

Educational Homophily and Educational Homogamy The Impact of Maternal Role Models on their Daughters' Cohabitation and Marriages

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Women often delay marriage (Blossfeld, 1995; De la Rica & Iza, 2005; Lichter, 1990) and also enter more and stay longer in cohabitations (Brown & Booth, 1996; Bumpass, Sweet & Cherlin, 1991; Thomson & Colella, 1992). Research has shown that educational matches among partners play an important role in the transition from cohabitation to marriage (Blossfeld & Timm, 2003). If women have a higher educational attainment level than their partners, cohabitations are significantly less likely to turn into marriages and are more often dissolved than cohabitations between other educational partner matches. In this paper, we focus on the process of educational assortative mating in more detail.

Research has mainly analyzed women's educational assortative mating with regard to their entry into marriage (Blossfeld, 2009; Blossfeld & Timm, 2003; Klein, 1997; Schwartz & Mare, 2005; Teckenberg, 1991, 2000; Wirth, 1996, 2000). An analysis of women's educational assortative mating with regard to their entry into cohabitation is clearly lacking. Furthermore, no research has been conducted on the effects of maternal role models on daughters' union formation behaviors. In this paper, we analyze the effects of mothers' mating on daughters' educational assortative mating with regard to entry into first marriages and first cohabitations for both East and West German women.

Social norms and gender roles can be transmitted within and outside the family. In this paper, we focus on the transmission of roles and norms within the family from one generation to the next. This transmission usually occurs through primary and secondary socialization processes within families. Previous research by Rosenthal (1985) has shown that family roles are transmitted from parents to children. Mothers who have chosen a partner with a lower educational attainment level do not behave according to the 'stereotypes' in traditional 'male-breadwinner' societies (Rosenthal, 1985). Because the mothers act as role models for their children, this occurrence increases the likelihood that their daughters will adopt a similar role as their mothers within their own partnership (Rosenthal, 1985; Beaman, Duflo, Pande & Topalova, 2012). Farré and Vella (2013) find that mothers with less traditional views about the role of women in society are more likely to have daughters without these traditional views. In other words, if mothers live less traditionally, their daughters are also very likely to live accordingly. If a mother has less traditional gender role attitudes and lives in a

partnership with a less educated partner, we expect their daughters not only to have a higher likelihood of cohabiting but also of having a partner with a lower educational attainment level. In contrast, we expect that women growing up in families with very traditional gender roles will share similar values and beliefs to their mothers and will therefore be more likely to enter into a marriage (without previous cohabitation) and also to have a more highly educated partner.

Using the life course data from the German National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)¹, we studied women's entry into a first union as competing risks with event history models. The NEPS is a project collecting longitudinal data in a multi-cohort sequence design. One of the six NEPS cohorts is a representative sample of adults aged 23-65. For these respondents, the NEPS offers retrospective family, educational and employment histories for 3,946 ever-married women in East and West Germany born between 1944 and 1986. The NEPS data collection took place from November 2009 until June 2010. For a detailed description of the NEPS project and the design of the NEPS study, we refer the reader to Blossfeld, Roßbach and von Maurice (2011).

Based on the NEPS data set, we use information on the education of the partners at the beginning of the first union, either cohabitation or marriage. For each partner, we distinguish four educational attainment levels: (1) lower secondary or intermediate qualification without vocational training; (2) lower secondary or intermediate qualification with vocational training or upper secondary education (Abitur) with and without vocational training; (3) university of applied sciences degree; and (4) university degree. Based on these four hierarchical levels, we define the following six destination states: (1) 'downward cohabitation' for women who cohabit with a less educated partner, (2) 'homophilous cohabitation' for women who cohabit with a partner with the same level of education, (3) 'upward cohabitation' for women who cohabit with a more educated partner, (4) 'downward marriage' for women who marry a less educated partner, (5) 'homogamous marriage' for women who marry a partner with the same level of education, and (6) 'upward marriage' for women who marry a more educated partner.

Our analysis of the NEPS data shows that the maternal role model has an influence on the daughter's educational assortative mating. Mothers with a less educated partner have daughters that are also more likely to cohabit with a less educated partner. In contrast, mothers in a more traditional union, in which the father has a higher education than the mother, also have significantly more often daughters who marry a more educated partner. In

¹ This paper uses data from the National Educational Panel Study (NEPS): Starting Cohort 6 – Adults (Adult Education and Lifelong Learning), doi:10.5157/NEPS:SC6:1.0.0. The NEPS data collection is part of the Framework Program for the Promotion of Empirical Educational Research, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and supported by the Federal States.

addition to the educational match of the parents, women's educational enrollment and attainment have important influences on daughters' educational partner matches. Educational enrollment reduces women's likelihood of entering into a first union – independent of the educational partner match and the type of first union. Women with a higher educational attainment level are less likely to find a better educated partner (ceiling effect) and are more likely to associate with a less educated partner (bottom effect). Women's educational attainment level has no effect on women's transition into homophilous cohabitation and homogamous marriage. However, cohabitations among equally qualified partners are more likely if women are better educated and if they are still enrolled in education. In other words, the educational system functions as a partner market.

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