AN ANALYSIS OF THAI MARRIAGE : ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR*: A CASE STUDY OF WOMEN IN BANGKOK METROPOLIS

การวิเคราะห์ทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมการสมรสของสตรีไทย ศึกษาเฉพาะกรณีของสตรีในเขตกรุงเทพมหานคร

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ABSTRACT

This analysis is based mainly on the Study of Thai Women's Attitudes Toward and Values of Marriage, undertaken in 1986 in which 1,004 working women, affiliated with the government offices, state enterprises and private sectors located in Bangkok Metropolis were interviewed by using a self-administered questionnaire. Through use of multiple classification analysis, it is found that the respondents' personal characteristics - education, marital status, income, place of birth, and duration of residence in Bangkok Metropolis are more significant than other set of variables (parental background and family relations/obligations) in explaining variations in their attitudes toward marriage. These same set of variables, however, are much weaker in predicting variations in their attitudes toward sex roles and status of women. This latter finding is speculated to be the result of use of inappropriate indicators.

Similarly, through use of Cox's partial likelihood approach, it is apparent that the respondents' timing of first marriage is more closely determined by their personal socio-economic characteristics than by other sets of variables. That is, education, labor force participation (employment and income), the economic obligation to the family at present as well as the positive attitudes toward being single are found to be the most significant predictors, and

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* This report was also published in a Paper Series (no. 56) of the Institute of Population Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 1987.

show a negative relationship with marriage timing. Of the remaining variables: parental background shows no effect and sibling composition displays little effect on the timing of first marriage of the respondents.

These findings of effects of higher education, participation in the labor force, and higher income in delaying marriage carry policy implications regarding the delayea entrance into marriage and reduction of fertility. To increase age at first marriage, policies or programs concentrating on increasing non-familiar roles for women, or providing women with greater opportunities in participating social and economic activities should be emphasized and encouraged. All these would give women a new status and alternative socio-economic roles, rather than engaging solely in the traditional sex roles, i.e. being a wife and a mother too early in life. Moreover, the improvement of status of women in these areas would facilitate the integration of women into the development process more efficiently.

บทคัดย่อ

การวิเคราะห์ทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมการสมรสของสตรีไทย ใช้ข้อมูลจากโครงการวิจัยเรื่องการศึกษาทัศนคติและค่านิยมของสตรีไทยเกี่ยวกับการสมรส พ.ศ. 2529 ซึ่งรวบรวมจากแบบสอบถามที่ส่งไปยังสตรีที่สุ่มตัวอย่างจากหน่วยราชการ รัฐวิสาหกิจ และหน่วยงานเอกชนในเขตกรุงเทพ–มหานคร จำนวนทั้งสิ้น 1,004 คน ผลการวิเคราะห์โดยใช้ Multiple Classification Analysis พบว่า ระดับการศึกษา สถานภาพสมรส รายได้ สถานที่เกิด และระยะเวลาที่อาศัยอยู่ในกรุงเทพมหานคร มีความสัมพันธ์อย่างมีนัยสำคัญทางสถิติต่อทัศนคติต่อการสมรสมากกว่าทัศนคติที่มีต่อสถานภาพและบทบาทของสตรี

นอกจากนี้ เมื่อใช้วิธีการคำนวณด้วยสมการถดถอยที่เรียกว่า Cox's Partial Likelihood Approach มาวิเคราะห์อัตราการเสี่ยงต่อการสมรส (Marriage hazard rate) ของสตรีที่เป็นกลุ่มตัวอย่าง พบว่า โอกาสและเวลาที่สตรีจะเข้าสู่สถานภาพสมรสส่วนใหญ่ถูกกำหนดโดยลักษณะส่วนตัวของสตรีผู้ตอบมากกว่าตัวแปรอื่น ๆ นั่นคือ ระดับการศึกษาสูง การมีงานทำ การมีรายได้เป็นของตัวเอง ภาระที่สตรีต้องจุนเจือครอบครัว และทัศนคติที่นิยมความเป็นโสด สิ่งเหล่านี้เป็นตัวแปรสำคัญที่อาจมีผลให้สตรีแต่งงานช้าลง ส่วนตัวแปรอื่น ๆ เช่น ลักษณะทางเศรษฐกิจและสังคมของพ่อแม่ และจำนวนพี่น้อง มีผลกระทบน้อยมากต่อการสมรสของสตรี แสดงว่า หากสตรีมีการศึกษาสูง มีบทบาทในตลาดแรงงานและมีรายได้สูงแล้ว แนวโน้มที่จะเข้าสู่สถานภาพสมรสของสตรีจะช้าลง ซึ่งจะมีส่วนช่วยลดภาวะการเจริญ–พันธุ์ได้อีกทางหนึ่งด้วย ดังนั้น หากรัฐมีนโยบายที่จะเพิ่มอายุแรกสมรสของสตรี ก็ควรส่งเสริมหรือสนับสนุนสตรีให้มีกิจกรรมหรือมีบทบาททางเศรษฐกิจและสังคมมากขึ้น รวมทั้งเปิดโอกาสให้สตรีได้มีส่วนเข้าร่วมในตลาดแรงงาน ซึ่งจะช่วยให้สถานภาพของสตรีดีขึ้นกว่าในอดีตที่สตรีเป็นเพียงภรรยาหรือมารดา และยังช่วยให้สตรีเข้ามามีบทบาทในกระบวนการพัฒนาประเทศได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพดีขึ้นด้วย

INTRODUCTION

Data available from 1947 to 1980 indicated that changes in marriage patterns had occurred in Thailand.* The trend toward increase in proportions of single and postponement of marriage in Thailand was similar to the situation found in many developing countries.[7,15] Such changes were more obvious among males and females in the capital, Bangkok Metropolis. The highest average age at first marriage in 1980 was 25.9 years of age in Bangkok Metropolis, followed by 23.4 for the Central, 22.0 for the North, 21.9 for the South and 21.6 for the Northeast.

This analysis is to broaden research on marriage in Thailand, by undertaking a more detailed investigation of various aspects of marriage. The investigation focuses on whether attitudes toward marriage and status of women determine marriage behavior. At the same time, the analysis also pays attention to the determinants of attitudes. Other variables such as the respondents' personal characteristics, their family backgrounds, parents and siblings, family relations and obligation are considered because they may influence the respondents' attitudes and behavior regarding marriage. In addition, to identify the linkages between changing socio-economic roles, status of women and delayed marriage. More detailed investigation, utilizing more elaborate statistical procedures, is expected to provide clues as to whether changes toward an older age at marriage and the increasing proportion single among women in Thailand (particularly in Bangkok Metropolis) represent responses to the modernization process and changes in social and economic roles and status among women themselves. If a relationship between these two sets of variables exists, the finding will serve as a basis for recommendations for policies to modify the status and roles of women and indirectly, to increase marriage age as another means to reduce fertility.

METHODOLOGY

The sampling was planned to include 1,211 potential female respondents who worked as employees in 13 government offices, 6 state enterprises and 4 private establishments located in Bangkok Metropolis. Of about 1,211 questionnaires were sent out to these selected women. 874 questionnaires were picked up at their location. Of these 739 questionnaires (84.5%) were complete; the rest (337 respondents) were asked to mail back due to the inconvenience in returning to pick them up. However, only 265 questionnaires (78.6%) were received by mail. Therefore, there were a total of 1,004 respondents in the final survey data file out of the planned 1,211 equal to an overall response rate of 83%. Out of these, 431 (42.9%) were currently married, 43 (4.3%) were ever married, 528 (52.6%) were single and 2

* Even before the recent changes in nuptiality patterns, traditionally the female age at marriage in Thailand was moderately late by Third World Standards.[7, 15]

(0.2%) were unknown of their marital status. Although the sampling ratios used for the selection of the single and married women differed, sampling weights were not employed in the analysis. The objective of the analysis was not to provide estimates of population values of any particular variables. Rather, the emphasis was on estimating relationships among variables. For this purpose, the weights were not required in either of the two main sets of analyses. In the analysis of the attitudes toward marriage and the status of women, marital status was included as an explanatory variable in all models; thus, any compositional effects of marital status were taken into account when examining other variables and in the analysis of the risk of marriage, the over-sampling of single women raised the absolute risk but in theory had no effect on the relative risks associated with any of the explanatory variables. (Absolute differences in risks between sub-groups were affected, of course, but the analytic technique considers relative rather than absolute risks.)

In the survey, questions were asked on the following topics:

1. Characteristics of the respondents; i.e. age, education, income, type of job, and family background including information about parents and siblings
2. Attitudes toward marriage, sex roles, and the status of women (asked both single and married respondents)
3. Attitudes toward marriage and mate selection (asked single respondents only)

These questions were designed to fill gaps in the available data on marriage over the past 15 years. More important, the survey was intended to yield information which would provide a better understanding of various aspects of marriage : its determinants; factors which lead some women to remain single while others marry; ways in which respondents perceived themselves in terms of socio-economic status compared to that of men in the same society; feelings of obligation to follow traditional sex roles; and how these attitudes and values related to marriage behavior.

The effects of selected independent variables on the respondents' attitudes were assessed through the multiple classification analysis (MCA) and the Cox's partial likelihood approach was employed to estimate the effects of the independent variables on the timing of first marriage of the respondents.

In the preliminary report,[11] simple two-and three-way crosstabulations were used to study the relationship between selected independent variables and the attitudes toward marriage and the status of women which, throughout the analysis, were treated as the dependent variables. The analysis revealed differentials in attitudes toward the subjects asked according to their characteristics. With regard to marriage, a large number of respondents, especially those who were single, expressed a favorable attitude toward being single. In their views, there was no need for women to marry since they can depend on themselves, both socially and economically. Education was the most significant variable in explaining variations in attitudes toward sex roles and status of women. The respondents with higher education were more egalitarian in outlook while those with less education tended to accept the traditional sex roles and were more patriarchal. These findings motivated a further

investigation of the relationship between attitudes and behavior regarding marriage contained in this report.

While attitudes* may not serve as good predictions of future trends,[8] particularly in a society which is changing as rapidly as Thailand (and in particular Bangkok Metropolis), it is still reasonable to assume that attitudes and behavior measured at the time of the survey reflect the existing economic, social and cultural conditions, the individual's past experiences, as well as revealing her modern/tradition orientations.

A respondent was asked a series of questions meant to elicit her attitudes toward marriage, family formation, sex roles and status. In designing this portion of the survey, it was never assumed that a person's attitude can be represented by any single item. Rather, it more meaningful and reliable if the responses obtained are combined into indices which can be used to indicate or to represent the respondents' attitudes or beliefs concerning the subject asked. From these composite indices, the overall direction of the attitude-whether positive, or negative, favorable or unfavorable can be determined. With this in mind, two indices had been constructed: a) a 'marriage' index, and b) a 'status' index. Through the procedures of index construction and basic by pothesis made earlier, a positive ralationship between marriage index and status index was expected. That was the respondents who felt favorable about being single were also expected to be more egalitarian in outlook. In order to examine the nature of this relationship, a scattergram of one against the other was constructed. This indicated that the relationship between these two was very weak. The correlation coefficient to these two indices was only 0.10.

Attitudes toward marriage and status of women

The relationship between dependent variables and independent variables was examined through multiple classification analysis. Before carrying out the MCA, interactions were tested, since the MCA assumed additive effects. The same approach was applied to both the 'marriage index' model (attitude toward marriage) and 'status index' model (attitude toward status of women).

The test of significance of interactions: in the regression analysis, the relationship between a dependent and any given independent variable is assumed to be additive. In other words, the relationship between a dependent and any given independent variable is the same across all values of the remaining independent variables. For some social sciences application, however, this assumption will not be tenable.[10] It is also desirable that, for the fitted MCA model, interaction terms are not statistically significant. For these reasons, all

* According to Rockeach,[13, 14] an attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around a specific object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner, while value refers to a single belief of a very specific kind. And, a person's social behavior is always mediated by at least two types of attitudes; one activated by the object, and the other by the situation. Moreover, action is determined not by a single attitude, but by a number of attitudes, wants and situational conditions.[13]

variables included in the model were tested for possible two-way interactions (higher order interactions were not considered). No significant interactions were detected for the marriage index model. On the other hand, in the status index model, one non-negligible interaction term was found (var 28-coresidence with siblings and var 31-financial support for family 5 years ago). These two variables, therefore, were combined into a new variable and included in the model.

The results of the determinants' attitudes toward marriage (marriage index) and attitudes toward sex roles and status of women (status index) were shown in Table 1. Before discussing the results, a word of caution is necessary about the interpretation of the findings obtained from parental background. A large number of respondents failed to supply the information about parents' age at marriage, education and occupation. These 'no information' responses were too large to be discarded from the analysis, since the sample remaining for analysis would be much smaller and possibly selective. For this reason, a separate 'no information' category was created for these variables; no interpretation was made on the effects estimated for this particular category.

Some of the explanatory variables in the marriage index' s model were significant predictors of the respondents' attitudes toward marriage. Among 3 sets of independent variables, only one variable, current marital status of respondents, was significant at the 0.001 level. The next most significant variables were place of birth, and duration of residence in Bangkok (significant at 0.01), education, income and coresidence with siblings at present (significant at 0.05) while father's education was significant at the 0.10 level.

Results from the MCA based on unadjusted (gross effects) and adjusted (net effects) values further clarified the relationship between explanatory variables and the attitudes toward marriage.

In the first set of explanatory variables (respondents' characteristics), the correlation ratio (η)* for current marital status of respondents had the strongest association (0.11) with attitude toward marriage. The educational level, occupation and monthly income had relatively high association with the dependent variable (η = 0.10, 0.06 and 0.06, respectively). However, once the effects of other factors and covariates are adjusted for, the relative importance of each factor changes. That is, birthplace of respondents show the strongest association (β = 0.18)** while the effect of marital status becomes the next important variable (β = 0.15).

Comparisons of the differences in mean unadjusted and adjusted index scores*** were also of interest. With respect to the unadjusted values, the mean index scores of

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* Correlation ratio which associated with the set of unadjusted category effects for each factor in the MCA Table.

** Statistics associated with the adjusted category effects for each factor.

*** Recall that, a higher score represents a more favorables attitude toward being single (for the marriage index) and toward egalitarianism (for the status index).

respondents who were born in the rural areas was higher than those who were born in Bangkok by about 0.16. However, with the adjustment for the effects of other factors, the mean index points of respondents who were born in the rural places increased to 1.25 higher than that of their counterparts. This pattern of change in mean index scores was also found for the current marital status of respondents. Figures in the unadjusted column showed that single respondents had a mean index score about 0.83 higher than those who were married. Once the effects of other factors were adjusted for, the mean index scores differences increased to 1.06. This could speculate that the respondents might have rationalized their responses to coincide with their current marital status. In other words, the respondents who were single might have expressed more favorable attitudes toward being single while the opposite was true for those who were married.

In the same set of explanatory variables, education and income had substantially smaller β values (0.10 and 0.13 respectively), but they were much more strongly associated with the dependent variable than the remaining predictors in the same model. Once again, the unadjusted and adjusted values for these 2 variables could be compared. For the unadjusted effect, the respondents with less education had about 1.1 points higher than those with master degree and doctorate degree. With adjustment, the difference between these two groups increased to 1.2 points. The unadjusted value of monthly income showed that the respondents with least monthly income were about 0.54 points higher on the index than those who were in the highest income category, but the differential increased to 1.15 after adjusting for the effects of other variables. These findings were quite surprising since it was assumed that the respondents with higher education and higher income would be more favorable to be independent. The proportion of variance explained by this set of predictors was only 0.05.

Among the second set of variables (parental background), none were significant except the father's education (significant at 0.10 level). However, the adjusted values (β) for father's and mother's age at marriage revealed the strongest association with the respondent's attitudes toward marriage. All the predictors together in this set explained only about 0.03 of the variation in the attitude. This was an intriguing result which suggested that in a society underwent rapid transition from traditional to modern, as was taking place in Bangkok Metropolis, parental socio-economic characteristics played very minor roles in shaping the individual's attitudes, especially concerning marriage. Rather, the variations in the attitudes were more powerfully influenced by the individual's personal characteristics.

For the third set of explanatory variables, the unadjusted and adjusted means indicated that coresidence with siblings at present and the financial support of the respondents for their family at present had stronger associations with attitudes toward marriage than did the financial support of respondents who presently resided with siblings and those who lived separately were less than 1.0 both before and after adjusting for the effects of other factors. This set of variables explained only 0.02 of variation in the dependent variable.

Compared to the marriage model, it was obvious from Table 2 that the 3 sets of explanatory variables were much weaker predictors of the attitudes toward sex roles and

status of women. Nearly all predictors included in the model were of relatively little importance in explaining variations in the dependent variable. Educational level of respondents was the only variable significant at the 0.001 level. Current age of respondents was the next important variable in predicting attitudes toward sex role and status of women (significant at 0.01), followed by the respondents' birth order (significant at 0.05) and duration of residence in Bangkok (significant at 0.10). Results from the MCA for the first set of explanatory variables, considering unadjusted and adjusted values, indicated that education had the strongest association with the attitudes toward sex role and the status of women ($\eta = 0.21$ and $\beta = 0.22$). Based on the unadjusted values, the respondents with higher education: master degree and doctorate degree had about 1.8 mean index points higher than those with less than a college level. After adjusting for the effect of other factors, the same pattern of relationship still existed, and the magnitude of the difference in mean index scores between these two educational groups had not changed, that was about 1.8 points different.

The findings on the relationship between education and attitudes toward sex roles and status of women was quite consistent with the results obtained from the preliminary analysis based on the crosstabulations. Women with higher education generally express more favorable attitudes toward egalitarianism, while the respondents with less education tend to accept the traditional sex roles which indicated a more patriarchal outlook.[11]

The lack of a strong association between the three sets of explanatory variables and the attitudes toward sex roles and status of women could be explained by the following reasons. First, it is possible that attitudes towards sex roles and status of women are less crystallized than those toward marriage. Second, it could be the result of the inappropriate indicators used in the empirical analysis. To observe the variations in attitudes on this particular issue, other kinds of information may be needed, such as socialization within the household, whether it favors egalitarianism or patriarchalism, characteristics of spouse, personal and interpersonal factors including relationship, responsibility and obligations among family members who have different roles and status within the family i.e. between parent and children, husband and wife or among siblings.[17] The information on these aspects may provide more direct measure of the attitudes toward sex roles and status of women.

The timing of first marriage

The risk of marriage of respondents (marriage hazard rate or hazard of marrying)* is examined by using Cox's partial likelihood approach[1] which based on the fundamental ideas of life-table analysis.

The regression equation consists of the effects of a series of explanatory variables introduced into a model in which the dependent variable is the risk or the hazard of first

* Hazard rate refers to the conditional probability that an event will occur at the particular time to a particular individual, given that the individual is at risk at that time.[1] For instance, marriage hazard refers to proportions of individuals entering a time period (e.g. age-group) who change states from single to married during that time period.

marriage at each age of respondents from 17 through 34 years of age. The explanatory variables are assumed to shift the hazard upward or downward relative to the baseline hazard. As the regression equation is log-linear in the parameters, exponentiated parameter estimates represent relative risks: the risk (or hazard) of first marriage relative to the baseline hazard.[4] A relative risk of 1.00 indicates that the estimated hazard is equivalent to the baseline hazard; a relative risk greater than 1.00 indicates that the risk of marriage is greater than the baseline hazard; and a relative risk less than 1.00 indicates that the risk of marriage is lower than the baseline hazard. Since most of the explanatory variables are categorical (and thus entered in the regression equations as sets of binary variables representing all but one category), the reference group for the relative risk is the omitted category: exponentiated parameter estimates greater than 1.00, for example, indicate that the marriage rate for the category in question exceeds the marriage rate in the omitted category.

A large number of variables included in the model were found to be significant (Table 3). Educational level of the respondents was, by and large, a very significant variable affecting variation in marriage risk. Using the respondents with a bachelor degree as the reference group, it was found that the risk of first marriage of respondents who had education less than a college level was about 73% higher, while the risk of those who had master degree or doctorate degree was about 13% lower than that of the reference group. This result was consistent with findings from past research which revealed a positive relationship between education and delayed marriage.[2,8,11] Higher education seems to affect the individual's attitudes, altering them from traditional to a more modern attitude i.e, from younger marriage to the older marriage age.

The lower risk of marriage among highly educated women might also be affected by the 'marriage squeeze' situation. This speculation is supported by data from the Thai 1980 Census which indicated that differences in percentage of never married between women aged 20 – 24 and men aged 25 – 29 increased sharply according to the increases in educational level. For instance, among those who had no education, the percentage of never married among men aged 25 – 29 was 1.9 higher than that of women aged 20 – 24. However, among population who had secondary education, the percentage of never married of women aged 20 – 24 was about 30 higher than that of men aged 25 – 29. The difference increased to 33% among those who had college education.[11]

Type of employment was found to have an effect on the respondents' risk of getting married as well. In this Table, the results showed that the risk of first marriage of respondents who were government officials was about 36% lower, and that of the respondents who were employees of state enterprises was about 12% lower than that of the reference group (respondents who worked in the private sectors; mostly in banking business). This finding contradicts results obtained from the 1980 Census, which indicated that women who were engaged in banking and other financial institutions had the highest singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) and highest level of celibacy.[11] The differentials in risk of marriage among respondents who worked in different workplaces may be due to the diversity of working environments and types of jobs which lead to various opportunities for meeting

potential mates. This is only a speculative interpretation of the above finding, since the relationship between workplace and risks of marriage already controls the effects of education and income.

A negative effect of income on the risk of first marriage of respondents in the survey was obvious. Risk of marriage of respondents who earned less than $115 a month was 49% higher than those who earned a medium salary (about $115 – 190, a reference group) while the risk of those who earned above $190 – 270 and those who earned more than $270 a month were about 5% and 18%, respectively, lower than that of the reference group. The lower risk of marriage among respondents who had higher income is undoubtedly associated with their higher education. These two elements together lead a person to evaluate the opportunities foregone by early marriage, or to raise the opportunity costs of marriage.[3,5,16]

In the survey, respondents were asked 'How important their financial support was to their parents and/or to their siblings 5 years ago (before the survey took place)... and how important it is at the present time (when the survey took place)? From these two questions, two different patterns of effect of family obligation on risks of first marriage were found.

Using the group of respondents who did not have to support their family 5 years ago as a reference, the risk of getting married at any age of the respondents who 'had no income' at that time was about 30% lower. This lower risk could be interpreted as follows. Five years ago this group of respondents were still in school and earned no income. Therefore, the possibility for them to marry was very low compared to that of the reference group. On the other hand, the respondents who reported that their financial support for their family of origin 5 years ago was 'very important' had relative risks of first marriage about 18% higher, and the risk of those whose financial support was 'fairly important' was about 13% higher than that of the reference group.

Once the relationship between the importance of financial obligation at present and the risk of first marriage among the same group of respondents was examined, the opposite pattern was found. The relative risks of first marriage of respondents who specified that their financial support 'is very important' was about 57% lower and those who said 'it is fairly important' was about 49% lower than the reference category, those respondents who reported 'no need to support the family (of origin) at present'.

A plausible explanation for these findings was not easily developed, because of the lack of data on timing of family support at the two periods of time relative to the timing of marriage. The attempt, however, was made by using crosstabulations to provide some clues in interpreting the relationship. The results of crosstabulations between family support in the past and at the present time showed that this obligation was rather a continuing process. That is, if the financial support provided by the respondents to the family was very important 5 years ago, it is still very important at the present time. On the other hand, if the respondents did not have to support the family 5 years ago, the majority of them reported that there was no need for them to support the family at the present time as well. Therefore, if this explanation held true, it could mean that the financial obligation had imposed a great burden on the

respondents and made it more difficult for them to get married. They might have to postpone marriage for some time until such burden was minimized. This was reflected in the lower risk of first marriage among the two groups of respondents whose financial obligation was 'very important' and 'fairly important' compared to those who did not have to support the family at the present time.

Interpretation of findings on financial obligation during the past was not pursued further, since this variable was not statistically significant. The relationship could, therefore, occur by chance.

The last two variables in the model were continuous; marriage index and status index. These results needed to be interpreted slightly different from that of the categorical variables. Between these two indices only the marriage index was significant ($P = 0.001$), and the relative risk obtained from this index was 0.95. This indicated that one unit change in the marriage index reduced the risk of getting married at any age by 5%. In other words, if the respondent got one index point higher (which indicates a more favorable attitude toward being single), risk of first marriage was lower by 5%.

The result obtained from the 'status index', however, seemed to be in the opposite direction, and contrary to the assumption made earlier. However, this variable was not statistically significant, and it also showed almost no effect on the relative risk of marriage. That is, one unit change in the status index increased the risk of getting married at any age by only 2%. In other words, if the respondent got one index point higher (which indicated a more favorable attitude toward egalitarianism) the risk of first marriage was higher by 2%.

The opposite findings obtained from these two indices seemed to confirm the results from the earlier analysis, which showed a weak relationship between 'marriage' and 'status' indices. In other words, women who expressed a favorable attitude toward being single did not necessarily favor egalitarianism, as it was assumed.

Table 4 showed the relationship between the relative risks of first marriage of respondents according to the second set of explanatory variables: place of birth, nationality, respondents' birth order, and total number of siblings of the respondents.

From this Table, it was clear that compared to the respondents who were born in Bangkok (the reference group), the risks of getting married at any age for respondents who were born in rural areas were about 22% higher, while that of respondents who were born in other urban places were about 21% higher. This result was consistent with findings from previous studies on marriage patterns in Thailand, which found that rural women, in general, marry earlier than those who were born in the capital, while the average age at marriage of woman who were born or lived in other urban places usually were intermediate between the rural and urban means.[8,9,12]

The respondents who in this survey identified themselves as Chinese had about 27% lower risk of getting married at any age than the Thai respondents. This finding was slightly different from that of a previous study on marriage age differentials between Thai and

Chinese based on the 1970 National Longitudinal Survey.[8] It was found in this early research that Thai and the second generation Chinese females had approximately the same age at marriage, both marrying between 20 and 24 years of age. The contradictory result from this present survey was further examined by crosstabulating ethnicity with education. Because the sample size of respondents who were Thais and those who identified themselves as Chinese were much different (915 vs. 86 cases) the direct comparison between these two groups could be misleading. Within groups, a majority (57%) of Chinese respondents achieved bachelor degree while more than 50% of Thais had completed less than bachelor degree. Moreover, about the same proportion (11%) of Chinese and Thai respondents had master degree or doctorate degree. To confirm the above finding, the regression equation was again estimated by adding education of the respondents into the same model. It was evident from this new model (the results were not shown here) that, with the presence of education, nationality was no longer significant. Therefore, part of the explanation for the lower risk of getting married among Chinese was their higher level of education, besides the effect of ethnicity itself.

Among respondents of different birth orders, the relative risks of first marriage were also different. From this same Table, it is clear that the respondents who were first born had relative risks of first marriage about 13% higher, while the risk of respondents who were born at higher order (5^{th} or higher) were about 24% lower than those who were born at the $2^{nd} - 4^{th}$ order (a reference group). In Thailand, although there is no fixed rule, in practice, the first born or the eldest sib of the family tends to marry earlier than the younger sibs. The total number of siblings of respondents is also taken into consideration. The relative risk of getting married for the first time for respondents who were the only child of the family about 13% higher than that of the reference group (respondents who had a medium size of siblings, 2 – 4). It is speculated that it may be easier for respondents who had no siblings to acquire the economic resources to get marry at any time, while those with larger size of siblings may have to postpone their marriage until the economic burden is minimized. Among respondents who had 1 – 5 siblings or larger, risks of first marriage were about the same. That is risk is only about 4% lower than that of the reference group.

Table 5 displayed the effects of parental background on the risk of first marriage. Similar to the earlier analysis of the 'marriage' and 'status' indices, **none** of the explanatory variables from this set are significant in explaining risk of first marriage (P value for the full set of variables = 0.8228). Because of their statistical insignificance, no attempt was made here to interpret the findings in detail. The results, however, did suggest some degree of 'inheritance', although it was not statistically significant, between parental marriage age and the risk of first marriage of the respondents. That is the risk of first marriage of respondents whose fathers married at a young age (15 – 24) was about 2% higher than that of the reference group (whose fathers married at ages 25 – 30). On the other hand, the risks of the respondents whose fathers married late (31 years and over) was about 11% lower than the risk of the reference group. The same pattern of relationship was also found for mother's marriage age and the risk of marriage of the respondents.

The difficulty arose in interpreting the findings on relationship between parent's

education, occupation and the respondents' risk of first marriage, because the patterns found were neither clear nor systematic. For instance, the risk of first marriage among respondents whose fathers had more years of education (secondary level and vocational training) was about 14% lower than respondents whose fathers had only 4 years of education (a reference group). This finding seemed to suggest a negative relationship between respondent's risk of marriage and father's education. However, this kind of relationship did not exist among other father's educational groups. That is, the risk of marriage of respondents whose fathers had a high level of education (university), those whose fathers had little education (could only read or write, or some kind of education which could not be measured in terms of number of years of training) were found not to be different from that of the reference group (that is, 3% lower among the former and 6% lower among the latter). This similar pattern was also found for mother's education.

The respondents whose fathers were employed by the government or by private sectors have a higher risk of first marriage than respondents whose fathers ran their own business (a reference group), about 18% and 13% respectively. On the other hand, respondents whose fathers were engaged in agriculture or worked as manual workers had about 3% lower riskes of first marriage than the reference group. Interpretation of this finding was not pursued further since it was not statistically significant.

The findings obtained in this analysis seemed to reject the assumption made earlier that family wealth and parental socio-economic background might influence a person's attitudes and behavior regarding marriage. Rather, the findings suggested more clearly that both attitudes and behavior regarding marriage of respondents were closely determined by their personal socio-economic and demographic characteristics as shown and discussed earlier in Table 3.

CONCLUSION

The assessment of the variations in attitudes toward marriage (marriage index model) and attitudes toward sex roles and status of women (status index model), according to three sets of selected explanatory variables (the respondent's socio-economic and demographic characteristics, parental background, and family relations and obligation) was carried out through use of multiple classification analysis (MCA). It was found that the respondents' personal socio-economic and demographic characteristics were more significant than the other sets of variables in explaining variations in the respondent's attitudes toward marriage. The significant variables include education, marital status, income, place of birth, and duration of residence in Bangkok Metropolis. However, these same variables were indeed much weaker in predicting variations in attitudes toward sex roles and status of women. The weak relationship found in the status index model was speculated to be a result of the use of inappropriate indicators. It was therefore suggested that other kinds of information, not available in this survey, would better explain the variations in attitudes toward sex roles and

status of women.

The estimates of risks of first marriage (marriage hazard) obtained from regression equation, using Cox's partial likelihood approach, suggest positive linkages between new social and economic roles and status, and delay in entrance to first marriage.

Although this sample of respondents was relatively homogeneous in terms of socio-economic background, the statistics indicated significant variations in risks of marriage according to the explanatory variables drawn into the model. It was found that whether the woman was born in the urban or rural areas, having different numbers of siblings, working in different types of workplaces, or having different levels of economic obligations to the family, lead to different risks of marriage. More important and obvious, the findings suggest negative relationships between the changing socio-economic status and roles of women and their marriage behavior. That is, the respondents with higher education, higher income, and more positive attitudes toward being single, had relatively lower risks of first marriage than did their counterparts. As mentioned repeatedly[8,9,10], higher education not only delayed marriage because of more time spent in school, it also helped alter attitudes from traditional to modern. Also, higher education was usually associated with certain occupational pursuits and higher income. Together, these elements encouraged the growth of new roles and new status, enhancing the positive attitudes toward independence among women who possessed these characteristics. As a result, the new roles and status might have some effects on ways of thinking and behavior related to marriage.

These findings of the effects of higher education, participation in the labor force, and higher income in delaying marriage carry policy implications regarding marriage and fertility. In any attempt to raise marriage age, policies which are designed to create non-familiar roles for women and to provide educational and occupational opportunities for females should be encouraged. The provision of special out-of-school training, adult educational programs, vocational training, and various women's development programs should be emphasized and expanded into many other areas. From the development planners' point of view, the improvement of status of women in the areas of economics, employment, education, public health, and women's right would facilitate the integration of women into the development process more efficiently. Greater opportunities for women in education and labor force participation would have the effect of postponing marriage, as well as influencing reproductive behavior.[6,10] This occurred because women develop alternative social and economic roles, rather than engaging solely in the traditional sex roles too early in life.

RECOMMENDATION

Compared to the information offered by the National Censuses and previous research surveys, the present analysis provides a wider range of data that can be used for the analysis of marriage and status of women. This analysis yields many interesting insights.

However, for several reasons, including financial constraint, the scope of this study is restricted to the educated and working women in Bangkok Metropolis. This limits the population covered.

An expansion of the scope of investigation that would cover a more heterogeneous population (including a group of 'urban poor' in the capital, women in other urban places and those who lived in the rural areas) is clearly desirable in future endeavors on this topic. By doing so, the researcher could obtain greater variation in the information relevant to socio-economic background needed for a more refined examination of attitudes and behavior of women.

The results obtained from the present analysis of attitudes toward sex roles and status of women in relation to marriage behavior are not satisfactory. The variables available for use as correlates to marriage behavior proved not to be good indicators. Moreover, to study sex roles and status of women in the family or in the society, questions asked only on attitudes may not be sufficient. There is an apparent need for information that could reveal individual's actual behavior regarding this matter as well. To mention some, it might be useful to include socialization in the household; whether it favors egalitarianism or patriarchalism; characteristics of spouse; personal and interpersonal factors including relationship, responsibility and obligations among family members who have different roles and status within the family i.e. between parents and children, husband and wife, or among siblings. Data on these aspects may provide more direct measure of attitudes and behavior and more meaningful results in the task of uncovering the interaction between women's role and status on the one hand and marriage behavior on the other hand.

The inclusion of women with various socio-economic characteristics, and a better design of research instrument containing more appropriate questions are expected to provide adequate knowledge and better understanding of the nature of linkages between socio-economic status and roles of women and changes in marriage behavior. All of these insights gained from such study, if to be used for future policy formation, could help insure that all action programs promoting delayed entry into marriage, improvement of status and changing roles of women as a means of fertility reduction could be more effectively directed to the appropriate target population.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to express her appreciation to National Research Council of Thailand, Chulalongkorn University and the Rockefeller Foundation for their financial supports and thanks to Professor Sidney Goldstein and Professor John B. Casterline for their constructive advices.

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Table 1. Multiple classification analysis of attitudes toward marriage (marriage index)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
First set of independent variables: personal characteristics			
Grand mean = 13.30			
Place of birth			
Bangkok	466	-0.10	-0.60
Other urban	233	0.16	0.78
Rural	153	0.06	0.65
η/β		0.03	0.18
F ratio			5.66**
Marital status			
Single	442	0.04	0.51
Married/ever married	410	-0.43	-0.55
η/β		0.11	0.15
F ratio			17.86*
Education			
Less than B.A.	415	0.27	0.25
B.A.	339	-0.08	-0.04
M.A./Ph.D.	98	-0.83	-0.92
η/β		0.10	0.10
F ratio			3.28***
Occupation			
Government officials	440	-0.13	-0.16
State enterprises	293	0.31	0.31
Private sectors	119	-0.29	-0.18
η/β		0.06	0.06
F ratio			1.30
Monthly income			
Less than $115	123	0.21	0.35
$115 – 190	312	-0.03	0.14
$190 – 270	212	0.24	0.37
$270 and over	205	-0.33	-0.80
η/β		0.06	0.13
F ratio			3.20***

Table 1. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
Other income			
No other income	660	0.02	-0.02
$40 – 80	123	-0.15	-0.13
$90 and over	69	0.10	0.42
η/β		0.02	0.04
F ratio			0.54
Covariate F ratio			
Duration of residence in Bangkok			0.05**
Multiple R squared			0.05
Multiple R			0.21
Second set of independent variables; parental background			
Grand mean = 13.28			
Father's marriage age			
15 – 24	233	-0.13	0.04
25 – 30	324	0.28	0.40
31 years and over	140	0.07	0.09
No information	225	-0.32	-0.68
η/β		0.07	0.11
F ratio			0.77
Father's education			
Four years	224	-0.26	-0.17
Secondary/vocational	367	0.33	0.37
University	90	-0.66	-0.73
Others	114	0.00	-0.09
No information	127	-0.04	-0.18
η/β		0.09	0.10
F ratio			1.99****

Table 1. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
Father's occupation			
Government officials	291	-0.01	-0.03
Own account	240	-0.18	-0.15
Employees	104	0.61	0.52
Agriculture/manual	179	-0.17	-0.15
No information	108	0.12	0.15
η/β		0.07	0.06
F ratio			0.74
Mother's marriage age			
14 – 19	246	-0.16	-0.29
20 – 25	329	0.05	-0.14
26 years and over	131	0.66	0.44
No information	216	-0.29	0.27
η/β		0.08	0.07
F ratio			1.05
Mother's education			
Four years	380	-0.19	-0.25
Secondary/vocational	266	0.07	-0.11
Others	169	0.20	0.36
No information	107	0.17	0.57
η/β		0.04	0.08
F ratio			1.24
Covariate F ratio			
Respondent's current age			-0.02
Multiple R squared			0.03
Multiple R			0.16
Third set of independent variables: family relations/obligations			
Grand mean = 13.32			
Coresidence with siblings at present			
Yes	445	0.32	0.29
No, live separately	436	-0.32	-0.30
η/β		0.09	0.08
F ratio			5.58***

Table 1. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
How important financial support at present?			
Very important	117	0.72	0.69
Fairly important	333	0.07	-0.06
No need to support	431	-0.25	-0.14
η/β		0.09	0.08
F ratio			1.70
How important financial support 5 years ago?			
Very important	132	0.25	-0.07
Fairly important	239	0.22	0.19
No need to support	367	-0.26	-0.11
No own income	143	0.08	0.02
η/β		0.06	0.03
F ratio			0.26
Covariate F ratio			
Respondent's birth order			0.08
Total number of siblings			-0.07
Multiple R squared			0.02
Multiple R			0.13

* Significant at 0.001
** Significant at 0.01
*** Significant at 0.05
**** Significant at 0.10

Table 2. Multiple classification analysis of attitudes toward status of women (status index)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
First set of independent variables: personal characteristics			
Grand mean = 8.85			
Place of birth			
Bangkok	488	-0.21	0.06
Other urban	237	0.26	-0.12
Rural	158	0.25	-0.00
η/β		0.08	0.03
F ratio			0.16
Marital status			
Single	465	0.05	-0.03
Married/ever married	418	-0.05	0.03
η/β		0.02	0.01
F ratio			0.11
Education			
Less than B.A.	430	-0.61	-0.61
B.A.	349	0.40	0.39
M.A./Ph.D.	104	1.15	1.20
η/β		0.21	0.22
F ratio			14.77*
Occupation			
Government officials	450	0.14	-0.05
State enterprises	312	-0.22	0.09
Private sectors	121	0.04	-0.07
η/β		0.06	0.02
F ratio			0.19
Monthly income			
Less than $115	129	-0.47	-0.12
$115 – 190	320	0.10	0.01
$190 – 270	220	0.12	-0.05
$270 and over	214	0.00	0.12
η/β		0.07	0.03
F ratio			0.14

Table 2. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
Other income			
No other income	685	0.01	0.03
$40 – 80	127	0.02	-0.03
$90 and over	71	-0.10	-0.24
η/β		0.01	0.02
F ratio			0.27
Covariate F ratio			
Duration of residence in Bangkok			-0.03****
Multiple R squared			0.05
Multiple R			0.23
Second set of independent variables: parental background			
Grand mean = 8.78			
Father's marriage age			
15 – 24	243	0.24	0.41
25 – 30	330	0.08	0.16
31 years and over	142	0.16	0.17
No information	247	-0.44	-0.72
η/β		0.09	0.14
F ratio			0.80
Father's education			
Four years	230	0.03	-0.10
Secondary/vocational	382	0.09	-0.04
University	92	0.50	0.30
Others	122	0.08	0.07
No information	136	-0.72	0.04
η/β		0.11	0.04
F ratio			0.30
Father's occupation			
Government officials	300	-0.04	-0.11
Own account	250	0.37	0.38
Employees	111	0.15	0.06
Agriculture/manual	186	-0.12	-0.12
No information	115	-0.63	-0.42
η/β		0.10	0.09
F ratio			1.75

Table 2. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
Mother's marriage age			
14 – 19	258	0.09	-0.21
20 – 25	335	0.08	-0.28
26 years and over	132	0.35	0.05
No information	237	-0.41	0.60
η/β		0.08	0.12
F ratio			0.67
Mother's education			
Four years	391	0.08	0.08
Secondary/vocational	274	0.36	0.29
Others	181	-0.10	-0.09
No information	116	-0.99	-0.79
η/β		0.13	0.11
F ratio			1.60
Covariate F ratio			
Respondent's current age			-0.03**
Multiple R squared			0.04
Multiple R			0.19
Third set of independent variables: family relations/obligations			
Grand mean = 8.80			
Coresidence with siblings at present			
Yes	469	-0.04	-0.14
No, live separately	452	0.04	0.15
η/β		0.01	0.05
F ratio			0.23
How important financial support at present?			
Very important	120	-0.36	-0.13
Fairly important	350	-0.24	-0.22
No need to support	451	0.29	0.21
η/β		0.09	0.07
F ratio			1.19

Table 2. (continued)

Variable + Category	N	Unadjusted values	Adjusted values
How important financial support 5 years ago?			
Very important	136	-0.56	-0.70
Fairly important	250	-0.23	-0.16
No need to support	385	0.20	0.12
No own income	150	0.38	0.60
η/β		0.10	0.13
F ratio			0.61
Covariate F ratio			
Respondent's birth order			-0.13***
Total number of siblings			0.08
Interactions of coresidence with sibs and past financial support			-0.10
Multiple R squared			0.02
Multiple R			0.13

* Significant at 0.001
** Significant at 0.01
*** Significant at 0.05
**** Significant at 0.10

Table 3. Relative risks of first marriage of respondents, by personal background, family obligations, and attitudinal variables [a]

Variables	Risks	Reference category
Education (below B.A.)	1.73*	B.A.
Education (M.A./Ph.D.)	0.87	
Occupation (government)	0.64**	private sector
Occupation (state enterprise)	0.88	
Income (below $115)	1.49***	
Income ($190 – 270)	0.95	$115 – 190
Income ($270 and over)	0.82	
Past financial (very important)	1.18	
Past financial (fairly important)	1.13	no need to support
Past financial (no own income)	0.70	
Present financial (very important)	0.43*	no need to support
Present financial (fairly important)	0.51*	
Marriage	0.95*	
Status	1.02	

a. Exponentiated parameter estimates

– 2 log likelihood = 5224.19
Model chi square = 92.17 (14 df.)
P value = 0.0

897 Observations
422 Uncensored observations
107 Missing cases

* Significant at 0.001
** Significant at 0.01
*** Significant at 0.05

Table 4. Relative risks of first marriage of respondents, by personal background variables [a]

Variables	Risks	Reference category
Birthplace (other urban)	1.21****	Bangkok
Birthplace (rural)	1.22	
Nationality (Chinese)	0.73****	Thai
Birth order (first born)	1.13	2^{nd} – 4^{th} order
Birth order (5^{th} and higher)	0.76***	
Total siblings (only child)	1.13	
Total siblings (one sib)	0.96	2 – 4 siblings
Total siblings (5 siblings or more)	0.96	

a. Exponentiated parameter estimates

– 2 log likelihood = 5821.86
Model chi square = 14.75 (8 df.)
P value = 0.0642

979 Observations
456 Uncensored observations
25 Missing cases

*** Significant at 0.05
**** Significant at 0.10

Table 5. Relative risks of first marriage of respondents, by parental background variables [a]

Variables	Risks	Reference category
Father's marriage age (15 – 24)	1.02	25 – 30 years
Father's marriage age (31 years and over)	0.89	
Father's education (second/vocational)	0.86	
Father's education (university)	0.97	Grade 4
Father's education (others)	0.94	
Father's occupation (government)	1.18	
Father's occupation (employee)	1.23	Own account
Father's occupation (agricultural/manual)	0.97	
Mother's marriage age (14 – 19)	1.05	20 – 25 years
Mother's marriage age (26 years and over)	0.91	
Mother's education (second/vocational)	0.93	Grade 4
Mother's education (others)	0.92	

a. Exponentiated parameter estimates

– 2 log likelihood = 5829.11
Model chi square = 3.97 (12 df.)
P value = 0.8228

979 Observations
456 Uncensored observations
25 Missing cases

Marriage index

Item no. and question	Item score*	r**	R sq. change
1. Single is worse off or better off than a married women.	Married better = 0 No different = 1 Single better = 2	.53	.28
2. After what age should a single no longer think of marriage.	Not beyond 35 = 3 Not beyond 40 = 2 Can be over 40 = 1 No limit = 0	.37	.13
3. After what age should a divorced try not to marry.	Not beyond 40 = 3 Not beyond 50 = 2 Can be over 50 = 1 No limit = 0	.37	.04
4. Does the increasing number of single women create a problem.	No problem = 2 Do not know = 1 Will be problem = 0	.32	.08
5. Ideal marriage age for men.	15 – 20 = 0 26 – 30 = 1 31 and over = 2	.33	.07
6. Ideal marriage age for women.	15 – 20 = 0 21 – 25 = 1 26 and over = 2	.31	.02
7. No need for women to get married since they could depend on themselves.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.55	.12
8. Single women are more accepted nowadays.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.26	.02
9. Marriage is still necessary although women can depend on themselves.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.52	.07

Marriage index (continued)

Item no. and question	Item scores*	r**	R sq. change
10. Marriage has lost its meaning these days.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.36	.05
11. Marriage and a family create a burden.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.35	.02
12. Marriage adds meaning to one's life.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.41	.03
13. A man could remain single (unmarried) as long as he wishes.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.34	.04
14. A woman could remain single (unmarried) as long as she wishes.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.44	.00

* Higher score is given to an answer which shows a positive attitude toward being single, and vice versa. The answer of No opinion, No different and the like will be treated as intermediate.

** Correlation of each item against the index.

Status index

Item no. and question	Item score*	r**	R. sq. change
1. Women should get equal pay for equal job.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.24	.06
2. Women should have right for equal education.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.17	.02
3. Women should have right to participate activities.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.30	.07
4. Women should be able to rank high administrative position.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.38	.07
5. Status of Thai women is as high as that of men.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.10	.17
6. Career advancement of a husband is more important than a wife's.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.54	.22
7. Husband should have a final say for family's matter.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.51	.12
8. Household chores should be the wife's responsibility.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.58	.13
9. Wife shouldn't work after marriage.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.32	.07

Status index (continued)

Item no. and question	Item score*	r**	R sq. change
10. Wife shouldn't expect the husband to help around the house.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.53	.10
11. Thai society does not provide the same opportunities for women as it does for men.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.21	.06
12. It is all right for men to go out as often as they wish.	Agree = 0 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 2	.35	.07
13. Both husband and wife are responsible for bringing up children.	Agree = 2 No opinion = 1 Disagree = 0	.08	.00

* Higher score is given to an answer which shows support for women to be equal to men (more egalitarianism) and vice versa. The answer of No opinion, No different and the like will be treated as intermediate.

** Correlation of each item against the index.