

Chapter 3

Gender Differences Among Youth: Education to Job Transitions in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan



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Abstract Despite education expansion, decreasing fertility rate and economic progress, women still face labor market integration problems and labor market disadvantages compared to men around the world. This applies also to the region of the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) and especially to Muslim societies of the CCA region due to the general weak labor market attachment of women in Muslim countries. As gender inequalities emerge already quite early in the working life this chapter focuses on gender inequalities in the transition from education to work. The key research question is how strong gender inequality is among young people who are transiting from school to work in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan. The nationally representative, retrospective life history data from the TEW-CCA “Youth Transitions Surveys” of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan 2017 are used to answer the research question. The gender inequality is described here in various aspects of the transition from education to work. First, the labor market inactivity decision is examined. Second, among those who are active in the labor market, it is investigated how much time it takes from the time of graduation until the moment of finding a first job. Third, the quality of the first job obtained is analyzed in terms of chances of getting access to formal sector jobs. Comparing results across the three countries will allow us to highlight cross-country similarities and differences that are expected because of the common past Soviet institutional legacy and varying economic and cultural conditions.

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3.1 Introduction

Despite education expansion, decreasing fertility rate and economic progress, women still face labor market integration problems and labor market disadvantages compared to men around the world (Heyne 2017). This applies also to the region of the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA) and especially to Muslim societies of the CCA region due to the generally weak labor market position of women in Muslim countries (Heyne 2017; Spierings et al. 2009; Spierings et al. 2010).

Gender inequalities emerge quite early in working life, especially after marriage and childbirth according to studies on Western countries (Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; van der Lippe and van Dijk 2002). In developing countries women's labor market disadvantage often arises earlier, already during the school-to-work transition. Females less actively join the labor market after school and usually have less opportunities to have good jobs (Elder and Kring 2016; Gebel and Heyne 2014). In the standard life course sequence, the transition from school to work represents a central life course event that young women face on their way to adulthood. Previous research has shown that decisions made at this stage of the life course set the track for the future labor market career and patterns of family formation (Blossfeld et al. 2008; Buchmann and Kriesi 2011; Schoon and Silbereisen 2009).

This chapter is following the research tradition of analyses on gender inequalities at labor market entry (Elder and Kring 2016; Iannelli and Smyth 2008; Smyth 2005) with the focus on the CCA region. The central aim of this chapter is to describe the gender inequality in various aspects of the transition from education to work in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan.

While previous research has investigated women's school-to-work transition in high income countries, not much is known about youth transition processes in post-Soviet countries, particularly in the CCA region. A notable exception is an ILO report on gender-specific patterns of school-to-work transition in the CCA region but this report does not cover the three countries considered (Elder et al. 2015). Our study fills the research gap by providing the first detailed multivariate analyses of young women's labor market integration drawing on newly collected, nationally representative, retrospective life history survey data from the TEW-CCA "Youth Transitions Surveys" of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan 2017. Moreover, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan also represent an interesting cross-country comparative setting for studying gender aspects in the transition from education to work due to similarities (mainly in the institutional setting) and differences (mainly in the economic development and cultural/religious background) of the three countries.

Gender differences are described with respect to key aspects of the school-to-work transition. First, the labor market inactivity decision is examined. Second, among those who are active in the labor market, it is investigated how much time

it takes from the time of graduation until the moment of finding a first job. Third, the quality of the first job obtained is analyzed in terms of chances of getting access to formal sector jobs. Comparing results across the three countries will allow us to highlight cross-country similarities and differences that are expected because of the common legacy and cultural and structural institutions inherited from Soviet Union.

This book chapter is organized as follows: Sect. 3.2 describes the structural, institutional and cultural background of the three countries analyzed. Then, the data set and sample is discussed. The description of the key variables and methods is given in Sect. 3.3 followed by empirical analyses for various aspects of the transition from education to work.

3.2 The Structural, Institutional and Cultural Background

Georgia, located at the Black Sea, and Azerbaijan, located at the Caspian Sea, are countries in the Caucasus. Tajikistan is a landlocked country in Central Asia sharing borders with China and Afghanistan among others. All three countries have a rather similar, relatively small population size (2016: ~9.8 million in Azerbaijan, ~8.7 million in Tajikistan, ~3.7 million in Georgia) (World Bank 2019). It is worth noticing that Tajikistan has the youngest population among the three countries with the increasing number of children every year, while the other two countries have the reversed population pyramids with the biggest share of 24–34 year groups in the population.

In general Azerbaijan and Georgia are better off economically, as they have higher GDP per capita than Tajikistan which is quite a poor country. According to World Bank data, the GDP per capita in 2017 was equal to 4131.67 USD in Azerbaijan; 4078.25 USD in Georgia; 800.97 USD in Tajikistan (World Bank 2019). At the same time total unemployment rate in Tajikistan is not that high (about 7% in 2016–2017) and comparable to Azerbaijan unemployment rate which is not more than 5%, while in Georgia it is about 14% (Statistical Yearbook of Georgia 2018; Demographic Year Book 2018; Socio-Economic Situation of the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States 2018; Statistical year Book of Azerbaijan 2019).

Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan, as well as many countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia, face the demographic challenge of a young population that needs to successfully make the transition to adulthood and economic self-sufficiency in an environment of increasing uncertainties (Elder et al. 2015; Lloyd 2005). Uncertainties stem from multiple causes. First, there are universal long-term trends causing uncertainties for youths such as globalization (Blossfeld et al. 2008). Second, in the specific context of post-socialist countries, the ongoing economic, institutional and social transformation processes have fundamentally shaped the transition process from education to work (Kogan et al. 2011). The demise of the socialist state and the emergent capitalist order put an end to former guarantees of lifetime employment and basic economic security for young people who are starting their labor market career. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan suffered from very strong initial

economic recessions and reduced economic growth in the 1990s. Only in the 2000s growth regained some strength, particularly in Azerbaijan, which profited from its oil resources. Third, economic and political shocks due to wars, revolutions and regime changes in the CCA region have contributed to the uncertainties young people face in their life course. In times of unfavorable macro-economic conditions there are fewer job opportunities, which makes the transition to work problematic (Gangl 2002).

Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan have the Soviet and socialist institutional legacy in common. For example, their education systems had tight education-occupation linkages, a strong vocational system and a small and exclusive tertiary education system in the socialist period (Gerber 2003). In the transformation process education-occupation linkages have weakened, the vocational education system has become more and more unpopular and strong tertiary education expansion and differentiation took place (Kogan et al. 2011). This trend can be observed in Azerbaijan and Georgia and to a lesser extent in Tajikistan. Another similarity is the legacy of a socialist tradition of supporting female labor force integration which can be observed in other post-Soviet and post-Socialist societies as well (Gerber and Mayorova 2006; Kosyakova et al. 2017).

There is clear evidence that youths face great labor market problems in the three countries but there are cross-country differences in the extent and character of labor market problems. Comparable data, provided by World Bank, show that youth (15–24yo) unemployment (modeled ILO estimates) reaches 14.0% in Azerbaijan, 28.4% in Georgia and 19.2% in Tajikistan in 2018 (World Bank 2019), which reveals country differences in the capacity of bringing young people into work. Moreover, disadvantages in terms of job quality are reported for youths in general and young women in particular. Youths have smaller chances of finding a formal sector job and they often end up in jobs in the informal sector, which is of large size in all three countries (ILO 2014).

The three countries also have different religious backgrounds and share the existence of ethnic minority groups. Azerbaijan and Tajikistan are mainly Muslim, whereas Georgia has Orthodox Christian tradition. All three countries are characterized by ethnic minorities: Talysh, Lezgins and Armenians in Azerbaijan, Armenians and Azeris in Georgia and Uzbeks in Tajikistan. Outward migration is common in Georgia and Azerbaijan (Badurashvili 2009), and in Tajikistan this takes place in the form of seasonal migration for work to Russia (Olimova and Bosc 2003).

Each society imposes certain expectations on behavioral patterns of men and women and these expectations are reflected in gender attitudes (Marcus and Harper 2014; Oláh et al. 2018). That is why gender attitudes play an important role as cultural determinants of the patterns of youth's transition from education to work. The empirical data (for a description see Sect. 3.3) contains a battery of questions that measure gender attitudes of young people in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan. Table 11.1 summarizes the degree of agreement and disagreement of male and female respondents to various statements about gender roles.¹

¹The the percentages of those, who was indifferent or was not able to provide an answer here was not reported. Respondents who strongly agreed or agreed with the statements are summed up in

The data suggest that Tajikistan is the most conservative country with respect to the gender values, where both men and women hold traditional views on gender roles. The most egalitarian gender attitudes were found in Georgia. The value of female education is strikingly low in Tajikistan, where over 70% of respondents of both sexes agree that girls should only go to school to make them good mothers and wives. In Georgia and Azerbaijan, approximately one fifth of respondents agreed to this statement. At the same time, a relatively high share of young people in all three countries disagreed that a woman who has a full-time job cannot be a good mother. This may be explained by the effect of the Soviet policies that promoted active role of women as workers and participants of political process (Selezneva 2017). While working mothers are not considered as unusual or undesirable phenomenon in post-Soviet countries, the overwhelming majority of young people in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan believe that women and girls need their male guardian's (e.g. father, brother or husband) permission to work outside home. In addition, over 70% of respondents from these two countries consider men to be better political leaders and business executives than women. However, in Georgia over 60% of female respondents disagreed to these statements, while male respondents tended to agree with them very moderately. In general, men in all three countries hold more traditional views on gender roles than women. This suggests that young women are the main holders of modern egalitarian gender values, especially in Georgia Table 3.1.

The differences in gender attitudes may cause conflict in the intra-household work allocations, if expectations of men and women differ considerably. Table 3.2 presents the answers of male and female respondents regarding their expectations of who should do the tasks of cooking, earning money, cleaning house and taking care of children in a family.

Again, the most egalitarian gender views were discovered in Georgia, where larger share of respondents ascribed doing household chores to both partners. The only exception is childcare, where more respondents of both sexes from Azerbaijan identified this task as the one, which should be shared by men and women. Cooking and cleaning house were considered as female tasks by the majority of respondents from all countries, while earning money was mostly ascribed to men, with an exception of Georgian women over 66% of whom believed that both partners should contribute to the household budget. This fact indicates that women in Georgia are likely to experience a "triple burden" of working on the labor market simultaneously to performing the unpaid work at home as home keepers and childrearsers.

3.3 Data and Sample

For the empirical analysis in this chapter large-scale nationally representative retrospective life history survey data from Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan is used.

a category of those, who agreed, and those, who strongly disagreed or disagreed are respectively presented as a group of those, who disagreed.

Table 3.1 Gender attitudes of youth, in %

		Azerbaijan		Georgia		Tajikistan	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Girls should only go to school to make them good mothers and wives	agree	21.0	13.6	21.1	17.7	72.4	74.9
	disagree	64.9	79.3	72.2	78.2	17.4	19.4
A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl	agree	24.9	12.6	14.4	9.5	54.4	44.3
	disagree	61.1	76.3	76.3	85.8	31.7	45.6
Women and girls need their male guardian's (e.g. father, brother or husband) permission to work outside home	agree	90.4	79.6	53.2	44.0	88.2	87.8
	disagree	5.1	13.7	32.3	43.6	5.8	6.3
Men make better political leaders than women do	agree	71.2	46.5	41.7	21.4	71.4	63.3
	disagree	14.0	32.0	36.7	60.3	12.0	18.5
Men make better business executives than women do	agree	74.9	52.1	48.4	22.5	70.1	59.9
	disagree	10.2	27.0	35.7	62.4	16.0	23.0
A husband's career should be more important to the wife than her own career	agree	77.8	60.3	33.5	25.9	72.0	69.8
	disagree	7.8	19.6	44.3	58.7	9.7	13.1
A woman who has a full-time job cannot be a good mother	agree	40.2	25.9	27.8	21.4	39.7	27.3
	disagree	42.3	62.9	54.0	66.2	41.7	58.4

Source TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan 2017; authors' calculations. Weighted results

These Youth Transitions Surveys were carried out within the international collaborative research project "Opportunities and Barriers at the Transition from Education to Work. A Comparative Youth Study in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan" (TEW-CCA) (Gebel et al. 2019). The fieldwork period lasted from October 2016 to February 2017. In each country 2,000 standardized face-to-face interviews of youths were conducted. In Georgia and especially in Tajikistan very remote mountainous

Table 3.2 Youth's opinions on intra-household work allocations, in %

		Azerbaijan		Georgia		Tajikistan	
		Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
What do you think, in a family, who should do the following ...							
Cook	man	0.3	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.7	0.2
	both	8.1	12.4	30.5	38.7	11.1	12.4
	woman	91.6	87.5	68.9	61.1	88.2	87.4
Earn money	man	86.6	66.8	53.3	33.3	86.2	69.3
	both	13.0	32.9	45.9	66.1	13.4	30.0
	woman	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.6	0.3	0.7
Clean house	man	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.2
	both	3.9	4.9	19.4	18.6	10.6	11.3
	woman	95.7	94.9	80.6	80.9	89.1	88.6
Take care of children	man	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.7	0.4
	both	52.3	68.4	50.9	54.5	35.1	41.6
	woman	47.6	31.4	48.8	45.4	64.1	58.0

Source TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan 2017; authors' calculations. Weighted results

areas were excluded. The original questionnaires were developed in English and translated into Azeri, Georgian, Tajik and Russian.

A multistage stratified random sampling was carried out. Based on a complete list of districts by region, districts were randomly selected. In Azerbaijan, election lists and full lists of voters were used for the random selection procedure. In Georgia and Tajikistan this was done based on most recent population census data. Each of the randomly selected districts contained several clusters. The cluster distribution covered all regions in accordance with the population size of each region and the urban-rural distribution of the population. Multi-stage clustering continued with selection of random households within each randomly selected cluster via route-random selection. Finally, eligible respondents were screened and randomly selected in each household. Design weights were calculated for each country in order to account for different selection probabilities. The data sets provide unique individual-level retrospective data on socio-demographic background, education history and patterns of labor market entry.

A dynamic perspective has already been taken in the definition of the target group of the TEW-CCA Youth Transition Surveys. Following the seminal survey work of the European Training Foundation in its school-to-work transition surveys on Ukraine and Serbia (European Training Foundation 2008) and Syria (Gebel 2012) the TEW-CCA Youth Transition Surveys adopted a dynamic life course definition in order to capture the transition from education to work for each individual. The target group

was defined as young people aged 18–35 who finished or stopped formal education in the period 2006–2015.² In this way it is guaranteed that only those respondents were included, who were in the period of their school-to-work transition, irrespectively of their specific biological age.

Leaving education is defined as finishing/stopping formal education (either successfully completing it or dropping out). “Being in education” was defined in terms of formal education. Formal education means enrolment and active participation in high school, university, institute or any other educational institution. This does not include informal education in terms of self-learning a foreign language at home or attending a computer course in the evening. Respondents are also classified as being in formal education if the respondent combines formal education with other activities (e.g. work). Pupils/Students on vacation or students who interrupted education due to parental leave or illness are in formal education. Students with pending status (i.e. students waiting for being accepted to the next stage of education) are also considered to be enrolled in formal education if they neither work nor look for work at the moment of the survey and plan to continue study in the near future.

The aim of the TEW-CCA Youth Transition Surveys was to collect longitudinal data on the dynamic processes of education attainment, labor market entry and the early work history. Due to practical and financial restriction the longitudinal design was implemented via retrospective questions. Information on variables and methods are introduced in each of the subchapter of empirical analyses separately.

3.4 Empirical Results

3.4.1 *The School-to-Home Transition and Reasons for that*

The chapter starts with the analysis of transition from school-to-home. Incidence of labor market inactivity was analyzed separately for males and females in each country. Definition of the ‘inactive’ persons in the sample of education leavers was as persons who have neither found a first job nor engaged in any kind of job search activities after leaving education. In the TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys respondents are asked whether they have been actively seeking for work in the period after finishing or stopping formal education. Actively seeking means applying for positions, replying to work offers, answering advertisements, appearing for a job interview, sending CV, going directly to companies’ offices. Combining this information with the information gained from the activity calendar allows identifying the group of inactive persons, i.e. young people who have never had a job and have not been looking for a job after leaving education (Gebel et al. 2019).

²Traditionally, researchers consider young adulthood as a rather static period between the ages of 15 and 24 and, in recent years, the upper age limit has been increased to 29 or 34 given the strong post-secondary education expansion around the world.

Taking regional specificities into account, engagement in the labor market is defined as a very broad concept, encompassing unregistered informal work arrangements, agricultural waged work, self-employment, and family helpers. Based on our sample definition and definition of inactivity, 25.9% of all Georgian women in our sample do not actively participate in the labor market and instead engage in full-time housework and care duties (see Table 3.3). The school-to-home transition pattern is more widespread in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, where 40.4%, respectively 48.7% of women became inactive. Thus, the highest inactivity rate among female education leavers can be found in Tajikistan that shares both a Muslim majority background and the lowest economic development level among the three countries (Gebel et al. 2019). This is in line with previous international comparative research that underlined that Muslim women, on average, are less likely to participate in the labor market (Heyne 2017). Next to the individual religious denomination it has been shown that women living in Muslim dominating societies have the lowest probability of participating in the labor market. Within the Christian world labor force participation rates are also lower for predominant Orthodox countries.

Table 3.3 shows that men's inactivity rates are much lower in all three countries. The highest inactivity rate is registered among male Georgian education leavers (11.0%) followed by men in Tajikistan (7.1%) in Azerbaijan (6.3%). Hence, across all three cultural, institutional and structural contexts only a small proportion of men is inactive, which translates into a large gender inequality with respect to the labor market participation decision after leaving education.

As a next step of the empirical analyses on the school-to-home transition we investigate personal reasons given by young men or women for not working and not looking for work after leaving education. When asked about the reasons for inactivity respondents could give multiple answers (Table 3.3). The major reasons for not engaging in job search among Georgian women are 'getting married' (55.5%) and 'care for other household members' (22.7%). These shares are much lower in Tajikistan (where 30.4% of women declared marriage and 11.9% mentioned care for other household members) and in Azerbaijan (where 17.2% of women chose marriage and 7.1% mention care for other household members). In contrast, the major reason for women's labor market inactivity after leaving education in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan is that the women's parents (if not married) and spouses (if married) did not allow them to work outside home. This applies especially to Azerbaijan, where 73.9% of women mention this barrier, followed by Tajikistan (46.4%). This issue is much less relevant for Georgia, where only 6.7% mention this reason of being inactive. Synthesizing the findings suggests that in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan fathers and husbands usually do not allow women to take up a job, whereas in Georgia family-related duties become the prime reasons for not working.

Next to family-related reasons female education leavers also mention the lack of jobs in the immediate surrounding as a reason for their labor market inactivity. This can reflect a general lack in labor market demand but also regional labor mobility barriers for women. Every fifth Georgian inactive woman identifies the lack of jobs in the immediate surroundings as one of the causes of her out of labor market position.

Table 3.3 Economic inactivity rate and reasons for inactivity by gender and country (in %)

	Azerbaijan		Georgia		Tajikistan	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
Economic inactivity rate	6.3	40.4	11.0	25.9	7.1	48.7
<i>Reasons for economic inactivity (multiple answer categories were allowed)^a</i>						
There was no job in the immediate surroundings	3.1	10.2	53.0	19.9	23.7	17.0
You were waiting for seasonal work	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.2	14.8	4.9
You did not have useful contacts	4.1	2.6	16.5	2.9	8.9	6.7
You were not properly qualified/trained	0.0	1.3	17.5	7.0	5.2	3.3
You were too young/ inexperienced	2.1	1.6	16.7	6.2	8.9	8.0
You were planning to go abroad (for study, job or marriage)	0.0	0.0	4.6	1.0	9.6	1.0
You were seriously ill or disabled	10.3	0.4	7.5	0.7	8.1	0.5
You got married	0.0	17.2	3.7	55.5	4.4	30.4
Your parents/spouse did not allow you to work outside home	0.0	73.9	1.7	6.7	2.2	46.4
You had to take care for other household members	2.1	7.1	0.0	22.7	3.7	11.9
Due to religious or cultural reasons	0.0	1.3	0.0	0.7	0.0	2.3
You did not want to work	24.7	18.1	16.1	5.8	10.4	7.6
You were waiting for military service	63.9	0.0	–	–	–	–

Source TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan 2017; authors' calculations. Weighted results

Remarks ^aAnalysis on the reasons for economic inactivity are conducted for the subsample of inactive persons

The problem is of similar size for Tajikistan (17.0%), whereas this is less an issue in Azerbaijan (10.2%).

If we compare the numbers for men and women, it becomes evident that the lack of labor demand is even more an issue among inactive men in Georgia and Tajikistan. About a half of Georgian inactive men and about a quarter of Tajik inactive men

said that they did not search for a job because there was no job in the immediate surroundings. In contrast, this applies only to 3.1% of Azeri inactive men. Given that the share was also lowest for Azeri inactive women it turns out that the lack of local labor demand is not such an issue in Azerbaijan compared to Georgia and Tajikistan. Compared to women, Georgian men also mentioned other labor market related issues as a reason for inactivity such as lack of useful contacts (16.5%), proper qualifications (17.5%) and work experience (16.7%). Health issues are also relatively much more often mentioned among inactive men than among inactive women. Men also more often mention that they did not want to work, which, for example, applies to about a quarter of inactive men in Azerbaijan. In case of Azerbaijan the big number of inactive men report that the reason for being inactive is that they are waiting for the military service after leaving education.

Thus, family restrictions as well as females' social norm choices for family responsibility are the predominant reason for being inactive in the labor market for women, while young men declare more often lack of job opportunities or health issues or army as the major reason for not being engaged in the labor market.

3.4.2 How Long Does It Take to Find a First Job?

Whereas the previous section addressed the labor force participation decision of young people who have left the education system, this section focuses on those persons who actively engage in the job search after they have left the education system. Thus, persons who never had a first job and who are not engaged in a job search were excluded. Instead, the subsample of persons who actively participate in the labor market after leaving education was under focus. Finding a job is a central marker in the transition to adulthood due to its importance in gaining independence from the family, as well as for securing a good socio-economic position, career and life chances. If young persons do not find a job, they mainly rely on their families' economic support because the states in CCA countries provides only weak support in terms of labor market policies.

The duration of the school-to-work transition is measured as the time between leaving the education system and finding a first job (Gebel and Noelke 2011). The date of leaving education is defined as leaving education, irrespective of whether students successfully completed their education level or dropped out before completion. Search periods prior to leaving education are disregarded due to missing information on potential search activities. Also search period while being at school is fundamentally different from the search period after leaving education, as the search after graduation accounts for higher material and psychological costs (Allen and van der Velden 2007).³

³Using the monthly retrospective activity calendar information, periods of military service were deducted from the measurement of search duration as this is an obligatory time-out that should not be counted to the duration of finding a first job.

Following common definitions (Gebel and Noelke 2011), the first job position for an education leaver was operationalized as any first job, including short-term, casual work and unregistered work, self-employment and work as family helpers. This broad definition accounts for the variety of first job positions in CCA countries. The respondents were asked to fill out a detailed monthly economic activity calendar for the time since leaving education until the time of the job interview. The activity calendar covers a minimum period of one year up to a maximum period of 10 years depending on the year the respondent was leaving education. Based on this calendar the first job was identified. The few graduates who obtain their first job before leaving the education system are counted as making an instantaneous transition (the search period was coded as one month).

Event history analysis is used to study the time elapsed between leaving education and finding a first job. The time elapsed until first employment is described with Kaplan–Meier estimates of transition rates because of the problem of right-censored duration data for those who have not yet found employment at the time of the interview (Blossfeld et al. 2007). Table 3.4 shows the proportion of active job searchers who have found a first job until a specific month after leaving education.

Except in Azerbaijan many education leavers experience direct and quick entries into their first job. In the following years, further labor market integration can be observed, but the conditional transition probabilities (so-called ‘hazard rates’) decrease: the longer the time elapsed in non-employment after leaving education, the harder it is to find a first job. Such a pattern of so-called negative duration dependence in the job search process is usually explained by discouragement effects that lead to reduced individual search intensities (Bejaković and Mrnjavac 2018; Krug et al. 2019). Moreover, potential employers may interpret the prolonged search period as a negative signal and therefore refrain from making job offers to the long-term

Table 3.4 Share of people (%) having found a first job until a specific month after leaving education, by gender and country

	Months since leaving education						
	1	6	12	24	36	48	60
<i>Azerbaijan</i>							
Men	12	44	57	78	85	90	92
Women	9	39	45	60	67	75	78
<i>Georgia</i>							
Men	38	52	61	72	79	84	87
Women	27	41	49	61	68	72	78
<i>Tajikistan</i>							
Men	47	62	71	79	88	92	94
Women	42	54	59	67	74	78	82

Source TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan 2017; authors' calculations. Weighted results

Remark Results based on Kaplan–Meier survival functions

unemployed (Van den Berg et al. 1994). As a result, there is a substantial share of young people who require several years to find a first job, and there is a non-negligible share of young people who do not succeed in finding a first job, even after a long search period. Thus, job seekers are strongly divided into those who find a first job within one year and those who search for longer periods of time (Van den Berg et al. 1994).

The analyses of the Azerbaijanian sample show that men make faster transitions to a first job than women, similar to other traditional societies like Egypt (Heyne and Gebel 2016) or Syria (Gebel 2012). For example, 57% of all young male job seekers find a first job within the first year after graduation, while the share is only 45% for women. After 24 months, the shares of successful job finders increase to 78% for men and 60% for women. After 48 months, 90% of Azeri men and 75% of Azeri women have found a first job.

A faster entry process can be observed in Georgia: 38% of men and 27% of women make immediate transitions within one month after leaving education. After 12 months, 61% of men in Georgia have found gainful employment, and the share increases to 72% after 24 months and 84% after 48 months. In contrast, the share of successful job seekers increases more slowly for women (61% after 24 months and 72% after 48 months).

Tajikistan has the highest share of immediate transitions from education to work. 42% of female job seekers and 47% of active male job seekers find a first job within one month after leaving education. However, afterwards the share only slowly increases to 79% for men and 67% for women after 24 months. After 48 months, 92% of male job seekers and 78% of female job seekers have found a first job. The high rate of instantaneous transitions in Tajikistan could be explained by the higher rates of informal employment in the country. Informal employment is usually quicker and easier to find. Similar reasons might explain the much better situation of the youth labour market in Tajikistan than the statistics from the World Bank gives us an impression. First, the time period until the job is found is discussed, not the static unemployment rates. Second, indeed the official statistics might not consider the informal employment that youth engaged in. Third, the definition of the target group is different (15–24 years old who are active in the labor market in World Bank statistics VS 18–34 years old who are active in the labor market and who left the education system during the last 10 years in the TEW-CCA surveys).

In addition, every respondent who actively searched for a job was asked about the main obstacles the person experienced in finding a job after leaving education. Both respondents who successfully found their first jobs and those who have not yet found their first job during the observation period are included. The results of the analyses differentiated by gender and country are presented in Table 3.5.

In each country a certain share of the respondents reports that they did not have any problems at all finding a job. This is in line with the rather high share of respondents making immediate and rather quick transitions from education to work. In Azerbaijan, around one quarter of men and almost one third of women report no problems in finding a job. The share is also high among Tajik women (24.5%) but lower among Tajik men (17.5%). In Georgia only around 12 to 13% of male and

Table 3.5 Main obstacles of finding a job after leaving education among active persons by gender and country (in %)

	Azerbaijan		Georgia		Tajikistan	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
You didn't have any problems at all in finding a job.	25.3	31.4	12.3	12.7	17.5	24.5
Requirements for job were higher than education/training received	19.3	10.7	18.2	18.0	7.7	7.7
Not enough work experience	43.3	36.8	36.0	39.2	36.7	27.7
Not enough jobs available	63.0	57.4	61.6	58.3	46.8	49.2
Discrimination based on age	12.9	9.0	1.6	2.9	0.8	0.2
Discrimination based on gender (being female or being male)	1.3	0.8	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.4
Discrimination based on ethnic origin	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.5
Low wages in available jobs	25.9	21.5	21.3	19.5	30.8	19.7
Poor working conditions in available jobs	7.0	5.4	9.8	6.4	8.8	4.3
You did not have useful personal contacts	15.8	16.8	11.8	11.5	7.6	5.7

Source TEW-CCA Youth Transitions Surveys in Azerbaijan, Georgia and Tajikistan 2017; authors' calculations. Weighted results

Remarks Analysis are conducted for the subsample of all economically active persons, irrespectively of the fact whether they found a first job or not. Multiple answer categories were allowed

female respondents who were actively looking for a job said that they did not face any problems at all in the job search process.

According to the popular youth opinion, the biggest obstacle in their job search is lack of jobs available for them in the labour market. For example, this applies to 63.0% of men and 57.4% of women in Azerbaijan. Figures are rather similar in Georgia, whereas the shares are a bit lower in Tajikistan (46.8% among men and 49.2% among women). Many respondents also report the problem that they did not have enough work experience (ranging from 27.7% to 43.3%). This applies more often to men than to women in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan, whereas the share is slightly higher among Georgian women compared to Georgian men.

Respondents also see the problem of unattractive job offers in the job search process. About 20 to 30% report the issue of low wages in available jobs as an

obstacle and 4 to 10% mention poor working conditions as a problem. The shares are higher among men compared to women in each country. This may either reflect the issue that men receive worse job offers because they enter different job segments (see next section) or that men have higher salary expectations on jobs given their role of the main breadwinner.

Interestingly, only about 5.7–16.8% report that they did not have useful contacts as a problem in the job search process. A tiny share of respondents (0.1–1.3%) report that they experienced discrimination based on gender. Similarly, discrimination based on ethnic origin remains in all groups below the 1% threshold. In contrast more people report age discrimination. The share is the highest in Azerbaijan (12.9% among men and 9.0% among women). In contrast the share remains below the 1% threshold in Tajikistan. This can be explained by the growing number of young populations in general in the country.

3.4.3 *Job Quality*

The previous section showed that finding a first job is not an easy task for many young people in CCA countries as a substantial share of young job searchers experiences long search durations. Even when young people succeed in entering a first job, it is still not guaranteed that the first job will offer good working conditions (ILO 2003). Previous research reported high levels of job precariousness among labor market entrants across the globe (Gebel and Giesecke 2016; Lange et al. 2014; OECD 2013; ILO 2011). In this respect, it is important to study the quality of first jobs.

From a methodological point of view, a multidimensional perspective on various aspects of job quality and working conditions instead of relying on a single job quality dimension (such as wages) or aggregating working conditions into a one-dimensional index is adopted here. The multidimensional perspective of quality of job is well developed both in academia and policy making institutions such as European Commission, ILO and OECD (ILO 2016; OECD 2017). For example, since 1990 the Eurofound every five years carries out European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS) of all European countries on quality of jobs and working conditions so that changes in job quality and their effects on individuals' well-being can be tracked (Eurofound 2020).

Kalleberg (2011) identifies at least four dimensions in the quality of job like: (1) earnings and fringe benefits; (2) the degree of job security and opportunities for advancement to better jobs; (3) the degree to which people are able to exercise control over their work activities and experience their jobs as interesting and meaningful; and (4) the extent to which people's time at work and control over their work schedules permit them to spend time with their families and in other non-work activities (Kalleberg 2011, p. 5). The approach of the chapter follows this perspective and describes at least three dimension of job quality. Unfortunately, TEW-CCA Youth Transition Survey does not contain the questions on income due to the difficulties for the respondents to remember the exact income in the retrospective questions of the

survey but it does have information on the occupation which could be used as proxy for the wage range. The type of job and type of contract for job security dimension was also discussed.

The advantage of such a multidimensional perspective is that it captures potential trade-offs or cumulative advantages or disadvantages in the working conditions of first job holders in different employment segments. Detecting cumulative disadvantages is important in order to assess the prevalence and degree of precarious work among young female workers. Specifically, job type, type of contract and the occupation are the central objective dimensions of job quality that are described in the Table 3.6 by gender and country.

An important differentiation for job quality is the job type. The specificities of the CCA region were taken into account by distinguishing formal/registered from informal/unregistered employment forms as well as different kinds of work as a family helper and own-account/self-employed worker. Formal versus informal employment are defined at the individual level and not at the firm level. A formal (registered) job means that income taxes for the specific job are paid either by the employer or employee, whereas this is not the case for informal (unregistered) jobs. Many education leavers enter their first jobs as an informal/unregistered employee. This applies, for example, to 23.7% of women in Tajikistan. The shares of informal employees are lower for women in Georgia (18.2%) and in Azerbaijan (15.5%). Across all countries men work more often as informal employees in their first job. In contrast, men are underrepresented in the formal sector. For example, 77.3% of Azeri women compared to 42.6% of Azeri men get their first jobs as formal employees. These are in line with the previous studies, which show that men are more likely to end-up in informal employment due to their risk acceptance nature and lower level of education on average that determines low-skilled jobs available in the informal sector (Karabchuk 2012a; Lehmann and Pignatti 2018; Lehmann and Zaiceva 2015; OECD 2013). There are significant country differences as the share of informal employees among men ranges from 24.4% in Georgia to 44.1% in Tajikistan. The gender gap for formal employees is also considerable and reaches 19 percentage points in Georgia and 17 percentage points in Tajikistan.

Working as an employee or helper in the family business takes rather small percentage. The highest shares are reached among Georgian men (11.2%) and Azeri men (7.3%). Similarly, self-employment remains in the single digit area for all groups apart from Azeri men that just surpass the 10% threshold.

Regarding the type of contract, the distinction is made between contracts of unlimited duration and contracts of limited duration (temporary or seasonal work contracts). It is important to emphasize that here those young people who are hired by someone else and do not work for the family or not self-employed are in the focus. There is a research tradition investigating the role of temporary work, its determinants, characteristics and consequences in Central and Eastern Europe (Baranowska and Gebel 2010; Baranowska et al. 2011; Karabchuk 2012b; Karabchuk 2012c). In the context of the CCA region and post-Soviet Space in general it is, however, even more important to distinguish the case of a written work contract from having no written work contract (just a verbal agreement) (Gërxhani and van de Werfhorst

Table 3.6 Job quality characteristics of first job by gender and country (in %)

	Azerbaijan		Georgia		Tajikistan	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
<i>Job type</i>						
Formal/registered employee	42.6	77.3	58.0	77.0	46.4	63.4
Informal/unregistered employee	39.5	15.5	24.4	18.2	44.1	23.7
Employee/helper in family business	7.3	4.3	11.2	2.1	2.3	3.8
Self-employed/employee	10.7	2.9	6.4	2.7	7.3	9.1
<i>Type of contract (only for those employed)</i>						
No contract	46.8	19.0	57.3	46.9	51.9	32.4
Unlimited contract	43.4	73.3	29.3	40.4	28.4	49.7
Limited contract	9.2	7.8	12.5	12.4	19.7	18.0
<i>Occupation, ISCO 08 (1 digit)</i>						
Legislators, senior official and managers	1.0	1.6	0.8	1.5	1.0	0.3
Professionals	19.6	37.4	11.9	22.8	16.1	38.4
Technicians, associate professionals	6.4	19.4	21.3	21.4	7.7	15.6
Clerks	5.8	21.5	8.9	17.1	4.3	6.7
Service workers, shop and market sales workers	23.0	12.6	14.1	27.1	7.9	7.3
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	8.4	4.5	4.1	0.9	2.4	8.1
Craft and related trades workers	17.8	1.0	16.5	3.8	45.1	8.1
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	6.2	0.3	4.7	1.0	4.3	0.7
Elementary occupations	9.6	1.4	16.3	4.2	11.3	14.7
Military occupation	2.2	0.3	1.6	0.0	–	–

2013; Gimpelson and Kapeliushnikov 2015; Gimpelson and Zudina 2012; Karabchuk 2012a; Karabchuk and Soboleva 2014; Kogan 2011; Lehmann and Zaiceva 2015). The case of having no written work contract is often seen as a defining characteristic of informal work arrangements next to or in addition to the distinction between registered and unregistered work.⁴

⁴Informal employment includes employment in both formal and informal sectors but it is a job-based concept and ‘encompasses those jobs that generally lack basic social or legal protections or employment benefits and may be found in the formal sector, informal sector or households’ (ILO

The share of first job holders without a written contract is highest among men. It reaches around 46.8% in Azerbaijan, 51.9% in Tajikistan and even 57.3% in Georgia. It is worth to underline that women in Georgia (46.9%) have very high probability of working without a contract. In contrast, this applies only to 19.0% of women in Azerbaijan. Limited work contracts do not play a big role in Azerbaijan. In Georgia, men and women face similar risks of getting a limited work contract (around 12–13%). Limited work contracts are a bit more widespread in Tajikistan reaching 19.7% among men and 18.0% among women.

Finally, different first jobs according to their occupational skill level were identified. The surveys classified first jobs based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 08) classification. ISCO-based occupations were grouped at the 1-digit level based on very informative original survey data that provide a very detailed three-digit occupational classification. Table 3.6 shows that only a tiny share of education leavers (less than 2%) succeeds in entering a position as legislators, senior officials and managers (ISCO-1). In contrast a great proportion succeeds in entering the levels of professionals (ISCO-2) or technical and associates professionals (ISCO-3). This is especially the case for women who reach ISCO-2 and ISCO-3 occupational levels more often than men in all three countries. For example, 38.4% of Tajik women work as professionals in their first job, whereas this applies only to 16.1% of Tajik men. Similarly, the share of technical and associate professionals (ISCO-3) is twice as high among Tajik women (15.6%) compared to Tajik men (7.7%). This occupational structure also explains why informal work and temporary jobs are dominated by men. Usually the informal work and temporary contracts are associated with the lower qualifications and lower level positions which are taken by men.

Many female entry jobs are located at ISCO-4 level as clerks. The gender gap at this occupation level is strongest in Azerbaijan, where 21.5% of women work as clerks in their first job compared to just 5.8% of men. The gender pattern is more diverse at ISCO-5 level of service workers, shop and market sales workers. While in Azerbaijan the share of ISCO-5 job among men is twice as much as among women, the opposite is observable in Georgia. In Tajikistan the ISCO-5 shares are rather equal between men and women in their first job. While men dominate the ISCO-6 category of skilled agricultural and fishery workers in Azerbaijan and Georgia the opposite is the case in Tajikistan. Across all countries men clearly dominate the ISCO-7 field of craft and related trades workers. For example, the 17.8% of Azeri male first job holders are in ISCO-7 occupations, whereas this applies only to 1.0% of Azeri female first job holders. The male dominance also applies to plant and machine operators and assemblers (ISCO-8). Elementary occupations (ISCO-9) are more widespread among men than women in Azerbaijan and Georgia, whereas the opposite is the case in Tajikistan.

2011, p. 2). In other words, informal employment refers to all informal jobs, whether carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises or households (ILO 2003).

3.5 Conclusions and Policy Implications

The chapter was dedicated to the description of the gender differences in the transition from school to work in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan. Due to advantage of the comparable design of the survey data collected within TEW-CCA Youth Transition Surveys it was possible to make explicit conclusions on the challenges that youth is experiencing in these countries when entering labor market.

The analysis showed that young women in all three countries remain economically inactive much more often than men. Female inactivity rates at labor market entry are ranging from 25.9% in Georgia to 48.7% in Tajikistan. The share of economically inactive men is low in all three countries and does not exceed 11%. When being asked about the reasons for not working and/or not looking for work after leaving education family factors are the predominant reason for being economically inactive in the labor market for women. In Georgia these are mainly family responsibilities such as marriage and care, whereas young women in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan often report that their parents/spouses did not allow them to work. In contrast, young men declare more often lack of job opportunities or health issues or army as the major reason for not being engaged in the labor market.

When measuring the duration of the period between leaving education and finding a first job it was found that there are gender differences as well. For example, 12 months after leaving education 57% of Azerbaijanian men but only 45% of Azerbaijanian women have found a first job. The same gender gap of 12 percentage points in job search probability is also found in Georgia and Tajikistan. This gender differences persist with ongoing job search duration. For example, 48 months after leaving education 90% of Azerbaijanian men but only 75% of Azerbaijanian women have found a first job. The gender gap is of a similar size in Tajikistan (14 percentage points) and Georgia (12 percentage points). When asked about the main obstacles of finding a first job, young people report the lack of jobs available for them in the labour market as the biggest obstacle. Respondents also see the problem of unattractive job offers in the job search process. About 20–30% report the issue of low wages in available jobs as an obstacle and 4–10% mention poor working conditions as a problem. It is worth to underline that gender discrimination as a reason of not getting a job was mentioned only by 1% of respondents in all countries.

Regarding job quality it is found across all countries that men work more often as informal employees in their first job than women. Thus, men are underrepresented in the formal sector. Young women are more engaged in the stable jobs with unlimited contracts, the gender gap ranges from 11 to 30 percentage points. For both men and women working as an employee or helper in the family business is very unpopular.

There is also a strong occupational gender segregation in the three countries. While women tend to have better chances to enter the levels of professionals, technical and associates professionals, and clerks, men tend to be overrepresented in lower occupational positions such as craft and related trade workers, plant and machine operators and assemblers, and elementary occupations. There is no clear gender

pattern across all countries for medium occupations such as service workers, shop and market sales assistants and craft and related trades workers.

The research findings allow to make the following policy implications. First, all three discussed countries are facing significant gender differences in the youth employment opportunities. These unequal opportunities in the labor market could affect the economic development in the countries (Welzel 2013). Young women still struggle with traditional family restrictions on permission to work outside the house in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan on. Moreover, early marriages that are still popular in these countries drive young women into inactivity (Gebel 2020). Thus, it is highly important to improve the labor market regulations for better female work engagement and support female empowerment. One way of enriching the young females' chances for better jobs is through higher education. As it was shown before, higher education attainment of young women in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Tajikistan has a strong positive impact on labor market activity and getting a formal sector job (Gebel 2020).

Second, young men forced to be involved more in informal jobs after they leave schools. Job insecurity of informal work creates income instability. Taking into account males gender roles as main breadwinners in all three countries, unstable earnings from informal employment can negatively affect family planning for young adults which might lead at the end to the decrease of fertility rates like it was shown for European countries (Karabchuk 2020). In this case there is a need for special attention to the job opportunities for youth from the governments and policy makers. Unfortunately, the channels of getting good jobs after graduation are not transparent, not openly competitive, and not easy to navigate. Still the chances of getting a good job in the formal sector depend on the social resources of parents in Georgia and Tajikistan and on parents' economic resources in Azerbaijan and Georgia (Gebel 2020).

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