

**A Comment on
“Intercultural Marriage and Its
Impact on Fertility in Taiwan”
by Yu-Hua Chen**

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Overview of the paper

Consists of two parts

- (1) major changes in marital behaviors and attitudes among Taiwanese and its influence toward fertility
- (2) analyses on intercultural marriage and its consequences on reproductive outcomes

Overview (1)

major changes in Taiwan esp. for women

(1) enrollment in higher education

(2) increasing educational homogamy

(3) late marriage low fertility

(4) single women low fertility

(5) males of low educational background

hard time finding a wife

import wives from neighbor countries

Overview (2)

analysis on intercultural marriages using micro-data surveyed on foreign spouses in Taiwan

main motivation of the analysis

- (1) a comparison regarding reproductive outcomes between Taiwanese and non-Taiwanese women (p.1)
- (2) to verify the validity of a popular saying that “foreign brides breed like rabbits”(p.12)

Overview (3)

logistic regression using data limited to female mainland Chinese and Southeastern Asian Spouses

major findings; other things being equal,

- (1) Wives from Southeast Asian countries reproduce more children than those of main land Chinese wives
- (2) Mainland Chinese wives are more likely to be childless

Overview (4)

another analysis on sex ratio

major findings

(1) the traditional preference for son in Taiwan

(2) this tendency is even more obvious among intercultural marriages

Comments (1)

logistic regression verified the validity of the popular saying about “rabbits”?

(1) data limited to Southeast Asian and mainland Chinese wives

(2) should compare with Taiwanese wives reproduction

pool data on Taiwanese wives, if any

Comments (2)

what does “SE Asian origin / Mainlander” variable in the regression actually tell us?

(1) biological ability to bear more children when other things being controlled?

(2) cultural, historical or religious background that may influence the reproduction behavior?

clarification of this variable would enrich the interpretation of this regression

Comments (3)

sex ratio discussion

(1) Taiwan's sex ratio for total birth

around 1.09 or 1.10

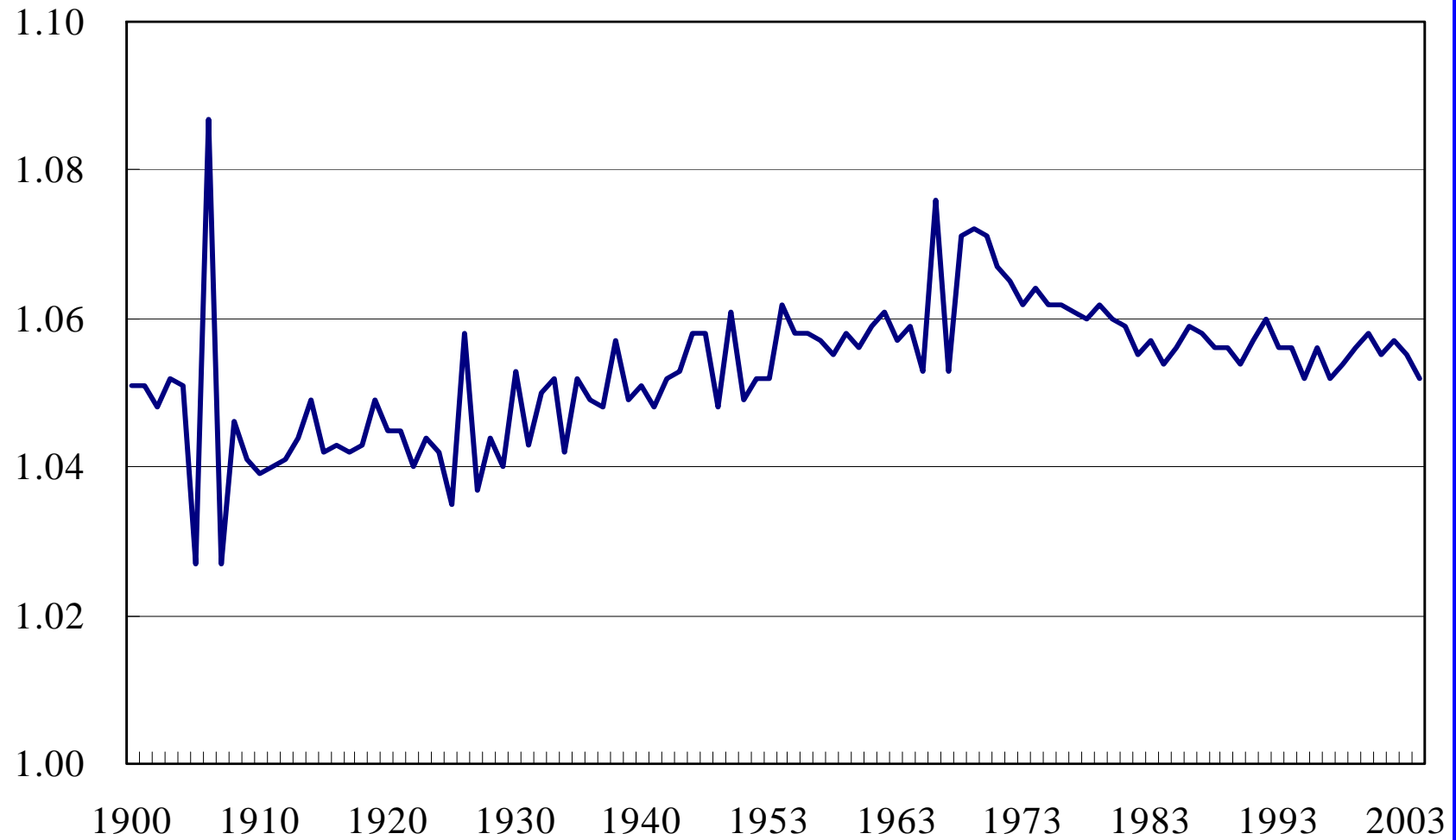
a bit high compare with Int'l standard

cf. "*Divine Providence*" Arbuthnott (1712)

has this ratio changed as marital and other
behavior changed in Taiwan?

cf. Japan' sex ratio

Japan's sex-ratio



Comments (3, continued)

sex ratio discussion

(2) *pseudo one-child strategy* among SE
and mainlander mothers

one shall compare on same bases:

calculate “sex ratio of 1st birth” for Taiwanese
mothers

another indirect but useful way to identify
son-preferences among foreign mothers :

just add “first-child daughter” dummy

Table 9. Total Births and Sex Ratio at Birth by Mother's Origin in Taiwan, 1998-2003

Year	Taiwan's Total Births ^a		Sex Ratio of 1st Birth ^b		Sex Ratio of 2nd Birth	
	Number	Sex Ratio	SE Asian	Mainlander	SE Asian	Mainlander
1998	254,776	1.088	1.154	1.174	1.141	1.163
1999	270,217	1.093	1.163	1.214	1.166	1.187
2000	292,724	1.096	1.125	1.175	1.132	1.171
2001	246,381	1.087	1.198	1.158	1.093	1.114
2002	236,687	1.098	1.234	1.209	1.184	1.200
2003	217,456	1.102	1.229	1.277	1.132	1.182
2004	216,419	1.106	1.076	1.106		
2005	205,854	1.090	1.099	1.087		

Finally...

very interesting paper

direct link among the analyses of each section
would enrich the paper

identifying what the variable stands for in
the regression would clarify the author's
intention

thank you!