as the child’s other parent. In Figures 2A and 2B, persons are classified as single if they are cohabiting without having any common children with their current partner.

The most mobile group is clearly those who are single and childless. Within this group, 18 percent of the men and 21 percent of the women moved during 2007, and they were also more likely to move to a new municipality or a new local labor market. The least mobile group are the married parents. Within this group only six percent moved during 2007, and only a small fraction of these moves were to a new local labor market or another municipality.

For Studies II and III the focus is on couples who are married or cohabiting with common children. As noted above, there is no way to identify cohabiting couples without children using Swedish register data. From Figures 2A and 2B, it is clear that the studied groups are two of the least mobile groups in the population. However, moving constitutes a major life event for couples with children, as there are at least three individuals who must adapt to new conditions in a new location. This makes them a theoretically important group for studying gendered family patterns.
Figure 2A
Migration patterns of men in 2007, by civil and parental status. Percentages

- Cohabiting parent
- Married parent**
- Single parent*
- Married childless**
- Single childless*

* Move to other local labor market
□ Move to other municipality
▪ Overall residential mobility

Figure 2B
Migration patterns of women in 2007, by civil and parental status. Percentages

- Cohabiting parent
- Married parent**
- Single parent*
- Married childless**
- Single childless*

* Also including individuals who cohabit but have no joint children with their current partner
** Also including registered same-sex partnerships

Source: Swedish population registers, author’s calculations
Data considerations

The empirical analyses have been performed using data from the Young Adult Panel Study (Study I) and Swedish population registers (Studies II, III and IV). All analyses are performed on pseudonomized data, where only Statistics Sweden has access to the key linking the ID number in the data files to individuals’ personal identification number. Researchers are not allowed access to this link. The register data used for Studies II and III are stored at Statistics Sweden, and accessed through remote desktop. The register data used for Study IV is securely stored at Uppsala University, and also available only through remote desktop. The researchers never have access to the physical data file, only to the output from statistical analyses.

In the following section I will present the two data sources, as well as some of the concerns that arose during their analysis.

The Swedish population registers

In three of the four studies (Studies II, III and IV) I analyzed Swedish population register data. For Studies II and III I used a collection of registers called Sweden in Time: Activities and Relations (STAR), including very specific demographic attributes. For Study IV, we use the PLACE database, including geographic coordinates for residential location, at 100 by 100 meter accuracy.

The Swedish population registers cover the total population of Sweden in a given year. This makes register data useful when studying relatively uncommon events, such as the long-distance moves of couples with children. Similar analyses can rarely be performed using survey data, as the number of moves becomes too small.

As the population data are collected yearly, and data for demographic events are collected on a daily basis, register data is very useful for keeping an accurate record of the order of events. In these data, we know whether any move took place prior to or following a change of employment, entrance
into unemployment, or childbearing. We also know where the two partners lived before they became a couple.

Although the Swedish population registers cover the total population, there is one important exception gap in relation to this research; the earnings structure statistics (lönestrukturnstatistiken) used for Studies II and III do not cover the entire population of workers. The earnings structure statistics are based on (1) those working in the public sector (stat, kommun, landsting); (2) those working in the private sector for an employer with at least 500 employees; and (3) those working for a sample of private companies with less than 500 employees. Statistics Sweden estimates that they have information on 50 percent of everyone working in small private companies (Statistics Sweden 2004). As a result, employees in the public sector are overrepresented in my data, and it is difficult to follow the occupational characteristics of employees in the private sector over time, because we cannot be sure that the same small company will be sampled two years in a row. These shortcomings have implications for analyses at the couple level, because sampling is even more unlikely to capture couples where both partners work at small private companies. The results hence risk being driven more by couples where both partners work in the public sector than by couples where either or both partners are employed in the private sector.

The measures of earnings and migration are derived from other registers, and are therefore not affected by this sampling frame. It is only the sampling of couples in occupations and the measures of occupational characteristics that are affected. In Study II, I deal with this problem by including a variable that captures whether the man and/or the woman works in the public or private sector. In Study III I do the same, and also perform robustness checks where I analyze different kinds of couples (man private-woman private / man private-woman public / man public-woman private / man public-woman public) separately, to make sure results are not driven by overrepresented public-public couples.

It is important to be aware that the registers cover de jure migration events, and these are likely to come later than de factor migration events. The register captures only the time when an individual registers at a new address. If s/he moves and does not register the move, s/he will not show up in the data as a mover. For older individuals, and couples with children, as in Studies II and III, this is unlikely to pose a problem. However, failure to register is likely to be more common for moves at young ages, such as the majority of those in Study IV, when people have less stable housing arrangements, or
may sublet an apartment without permission of the landlord and therefore do not register the address; or when an individual is studying and remains registered in the parental home. An indicator of moves that are not registered is that the median age of leaving home is one year later in the registers compared to survey estimates (Statistics Sweden 2008b).

Another issue stemming from the structure of Swedish population registers is how we measure whether two individuals constitute a couple. From register data it is possible to link partners to one another only if they are married or are cohabiting with common children. This is because individuals in Sweden are registered at properties (fastigheter) rather than in apartments. One property can consist of several apartments, and therefore we do not know if two individuals share the same apartment or simply live on the same property. If two individuals live on the same property and have common children, they are assumed to be cohabiting in the same apartment (Thomson and Eriksson, 2013). This means that the individuals that appear to be single in Swedish register data may be either single or cohabiting with a partner but not having a child with that partner. This makes it problematic to compare partnered and single individuals, as the single group also includes many cohabitants.

For Studies II and III, I include only couples that have common children, so that cohabitants and married couples appear in the data on the same conditions. I also avoid contrasting the mobility of couples to that of persons who appear to be single in the register data, as these individuals may not be truly single.

The Young Adult Panel Study (YAPS)

For Study I, I use data from The Young Adult Panel Study (YAPS), a longitudinal data set collected in three waves: 1999, 2003 and 2009. The data collection was organized by Professor Eva Bernhardt and administrated by Statistics Sweden. YAPS was developed with the aim of capturing gender relations such as those expressed in the division of paid versus unpaid work, and views about family orientation, work orientation, and gender ideology. For the data collection in 2009, I was fortunate to be able to add a question on migration and migration motives, making it possible to use the existing rich information on gender roles from the previous waves, and connect it to migration data through 2009. In Study I, I use data from the two waves in
2003 and 2009, to examine how gender ideology and attitudes in 2003 are associated with gender differences in (1) the willingness to move for the sake of a partner’s potential career advancement and (2) the likelihood of moving for work or studies.

When is a mover a migrant?

Unlike other demographic events, such as mortality and fertility, migration is not always straightforward to measure. There are multiple definitions of when someone is a mover; whether an individual crosses an administrative border (for instance a move to another parish, municipality, local labor market or county), moves a certain distance, or simply changes residence. This makes it difficult to compare studies in different countries, because results must be interpreted through the lens of country size, population density, administrative units, and infrastructure. The US, for example, has a land area of 9.2 million km², while the Netherlands has a land area of 34 thousand km² (Sweden’s land area is 407 thousand km²). To move a certain distance within any of these three countries is therefore likely to mean different things depending on country.

Moving over a certain distance or over an administrative border is also likely to mean different things in different parts of a country, particularly given within-country differences in infrastructure. Mentally, the 340 kilometers from Kiruna to Luleå, in sparsely populated northern Sweden with its high out-migration rates is likely to be perceived as a shorter distance to move than moving 320 kilometers between Stockholm and Jönköping, in the more densely populated southern Sweden, where many cities of potential residence lie between the two cities. Similarly, moving over a municipality border likely means something different if an individual leaves the municipality of Kiruna, with its 19,000 km² than if s/he leaves the municipality of Danderyd, near Stockholm, with its 26 km² area.
In Studies II and III, I use the concept of local labor markets to control to some extent for differences across Sweden in density, infrastructure et cetera. Local labor markets are clusters of municipalities that are located next to each other and where most commuting takes place within a given cluster. Local labor markets are re-defined yearly by Statistics Sweden. In 1995 the number of local labor markets in Sweden was 106, and in 2003 the number had decreased to 87, because of increased commuting. If a couple has moved during a year, and the new municipality is in another local labor market, they are defined as migrants in Studies II and III. Because the measure of migration is based on commuting patterns, it incorporates regional variation in infrastructure, making the meaning of a move clearer than if one used administratively defined borders. The use of local labor markets to define migration is common in Swedish migration research (see e.g., Lundholm 2007; Korpi et al. 2011). Figure 3 shows the borders of the local labor markets in Sweden in 2009.

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1 The process to distinguish local labor markets goes as follows: initially, all the local centers in Sweden (called type 11 municipalities) are identified as municipalities that (1) have less than 20 percent of the working population commuting outside the municipality, and (2) have less than 7.5 percent of the working population commuting to one single municipality. These are the local centers of a local labor market. The municipalities that do not fulfill these criteria are defined as type 20 municipalities (if the municipality has its largest stream of outcommuting to a type 11 municipality), type 30 municipalities (if the municipality has its largest stream of outcommuting to a type 20 municipality), or type 50 municipalities (if the municipality has its largest stream of outcommuting to a type 30 municipality). The municipalities that are connected to each other, i.e. share a local center (a type 11 municipality), form a local labor market (Statistics Sweden 2010).
Figure 3
Local labor markets in Sweden 2009

Source: Statistics Sweden 2011
In Study I, I use survey data from the Young Adult Panel Study to examine migration and reasons for migration. For this study, I use the respondents’ own perception of whether the move was ‘a long distance move’, based on responses to the question ‘When was the last time you moved a long distance, to another place [ort]?’. The respondents were also asked “What was the main reason for the move?”, and were offered a number of pre-defined responses, and asked to check only one box (alternatively, respondents could fill out the open ended “other” alternative). In Study I, I do not take into account the distance of the move, or whether it involved crossing an administrative or labor market border. I only take into account whether the respondent believed the move to be “a long distance”. In each of the survey waves, we have information from register data on the residence of the respondent. Using this information, I validated the self-reported measure by comparing how results from this definition differ from those based on administrative borders and local labor markets. Results were quite similar, indicating that the survey based-measure is also a functional way of measuring migration.

Occupational characteristics

In Studies II and III, the measures aimed at capturing occupational differences between women and men are of central importance. The construction of these measures is described in Study II and in the Appendix of Study III.

I focus on three kinds of occupational characteristics. (1) Geographic ubiquity of an occupation (Shauman and Noonan 2007) measures how evenly distributed an occupation is over Sweden. (2) The earnings potential in an occupation measures how large the wage differential is between the highest earning quintile and the lowest earning quintile in that same occupation. This measure is constructed separately for women and men, to adjust for women having lower wages than men within a given occupation. (3) The geographical wage differences of an occupation captures the differences in wages between regions for a given occupation. It compares the wage level in the regions with the highest wages with the wage level in the regions with the lowest wages. This measure is also constructed separately for women and men.

Tables 2 and 3 provide lists of the occupations with the highest and lowest values on the three measures for 2005. We see that the occupations with high earnings potential and high geographical wage spread are occupations that
typically hire men, such as directors and legal professionals. We also see that occupations that have high geographic ubiquity are female dominated occupations, such as teaching and health professionals. When it comes to the occupations with the lowest earnings potential and the lowest geographical differences in wages, the pattern is not as straightforward. There are gendered patterns in terms of low earnings potential for teachers, but also for different kinds of handicraft workers. The geographical wage spread is particularly low for occupations in the public sector. Finally, we see that the occupations with low geographic ubiquity are those that typically employ men, such as metal-processing plant operators, miners and similar physical / manual laborers.
Table 2
Top five occupations in 2005, in terms of...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic ubiquity (not sex-specific)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Production and operations managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Primary and pre-primary education teaching professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Health associate professionals (except nursing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Pre-primary education teaching associate professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Secondary education teaching professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earnings potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Directors and chief executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Senior officials of special-interest organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Legal professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Other specialist managers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical wage spread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Senior officials of special-interest organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Directors and chief executives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Ship and aircraft controllers and technicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Legislators and senior government officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Mathematicians, statisticians and related professionals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3  
**Bottom five occupations in 2005, in terms of...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic ubiquity (not sex-specific)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Metal-processing plant operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Miners, shotfirers, stone cutters and carvers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Fishery workers, hunters and trappers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Mining and mineral-processing-plant operators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Glass, ceramics and related plant operators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Earnings potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Street vendors and related workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Pre-primary education teaching associate professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Handicraft workers in wood, textile, leather and related materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Motor vehicle drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Wood treaters, cabinet-makers and related trades workers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical wage spread</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Street vendors and related workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Library, mail and related clerks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Police inspectors and detectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Secondary education teaching professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Motor vehicle drivers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of the empirical studies

Study I: Gender and Couples’ Career Migration in Sweden

The main purpose of Study I is to examine if partnered women are more willing to relocate for their partner’s career than are partnered men, and if partnered men are more likely to move for their own career than are partnered women. This pattern of women following men is often suggested in the international literature, and I examine whether the pattern also holds for Sweden. I also examine whether such patterns can be explained by partners’ gender attitudes, such as work- versus family orientation and norms around sharing work and care.

The analyses are based on data from the Young Adult Panel Study (YAPS) and includes 1021 individuals who were living with a partner in 2003. I study two aspects of mobility: (1) whether individuals report a willingness to move in the hypothetical event that their partner were offered a stable, well-paid job in another region, and (2) whether individuals report having moved for their own work or education between 2003 and 2009.

The findings suggest gendered patterns in two respects. First, women are more willing than men to move with their partner if their partner was hypothetically offered a stable and well-paid job in another region. Second, among couples with children, women are less likely than men to move to pursue their own career advancement opportunities. Men generally want to have secured employment before considering a move to accommodate their partner’s career, while women are willing to take a leave of absence and move with their partner even before securing employment at the destination location. Conversely, women are no more likely than men to actually move for the sake of their partner. And when childless, women are even more likely than men to move for work or education, even when they live with a partner.

The next step is to examine whether observed gender differences can be explained by couples’ traditional gender ideologies. Gender differences in
family versus work orientation failed to explain the gendered migration patterns described above. Beliefs about how women and men should share the responsibilities for paid work and children have more explanatory power, at least for predicting individuals’ willingness to move for a partner’s potential career advancement. I found particularly pronounced gender differences in the willingness to move for a partner’s sake when respondents reported non-egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles and responsibilities. However, even among individuals with more egalitarian gender ideologies, women were more willing than men to move for the sake of their partner’s potential career advancement, indicating that articulated gender ideology is not enough to explain why couples seem to accommodate men’s career more often than women’s.

Study II: Couples' Education and Regional Mobility – the Importance of Occupation, Income and Gender

In Study II, I test whether the sex segregation on the labor market can explain why couples are more likely to move to accommodate men’s career advancement opportunities. This study is, in part, a development of my Master’s thesis (Brandén 2009) and parts of it have also evolved from a working paper I wrote with Sara Ström (Brandén and Ström 2011).

High education has been shown to be positively associated with individuals’ likelihood of moving. However, research generally indicates that the man’s education affects the couple’s likelihood of moving more than the woman’s. A high education is commonly seen as a human capital investment from which individuals expect economic returns. If couples generally move in response to the man’s education, it could be an indication that couples view men’s perspective career advancement as more important than women’s.

Conversely, the relative importance of men’s education could also be the result of differences in the kinds of occupations high education implies for women and men. In this study, I test whether the reason that couples adapt to the man’s education more often than women’s is that high educational attainment among men is associated with more career opportunities than it is for women. High educational attainment among women often leads to occupations in the public sector that are geographically ubiquitous and have limited upward mobility. I also test the impact of bargaining power within a
couple as measured by the share of couple’s income that is contributed by the woman. Analyses are performed using Swedish population register data on dual-earner couples with common children, residing in Sweden in 1997–2006.

The findings from Study II show that on average, men’s occupations have better career advancement opportunities and larger geographically-based wage differentials than women’s. Women’s occupations, on the other hand, are more geographically ubiquitous. These differences remain when comparing women and men with similar levels of education.

I find that high educational attainment among both men and women increase the couple’s likelihood of moving. The man’s education has a larger impact than the woman’s, as expected. After adjusting for gender differences in income and occupational characteristics, only a very small gender difference remains. I also found that the man’s and woman’s occupational characteristics have a very similar impact on the couple’s likelihood of moving. Thus, net of the structural gender inequalities that exist within the labor market, and non-egalitarian processes making women select occupations that make it easy to adapt to a partner, the link between education and migration is not as gender-differentiated as it may appear at the outset. Gender affects couples’ migration, even after adjusting for occupational differences between women and men. For instance, couples are influenced to move more by the man’s age than the woman’s, and couples are more mobile when the woman is on maternity leave or when the man is enrolled in education.

Study III: Family Migration and Gender Differentials in Earnings: The Impact of Occupational Sex Segregation

In Study III, I move from determinants of family migration to the consequences of migration. Several studies show that family migration is associated with an increase in men’s earnings, and a decrease in women’s earnings. In this study, I examine whether occupational differences between women and men can explain this gender imbalance. I use Swedish population register data including all dual-earner couples aged 20 to 55 with at least one common child any of the years 1997-2001. I examine the relationship between the couples’ migration status and each partners’ earning trajectory, the couple’s total earnings trajectory as well as the development in the woman’s economic dependency in the household over the six subsequent years.
It is not until six years after migration that men benefit from moving. The benefits men reap stem largely from the fact that men who move more often work in occupations with high earning potential. For women, the earning trajectories suffer for the first few years after a move, though some of the drop in earnings can be attributed to the birth of additional children, which often follows migration. Six years after a move, women’s earning trajectories have recovered and are similar to that of women who did not move. Nevertheless, women’s gains are still lower than men’s, even after adjusting for occupational differences. Both women and men gain more from moving if they are working in occupations that exist all over the country. For couples where the woman works in a geographically ubiquitous occupation, her economic dependency recovers faster after the move. Findings also suggest that men gain from being partnered with women in geographically ubiquitous occupations, regardless of migration status. This could indicate that if the woman is working in an occupation that can be found all over Sweden, it is also possible to stay in whatever region is most beneficial to the man.

Study IV: Who Moves to Whom? Gender Differences in the Distance Moved to a Shared Residence (together with Karen Haandrikman)

In Study IV, we examine migration at the start of coresidence. This is an understudied dimension of couple migration. When two individuals move in together, there are two alternate possibilities: either one person moves in with the other, or both partners move to a joint new address. There are indications that it is more common for women than for men to move, and women generally move longer distances than men. This indicate gender inequality in couples’ migration choices at the start of co-residence. Thus far studies that have addressed this issue have not had access to data on where partners lived prior to union formation. As a result, researchers were required to extrapolate data using variables like proximity to partners’ parents or migration patterns during the first year of marriage. In this study, we address the issue of migration at the start of coresidence using higher quality, longitudinal register data. We backtrack couples who married or had a child in 2008 and measure the Euclidean distance between where the partners lived prior to co-residence and their first joint home. We then examine two factors we interpret as indicating gendered moving patterns: (1) whether women are more likely to
move in with their new partner and (2) whether women in general move over longer distances than men at the start of co-residence. We test the importance of age differences, family- and labor market ties, educational attainment, labor marker characteristics and bargaining power, as possible explanations for any gender differences.

Results indicate that women are more likely to move at the start of co-residence, and that women move longer distances, on average than men. These patterns are especially pronounced in couples where partners live far apart prior to union formation. After adjusting for the effects of confounding variables, as described above, around half of the gender differences in distance moved remains. Age differences between partners are particularly important in explaining why couples generally start their cohabitation closer to the man’s previous dwelling. Men’s likelihood to move and their distance moved is more affected by local- and labor market ties than women’s, whereas women are more affected by having children from previous relationships living in their household.

Contributions

Studies I, II, III, and this introduction are individual work, by Brandén. Study IV is joint project with Karen Haandrikman as the second author. In Study IV Brandén developed most of the study design and wrote most of the text while Haandrikman conducted data work and programming. The statistical analyses were performed jointly. Both authors have contributed to all parts of the final version of the paper.
Concluding discussion

This dissertation project started out as an attempt to examine gendered patterns in couples’ regional mobility, with a special focus on whether women’s often disadvantaged position in couples’ migration was the result of sex segregation in the labor market. Results from the empirical analyses show that gender played an important role in couples’ decisions to move in Sweden. Women are more willing than men to move when their partner is offered a job in another region, even prior to securing their own employment; and parents are more likely to move to accommodate the father’s than the mother’s career. Furthermore, men’s education affects a couple’s migration propensities more than women’s; partnered men’s annual earnings increase more than women’s following a move; and women move over longer distances than men, and more often move in with the man, when couples start a co-residential union.

Occupational differences between women and men explain some of the observed patterns in couples’ migration. This is especially true for the commonly found gender differences in whose education tends to matter most in determining a couple’s migration propensity. After adjusting for higher earning potential, and larger region-based wage differentials in men’s occupations, and for higher geographic ubiquity in women’s occupations, couples’ migration propensities are impacted equally by the man’s and the woman’s educational achievement. The man’s and the woman’s occupational characteristics have a similar impact on the couple’s likelihood of moving, and on what each partner gains from moving. However, differences in occupational characteristics cannot explain why men benefit more economically from moving than women.

Traditional gender ideologies and differences in articulated family- and work orientation between women and men are of little importance in explaining why women are more willing to move to accommodate their partner’s career advancement, nor why parents are more prone to move for the benefit of the father’s than the mother’s career. Hochschild and Machung (1989) argues that individuals have ideologies “on top” and “underneath”,
which means that an individual may have gender egalitarian attitudes (on top ideologies) but still act in a traditional manner (underneath ideologies). This may help to explain why non-egalitarian patterns of migration emerge even among individuals who report more egalitarian attitudes. It may also be that individuals’ gender ideologies are a weak predictor of gendered patterns in couples’ migration in Sweden, and that social structural patterns such as labor market characteristics become more important when most individuals hold relatively egalitarian attitudes towards gender.

Neither women nor men experience an immediate increase in earnings following a move. It is not until six years after a move that men’s earnings increase significantly, relative to their non-moving counterparts. Furthermore, it takes six years following a move for women’s salaries to recover to the level of their counterparts who have not moved. These lagged gains for men, and non-existent gains for women, could indicate that monetary utility maximization is not what drives the majority of couple moves. Perhaps other factors, such as friends, family or other non-monetary qualities, are more important drivers of mobility, especially among couples with children. The importance of non-work related factors has been suggested by Lundholm, et al. (2004) and is echoed both in the results on how uncommon it is to move for work or studies (Study I) and in the results indicating that local ties are some of the most important predictors of distance moved at the start of co-residence (Study IV).

Having common children is an important factor in predicting gender differences in migration for one’s own work or education. Before entry into parenthood, women are even more likely than men to move for their own career, even when in a co-residential union. However, more traditional patterns emerge among parents, where findings indicate that men’s careers are more likely than women’s careers to be the stimulus for a move. In the Swedish register data, the only way to capture cohabiting couples is through common children, and therefore I have not been able to examine the role of parenthood in Studies II and III. Study III however indicates that the birth of additional children post-migration may help explain why women’s earnings suffer following a move. Future research should examine the role of children and childcare responsibilities in predicting gendered family migration patterns.

Similarly, we need to know more about the importance of friends and family networks for women’s and men’s ability to pursue a career. As women are often primary caregivers in the home, having networks in the region of
residence, such as parents or adult siblings, may be necessary in order to balance career and family responsibilities. Women may, therefore, choose to pursue career opportunities in their hometown, rather than in another region that would cause them to lose these place specific networks. This could explain why mothers are reluctant to move for their own career, and why earnings do not differ much between moving and staying mothers.

Another distinction to be made is between (1) work as a precondition for moving, and (2) work as the reason for moving. Results in Study I indicate that men’s work is a stronger precondition than women’s work for moving. Whereas women are prone to answer that they would move with their partner if he was offered a job in another region, even prior to finding a job of their own, men would rather separate temporarily, moving only after they have found a job. Hence, for men, having secured employment in the new location is a stronger pre-condition for moving for the sake of a partner than it is for women. However, gender differences in work as a reason for moving are fewer, and only exist for couples with children. Distinguishing between these two ways in which work and career operate for couples’ migration decisions would improve our understanding of gendered family migration decisions even more.
References


