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Inequality of Educational Returns in France. Some Evidence of Change in the Relative Importance of the Effect of Education and Social Background on Occupational Careers

Milan Bouchet-Valat   INED

Camille Peugny   CRESPPA, Université Paris 8

Louis-André Vallet   Sciences Po, OSC, CNRS

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In contemporary France, does social origin still have an influence when young men and women leave the educational system upon receiving their degree and present themselves on the labor market for their first job? If, even in a post-industrial society (Bell, 1973), family background still affects the degree of success of this first step among youths with the same educational assets, does this ascription effect endure over the course of their subsequent occupational careers? Could it be the case that, in a country characterized by tremendous educational expansion over recent decades, the long-lasting effect of social origin has become more prominent in the most recent cohorts as compared to the previous ones? Finally, have returns to education followed an opposite trend, thereby reflecting a recent shift in the relative balance between ascription and achievement?

These questions are of central interest for both the study of French society and the more general understanding of fundamental social stratification processes that govern the dynamics of occupational attainment over the life course. Such issues are indeed sharply debated in current sociology. In particular, the 'Increased Merit Selection' hypothesis – as labeled by Jonsson (1993) – has suggested that, in modern societies, "access to education becomes decreasingly determined by class origin and that class position is increasingly dependent on educational achievement, as the influence of characteristics associated with family background becomes irrelevant" (Whelan and Layte, 2002: 38). If so, labor market success in modern societies would increasingly depend on 'merit' as embodied in own educational achievement. However, other scholars have suggested that social background might well become increasingly relevant, especially as a consequence of the development of job positions within the tertiary sector for which employers attach importance to "attributes that, rather than being achieved through ability and effort displayed within the educational system, are acquired more or less as a matter of course through family or community socialisation" (Jackson, Goldthorpe and Mills, 2005: 13).

This chapter aims at conducting an empirical examination of the aforementioned questions on the basis of large scale, high quality and nationally representative data that spans the evolution of French society from 1977 to 2003 and the labor market situation of cohorts born between 1938 and 1975. We begin by reviewing the literature that has examined trends in social stratification and mobility in France. In so doing, we will pay special attention to the empirical studies that, adopting a period perspective, have analyzed the gross Origin-Destination (OD) association, the 'direct' (i.e. net of Education), Origin-Destination association and, more generally, the so-called Origin-Education-Destination (OED) 'triangle'. We will also review the French literature that, over the last two decades, has adopted a cohort perspective to investigate change in the labor market returns to education and social origin across cohorts that have been differentially affected by educational expansion. Then we will present our material – the four Formation & Qualification Professionnelle (FQP) surveys conducted in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003 – as well as the definition of our dependent and explanatory variables, and the method of analysis. The third section will be devoted to a systematic overview of our empirical answers to the four fundamental research questions that we address: (i) the existence or non-existence of a 'direct' effect of class origin on labor market success; (ii) whether or not this effect varies in its intensity over educational categories; (iii) whether or not it has declined over time; (iv) whether or not returns to education have decreased. Our contribution will answer these questions for France, not only on the basis of the central dependent variables put forward in the comparative project – two continuous measures of labor market success based on a socioeconomic or occupational prestige score on one hand, current wage on the other hand –, but also by using two qualitative variables that more directly reflect the class position attained, namely getting access to the service class and 'avoiding' the working class. We will conclude with a final discussion of our results, putting them in perspective with both previous research about French society and the general theses that have been advanced in social stratification research.

Origin-Destination and Origin-Education-Destination dynamics in French society: A review of the literature

In a well-acclaimed book published more than thirty years ago, Thélot (1982: 148-9) provided a convincing test of whether or not, for all occupied men aged between 35 and 52 in 1970, class origin still exerts a long-lasting and 'direct' effect on their current class position. To be more precise, the author postulated a specific model of class attainment in which class position at the entrance on the labor market depends on both education attained and class origin, and class position in 1970 depends on both education attained and first class position. That is to say, in such a model, all the influence of class background on current class destination is 'indirect', as it only goes through its effects on educational attainment and first footsteps in the labor market. Estimating the father-son mobility table that should have been observed if such a theoretical model would have been valid, Thélot concluded that it clearly diverged from the real 1970 mobility table in two ways: the model systematically underestimates class immobility in all diagonal cells of the mobility table; on the other hand it strongly overestimates the proportion of men who, while originating in the non agricultural employer or self-employed class, or in the higher or lower service class, have, in their mature age, descended into the working class.

Thélot therefore concluded that the long-lasting effect of class origin over the entire occupational career is fundamentally twofold. It reinforces class immobility and also inhibits strong social demotion. Applying the same analytical strategy to the corresponding population of all occupied women aged between 35 and 52 in 1970, Vallet (1991: 304-11) subsequently demonstrated that the same conclusions also hold for women, albeit with an interesting nuance. The deviations between the real father-daughter table and the one implied by the theoretical model are weaker among females than they are among males, suggesting that, in the 1970s French society, education attained and class position at the entrance on the labor market were more powerful determinants of female subsequent occupational trajectories, and/or pointing to the fact that, in the absence of mother's class position that was not documented in the 1970 FQP survey, father's class position might possibly synthesize the whole class background less accurately for women than for men.

While the above analyses specifically addressed the issue of the existence of a long-term effect of class origin in French society, over and above its influence on obtained education and first occupational paths, a larger number of articles in journals or chapters in books have examined temporal trends in the gross Origin-Destination association, both in absolute and relative terms. Both Goldthorpe and Portocarero (1981) for the period 1953-1970, Thélot (1982) for 1953-1977, then Vallet (1999) between 1953 and 1993, and recently Vallet (2014) between 1977 and 2003 have pointed to the same two-fold conclusion. Absolute rates of social mobility, i.e. observed mobility, have increased over the second half of the 20th century, especially as a consequence of the transformation from an agricultural to an industrial, then post-industrial society, but not only for such a 'structural' reason. That is to say, relative rates of social mobility, i.e. social fluidity, have also slightly and monotonically risen. Vallet (1999) estimated for instance that, for both French working men and women aged between 35 and 59, the strength of the statistical association between class origin and class destination – measured in the scale of logged odds ratios – has diminished over forty years at an annual rate of 0.5%. It is notable that this diagnosis of slightly increasing openness in the French social structure has been extended to, and confirmed by, analyses of homogamy tables among married and cohabiting couples between 1969 and 2011, for both education, class destination and class origin (Bouchet-Valat, 2014).

In his contribution to *Social Mobility in Europe* (Breen, 2004), Vallet has scrutinized the causes of this increase in social fluidity, introducing education as an intermediate va-

riable between origin and destination, i.e. analyzing the OED 'triangle'. According to his conclusions for both men and women, three elementary processes have intervened: an uneven decline in the inequality of educational opportunity (the Origin-Education association); a decline in the relative occupational advantage afforded by education (the net Education-Destination association); a compositional effect by which the expansion of education has progressively increased the relative size of educational categories for which the direct effect of origin on destination is reduced[1]. It is remarkable that, among the three sides of the OED 'triangle', the 'direct' OD side was found the most stable over the period 1970-93, a conclusion that also corroborated Goux and Maurin's previous statement that "there is no evidence of a decline of the OD net association" (1997: 173).

While the aforementioned contributions have analyzed the dynamics of the relationships between class origin, education, and class destination in France following a period perspective, i.e. on the basis of surveys conducted in different years, other works have adopted the complementary view provided by a birth cohort perspective (see, in particular, Baudelot and Establet, 2000; Chauvel, 1998a). The latter author has emphasized that French men and women born between the late 1930s and the late 1940s have benefited from a clearly propitious context that no longer existed to the same extent for subsequent cohorts. They became more qualified than their elders as a consequence of the first French educational expansion (Chauvel, 1998b). Moreover, they got high returns to their educational investments because of the rapid transformation of the French occupational structure, especially the increase of the tertiary sector and the multiplication of medium- and high-skilled corresponding jobs.

More recently, using a series of five French Labor Force Surveys,

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1. This compositional effect has also been described for the United States (Hout, 1988). According to Vallet's analyses, the capability of advanced education to weaken the 'ascriptive' effect has diminished over the course of the educational expansion, thereby suggesting that a given tertiary degree, being less rare in 1993 than in 1970, might well represent a less strong signal, consequently becoming less powerful in offsetting the origins effect.

Peugny (2007) has scrutinized the social mobility experience of men and women belonging to birth cohorts that span half a century (from 1924-28 for the oldest to 1974-78 for the youngest). Using a classification inspired by the Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero class schema and computing the ratio of upward mobility to downward mobility, he confirmed that this statistic culminated for men and women born between 1939 and 1948, then regularly declined for subsequent cohorts. For instance, at the age of 35 to 39, the ratio amounted at 2.55 for men in the 1944-48 cohort, but 1.63 in the 1964-68 one, and respectively 1.68 and 1.20 for women. The declining trend in the ratio statistic is partly related to a less rapid and less favorable evolution in the occupational and social structure during the recent decades as opposed to the 'Trente Glorieuses' period, despite the fact that the cohorts born during the 1960s were remarkably more educated as a consequence of the second French educational expansion. Using linear multiple regression to analyze the determinants of a socio-economic status score for, separately, men and women in the 1941-50, 1949-58, and 1959-68 cohorts, the author simultaneously highlights clear signs of declining occupational returns to education across cohorts, as well as an increasing net effect of the father's socio-economic status score.

Data and Methods

To address our research questions, we use four surveys that belong to the *Formation & Qualification Professionnelle (FQP)* series and were conducted in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003 by the French Statistical Office (INSEE) in metropolitan France. These large-scale surveys (N=39,103 in 1977; 39,233 in 1985; 18,332 in 1993; and 39,285 in 2003), with a highly comparable design and questionnaire, are usually considered as offering unique information about social background, educational career and qualifications, position on the labor market and detailed characteristics of occupation both in the first job and at the time of the survey (or last occupation for people unemployed or out of the labor force), as well as detailed information about wage in the year before the survey.

We restrict our analytical sample to persons born in metropolitan France in order to avoid fragile comparisons between immigrants and natives: educational career and first job of immigrants may often have taken place in another country where our categories do not apply; moreover, even when studying current job in France, a time-dependent effect might well be introduced as a consequence of the significant variations in immigration inflows, outflows and policies over the period. We also focus exclusively on people aged 28 to 65 in each survey, so that most respondents have completed their education and are not yet retired (or not for too long)[2].

We model three different outcome variables with respect to both first and current job: occupational prestige score, accessing the service class, and avoiding the working class. Occupational prestige scores are taken from Chambaz, Maurin and Torelli (1998), and were obtained via a survey in which respondents were asked to rate typical detailed occupations on a five-grade scale. We use the scores computed for 16 occupational categories, ranging from -1.52 for unskilled workers to +2.19 for liberal professions.

Accessing the service class corresponds to membership in the Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (EGP) classes I and II. Avoiding the working class corresponds to belonging to another EGP class than classes IIIb, VI, VIIa and VIIb. Such a definition of the working class is therefore a broad one, as it includes not only blue-collar workers (both skilled and unskilled), but also agricultural workers and lower-grade routine non-manual workers. With regard to the current job, the most recent occupation is used for people who are unemployed or out of the labor market at the time of the survey.

Our fourth outcome variable is the logarithm of the net annual wage for salaried respondents who were employed full-time during 12 months the year before the survey (1976, 1984, 1992 or 2002); it is not available for the first job. Self-employed income is not taken into account since this information is not available for all survey years, and cannot be reliably compared with wages. Mandatory social security contributions (pension and health insurance) are not included in the value of the net wage. On the other hand, in the French system, income taxes are transferred to employees as part of the net wage, and paid directly later by tax payers. The net wage is fully declarative (respondents are explicitly told that the survey is anonymous). It is converted to euros at their 2012 value using the French inflation index computed by the French Statistical Office[3].

Our explanatory variables are as follows. With regard to the respondent's own education, we use the highest diploma obtained in initial schooling, including apprenticeship. The *FQP* surveys allow us to use a detailed educational classification, namely the 'old' version of the CASMIN educational schema with 9 categories (Brauns and Steinmann, 1999: Table A1; see Vallet, 2004: 145 for the correspondence with French diplomas). These categories are: (1a) Inadequately completed general education; (1b) General elementary education; (1c) Basic vocational qualification (with or without 1b); (2a) Intermediate vocational qualification (with or without 2b); (2b) Intermediate general qualification; (2c_voc) Vocational maturity certificate; (2c_gen) General maturity certificate; (3a) Lower tertiary education; (3b) Higher tertiary education.

Social origin of the respondent is measured using the dominant occupational prestige score of the parents, in the same Chambaz, Maurin and Torelli (1998) scale that we use for the respondent's own occupation. This score is defined as the highest of the two parents' individual scores; when information about one of the parents is missing, the score of the other is used.

Several control variables are introduced in the third and subsequent models. A 'citizenship' variable is created to control

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2. The employment rate of men aged 60-64 in France dropped from 51.0% in 1975 to only 14.4% in 2003, then rose to 23.7% in 2012; the corresponding statistics for men aged 55-59 are 80.3%, 60.0% and 71.0% (INSEE, 2013). Female employment rates are lower, but less variable over time. As a consequence, we emphasize the importance of considering the last occupation for all those who are not currently occupied.

3. Available at http://www.insee.fr/fr/themes/calcul-pouvoir-achat.asp

for the differences between native-born citizens, naturalized citizens and foreigners (all of which born in metropolitan France, cf. supra). The size of the urban or rural area where the parents of the respondent lived when he or she stopped attending school or university on a regular basis allows us to control for geographic differences in the structure of job opportunities at the end of youth. Employment status (salaried or self-employed) is introduced in the models regarding first and current job[4] (but not wage, cf. supra), while work time of the respondent (full-time, part-time, unemployed) only concerns current job; we use it as a control variable because part-time work and unemployment are often undesired situations that negatively impact social status for a given value of the prestige score. Finally, all models from the third one control for gender and, when analyzing first job variables, two dummies respectively capture membership of at least one of the grandfathers to the service class (EGP I-II), or the working class (EGP VI-VIIab), relative to all other situations.

While all first job variables are analyzed following a cohort perspective, distinguishing between those born between 1938-44, 1945-50, 1951-56, 1957-62, 1963-68 and 1969-75 on the basis of the 2003 survey data, all current job variables and the logarithm of the wage are analyzed according to survey year (1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003), introducing age and age-squared as supplementary controls.

When we model the occupational prestige score and the logarithm of the wage, we rely on standard ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions. As for the access to the service class and the avoidance of the working class, we use linear probability models (LPM) estimated similarly. In both cases, sampling weights are used, and reported p-values are based on heteroskedasticity-robust sandwich (Huber-White) standard errors[5].

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4. Regarding current job, employment status is only introduced when modeling occupational prestige score and access to the service class because, for the avoidance of the working class, virtually no members of this class are self-employed in our dataset.
5. Results associated with all our regression models are available in a complementary appendix.

Descriptive Statistics

Educational expansion

As documented above, France experienced a significant educational expansion over the period we study, with an acceleration in the last (1969-75) birth cohort (Table 1). From the 1938-44 cohort to the 1963-68 cohort, the share of people with inadequately completed general education (1a) did not significantly vary; it started decreasing only in the last cohort. By contrast, over all cohorts, the proportion of people with only general elementary education (1b) decreased dramatically, and this category almost disappeared[6]. To a lower extent, basic vocational qualification (1c) also lost importance, particularly in the last cohort.

Most other educational levels increased their share. In particular, that of people with an intermediate vocational qualification (2a) doubled from 7.5% to 15.5%; that of people with a vocational maturity certificate (2c_voc) increased by a factor of 7, from 2.1% to 13.6%; and that of higher educated (3a and 3b) more than tripled, from 10.5% to 36.7%. Only intermediate (2b) and maturity (2c_gen) general education certificates remained stable or slightly decreased (since a large part of their owners also obtained higher educational qualifications).

The acceleration of educational expansion we observe for the last cohort (1969-75) affects certificates above and including general and vocational maturity certificates (the Baccalauréat). This shift corresponds to a new policy initiated in 1985 by the socialist government and aiming at bringing "80% [of a cohort] to the Baccalauréat". That year saw the creation of the Baccalauréat professionnel, a new vocational track which complemented the already existing Baccalauréat de technicien track (both corresponding to 2c_voc). This reform had been prepared since the 1960s by the progressive integration of the elementary, technical and general educational systems, which were pre-

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6. The main certificate of the 1b category, the Certificat d'études primaires, progressively vanished between 1959 (when compulsory schooling was extended until age 16), 1972 (when it remained open only to adults) and 1989 (when it was officially withdrawn).

Table 1. Educational Distribution by Birth Cohort

	1938-44	1945-50	1951-56	1957-62	1963-68	1969-75
1a	21.4	17.6	18.7	20.8	18.5	13.7
1b	27.8	20.1	15.3	4.6	1.2	0.6
1c	16.8	18.8	16.9	14.5	13.6	7.7
2a	7.5	9.0	10.9	15.8	19.4	15.5
2b	9.0	10.6	10.9	12.8	9.3	6.3
2c_voc	2.1	4.1	5.2	7.1	9.2	13.6
2c_gen	4.8	5.1	6.3	6.8	5.5	6.0
3a	3.9	6.4	8.0	10.0	12.3	16.7
3b	6.6	8.4	7.8	7.7	10.9	19.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003)

Table 2. Social Class of First Job by Birth Cohort

	1938-44	1945-50	1951-56	1957-62	1963-68	1969-75
I	6.0	6.7	5.8	6.2	7.1	10.0
II	11.1	12.5	11.9	11.4	14.2	17.1
IIIa	16.6	19.7	21.9	21.8	21.1	19.4
IIIb	12.4	11.8	12.6	13.1	15.2	16.2
IVa	0.9	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3
IVb	2.0	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.6
IVc	7.0	4.0	2.6	2.1	1.5	0.9
V	3.7	4.2	4.4	4.6	5.2	5.2
VI	12.5	13.1	13.2	14.0	13.3	12.2
VIIa	22.3	23.2	23.8	23.5	18.7	16.3
VIIb	5.6	3.3	2.6	2.4	2.6	2.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003)

Table 3. Ratio of Higher Educated to First Jobs in Service Class by Birth Cohort

	1938-44	1945-50	1951-56	1957-62	1963-68	1969-75
Higher education (%)	10.5	14.8	15.8	17.6	23.2	36.7
First job in service class (%)	17.0	19.2	17.7	17.6	21.3	27.0
Ratio	0.6	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.4

(Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003)

viously separated, into a unified track at the lower secondary level. Although the goal of 80% of a cohort at the Baccalauréat level is still not fulfilled in the present day, a major shift in the educational distribution ensued from this policy until 1995, when the rate of bacheliers stabilized around 65%. We observe this process – the second French educational expansion – almost entirely since the 1969-75 cohort typically graduated from the Baccalauréat (at age 18) between 1987 and 1993.

More limited upgrade of the structure of first jobs

The distribution of first jobs also changed significantly, although arguably not at the same rhythm as education (Table 2). Expansion of the service class (I and II) is notable over the last three cohorts (born between 1957 and 1975), with a move from 17.6% to 27.1% of first jobs. This increase has been too slow to absorb the expansion of the share of the higher educated (Table 3): the ratio of the latter to the former monotonically increased from 0.6 to 1.4. While within the first cohort more than one third of first jobs in the service class had to be attributed to people with less than a higher education diploma, within the last cohort, one quarter of the higher educated could not find a first job in this class.

Salaried categories just below the service class only expanded slightly. Class IIIa increased its share in the first three cohorts (1938-56), but stabilized afterwards. Class V gained some importance over all cohorts, but at a very slow pace.

At the bottom of the social structure, the share of blue collar (VI and VIIa) and agricultural workers (VIIb) decreased, especially for the semi- and unskilled workers (VIIa) over the last three cohorts. This change was partly compensated by the expansion of lower-grade routine non-manual positions (IIIb). Overall, the share of the working class decreased moderately, from around 53% in the first four cohorts to 46.7% in the last one.

Regarding the petty bourgeoisie, first jobs were already below 3% in the first cohort for IVa and IVb classes taken together; in the last cohort, they are below 1%. Farmers experienced a sharp reduction in their share, from 7% to less than 1%. Thus, in the most recent cohorts, first jobs almost always correspond to salaried positions.

Moreover, the French labor market has tended to provide the cohorts born from the early 1960s with less secure job positions, often characterized by part-time and short-term contracts. As a consequence of the divergent trend between the educational structure and the occupational structure (Table 3), some authors have also emphasized an increasingly frequent mismatch between the qualification acquired in the educational system and that required on the job for the youngest generations (Baudelot and Glaude, 1989; Forgeot and Gautié, 1997; Goux and Maurin, 1998; Tomasini and Nauze-Fichet, 2002).

Results for Core Models: Occupational Prestige Score & Wage

First Research Question

Whether or not there is a direct effect of social origin over and above that of own education is a question that receives an indisputable positive answer. Let us first consider the analysis of occupational prestige score in the first job. Beginning with Model 1 that only includes cohorts and parental occupational score, a substantial effect of the latter variable is revealed (+0.411). Most of it vanishes when the respondent's education is additionally taken into account (Model 2). However, in this model, the net effect of the parental occupational score still amounts to +0.116 and remains highly significant. This effect is only very slightly reduced when introducing, in Model 3, additional control variables (employment status, gender, citizenship, area size of parental home, and grandfathers' class position). The estimated coefficient of +0.096 implies that an increase in the parental score brings about a change of approximately 10% of its magnitude in the own score. Put in another way, a dominant parental score of 2.19 (the maximum value) rather than one of -1.52 (the minimum) brings a gain in own occupational prestige score of 0.36, which amounts to 19% of the net advantage brought by the possession of a higher tertiary education diploma (3b) compared with an inadequately completed education (1a). The effect of having one grandfather in the service class is not significant at the 5% level, though the coefficient is positive (0.034)[7]. In Models 2 and 3 that control for education, we also

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7. This coefficient increases to about 0.044 and becomes si-

see a substantial and monotonic decline of the prestige score across cohorts, which illustrates the above mentioned loss of value of educational certificates.

Results are very similar when modeling occupational prestige score in the current job. In Model 3, the coefficient of 0.100 is very close to that obtained with the first job (0.096). Returns to higher education degrees are also very similar, but those associated with lower and intermediate diplomas (from 1b to 2c) are clearly higher for the current job than for the first job. That suggests that, while tertiary diplomas 'find their occupational value' in allowing access to high positions from the very outset of the career, the advantage afforded by less prestigious degrees reveals itself later, allowing access to better positions via career mobility.

Coming to the logarithm of the net wage gained during the year before the survey, the origin effect can again be observed. It has indeed the same strength as for the current job prestige score when compared with the effect of own education. Again, control variables introduced in Model 3 do not change the size of this effect much. Here, after controlling for own education and other variables (including age and age-squared), an increase of parental score from the minimum to the maximum value increases the net wage by 19%. This change amounts to 15% of the increase due to the possession of the highest diploma (3b) rather than no diploma at all (1a), which multiplies the wage by a factor of 2.24.

Second Research Question

When we move to our second research question of whether or not the direct effect of social origin is weaker among the higher educated, the answer is again positive for occupational prestige score in the first and the current job, but mixed for log net wage the year before the survey (Model 4). For prestige score in the first job, the effect of parental score culminates at 0.145 for those with inadequately completed education (1a); it is significantly weaker for people with at least a maturity certificate (2c), and especially for those with a general maturity certificate (2c_gen) and a lower tertiary education diploma (3a). For the

gnificant at the 5% level in subsequent models that include the interactions discussed below.

3a category, the effect of parental score almost disappears (it only amounts to 0.024), though it slightly rises to 0.059 for the most educated (3b). This pattern can be observed even more clearly for the prestige score in the current job. Here the effect of parental score culminates at 0.191 for the 1a category, but is nil for the 3a one, and only amounts at 0.042 for the 3b one. As for the socioeconomic value of the first and current jobs, we thus conclude that a higher social background may compensate, to some extent, less remarkable educational assets, and even more in the course of the career than at its outset.

Finally, regarding log net wage the year before the survey, the hypothesis is only partly confirmed. Generally speaking, the effect of parental score is weaker, though still visible, among those who are more educated. However, it is significantly larger for the most educated (3b) than for those immediately below (3a, 2c_voc, 2c_gen); this difference also exists, but is not as visible, when modeling occupational prestige score.

Third Research Question

Whether or not we observe a temporal decline of the direct effect of social origin is a question that receives mixed results. The effect of parental score on prestige score in the first job monotonically declines over cohorts *when returns to education are assumed to have remained the same for all cohorts* (Model 5). This effect is reduced by 31% in the 1969-75 cohort compared with the 1938-44 cohort (Figure 1). Under the abovementioned hypothesis, we would therefore conclude that, at the outset of the occupational career, ascription has declined relative to achievement.

Concerning prestige score in the current job, our conclusions are different. While we do observe a significant decline of 12% in the effect of parental score for the 1993 survey (in contrast with the 1977 one), no statistically significant decline is visible for 1985 and 2003. As for log net wage the year before the survey, no clear evolution is visible across surveys: taking 1977 as a reference, a statistically significant 30% decline of the effect of parental score in 1985 is followed by a non-significant 13% reduction in 1993, then a significant 19% decline in 2003 (see Figure 2). The 1977 survey thus appears to be different from the three other ones, but no trend can be identified. At a more

mature stage in the occupational career, we would conclude that ascription does not have significantly declined in France over the last decades, even when assuming that educational returns have remained constant – an assumption we need to relax in the light of the findings of our fourth research question.

Fourth Research Question

The question of whether returns to education have varied over time puts into perspective the results we have just commented on. Indeed, relaxing the hypothesis that returns to education have remained constant leads to quite different conclusions. For prestige score in first and in current job, as well as for log net wage the year before the survey, returns to education have dramatically varied over time. Introducing the interaction between cohort or survey year and educational level in Model 6 significantly decreases the AIC and BIC statistics compared with Model 5 for all three outcomes, despite the large number of degrees of freedom consumed by these additional parameters.

Figure 1: Effect of Parental Occupational Score on First Job over Cohorts
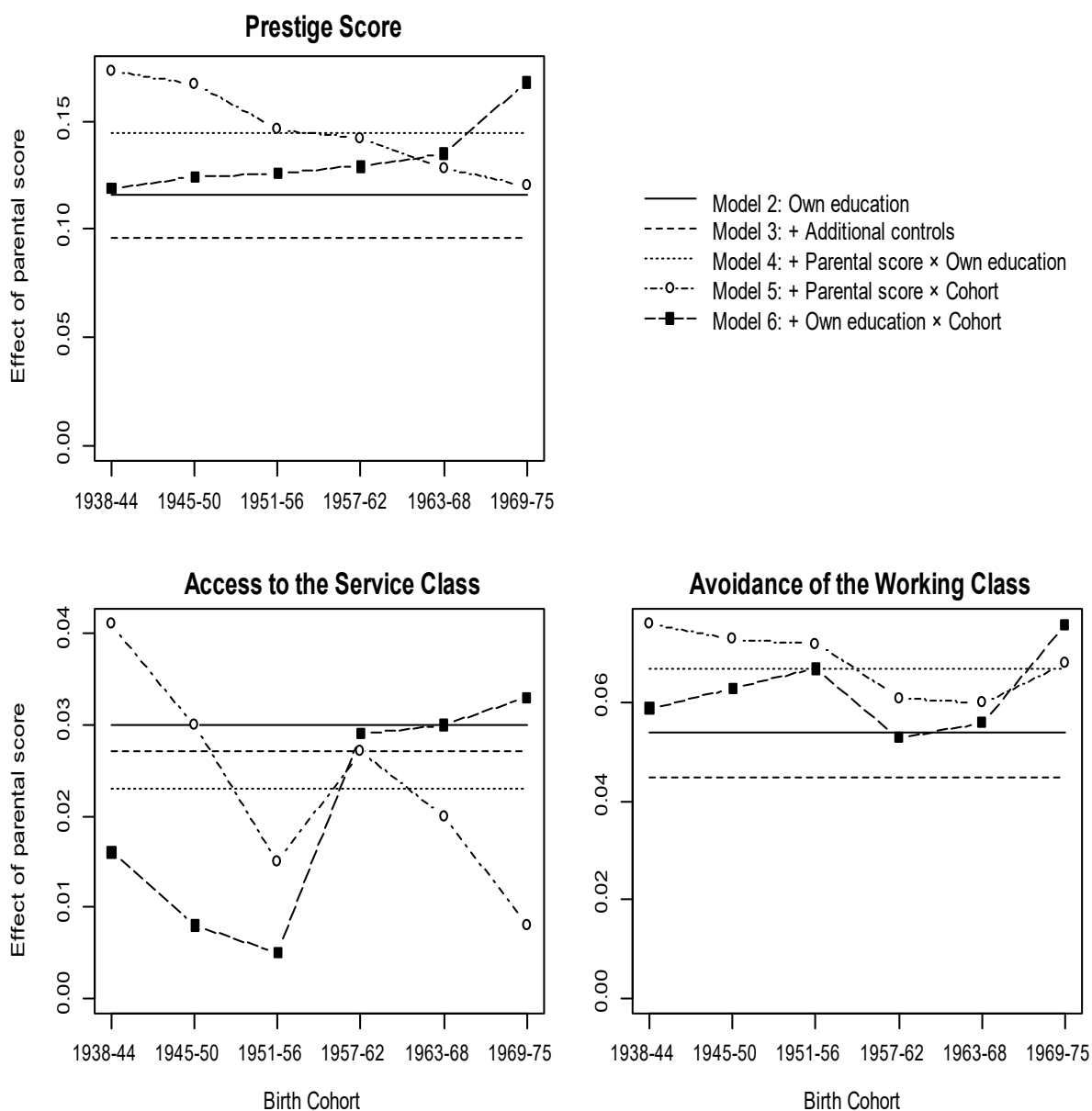
Note: From Model 4 onwards, the displayed coefficients are those for educational category 1a. However, the variation over cohorts is common to all educational categories.

Figure 2: Effect of Parental Occupational Score on Current Job over Survey Years
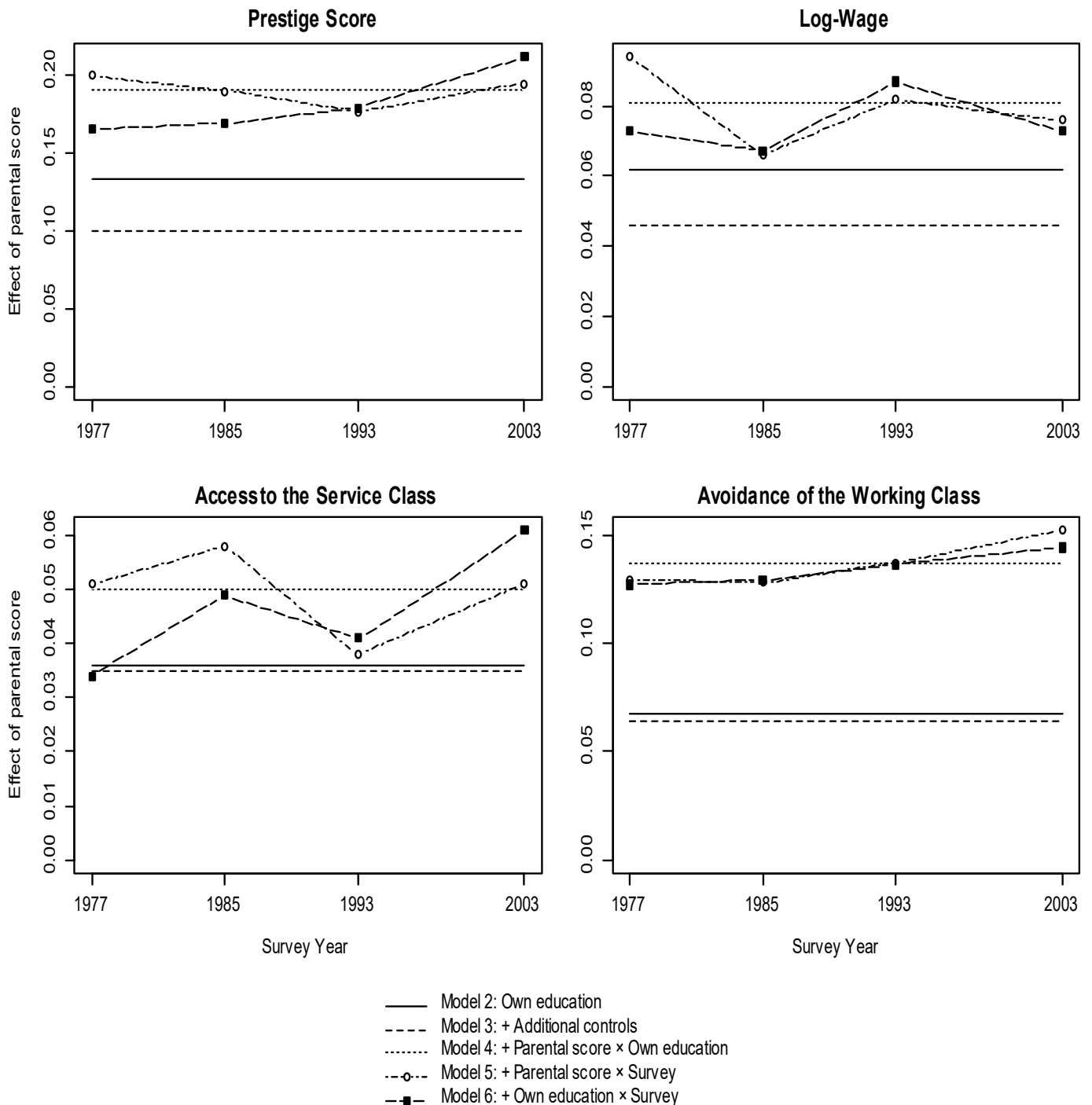
Note: From Model 4 onwards, the displayed coefficients are those for educational category 1a. However, the variation over cohorts is common to all educational categories.

This emphasizes the fact that temporal dynamics in educational returns must be taken into account.

For all outcomes, the direct effect of parental score as well as the interaction between parental score and education are not seriously affected by the introduction of time-dependent educational returns in Model 6. We still observe the already mentioned curvilinear pattern for the effect of parental score: it again decreases with the educational level until the lower tertiary education category (3a), but goes up for the higher tertiary one (3b). Thus, the answers to our first two research questions presented above still hold.

On the contrary, the variation over cohorts or survey years in the effect of parental score dramatically changes after allowing for temporal dynamics in educational returns. While we observed in Model 5 a decline in the effect of parental origin on prestige score in the first job, and no clear trend for prestige score in the current job nor for log net wage the year before the survey, we do however observe in Model 6 a significant increase in the effect of parental score on prestige score in both first and current jobs. The answer to our third research question must thus

be revised.

Regarding prestige score in the first job, a slow but steady increase in the effect of parental score takes place over the first five cohorts (born from 1938 to 1968), and a dramatic shift affects the last one (1969-75). For that cohort, the direct effect of parental score significantly exceeds by 41% the one measured for the first cohort (Figure 1). The conclusion is similar for prestige score in the current job, with the effect of social origin monotonically increasing over survey years, especially between 1993 and 2003 (Figure 2). Compared with the estimation for 1977, the direct effect of parental score is significantly higher by 28% in 2003. The fact that this 'increasing ascription effect' is more markedly revealed with the first job than the current job suggests that it should primarily be interpreted as a cohort effect characterizing men and women born from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s. The change observed between 1993 and 2003 for the current job would therefore reflect a cohort rather than a period effect.

Our results are different for log net wage the year before the survey: no sign of a change over time is visible for this outcome

Figure 3: Interaction Education × Cohort (Prestige Score in First Job – Model 6)
(For each degree, the line represents the gain or loss in terms of prestige score, as compared with the 1938-44 cohort)
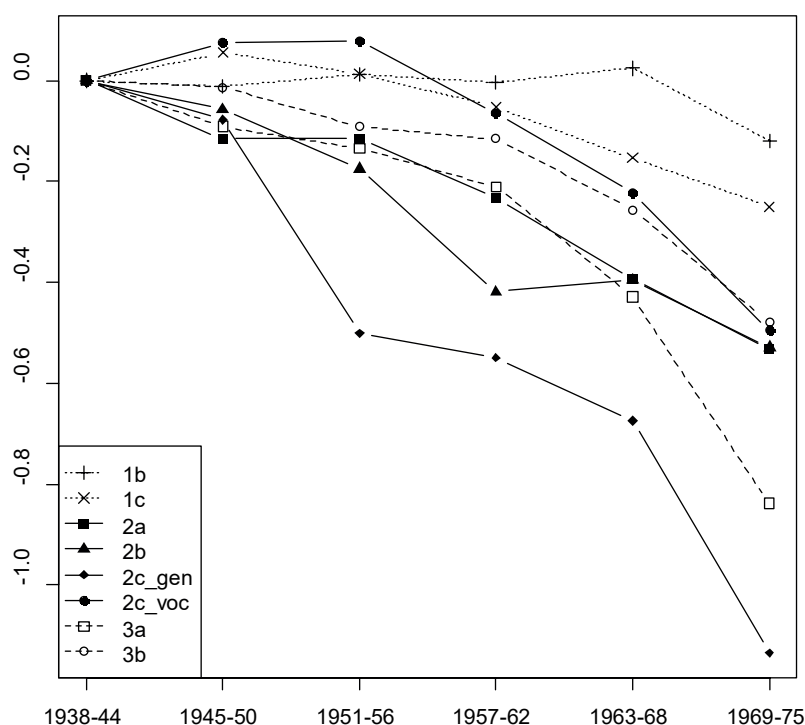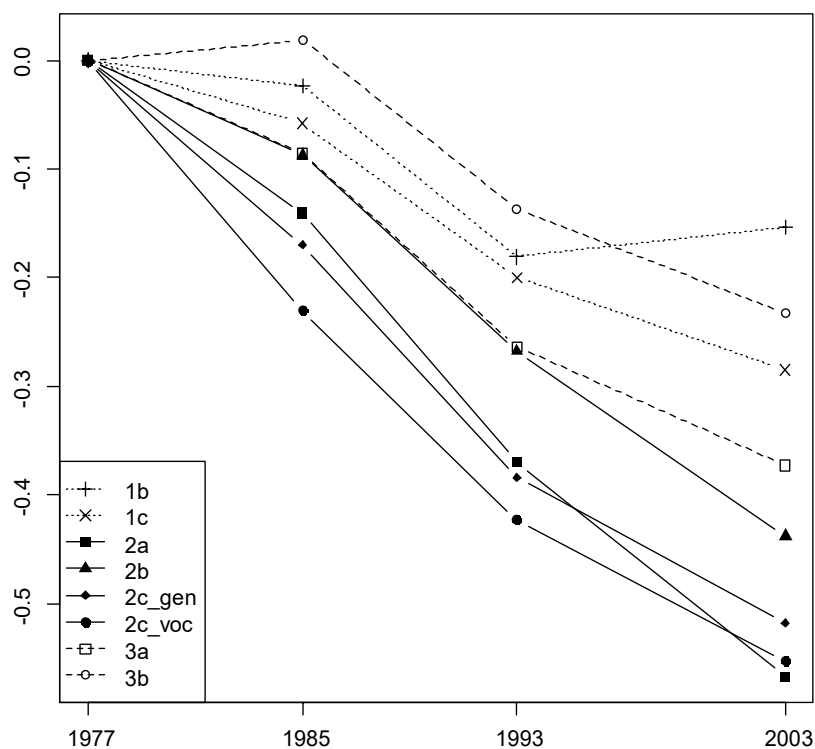
Figure 4:
Interaction Education × Survey Year
(Prestige Score in Current Job – Model 6)

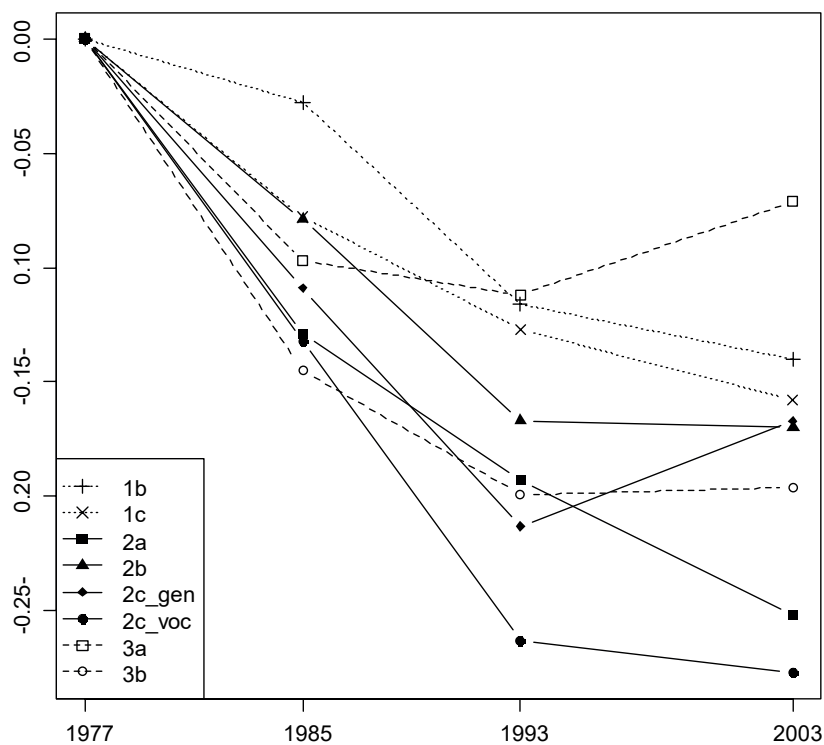(For each degree, the line represents the gain or loss in terms of prestige score, as compared with the 1977 survey)

Figure 5:
Interaction Education × Survey Year
(Log Net Wage Year Before Survey – Model 6)

(For each degree, the line represents the gain or loss in terms of log net wage, as compared with the 1977 survey)

variable in Model 6. Only small and non-significant fluctuations can be observed for 1985 and 1993; in 2003 the effect of parental score is back to exactly the same value as in 1977 (Figure 2).

Overall, we observe no indication of a decreasing ascription in France over the last decades. On the contrary, strong signs of an increased effect of social origin on the occupational status in both the first and the current job are visible in the most recent cohort (1969-75) and survey (2003). The second educational expansion that took place in France does not appear to have met its goals in terms of reducing ascription effects on the labor market.

Indeed, the general rise in the educational level of more recent cohorts has lead to a massive decrease of educational returns, visible for all certificates – especially the intermediate ones (2a, 2b, 2c) – as regards prestige score in the first job, as well as prestige score in the current job and log net wage the year before the survey[8]. The loss of value of degrees in terms of prestige score in the first job (Figure 3) essentially started with the 1951-56 cohort, especially for the general Baccalauréat (2c_gen), and has progressively affected all degrees at an accelerating pace. Regarding prestige score in the current job (Figure 4), the decrease is very steady over surveys and affects all certificates at the same rhythm. Finally, returns in terms of log net wage (Figure 5) have followed the same pattern, though the evolution is less regular in the last survey.

Class Analysis: Access to Service Class & Avoidance of Working Class

First research question

Similar analyses based on our class-related dependent variables confirm the results detailed above and often allow for a finer description of the recent changes that occurred in French society (Figures 1 and 2). The direct effect of parental occupational score on the probability of directly entering the service class (first job) or belonging to it (current job) is again noticeable. After controlling for the respondent's education (Model 2), and additional variables (Model 3), going from a parental score of -1.52 (the minimum) to 2.19 (the maximum) adds 10 to 11 percentage points to the probability of directly entering the service class (I-II). Moreover, having at least one grandfather in the service class increases this probability by 2.6 percentage points (coefficient significant at the 1% level); this 'dynasty' effect is indeed more marked than for prestige score in the first job[9]. The direct effect of parental score is noticeably

larger when considering the current rather than the first job[10]: the probability gap between the two extremes of the parental scale is of 13 percentage points instead of 10 or 11. Finally, these features are replicated with regard to the avoidance of the working class. Here, the direct effect of parental score (estimated between the two extremes of the parental scale) is circa 18 percentage points in the first job and circa 24 points in the current job.

With our class-related dependent variables, we again clearly observe the consequences of credentials inflation: for a given educational level, occupational opportunities have declined, essentially from the 1951-56 cohort onwards.

Second research question

With our class-related dependent variables, the direct effect of social origin is again weaker among the higher educated (Model 4). When considering the avoidance of the working class in either the first or the current job, the effect of parental background totally disappears for tertiary degree holders (3a and 3b). As for belonging to the service class in the current job, the effect is reduced by three quarters while no interaction effect between parental score and education can be found with regard to a first job experience in the service class.

These results allow for a deeper understanding of the processes at play than the analysis of prestige score alone. Even though tertiary education protects from ever being a member of the working class, whatever one's social origins were, and also warrants access to the service class later in one's career, it now appears that in getting a service class position in the first job, parental background matters even for the higher educated. This might be attributed to a social capital effect. We have already stressed that wage earned the year before the survey depends on parental background among lower (3a), and even more among higher (3b) tertiary degree holders. Social origin is therefore a major asset when trying to secure access to top-level occupational positions.

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8. As stated in note 6, category 1b progressively disappeared over the period and its recent variation is not meaningful.

9. It is also the case in the analysis of occupational prestige score. In Model 2 that only controls for education and cohort (or survey and age), the regression coefficient associated with parental score is 0.116 for the first job and 0.134 for the current job.

Third research question

Assuming that the returns to education have remained constant over time (Model 5; Figures 1 and 2), we do observe a clear decline in the effect of social origin for entering the service class in the first job (a decrease of 80% in the 1969-75 cohort compared with the 1938-44 cohort). On the contrary, our estimates reveal a rising social origin effect for the avoidance of the working class in the current job (an increase of 18% in 2003 compared with 1977). Finally, with regard to access to the service class in the current job and avoidance of the working class in the first job, no significant evolution can be observed at all. Our results are therefore inconsistent. They certainly do not allow us to conclude that ascription has declined in France in the recent period – under the (temporary) hypothesis that educational returns have remained constant.

Fourth research question

Here again, we can reply very clearly that returns to education have massively decreased over time (Model 6). With regard to access to the service class in the first job, the decline is the most marked for holders of an academic Baccalauréat (2c_gen), followed by those of lower (3a), then higher (3b) tertiary certificates, i.e. those groups that are most likely to get a job in the service class. With the higher educated progressively outnumbering job positions in the service class (Table 3), holders of an academic Baccalauréat have found it harder and harder to secure access to these occupational positions. When we consider the current job, the decrease has affected all intermediate qualifications (2a, 2b, 2c_gen and 2c_voc), lower tertiary degrees (3a), but less the highest qualified (3b). The former groups were previously able to attain service class positions through promotions during their careers, which is less likely today due to the exacerbated competition from more educated individuals.

These categories with secondary or lower tertiary qualifications have also been the most affected by the decline in educational returns with regard to avoiding the working class in the first job. As for the current job, it is remarkable that tertiary education certificates protect from demotion into the working class as strongly in 2003 as in 1977; returns to a general Baccalauréat

have only slightly declined while all other qualifications have been sharply affected.

Here as in our core models, the direct effect of parental score as well as the interaction between parental score and education are not seriously affected by these tremendous changes in educational returns. But the time trend in the effect of parental background is, as above, transformed.

Concerning the first job, results rather consistently suggest a rising effect of social origin (Figure 1). With regard to access to the service class, an increase of the effect of parental background appears in the last three cohorts: the impact of social origin is doubled from the 1938-44 cohort to the 1969-75 one. This rising ascription effect is most pronounced and statistically significant between the 1951-56 and 1957-62 cohorts, which may be related to the strong increase in youth unemployment – from 6.8% in 1975 to 15.4% in 1982 among the 15-24 (INSEE, 2013). With regard to avoiding the working class, the coefficient for the last cohort is again close to statistical significance and points to an increase of 29% of the ascription effect.

Analyses based on the current job confirm these findings (Figure 2). With regard to access to the service class and compared with 1977, two highly significant increases appear in 1985 and 2003, the latter being almost twice the magnitude of the former. The effect of parental background is higher by 79% in 2003 compared to 1977. For the avoidance of the working class, the corresponding increase is steady and amounts to 13% in 2003 (significant at the 1% level).

Conclusion

Inspired by a pioneering article by Erikson and Jonsson (1998) in which they examined whether social origin still has an effect on the occupational career, even when acquired education is measured with considerable detail, our analytical effort has scrutinized the existence, structure and variations of a short- and long-term impact of parental background in France, after controlling for the effect of education in a detailed way – the

CASMIN educational schema with 9 categories. Our main conclusions can be summarized as follows.

First, whatever the indicator of labor market success – occupational prestige score, access to service class, avoidance of working class, wage earned – a 'direct' effect of class origin or parental background does exist in contemporary French society. This effect is more visible at an advanced stage of the occupational career than at its outset. In other words, the influence of parental origin seems to increase over the life course, being less pronounced for the first job than for the current job.

Second, the 'direct' origin effect generally varies in strength over educational categories, being weaker or non-existent among the higher educated. Put in the opposite way, to a certain extent a higher social background is able to compensate for less prominent educational assets, and even more so in the course of the career than at its outset.

Third, the 'direct' origin effect has indeed strengthened in the most recent cohorts or the last decade observed. And fourth, this can be related to the declining occupational returns to education, in the context of sustained educational expansion that has characterized France in the post-Second World War period.

Coming back to the first parts of our chapter, these empirical results certainly cast doubts on the validity of the 'Increased Merit Selection' hypothesis. On the other hand, they are fully consistent with what Thélot (1982) already observed, on the basis of 1970 data, about the long-lasting influence of class origin; as well as with the results by Peugny (2007) about the relative importance of education and social background as determinants of status attained and its dynamics over cohorts. In themselves, our results are not contradictory with the increase in social fluidity that has been observed in France in the last half century. They certainly suggest that the temporal dynamics of the 'direct' origin effect have played a null, then negative role in the increase in social fluidity, thereby underlining the central role that both declining inequality of educational opportunity and educational expansion have played in this respect (Vallet, 2004). Ultimately, our results raise the question of whether such an increase in social fluidity will go on in the future, in a context of weak economic growth, a persistently high unemployment rate, and an increasing disequilibrium between the distribution of acquired degrees and the structure of available positions, which produces a decline of occupational returns to education.

Finally, we must recognize that our data, while being quite powerful in establishing these empirical facts, are poorly suited to scrutinize the very substance of the 'direct' origin effect and to trace the concrete channels by which parental background exerts its long-lasting influence in French society. Additional work would be needed in this respect, following for instance the 'Social networks', 'Favouritism', 'Productivity' and 'Aspirations' mechanisms that Erikson and Jonsson (1998) have put forward.

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Appendix - Detailed Linear Model Results

Prestige Score of First Job - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	-0.358 ***	-0.794 ***	-0.932 ***	-0.912 ***	-0.907 ***	-1.060 ***
Cohort:1938-44	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Cohort:1945-50	0.043 *	-0.059 ***	-0.049 **	-0.048 **	-0.050 **	-0.046
Cohort:1951-56	0.017	-0.126 ***	-0.110 ***	-0.108 ***	-0.114 ***	-0.061
Cohort:1957-62	-0.014	-0.208 ***	-0.187 ***	-0.185 ***	-0.190 ***	-0.056
Cohort:1963-68	0.008	-0.257 ***	-0.232 ***	-0.231 ***	-0.236 ***	-0.002
Cohort:1969-75	0.060 **	-0.395 ***	-0.365 ***	-0.364 ***	-0.367 ***	0.080 *
Parental Score	0.411 ***	0.116 ***	0.096 ***	0.145 ***	0.173 ***	0.119 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		-0.022	-0.035 *	-0.037	-0.039	0.080 *
Educ:1c		0.259 ***	0.273 ***	0.252 ***	0.251 ***	0.332 ***
Educ:2a		0.498 ***	0.491 ***	0.470 ***	0.470 ***	0.726 ***
Educ:2b		0.519 ***	0.518 ***	0.498 ***	0.497 ***	0.787 ***
Educ:2c_gen		1.075 ***	1.071 ***	1.063 ***	1.064 ***	1.603 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.825 ***	0.823 ***	0.800 ***	0.800 ***	0.937 ***
Educ:3a		1.419 ***	1.417 ***	1.418 ***	1.418 ***	1.778 ***
Educ:3b		1.908 ***	1.898 ***	1.898 ***	1.898 ***	2.073 ***
Status:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Status:Self-employed			0.357 ***	0.357 ***	0.358 ***	0.376 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			0.048 ***	0.049 ***	0.048 ***	0.053 ***
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			0.001	-0.001	-0.002	-0.005
Citizen:Foreigner			0.099	0.095	0.092	0.082
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.056 ***	0.056 ***	0.055 ***	0.048 **
AreaSize:<50K			0.053 ***	0.054 ***	0.054 ***	0.049 ***
AreaSize:<200K			0.071 ***	0.072 ***	0.071 ***	0.063 ***
AreaSize:<2M			0.097 ***	0.099 ***	0.098 ***	0.091 ***
AreaSize:Paris			0.212 ***	0.213 ***	0.212 ***	0.204 ***
Grandfather:I-II			0.034	0.046 *	0.044 *	0.040 *
Grandfather:VI-VIIab			0.009	0.008	0.008	0.010
Grandfather:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				-0.007	-0.021	0.016
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.044 *	-0.047 *	-0.030
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.041	-0.034	-0.032
Parental Score*Educ:2b				0.004	0.004	0.014
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.106 ***	-0.102 ***	-0.073
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				-0.064 *	-0.055 *	-0.059 *
Parental Score*Educ:3a				-0.121 ***	-0.113 ***	-0.116 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3b				-0.086 ***	-0.078 ***	-0.082 ***
*Parental Score*Cohort:1938-44*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Cohort:1945-50					-0.006	0.005
Parental Score*Cohort:1951-56					-0.027	0.007
Parental Score*Cohort:1957-62					-0.031	0.010
Parental Score*Cohort:1963-68					-0.045 *	0.016
Parental Score*Cohort:1969-75					-0.053 **	0.049 *
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1945-50*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1951-56*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1957-62*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1963-68*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1969-75*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.011
Educ:1b*Cohort:1951-56						0.012
Educ:1b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.004
Educ:1b*Cohort:1963-68						0.024
Educ:1b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.120
*Educ:1c*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Cohort:1945-50						0.055
Educ:1c*Cohort:1951-56						0.013
Educ:1c*Cohort:1957-62						-0.053
Educ:1c*Cohort:1963-68						-0.154 **
Educ:1c*Cohort:1969-75						-0.251 ***

Educ:2a*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:2a*Cohort:1945-50						-0.116
Educ:2a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.115
Educ:2a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.233 ***
Educ:2a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.394 ***
Educ:2a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.533 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.057
Educ:2b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.175 *
Educ:2b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.419 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.396 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.529 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1945-50						-0.078
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1951-56						-0.501 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1957-62						-0.549 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1963-68						-0.674 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1969-75						-1.134 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1945-50						0.075
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1951-56						0.079
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1957-62						-0.065
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1963-68						-0.223 *
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1969-75						-0.496 ***
Educ:3a*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Cohort:1945-50						-0.091
Educ:3a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.134
Educ:3a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.210 **
Educ:3a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.429 ***
Educ:3a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.838 ***
Educ:3b*Cohort:1938-44						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.014
Educ:3b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.092
Educ:3b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.116
Educ:3b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.257 ***
Educ:3b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.479 ***
N	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540
R^2	0.139	0.462	0.472	0.473	0.474	**0.485**
AIC	71708	58793	58266	58216	58213	**57698**
BIC	71765	58916	58480	58496	58534	**58347**

Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The parental dominant prestige score is in the interval [-1.52; 2.19].
(Models 2-3) After controlling for education (and possibly some other variables), a substantial effect of parental score remains. Controlling for education, we also see a substantial decline of the prestige score across cohorts.
(Model 4) The hypothesis is confirmed: the effect of parental score is weaker, though still visible, amongst the most educated.
(Model 5) The hypothesis is confirmed: the effect of parental score monotonically declines over the birth cohorts.
(Model 6) But the returns of education in terms of prestige of the first job have declined over cohorts. When the latter effect is taken into account, the interaction between education and parental score is still robust. However, this is not the case for the interaction between parental score and cohort: indeed, ascription has significantly increased in the youngest cohort (1969-1975).

First Job in Service Class (I, II) - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	0.203 ***	0.087 ***	-0.932 ***	0.075 ***	0.078 ***	0.027 **
Cohort:1938-44	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Cohort:1945-50	0.017 *	-0.013 *	-0.014 *	-0.015 *	-0.017 *	-0.011
Cohort:1951-56	0.002	-0.040 ***	-0.042 ***	-0.042 ***	-0.047 ***	-0.019
Cohort:1957-62	-0.012	-0.064 ***	-0.066 ***	-0.066 ***	-0.069 ***	-0.006
Cohort:1963-68	0.012	-0.062 ***	-0.064 ***	-0.064 ***	-0.068 ***	-0.002
Cohort:1969-75	0.052 ***	-0.102 ***	-0.104 ***	-0.104 ***	-0.106 ***	0.014
Parental Score	0.148 ***	0.030 ***	0.027 ***	0.023 ***	0.041 ***	0.016 *
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		-0.032 ***	-0.030 ***	-0.036 ***	-0.037 ***	-0.002
Educ:1c		-0.011 **	-0.011 **	- 0.013 *	-0.013 *	-0.003
Educ:2a		0.037 ***	0.037 ***	0.037 ***	0.037 ***	0.062 **
Educ:2b		0.094 ***	0.091 ***	0.094 ***	0.094 ***	0.187 ***
Educ:2c_gen		0.370 ***	0.365 ***	0.372 ***	0.372 ***	0.653 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.149 ***	0.147 ***	0.149 ***	0.149 ***	0.153 **
Educ:3a		0.472 ***	0.467 ***	0.463 ***	0.463 ***	0.675 ***
Educ:3b		0.752 ***	0.745 ***	0.745 ***	0.746 ***	0.814 ***
Status:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Status:Self-employed			-0.045 ***	-0.044 ***	-0.043 ***	-0.035 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			0.018 ***	0.018 ***	0.018 ***	0.021 ***
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			0.027	0.027	0.027	0.026
Citizen:Foreigner			0.001	0.004	0.003	0.001
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.011	0.011	0.011	0.007
AreaSize:<50K			0.003	0.003	0.002	0.000
AreaSize:<200K			0.010	0.010	0.010	0.008
AreaSize:<2M			0.011 *	0.011	0.011	0.008
AreaSize:Paris			0.018 *	0.018 *	0.017 *	0.016 *
Grandfather:I-II			0.026 **	0.024 *	0.023 *	0.020 *
Grandfather:VI-VIIab			-0.007	-0.007	-0.007	-0.008
Grandfather:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				-0.012	-0.017 **	-0.000
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.007	-0.008	-0.003
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.004	-0.001	-0.004
Parental Score*Educ:2b				0.023 *	0.024 *	0.026 **
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.013	-0.011	0.002
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				0.012	0.017	0.011
Parental Score*Educ:3a				0.020	0.025 *	0.020
Parental Score*Educ:3b				0.006	0.011	0.007
*Parental Score*Cohort:1938-44*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Cohort:1945-50					-0.011	-0.008
Parental Score*Cohort:1951-56					-0.026 **	-0.011
Parental Score*Cohort:1957-62					-0.014	0.013
Parental Score*Cohort:1963-68					-0.021 *	0.014
Parental Score*Cohort:1969-75					-0.033 ***	0.017
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1945-50*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1951-56*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1957-62*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1963-68*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1969-75*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.003
Educ:1b*Cohort:1951-56						0.001
Educ:1b*Cohort:1957-62						0.001
Educ:1b*Cohort:1963-68						0.043
Educ:1b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.037 **
*Educ:1c*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Cohort:1945-50						-0.001
Educ:1c*Cohort:1951-56						-0.001
Educ:1c*Cohort:1957-62						0.001
Educ:1c*Cohort:1963-68						0.001
Educ:1c*Cohort:1969-75						-0.015
*Educ:2a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*

Educ:2a*Cohort:1945-50						-0.001
Educ:2a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.028
Educ:2a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.040
Educ:2a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.047 *
Educ:2a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.054 *
*Educ:2b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.064 *
Educ:2b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.065 *
Educ:2b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.160 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.089 **
Educ:2b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.116 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1945-50						-0.052
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1951-56						-0.314 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1957-62						-0.337 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1963-68						-0.379 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1969-75						-0.444 ***
*Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1945-50						0.027
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1951-56						0.019
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1957-62						-0.032
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1963-68						-0.030
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1969-75						-0.054
*Educ:3a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Cohort:1945-50						-0.069
Educ:3a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.079
Educ:3a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.179 ***
Educ:3a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.263 ***
Educ:3a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.374 ***
*Educ:3b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Cohort:1945-50						0.026
Educ:3b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.030
Educ:3b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.069
Educ:3b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.084 *
Educ:3b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.167 ***
N	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540
R²	0.107	0.421	0.423	0.423	0.424	**0.437**
AIC	24958	13062	12988	12979	12968	**12410**
BIC	25016	13186	13202	13259	13289	**13060**

Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003.
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

The story is about the same. However, the structural interaction between parental score and education does not exist at all, and the increase in the ascription effect is not significant in the most recent cohort (p-value of .111).

First Job Outside of the Working Class (IIIb, VI, VIIab) - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	0.511 ***	0.305 ***	0.137 ***	0.145 ***	0.147 ***	0.076 ***
Cohort:1938-44	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Cohort:1945-50	0.008	-0.038 ***	-0.021 *	-0.020 *	-0.021 *	-0.024
Cohort:1951-56	-0.001	-0.070 ***	-0.043 ***	-0.042 ***	-0.043 ***	-0.020
Cohort:1957-62	-0.022 *	-0.123 ***	-0.089 ***	-0.088 ***	-0.090 ***	-0.032
Cohort:1963-68	-0.006	-0.135 ***	-0.098 ***	-0.097 ***	-0.098 ***	-0.002
Cohort:1969-75	0.003	-0.205 ***	-0.160 ***	-0.159 ***	-0.160 ***	0.069 ***
Parental Score	0.178 ***	0.054 ***	0.045 ***	0.067 ***	0.076 ***	0.059 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		0.020	-0.005	0.002	0.001	0.067 ***
Educ:1c		0.057 ***	0.083 ***	0.079 ***	0.079 ***	0.125 ***
Educ:2a		0.299 ***	0.286 ***	0.277 ***	0.277 ***	0.426 ***
Educ:2b		0.338 ***	0.329 ***	0.320 ***	0.320 ***	0.502 ***
Educ:2c_gen		0.561 ***	0.541 ***	0.539 ***	0.539 ***	0.706 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.476 ***	0.467 ***	0.456 ***	0.456 ***	0.480 ***
Educ:3a		0.675 ***	0.664 ***	0.668 ***	0.668 ***	0.740 ***
Educ:3b		0.726 ***	0.719 ***	0.735 ***	0.735 ***	0.787 ***
Status:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Status:Self-employed			0.445 ***	0.446 ***	0.446 ***	0.452 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			0.175 ***	0.176 ***	0.175 ***	0.176 ***
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			-0.002	-0.003	-0.003	-0.005
Citizen:Foreigner			0.032	0.028	0.028	0.017
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.017 *	0.017 *	0.017 *	0.015
AreaSize:<50K			0.014	0.014	0.014	0.013
AreaSize:<200K			0.027 **	0.027 **	0.027 **	0.024 **
AreaSize:<2M			0.036 ***	0.037 ***	0.037 ***	0.035 ***
AreaSize:Paris			0.114 ***	0.114 ***	0.114 ***	0.111 ***
Grandfather:I-II			0.015	0.025 **	0.025 **	0.025 **
Grandfather:VI-VIIab			-0.001	-0.001	-0.001	0.001
Grandfather:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				0.014	0.009	0.020
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.006	-0.007	0.000
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.013	-0.011	-0.008
Parental Score*Educ:2b				0.016	0.016	0.021
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.056 ***	-0.056 ***	-0.044 **
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				-0.025	-0.024	-0.019
Parental Score*Educ:3a				-0.070 ***	-0.068 ***	-0.066 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3b				-0.064 ***	-0.063 ***	-0.062 ***
*Parental Score*Cohort:1938-44*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Cohort:1945-50					-0.003	0.004
Parental Score*Cohort:1951-56					-0.004	0.008
Parental Score*Cohort:1957-62					-0.015	-0.006
Parental Score*Cohort:1963-68					-0.016	-0.003
Parental Score*Cohort:1969-75					-0.008	0.017
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1945-50*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1951-56*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1957-62*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1963-68*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Cohort:1969-75*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.009
Educ:1b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.024
Educ:1b*Cohort:1957-62						0.001
Educ:1b*Cohort:1963-68						0.034
Educ:1b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.087
*Educ:1c*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Cohort:1945-50						0.038
Educ:1c*Cohort:1951-56						0.006
Educ:1c*Cohort:1957-62						-0.050
Educ:1c*Cohort:1963-68						-0.071 *
Educ:1c*Cohort:1969-75						-0.181 ***
*Educ:2a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2a*Cohort:1945-50						-0.038
Educ:2a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.051
Educ:2a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.120 **

Educ:2a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.208 ***
Educ:2a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.353 ***
*Educ:2b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.019
Educ:2b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.105 **
Educ:2b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.252 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.273 ***
Educ:2b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.370 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1945-50						0.010
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1951-56						-0.126 **
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1957-62						-0.144 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1963-68						-0.194 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Cohort:1969-75						-0.451 ***
*Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1945-50						0.057
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1951-56						0.122
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1957-62						0.061
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1963-68						-0.034
Educ:2c_voc*Cohort:1969-75						-0.251 ***
*Educ:3a*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Cohort:1945-50						0.009
Educ:3a*Cohort:1951-56						-0.030
Educ:3a*Cohort:1957-62						-0.023
Educ:3a*Cohort:1963-68						-0.070 *
Educ:3a*Cohort:1969-75						-0.266 ***
*Educ:3b*Cohort:1938-44*						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Cohort:1945-50						-0.042
Educ:3b*Cohort:1951-56						-0.046
Educ:3b*Cohort:1957-62						-0.027
Educ:3b*Cohort:1963-68						-0.066 *
Educ:3b*Cohort:1969-75						-0.180 ***
N	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540	27540
R²	0.095	0.316	0.384	0.387	0.387	**0.398**
AIC	37238	29537	26661	26572	26577	**26164**
BIC	37296	29661	26875	26851	26898	**26813**

Men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 2003.

* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

In comparison to first job in the service class:

In model 2, both the cohort effect and the parental score effect are more pronounced; the magnitude of the education effect is about the same with a few differences for some peculiar diplomas.

In model 4 onwards the structural interaction between parental score and education is very marked (the origin effect totally disappears for those in 3a and 3b). In model 5 onwards there is no significant change in the origin effect across cohorts. In model 6, the p-value associated with the 0.017 coefficient is .155.

Prestige Score of Current Job at the Time of the Survey - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	-0.986 ***	-2.190 ***	-2.056 ***	-2.022 ***	-2.021 ***	-2.190 ***
Year:1977	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Year:1985	0.089 ***	0.002	0.006	0.006	0.003	0.038 *
Year:1993	0.109 ***	-0.082 ***	-0.058 ***	-0.060 ***	-0.064 ***	0.108 ***
Year:2003	0.128 ***	-0.196 ***	-0.154 ***	-0.157 ***	-0.160 ***	0.106 ***
Age	0.042 ***	0.065 ***	0.059 ***	0.060 ***	0.060 ***	0.062 ***
Age² (× 10³)	-0.439 ***	-0.590 ***	-0.542 ***	-0.548 ***	-0.548 ***	-0.569 ***
Parental Score	0.411 ***	0.134 ***	0.100 ***	0.191 ***	0.200 ***	0.166 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		0.216 ***	0.205 ***	0.177 ***	0.177 ***	0.279 ***
Educ:1c		0.460 ***	0.401 ***	0.353 ***	0.353 ***	0.492 ***
Educ:2a		0.695 ***	0.663 ***	0.615 ***	0.615 ***	0.940 ***
Educ:2b		0.765 ***	0.758 ***	0.711 ***	0.712 ***	0.923 ***
Educ:2c_gen		1.221 ***	1.226 ***	1.198 ***	1.198 ***	1.495 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.991 ***	0.957 ***	0.912 ***	0.912 ***	1.287 ***
Educ:3a		1.462 ***	1.458 ***	1.448 ***	1.448 ***	1.652 ***
Educ:3b		1.860 ***	1.796 ***	1.793 ***	1.793 ***	1.882 ***
Status:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Status:Self-employed			0.277 ***	0.276 ***	0.276 ***	0.283 ***
EmplTime:Full Time			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
EmplTime:Part Time			-0.161 ***	-0.159 ***	-0.160 ***	-0.157 ***
EmplTime:Unemployed			-0.221 ***	-0.217 ***	-0.218 ***	-0.220 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			-0.207 ***	-0.207 ***	-0.207 ***	-0.207 ***
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			-0.003	0.000	0.001	0.009
Citizen:Foreigner			-0.287 ***	-0.271 ***	-0.268 ***	-0.219 ***
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.069 ***	0.070 ***	0.070 ***	0.066 ***
AreaSize:<50K			0.112 ***	0.112 ***	0.113 ***	0.105 ***
AreaSize:<200K			0.119 ***	0.120 ***	0.120 ***	0.111 ***
AreaSize:<2M			0.155 ***	0.158 ***	0.158 ***	0.149 ***
AreaSize:Paris			0.284 ***	0.290 ***	0.290 ***	0.280 ***
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				-0.044 **	-0.045 **	-0.027
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.094 ***	-0.092 ***	-0.083 ***
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.108 ***	-0.106 ***	-0.115 ***
Parental Score*Educ:2b				-0.074 ***	-0.073 ***	-0.069 ***
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.150 ***	-0.148 ***	-0.145 ***
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				-0.121 ***	-0.120 ***	-0.126 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3a				-0.191 ***	-0.189 ***	-0.189 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3b				-0.149 ***	-0.147 ***	-0.146 ***
*Parental Score*Year:1977*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Year:1985					-0.010	0.003
Parental Score*Year:1993					-0.023 *	0.013
Parental Score*Year:2003					-0.005	0.046 ***
*Educ:1a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1985*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1993*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:2003*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Year:1985						-0.024
Educ:1b*Year:1993						-0.181 ***
Educ:1b*Year:2003						-0.154 ***
*Educ:1c*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Year:1985						-0.058 **
Educ:1c*Year:1993						-0.200 ***
Educ:1c*Year:2003						-0.285 ***
*Educ:2a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2a*Year:1985						-0.141 ***
Educ:2a*Year:1993						-0.370 ***
Educ:2a*Year:2003						-0.567 ***
*Educ:2b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Year:1985						-0.087 **
Educ:2b*Year:1993						-0.268 ***
Educ:2b*Year:2003						-0.438 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1985						-0.170 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1993						-0.384 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:2003						-0.518 ***

*Educ:2c_voc*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1985						-0.230 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1993						-0.423 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Year:2003						-0.553 ***
*Educ:3a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Year:1985						-0.086 **
Educ:3a*Year:1993						-0.264 ***
Educ:3a*Year:2003						-0.373 ***
*Educ:3b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Year:1985						0.019
Educ:3b*Year:1993						-0.137 ***
Educ:3b*Year:2003						-0.233 ***
N	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342
R²	0.146	0.412	0.455	0.457	0.458	**0.462**
AIC	193868	165444	159592	159296	159294	**158659**
BIC	193933	165582	159832	159610	159636	**159223**

Economically active men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003.
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

The parental dominant prestige score is in the interval [-1.52; 2.19].

(Models 2-3) After controlling for education (and possibly some other variables), a substantial effect of parental score remains. Controlling for education, we also see a substantial decline of the prestige score over time.

(Model 4) The hypothesis is confirmed: the effect of parental score is weaker, though still visible, amongst the most educated. Indeed, it is nonexistent for those in 3a and small for those in 3b.

(Model 5) The hypothesis is not confirmed: the effect of parental score does not significantly vary across surveys except for 1993.

(Model 6) But the returns of education in terms of prestige of the current job have declined over time. When the latter effect is taken into account, the interaction between education and parental score is still robust. However, an interaction between parental score and time appears: indeed, ascription has significantly increased in the most recent survey (2003).

Current Job in Service Class (I, II) at the Time of the Survey - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	-0.004	-0.538 ***	-0.499 ***	-0.494 ***	-0.493 ***	-0.549 ***
Year:1977	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Year:1985	0.033 ***	0.000	-0.001	-0.001	0.000	0.011 *
Year:1993	0.050 ***	-0.029 ***	-0.035 ***	-0.035 ***	-0.037 ***	0.025 ***
Year:2003	0.075 ***	-0.071 ***	-0.083 ***	-0.083 ***	-0.084 ***	0.011 *
Age	0.012***	0.025 ***	0.023 ***	0.023 ***	0.023 ***	0.024 ***
Age² (× 10³)	-0.141***	-0.230 ***	-0.203 ***	-0.205 *** -	0.205 ***	-0.211 ***
Parental Score	0.172 ***	0.036 ***	0.035 ***	0.050 ***	0.051 ***	0.034 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		0.028 ***	0.029 ***	0.024 ***	0.024 ***	0.053 ***
Educ:1c		0.083 ***	0.074 ***	0.065 ***	0.065 ***	0.091 ***
Educ:2a		0.198 ***	0.190 ***	0.182 ***	0.182 ***	0.298 ***
Educ:2b		0.286 ***	0.273 ***	0.265 ***	0.265 ***	0.354 ***
Educ:2c_gen		0.569 ***	0.552 ***	0.546 ***	0.546 ***	0.712 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.343 ***	0.334 ***	0.326 ***	0.326 ***	0.437 ***
Educ:3a		0.699 ***	0.684 ***	0.683 ***	0.683 ***	0.816 ***
Educ:3b		0.844 ***	0.827 ***	0.835 ***	0.835 ***	0.867 ***
Status:Other			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Status:Self-employed			-0.146 ***	-0.146 ***	-0.146 ***	-0.142 ***
EmplTime:Full Time			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
EmplTime:Part Time			-0.049 ***	-0.049 ***	-0.049 ***	-0.048 ***
EmplTime:Unemployed			-0.052 ***	-0.051 ***	-0.051 ***	-0.053 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			-0.011 ***	-0.011 **	-0.011 **	-0.011 **
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			-0.027 *	-0.026 *	-0.026 *	-0.023 *
Citizen:Foreigner			-0.054 ***	-0.052 ***	-0.051 ***	-0.034 ***
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.013 **	0.014 **	0.013 **	0.012 *
AreaSize:<50K			0.018 ***	0.018 ***	0.018 ***	0.016 **
AreaSize:<200K			0.022 ***	0.022 ***	0.022 ***	0.019 ***
AreaSize:<2M			0.028 ***	0.028 ***	0.028 ***	0.026 ***
AreaSize:Paris			0.074 ***	0.075 ***	0.075 ***	0.072 ***
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				-0.007	-0.008	0.000
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.017 **	-0.016 **	-0.013 *
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.018 *	-0.017	-0.021 *
Parental Score*Educ:2b				-0.003	-0.002	-0.002
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.020	-0.019	-0.020
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				-0.015	-0.014	-0.018
Parental Score*Educ:3a				-0.034 ***	-0.033 ***	-0.035 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3b				-0.036 ***	-0.035 ***	-0.036 ***
*Parental Score*Year:1977*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Year:1985					0.007	0.015 **
Parental Score*Year:1993					-0.013 *	0.007
Parental Score*Year:2003					-0.000	0.027 ***
*Educ:1a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1985*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1993*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:2003*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Year:1985						0.005
Educ:1b*Year:1993						-0.047 ***
Educ:1b*Year:2003						-0.047 ***
*Educ:1c*year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*year:1985						-0.002
Educ:1c*year:1993						-0.038 ***
Educ:1c*year:2003						-0.067 ***
*Educ:2a*year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2a*year:1985						-0.052 **
Educ:2a*year:1993						-0.148 ***
Educ:2a*year:2003						-0.190 ***
*Educ:2b*year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*year:1985						-0.048 **
Educ:2b*year:1993						-0.117 ***
Educ:2b*year:2003						-0.166 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Year:1977*						*0.000*

Educ:2c_gen*Year:1985						-0.104 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1993						-0.223 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:2003						-0.258 ***
*Educ:2c_voc*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1985						-0.081 *
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1993						-0.146 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Year:2003						-0.161 ***
*Educ:3a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Year:1985						-0.060 **
Educ:3a*Year:1993						-0.155 ***
Educ:3a*Year:2003						-0.217 ***
*Educ:3b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Year:1985						0.006
Educ:3b*Year:1993						-0.040 *
Educ:3b*Year:2003						-0.088 ***
N	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342
R²	0.118	0.407	0.426	0.426	0.427	**0.430**
AIC	82083	51811	49304	49260	49240	**48784**
BIC	82148	51950	49544	49574	49582	**49348**

Economically active men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003.
* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Overall, the results are the same.

Current Job Outside of Working Class (IIIb, VI, VIIab) at the Time of the Survey - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	0.332 ***	-0.205 ***	-0.126 **	-0.100 *	-0.106 **	-0.167 ***
Year:1977	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Year:1985	0.032 ***	-0.011 *	-0.016 ***	-0.017 ***	-0.016 ***	-0.014
Year:1993	0.024 ***	-0.065 ***	-0.065 ***	-0.066 ***	-0.064 ***	-0.011
Year:2003	0.010 *	-0.139 ***	-0.136 ***	-0.139 ***	-0.136 ***	-0.062 ***
Age	0.011 ***	0.020 ***	0.017 ***	0.018 ***	0.018 ***	0.019 ***
Age² (× 10³)	-0.090 ***	-0.141 ***	-0.114 ***	-0.120 ***	-0.121 ***	-0.132 ***
Parental Score	0.173 ***	0.067 ***	0.064 ***	0.137 ***	0.129 ***	0.127 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		0.159 ***	0.142 ***	0.122 ***	0.123 ***	0.162 ***
Educ:1c		0.233 ***	0.217 ***	0.186 ***	0.187 ***	0.236 ***
Educ:2a		0.437 ***	0.413 ***	0.375 ***	0.376 ***	0.487 ***
Educ:2b		0.468 ***	0.444 ***	0.406 ***	0.407 ***	0.486 ***
Educ:2c_gen		0.596 ***	0.567 ***	0.547 ***	0.547 ***	0.571 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.582 ***	0.557 ***	0.521 ***	0.521 ***	0.594 ***
Educ:3a		0.675 ***	0.646 ***	0.632 ***	0.632 ***	0.615 ***
Educ:3b		0.653 ***	0.627 ***	0.637 ***	0.637 ***	0.621 ***
EmplTime:Full Time		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	
EmplTime:Part Time		-0.101 ***	-0.099 ***	-0.099 ***	-0.098 ***	
EmplTime:Unemployed		-0.156 ***	-0.153 ***	-0.152 ***	-0.152 ***	
Sex:Male		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	
Sex:Female		0.059 ***	0.058 ***	0.058 ***	0.057 ***	
Citizen:Native Born		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	
Citizen:Naturalized		-0.040 *	-0.037 *	-0.038 *	-0.037 *	
Citizen:Foreigner		-0.274 ***	-0.261 ***	-0.263 ***	-0.249 ***	
AreaSize:Rural		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	
AreaSize:<10K Inhab		-0.034 ***	-0.033 ***	-0.033 ***	-0.034 ***	
AreaSize:<50K		-0.025 ***	-0.024 ***	-0.023 ***	-0.026 ***	
AreaSize:<200K		-0.035 ***	-0.034 ***	-0.033 ***	-0.036 ***	
AreaSize:<2M		-0.012 *	-0.009	-0.009	-0.012 *	
AreaSize:Paris		0.045 ***	0.050 ***	0.051 ***	0.047 ***	
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	
Parental Score*Educ:1b			-0.031 ***	-0.028 **	-0.026 **	
Parental Score*Educ:1c			-0.054 ***	-0.053 ***	-0.051 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:2a			-0.081 ***	-0.085 ***	-0.086 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:2b			-0.089 ***	-0.090 ***	-0.088 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen			-0.129 ***	-0.131 ***	-0.127 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc			-0.111 ***	-0.118 ***	-0.113 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:3a			-0.137 ***	-0.141 ***	-0.136 ***	
Parental Score*Educ:3b			-0.136 ***	-0.140 ***	-0.134 ***	
*Parental Score*Year:1977*				*0.000*	*0.000*	
Parental Score*Year:1985				-0.001	0.002	
Parental Score*Year:1993				0.008	0.009	
Parental Score*Year:2003				0.023 ***	0.017 **	
*Educ:1a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1985*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1993*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:2003*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Year:1985						0.001
Educ:1b*Year:1993						-0.088 ***
Educ:1b*Year:2003						-0.090 ***
*Educ:1c*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Year:1985						-0.012
Educ:1c*Year:1993						-0.065 **
Educ:1c*Year:2003						-0.116 ***
*Educ:2a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2a*Year:1985						-0.030
Educ:2a*Year:1993						-0.126 ***
Educ:2a*Year:2003						-0.196 ***
*Educ:2b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Year:1985						-0.018
Educ:2b*Year:1993						-0.105 ***
Educ:2b*Year:2003						-0.169 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1985						-0.001

Educ:2c_gen*Year:1993						-0.040
Educ:2c_gen*Year:2003						-0.058 ***
*Educ:2c_voc*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1985						-0.008
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1993						-0.057 *
Educ:2c_voc*Year:2003						-0.140 ***
*Educ:3a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Year:1985						0.010
Educ:3a*Year:1993						-0.009
Educ:3a*Year:2003						0.006
*Educ:3b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Year:1985						0.005
Educ:3b*Year:1993						-0.019
Educ:3b*Year:2003						0.016
N	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342	76342
R²	0.093	0.264	0.281	0.287	0.287	**0.290**
AIC	99097	83090	81379	80791	80768	**80459**
BIC	99161	83228	81610	81096	81101	**81014**

Economically active men and women born in metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Up to model 5, the results are the same as for current job in the service class. Regarding model 6, it is remarkable that educational levels 3a and 3b effectively still protect from belonging to the working class; simultaneously, we still observe a slightly increasing ascriptive effect in the last survey (2003).

Log Wage of Current Job - Unstandardized Coefficients

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Intercept	8.661 ***	8.113 ***	8.185 ***	8.202 ***	8.205 ***	8.104 ***
Year:1977	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Year:1985	0.046 ***	0.004	0.006	0.005	-0.001	0.058 ***
Year:1993	0.040 ***	-0.046 ***	-0.040 ***	-0.042 ***	-0.045 ***	0.074 ***
Year:2003	0.034 ***	-0.102 ***	-0.098 ***	-0.099 ***	-0.104 ***	0.023
Age	0.058 ***	0.069 ***	0.067 ***	0.068 ***	0.068 ***	0.069 ***
Age² (× 10³)	-0.585 ***	-0.670 ***	-0.651 ***	-0.651 ***	-0.652 ***	-0.662 ***
Parental Score	0.168 ***	0.062 ***	0.046 ***	0.081 ***	0.094 ***	0.073 ***
Educ:1a		*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Educ:1b		0.094 ***	0.110 ***	0.092 ***	0.091 ***	0.155 ***
Educ:1c		0.238 ***	0.214 ***	0.194 ***	0.195 ***	0.284 ***
Educ:2a		0.343 ***	0.360 ***	0.343 ***	0.343 ***	0.503 ***
Educ:2b		0.341 ***	0.374 ***	0.355 ***	0.355 ***	0.459 ***
Educ:2c_gen		0.457 ***	0.510 ***	0.497 ***	0.497 ***	0.624 ***
Educ:2c_voc		0.423 ***	0.441 ***	0.424 ***	0.424 ***	0.630 ***
Educ:3a		0.539 ***	0.587 ***	0.578 ***	0.578 ***	0.634 ***
Educ:3b		0.806 ***	0.806 ***	0.784 ***	0.784 ***	0.924 ***
Sex:Male			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Sex:Female			-0.298 ***	-0.298 ***	-0.298 ***	-0.298 ***
Citizen:Native Born			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Citizen:Naturalized			-0.011	-0.011	-0.009	-0.004
Citizen:Foreigner			-0.101 ***	-0.096 ***	-0.091 ***	-0.062 ***
AreaSize:Rural			*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
AreaSize:<10K Inhab			0.029 ***	0.029 ***	0.029 ***	0.028 ***
AreaSize:<50K			0.048 ***	0.049 ***	0.049 ***	0.046 ***
AreaSize:<200K			0.046 ***	0.047 ***	0.047 ***	0.044 ***
AreaSize:<2M			0.057 ***	0.057 ***	0.058 ***	0.054 ***
AreaSize:Paris			0.194 ***	0.195 ***	0.195 ***	0.191 ***
*Parental Score*Educ:1a*				*0.000*	*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Educ:1b				-0.034 **	-0.035 ***	-0.027 *
Parental Score*Educ:1c				-0.039 ***	-0.037 ***	-0.033 **
Parental Score*Educ:2a				-0.029 *	-0.027 *	-0.027 *
Parental Score*Educ:2b				-0.037 **	-0.035 **	-0.031 **
Parental Score*Educ:2c_gen				-0.057 ***	-0.055 ***	-0.053 ***
Parental Score*Educ:2c_voc				-0.072 ***	-0.069 ***	-0.068 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3a				-0.065 ***	-0.063 ***	-0.060 ***
Parental Score*Educ:3b				-0.031 *	-0.029 *	-0.025 *
*Parental Score*Year:1977*					*0.000*	*0.000*
Parental Score*Year:1985					-0.028 ***	-0.006
Parental Score*Year:1993					-0.012	0.014
Parental Score*Year:2003					-0.018 *	0.000
*Educ:1a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1985*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:1993*						*0.000*
*Educ:1a*Year:2003*						*0.000*
*Educ:1b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1b*Year:1985						-0.028 *
Educ:1b*Year:1993						-0.116 ***
Educ:1b*Year:2003						-0.140 ***
*Educ:1c*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:1c*Year:1985						-0.078 ***
Educ:1c*Year:1993						-0.127 ***
Educ:1c*Year:2003						-0.158 ***
*Educ:2a*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2a*Year:1985						-0.129 ***
Educ:2a*Year:1993						-0.193 ***
Educ:2a*Year:2003						-0.252 ***
*Educ:2b*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2b*Year:1985						-0.079 ***
Educ:2b*Year:1993						-0.167 ***
Educ:2b*Year:2003						-0.170 ***
*Educ:2c_gen*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1985						-0.109 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:1993						-0.213 ***
Educ:2c_gen*Year:2003						-0.167 ***
*Educ:2c_voc*Year:1977*						*0.000*
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1985						-0.132 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Year:1993						-0.263 ***
Educ:2c_voc*Year:2003						-0.277 ***

Educ:3a*Year:1977						*0.000*
Educ:3a*Year:1985						-0.097 ***
Educ:3a*Year:1993						-0.112 ***
Educ:3a*Year:2003						-0.071 **
Educ:3b*Year:1977						*0.000*
Educ:3b*Year:1985						-0.145 ***
Educ:3b*Year:1993						-0.199 ***
Educ:3b*Year:2003						-0.196 ***
N	50413	50413	50413	50413	50413	50413
R²	0.097	0.243	0.327	0.328	0.328	**0.332**
AIC	73071	64197	58302	58255	58243	**58020**
BIC	73133	64329	58505	58528	58543	**58532**

Men and women born in Metropolitan France aged 28 to 65 in 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003 who worked full time during 12 months the year before the survey.

$* p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001$

The parental dominant prestige score is in the interval [-1.52; 2.19].

(Models 2-3) After controlling for education (and possibly some other variables), a substantial effect of parental score remains.

(Model 4) The hypothesis is partly confirmed: generally speaking, the effect of parental score is weaker, though still visible, amongst those who are more educated; however, it is remarkable that the effect of parental score is indeed larger for the most educated (3b) than for those immediately below (3a, 2c_voc, 2c_gen).

(Model 5) The hypothesis is not substantially confirmed: the effect of parental score does not strongly vary across surveys.

(Model 6) The returns of education in terms of income provided by the current job have declined over time. When the latter effect is taken into account, the interaction between education and parental score is still robust and the interesting curvilinearity described above is still visible. Finally, there is strong confirmation that the effect of parental score on income (log wage) has not changed at all over time.

Abstract

This paper is an extended version of the chapter about France within the comparative volume edited by F. Bernardi and G. Ballarino (2016), *Education, Occupation and Social Origin. A Comparative Analysis of the Transmission of Socio-Economic Inequalities,* Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing. On the basis of the 1977, 1985, 1993 and 2003 *Formation & Qualification Professionnelle* surveys and various indicators of labour market success, it establishes three main results: (1) after controlling for education, there still exists a 'direct' effect of class origin on labour market success which is visible more at an advanced stage of the occupational career than at its outset; (2) this 'direct' origin effect varies in strength over educational categories, being weaker or non-existent among the higher-educated, i.e., a higher social background is to a certain extent able to compensate for less prominent educational assets; (3) the 'direct' origin effect has strengthened in the recent cohorts or the last decade observed.

Keywords

social origin, education, labour market success, direct effect of social origin

Résumé

Cette note est une version longue du chapitre à propos de la France, publié au sein du volume comparatif dirigé par F. Bernardi et G. Ballarino (2016), *Education, Occupation and Social Origin. A Comparative Analysis of the Transmission of Socio-Economic Inequalities,* Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing. À partir des enquêtes *Formation & Qualification Professionnelle* de 1977, 1985, 1993 et 2003 ainsi que de plusieurs indicateurs du degré de réussite professionnelle, elle établit les trois résultats suivants : (1) à niveau d'éducation contrôlé, il existe encore un effet 'direct' de l'origine sociale sur la réussite professionnelle et cet effet est davantage visible à un stade avancé de la carrière qu'au début ; (2) cet effet 'direct' de l'origine sociale varie, dans son intensité, avec le niveau d'éducation et s'avère plus faible, voire inexistant, parmi les diplômés de l'enseignement supérieur - en d'autres termes, une origine sociale plus élevée est susceptible de compenser, jusqu'à un certain degré, des ressources scolaires plus faibles ; (3) l'effet 'direct' de l'origine sociale s'est renforcé dans les cohortes récentes ou la dernière décennie observée.

Mots clés

origine sociale, éducation, réussite professionnelle, effet direct de l'origine sociale

Contact auteurs
louisandre.vallet@sciencespo.fr
camille.peugny@gmail.com
nalimilan@club.fr

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