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**Effects of Young Adults' Employment Type on their Desire
to Get Married or Cohabit: A Comparative Analysis of Six
Countries in Asia and Europe**

Shigeki Matsuda

Chukyo University

Many developed Asian countries are experiencing low fertility, resulting from drastically decreased marriage rates due to young people's so-called "flight from marriage" whereas major Western/Northern European countries have relatively high fertility and proportion of marriage/cohabitation. This study compares the flight background between some Asian and European countries by focusing on young adults' employment situation, which affects their desired timing of first marriage. Employment is a strong determinant of marriage because it provides sufficient economic margin to begin a married life. Despite economic growth, young adults' employment in Asia has gradually deteriorated, including increased non-regular employment, under-employment, and unemployment, due to globalization, service industrialization, and universalization of higher education, thereby lowering their marriage motivation. The study hypothesized that young adults in non-regular employment and unemployed have less desire to marry soon than those in regular employment. A questionnaire was administered to collect representative micro data of 1,331 never married/cohabited males and females aged 20–49 years from six developed Asian and European countries: Japan, South Korea, Singapore, the UK, France, and Sweden. Since cohabitation is an alternative to marriage in Europe, a multiple regression analysis was conducted with desired timing of first marriage/cohabitation as a dependent variable. Results revealed that the hypothesis was supported in the Asian countries, particularly Japan and South Korea, but not in the European countries and more by males than by females, because Asian countries have stronger traditional gender norms and less flexible labor markets. The employment effect did not indicate any clear gender differences. Thus, deterioration of young adults' employment situation decreases marriage rates in Asian countries, suggesting that young couple formation in Asia is vulnerable to labor market deterioration.