

Employment, Gender Relations and Recession in Ireland

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Outline

- Context and Questions
- Discourse on employment and gender in crisis and theories of labour supply
- Trends in Ireland
- Potential implications for intra-household gender relations
- Moving Forward

Context

- Boom: Exceptional and Sustained Growth in Ireland from 1994
- Overall employment peak – 70% in 2007
- Bust: Irish economy went into crisis in 2008
- Global financial crisis → property bubble burst → bankrupting main Irish banks
- Stark consequences for employment
- Overall unemployment rate rose from 4.4% ('06) to 14.7% ('12) (for men and women)

Questions

- How has the economic crisis in Ireland affected men and women's employment/unemployment patterns?
- What are the potential implications of these changing employment patterns for gender relations within the household?

Literature

- Notable differences in effects of this recession by gender
- 'Mancession' – common perception that most job losses have accrued to men
- Construction sector took large hit – 1 in 5 men in Ireland were employed in sector prior to recession – 21% decline upon recession
- Women 'protected' from recession BUT medium and long term effects of recession may affect women more
- US: Women's unempl. rising while male unempl. is reducing (Mancovery?)

Theories of Family Labour Supply

- Added worker effect
- Women enter labour market/increase their labour supply on spousal job loss coupled with credit constraints
- Smooths family's income/consumption
- Magnitude/existence – mixed accounts
- 'Wealth poor' more likely to rely on spousal labour, 'wealth rich' likely to rely on savings
- Effects not permanent

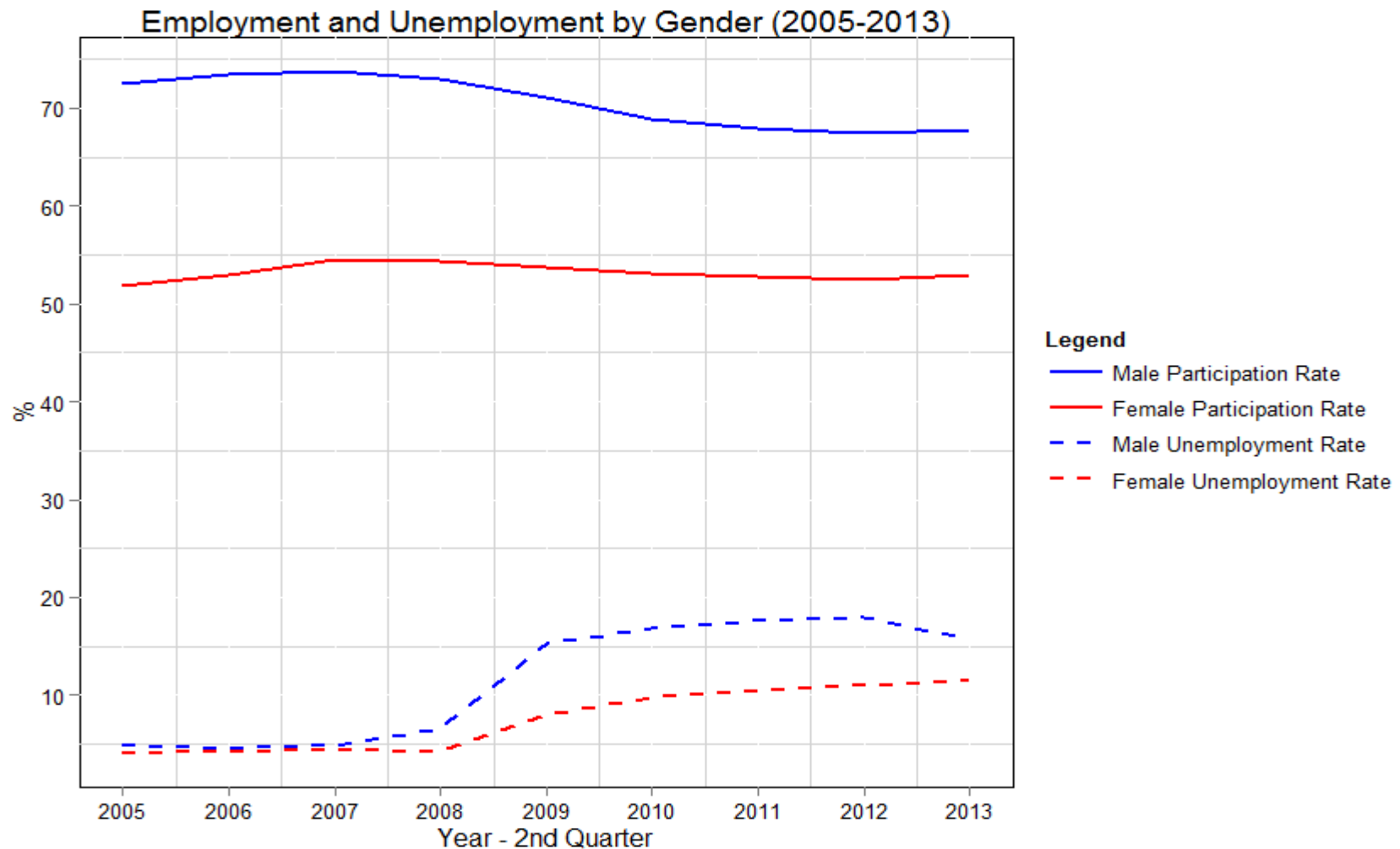
Family Labour Supply Ctd.

- Discouraged worker effect
- Where workers who view the probability of getting a job as low cease their job search
- More likely to be younger and older workers due to disadvantaged position in labour market
- N.B. Effect of children's age versus mother's age
- Added/Discouraged worker effects can exist concurrently

Labour supply patterns and gender

- Three opposing hypotheses –
 - Segregation hypothesis (i.e. Rigid sex-typing of occupations)
 - Buffer hypothesis (i.e. Women as flexible labour reserve, hired and fired when needed)
 - Substitution hypothesis (i.e. Hiring females in place of males as cost saving strategy)
- Hypotheses should be used in a complementary rather than competing manner to allow for more sophisticated analyses

Participation and Unemployment Rates



Key changes in PES by gender

People aged 15 years and over (Thousand) by sex, PES and Quarter										
		2005Q2	2006Q2	2007Q2	2008Q2	2009Q2	2010Q2	2011Q2	2012Q2	2013Q2
Male	At work	1087.3	1139.8	1184	1170.9	1039.8	985.1	970.2	949.6	974.4
	Unemployed	81.3	80.6	84.3	106	234	257.6	260.6	265.2	227.7
	Engaged on home duties	5	4.9	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.4	8.1	8.4	8.7
	Retired from employment	211.5	211	213.9	221.4	227	237.8	243.1	254.3	255.3
Female	At work	779.7	815.1	865.6	889.5	863.5	843.4	843.2	823.8	829
	Unemployed	33.5	38.1	39.2	41	82.4	98.2	103.4	108	102.3
	Engaged on home duties	540	528.2	525.4	529.8	535.7	527.4	512.9	505.9	478
	Retired from employment	74.1	77.3	84.3	89.9	88.2	100.7	115.2	129.1	148.7

Participation by marital status

ILO Participation Rates (%) by Age Group, Sex, Marital Status and Quarter

	2005Q2	2006Q2	2007Q2	2008Q2	2009Q2	2010Q2	2011Q2	2012Q2	2013Q2
15 years and over									
Male									
Single - never married	70.2	72.0	72.4	70.9	68.1	64.9	64.2	64.2	63.9
Married	76.8	77.2	77.5	77.6	76.1	74.7	73.8	73.2	73.7
Widowed	23.7	23.4	24.4	26.1	24.3	22.4	23.5	20.6	22.8
Separated or divorced	72.2	71.3	69.8	67.7	66.5	68.6	62.9	62.3	62.7
Female									
Single - never married	61.3	62.9	64.3	63.1	62.4	59.8	59.4	58.5	60.2
Married	51.5	52.3	53.4	54.3	54.0	54.8	54.7	54.3	54.3
Widowed	11.4	11.2	12.5	12.2	11.2	11.6	12.5	12.7	11.8
Separated or divorced	58.5	59.9	63.2	60.6	59.1	60.0	56.3	58.4	59.5

Implications for gender relations

- Labour supply adjustments may reflect some shifting of the burden of supporting hh onto women – literature unresolved
- Other theories have relevance here – namely non-unitary collective and bargaining models
- Women more concerned with children's consumption → Increased AWE improving women's income and bargaining power → Increased access to resources

Implications for gender relations (ctd.)

- Increased bargaining power may affect long term – necessary to look beyond questions of current consumption and labour supply
- May be intra-household differences in opinions around how much to save or borrow in a period of hardship?
- Women generally younger and live longer – suggestion that women favour saving over spending for future security

Moving forward

- Introduction to further work on employment, the crisis and effects on gender relations within the household
- Seeks to tease out nuances in the relationship between employment and gender relations within the home

Questions to address

- Has there been a shift in the segregation of the labour market?
 - Given added and discouraged worker effects and the changing rationale of employers in testing times has there been a reduction in the segregation?
 - Must examine labour market effects by sector to get a true insight into gendered effects

Questions to address

- What, if any, has been the differential impact of the crisis looking at households defined by the age of the children as opposed to age of worker?
- Regarding the surge in women choosing to retire – can this be regarded as a form of discouraged worker effect?

Thank you for your attention!