

PATTERNS AND TRENDS OF EDUCATIONAL MATING IN KOREA

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This study examines the patterns and trends in the association between wives' and husbands' educational attainment during 1950-79 in Korea. Log-linear analysis traces the educational mating of successive marriage cohorts, using Korean censuses. The most prominent feature in educational mating in Korea overtime has been a rapid increase in college homogamy during 1960-79, which has increased three times every decade since the 1950s. This increase reflects the increasing rigidity of the status order in Korea during the 1960s and 1970s. This result is consistent with the conflict perspective, which argues that the dominant strata consolidates its class culture through homogamous marriages. From 1970-79, hypergamy increased in Korea, sustaining the traditional marriage pattern while Korea underwent industrialization. Although Korean couples married during 1970-79 have greater educational hypogamy, it is thought to be due to demographic changes in age heterogamous couples.

INTRODUCTION

In Korea, there has been enormous improvement in the education of both males and females since the Korea War. However, the improved education of women has not been fully reflected in the labor force participation of women, due to job discrimination and social norms that prohibit women's work outside the home. In the presence of unequal opportunity in the work place, the most plausible route of social mobility for women is marriage.

Unlike traditional Korean society, where marriage was arranged by relatives or kin who knew the bride or groom very well, a contemporary marriage arrangement is based on the compatibility of the bride and groom's educational level rather than the match between the personalities of the prospective spouses. Most marriages are arranged (usually by match-makers) between people of similar educational backgrounds; therefore, it is very rare that highly educated women marry men with a lower level of schooling. The result of marriages between those with high status is consolidation of elite power. This consolidation tends to make a society's stratification system rigid (Collins 1985; Dimaggio and Mohr 1985; Haller 1981).

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The linkage between marriage and stratification was noted by Weber (1968) who observed that the social interaction among elite circles leads to a closed caste. However, despite the important role of educational mating in the process of stratification (Blau and Duncan 1967; Haller 1981; Berent 1980:321; Becker 1974), educational mating has received less attention as inter-generational occupational mobility.¹

Therefore, the aim of the present study is to establish the substantive importance of educational mating and to improve methodology regarding this topic. On the theoretical level, the patterns and trends of educational mating are considered to be significant aspects of social stratification and marriage behavior. Log-linear analysis, which has not been frequently exploited in educational mating studies is the method of analysis. Furthermore, this study has aimed to reduce the biases by using data from multiple-censuses.

Theories of Educational Assortative Mating

Educational assortative mating is the most useful measure of assortative mating, because since not only reflects parental socio-economic status but also aspirations, goals, life styles and common interests, which are seen as important mate selection criteria (Burgess and Wallen 1943; Blau and Duncan 1967; Burr 1973; Warren 1966; Dimaggio and Mohr 1985).

If educational homogamy of the parental generation increases, the proportion of variation in the childrens' socioeconomic attainment that will be determined by the social standing of the parents will also increase (e. g. ,Cavalli-Sforza and Feldmen 1981; Epstein and Guttmen 1984; Eckland 1968;Becker 1974). Moreover, not only does status achievement (occupational prestige) through education decrease, but status ascription (effect of parent's background on offsprings' occupational prestige) also increases (Grusky 1983). Therefore, the functionalist assumption that the expansion of egalitarianism caused by education during the process of industrialization will loosen the structural barriers between classes is contradicted by the conflict perspective. According to the conflict view, education is the mechanism for reproducing the dominant class culture, thereby consolidating class inheritance (Boudon 1973; Bourdieu and Passeron 1973; Collins 1971, 1985). Consequently, choosing the marriage partner within similar cultural boundaries created by education-that is, educational homogamy-helps to maintain and reproduce social stratification and class-inequality (Haller 1981).

On the other hand, in addition to facilitating inter-stratum mobility, heterogamy is related to gender inequality. When the sexes are segregated and un-

¹ One notable study of Korea comes from Cha (1986). Fathers-in-laws' occupations rather than male respondents' occupations were used as a proxy for mate selection instead of wives' and husbands' characteristics, which reflect the assortative mating in which we are interested.

equal, the incentive for women to marry up is strong, since acquiring a superior status from her husband results in advantageous class inheritance for the descendants. The result is hypergamous marriage. However, those women who are less concerned about the sex-bound rule or female-subordination could marry men with inferior status, that is, hypogamy (Davis 1964; Merton 1964).²

DATA

The Korean censuses of 1975 and 1980 are analyzed, specifically, the 1/100 sample of the 1975 census and 1/200 sample of the 1980 census. Data on couples are not available because the sampling unit of the Korean census is the individual, not the household. The procedure for creating the Korean couples data is as follows: (1) "the currently married" are selected from marital status data, (2) "the head of household" and "spouse" are selected from data on relationship to head of household, (3) "the household identification" record is arrayed, and (4) the husband and wife records are then matched to household identification record. Among the household identification records, 46,882 for 1975 census and 129,907 for 1980 were matched as husband and wife. From the 1975 census, the marriage cohorts of 1950-59 (11,070 records) and 1960-69 (14,016 records) were selected. From the 1980 census, the marriage cohort of 1970-79 (11,058) was selected. Marriages ten years prior to the census are considered to be partially free from estimated assortative mating patterns that may occur when schooling is completed after marriage.

The measure of education is "level of formal education. "The educational classification of husband and wife is as follows: (1) no formal education or primary schooling (0 to 6 years), (2) middle schooling (7 to 9 years), (3) high schooling (10 to 12 years), (4) some college or more (13 years and more).

METHOD

Patterns and trends in educational mating are analyzed via the multivariate analysis of cross-classified categorical data (e.g., Goodman 1984). The justification for a multivariate log-linear analysis is the supposition that the association between particular educational categories reveals aspects of marriage behavior and the process of stratification that are missed by single parameter of regression analysis (Hauser 1978). Moreover, log-linear analysis separates pat-

²In this study of educational mating, "educational homogamy" refers to the situation where women marry men who have the same education. "Educational hypergamy" refers to the situation in which women marry men who have a higher education; the opposite case is called "educational hypogamy."

terns of assortative mating that result from changes in the marginal distributions of husbands' and wives' traits from those that reflect the association between spouses' traits. Log-linear permits statistical tests of hypothesis about patterns and changes in assortative mating (e.g., Johnson 1980). That is, educational distributions for husbands and wives are unequal and, therefore, should be controlled.

In the analysis, the GLIM computer package (Generalized Linear Interactive Modelling), which is designed to fit linear models, is used. Underlying GLIM is the notion of the Generalized Linear Model (Baker and Nelder 1978), which comprises those models with the exponential class of probability distributions, each of which can be fitted as a linear model by the method of "iterative weighted least-squares" (IWLS).

The log-linear analysis is in two parts. The first part focuses on identifying an appropriate model for educational mating without regard to trends among marriage cohorts. This involves the interpretation and inspection of the goodness of fit for several models. Then, with some parsimonious models, the later part of the analysis focuses on change in educational mating among marriage cohorts. The basic model is as follows:

$$\text{Log } F_{ijk} = \mathcal{M} + \lambda_i^W + \lambda_j^H + \lambda_k^M + \lambda_{ij}^{WH} + \lambda_{ik}^{WM} + \lambda_{jk}^{HM}$$

W: wife's education

H: husband's education

M: marriage cohort

where $i, j = 1, 2, 3, 4$, and $k = 1, 2, 3$

The λ s represent the possible effects of the variables W, H, and M on $\text{Log } F_{ijk}$. The main effects are λ_i^W , λ_j^H , λ_k^M , the interaction effects are λ_{ij}^{WH} , λ_{ik}^{WM} and λ_{jk}^{HM} for two-factor effects. These models allow the educational distribution of wives and husbands to vary across marriage cohorts as shown in terms of λ_{ik}^{WM} and λ_{jk}^{HM} . With this model, parameterization of λ_{ij}^{WH} is followed.

In assessing how well a model fits the data, the extent to which the frequencies expected under the model (F_{ijk}) approximated the frequencies actually observed (the f_{ijk}) is compared using the likelihood-ratio statistic (L^2):

$$L^2 = 2 \sum f_{ijk} \text{Ln}(f_{ijk}/F_{ijk})$$

Since discrepancies between the expected figures and real frequencies are given in the form of L^2 scores, the larger the L^2 relative to the available d.f. (degrees of freedom), the more the expected frequencies depart from the actual cell entries. Hence, we conclude for a large L^2 that the hypothesized model does not fit the data well and should be rejected as an inadequate representation of the relationships among the variables (Knoke and Burke 1980).

However, minimizing the L^2 statistic cannot be the sole criterion, since we would inevitably choose the saturated model from among the many candidates in view of its perfect fit and L^2 of zero. We are also interested in parsimonious models that are consistent with the observed data. Using the backward selection or forward elimination procedures, parameters are added or subtracted to arrive at models that are more parsimonious than the saturated model. The parameter estimates and their contribution to the overall L^2 can vary depending on which other parameters are considered. Therefore, the conditional test of a parameter is the difference between the L^2 of the two models that are identical except for that parameter. This difference in L^2 is also distributed approximately as a χ^2 variable with d.f. equal to the difference in d.f.s between the two models. Therefore, the difference is compared with $\chi^2_{d,0.05}$ where d is the difference in the degrees of freedom (Fingleton 1984).

ANALYSIS

Patterns of Educational Mating

Before analyzing the variation in educational mating over time, the pattern of association between the educations of husbands and wives is examined. For this purpose, three-dimensional contingency tables cross-classified by the wives' education, husbands' education, and marriage cohorts are used. Table 1 presents tests for models of Korean educational mating patterns and Figure 1 shows the parameterization of the patterns.

TABLE 1. TEST FOR MODEL OF EDUCATIONAL MATING

Model	L^2	d.f.	$L^2 / \text{d.f.}$
1. (UNIF) (WM) (HM)	874.92	26	33.7
2. (SYM) (WM) (HM)	263.89	21	12.6
3. (DIAG) (WM) (HM)	798.3	24	33.3
4. (DSYM) (WM) (HM)	527.32	24	21.9
5. (NSYD) (WM) (HM)	315.35	22	14.3
6. (NSDD) (WM) (HM)	94.99	19	5.0

NOTES: UNIF : uniform association

SYM : symmetric association

DIAG : diagonal symmetric association

DSYM: different main-diagonal symmetric association

NSYD: non-symmetric diagonal association

NSDD: non-symmetric different-diagonal association

W : wife's education

H : husband's education

M : marriage cohort

1	5	8	10
5	2	6	9
8	6	3	7
10	9	7	4

SYM

1	2	3	4
2	1	2	3
3	2	1	2
4	3	2	1

DIAG

1	5	6	7
5	2	5	6
6	5	3	5
7	6	5	4

DSYM

1	2	3	4
5	1	2	3
6	5	1	2
7	6	5	1

NSYD

1	5	6	7
8	2	5	6
9	8	3	5
10	9	8	4

NSDD

FIGURE 1. PARAMETERIZATION OF PATTERNS OF EDUCATIONAL MATING

In Table 1, the first model considers the uniform association (UNIF) where the odds ratios for all the subtables of the basic set are equal but different from one (were they all equal to one, we would have the independence model). The symmetry (SYM) of marriage pattern is shown in second model. The diagonal symmetric (DIAG) assumes that when marriage partners come from different educational levels, one can predict that, as educational levels move further apart, the probability of such a relationship decreases. In the different main-diagonal symmetric (DSYM) association, the specification of educational homogamy among different social strata is made. In the non-symmetric diagonal (NSYD) association, symmetry on the off-diagonals is released to make educational hypergamy and hypogamy different but to keep homogamy the same. Therefore, this model shows that marrying-up and marrying-down are processes to be examined separately. Finally, in the non-symmetric different-diagonal (NSDD) association, not only educational homogamy but also hypergamy and hypogamy are examined separately.

As shown in Table 1, the most appropriate model with the lowest ratio of L^2 to d.f. has the 'NSDD' parameterization, which allows the educational distributions of wives and husbands to vary across the three marriage cohorts. The best fit of the model with NSDD parameterization reveals that the degree of hypergamy of the upper-diagonal and hypogamy of the lower-diagonal is not symmetric and that Korean women marry-up and marry-down up to three levels.

In Table 2 and Figure 2, the odds homogamy are greatest among the college educated and lowest among those with high school education. As expected, two- and three-level hypergamy is less likely to occur than is elementary homogamy. Except for one-level hypergamy, hypergamy is less likely to occur than is homogamy. Hypogamy is uncommon. Among patterns of hypogamy, the odds of one-level hypogamy are more than five times greater than any other form. The strong homogamy in general and college homogamy in particular reflect the rigid status order in Korea. The structural constraint of college educational opportunity based on parental socio-economic background is related to college homogamy. Though some colleges are sex-segregated in Korea, arranged marriages by kin and matchmakers lead to college homogamy and contribute to elite-consolidation in Korean society.

Stronger hypergamy than hypogamy follows from the unequal gender relations in Korean society. The extent of male-dominance is further indicated by son-preference, which is especially strong among well-educated females (Park 1990a). Also, hypogamy of the college to elementary level is very unlikely to occur in Korea, as demonstrated by some empty cells in the observed frequencies. This reveals a marriage norm that inhibits extreme cases of marrying-down and a structural constraint that makes it unlikely that people with

different levels of education will meet. Against this background of Korean educational mating, the next section will focus on variation in educational mating over the 1950-79 period.

TABLE 2. ESTIMATES OF THE INTERACTION ODDS RATIO OF EDUCATIONAL MATING IN THE NSDD MODEL

Parameter	Log Estimate(s.e)	Exp(estimate)	significant at 0.05
NSDD ₂	0.2140(0.10)	1.24	**
NSDD ₃	-0.3857(0.09)	0.68	**
NSDD ₄	1.434(0.14)	4.20	**
NSDD ₅	-0.006(0.06)	0.99	
NSDD ₆	-1.402(0.05)	0.25	**
NSDD ₇	-3.691(0.06)	0.02	**
NSDD ₈	-2.184(0.07)	0.11	**
NSDD ₉	-3.826(0.13)	0.02	**
NSDD ₁₀	-5.153(0.60)	0.006	**

NOTES : The base line group is NSDD₁ of elementary homogamous couples.

NSDD₂ : (0) middle school homogamy.

NSDD₃ : (0) high school homogamy.

NSDD₄ : (0) college homogamy.

NSDD₅ : (1) one-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-middle, middle-high, and high-college

NSDD₆ : (2) two-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-high and middle-college

NSDD₇ : (3) three-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-college

NSDD₈ : (-1) one-level wife-hypogamy of middle-elementary, high-middle, and college-high

NSDD₉ : (-2) two-level wife-hypogamy of high-elementary and college-middle

NSDD₁₀ : (-3) three-level wife-hypogamy college-elementary

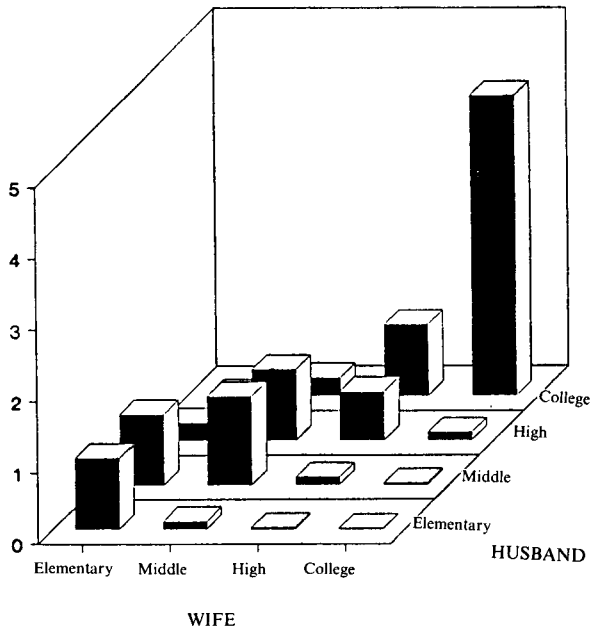


FIGURE 2. EDUCATIONAL MATING IN NSDD MODEL

Marriage Cohort Variation in Educational Mating

As noted in the previous section, educational homogamy among Korean couples is especially strong among college-graduates, and educational hypergamy is relatively stronger than hypogamy. To examine whether these patterns of educational mating show variation over time, the data used in the previous section are reanalyzed. In this analysis, three marriage cohorts represent the year of marriage. To examine variation across marriage cohorts, the saturated model is tested as follows. In Table 3, two models are presented to test for interactions among the husbands' education, wives' education, and marriage cohorts.

When we compare Model 2 with Model 1 (the saturated model) in Table 3, there is a difference of $L^2=94.85$, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This implies that a three-way interaction of WHM should be in the model. That is, the association between the husband's and wife's education is different across marriage cohorts. To see the variation in educational mating across marriage cohorts, the individual coefficient of WHM in the saturated Model 1 should be examined.

TABLE 3. TEST FOR MARRIAGE COHORT VARIATION IN EDUCATIONAL MATING

Model	L^2	d.f.	$L^2 - L^2$	d.f. - d.f.	$X^2_{0.05}$	Conclusion
1. (WHM)	0	0				
2. (WH) (WM) (HM)	94.85	18	2-1:94.85	18	28.7	WHM \neq 0

NOTES : W: wife's education
 H: husband's education
 M: marriage cohort

In the previous section, where several models were tested, we chose the NSDD model as the best one for Korean educational mating. The NSDD model can also be applied to analyze marriage cohort variation in educational mating. The model has terms of (NSDD*M)(WM)(HM), which allows for variation in the educational distribution of the wives and husbands across time.

This NSDD*M model has L^2 of 1.728 with 3 degrees of freedom. Table 4 shows the coefficients of the NSDD*M model.

As shown in Table 4 and Figure 3, middle school homogamy was greater during 1960-79 than during 1950-59. High school homogamy increased only during 1970-79. College homogamy was greater during 1960-79 than during 1950-59. One-level hypergamy increased during 1960-79 compared to 1950s. During 1960-69, two-level hypergamy was greater than during 1950-59 and, during 1970-79, three-level hypergamy decreased compared to 1950-59. As for hypogamy, one-level hypogamy was greater among those who married during 1970-79 than it was during 1950-59. Two-level hypogamy increased during 1970-79 compared to 1950-59.

However, the most prominent feature in educational mating of Korea over-time has been the rapid increase in college homogamy during 1960-79, which has tripled every decade since the 1950s. This increase reveals the increasing rigidity of the status order in Korea during the 1960s and 1970s. With regard to hypergamy, the increased one-level hypergamy during 1960-79 and the increased two-level hypergamy during 1960-69 shows the persistence of traditional marriage patterns while Korea underwent rapid industrialization during the 1960s. Three-level hypergamy, an uncommon pattern, decreased during 1970-79. Among 1970-79 married couples, hypogamous marriage, a less likely pattern of educational mating, increased at one-and two-levels.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This study has examined patterns and trends in the association between

TABLE 4. ESTIMATES OF THE INTERACTION ODDS RATIO OF EDUCATIONAL MATING OVER MARRIAGE COHORTS IN THE NSDD*M MODEL

Parameter	Log Estimate(s.e)	Exp(estimate)	significant at 0.05
NSDD ₂ . M ₂	0.7164(0.29)	2.05	**
NSDD ₂ . M ₃	1.962(0.28)	6.82	**
NSDD ₃ . M ₂	0.4734(0.28)	1.61	.
NSDD ₃ . M ₃	1.333(0.26)	3.78	**
NSDD ₄ . M ₂	1.370(0.47)	3.94	**
NSDD ₄ . M ₃	2.228(0.41)	9.28	**
NSDD ₅ . M ₂	0.5557(0.18)	1.74	**
NSDD ₅ . M ₃	0.9782(0.17)	2.66	**
NSDD ₆ . M ₂	0.2420(0.11)	1.27	**
NSDD ₆ . M ₃	-0.0689(0.10)	0.93	
NSDD ₇ . M ₂	-0.0429(0.11)	0.96	
NSDD ₇ . M ₃	-0.7726(0.21)	0.46	**
NSDD ₈ . M ₂	0.3054(0.20)	1.36	
NSDD ₈ . M ₃	1.453(0.20)	4.28	**
NSDD ₉ . M ₂	0.0661(0.37)	1.07	
NSDD ₉ . M ₃	1.096(0.33)	2.99	**
NSDD ₁₀ . M ₂	0.1588(1.49)	1.17	
NSDD ₁₀ . M ₃	0.5392(1.47)	1.71	

NOTES : :The base line group is NSDD₁ of elementary homogamous couples.

NSDD₂ : (0) middle school homogamy.

NSDD₃ : (0) high school homogamy.

NSDD₄ : (0) college homogamy.

NSDD₅ : (1) one-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-middle, middle-high, and high-college

NSDD₆ : (2) two-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-high and middle-college

NSDD₇ : (3) three-level wife-hypergamy of elementary-college

NSDD₈ : (-1) one-level wife-hypogamy of middle-elementary, high-middle, and college-high

NSDD₉ : (-2) two-level wife-hypogamy of high-elementary and college-middle

NSDD₁₀ : (-3) three-level wife-hypogamy college-elementary

M₁ is the base line couples who married during 1950 – 59

M₂ : married during 1960 – 69

M₃ : married during 1970 – 79

NSDD₂. M₂ refers the log odds ratio between M₂ and M₁. In other words, 2.05 was calculated from the ratio between two groups' log of odds ratio of expected frequencies in the table. If expected frequencies in the model is F_{ij} and cell location of NSDD. M is denoted by subscripts, the log odds ratio of NSDD₂. M₂ can be derived as follows :

$$\frac{F_{22}/F_{21}}{F_{12}/F_{11}}$$

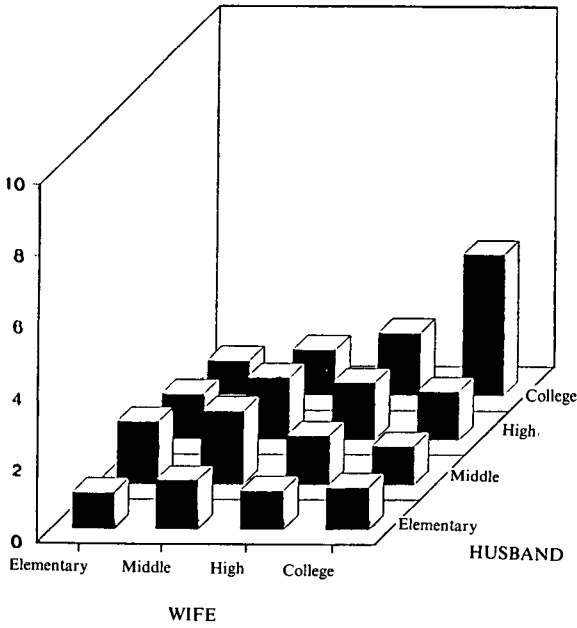
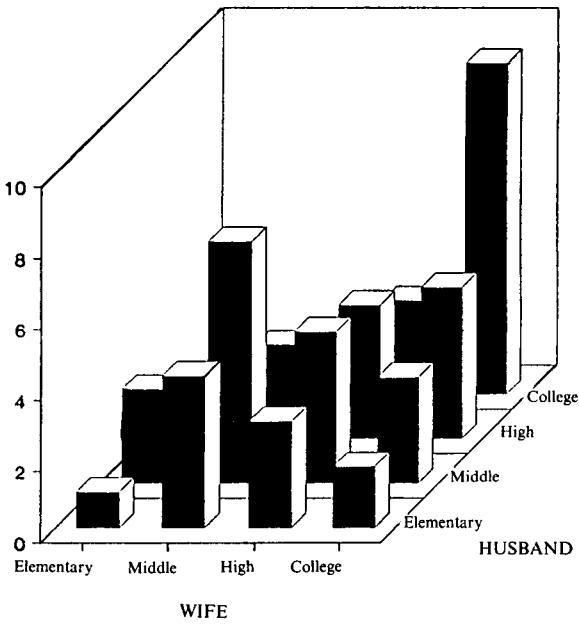


FIGURE 3(A). EDUCATIONAL MATING OF 1960-69 MARRIED IN NSDD*M MODEL



(B). EDUCATIONAL MATING OF 1970-79 MARRIED IN NSDD*M MODEL

wives' and husbands' educational attainment during 1950-79 in Korea by applying log-linear analysis to census data. Findings show that (1) college homogamy as a predominant pattern of educational mating increased during the 1970s, (2) one-level hypergamy was more likely to occur during the 1970s, and (3) during the 1970s, one and two-level hypogamy increased among Korean couples. These findings can be interpreted as showing strata-formation and increased sexual inequality in marriage.

In Korea, where marriage is interpreted as a family-to-family contract, bonds between families with similar status help to assure familial prestige and privilege. Among members of the upper-strata, this situation is very likely. College homogamy among couples married during the 1960s and 1970s was stronger compared to the 1950s marriage cohorts, indicating that the Korean status order became more rigid, especially in the highly educated strata.

Increased hypergamous marriage in Korea over time indicates the persistence of the traditional tendency for women to marry-up, which is rooted in the male-dominated Confucian culture, where female-subordination is advocated for peaceful marriage (e.g., Blood and Wolfe 1960). Hypergamous marriage is further explained by the lack of female's socio-economic participation, despite their rising aspirations during rapid industrialization. That is, although the educational attainment of women improved during the past few decades, this improvement is not reflected in increases in labor force participation compared to men. Therefore, under conditions of limited occupational mobility, the most plausible route for social mobility for women is through marriage. Therefore, women have a tendency to marry-up.

Although hypogamy among Korean couples during 1970-79 increased, it is related to demographic changes in the age heterogamous couples (Park 1990b). In hypogamous marriage, the bride's younger age, higher education, and inferior gender are thought to be exchanged for the husband's seniority, social status, and superior gender (Cho *et al.* 1982).

In sum, the findings of this study show that homogamous marriage was the predominant form of educational mating, compared to other hypergamy or hypogamous marriage, and increased during the 1970s. Overall, the increase of educational homogamy among newly formed families implies an increase in the effect of parental background on the socio-economic attainment of children, which helps to maintain and reproduce the existing status order.

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