Moonlighting among Married Men over Life Cycle Stages in Sri Lanka

Sumadi Samaraweera

Department of Economics and Statistics, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka

and

Athula Ranasinghe

Department of Economics, University of Colombo

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Introduction

Moonlighting (multiple job holding) has become a prominent feature in most of labor markets. Worker's motivation to moonlight is influenced by several factors including hours constrained motive (to compensate for insufficient work hours), heterogeneous job motive (to perform different tasks) and financial motive (to meet their regular household expenses) (Heineck, 2009). Motives could also change during different stages of the worker's life cycle. In the life cycle stages following parenthood, financial motive becomes the leading decision variable in moonlighting among married men. The reason is that they feel squeezed by the lack of finances to meet the new family requirements during this stage according to Wilensky (1963, cited in McClain and Moen, 1989, p.45). Such family requirements vary according to the age composition of children.

Objectives

Main objective of this study is to examine the changes of the probability of moonlighting by married men in Sri Lanka with the changes of age composition of their children. Identifying other socio economic determinants of moonlighting for the selected group is a supplementary objective.

Methodology

The study is based on a sub-sample of 5,673 married, employed male household heads in the age group of 31-50[6], extracted from Quarterly Labour Force Surveys in 2010. This group records the highest moonlighting rate among all age groups. Binary logistic

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[6] The missing observations (188) resulting for the question of engaging in secondary employment (q 21) are dropped from the sample of 5,861 married, employed male household heads in the age group of 31-50.

regression models and OLS regression models were used for the analysis. 3,114 cases are used in the logistic regression analysis after removing missing values in two independent variables of log per hour earning and log years of education[7]. The dependent variable of being a moonlighter or not being moonlighter is used in all binary logistic regression models. The age composition of employees' children (no children, having children less than 6 years old, having children between 6-14 years old, having children more than 14 years of age) which is based on the mean age of children in each household, is used to indicate life cycle stages of married men.

Results

The cost of maintaining children has been growing rapidly in the modern world. This 'cost' is determined by both direct and indirect expenses consequent to parenthood. Direct cost includes costs of food, clothing, health and education of children. Indirect cost includes opportunity cost of wife's employment (Kaufman and Hotchkiss, 2003, p.117). If wife is employed, the opportunity cost is the market price of time intensive activities of a housewife. Time intensive activities of a mother are very high in the life cycle stages with infants, pre-school or school-going children within the age of child dependency. A huge amount of finances are required to convert these time intensive activities into market intensive activities. In the Sri Lankan context, short-term departure or reduction of labour force participation by reproductive age women is not so prominent since labour market policies are not so flexible. Therefore, both married men and women have to earn more to meet the family cost of children as defined above. Considering married men with children of less than 6 and 6-14 age groups, their total work hours (summation of primary and secondary work hours) are significantly higher than the other groups as found by OLS regression models. The study also found that married men are more likely to moonlight at these two stages of the life cycle, rather than men with no children, the reference category (Table 1 below).

Years of education also increases moonlighting by married men. Underutilization of educated workers by primary employer is one reason for seeking additional moonlighting opportunities. However, it could reduce the commitment to work in the first job.

According to neoclassical labour leisure model, increasing income reduces labour supply. Therefore, low per hour earning from the main job increases labour supply of

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[7] Log per hour earning is regressed on log years of education and the residual of the model was used as log per hour earning to avoid the issues of multicollinearity between the two variables.

worker. If the employees are not allowed additional work hours in their primary jobs, moonlighting is the best way of expanding work hours.

Table 1: Binary logistic regression model for the determinants of moonlighting among married men between 31-50 age groups

Explanatory Variables	B	Wald Statistics	Odds Ratio
Demographic composition of children (Ref: No children)		6.31	
Children less than 6 years old	0.52	3.36	1.68
Children between 6-14	0.50	3.58	1.65
Children more than 14	0.23	0.66	1.26
ln years of education	0.23	3.27	1.26
ln per hour earning (residual)	-0.12	5.41	0.89
Having EPF entitlement(Formal private sector worker)	-0.72	18.72	0.49
Being rural sector worker	0.33	3.90	1.39
Interaction Rural* Agricultural worker	0.63	12.55	1.88
Constant	-3.19	66.34	0.04

Note: Number of observations = 3114

Source: Author's calculations using Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2010

Workers having EPF entitlement in formal private sector are less likely to moonlight than workers in other work sectors since they are fully utilized by the primary employer. Overtime availability is also high for them in the same primary job.

Moonlighting among rural sector workers is higher than in the non-rural sector. Rural agricultural sector workers (28% of rural workers) moonlight more than rural or non-rural non-agricultural workers. This could be a result of hour's constrained motive and financial insecurity in such employment. According to Gunathilake (2010) the agricultural sector is the primary sector that contributes to working poverty.

According to Table 2 below, having an employed spouse increases the possibility of moonlighting of married men other than in the group of men with children less than 6 years old. Employment of the wife changes time intensive household activities into market intensive activities (Becker, 1965). Since the cost of time intensive activities

increases, both husband and wife should earn more. Importance of impact on moonlighting of EPF entitlement, years of education, per hour earning in primary employment, being rural sector, being rural agricultural worker differs by life cycle stages based on age composition of children. Hosmer and Lemeshow tests are insignificant for all binary logistic regression models indicating the goodness of fit of the models.

Table 2: Binary Logistic regression models for the determinants of moonlighting among Fathers in different life cycle stages based on demographic composition of children

Variables	Less than 6 (N=628)			Age 6-14 (N= 1626)			15 or more (N= 641)		
	β	Wald	Odds ratio	β	Wald	Odds ratio	β	Wald	Odds ratio
ln years of education	0.79	4.76	2.21	0.24	2.00	1.28	-0.28	1.10	0.76
ln per hour earning-main job (residual)	-0.17	2.21	0.85	-0.08	1.05	0.93	-0.31	4.75	0.74
having EPF entitlement(Formal private sector worker)	-1.02	8.69	0.36	-0.77	11.09	0.46	-0.48	1.40	0.62
Being Rural sector worker	0.10	0.08	1.10	0.52	4.77	1.68	0.31	0.67	1.36
Interaction Rural* Agricultural worker	0.66	2.06	1.93	0.66	7.35	1.93	0.47	1.54	1.60
Having Employed spouse	0.40	2.16	1.49	0.96	37.85	2.60	1.04	13.20	2.82
Constant	-3.81	19.02	0.02	-3.28	61.29	0.04	-2.51	17.55	0.08

Source: Author's calculations using Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2010

Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

The study concludes that moonlighting among married men is higher for the two groups with children less than 6 years of age and 6-14 years of age and that the total hours of work in above two life cycle stages are higher for married males. This could create a work-family imbalance. Before identifying specific policy implications for these groups, positive and negative implications of moonlighting should be analyzed. Most of

the researchers have found that introducing flexible work schedules helps to achieve work-family balance leading to higher family welfare.

Low per hour income and years of education encourage more moonlighting. One reason is that the full capacity of the highly educated group could not be totally extracted by the primary employer. Moonlighting reduces the labor market risk to a certain extent because in case the main job is lost, the worker will have a second one. However, moonlighting could lead to inefficiencies in the primary job.

Rural agricultural workers are more likely to moonlight and this has important policy implications. As underemployment and poverty are some possible reasons for this, creating opportunities for additional earning is necessary to minimize the issues of working poor in this group. Poverty alleviation programmes including 'Samurdhi' and other development programmes such as 'Divineguma' could absorb this additional labour by encouraging and facilitating new small-scale enterprise development. This would help increase labour productivity in economically insecure sectors and avoid issues of working poor.

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