



A multiple decrement life table model for orphan daughters in Turkey

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Abstract

The multiple decrement life table application in this study shows that, social insurances for surviving daughters in Turkey is considerably generous. When causes other than death are eliminated, expected benefit duration for surviving daughters, is higher than that is calculated for women pensioners who have earned their benefits after their career. Survivor pensioner daughters are encouraged to remain out of the labour force and receive their orphan's pensions, rather than start working. However, benefiting from the demographic dividend requires covering both men and women in the labour force.

Keywords: Multiple decrement life table, Survivor pensions, Orphan daughters.

Öz

Bu çalışmadaki çok-azalanlı yaşam tablosu uygulaması, ölüm aylığı alan yetim kız çocukları için sosyal sigortaların oldukça cömert olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Ölüm dışındaki ayrılış nedenleri analizden çıkarıldığında, Türkiye'de yetim kız çocukları için beklenen aylık ödeme süresi, kendi çalışmalarından kaynaklı emekliliğe hak kazanan kadın sigortalıların beklenen emekli aylığı alma sürelerinden fazladır. Yetim aylığı alan kız çocukları çalışmak yerine, iş gücü dışında kalarak yetim aylıklarını alma yönünde cesaretlendirilmektedir. Öte yandan, demografik fırsattan faydalanabilmek kadın ve erkeklerin birlikte iş gücüne dahil olmasından geçmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Çok azalanlı yaşam tablosu, Ölüm aylıkları, Yetim kız çocukları.

1. Introduction

Life expectancies at all ages have risen due to the progress in quality of life, an increase in the number of people seeking health, and an increase in the availability and accessibility of sanitary and health services. Despite the difference in the phase of epidemiologic transition that countries are passing through, there is a worldwide trend in increased expected duration of life at old age, not only in the developed world but also in developing countries. According to the United Nations [1], life expectancy (LE) at birth has risen 10 to 25 years in different regions of the world. At individual level and for society as a whole, to live longer is a gift. However, if the prolonged life is in ill health, the process becomes burdensome for both

the individual and the country. At the individual level, the quality of life is low, while at the country level it is the public pressure on finance, which makes the process difficult. Longevity leads to a rise at the durations of retirement benefits, thus putting more pressure on the national budget. The expenditure on public pensions when measured as percentage of Gross Domestic Product, have risen 2.5% on average since 1990 [2]. Therefore, increased life span and low levels of mortality during retirement is more frequently discussed in academic and policy oriented literature.

Pay As You Go financed public pension systems sustain the expenditures of current pensioners from today's active working population. Similarly, future contributors will finance future pension payments to today's active contributors. Nevertheless, population ageing disrupts the balance between contributors and beneficiaries. Pension reforms become indispensable instruments for tackling the burden of population ageing. If there is not enough number of contributors to pay for the liabilities of pensioners, public pension systems face financial unsustainability and budget deficits. In case, that the country manages the demographic gift appropriately, a cumulative burden on labour, sustainable pensions and economic growth is avoidable until the opportunity window closes [3]. In this respect, Turkey anticipates a window of opportunity until 2040 [4]. Turkish pension system has a challenge for the next 20 years to solve current problems regarding; early retirement, generous rights for surviving women and meanwhile has to prepare for the contemporary issues for creating jobs during the 'gift'.

The popular opinion about 'retirement' in Turkey covers benefits that are transferred from deceased family members. Common people call their survivor benefits as their 'retirement'. Besides, long term insurance branch in Turkey covers old age, disability and survivor insurance. The contribution load is 20% of declared wage. The person is under the insurance umbrella for the aforementioned risks by paying the contribution that is calculated on actual earnings. Survivors of two different insured groups can get survivor pensions. Firstly, the deceased person who was receiving (or was entitled to receive) an old age or disability pension before death is under coverage. Secondly, active working people who have paid at least 900 Days of Contribution (DoC) with at least five Years of Service before death are covered. Spouses are directly eligible to benefits regardless of their own pensions or active salaries. Children under 18 (20 if pre-university student and 25 if university student), disabled sons or daughters at any age, unmarried, divorced or widowed daughters who are not insured or receive any sort of social security benefits are also eligible [5]. 50% of the pension amount of the deceased is paid to the spouse whereas orphans receive 25%. Apart from these, surviving daughters receive two years accumulated value of survivor pensions as at marriage date, as a marriage grant.

In addition to the old-age pension which is paid to the retired individual, Social Security Institution (SSI) provides death benefits to survivors of the deceased according to special conditions. Surviving spouses, children, mother and father may be eligible to death benefits. Benefits are also stopped, not only by a single decrement "death" but also by marriage, by working or by reaching a specific age. Therefore a multiple decrement process is on duty.

In Turkey, major life table (LT) studies rely on indirect methods on account of the poor death registration in the country. Incompleteness of death counts was estimated to be around 17% in 2005 by Hoşgör [6]. The dataset, that is used, is either Turkey Demographic and Health Survey-TDHS (see [7-11]), population census data of Turkish Statistical Institute-TurkStat ([12-14]) or burial records [15]. All the authors who have used the TDHS data, estimate adult mortality with "orphanhood" method which is popular in case that the death registration is poor. Taylan and Yapar [16] use address based population register system data of Turkey and obtain period LTs for 2009, 2010 and 2011.

There are examples of LTs which are constructed via direct techniques with deaths records of pensioners or employees of SSI. In 2005, Tuzgöl [17] constructed a life table for pensioners beyond age 30, with four years (2000-2003) of SSI administrative data. Death rates were graduated by the method proposed by Whittaker [18]. In addition, she had to borrow the rates from Turkish national data of TurkStat or apply specific constant increment coefficients for crude death rates for females beyond 90 (and males 75+

respectively). Other LT technique applications with SSI data in recent native literature include, multiple increment-decrement LTs for the actively insured employees ([19-20]) and the 2008 SSI table which was prepared under Life and Annuity Life Table Construction Project of the Turkish Treasury [21]. LTs were constructed with data of mixed groups of insured persons (retirees, invalidity pensioners, active contributors) as units of analysis.

The aim of this study is to construct multiple decrement life tables for survivor pensioner daughters. SSI data on withdrawals from survivor benefits and mid-year beneficiaries for 2012 to 2016 is used as input data. Units of analysis for the multiple decrement LT application in this study are daughters that are receiving survivor pensions. In the following parts of the study, age specific expected duration of survivor benefits of daughters are analysed with multiple decrement LT application.

2. Data and Methods

In this section, the steps of calculations and the assumptions that is used for producing different columns of the LTs are highlighted.

2.1. Data sources and description of data

SSI is the major information source in Turkey for the life events for the retired, as the institution pays the monthly benefits to the pensioners. Main events that requires the cessation of benefits is tracked. Therefore SSI has data on, in-year deaths, withdrawals and mid-year number of beneficiaries, which is the key material when constructing LTs. In this study, withdrawals and pensioner figures for 2012 to 2016 is used to depict average pension payment durations of surviving daughters. LTs are modelled with big data. In total, 140,740 withdrawals and 2,403,655 daughters that are exposed to risk are covered. Information for event and exposure is loaded to SSI server and data is prepared by SAS Enterprise Guide.

2.2. Description of age and 'daughter'

“Age at last birthday” which is also known as “age in completed years” or “actual age”, takes the number of years completed alive by the person for a date of reference into account [22]. In this study, age is defined as “age at last birthday”. Completed age at death is calculated by the exact date of death and the exact date of birth. Similarly, exact date of birth and mid-year data of pensioners (July 1) gives the age at mid-year for a specific year.

The daughter definition is made according to the current legislation. The surviving daughter of a deceased pensioner (or active contributor, with at least 1800 DoC -or 5 years of service with 900 DoC- for longterm insurances before death) is under coverage with specific additional conditions. The additional conditions are as follows:

- “The ones who have completed the age of 18, the age of 20 in case receiving education in high school or equivalent, or the age of 25 in case receiving higher education; or
- The ones who are found to be disabled by losing minimum 60% of working power based on Institution Health Committee decision (regardless of his or her marital status); or
- The daughters, whatever the ages are, not married, divorced or widow.” (see [5]).

2.3. Multiple decrement processes

Let ${}_nD_x^i$ describe the number of decrements from cause i between age x to $x + n$, where ${}_nD_x$ is the number of deaths between age x and $x + n$ then, a “constant of proportionality” [23] reflecting decrements other than cause i between age x to $x + n$ is given by:

$$R^{-i} = \frac{{}_nD_x - {}_nD_x^i}{{}_nD_x}. \quad (1)$$

Probability of surviving ${}_np_x$, death probabilities ${}_nq_x$ and the average person years lived between age x and $x + n$, by those die in n years ${}_na_x$, the number of survivors l_x , are received from the all-cause LT. For the probability of surviving from x to $x + n$, where only decrements due to causes other than i between age x to $x + n$ is at force, is equal to:

$${}^*p_x^{-i} = [{}_np_x]^{R^{-i}}. \quad (2)$$

Similarly, one can calculate survivors at age $x + n$, with

$${}^*l_{x+n}^{-i} = {}^*l_x^{-i} \cdot {}^*p_x^{-i} \quad (3)$$

where the superscript $-i$ reflect the causes other than i that are in effect. In order to get the person years lived ${}^*L_x^{-i}$,

$${}^*L_x^{-i} = n \cdot {}^*l_{x+n}^{-i} + {}^*a_x^{-i} \cdot {}^*d_x^{-i} \quad (4)$$

the average person years lived between age x and $x + n$, by those die due to causes other than i in the interval ${}^*a_x^{-i}$ and the number of pensioners that die between age x to $x + n$ is needed. For the first age group $x = 45$ and the last age $x = 84$ before the open ended interval, the approach proposed by Preston et al. [24] is used and ${}^*a_x^{-i}$ is obtained with the equation,

$${}^*a_x^{-i} = n + R^{-i} \frac{{}_nq_x}{{}_nq_x^{-i}} ({}_na_x - n). \quad (5)$$

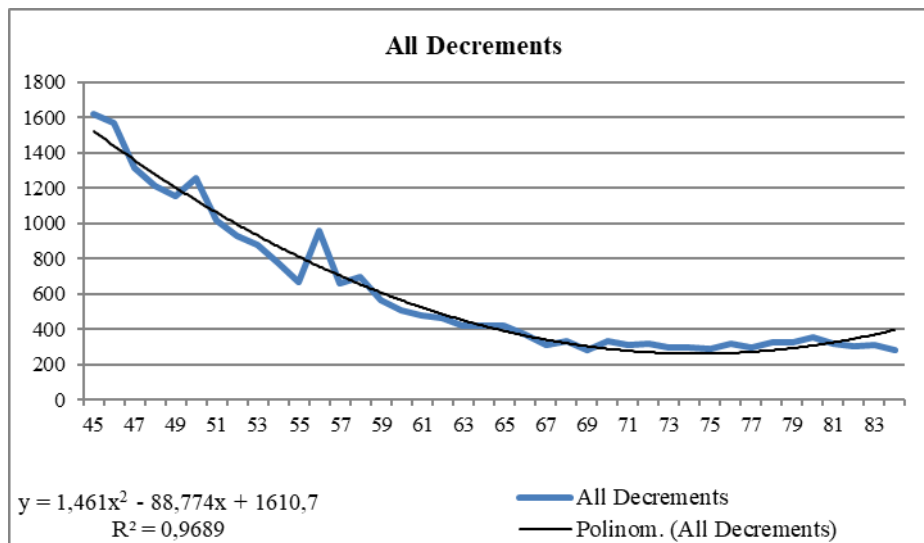


Figure 1. Distribution of all cause decrements that is needed to decide on the suitable ${}^*a_x^{-i}$.

Since all cause decrements support the assumption of second degree polynomial distribution with a R^2 of 97% (Figure 1), for the ages in between ($x=46$ to $x=83$), following Keyfitz [25], ${}^*a_x^{-i}$ is calculated by the equation;

$${}^*a_x^{-i} = \frac{\frac{-n}{24} {}^*d_{x-n}^{-i} + \frac{n}{2} {}^*d_x^{-i} + \frac{n}{24} {}^*d_{x+n}^{-i}}{{}^*d_{x+n}^{-i}} \tag{6}$$

The LT functions for the open ended interval are as follows:

$${}^*a_{85}^{-i} = \frac{{}^*e_{85}^0}{R^{-i}} \tag{7}$$

Life expectancy at age x in the absence of cause i is, ${}^*e_x^{-i}$, and can be calculated by the following equations.

$${}^*T_x^{-i} = \sum_{\alpha=x}^{\infty} {}^*L_{\alpha}^{-i} \tag{8}$$

and

$${}^*e_x^{-i} = \frac{{}^*T_x^{-i}}{{}^*l_x^{-i}} \tag{9}$$

3. Results

Figure 2 shows expected survivor benefit payment duration to daughters at selected ages when all causes are at force and when causes except death are eliminated. Life table details for all single ages are presented in Annex. Naturally, more decrements imply increased transition probability from the ‘beneficiary’ status and thus lower expected benefit duration. However, at each consecutive age, the

contribution of causes other than death diminishes. As daughters get older, it is less likely that they work or get married. That is visible with shorter difference between the bars in Figure 2. After 70, the principal cause that affects expected years to be spent as survivor pensioner, is death. Finally, the survivor pension has to cease for some reason and that is death of the beneficiary daughter.

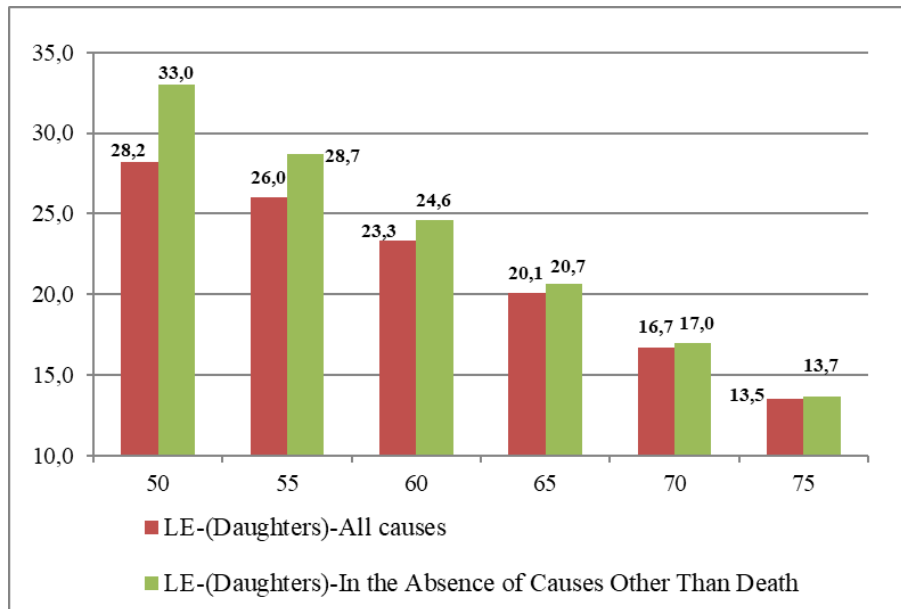


Figure 2. Expected duration of survivor benefits in years (Daughters).

In reality, all causes are at force according to the current legislation. The red bars in Figure 2 show that a 50 year surviving daughter is expected to receive pension benefits during the remaining 28.2 years. Long benefit payment durations and generosity of the pension system in Turkey is visible. In other words, SSI is expected to pay pensions in the next 23.3 years to a 60 year old surviving daughter, under the assumption that daughters will be subject to transition rates during 2012-2016 in their remaining 'life'. But it is noteworthy that 'life' hereby represents duration that is spent as survivor beneficiary and life is not only continuable by being alive but also by not exiting to other causes.

Figure 3 is derived from Figure 2 and it represents the details of the difference between all cause and cause eliminated (causes other than death) LT application results. In Figure 3, the difference is decomposed by causes. Causes other than death have three categories; work, marriage and other. If deaths were the only cause, a 55 year old daughter would be expected to receive survivor benefits for the remaining 28.7 years. But work, marriage or other causes provide 2.7 years reduction in the average duration. Finding a job and starting to work and as a result losing the benefit is figured with 'Work'. It has the lowest contribution to the gap. 'Marriage' is the second reason in the ranking and finally the highest contribution to the gap is due to annulment, suspension, absence or other remaining reasons.

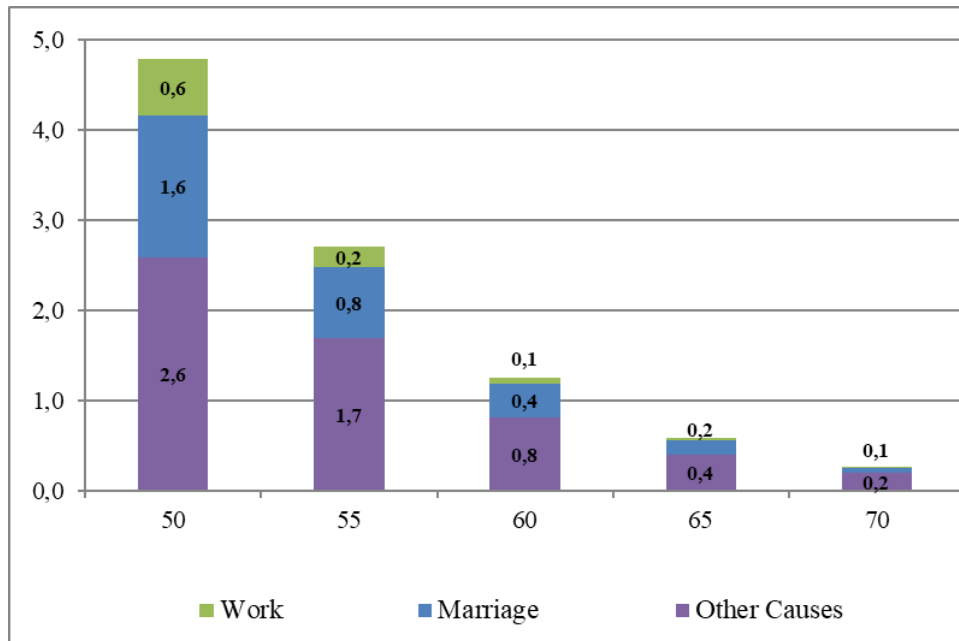


Figure 3. Relative contribution of causes other than death to the expected duration of survivor benefits.

The striking behaviour observed in recent years is the unregistered work of the surviving daughters in order not to lose the benefit that they get. Moreover, surviving daughters avoid marriage or if married, they get divorced and continue to live in the same household with the ex-husband. According to Figure 3, an additional duration can be gained by daughters (for instance $1.6+0.6=2.2$ at age 50) if some life events are not declared to SSI. From the perspective of SSI, there is a potential abuse possibility which may increase the financial burden that is on the institution. Daughters, who get involved in such abuse are expected to continue being survivor pensioners considerably long.

The comparison of average benefit durations between orphan daughters and women old age pensioners is in Figure 4. Although survivor beneficiary daughters do not earn their own pension by working, but have a transferred pension, they are expected to get benefits less than max 6.5 years shorter (age 50) than an old age pensioner.

At all ages below 70, daughters receive benefits for durations that is equal to or considerably close to the average pension payment durations of women who have earned their benefits after life time working history. Weighted average durations are even 3.3 years higher for surviving daughters (26.9 years) when compared with women pensioners (26.6 years).

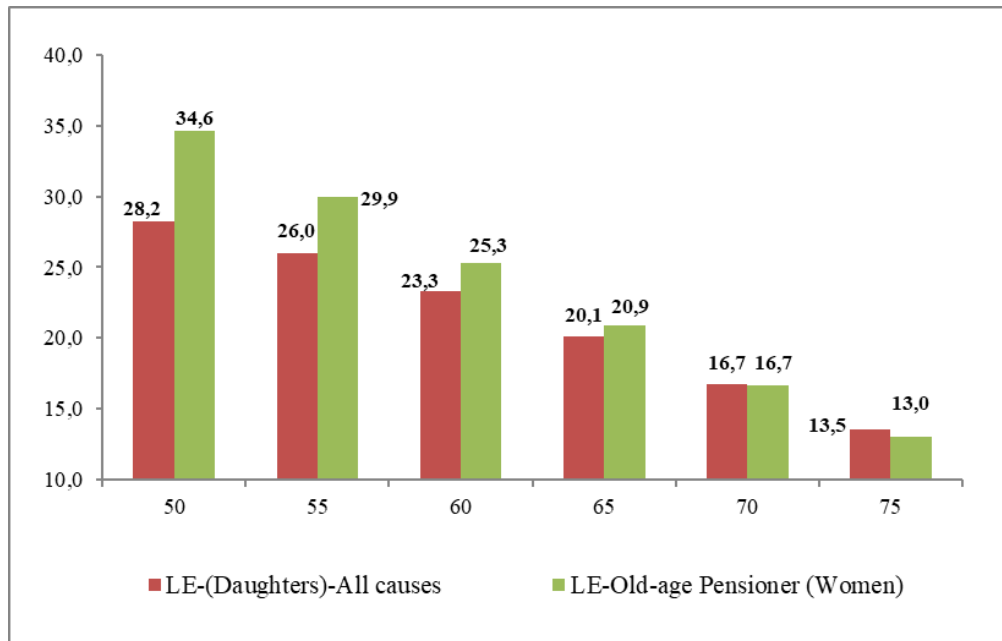


Figure 4. Expected duration of retirement benefits and survivor benefits.

4. Conclusion

The multiple decrement life table application in this study shows that, social insurances for surviving daughters in Turkey is generous. Weighted average of expected benefit payment duration to daughters, with number of beneficiaries as weights, is 26.9 years which is higher than the weighted average of 26.6 years calculated for women receiving old age pensions. Put it differently, the period SSI is expected to pay benefits to daughters that do not work, participate in the labour force, is more than the period that women pensioners are expected to receive as retirement pension.

Gruber and Wise [26] discuss whether social security has impacts on low labour force participation in the industrialized countries. They suggest that, social security contributed to the decline in participation rates via generous benefits at young ages, early retirement or easy pathways to disability insurance. In this sense, survivor benefit regime in Turkey is also generous that, non working daughters are encouraged to stay out of labour force and receive their pensions, rather than start working and lose their survivor benefits. However, the demographic window of opportunity is forecasted to end after 2040. To benefit from the dividend and develop sustainably, both men and women are needed in the economic production process. 2023 targets or benefiting from demographic dividend can not be possible by leaving half of the population outside the labour force. Therefore, encouraging survivor beneficiary daughters to earn their own pensions and offering incentives to those taking part in the labour force may be among suitable policy options.

An important point hereby is the contradiction between government policies. Under main policy pillars of National Employment Strategy, policies to strengthen labour participation of women are discussed in the section “Increasing employment of those needing special policies” [27]. However, neither this section, nor the section on “strengthening links between employment and social protection” provides criticism for the existing generous survivor pensions system in the country.

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