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Technology and the Changing Family: A Unified Model of Marriage, Divorce, Educational Attainment and Married Female Labor-Force Participation

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Abstract

Marriage has declined since 1960, with the drop being bigger for non-college educated individuals versus college educated ones. Divorce has increased, more so for the non-college educated vis-a-vis the college educated. Additionally, assortative mating has risen; i.e., people are more likely to marry someone of the same educational level today than in the past. A unified model of marriage, divorce, educational attainment and married female labor-force participation is developed and estimated to fit the postwar U.S. data. The role of technological progress in the household sector and shifts in the wage structure for explaining these facts is gauged.

Keywords

Assortative mating, Education, Household production, Marriage and divorce, Married female labor supply, Minimum distance estimation