**Ethnic and Generational Differences in Partnership Patterns among Asian Americans**
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**Abstract**

Changes in partnership patterns among Asian Americans reflect their level of cultural and socioeconomic assimilation. Although Asian Americans are an extremely diverse group, relatively little research has explored their subgroup variations in partnership patterns. Using the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, this study examines ethnic and generational differences in marriage and cohabitation patterns among six major Asian groups. We find significant ethnic variations in declining marriage rates over generations, particularly among Asian American women. Indian and Vietnamese exhibit the largest generational decline in marriage, while Japanese and Koreans show the smallest. We also find ethnic differences in the relative importance of the postponement of partnership formations and the rise in cohabitation in explaining the generational decline in marriage. Our findings suggest that not all Asian Americans assimilate at the same pace, and thus should be operationalized as a disaggregate unit.

**Keywords**: Asian Americans, assimilation, immigration, ethnicity, marriage, cohabitation

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## Introduction

Over the past five decades, partnership patterns in the United States (US) have undergone substantial changes. Cohabitation emerged as a new living arrangement in the 1960s, and its prevalence has increased dramatically: the number of cohabiting couples increased from approximately 400,000 in 1960 to 7.7 million in 2010 (Lofquist et al. 2012). Also, the postponement of marriage extends the length of time before individuals wed for the first time. Between 1960 and 2017, the median age at first marriage increased from 22.8 to 29.5 for men, and from 20.3 to 27.4 for women (US Census Bureau 2017). The changes in partnership patterns signal that marriage has weakened as a social institution. Marriage is no longer mandatory; instead, it has become a sign of prestige (Cherlin 2004). The rise of cohabitation and marriage postponement also reflect existing social inequality because some young people choose to cohabit or postpone marriage due to economic difficulties (Lundberg et al. 2012; McLanahan and Percheski 2008l; Sassler 2004; Thornton et al. 2007).

The changes in partnership formation has disproportionately affected different racial and ethnic groups (Brown et al. 2008; Choi and Seltzer 2011; Phillips and Sweeney 2005; Manning and Landale 1996; Raley et al. 2015; Smock 2000). While there are many studies that explore the differences between whites, blacks and Latinos, relatively little research focuses on Asian Americans (Smock et al. 2008). This is a serious gap in the literature because Asian Americans are the fastest growing racial group in the US (Lopez et al. 2017). The Asian American population increased from 1.5 million in 1970 to over 20 million in 2017 (US Census Bureau 2017). By 2060, the population is projected to grow to about 40 million (Colby and Ortman 2015). Moreover, Asian Americans show a great level of intra-group heterogeneity. Thus, a study of this diverse, rapidly growing group is needed to expand our understanding of the ongoing changes in family formation

in the US. Moreover, Asian Americans' partnership patterns shed light on how Asian immigrants and their offspring are adapting to life in the US. Based on various assimilation theories, these partnership patterns may reflect how closely Asian Americans' cultural norms and structural opportunities for partnership formation resemble those of the host society (Arias 2001; Glick 2010; Parrado and Morgan 2008).

This study examines the ethnic and generational differences in Asian American young adults' partnership patterns— namely, their likelihood of marriage, cohabitation, and being single. We focus on the six largest Asian groups: Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese who collectively make up about 90% of the total Asian American population (López et al., 2017). Using the 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates and multinomial logistic regression, we conduct the study in three stages. First, we investigate whether the prevalence of marriage among Asian Americans varies by generational status (first-generation, 1.5-generation[1], and US-born). Then, we examine whether there are ethnic variations in the declining marriage rates over generations. Lastly, for each ethnic group, we show the relative importance of partnership postponement and the rise in cohabitation in explaining generational decline in marriage. By conducting a detailed examination of Asian Americans' partnership patterns, this study contributes to the literature on how family behaviors differ by ethnicity, immigrant generational status, and gender. To do this, we begin by reviewing the theories of assimilation. We then turn to previous research on marriage and cohabitation in different Asian countries as well as different structures of Asian American co-ethnic communities.

[1] The first-generation refers to individuals who are foreign-born and came to the US after the age of 12. The 1.5-generation is defined as foreign-born individuals who arrived in the US at the age of 12 or earlier.

## Background

*Assimilation and Partnership Formation*

Since the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965, the Asian American population has grown drastically. They are now the fastest-growing immigrant group in the US, and at the current rate, they will supersede Latinos to become the largest immigrant group by 2065 (Pew Research Center 2015). Given their demographic importance, scholars have paid close attention to how Asian immigrants and their offspring are adapting to life in the US. Defined as "the decline of an ethnic distinction and its corollary cultural and social differences," assimilation is a multigenerational, multidimensional process. (Alba and Nee 2003:11) The main question raised by assimilation researchers is how and how well immigrants and their offspring are incorporating—socioeconomically, socially and culturally. Generational changes in family behavior, such as the timing of partnership formation and the type of partnership (marriage or cohabitation), are important indicators of assimilation. These generational changes signal whether there is a convergence in cultural norms or if there are structural opportunities for partnership formation between immigrant groups and the mainstream population (Arias 2001; Glick 2010; Parrado and Morgan 2008).

Existing research documents that the marriage rate is high among Asian immigrants, more so than among any other groups (Xie and Goyette 2004; Pew Research Center 2013). For example, in 2010, Asian immigrants had a higher marriage rate (67%) than whites (55%), and a much lower cohabitation rate (8% vs 15%, respectively) (Cohn et al. 2011; Pew Research Center 2013; Qian 2013). Today's Asian immigrants come from countries where the cultural norms about family are generally more traditional than those in the US. In many Asian countries, while the average age at first marriage has increased, marriage remains a foundational social institution (Raymo et al. 2015;

Yeung et al. 2018). Thus, cohabitation is rare in most Asian countries. Another factor that contributes to the high prevalence of marriage among Asian immigrants is the current immigration policy. The family reunification policy prioritizes marriage over other family relationships, and thus, plays a role in shaping the family pattern among immigrants[2] (Hooper and Salant 2018). In addition, several studies have found that the economic constraints on Asian immigrant families reinforce the traditional patriarchal family system present in their co-ethnic communities (Espiritu 1999; Kibria 1990; Lim 1997; Min 1998). These factors help us understand the higher prevalence of marriage among Asian immigrants than the native majority population. The differences in marriage and cohabitation rates between Asian immigrants and whites raise the question of whether the rates will converge over time and across generations.

The classic assimilation approach predicts that across generations, Asian Americans' partnership patterns is likely to converge with the dominant pattern in the host society, as they gradually gain socioeconomic parity with and become culturally similar to the native majority population. According to Alba and Nee (2003), such changes will occur not because immigrants and their children necessarily want to shed their "old country" ways. Rather, the changes in partnership formation will occur as a by-product of the actions immigrants and their children take to improve their life chances. For example, second-generation Asian Americans who have high educational and occupational expectations (Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005; Goyette and Xie 1999; Kao and Tienda 1998; Louie 2004) may postpone marriage and childbearing in pursuit of upward mobility, because the demands of college education and family formation are often found to be incompatible (Glick et al. 2006). We can also expect cohabitation rates to increase across

[2] This was not the case for pre-1965 Asian immigrants. The earlier generations of Asian immigrants were denied the rights to form a family as a result of the passage of the discriminatory immigration laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Immigration Act of 1924 (Kitano et al. 1984).

generations. The socioeconomic attainment of the second generation will increase their opportunity to interact with the native majority population. As a result, they may have a greater exposure to the alternative family arrangements and become more open to the idea of cohabitation as a type of partnership.

While proponents of classical assimilation view the assimilation process as "something that happens to people while they are making other plans" (Alba and Nee 2003: 282), the segmented assimilation perspective argues that there are different ways of "becoming American" (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993). The intergenerational processes and outcomes of assimilation may differ across immigrant groups, depending on their race, parental human capital, familial and community ties, and the contexts of incorporation (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993). In their formulation, shedding the "old country" culture and rapidly adopting the host society culture is not necessarily an ideal scenario. Rather, they argue that selective assimilation—where immigrant groups incorporate themselves to the host society while voluntarily maintaining some elements of their ethnic cultural distinctiveness—can be beneficial for immigrant groups who face discrimination and hostility from the host society.

Past research shows that Asian immigrant families attempt to transmit their cultural practices to their children (e.g., Espiritu 2003; Min 1998; Salam 2013; Zhou and Bankston 1998). Immigrant parents expose their children to their native value systems that restrict romantic relationships during adolescence and premarital sexual relationships. According to Espiritu (2003), Filipino immigrants enact stern restrictions on their children, particularly their daughters. They reinforce the traditional notion that engaging in premarital sexual behavior is not only immoral but also uncharacteristic of a true Filipina. Kim and Ward (2007) find that Asian American youth receive mainly sexually prohibitive messages from their parents, such as practicing abstinence

until marriage. These norms and values about intimate relationships partially explain the lower rate of engagement in romantic and sexual relationships among Asian American youth (Ahrold and Meston 2008; Harris 1999; Tong 2013). According to Cheng and Landale (2011), parental socialization during adolescence continues to shape Asian Americans' partnership formation behavior in early adulthood. Therefore, it is understandable that the likelihood of cohabitation for Asian American young adults is related to their parents' views on family.

Segmented assimilation theory acknowledges that not all parents succeed in transmitting ethnic culture. In fact, a sharp difference between parent's native culture and the American youth subculture can be a major source of intergenerational conflict between parents and their children (Glick 2010; Foner and Dreby 2011; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). According to Portes and Rumbaut, (2001) in order for parents to successfully pass down ethnic culture to their children, parental expectations need to be reinforced within co-ethnic communities. Zhou (2007) also finds that support from tightly-knit co-ethnic communities are vital for the younger generation to maintain ethnic cultural distinctiveness (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Zhou 2007). Thus, proponents of segmented assimilation would expect that upwardly mobile Asian American young adults who are embedded in dense ethnic communities will selectively assimilate by delaying marriage rather than cohabiting.

Brown and her colleagues (2008) find that the generational differences in Asian American and Pacific Islanders' (AAPI) partnership patterns suggest that AAPIs are assimilating. They find that, for both AAPI men and women, marriage rates have declined while cohabitation rates have increased across generations. Their findings, however, also suggest that AAPI are selectively assimilating: both men and women (1.5- or higher generation) are less likely to be married than their native-white counterparts. In addition, they are more likely to be single than their native-

white counterparts. These patterns suggest that the generational decline in marriage among AAPI is more related to the younger generations' postponing partnership formation rather than their choosing cohabitation in lieu of marriage.

These findings confirm the importance of taking immigrant generational status into account when studying partnership patterns among Asian Americans. However, lumping together Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders may have masked ethnic diversity in partnership formation. Given that Asian Americans are a culturally and economically diverse group, it is unlikely that all Asian ethnic groups undergo the same generational changes in partnership formation. Also, the density of co-ethnic communities, which plays an important role in facilitating selective assimilation, varies across Asian American groups. In the following section, we discuss the possible sources of ethnic diversity in partnership patterns among Asian Americans.

*Partnership Patterns in Six Asian Countries*

Although often treated as monolithic in the media and scholarly literature, Asian Americans hail from over 20 countries of origin, with unique histories, cultures, languages, and economies. Therefore, a discussion of the partnership patterns in Asian countries is needed to better understand ethnic variations in partnership patterns among Asian Americans. Below, we present a discussion of the prevailing patterns of family formation in six Asian countries (China, India, the Philippines, Japan, South Korea, and Vietnam).

As three countries that share a Confucian cultural heritage, China, South Korea, and Japan have traditionally emphasized a patriarchal family structure with rigid gender roles for husbands and wives (Raymo et al. 2015). Given their rapid economic growth, coupled with an increase in the educational attainment of women, it is unsurprising that these three countries have undergone

the most striking changes in family formation in Asia in the past fifty years, as indicated by the postponement of marriage and decrease in fertility rates (Ji 2015; Raymo et al., 2015). The postponement in marriage is most striking for South Korea and Japan. The singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM) was 32.9 for Korean men and 30.3 for Korean women in 2017 (Statistics Korea, 2018; UN World Marriage Data, 2017). In Japan, the SMAM was 31.1 for men and 29.4 for women in 2017 (Statistics Japan, 2018; UN World Marriage Data, 2017). These statistics suggest that the marriage postponement is more pronounced in South Korea and Japan than it is in the US. Comparatively, marriage postponement is not as prominent a trend in China as it is in South Korea and Japan. In 2013, the SMAM was 26.2 for Chinese men and 24.4 for Chinese women (UN World Marriage Data, 2017).

Although marriage is being delayed in China, South Korea, and Japan, the low rate of cohabitation indicates that marriage remains a foundational social institution in these countries. Yet there is evidence that suggests that attitudes toward cohabitation are changing. In Japan and China, cohabitation is increasing, particularly among younger age cohorts (Raymo et al. 2009; Yu and Xie 2015). On the other hand, due to South Korea's strict adherence to more traditional family values, there remains a strong stigma associated with cohabitation (Eun 2006; Byun et al. 2016; Raymo et al. 2015).

Unlike their East Asian counterparts, marriage postponement is not nearly as dramatic a trend in Vietnam and the Philippines. As of 2011, the SMAM was 26.4 for Vietnamese men and 22.3 for Vietnamese women (UN World Marriage Data, 2017). Williams (2009) found that marriage remains a universal and morally important institution. In the Philippines, the SMAM was 26.9 for Filipino men, and 24.2 for Filipino women in 2010 (UN World Marriage Data, 2017). Conversely, the Philippines has simultaneously witnessed a rise in cohabitation rates (Abalos

2014). While religion, particularly Catholicism, has a major influence on marriage as a social institution, the relatively high cost of marriage ceremonies and the continued illegality of divorce may have motivated more people to cohabit (Kabamalan, 2004; Williams, Kabamalan and Ogena, 2007).

Lastly, partnership patterns in India are highly traditional, with low ages at marriage and virtually no cohabitation (Cherlin 2014; Yeung et al. 2018). Unlike the other aforementioned Asian countries, arranged marriage remains a historically recognized (albeit declining) practice and defining feature in Indian marital customs (Allendorf and Pandian 2016). Traditionally, the parents and extended family in India arranged the marriage with the groom, while the bride has little say in her marital partner (Dommaraju 2012). Demographically speaking, the mean age at marriage has gradually increased over time. In 2011, the SMAM was 24.9 for Indian men, and 20.7 for Indian women (UN World Marriage Data, 2017).

This brief review of marriage timing, as well as the trends in and attitudes on cohabitation in Asian countries reveals that there are significant cross-national differences. These patterns suggest that there are reasons to expect ethnic variations in partnership patterns among Asian Americans. Past research finds ethnic variations in median age of marriage: in 2000, Indian American women had the lowest median age of marriage at 23, and East Asian American women had the highest median age of marriage at 27 (Xie and Goyette 2004).

Cohabitation rates also vary by ethnicity. According to Liang and Ito (1999), in 1990, Japanese had the highest cohabitation rate at 2.1%, and Indians had the lowest rate at 0.6%. These findings suggest that to better understand Asian Americans partnership patterns, we need to consider the sending country patterns. However, prior research has failed to account for the possibility that both ethnicity and generation may matter in partnership formation among Asian

Americans. Based on the segmented assimilation framework, we expect that the pace at which each ethnic group's partnership formation changes across generation is contingent not only on the cultural norms in sending countries, but also on the presence of strong co-ethnic communities (Alba and Nee 2003; Arias 2001; Glick 2010; Parrado and Morgan 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). Therefore, we now turn to a discussion on the Asian ethnic differences in co-ethnic communities.

*Differences in Co-Ethnic Communities among Asian Americans*

As mentioned in the earlier section, co-ethnic communities play an important role in the adaptation process of immigrants and their children. It is well documented that these communities can provide ethnic resources and supportive networks that enable immigrant groups to economically incorporate into the mainstream while retaining some of their ethnic culture (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Portes and Zhou 1993). However, not all co-ethnic communities are created equal. The likelihood of selective assimilation depends on the density of co-ethnic communities (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). The strong social ties of a co-ethnic community help reinforce the cultural norms among the younger generation. Thus, it is reasonable to expect the 1.5- or second-generation Asian Americans who grow up in tight co-ethnic communities to perceive marriage as an important social institution that cannot be replaced by cohabitation.

Given that Asian Americans have diverse immigration histories, settlement patterns, and socioeconomic resources, it is not surprising that there are differences in the density of co-ethnic communities across ethnic groups. With a continued flow of middle-class immigrants, Indian and Chinese Americans have densely populated co-ethnic communities (Beacon 1996; Kurien 1998; Zhou 2009). These communities provide various social structures such as language schools and

religious organizations that help children of immigrants maintain their distinct ethnic culture while pursuing upward mobility. For this reason, among Indian and Chinese Americans, we expect to observe a decline in marriage across generations, accompanied by partnership postponement rather than a rise in cohabitation. The generational increase in cohabitation may be much smaller for Indian Americans than for Chinese Americans because the cultural norms on marriage in India, as described in the previous section, are more traditional than those in China.

Korean Americans are also known to have a tightly knit community that emphasizes family values and stability (Lim 1997; S. Kim 2010; Min 2001). Although the number of immigrants coming to the US has decreased in the past decade, the community remains robust due to their high rate of participation in co-ethnic churches, ethnic small businesses and language schools (Min 1998). Given that marriage postponement is already the norm in Korea, Korean Americans may exhibit a moderate increase in cohabitation across generations similar to Chinese Americans.

On the other hand, past studies have found that Filipino and Japanese American populations are more geographically dispersed than the other Asian ethnic populations (Akiba 2006; Bankston 2006). Filipino and Japanese Americans who came prior to 1965 were concentrated in ethnic enclaves because they faced severe racial discrimination. However, a large proportion of the post-1965 Filipino immigrants are professionals who live in predominantly white suburbs (Espiritu 2003). The Japanese American population is also dispersed, mainly due to their longer immigration histories and the small number of immigrants arriving to the US each year (Fugita and Fernandez 2004). With a smaller number of immigrants replenishing the co-ethnic communities, we expect to find a larger increase in cohabitation across generations among Filipino and Japanese Americans than other Asian groups.

Despite disadvantages as political refugees, Vietnamese immigrants developed remarkably strong communities. Zhou and Bankston's (1998) research on the Vietnamese enclave in New Orleans illuminates how a co-ethnic community helps offset low parental human capital through a reinforcement of educational and traditional family values among Vietnamese American youth. The findings suggest that Vietnamese Americans are the prime example of selective assimilation. However, when Zhou and Bankston (2006) revisited the community in 2003, they found that the co-ethnic community was less unified than it previously observed, because of middle-class outmigration to the suburbs. They reported that the younger cohort of Vietnamese youth was "moving closer to the subculture of their American peers and away from their Vietnamese community (Zhou and Bankston 2006:130)." Based on the changes in the density of the Vietnamese co-ethnic community, we expect to observe a mixed trend: a generational decline in marriage accompanied by both partnership postponement and a rise in cohabitation among Vietnamese Americans.

The differences in the sending country norms and varying structures of the co-ethnic communities among Asian Americans suggest that there are reasons to expect an interaction between ethnicity and generation in predicting their partnership status. Yet, very little is known about how the effect of generational status on partnership pattern differs across ethnic groups. To our knowledge, Cheng (2017) is the only study that simultaneously examines the effect of ethnicity and generation on partnership formation among Asian American young adults. She finds that ethnicity is a significant predictor of marriage delays but not for cohabitation. Although Cheng (2017) presents the most comprehensive study on Asian American marriage and cohabitation pattern thus far, her study has a limited categorization of the Asian groups (East Asian, Filipinos, and Other Asians) and does not examine whether generational changes in partnership pattern vary

across different ethnic groups. This study intends to build on Brown et al. (2008) and Cheng (2017) by introducing six Asian ethnic groups into the analysis.

## Current Study

The aim of this study is to paint a more detailed picture of Asian American partnership patterns. Specifically, we ask three questions. First, does the prevalence of marriage decrease across generations among Asian Americans? In line with existing studies, we expect to find a decrease in the prevalence of marriage with generational progression accompanied by a delay in partnership formation and a rise in cohabitation. Second, we ask: are there ethnic variations in declining marriage rates over generations? Based on different cultural norms and socioeconomic statuses, we expect the ethnic differences in partnership patterns to decrease but simultaneously persist across generations. Lastly, we examine the ethnic differences in the relative importance of partnership postponement and rise in cohabitation in explaining generational decline in marriage. In other words, we investigate whether the observed generational decline in marriage is mostly accompanied by partnership postponement, cohabitation, or both. We expect to find cohabitation to be relatively more important than partnership postponement among ethnic groups who originate from countries where a delay in marriage is the norm and who have more dispersed co-ethnic communities.

## Method

### Data and Sample

Using the 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year estimates from the IPUMS (Ruggles et al., 2017), we investigate ethnic and generational differences in partnership

patterns among Asian Americans and compare them to those of US-born non-Hispanic whites (whites hereafter). The ACS is publicly available and administered by the US Census Bureau every year. There are two types of period estimates for the most recent data (1-year and 5-year), and we selected the 5-year estimates, which pool five years of data, to give us a sufficient sample size for analyzing Asian Americans by generation and ethnicity.

The analytic sample of this study is limited to Asian American and white men and women who were between the ages of 20 and 34 years old at the time of the survey (2012-2016). The Asian American sample includes the six largest ethnic groups: Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. We chose US-born whites as the reference group to place generational changes in context. The final unweighted analytic sample size (*N*) for this study is 1,762,495.

**Measures**

*Dependent Variable*

Partnership status is a categorical variable with three categories: married, cohabiting and single. The variable is constructed based on information on one's marital status and whether one is living with a partner. Individuals who are cohabiting are those who are not currently married but living with a partner. Individuals are identified as single (or unpartnered) if they are neither currently married nor residing with a partner. One limitation of the sample is that since partnership status is determined based on the current marital status, there are cohabiting or single individuals who have previously been married. Previously married individuals make up 5.52% of the total sample.

*Independent Variables*

The main independent variables are ethnicity and generational status. Ethnicity is a variable with the following categories: Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese. We

compare among Asian Americans but also with US-born whites to place generational changes in context. Generational status is constructed based on respondents' nativity status and age at arrival to the US. The variable has three categories: first-generation, 1.5-generation and US-born. The first-generation refers to individuals who are foreign-born and came to the US after the age of 12. The 1.5-generation is defined as foreign-born individuals who arrived in the US at the age of 12 or earlier. Lastly, the US-born generation is defined as those who are born in the US. The ACS does not allow researchers to identify whether a US-born individual is second-generation (native-born to foreign-born parents) or third or higher generation (native-born to native-born parents). We, however, do not believe that this is a major concern given the immigration history of Asian Americans. Since most Asian Americans came in large numbers after 1965, we assume that most US-born Asian Americans are second-generation except for Japanese, the majority of whom came to the US in the early 20th century (Min 2006).

*Control Variables*

We also control for other individual factors and household characteristics that may be associated with partnership status. Age is a continuous variable that ranges from 20 to 34. We include a quadratic of age since age may have a non-monotonic relationship with partnership status. Educational attainment is a categorical variable with the following categories: high school or lower, some college, college degree, and advanced degree. Since the age range of the sample is 20 to 34, it is likely that a sizeable proportion of the sample was pursuing higher education at the time of the survey. Therefore, we control for a dummy variable that indicates whether one is currently attending school. Employment status is measured in four categories: full-time, part-time, unemployed, and not in labor force. We also control for family characteristics such as an indicator of living with one's own child and living with one's own parent(s). Lastly, we control for income,

which is based on self-reported total personal income. We take the cubic root of income to account for negative and zero values of income in the sample (Weisberg 2014). Lastly, rather than treating gender as a control variable, we ran separate analyses for male and female subsamples. Detailed sample characteristics are presented in Appendix 1.

**Analytic Strategy**

First, we run a descriptive analysis which entails the distribution of partnership status by gender, ethnicity, and generation to identify whether the prevalence of marriage and cohabitation varies by ethnicity and generation. Next, we estimate the probability of being married or cohabiting versus being single using multinomial logistic regression models. We use separate models for men and women, and in each model, we introduce a term for the interaction between ethnicity and generation to examine ethnic variations in declining marriage rates over generations. Then, we illustrate the regression results using 1) bar charts (in predicted probabilities) to easily visualize generational differences in likelihood of marriage, cohabitation and being single for each ethnic group, and 2) scatterplots to identify whether the postponement of marriage, increase in cohabitation, or both is responsible for the generational decline in marriage for each ethnic group. Finally, we further limit our focus to partnered individuals to estimate the probability of cohabitation among this group. We use logistic regression since the measured outcome has two categories: cohabiting and being married. This additional analysis is helpful in understanding whether there are ethnic and/or generational differences in social acceptability of cohabitation as a form of partnership. All analyses are weighted using ACS 2012-2016 5-year estimate person weights.

# Results

## Differences in Partnership Status by Generation

**Table 1** presents the distribution of partnership status of Asian Americans and whites by gender, ethnicity, and generation. For both Asian American men and women, marriage is most prevalent among the first generation, and its prevalence decreases with each successive generation. Generational decline in marriage is accompanied by growth in being single and cohabitating. For example, the percentages of married Chinese men for first-, 1.5-, and US-born generations are approximately 32%, 21%, and 12%, respectively. Conversely, the percentages of them being single are 64% (first), 74% (1.5), and 84% (US-born). Similar trends can be seen for other Asian ethnic groups, regardless of gender. Cohabitation also increases across generations but not as dramatically as single status. These changes are found across all Asian groups and suggest that younger-generations are postponing partnership formation (whether it be marriage or cohabitation) compared to the first generation.

[Table 1 goes here]

In addition, differences in partnership status are larger between the first- and 1.5-generations than those between the 1.5-generation and the US-born. This pattern suggests that 1.5-generation Asian Americans are forming partnerships in a manner akin to the US-born more so than to the first generation. For example, 1.5-generation and US-born Filipino women have much lower marriage rates, about 32% and 25%, respectively, than the first generation (57%). This suggests that spending one's formative years in the US is an important factor for marital status. Generational increase in cohabitation is relatively small, and this may be partially due to partnership postponement among Asian Americans in general (as shown by the high percentages of single status among these groups). If we narrow down our sample to those who are partnered

(either married or cohabiting), we see that cohabitation is significantly increasing as a partnership choice. In fact, most US-born Asian groups (except for Indians) have similar or even slightly higher percentages of cohabiting than whites. This suggests that when US-born Asian Americans choose to form a union with their loved ones in early adulthood, they are at least as likely as whites to choose cohabitation over marriage.

Another notable finding is that the gender gap in marriage decreases for higher order generations. First-generation women are much more likely to be married than first-generation men (about 12-24% difference, depending on ethnicity). However, the gender difference in marriage is significantly reduced among the US-born (about 4-9% difference). The approaching parity of marriage rates is mainly associated with the significant generational changes among Asian American women.

**Ethnic Variations in Generational Decline in Marriage**

Next, we examine whether there are ethnic variations in the generational decline in marriage. To test this hypothesis, we present the results of multinomial and logistic regressions predicting partnership status with an interaction term for ethnicity by generation. The model presented in Table 2 allows us to see whether generational differences in partnership types vary by ethnic groups after controlling for age, education, work status, income, parent status, and living with parent(s) status. We report exponentiated coefficients so that they can be interpreted as odds ratios. Since the focus of the models is to estimate the interaction effect, they do not include the coefficients of the main effects (full results available upon request). Instead, we reparametrized the interaction coefficients from the original full model that includes both main and interaction effect coefficients. These simplified models presented in Table 2 have the same fit as the full model, but they allow a more intuitive interpretation of the coefficients because the interaction terms can

be directly compared to the reference category (US-born whites). For example, the odds ratio of marriage (versus single) for first-generation Indian is 1.73, which means that first-generation Indians have odds of being married that are 1.73 times those of US-born whites. In addition, in Figure 1, we present the predicted probability of each partnership type for each ethnic and generation group for more intuitive interpretation.

[Table 2 goes here]

[Figure 1 goes here]

First, the top right figure in Figure 1 presents the predicted probabilities of being married for Asian American and white women. Across all ethnic groups, the first generation is most likely to be married, and the likelihood of being married decreases with each successive generation in a step-wise fashion. However, the degree of generational differences varies by ethnic group. As expected, there are smaller generational differences among women of Chinese, Japanese and Korean descent. This makes sense because postponement in marriage is a popular trend in these countries. On the other hand, the decrease in marriage is more pronounced among Indian, Filipino and Vietnamese women whose countries of origin have lower mean ages at first marriage. Among these three groups, the Vietnamese have a particularly larger generational decrease; US-born Vietnamese women have one of the lowest likelihood of being married among these groups.

Ethnic variations in generational decrease in marriage are less pronounced among Asian American men than those of the women. The degree of generational decline in marriage is similar across most ethnic groups, with a roughly 10 percentage point difference between the likelihood of marriage for those who are first-generation compared to the US-born. While there is a large generational decline in marriage among Indian American women, the decline is much smaller among their male counterparts. Among Vietnamese men, however, there is about a 20-point

percentage difference in the likelihood of being married between the first-generation (48%) and US-born (28%).

Model 1 of Table 2 also controls for other factors that are associated with partnership status. First, age is positively associated with both types of partnership, marriage, and cohabitation. The coefficient of the squared term of age is significant for both types of partnership regardless of gender, suggesting that the association is lessened as age increases. As for education, we find that the higher the education level, the higher the odds of being married over being single for both men and women. However, the relationship is the opposite for cohabitation. Less-educated individuals are more likely to cohabit than the highly-educated. Also, if one is currently in school, he or she is generally less likely to be in either type of partnership.

The association between partnership status and work status differs by gender. For men, full-time workers are most likely to be in a partnership. On the other hand, women who are not in the labor force are most likely to be married while least likely to be cohabiting. Gender differences were also found in the relationship between income and partnership status. For men, income is positively associated with partnership (both marriage and cohabitation), whereas it is negatively associated with marriage for women. This association may be affected by the sample that includes individuals who are either unemployed or not in the labor force. Household characteristics are also related to partnership status. Having a child was significantly associated with being in a relationship, particularly being married. Lastly, living with parents is linked to lowering the odds of being in either type of partnership.

Next, we limit our focus to partnered individuals to estimate the probability of cohabitation among this group (see Model 2 of Table 2 and the bottom two figures in Figure 1). The likelihood of cohabitation among the partnered increases across generations for most groups of Asian

Americans, regardless of gender. In fact, among the partnered individuals, most US-born Asian Americans (except Indian men, Indian women, and Korean men) have higher chances of cohabitation than the US-born whites. But again, we find ethnic variations in the degree of generational differences. The largest generational differences are found among the Vietnamese Americans. The first-generation Vietnamese have about 5% chance of choosing cohabitation over marriage. The US-born Vietnamese, however, have 30% chance of choosing of cohabitation over marriage. On the contrary, Indian Americans, particularly Indian women, have the smallest generational difference in the likelihood of cohabitation (2% for the first generation; 12% for the US-born). We also find a notable difference by gender among the US-born Koreans. While the US-born Korean women are as likely as their white counterparts to choose cohabitation, the US-born Korean men are less likely to choose cohabitation than their white counterparts.

**The Relative Importance of Partnership Formation Postponement and the Rise in Cohabitation in Explaining Generational Declines in Marriage**

The decline in marriage is associated with two trends: postponement of partnership formation and rise in cohabitation. Now we examine how each trend is responsible for the generational decline in marriage and whether there are ethnic variations in their relative importance. To understand their relative importance, we need to jointly examine generational differences in probabilities of being single and cohabiting. Thus, we present Figure 2 which has x- and y-axes: the x-axis represents the predicted probability of cohabitation. It can be interpreted that the greater the probability of cohabitation, the more prevalent cohabitation is for a specific group. The y-axis represents the predicted probability of being single. It is important to note that being single indicates that one is not currently married; one could have never been married or previously

married. But given the low age range of the sample, being single is most likely to mean that they have never been married. Thus, we interpret that the greater the probability of being single, the more likely an individual is to postpone marriage. Each ethnic group has two data points: one for the first-generation and the other for the US-born. Connecting these two data points help us simultaneously examine the changes in the likelihoods of cohabitating and being single and determine which trend is more responsible for decline in marriage.

[Figure 2 goes here]

The top figure in Figure 2 shows that the slopes vary greatly across different ethnic groups of women. For Chinese, Japanese, and Korean women, generational differences in probabilities of being single are small since the first-generation women already have high chances of being single. On the other hand, there are more sizeable generational differences in cohabitation. For example, first-generation Korean women have a 2% chance of cohabitation, whereas their US-born counterparts have a 9% chance of cohabitation. Based on this finding, it is likely that the generational decrease in marriage among East Asian women is due to the rise in cohabitation among the younger-generation.

For Indian women, there is a much greater generational difference in the likelihood of being single than of cohabitating. The likelihood of cohabitation among both the first-generation (1%) and the US-born Indian women (4%) is quite low, whereas there is a substantial increase in the likelihood of being single (about 36% and 55% for the first generation and the US-born, respectively). Although the change in the likelihood of cohabitation represents a larger percentage change, the growth in single status is much larger in terms of population numbers, and therefore has a much larger impact on marriage rates. Thus, the generational decrease in marriage observed among Indian women is more closely associated to postponement in partnership formation among

the younger-generation. In the earlier subsection, we saw a large generational decline in marriage among Filipina and Vietnamese women as well. They are, however, different from Indian women in that their generational decline in marriage are related to both postponement of partnership formation and increased incidence of cohabitation. For example, Vietnamese women show large differences in both the likelihood of being single (39% for the first generation; 55% for the US-born) and the likelihood of cohabitation (roughly 4% for the first generation; 12% for the US-born).

We also see variations in slopes among Asian American men, but the variations are smaller than those of the women. The slope for Japanese men is nearly horizontal since there is a large generational difference in their likelihood of cohabitation (approximately 3% for the first-generation; 11% for the US-born) with very little, nonsignificant change in their likelihood of being single (61% for the first generation; 63% for the US-born). Vietnamese men exhibit large generational differences in both trends: they also have the largest changes in both cohabitation (3% for the first generation; 9% for the US-born) and being single (52% for the first generation; 64% for the US-born). For Chinese, Filipino, and Korean men, the generational changes in the likelihood of being single are greater than those of cohabitation, suggesting that postponement of partnership formation is the most pronounced partnership formation behavior difference between first-generation and US-born men among these ethnic groups.

## Discussion

The role that marriage plays in social life has changed greatly in recent decades. Gone are the days when marriage was the expected rite of passage in early adulthood. Now, we see that individuals are delaying marriage and entering cohabitation at increased rates. Yet this does not occur at the same rate across all groups. Past studies have documented the differences in

partnership formation between whites, blacks, and increasingly, Latinos. On the other hand, there are very few studies that examine Asian American partnership formation. This is a notable gap in the literature because Asian Americans' are the most diverse and fastest-growing group today. To fully understand the changes in the American family, we need to pay more attention to Asian Americans.

This study builds on previous research by using the 2012-2016 ACS 5-year estimates to investigate ethnic and generational differences in partnership pattern among Asian Americans. Our study extends prior research in three significant ways. First, to our knowledge, this study is the first to provide a detailed analysis of partnership patterns among Asian Americans disaggregated by ethnicity and generation. Given evidence of different cultural practices in their sending countries and different co-ethnic community structures in the United States, we find it informative to forgo using Asian Americans as a pan-ethnic category when analyzing their partnership patterns. Second, disaggregating Asian Americans by ethnicity and generation gives this study a unique opportunity to examine whether generational difference in partnership pattern varies across ethnic groups. This is important because it helps us better understand whether the pace and types of assimilation led by generational progression vary across different ethnic groups when it comes to their partnership formation. Third, along with the analysis of the subgroup differences among Asian Americans, this study compares partnership patterns of different Asian subgroups to that of native-born non-Hispanic whites to examine whether the patterns eventually converge across generations.

Consistent with past research (Brown et al. 2008; Cheng 2017), we found that for both men and women and across ethnic groups, there is a generational decline in marriage. Our findings show that marriage is much more prevalent among the first generation, and its prevalence

decreases for each successive generation in a step-wise fashion. The first generations' particularly high rates of marriage are partially explained by the cultural norms on family in their countries of origin. In Asian countries, marriage continues to be the only accepted form of partnership although age at marriage has been steadily increasing. High salience of marriage among the first generation is also related to the current immigration policy. The US immigration policy recognizes marriage as the only eligible type of partnership for family sponsorship. Since most immigrants enter the country through family reunification, it is no surprise that a high proportion of the first generation is married (Hooper and Salant 2018).

On the other hand, we found a lower prevalence of marriage among the younger-generations. The generational decline in marriage is accompanied by postponement in partnership formation among the younger generation as well as increased rates of cohabitation. Postponement of partnership among the younger generation can be explained by their pursuit of human capital. Existing research has found that Asian Americans have high educational and career aspirations, and thus, tend to delay romantic partnership, marriage, and childbearing (Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005; Kasinitz et al. 2008). For example, second-generation Chinese Americans in New York believe that having financial security is necessary prior to getting married. While pursuing financial independence, some were living with parents until getting married to save living expenses (Kasinitz et al. 2008). At the same time, while the postponement of partnership formation seems to be a dominant trend, our results suggest that US-born Asian Americans are much more accepting of cohabitation than their first-generation counterparts. In fact, US-born Asian Americans are as likely as whites to choose cohabitation when they choose to form a union with their loved ones in early adulthood. These findings are consistent with the classical assimilation perspective, which suggests that cohabitation should increase with generational progression.

But we also find that the changes in partnership patterns across generations are not uniform across ethnicity and gender. The largest generational decline in marriage was found among Indian and Vietnamese American women, while the decline was much smaller among Chinese, Japanese and Korean American women. One possible explanation to the observed differences is that the cultural norms from the sending countries matter: marriage postponement is the norm in East Asian countries whereas age at first marriage is still young in India, Vietnam and the Philippines. Also, migration strategies may relate to Indian immigrant women's particularly high marriage rate. According to Kurien (1999), a large percentage of Indian immigrant women come to the US as trailing spouses.

More importantly, we find that there are ethnic differences in the relative importance of partnership postponement and cohabitation in explaining the decline in marriage across generations. The most striking finding is that while both Vietnamese and Indian women exhibit a significant generational decline in marriage, cohabitation remains rare among US-born Indian women, whereas US-born Vietnamese women are one of the ethnic groups that is most likely to cohabit. In fact, Vietnamese American women are as likely to cohabit as their white counterparts. Ethnic variations in generational change in partnership types suggests that ethnicity is an important factor in assimilation, as the rates and types of changes in partnership patterns vary significantly by ethnicity. This suggests that different groups of Asian Americans do not assimilate at the same pace, and some groups may be more selective in adopting mainstream partnership formation practices. We speculate that the lower likelihood of cohabitation among US-born Indian women compared to their Vietnamese counterparts is associated with their stronger ties to the co-ethnic community that reinforces traditional values of family (Dasgupta 1998; Kurien 1999; Lessinger 1995; Maira 2002; Salam 2013). It is less clear why Vietnamese Americans exhibit a much larger

increase in cohabitation across generations. It is our speculation that the dispersion of once tight-knit ethnic community in the early 2000s (Zhou and Bankston 2006) may have accelerated the acculturation of the US-born Vietnamese American young adults.

There are limitations to our study. First, our research is based on cross-sectional data, and thus, examines partnership status at a specific point in time. While we show that there is a generational increase in cohabitation, we cannot explain what role cohabitation plays in the family formation process. Put differently, we do not know whether Asian Americans enter cohabitation as an alternative to marriage, or as a stepping stone to marriage. Unfortunately, to our knowledge, there are no longitudinal data with large enough cases to test the role of cohabitation among Asian Americans. Another limitation of this study is that our models include a limited set of control variables. Past studies have identified family stability during childhood as an important predictor of partnership patterns (McLanahan and Bumpass 1988; Michael and Tuma 1985), but the ACS does not include information on respondents' upbringing.

Third, our analytic sample includes six ethnic groups and does not include mixed-race or mixed-ethnic Asian Americans. According to the 2010 Census, there were over 2.6 million mixed Asian Americans (Hoeffel et al. 2012), and this group is expected to grow rapidly as a result of the high rate of intermarriage among Asian Americans. Future studies should pay attention to how mixed Asian Americans approach partnership formation. Also, there is a limitation to the theoretical framework of this study. The particularly high rate of single status among Asian American men may not mean that they are selectively assimilating by voluntarily postponing partnership. Instead, Balistreri and her colleagues (2015) find that Asian American men are marginalized in the dating market due to the controlling images of their sexuality. Their finding suggests that postponement of partnership among Asian American men may not be voluntary.

Thus, we need more studies that explore the relative importance of different theoretical frameworks in explaining Asian Americans' partnership pattern. Lastly, our study compares the partnership patterns of Asian ethnic groups only to those of the US-born whites. By making this comparison, we did not intend to convey an assumption that assimilation equates to being more like whites. Future research should compare Asian ethnic groups not only to whites but also to other racial/ethnic groups.

Despite the limitations, this study makes important contributions to the literature on Asian American family formation. We show evidence of Asian American assimilation by examining the extent to which Asian Americans' partnership patterns change over generations. Also, we use recent data with sample size large enough to disaggregate Asian Americans by ethnicity and show that there is ethnic variation in the pace and process of assimilation. This finding helps us paint a more nuanced picture of Asian American assimilation experience, and stress that it is not uniform across the Asian groups. Through these contributions, this study broadens our understanding of the racial and ethnic diversity in partnership formation.

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Table 1. Current Partnership Status by Sex, Race-ethnicity, and Generation (in Percentages)

| | Women | | | | Men | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Partnered | | Single | Cohabit among Partnered | Partnered | | Single | Cohabit among Partnered |
| | Married | Cohabit | | | Married | Cohabit | | |
| **NH-White** | | | | | | | | |
| US-born | 36.87 | 12.40 | 50.73 | 25.17 | 29.00 | 10.53 | 60.47 | 26.63 |
| | (0.07) | (0.05) | (0.07) | (0.09) | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.10) |
| **Asian Indian** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 81.53 | 0.80 | 17.68 | 0.97 | 56.80 | 0.88 | 42.32 | 1.52 |
| | (0.44) | (0.12) | (0.43) | (0.14) | (0.55) | (0.09) | (0.55) | (0.16) |
| 1.5 | 36.28 | 2.60 | 61.12 | 6.69 | 23.31 | 2.07 | 74.62 | 8.15 |
| | (1.18) | (0.48) | (1.21) | (1.19) | (1.03) | (0.34) | (1.07) | (1.31) |
| US-born | 26.54 | 2.54 | 70.93 | 8.72 | 17.83 | 2.25 | 79.93 | 11.20 |
| | (0.85) | (0.28) | (0.88) | (0.93) | (0.71) | (0.26) | (0.74) | (1.23) |
| **Chinese** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 45.43 | 4.85 | 49.72 | 9.64 | 32.16 | 4.19 | 63.65 | 11.52 |
| | (0.58) | (0.25) | (0.59) | (0.49) | (0.58) | (0.28) | (0.60) | (0.73) |
| 1.5 | 25.97 | 7.07 | 66.97 | 21.39 | 21.22 | 4.35 | 74.43 | 17.00 |
| | (0.96) | (0.58) | (1.06) | (1.59) | (0.89) | (0.46) | (0.97) | (1.68) |
| US-born | 16.70 | 6.75 | 76.55 | 28.78 | 12.10 | 3.88 | 84.02 | 24.29 |
| | (0.53) | (0.35) | (0.60) | (1.31) | (0.45) | (0.28) | (0.51) | (1.52) |
| **Filipino** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 56.63 | 5.25 | 38.13 | 8.48 | 35.38 | 4.06 | 60.55 | 10.30 |
| | (0.86) | (0.39) | (0.85) | (0.61) | (1.00) | (0.39) | (1.02) | (0.96) |
| 1.5 | 31.74 | 7.81 | 60.45 | 19.75 | 20.72 | 5.46 | 73.81 | 20.87 |
| | (1.12) | (0.65) | (1.18) | (1.52) | (0.93) | (0.49) | (1.01) | (1.72) |
| US-born | 24.47 | 8.47 | 67.07 | 25.71 | 15.21 | 5.53 | 79.26 | 26.67 |
| | (0.74) | (0.48) | (0.81) | (1.32) | (0.58) | (0.39) | (0.67) | (1.63) |
| **Japanese** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 55.30 | 4.60 | 40.10 | 7.68 | 39.44 | 3.20 | 57.36 | 7.51 |
| | (1.83) | (0.82) | (1.82) | (1.34) | (2.24) | (0.76) | (2.26) | (1.74) |
| 1.5 | 27.12 | 10.80 | 62.08 | 28.49 | 15.46 | 5.23 | 79.31 | 25.29 |
| | (3.51) | (2.37) | (3.90) | (5.55) | (3.25) | (1.94) | (3.62) | (8.38) |
| US-born | 24.60 | 9.93 | 65.47 | 28.75 | 17.49 | 7.72 | 74.79 | 30.63 |
| | (1.45) | (1.06) | (1.62) | (2.68) | (1.31) | (0.86) | (1.46) | (3.03) |
| **Korean** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 41.15 | 2.41 | 56.44 | 5.54 | 28.89 | 1.67 | 69.44 | 5.46 |
| | (1.17) | (0.51) | (1.20) | (1.15) | (1.18) | (0.33) | (1.20) | (1.06) |
| 1.5 | 28.77 | 8.09 | 63.14 | 21.96 | 18.95 | 4.27 | 76.78 | 18.40 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (1.14) | (0.63) | (1.22) | (1.58) | (1.04) | (0.57) | (1.14) | (2.25) |
| US-born | 20.59 | 7.00 | 72.42 | 25.36 | 12.80 | 3.57 | 83.64 | 21.80 |
| | (0.95) | (0.65) | (1.08) | (2.08) | (0.75) | (0.49) | (0.87) | (2.59) |
| **Vietnamese** | | | | | | | | |
| First | 54.00 | 3.21 | 42.79 | 5.61 | 33.17 | 1.70 | 65.13 | 4.88 |
| | (1.12) | (0.40) | (1.12) | (0.69) | (1.36) | (0.34) | (1.37) | (0.97) |
| 1.5 | 34.45 | 6.30 | 59.25 | 15.47 | 25.03 | 4.24 | 70.73 | 14.50 |
| | (1.35) | (0.69) | (1.40) | (1.60) | (1.33) | (0.53) | (1.37) | (1.75) |
| US-born | 16.61 | 8.00 | 75.39 | 32.49 | 12.25 | 4.87 | 82.89 | 28.43 |
| | (0.82) | (0.62) | (0.97) | (2.12) | (0.70) | (0.47) | (0.81) | (2.36) |

Source: ACS 2012-2016

Table 2. Odd Ratios of Predicting Types of Partnership/Union among Major Asian Groups by Generation

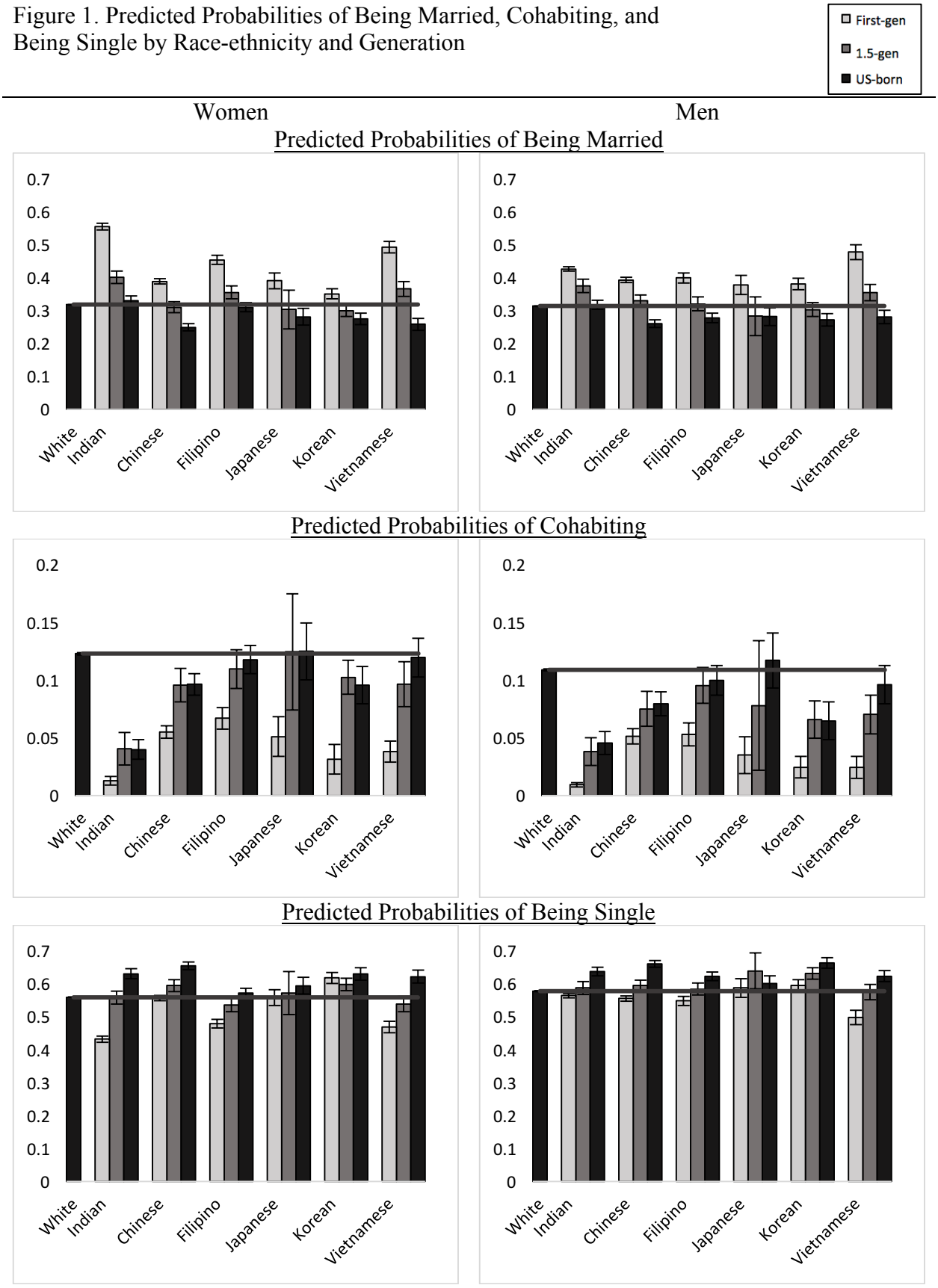
| | | Women | | | Men | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Model 1[a] (all sample) | | Model 2[b] (among partnered) | Model 1[a] (all sample) | | Model 2[b] (among partnered) |
| | | N=889,821 | | N=369,655 | N=872,674 | | N=456,081 |
| | | Married (vs. Single) | Cohabiting (vs. Single) | Cohabiting (vs. Married) | Married (vs. Single) | Cohabiting (vs. Single) | Cohabiting (vs. Married) |
| **Race-ethnicity*Generation (ref.= White, US-born)** | | | | | | | |
| Indian | First | 3.83 | 0.18 | 0.05 | 1.73 | 0.10 | 0.06 |
| | | (0.14) | (0.03) | (0.01) | (0.05) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| | 1.5 | 1.39 | 0.33 | 0.26 | 1.25 | 0.34 | 0.37 |
| | | (0.09) | (0.06) | (0.05) | (0.12) | (0.06) | (0.07) |
| | US-born | 0.81 | 0.25 | 0.36 | 0.73 | 0.31 | 0.57 |
| | | (0.04) | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.04) | (0.08) |
| Chinese | First | 1.33 | 0.45 | 0.39 | 1.59 | 0.55 | 0.38 |
| | | (0.04) | (0.03) | (0.02) | (0.06) | (0.04) | (0.03) |
| | 1.5 | 0.84 | 0.68 | 0.94 | 0.98 | 0.64 | 0.74 |
| | | (0.05) | (0.07) | (0.09) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.11) |
| | US-born | 0.51 | 0.56 | 1.31 | 0.48 | 0.47 | 1.15 |
| | | (0.02) | (0.03) | (0.08) | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.10) |
| Filipino | First | 2.30 | 0.77 | 0.35 | 1.70 | 0.59 | 0.38 |
| | | (0.11) | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.11) | (0.06) | (0.04) |
| | 1.5 | 1.28 | 0.98 | 0.85 | 1.00 | 0.85 | 0.89 |
| | | (0.09) | (0.10) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.11) |
| | US-born | 0.92 | 0.91 | 1.14 | 0.65 | 0.72 | 1.19 |
| | | (0.05) | (0.06) | (0.09) | (0.04) | (0.06) | (0.11) |
| Japanese | First | 1.34 | 0.42 | 0.35 | 1.26 | 0.32 | 0.24 |
| | | (0.12) | (0.08) | (0.07) | (0.17) | (0.08) | (0.07) |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.5 | 0.89 | 0.96 | 1.26 | 0.61 | 0.52 | 0.75 |
| | | (0.21) | (0.28) | (0.36) | (0.17) | (0.23) | (0.36) |
| | US-born | 0.74 | 0.89 | 1.40 | 0.75 | 0.94 | 1.38 |
| | | (0.07) | (0.12) | (0.20) | (0.09) | (0.13) | (0.22) |
| Korean | First | 0.92 | 0.21 | 0.26 | 1.22 | 0.21 | 0.18 |
| | | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.10) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| | 1.5 | 0.80 | 0.72 | 1.00 | 0.70 | 0.46 | 0.70 |
| | | (0.06) | (0.07) | (0.10) | (0.07) | (0.06) | (0.12) |
| | US-born | 0.63 | 0.60 | 1.13 | 0.50 | 0.38 | 0.88 |
| | | (0.04) | (0.06) | (0.12) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.15) |
| Vietnamese | First | 2.71 | 0.46 | 0.18 | 2.97 | 0.36 | 0.13 |
| | | (0.18) | (0.06) | (0.03) | (0.29) | (0.08) | (0.03) |
| | 1.5 | 1.32 | 0.86 | 0.69 | 1.22 | 0.67 | 0.60 |
| | | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.09) | (0.14) | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| | US-born | 0.60 | 0.77 | 1.46 | 0.66 | 0.69 | 1.21 |
| | | (0.04) | (0.07) | (0.16) | (0.06) | (0.07) | (0.16) |
| *Controls* | | | | | | | |
| Age | | 2.43 | 2.12 | 0.82 | 2.21 | 2.19 | 0.98 |
| | | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.02) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.02) |
| Age squared | | 0.99 | 0.99 | 1.00 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 1.00 |
| | | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| **Highest Educational Level (ref. = Some College)** | | | | | | | |
| HS or Less | | 0.69 | 1.00 | 1.41 | 0.83 | 1.07 | 1.29 |
| | | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) |
| BA | | 1.46 | 0.82 | 0.62 | 1.09 | 0.87 | 0.81 |
| | | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| MA or More | | 1.91 | 0.81 | 0.46 | 1.40 | 0.89 | 0.63 |
| | | (0.03) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.01) |

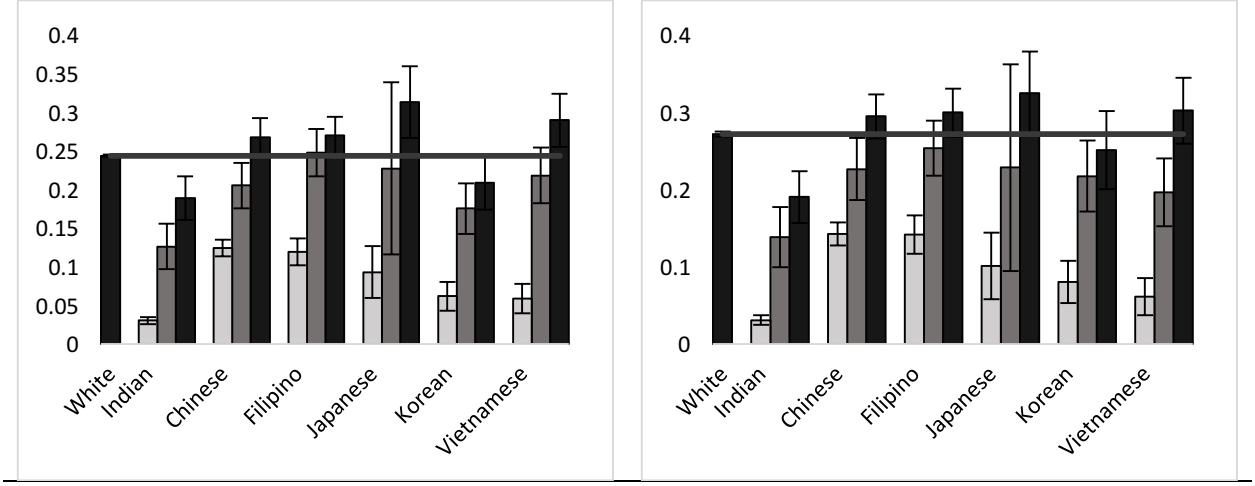
| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Currently in School | 0.50 | 0.65 | 1.35 | 0.98 | 0.74 | 0.80 |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| **Work Status (ref. = Full-Time)** | | | | | | |
| Part-Time | 0.94 | 0.83 | 0.90 | 0.62 | 0.79 | 1.29 |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.03) |
| Unemployed | 0.62 | 0.87 | 1.37 | 0.64 | 0.87 | 1.39 |
| | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.04) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.04) |
| NILF | 1.18 | 0.68 | 0.63 | 0.56 | 0.35 | 0.67 |
| | (0.02) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) |
| Cubic root of Income (mean) | 0.99 | 1.00 | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.00 | 0.98 |
| | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Have Children | 7.34 | 2.71 | 0.38 | 36.73 | 12.56 | 0.33 |
| | (0.07) | (0.03) | (0.00) | (0.52) | (0.21) | (0.00) |
| Living with parents | 0.09 | 0.01 | 0.08 | 0.11 | 0.01 | 0.06 |
| | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Constant | 0.00 | 0.00 | 48.48 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 7.52 |
| | (0.00) | (0.00) | (13.28) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (2.40) |

a: Model 1 shows the results of multinomial regression. The odd ratios in this model predict the odds of being married and cohabiting over being single among all samples (married, cohabiting, and single).
b: Model 2 is based on the results of logistic regression. The odd ratios in this model predict the odds of cohabiting over being married only among those who are currently partnered (married and cohabiting).
*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05
Source: ACS 2012-2016

Figure 1. Predicted Probabilities of Being Married, Cohabiting, and Being Single by Race-ethnicity and Generation

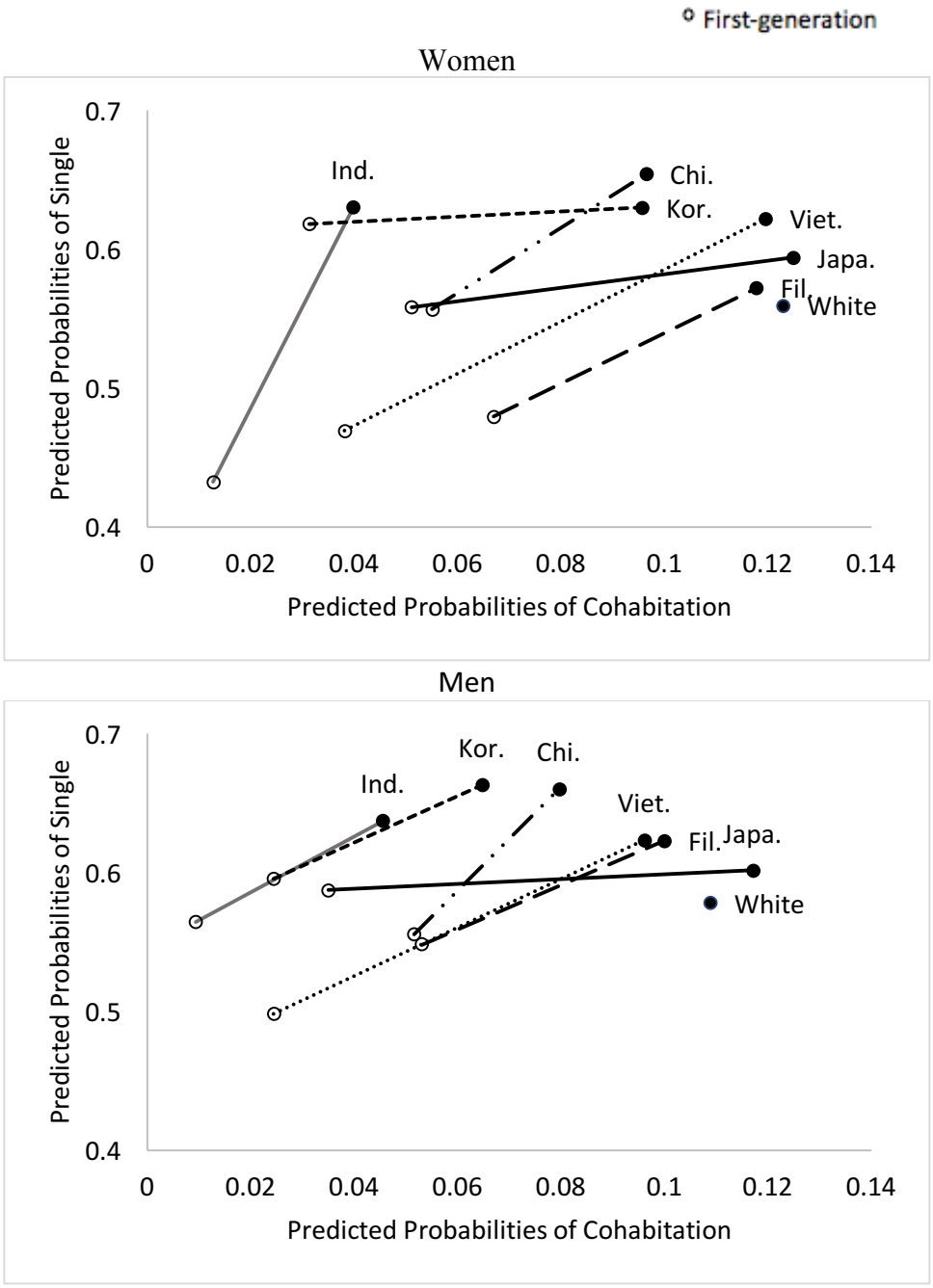


Predicted Probabilities of Cohabiting among Partnered




Error bars indicate 95% confidence interval
The line across each figure indicate predicted probabilities for US-born whites
Source: ACS 2012-2016

Figure 2. Postponement of marriage and prevalence of cohabitation for each ethnic-generation subgroup



Appendix 1. Characteristics of the Weighted Sample

| | NH- White | Indian | | Chinese | | | Filipino | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | US-born | First | 1.5 | US-born | First | 1.5 | US-born | First | 1.5 | US-born |
| Age (mean) | 26.9 | 29.1 | 26.4 | 26.1 | 27.0 | 26.7 | 26.0 | 28.5 | 27.0 | 26.4 |
| Female | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.53 | 0.51 | 0.48 | 0.61 | 0.48 | 0.48 |
| Education | | | | | | | | | | |
| HS or Lower | 0.30 | 0.08 | 0.13 | 0.09 | 0.18 | 0.13 | 0.10 | 0.20 | 0.19 | 0.16 |
| Some College | 0.39 | 0.08 | 0.31 | 0.29 | 0.23 | 0.27 | 0.28 | 0.39 | 0.48 | 0.46 |
| College degree | 0.24 | 0.40 | 0.37 | 0.36 | 0.31 | 0.42 | 0.46 | 0.36 | 0.27 | 0.32 |
| Advanced degree | 0.08 | 0.44 | 0.19 | 0.26 | 0.29 | 0.18 | 0.16 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.06 |
| Currently in School | 0.22 | 0.17 | 0.37 | 0.41 | 0.45 | 0.34 | 0.39 | 0.18 | 0.31 | 0.35 |
| Work Status | | | | | | | | | | |
| Full-Time | 0.58 | 0.60 | 0.51 | 0.50 | 0.42 | 0.57 | 0.53 | 0.59 | 0.56 | 0.53 |
| Part-Time | 0.18 | 0.08 | 0.18 | 0.16 | 0.14 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.16 | 0.19 | 0.23 |
| Unemployed | 0.06 | 0.03 | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.06 |
| NILF | 0.18 | 0.29 | 0.25 | 0.28 | 0.40 | 0.23 | 0.25 | 0.20 | 0.18 | 0.19 |
| Cubic root of Income (mean) | 25.7 | 26.9 | 24.5 | 25.0 | 20.2 | 26.4 | 25.3 | 24.5 | 25.2 | 24.6 |
| Have Children | 0.30 | 0.37 | 0.16 | 0.10 | 0.20 | 0.12 | 0.07 | 0.34 | 0.21 | 0.16 |
| Living with parents | 27.0 | 10.0 | 47.6 | 44.2 | 16.2 | 42.3 | 43.9 | 34.3 | 51.5 | 50.8 |
| Unweighted N | 1,621,607 | 26,043 | 4,919 | 8,512 | 21,487 | 5,762 | 14,106 | 8,942 | 5,280 | 10,516 |
| Total N | 1,762,495 | | | | | | | | | |

Source: ACS 2012-2016

Appendix 1. *Continued*

| | Japanese | | | Korean | | | Vietnamese | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | First | 1.5 | US-born | First | 1.5 | US-born | First | 1.5 | US-born |
| Age (mean) | 28.6 | 26.7 | 26.9 | 27.8 | 27.1 | 26.2 | 27.6 | 27.8 | 25.6 |
| Female | 0.63 | 0.54 | 0.49 | 0.55 | 0.54 | 0.51 | 0.63 | 0.50 | 0.48 |
| Education | | | | | | | | | |
| HS or Lower | 0.14 | 0.17 | 0.15 | 0.11 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.39 | 0.20 | 0.16 |
| Some College | 0.29 | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.36 | 0.35 | 0.34 | 0.36 | 0.34 | 0.42 |
| College degree | 0.40 | 0.36 | 0.39 | 0.34 | 0.39 | 0.40 | 0.18 | 0.35 | 0.32 |
| Advanced degree | 0.17 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.19 | 0.13 | 0.14 | 0.07 | 0.11 | 0.10 |
| Currently in School | 0.34 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.49 | 0.31 | 0.38 | 0.33 | 0.30 | 0.44 |
| Work Status | | | | | | | | | |
| Full-Time | 0.41 | 0.53 | 0.54 | 0.34 | 0.54 | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.57 | 0.48 |
| Part-Time | 0.11 | 0.20 | 0.23 | 0.13 | 0.17 | 0.19 | 0.19 | 0.18 | 0.21 |
| Unemployed | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.06 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 |
| NILF | 0.47 | 0.25 | 0.18 | 0.49 | 0.23 | 0.27 | 0.28 | 0.20 | 0.26 |
| Cubic root of Income (mean) | 20.2 | 24.7 | 26.2 | 17.2 | 25.6 | 23.9 | 20.5 | 25.3 | 22.8 |
| Have Children | 0.24 | 0.12 | 0.13 | 0.18 | 0.15 | 0.08 | 0.31 | 0.21 | 0.10 |
| Living with parents | 3.2 | 35.0 | 39.5 | 17.7 | 37.4 | 39.4 | 36.9 | 49.7 | 51.4 |
| Unweighted N | 1,990 | 414 | 2,670 | 5,061 | 4,465 | 5,413 | 5,051 | 3,758 | 6,499 |
| Total N | 1,762,495 | | | | | | | | |

Source: ACS 2012-2016