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*Women's Returns to Education in
the Marriage Market: A Comparative Analysis
of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan*



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Abstract: Much but not enough research tried to find the association between a wife's schooling and a husband's earnings, or between a woman's education and a household's standard of living. This association has been named as women's returns to education in the marriage market, or marriage returns to education. This paper did a comparative analysis of these returns to education among some of East Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, and compared those returns with the wage returns to education in each country. Analyzing the General Social Survey data of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan collected in the late 2000s, this paper found the followings: First, the OLS estimates for the marriage returns to education were downwardly biased mainly due to the endogeneity of women's schooling in all of the three countries. Even if this bias was corrected by the instrumental variable regression and the conditional mixed process models, however, the story did not change to a great extent: the marriage returns to education for women were higher in Korea and Taiwan, and lower in Japan. Second, women's marriage returns to education were lower than their wage returns in Korea and Taiwan, while the reverse was true in Japan. However, this was true only in the relative terms. From the standpoint of the increase of actual amount of money, the marriage returns were much higher than the wage returns in Japan, whereas the former was in a very similar level to the latter in Korea and Taiwan. This means that Japanese women might have been more sensitive to their marriage prospects than their counterparts in Korea and Taiwan when deciding their educational career.

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