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ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Intergenerational Social Mobility and Gender Disparities by Cohort: A Comparative Study of Spain and Chile

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Abstract
This study compares social mobility between Chile and Spain, employing a cohort analysis to generate a consistent analysis between men and women in both countries. The study uses data from multiple national surveys in Spain, but in Chile, increases the sample and period of analysis. In terms of analytical methods, the study presents several innovations. It incorporates the classic analyses of social mobility, while also adopting a long-term perspective through the use of cohorts. Furthermore, it employs the criterion of dominance in social origin, thereby rectifying the shortcomings of previous studies which failed to incorporate the role of the mother. The main findings show that education is a significant determinant of social mobility, although they also reveal notable differences between men and women. In particular, women are the primary contributors to mobility. Furthermore, an examination of temporal trends reveals that both structural and relative mobility are shaped by the distribution of opportunities, yet high levels of social reproduction persist.

Keywords Social stratification · Social class · Comparative studies · Inequality · ISCED

1 Introduction

Social inequality is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon that extends beyond the simple distribution of income (Atkinson & Bourguignon, 2000). Traditionally, the measurement of inequality has focused on economic income, using indicators such as the Gini index to compare income distribution across countries (Breen, 2005; Ferreira & Peragine, 2015). However, this approach does not fully capture the diversity of factors contributing to inequality, as the income is only a partial indicator (Alvaredo &Piketty, 2010).

To effectively adopt a multidimensional perspective in analyses of social inequality, it is essential to consider not only income but also the social conditions embedded in the

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social structure over time. This includes inequality of opportunity and the distribution of cultural capital, which play crucial roles in social stratification (Jung et al., 2014).

It is important to distinguish between difference and inequality. While difference is based on the inherent diversity of human beings, inequality refers to unequal access to resources and opportunities. For example, members of a family may be different but have equal access to resources. However, comparing families from different social strata reveals inequalities in terms of access to opportunities and living conditions (López-Roldán & Fachelli, 2021). The unequal distribution of life chances among different social groups focuses on hereditary or ascriptive factors, such as ethnicity and gender. This approach is reflected in social mobility studies, which analyze how circumstances of origin influence individuals' destinies (Espinoza & González, 2012; Solís et al., 2016). Factors such as cultural capital, according to Bourdieu, are determinants in the reproduction of inequalities. This capital is accumulated in the family environment and manifests in education and life opportunities. It is at school that classes and their positions relative to other class groups are identified (Bourdieu, 1989). Bourdieu and Passeron (1996) stated that school is crucial for the reproduction of cultural privileges, which are then transformed into different types of capital. Therefore, to achieve social justice, education needs more than simply to exist; it is necessary to possess the best cultural capital to stand out from others (Cuenca, 2012).

Social stratification emerges as a fundamental concept in sociology, referring to the institutionalized division of a society into layers or strata of individuals with unequal access to resources, opportunities, and power (Requena et al., 2013). In pre-industrial societies, these differences were considered natural or divine. However, with industrialization, theorists such as Marx, Weber, and Parsons began to explore the structural basis of these divisions and introduced the first analyses of social class, allowing us to measure and establish mechanisms for grouping different social positions (Kerbo, 2009). This analysis focuses on how social structures distribute rewards and justify these inequalities.

Social mobility then emerges to assess social justice and equality of opportunity in different contexts (Swift, 2004). This concept refers to changes in the socio-economic position of individuals or groups over time and is fundamental to understanding how a society is structured and transformed. Social mobility can be intergenerational, comparing the position of parents with that of their children, or intragenerational, analyzing changes in an individual's position over the course of their working life.

Several theoretical and methodological approaches have been developed to analyze this phenomenon. These include the theory of cross-country similarity, which argues that social mobility rates are similar in industrialized nations; the theory of constant social fluidity, which argues that mobility patterns remain stable over time; and the theory of differentiation of mobility regimes, which suggests significant differences in mobility patterns between countries due to cultural, political, and institutional factors (Fachelli et al., 2020).

Education emerges as a key factor in social mobility, acting as a mediator between social origin and occupational destination. Educational inequalities, influenced by social origin, can perpetuate class inequalities, while greater educational accessibility and quality can promote greater social mobility (Barone, 2020). Social reproduction theory, for example, argues that the education system tends to reproduce existing inequalities, favoring the dominant classes (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996).

Additionally, labor market and employment opportunities are determinants of social mobility configurations. Human capital theory suggests that education and training increase productivity and thus earnings, while signaling theory highlights the role of educational credentials in determining job opportunities (Morescalchi, 2021).

The relationship between social inequality and intergenerational social mobility (ISM) is crucial for understanding how structural opportunities and constraints affect individual trajectories. A high association between family social origins and social destinations indicates low levels of ISM, while high ISM reflects lower dependence on social origins (Barone, 2020).

2 Social Mobility and Gender

Historically, studies on social stratification have excluded women and ignored their experiences and circumstances, leading to the belief that women's positions largely depend on those of men. However, this perspective overlooks the diversity of women's experiences, particularly in terms of education, partnerships across different social classes, and the division of labour within the household (Abbot et al., 2005; Wright, 2018). The massive entry of women into the workforce has led to occupational segregation by gender and the devaluation of feminized occupations, contributing to the persistence of gender inequality in access to higher social classes (García & Van Rompaey, 2007). Therefore, it is crucial to integrate gender into studies of social stratification and mobility to better understand gender inequalities.

Women's initial entry into the labour market is often characterized by precariousness and informality, affecting their opportunities for social mobility. Women who start their careers in non-salaried jobs face a higher risk of remaining in the informal sector later. Additionally, the beginning of a career is a crucial moment that largely determines future opportunities for occupational mobility (Mancini, 2016).

The effects of gender differences on social mobility are influenced by various factors, including occupational and labour structures, gender equality policies, and social expectations. Gender equality policies that promote equal opportunities, such as education and equal access to employment, can positively impact women's social mobility. Social expectations and gender norms also influence women's career decisions and social mobility.

The systematic increase in women's participation in the productive world consolidates views on gender equality but also brings new perspectives on this social change. One of the first conceptual elements was the "double shift," referring to the care crisis caused by working women (who previously were the primary caregivers and performed unpaid work) who, even when employed in the productive world, continue to perform domestic tasks (assigned by gender) (Abbott et al., 2005; Balbo, 1994; Carrasquer, 2009, 2013; Torns, 2008).

The most productive focus of social mobility studies involving women is the comparison of differences between men and women. This type of analysis has become a dominant line within mobility studies from the perspective of occupational class, as promoted by Goldthorpe. Beyond an operational incorporation in data analysis, conducting such comparisons (men-women) shifts the theoretical and analytical focus, highlighting everyday social processes and allowing for international comparative analysis (Fachelli & López-Roldán, 2015; Salido, 2020).

3 Some Distinctions in the Case Studies

The economic and social evolution of Chile and Spain presents certain differences in their development models and public policies. Since the mid-1970s, Chile has adopted a neoliberal approach characterized by labour market liberalization and the promotion of international trade. This model is based on the belief that market efficiency is key to optimal

resource allocation and that state intervention should be minimal (Bustelo, 1992). In contrast, Spain has developed a social market economy since the 1978 Constitution, focusing on decentralization and the autonomy of its autonomous communities, allowing for greater state intervention in economic and social regulation.

In the labour market, Chile has a less regulated market, with working conditions primarily determined by the interaction between supply and demand. On the other hand, Spain has a mixed coordination system where collective bargaining and state regulation play a crucial role in determining wages and working conditions. This difference in labour regulation has direct implications for income inequality and social mobility in both countries (Martín-Artiles et al., 2021).

In terms of education, both countries have followed different historical trajectories. While Spain has implemented significant reforms to diversify and improve its educational system, Chile has maintained a more constant structure, with a high level of privatization in higher education. The distribution of educational institutions also differs, with Spain showing a higher proportion of enrolment in public institutions compared to Chile.

Spain has a tradition in social mobility studies, with its first data collected in 1992 through the sociodemographic survey, followed by regular data collection through the living conditions survey, allowing for the analysis of intergenerational behaviours. In Latin America, countries like Mexico, Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina have been pioneers in measuring intergenerational mobility. In Chile, there have been certain advances starting with the studies by Torche and Wormald (2004) and others like Espinoza and Nuñez (2014). However, there are no regular data collections that allow for periodic measurement of intergenerational occupational movements.

The comparative analysis of these two countries reveals how different economic and social approaches can influence the structure and dynamics of their societies. Therefore, understanding these differences is essential for accurately analysing the sociopolitical and economic situation in each context and for developing public policies that address the specific needs of each country.

In summary, both in Chile and Spain, the barriers to social mobility are multifaceted and deeply rooted in economic, educational, and social structures. Addressing these barriers requires an integral and sustained approach over time, with public policies that promote equal opportunities and reduce structural inequalities.

4 Data and Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional and comparative correlational-explanatory design across countries and over time. This design enables the identification of relationships or degrees of association between two or more concepts, categories, or variables in specific contexts, and introduces explanatory elements of the phenomenon under study, which in this case is social mobility in Chile and Spain.

For the comparative analysis, various surveys were utilized to provide the necessary variables for studying intergenerational and intragenerational social mobility. The main data sources include:

Spain: EU statistics on income and living conditions (ECV_EUSILC, 2005-2011-2019), which provides data on the occupation and professional relationships of the interviewees and their parents.

Chile: National Social Stratification Survey (ENES, 2009), which provides comprehensive data for the analysis of social mobility, and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP, 1999-2009-2019), used to increase external validity and statistical conclusiveness by combining data from different years.

Individuals were included in the analysis if they met the following criteria:

Belong to the active population (working or unemployed with last recorded occupation).
Be between 25 and 60 years of age.
Have a destination occupational class and a social origin occupation.

The final samples were:

Spain: ECV-EUSILC (2005, n = 13,007; 2011, n = 12,296; 2019, n = 14,278), Total = 43,240.
Chile: ISSP (1999, n = 476; 2009, n = 613; 2019, n = 258), ENES (2009, n = 1,989), Total = 3,662.

5 Variables Used

The main variable of analysis is social class, defined according to the EGP classification of six categories, using the criterion of class dominance (the highest occupational classification of the parent).

Social class: Social class is used for both occupational origin and occupational social destination. The EGP-CASMIN classification (Erikson et al., 1979; with adjustments by Ganzeboom & Treiman, 1996) is employed due to its international comparative strength. The use of this six-class classification is justified by the availability of data, although in some cases it can be reduced to three classes depending on statistical requirements. The ISCO-88 or ISCO-08 occupational classification is used.

For the education variable, the ISCED-97 (International Standard Classification of Education) classification is used in 4 categories: 0–1 (no education or up to primary) 2 (lower secondary) 3–4 (upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary) 5–6 (tertiary).

Social origin: The social origin of the respondent is constructed using the occupations and professional relationships of the parents, applying the class dominance criterion to select the highest occupational classification between the father and the mother (Fachelli & López-Roldán, 2015).

Intragenerational mobility: We analyse the labour trajectory of the interviewee, from their first occupation to their current occupation, to study mobility within their own generation.

Cohort: 4 cohorts are used in each country: in Spain in the LCS (1945 and 1956) (1957–1968) (1969–1981) (1982–1994), for Chile (1939–1954) (1955–1966) (1967–1978) (1979–1994).

6 Analysis Techniques

Contingency Table Analysis for Absolute Mobility. Mobility tables or transition matrices are used to measure social mobility between two points in time or generations. These matrices explain movements in absolute terms, showing large structural changes

Table 1 EGP-6 social classes. *Source*: Erikson and Goldthorpe (1992)

Classes	Description
I + II	Service class: professionals, administrator and managers, higher-grade, supervisors of non-manual workers
IIIAB	Routine non-manual workers: routine non-manual employees in administration and commerce, sales personnel, other rank-and-file service workers
IVAB	Petty bourgeoisie: small proprietors and artisans, etc., with and without employees
V + VI	Skilled workers: lower-grade technicians, supervisors of manual workers, skilled manual workers
VIIA	Non-skilled workers: semi- and unskilled manual workers (not in agriculture. Etc.)
IVC + VIIB	Farmers and agricultural labourers: farmers and smallholders and other self-employed in primary production, agricultural and other workers in primary production

over time. Absolute mobility analysis is based on counting and analysing percentages to understand the relationship between the origin and destination of respondents (Table 1).

Two-dimensional cross-tabulations:

1. Independence or Association: Pearson's Chi-square test of independence is used to determine whether there is a relationship between qualitative variables.
2. Degree of Association: This is measured with Cramer's V, which varies from 0 to 1, where 1 indicates a perfect association. Values above 0.3 are considered a moderate association.

Log-linear Models for Relative Mobility Analysis

Relative mobility refers to the difference in the social position of an individual with respect to his or her household of origin, describing the opportunities for social mobility without considering structural changes. This analysis is carried out using log-linear models, which allow us to understand equality of opportunity across generations.

Log-linear models:

1. Constant Fluidity Model (CnSF): assumes that relative mobility rates remain constant over time, indicating expected social reproduction.
2. Uniform Differences Model (Unidiff): Allows to analyse how the intensity of the relationship between origin and destination varies over time or between different cohorts. This model is more flexible and can show changes in the rigidity or fluidity of social mobility.

These models are implemented using SPSS, Stata and LEM statistical software, as they allow a detailed analysis of the relationships between origin, destination and cohort.

7 Results

7.1 Absolute Mobility

The social structure of Chile and Spain can be analysed through the distribution of occupational classes between fathers/mothers and sons/daughters and how these change over time. This intergenerational approach reveals how social classes are distributed between generations. According to Wright and Lamont (cited by Torche, 2020), a similar class position can generate common interests and attitudes, defining classes as communities. Therefore, understanding social structure and social change shows the evolution of inequality and the degree of openness of a society. Lower social mobility acts as a brake towards a more equal society (Neckerman & Torche, 2007), thus one would expect to see further movements and changes in social structure in a more open society.

Table 2 shows the changes in origin and destination classes, comparing countries and sex. Notable changes are evidenced in the movements between origin and destination, with the service class reaching close to 30% in each country and in both sexes. Spaniards increase 13.7 points compared to 9.5 points in Chile. Main differences are in the non-manual classes, where Spain increases 6.6 points while Chile decreases 0.4 points (22.9% vs. 14.9%). In Chile, the self-employed class increases to 23.2% (3.1 points higher), while in Spain it decreases to 12.1% (2.9 points lower). Farm workers decrease more in Spain (11.3 points less) than in Chile (5.6 points less). Skilled workers decrease in both countries (6.6 and 3.8 points), but unskilled workers increase in Spain (0.5 points) and decrease in Chile (almost 3 points).

When analysed by gender, men do not show much change in most social classes, irrespective of the country. However, there is a difference of almost 8 points in the self-employed class between Spanish men (14.2%) and Chilean men (22.0%). Chilean agricultural workers maintain a percentage close to 11%. In contrast, women show greater differences between countries. In class IIIab, there is a difference of 9 points (Spain: 34%, Chile: 24%), and in class IVab, a difference of 16 points (Spain: 9.4%, Chile: 25.4%). Despite these differences, women have similar scores in the skilled female worker class, being the lowest in both countries.

7.2 Absolute Mobility Matrices

Downward mobility has the lowest percentages in both countries. Spanish women are the least downwardly mobile (19.3%), while Chilean men have the highest percentage (29%). In terms of social inheritance, men are the most likely to maintain the same occupational class as their parents, with more than 30%, compared to women, who reach 25%.

Upward mobility is the most common, with 49.9% in Spain and 43.9% in Chile. Women contribute the most to this type of mobility, with Spanish women reaching 55 points and Chilean women 50. Chilean men are the least upwardly mobile, with 39.9%.

Chilean women show the lowest association between origins and destinations (Cramer's V of 0.15), indicating a mild association. There is no difference between Spanish and Chilean men, both having an association of 0.21, which is mild to moderate. Overall, both societies have a score of 0.19 on the association statistic, meaning that the stronger the association, the greater the influence of social origin on occupational destination.

Table 2 Changes in occupational structure between origins and destinations (%). *Source*: ENES (2009) e ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile. & ECV_EU-SILC (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Class position	*Both sex*					
	Spain			Chile		
	O	D	DI	O	D	DI
I + II—Service class	16.4	30.1	13.7	16.9	26.4	9.5
IIIab—Routine non-manual	16.3	22.9	6.6	15.3	14.9	− 0.4
IVab Employers	15.0	12.1	− 2.9	20.1	23.2	3.1
V + VI—Skilled workers	17.6	11.0	− 6.6	12.8	9.0	− 3.8
VIIa—Unskilled workers	18.3	18.8	0.5	20.4	17.6	− 2.8
VIIb + Ivc—Agricultural labourers	16.4	5.1	− 11.3	14.5	8.9	− 5.6
Total	100	100		100	100	

Class position	Men				Women			
	Spain		Chile		Spain		Chile	
	O	D	O	D	O	D	O	D
I + II—Service class	15.4	**28.0**	17.3	**25.9**	17.7	**32.9**	16.2	**27.2**
IIIab—Routine non-manual	15.8	14.0	13.5	9.8	17.0	**34.1**	18.3	23.5
IVab Employers	14.7	14.2	19.7	22.0	15.4	9.4	20.7	**25.4**
V + VI—Skilled workers	18.1	17.2	13.2	12.7	17.0	3.1	12.2	2.7
VIIa—Unskilled workers	18.5	20.4	21.3	18.8	18.0	16.7	18.7	15.6
VIIb + Ivc – Agricultural labourers	17.6	6.2	15.0	10.9	14.9	3.8	13.8	5.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Absolute mobility summary metrics	Spain			Chile		
	Men	Women	Both	Men	Women	Both
Heritage	30.1	25.6	28.2	31.1	24.3	28.6
Upward mobility	45.8	55.1	49.9	39.9	50.7	43.9
Downward mobility	24.1	19.3	21.9	29.0	25	27.5

Statistics of association between variables	OD for Spain			OD for Chile		
	Men	Women	Both	Men	Women	Both
Chi-square (x^2)	5359 **	2751 **	8108**	561.4**	160.2**	683.5**
Cramér's V	0.213**	0.171**	0.195**	0.216**	0.15**	0.189**

O Origin, *D* Destination, *DI* Dissimilarity index

** *p*-value < 0,000

7.3 Analysis by Cohort

This structural analysis by cohort allows us to observe the changes in Chile and Spain over time. Figures 1 and 2 compare occupational origin and destination by cohort, first for men and then for women, by country. The analysis by cohort shows that in both countries, as cohorts get younger, there is a decrease in the lower occupational classes (VIIb + IVc and VIIa) and an increase in the service class (I + II and IIIab). The intermediate classes keep stable percentages over time. In Spain, the drop in the lower classes is more pronounced

Fig. 1 Occupational class structure by origin and destination for Spanish and Chilean males, according to birth cohort

in the younger cohorts. For men, in both countries, there is a steady growth in the service or professional class, being slightly higher in the last cohorts for Chileans (32%). This is related to the democratisation and increase of social policies in tertiary education in Chile, driven by student movements in 2005 and 2011, which increased the coverage of scholarships and student loans.

Self-employed men in Spain have seen a steady decrease in their percentages, both in origin and destination, reaching 19% and 9% respectively in the last period. In Chile, although these percentages have also decreased, the levels remain above 15% in the last cohorts. The informality and precariousness of self-employment in Chile may explain the presence of 'false self-employed' who are difficult to detect in surveys.

This analysis highlights how policies and socio-economic contexts have influenced social and occupational mobility in both countries over time.

When analysing the cohorts of Chilean and Spanish women, there is a percentage decrease in the agricultural working class (VIIab and IVc) over time. The skilled manual work class also decreases significantly, with no data for the last cohort of Chilean women and only 2% for Spanish women. The unskilled manual class has slowly

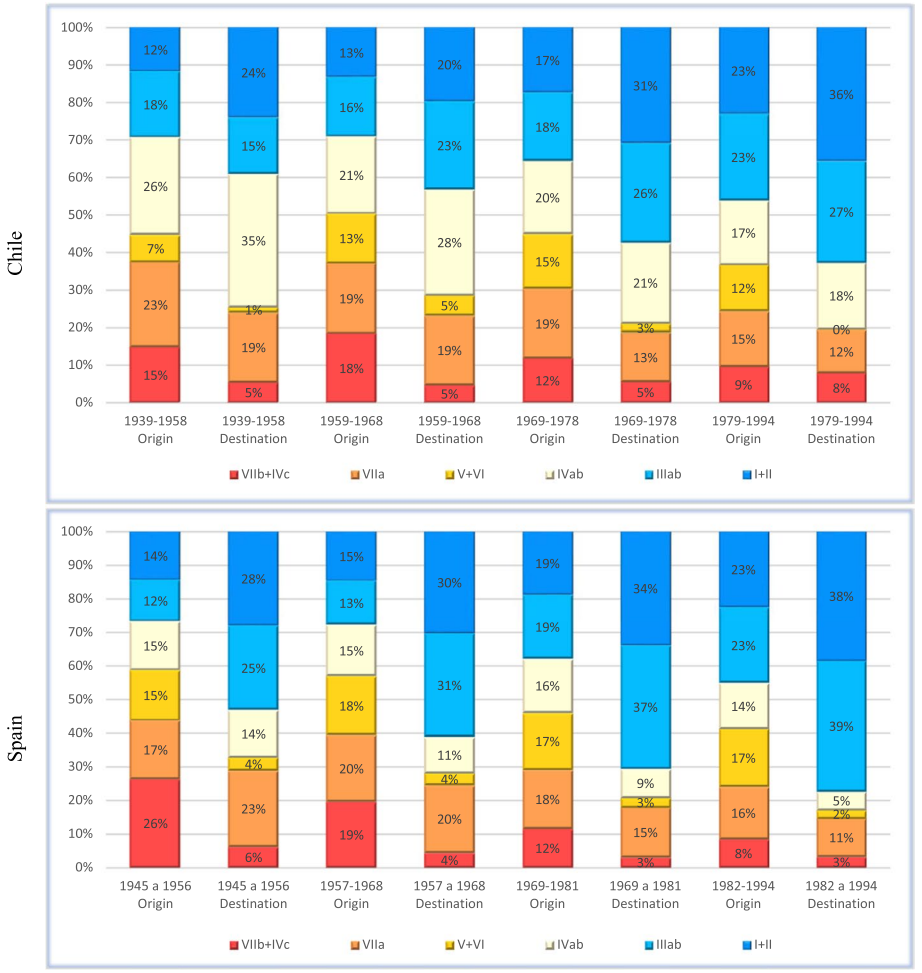

Fig. 2 Origin and destination classes of Chilean and Spanish women by cohort

decreased (see Fig. 2). In comparison, the first two classes show a steady increase in each period, by around 10 points. For example, the administrative class in Spain increases from 25 to 39% in the last period.

Absolute mobility reflects a person's change between the social class of origin and the social class of destination, either by moving up, staying the same or moving down. The transition matrix shows downward movements in the upper triangle and upward movements in the lower triangle, while the diagonal indicates those who maintain the same social class of origin, known as social inheritance.

In both countries, upward mobility rates are higher, with women contributing more, as about 50% in each cohort experience upward mobility. This is lower only for the youngest cohort of women in Chile. In contrast, Spanish men have seen a decrease in upward mobility from 56.8% in the oldest cohort to 36.8% in the period 1982–1994,

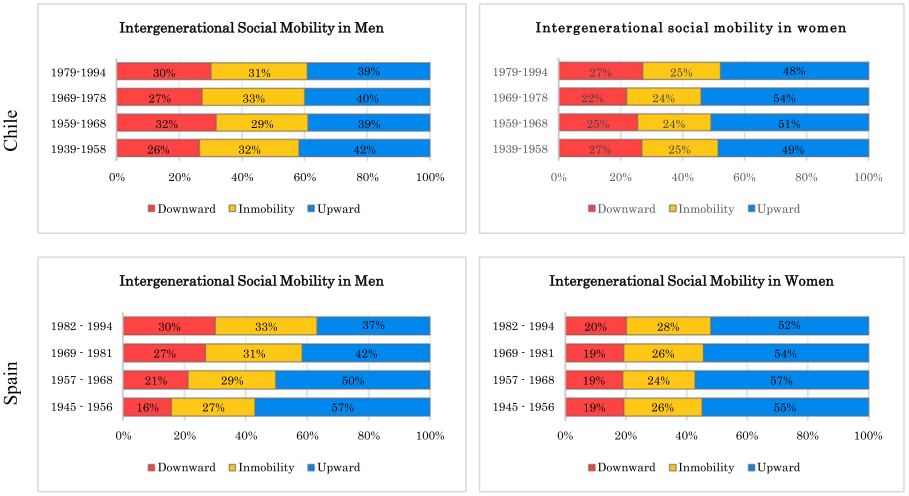

Fig. 3 Absolute social mobility in Chile and Spain by cohort

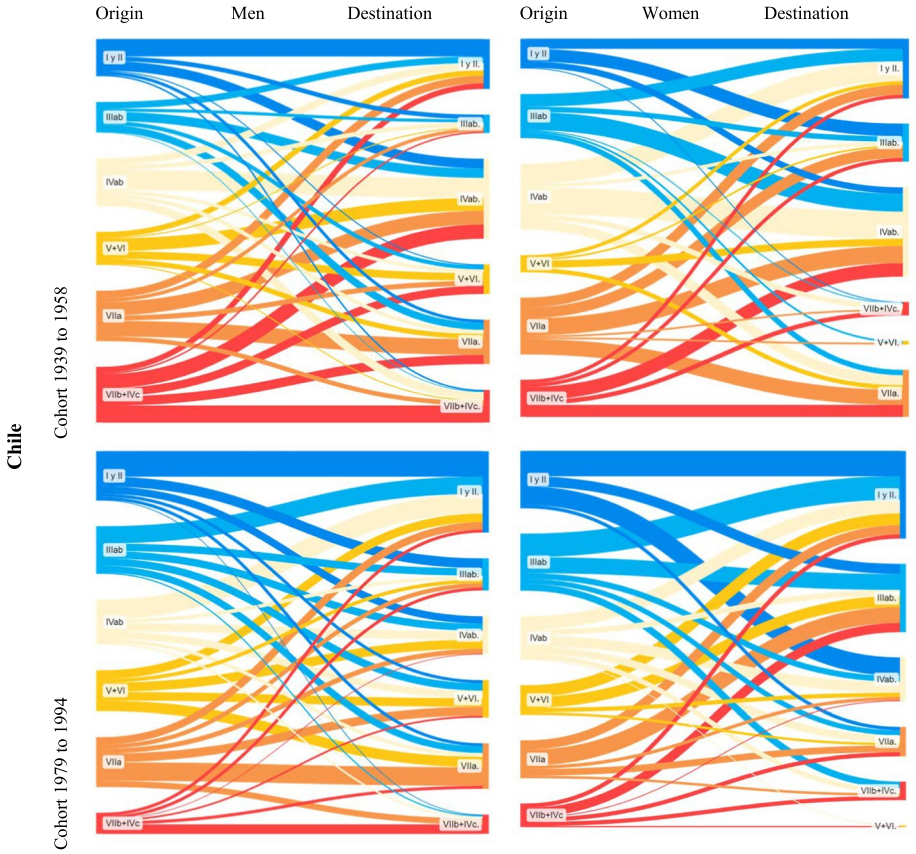

Fig. 4 Global analysis, intergenerational movements, by sex and cohorts for Chile

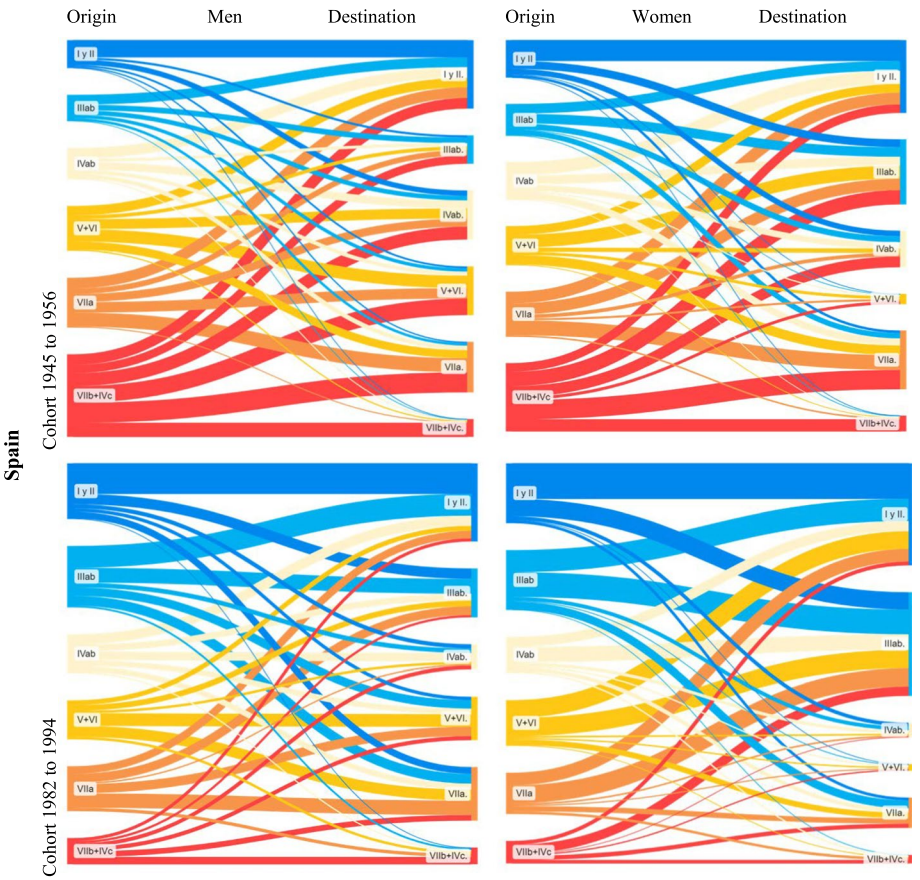

Fig. 5 Global analysis, intergenerational movements, according to sex and cohorts for the Spanish case

fostering inheritance and downward mobility. Men in Chile have remained basically constant over the periods analysed (see Fig. 3).

Figure 4 analyses the intergenerational movements of men and women in Chile, separated by cohorts between the first and the last. In the first cohort of men, a higher proportion of the working class moves up to higher classes. For women, the movement is lower, indicating that it is more difficult to reach the service class from a low social position. Men have more homogeneous movements.

For those born between 1979 and 1994, the movements are more concentrated in the service and technical/administrative classes, with few downward movements for men. Women, on the other hand, show downward movements towards the self-employed class, especially if their origin is the service class. The administrative/technical class facilitates upward movements towards the service class for both sexes.

Figure 5 shows the intergenerational movements of the Spanish population, differentiated by sex and cohort, between the first and the last, these graphs allow us to visualise the changes in the social structure.

Between 1945 and 1956, most of the movements were upward from the working class to other classes, with more movements towards the nearer classes and less towards the higher classes. Gender differences are minimal, although women have a slight advantage in moving up into the service class. Downward movements are rare.

For those born between 1982 and 1994, social origin shifts from the working classes to the service classes for both men and women. Movements are mostly upward or downward towards nearer classes, mainly between classes I and II, IIIab or IVab.

7.4 Logistic Regression Analysis for Chile and Spain

This analysis uses logistic regression to identify factors that explain upward intergenerational social mobility. First, upward mobility is compared with immobility and offspring. Then, a multinomial logistic analysis is performed considering destination class as the dependent variable, using a 3-class EGP.[1] We use beta values (B) and Odds Ratios (Exp(B)), and for greater precision, the Average Marginal Effects (margins) following the recommendations of Mood (2010, 2017) and Ballesteros (2018). Since, in logistic regressions, to make comparisons between different sample types in conformation and size, it is not possible to have a specific comparative interpretation with ORs, as there may be unobserved heterogeneity (given by omitted variables in the model that may be related to the dependent variable). Therefore, the use of margins is recommended as they are not sensitive to variation in unobserved heterogeneity. This procedure is performed with STATA version 16.

Table 3 compares Chile and Spain, using upward mobility as a reference. Four key variables are considered:

1. *Parents' education:* In both countries, the higher the parents' level of education, the lower the probability of upward mobility. In Spain, having parents with completed secondary education reduces upward mobility by 19% for men and 22% for women. With tertiary education, the reduction is greater (32% for men and 39% for women). In Chile, parents' tertiary education reduces the probability of upward mobility by 46% for men and 37% for women.
2. *Mother's education:* In Chile, it is only relevant for women with mothers with tertiary education, reducing the probability of upward mobility by 31%. In Spain, the mother's secondary education is not relevant for men, but other categories show reductions between 6 and 29% for men, and between 6 and 31% for women.
3. *Household homogamy:* In Chile, it is beneficial for upward mobility if the father has the best occupational class in the household (19.9% for men and 28% for women). In Spain, it is beneficial if both parents or only the father has the best class, with a minimum contribution of 22%. For Spanish women, the benefit is minimal (1.7%).
4. *Respondents' current education:* In Spain, having secondary or tertiary education increases upward mobility by 12–29% for men. In Chile, the increase is higher, between 19 and 40%. For Spanish women, any level of education increases the chances of upward mobility, from 7% with primary education to 29% with higher education. In Chile, only higher education has a significant impact (33%).

[1] A 3-class EGP is used for this analysis, Services with I and II, Intermediate with IIIab, IVab and V + VI and the manual class, with classes VIIa + VIIb + IVc.

Table 3 A binary logistic regression analysis of upward intergenerational social mobility, disaggregated by sex. *Source*: Enes (2009) & ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile, and ECV (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Model: upward mobility vs rest	Spain						Chile					
	Men			Women			Men			Women		
Coefficients	B	Exp(B)	Margin	B	Exp(B)	Margin	B	Exp(B)	Margin	B	Exp(B)	Margin
Constant	−0.581	0.559		0.331	1.39		−2.378	0.093		−1.676	0.187	
Father education ISCED 0+1 (ref.)												
ISCED 2	−0.249	0.779**	−0.056*	−0.020	0.979	−0.004	−0.149	0.861	−0.093	0.130	1.138	0.133*
ISCED 3+4	−0.904	0.404**	−0.193**	−1.012	0.363**	−0.225**	−0.725	0.484	−0.176	−0.487	0.614	−0.069
ISCED 5+6	−1.688	0.184**	−0.321**	−1.904	0.148**	−0.398**	−3.186	0.041**	−0.466**	−1.772	0.169**	−0.374**
Mother education ISCED 0+1 (ref.)												
ISCED 2	−0.277	0.758**	−0.060**	−0.321	0.725**	−0.069**	0.283	1.326	−0.024	−0.228	0.795	−0.023
ISCED 3+4	−0.120	0.886	−0.026	−0.548	0.578**	−0.119**	−0.676	0.508	−0.179	−0.525	0.591	0.060
ISCED 5+6	−1.355	0.257**	−0.256**	−1.475	0.228**	−0.310**	0.062	1.064	−0.007	−0.940	0.390**	−0.313**
Homogamy home (ref. Madre)												
Dominance's father	0.479	1.614**	0.142**	0.233	1.262**	0.017**	1.099	3.001**	0.199*	0.907	2.476**	0.281**
Homogamy	−0.705	0.493**	0.248**	−0.844	0.429**	0.224**	0.886	2.425*	0.216	0.186	1.204	0.147
Education actual ISCED 0+1 (ref.)												
ISCED 2	0.121	1.128	0.023	0.363	1.437**	0.074**	0.659	1.933*	0.095	0.687	1.987*	0.084
ISCED 3+4	0.614	1.847**	0.125**	0.893	2.442**	0.184**	1.223	3.396**	0.198*	1.398	4.048**	0.119
ISCED 5+6	1.381	3.978**	0.291**	1.465	4.326**	0.295**	2.045	7.728**	0.403**	2.094	8.119**	0.336**
R^2 Nagelkerke en %	16.6			22.0			17.4			19.0		
Sig	0.000			0.000			0.000			0.000		
n	6769			6208			855			581		
Cut-off point	0.5			0.5			0.5			0.5		

** $p<0.01$; * $p<0.05$

7.5 Relative Mobility

This section analyses relative mobility in Chile and Spain to assess equality of opportunity and social fluidity in each country. Log-linear regression models are used to identify the pattern and intensity of the association between class origins and destinations, neutralising the effects of marginal distributions.

Three-way analyses are performed, considering the variables: Social Origin (O) in 6 classes, Social Destination (D) in 6 classes, Education (E) in 4 levels according to ISCED 97, and Cohorts (C). In Spain 4 cohorts are used, while in Chile they are reduced to 3 cohorts due to data availability.

The design includes:

1. OD-C: Relationship between Origin and Destination across cohorts.
2. OE-C: Relationship between Origin and Education across cohorts.
3. ED-C: Relationship between Education and Social Destination across cohorts.
4. OD-E: Relationship between Origin and Social Destiny across educational levels.

Two models are evaluated:

Constant association model (CnSF): Relative mobility rates do not change over time.
Uniform differences model (Unidiff): Assesses whether social fluidity has increased or decreased over time. A baseline value of 1 indicates the base in the first period; values greater than 1 indicate greater rigidity and less than 1 indicate greater fluidity.

To choose the best model, we analyse the differences in the chi-square, which are generated from the differences between the Likelihood Squared (L2) statistic and the degrees of freedom (df). If the chi-square is significant, the Unidiff model is chosen, indicating changes in social fluency. If it is not significant, the model is held constant, reflecting persistent inequalities.

Origin–Destination Association across cohorts (OD-C): This analysis measures relative mobility in Spain and Chile, comparing men and women to determine whether inequalities have remained the same or changed over time.

Table 4 analyses the association between origin and destination across cohorts, differentiating by gender and country. The differences between the constant model and the unidiff model (A1-A2) are not significant, indicating that inequalities persist over time and that social origin continues to have a strong influence. These results are consistent in both countries. The study by Fachelli et al. (2023), using the same surveys but with a different cohort and different ages, found that for women there is social fluidity in the association between origin and destination.

These models (B1–B2) analyse inequalities in educational opportunities (Table 5). A stronger association suggests that social origin is related to educational achievement: the higher the social origin, the higher the educational attainment. In the case of Spaniard men, the unidiff model was preferred, as changes across cohorts (second and third) are significant ($p = 0.009$). However, the values show a pattern close to constancy, similar to that found in the other cases: Spaniard women and Chilean men and women.

Inequality of educational opportunities persists over time, with the effect of social origin on educational attainment being maintained, as several studies in Spain have shown.

Education-Destination Association across Cohorts (ED-C): Human capital theory suggests that education should be associated with increasing levels of occupational

Table 4 Log-linear model. *Source*: Enes (2009) & ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile, and ECV (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Model Spain	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men (n = 23.739)					Women (n = 18.797)				
Three-way models	OD-C (observed trend of social fluidity)									
A1. Constante [OC] [DC] [OD]	208.04	75	0.000	− 547.54	2.86	192.7	75	0.000	-545.38	3.37
A2. Unidiff	205.09	72	0.000	− 520.26	2.80	189.71	72	0.000	− 518.84	3.34
Difference A1-A2	2.95	3	***0.399***			2.99	3	***0.393***		
Cohorts	1945–1956	1957–1968	1969–1981	1982–1994		1945–1956	1957–1968	1969–1981	1982–1994	
Unidiff [OD-C]	1.000	0.9588	0.9909	1.0424		1.0000	0.9299	0.9585	0.8636	
Model Chile	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men (n = 2.376)					Women (n = 1.308)				
Three-way models	OD-C (observed trend of social fluidity)									
A1. Constant [OC] [DC] [OD]	78.26	50	0.007	− 310.39	6.59	86.65	50	0.001	− 272.15	8.3
A2. Unidiff	77.5	48	0.005	**− 295.61**	6.71	86.28	48	0.001	**− 258.17**	**8.16**
Difference A1-A2	0.76	2	***0.684***			0.37	2	***0.831***		
Cohorts	1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994			1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994		
Unidiff [OD-C]	1.000	1.0041	1.1034			1.0000	1.1906	1.0361		

Likelihood, Constant vs. Unidiff, Social Fluidity for OD-C

Table 5 Log-linear model. *Source*: Enes (2009) & ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile, and ECV (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Model Spain	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men (n = 23,739)					Women (n = 18,797)				
Three-way models	OE-C (inequality of educational opportunities)									
B1. Constant [OC] [EC] [OE]	155.13	45	0.000	−298.2	2.7	136.13	45	0.000	−306.7	2.4
B2. Unidiff	143.64	42	0.000	−279.5	2.7	132.54	42	0.000	−280.8	2.4
Difference B1-B2	11.49	3	***0.009****			3.59	3	0.309		
Cohorts	1945–1956	1957–1968	1969–1981	1982–1994		1945–1956	1957–1968	1969–1981	1982–1994	
Unidiff [OE-C]	1.000	0.929	0.873	1.0449		1.0000	0.9120	0.8727	0.9055	
Model Chile	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men (n = 2.376)					Women (n = 1.308)				
Three-way models	OE-C (inequality of educational opportunities)									
B1. constant [OC] [EC] [OE]	70.35	30	0.000	−162.9	6.4	25.37	30	0.706	−189.8	4.9
B2. Unidiff	68.53	28	0.000	−149.2	6.2	24.39	28	0.660	−176.4	4.6
Difference B1-B2	1.82	2	0.403			0.98	2	0.613		
Cohorts	1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994			1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994		
Unidiff [OE-C]	1.000	1.1708	1.035			1.0000	1.1870	1.0048		

Likelihood, Constant vs. Unidiff, Social Fluidity for OE-C

expressing significance (**p < 0.01; * p < 0.05)

Table 6 Log-linear model. *Source*: Enes (2009) & ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile, and ECV (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Model Spain	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men *(n = 23.739)*					Women *(n = 18.797)*				
Three-way models	ED-C (return to education)									
C1. Constant [EC] [DC] [ED]	131.6	45	0.000	− 321.8	2.2	201.3	45	0.000	− 241.6	3.3
C2. Unidiff	108.1	42	0.000	− 315	1.9	167	42	0.000	− 246.3	3
Difference C1-C2	23.44	3	**0.000**			34.23	3	***0.000***		
Cohorts	1945–1956	1957–1968	1969–1981	1982–1994		1931–1940	1941–1950	1951–1960	1961–1970	
Unidiff [ED-C]	1.000	0.8655	0.903	1.03		1.0000	0.8821	0.8231	0.7071	
Model Chile	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men (n = 2.376)					Women(n = 1.308)				
Three-way models	ED-C (return to education)									
C1. Constant [EC] [DC] [ED]	39.58	30	0.113	− 193.7	4	36.44	30	0.194	− 178.8	5.2
C2. Unidiff	36.88	28	0.121	− 180.8	4	34.32	28	0.191	− 166.5	4.8
Difference C1-C2	2.7	2	0.259			2.12	2	0.346		
Cohorts	1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994			1939–1957	1958–1973	1974–1994		
Unidiff [ED-C]	1.000	1.1758	1.208			1.0000	0.8450	0.7667		

Likelihood, Constant vs. Unidiff, Social Fluidity for ED-C

Table 7 Log-linear model. Source: Enes (2009) & ISSP (1999–2009-2019) for Chile, and ECV (2005–2011-2019) for Spain

Model Spain	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men *(n = 23.739)*					Women *(n = 18.797)*				
Three-way modelS	OD-E (compositional effect of education)									
D1. Constant [OE] [DE] [OD]	179.8	75	0.000	−575.8	2.9	179.3	75	0.000	−558.8	2.89
D2. Unidiff	174.1	72	0.000	−551.3	2.9	165.00	72	0.000	−543.6	2.6
Difference D1-D2	5.66	3	0.129			14.33	3	**0.002**		
Educational level (ISCED)	0–1	2	3–4	5–6		0–1	2	3–4	5–6	
Unidiff [OD-E]	1.000	1.0508	0.9412	1.0736		1.0000	0.8876	0.6517	0.9370	
Model Chile[a]	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I	L^2	d.f	Sig	BIC	D.I
	Men *(n = 2.376)*					Women *(n = 1.308)*				
Three-way models	OD-E (compositional effect of education)									
D1. Constant [OE] [DE] [OD]	158.9	75	0.000	−425.2	8.9	127.5	75	0.000	−411.0	9.7
D2. Unidiff	132.0	72	0.000	−428.0	7.6	125.3	72	0.000	−391.7	9.5
Difference D1-D2	26.85	3	***0.000***			2.28	3	0.516		
Educational level (ISCED)	0–1	2	3–4	5–6		0–1	2	3–4	5–6	
Unidiff [OD-E]	1.000	0.391	0.4835	0.7855		1.0000	1.008	0.6083	2.8955	

Likelihood, Constant vs. Unidiff, Social Fluidity for OD-E

[a]In the case of Chile, due to the small sample size, we followed Jorrat's (2014) recommendation to avoid estimation bias, which involves adding 0.1 to each cell in the frequency table used

qualification. Table 6 shows differences between both countries. In Spain, the unidiff model is preferred, indicating clear changes across cohorts for both men and women. Men maintain consistency in the last cohort, while women exhibit a trend towards fluidity, reducing the association between education and occupation, which contradicts the meritocratic hypothesis. Across cohorts, unidiff values decrease, showing a 29.25% reduction in the ED association for women between the first and last cohorts.

In Chile, both men and women show consistency in inequalities over time, with no significant evidence of changes between cohorts, which does not support the credentialism hypothesis.

7.6 Compositional Effect of Education (OD-E)

It is expected that as the level of education increases, the association between origin and destination decreases. However, different patterns emerge depending on the country and gender.

In Spain, men display a constant association between origin and destination across educational levels, indicating that social origin continues to influence social destination regardless of education. Although there is a trend towards fluidity at higher educational levels (ISCED 3–4), it is not statistically significant. Women, on the other hand, shows a trend towards greater fluidity, particularly at intermediate educational levels. However, at the highest educational level, the association increases by 28%, remaining fluid but with a value of 0.93 compared to 0.65 at the previous level.

In Chile, men support the unidiff model, showing that the association between origin and destination is not constant and is stronger among those with complete secondary and primary education. For Chilean women, the constancy model is preferred, as there are no significant differences between the models, indicating a persistent association between origin and destination across educational levels (see Table 7).

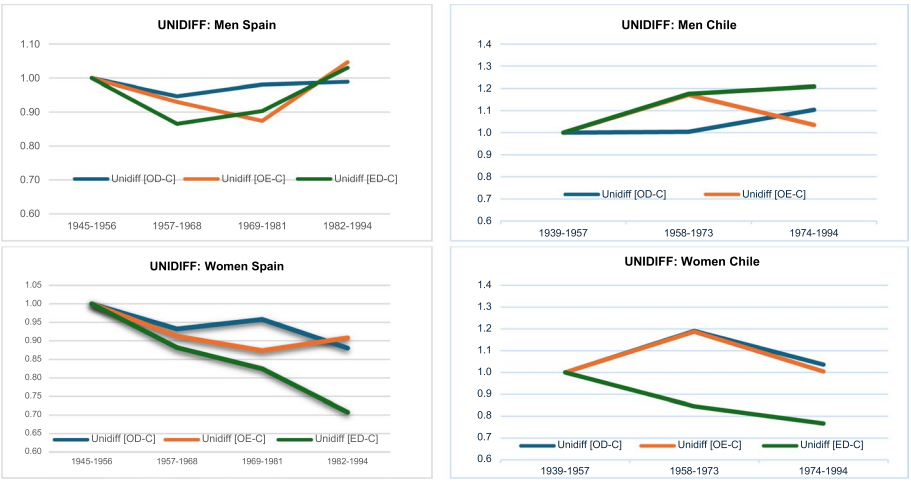

Fig. 6 Graph showing the trend observed in the OED triangle association

The graphs in Fig. 6 shows movement across cohorts. In Spain, women maintain social fluidity in each type of association, whereas for men, the fluidity observed in the first three cohorts turns into rigidity in the last period.

In Chile, greater rigidity is perceived across cohorts compared to Spain, especially among men. Chilean women exhibit slightly more fluidity compared to men, particularly in the association between class and education, which weakens over the different periods.

8 Conclusions

Over time, both Chile and Spain have experienced important changes in social mobility, with the increasing participation of women in upward mobility processes standing out. Nevertheless,, these dynamics reflect profound structural differences influenced by the economic, educational and social context of each country. In Spain, the decline in upward mobility for men, accompanied by an increase in immobility or downward mobility, contrasts with the progress observed for women. In Chile, the unskilled working classes, especially in agriculture, represent a larger proportion of the population, highlighting the structural inequalities associated with the neoliberal economic model, characterised by less labour market regulation and high levels of privatisation in higher education (Bustelo, 1992; Martín-Artiles et al., 2021).

Theoretical analysis highlights that social inequality is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be reduced to income distribution alone (Alvaredo & Piketty, 2010; Atkinson & Bourguignon, 2000). In this sense, education is positioned as a crucial factor for social mobility, acting as a mediator between social origin and occupational destination (Barone, 2020). In both countries, educational reforms have increased access, especially in higher education, where Spanish women have achieved greater representation. This is reflected in the persistence of educational inequalities, which are influenced by cultural capital and the unequal opportunities associated with social origin (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996). This reinforces the thesis that educational institutions tend to reproduce privileges and structural inequalities, consolidating the advantages of the dominant classes (Bourdieu, 1989; Cuenca, 2012).

In terms of relative mobility, the origin–destination association remains strong in both countries, although with different degrees of intensity. In Chile, the education-destination (ED) association has declined in recent cohorts, while in Spain the origin–destination (OD) association persists, especially for men. This pattern reflects the meritocracy hypothesis in Spain, in which high levels of education strengthen the relationship between social origin and destination, while in Chile there remains a greater dependence on the family context and the occupations of the head of household (Barone, 2020; Bourdieu, 1989).

From a gender perspective, current literature suggests that social mobility studies have historically ignored women's experience, assuming that their trajectories depended on those of men (Abbot et al., 2005; Wright, 2018). However, the increasing incorporation of women into the labour market has led to specific patterns that challenge this traditional view. In Chile, for instance, women encounter substantial barriers to entering the labour market, frequently characterised by informality and precariousness, which adversely impacts their long-term mobility (Mancini, 2016). In Spain, while greater fluidity has been achieved in recent cohorts, traditional gender roles, such as 'double presence', continue to limit women's career development opportunities by imposing both

productive and reproductive responsibilities (Balbo, 1994; Carrasquer, 2013; Torns, 2008).

In addition, the economic and educational models of each country reflect structural differences that directly influence mobility trajectories. The Chilean neoliberal model, predicated on market efficiency and minimal state intervention, has been shown to perpetuate structural barriers to equal opportunities (Bustelo, 1992). Conversely, the social market economy model in Spain, despite its increased regulation, has recently confronted challenges related to male mobility rigidity. This underscores the need to incorporate institutional and cultural factors into social mobility studies (Fachelli et al., 2020; Requena et al., 2013).

In conclusion, an analysis of social mobility in Chile and Spain reveals that barriers to mobility are deeply rooted in the economic, educational and cultural structures of each country. Education, although crucial for promoting upward mobility, also acts as a mechanism for the reproduction of inequalities, particularly when influenced by cultural capital and unequal initial opportunities (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1996).

The findings of this study are of pivotal for the design of public policies that promote greater equality of opportunity and reduce structural gaps. Finally, this paper highlights the need to integrate a gender perspective into studies of social mobility, recognising that women face specific barriers that limit their access to the higher social classes. Future studies should focus on the interaction between gender, education and the labour market, as well as the impact of equality policies, in order to offer comprehensive solutions to persistent social mobility challenges.

8.1 Implications and Future Lines of Research

The study's findings have significant implications for sociology and public policy. The persistence of social immobility in certain groups indicates the necessity for specific interventions to enhance equity in access to opportunities. Education reforms must persist in their focus on reducing inequalities of social origin, promoting greater accessibility and quality in education for all social groups. Furthermore, it is imperative to integrate a gender perspective in social mobility studies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of gender inequalities. The implementation of policies promoting equal opportunities in education and employment has been demonstrated to have a positive impact on women's social mobility. The study's limitations include the lack of consistent longitudinal data in some contexts, which hinders the ability to track trends over time. Future studies could benefit from the regular collection of data and the use of comparative methodologies to analyse cross-country differences more accurately.

In conclusion, addressing barriers to social mobility necessitates a comprehensive and sustained approach over time, with public policies that promote equal opportunities and reduce structural inequalities. Education and gender equality policies emerge as pivotal factors to foster greater social mobility and social justice in Chile and Spain.

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