

ESS22-008 - Family outcomes of assortative mating: New insights based on couple-level survey/register data

Abstract

Educational expansion and the reversal of the gender gap in education have led to an increase in the proportion of heterosexual couples in which the woman is more educated and/or has a higher income than the man - a phenomenon known as rising female hypogamy. How this change affects relationships, family planning, careers and equality between partners hasn't been thoroughly researched. Our project aims to fill this gap by using large-scale registry data, linked to survey data, which allow us to examine in detail how gender inequality within couples evolves over time. The data allow us to model 'mating markets' to investigate the impact of where people live and work on the types of partners they choose. We then examine the impact of 'modern relationships' - where the woman is better educated and/or earns more than the man - on family and work decisions. We examine how the partners' relative resources affect when couples decide to start a family, how many children they have and how healthy those children are. Finally, we examine how having children affects income inequality within couples and how the size of the motherhood penalty varies with inequality in education and earnings potential within couples. Through this project, we hope to shed new light on the complex dynamics of modern relationships and their wider implications for families and society.

Scientific disciplines:

Economic sociology (50%) | Demography (50%)

Keywords:

education, assortative mating, hypogamy, couples, fertility, motherhood, child penalties

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Further links to the persons involved and to the project can be found under

<https://www.wwtf.at/funding/programmes/ess/ESS22-008/>