

ABSTRACT

Education and Social Mobility:
The Case of 1976–1986 Birth Cohort

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The four-year-project “Education and Social Mobility” is designed for both analyzing and archiving educational inequality data for the cohorts born between 1943 and 1986, in which social change and educational opportunity expansion had made rapidly. In this project, we analyze educational inequality and the role of education in social mobility both in comparative perspective by time period and in gender perspective which has been neglected.

In 2011, the final year, we added the data for the cohort born between 1976 and 1986, and eventually achieved to archive data for the cohort born between 1943 and 1986. In this report, we analyzed and compared stratification in education and the outcomes of education of the birth cohorts of 1943–1955, 1956–1965, 1966–1975, and 1976–1986. Regarding the stratification in education, we focused on the qualitative differentiation of stratification in education. Concerning the outcomes of education, we concentrated on the effect of the family background and education on the occupational status and income,

and gender effect.

The results of analysis on the stratification in education are as following.

First, OLS regression of the year of education on gender and family background reveals that the gender effect has been decreasing, however, the family ground effect is increasing in younger cohort. In spite of the expansion of educational opportunity reduces the gender gap in education, the influence of family background does not lessen.

Second, logistic regression of the advance to upper level education on gender and family background shows that gender gap gets bigger as going up to upper level and, on the contrary, family background effect becomes smaller as going up to upper level.

Third, logistic regression of tracking tells that family background has strong effect in advance both to high school and college. It means that there has been qualitative stratification in the selection of track.

Fourth, analysis of 1976-1986 cohort shows that family background has effects on the selection of program orientation of high school and college. Particularly, comparing with previous cohort, father's occupational status and family background have stronger effect on year of education, and family background and parents' educational support have stronger effect on the advance to higher education.

The results of the analysis on the outcomes of education are as following.

First, comparing occupational status of first job by birth cohort, younger cohort has higher status due to the improvement of education level. However, comparing by education level, the occupational status of college graduates is rather getting lower. Comparing by gender, women's occupational status of first

job and current job is higher than that of men since 1956–65 birth cohort and 1966–75 birth cohort respectively. However, gender gap in income is still maintained. It might be that the improvement of women's occupational status is due to feminization of office job.

Second, family background has different influence on the occupational status of first job by birth cohort: father's job for 1943–65 birth cohort and father's education level for 1966–75 birth cohort. The comparison of the occupational status of current job is difficult because of difference of age group. However, if excluding the effect of growth area which has influence for young cohort, family background has similar effects on the occupational status of current job as on first job.

Third, respondent's education level is a main factor for determining current income level. It means that family background has effect on occupational status and income through education level. Occupational status also has influence on income over all cohorts. Even though the limit of difference in age group and interview time, comparison by birth cohort shows that younger cohort is influenced by the effect of growth area and social economic status of family. It means that the influence of parents generation's capital on social mobility of younger cohort is getting stronger.

Forth, in the analysis of the possibility of having job experience for the cohort born between 1976 and 1986, women have less likelihood than men, and 4-year college graduates also have less chances than high school graduates and vocational college graduates. Path analysis on occupational status confirms the model of 'father's educational level → respondent's educational level → occupational status of first job → occupational status of current job' as well the 1943–75 birth cohorts. Class mobility analysis tells that, whether controlling education level or not, class origin is closely related with class destination more

for men than for women.

The four-year-project on educational stratification and class mobility suggests implications as following.

First, during the rapid industrialization and economic development era in Korea, social mobility prevailed and education had important role in social mobility. Rapid industrialization made unprecedented affairs such as little time gap between the growth of manual worker ratio and the growth of white collar and professional class ratio, and expansion and improvement of educational opportunities. The relation between job structure change and expansion of educational opportunities evident: rapid decrease of agriculture, forestry and fishery sector and complete elementary school entrance; increase of manual worker sector and increase of secondary education; increase of white collar, particularly professional class and increase of higher education. It means that social mobility was open to the degree of educational opportunities with job structure change. Younger cohorts had less gender gap and less education year gap with expanded educational opportunities. However, education had strong effects on occupational status, income and social mobility. In short, during the rapid industrialization, there was possibility of upward social mobility by education.

Second, the possibility of upward social mobility becomes weaken for younger cohorts. There were some evidences of social mobility limitation: barrier between manual worker and non-manual worker, increased reproduction of service sector and white collar class, and the effect of family background on current income. The effect of family background on education was also apparent, and particularly the effect was more evident for the 1976-86 birth cohort. More noteworthy phenomenon is qualitative differentiation in education.

For the birth cohort after 1960s, qualitative differentiation in tacking in advance to high school and college was distinct. It means that the possibility of upward social mobility becomes weaken and qualitative differentiation in education is the main factor of the weakness.

Keywords : educational stratification, outcomes of education, social mobility, attainment of occupational status, class mobility, cohort analysis