

**Living Arrangements of Young Adults and Inequality in Higher Education: recent changes and the advantages of being a “late-stayer” in Brazil, from 1982 to 2006.**

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Changes in family size and composition and the postponement of marriage and fertility have been widely reported both for developed and developing countries (Carvalho 2009, Arriagada 1997). For developed countries, this process has been associated to the second demographic transition (Armas, 2008), whereas in developing countries it is harder to explain. Economic pressures in developing countries might make living with parents a fundamental condition for pursuing higher levels of educational attainment. In the case of Brazil, for instance, the option of working and studying at the same time greatly reduces educational attainment chances (Hazenbalg 2003), and most parents are not able to support their children living away from home while they pursue higher education. Therefore, although for most countries independent living is considered the first choice for young adults (Cohen and Casper 2002), in developing countries such as Brazil living in the parental home might be the only way these individuals have access to in order to financially support their studies.

Although there has been a large expansion of higher education in Brazil in the last decades, students of low family income still lag way behind of their high family income counterparts in the chances of attaining higher education (Collares 2009). Most empirical research that attempts to explain this educational gap between students of low and high

family income finds that the conventional socio-demographic and cultural controls are insufficient to account for the income effects. To explain the mechanisms through which family income transforms in educational advantage for young adults it is important to take into consideration the mechanisms that link the context of student's lives and their schooling (Lareau and Weininger 2003, Roksa 2009).

In this paper we investigate some of these mechanisms by looking at the impact of living arrangements of Brazilian young adults belonging to two cohorts: 18—24 years old and 25—32 years old. Our outcomes are the likelihood of attending higher education, the chances of graduating from a high quality postsecondary program, and the probability that these young adults will be enrolled in a socially prestigious field of study. We also use parametric and non parametric models to assess changes over time in the chances of these individuals of participating in higher education; changes in their living arrangements; and changes in the relationship between living arrangements and participation in higher education. We focus especially on the “late-stayers”, or individuals that were living at their parent's home between 18 and 32 years old.

The data sources used for this analysis are all the 22 years available between 1982 and 2006 for the National Survey of Sampled Households (PNAD), and the National Examination of Higher Education Programs (ENC) from 2003. Both data sets are representative of the Brazilian population. Using PNAD we investigate trends in home living arrangements for individuals in the two age cohorts of interest based on their educational status, the sector of the educational institution they attend (public or private), their employment status and other socio-demographic characteristics, including family income and the interaction of family income and year of survey. Based on the findings

from this analysis, we use ENC data to investigate the hypothesis that living at home constitutes an indirect intergenerational transfer of funds that allow students to complete their postsecondary education at more prestigious institutions and fields of study.

The results suggest that, for the 18 – 24 year old cohort, living with parents is almost a *sine qua non* condition for attending higher education in Brazil. More than 80% of postsecondary students in this cohort lived at their parent's home while enrolled in a higher education institution. On the other hand, most of the individuals from this cohort that were not living with their parents at the time of the survey were not enrolled in any type of education. There were significant differences in the influence of home living on higher education participation by region of the country, by urbanicity and by the sector of the educational institution attended.

For the 25—32 year old cohort the picture is very different, showing a steady increase over time in the percent of these individuals that were living with their parents at the time of the survey (changing from 17% to almost 25% of the cohort between 1982 and 2006). However, the percent of individuals from this cohort living at their parent's home and attending higher education remained almost stable (around 40%) over this same period. For both cohorts, there was a significant change over time in the impact of home living on the chances of being enrolled in postsecondary education, but these changes were greater for the older cohort.

The analysis using ENC data contrast three types of living arrangements: living at the parent's home, living independently or living with a spouse and/or children. The results show that the impact of father's education, region of the country, type of institution and gender on the chances of being in a course of higher quality are different

for all these variables according to the type of living arrangements of the students. There are practically no gender differences in course program quality if the student was living at his/her parent's home while attending postsecondary education, and this living arrangement also decreases the impact of course quality on time to graduation.

The literature in living arrangements has demonstrated that being a “late-stayer”, i.e., living at the parental home as a young adult, has implications in several life events including fertility, marriage and divorce. This is true for most developed and developing countries and Brazil is not an exception (Carneiro et al. 2002, Carvalho 2009). We contribute to this literature by showing that in developing countries living in the parental home can represent an indirect form of intergenerational transfer that boosts chances of participating in higher education for students that had already completed secondary education, and reduces gender and SES differences in the chances of attaining high quality postsecondary education programs.

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