

Unintended Consequences of Immigration Reforms: Marriage Market, Intra-Household Bargaining, and Well-being

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Introduction

- Households (HHs) are fundamental economic units where everyday choices combine into broader economic outcomes
- These choices are rarely dictated by one individual, but emerge from negotiation among HH members with varying degrees of influence
- In many context and historically, women have had less bargaining power
 - Bolstering women's influence shown to reshape outcomes within and outside of HHs
- ★ This paper:
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Reform's *unintended* implications to marriage market → exogenous source of variation

- Marriage migration historically popular/simple migration path to SK
 - inflow of foreign brides, mostly Ethnic Korean Chinese (EKC)
- Reform: new preferential visa program for EKC migrants
 - ★ Diversion of EKC women away from marriage visas
 - ★ Shortage of brides
- Leverage administrative records, household-panel survey datasets, and registry data.
 - Immigrant inflows by gender, origin, and visa type
 - Household bargaining measures, intra-household time allocation, labor supply, life satisfaction among married women (and men)
 - Divorce rates and reasons for divorce.
- Employ a triple DDD strategy to estimate the reform effects
 - Pre-/post immigration reforms (outside of 2009–2012)
 - Regions in terms of:
 - Excess demand for women (sex ratio)
 - Marriage migrant network

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Related Literature

● **Intra-household implications of economic conditions and intra-household bargaining**

- **Intra-household bargaining:** Becker (1973), Manser and Brown (1980), McElroy and Horney (1981), Chiappori (1988), Thomas (1990), Chiappori (1992), Lundberg et al. (1997), Adimora et al. (2002), Cornwell and Cunningham (200), Anderson and Eswaran (2009), Chiappori et al. (2012), Lafortune (2013), Knowles (2013), Brainerd (2016), Health and Tan (2020), Friedberg (1998), Wolfers (2006)
- **Sex ratio:** Angrist (2002), Abramitzky et al. (2011), Grosjean and Khattar (2019), Calvi (2020); Raymo and Park (2020), Alix-Garcia et al. (2022), Zaremba (2024)

● **Economic consequences of immigration**

- Altonji and Card (1991), Card (2001, 2007, 2009), Borjas (2003), Betts and Fairlie (2003), Borjas and Katz (2007), Cutler et al. (2008), Cortes (2008), Card (2009), Boustan et al. (2010), Saiz and Wachter (2011), Cascio and Lewis (2012), Ottaviano and Peri (2012), Felipa (2015); Dustmann et al. (2016), Morales (2018), Burstein et al. (2020), Han et al. (2021), Albert and Monras (2022), McCully (2024)
- **Marriage related:** Kawaguchi and Lee (2017), Weiss et al. (2018), Adda et al. (2020), Ahn (2020), Lee and Wie (2020), Dziadula and Zavodny (2023), Ahn and Lubotsky (2024), Briselli (2024)

1. Novel exogenous source of variation—shock to local marriage markets—to estimate casual effects on negotiation outcomes.

2. Unique dataset to measure and track changes in intra-household bargaining power.

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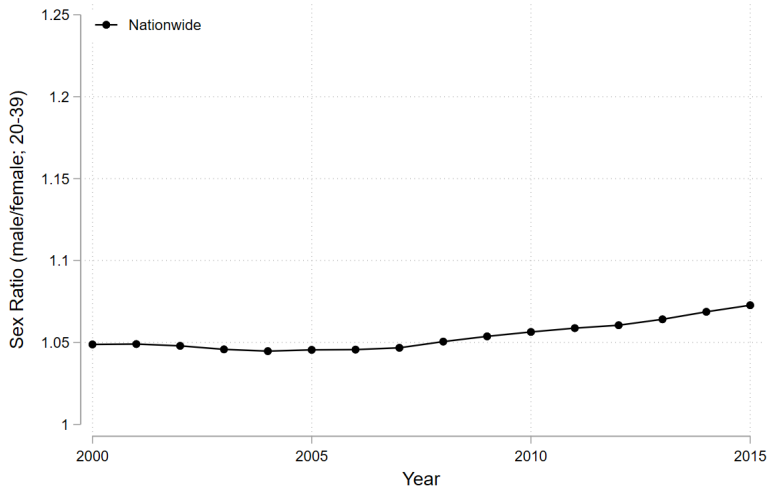
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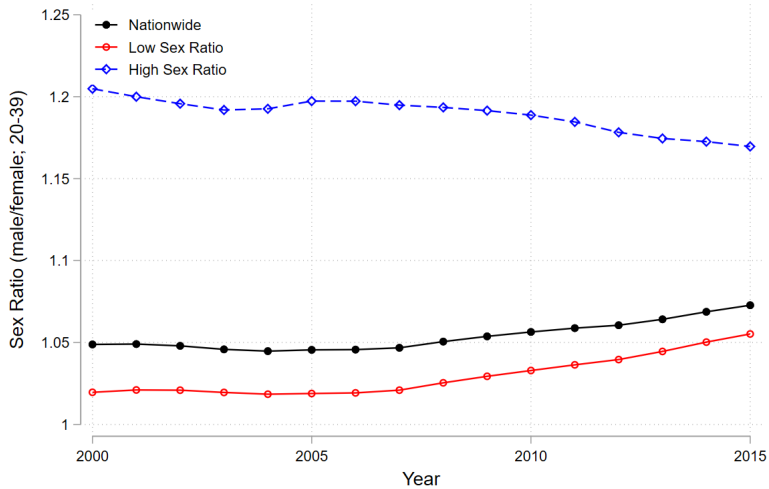
Outline

- 1 Background and Data
- 2 Empirical Strategy
- 3 Results
- 4 Concluding Remarks

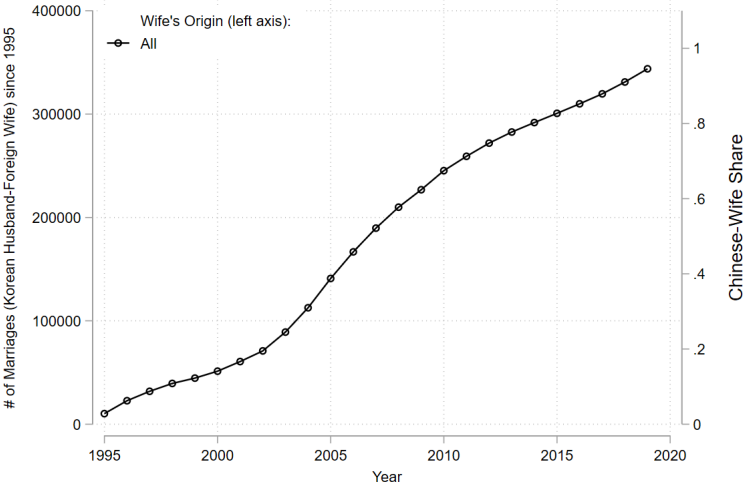
Sex ratio: \sim natural ratio (male-to-female)



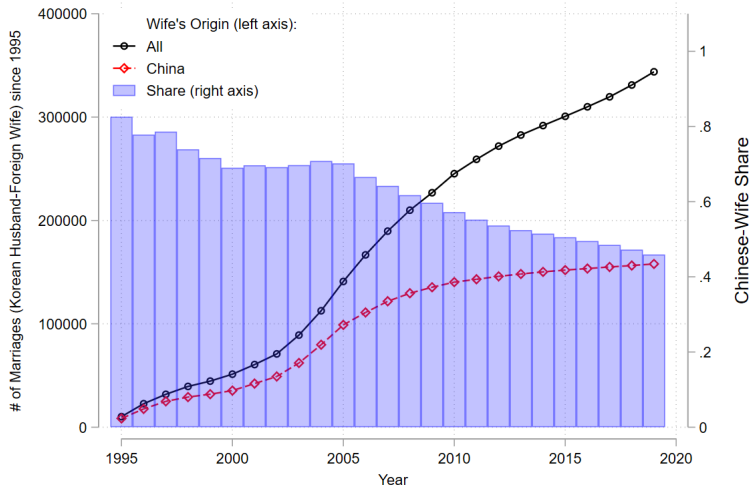
Sex ratio: a large gap between regions, and it persists



International marriages between Korean husbands and foreign wives



Share of Ethnic Korean Chinese brides (EKC) declined



Immigration Policy Reforms

- In 2008 and 2010, EKC became eligible for semi-permanent residency and broader rights in South Korea
- The reforms resulted in a significant reduction in the barriers and costs associated with entering and staying in Korea for ethnic Koreans
- For EKC brides, this implies an alternative route to South Korea aside marriage visa
- The effects of these reforms are unlikely uniform across the country
- ★ The diversion of EKC from marriage affected regions with:
 - ▶ Higher excess demand for brides (high sex ratio)
 - ▶ Lower ability to “respond” (e.g., accessibility to international marriage market)

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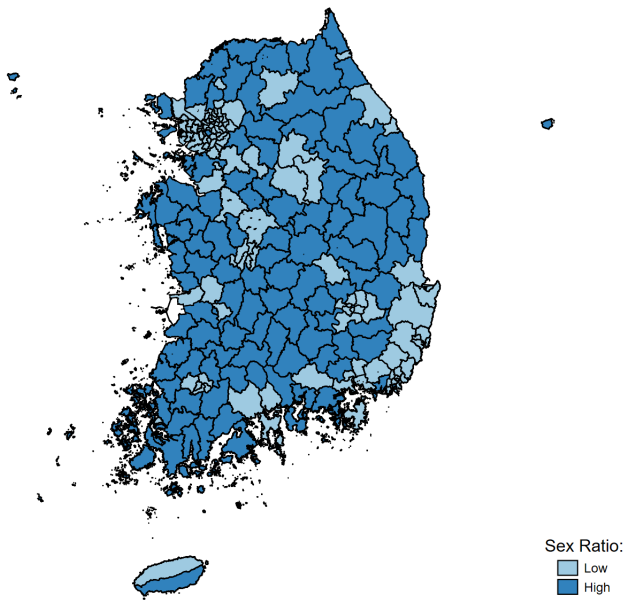
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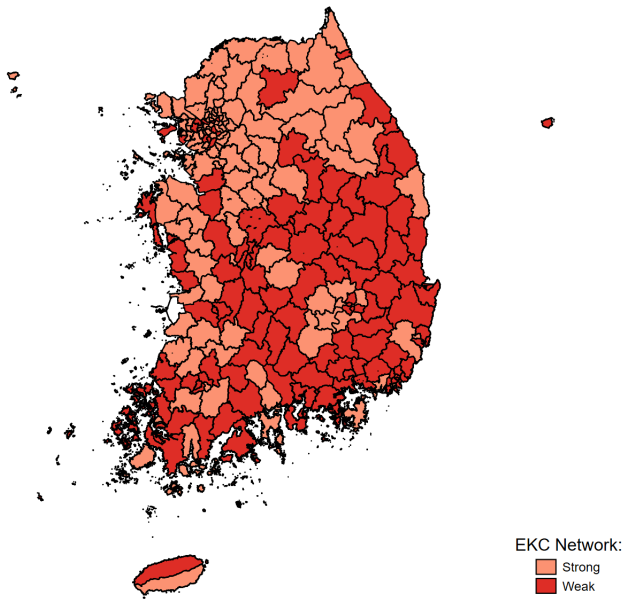
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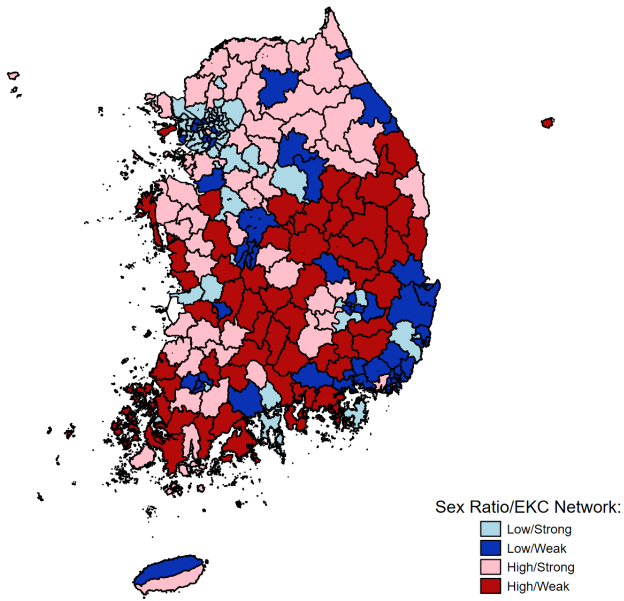
Districts by pre-reform sex ratio



Districts by pre-reform EKC concentration



Overlaying both dimensions



Main Data Sources

- **Korean Longitudinal Survey of Women and Families (KLoWF):**
 - Individual-level panel of (10,000) women; geocoded
 - Sample restriction: married (native Korean) women throughout the sample periods
 - 6 waves: **2007, 2008**, 2010, 2012, **2014, 2016**
 - Measure of HHB:
 - ★ When making a decision, how much do you rely on your opinion vs. husband's?
 - ▶ Time spent on housework and at work, and marital satisfaction
- **Korea Labor & Income Panel Study (KLIPS):**
 - Annual panel of households (individuals); geocoded
 - Income, HH Expenditure, life satisfaction
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 - Date of divorce, addresses, reason for divorce, individual-level characteristics

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Empirical Strategy: Triple Difference-in-Differences

- We exploit the immigration policy reforms and its regional implications and estimate:

$$Y_{i,t} = \phi_i + \psi_r + \beta_1 \text{post}_t + \beta_2 \text{post}_t \times \text{HSR}_r + \beta_3 \text{post}_t \times \text{HEX}_r + \beta_4 \text{DDD}_{r,t} + \xi_{i,r,t},$$

- $Y_{i,t}$: individual i 's outcome measured in year t
- ϕ_i : individual fixed effects
- ψ_r : district fixed effects
- post_t : indicator for post-reform years
- HSR_r : districts with sex ratios above the median 2000
- HEX_r : districts with lower concentration of EKC brides pre-reform
- $\text{DDD}_{r,t}$: triple interaction term ($\text{post}_t \times \text{HSR}_r \times \text{HEX}_r$)

★ β_4 : Reform effect

ΔMarriage

ΔBrides

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Identifying Assumption (DDD)

In the absence of the reforms:

- Differences in outcomes between strong and weak migrant network districts **trended similarly** across districts with high and low sex ratio

Supporting evidence:

- HSR_r and HEX_r do not systematically explain each other
- Results are robust to adding district-specific controls interacted with time trends
- Labor market implications of the reforms do not explain the results we find

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Results on Household Bargaining

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Bargaining Power		
	Labor Supply	Δ Job	
post	0.0517 (0.0475)	-0.0398 (0.0547)	
post \times HSR	-0.126*** (0.0394)	-0.138*** (0.0441)	
post \times HEX	-0.125*** (0.0278)	-0.0903*** (0.0327)	
DDD	0.219*** (0.0515)	0.217*** (0.0558)	
Constant	2.504*** (0.0198)	2.473*** (0.0228)	
Observations	18946	17509	

Results on Household Bargaining

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	Bargaining Power		
	Labor Supply	Δ Job	Husband's
post	0.0517 (0.0475)	-0.0398 (0.0547)	-0.184*** (0.0654)
post \times HSR	-0.126*** (0.0394)	-0.138*** (0.0441)	0.213*** (0.0535)
post \times HEX	-0.125*** (0.0278)	-0.0903*** (0.0327)	0.146*** (0.0359)
DDD	0.219*** (0.0515)	0.217*** (0.0558)	-0.102 (0.0685)
Constant	2.504*** (0.0198)	2.473*** (0.0228)	0.823*** (0.0273)
Observations	18946	17509	21679

Results on Time Allocation and Labor Supply

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Married Women					
	HW Time	W Time	EMPL			
post	-287.4*** (20.61)	477.5*** (82.82)	0.0136 (0.0197)			
post \times HSR	94.98*** (20.78)	-281.7*** (80.07)	-0.0588*** (0.0197)			
post \times HEX	102.7*** (16.10)	-130.1** (65.28)	-0.00118 (0.0152)			
DDD	-51.55** (25.52)	186.4** (94.79)	0.0611** (0.0259)			
Constant	680.1*** (7.945)	2435.3*** (33.65)	0.488*** (0.00753)			
N	24741	11168	24667			

Results on Time Allocation and Labor Supply

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Married Women			Single Women		
	HW Time	W Time	EMPL	HW Time	W Time	EMPL
post	-287.4*** (20.61)	477.5*** (82.82)	0.0136 (0.0197)	31.18* (18.92)	-25.22 (159.9)	-0.199*** (0.0717)
post \times HSR	94.98*** (20.78)	-281.7*** (80.07)	-0.0588*** (0.0197)	3.803 (30.84)	363.7 (247.3)	0.0360 (0.0961)
post \times HEX	102.7*** (16.10)	-130.1** (65.28)	-0.00118 (0.0152)	18.26 (13.90)	84.13 (136.7)	0.109** (0.0531)
DDD	-51.55** (25.52)	186.4** (94.79)	0.0611** (0.0259)	30.06 (37.01)	-423.5 (335.9)	-0.0541 (0.127)
Constant	680.1*** (7.945)	2435.3*** (33.65)	0.488*** (0.00753)	73.03*** (8.179)	2561.9*** (66.49)	0.622*** (0.0297)
N	24741	11168	24667	3543	1616	3556

Wife's Life Satisfaction

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Overall					
post	0.0783 (0.0601)					
post \times HSR	-0.0282 (0.0847)					
post \times HEX	-0.0773** (0.0319)					
DDD	0.0976 (0.102)					
Constant	2.400*** (0.0317)					
<i>N</i>	8398					

Wife's Life Satisfaction

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Overall	HH Income	Living Condition	Family Relation	Social	
post	0.0783 (0.0601)	-0.129* (0.0755)	0.187** (0.0743)	0.0872 (0.0678)	0.0331 (0.0623)	
post \times HSR	-0.0282 (0.0847)	0.0631 (0.0762)	-0.0970 (0.0758)	-0.0927 (0.0614)	0.000592 (0.0696)	
post \times HEX	-0.0773** (0.0319)	-0.00846 (0.0383)	-0.137*** (0.0382)	-0.121*** (0.0316)	-0.0159 (0.0317)	
DDD	0.0976 (0.102)	-0.0293 (0.106)	0.355*** (0.103)	0.309*** (0.0883)	0.00996 (0.0963)	
Constant	2.400*** (0.0317)	1.984*** (0.0391)	2.403*** (0.0388)	2.682*** (0.0362)	2.493*** (0.0327)	
N	8398	8399	8398	8399	8398	

Wife's Life Satisfaction

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Overall	HH Income	Living Condition	Family Relation	Social	Marriage
post	0.0783 (0.0601)	-0.129* (0.0755)	0.187** (0.0743)	0.0872 (0.0678)	0.0331 (0.0623)	0.316*** (0.0380)
post \times HSR	-0.0282 (0.0847)	0.0631 (0.0762)	-0.0970 (0.0758)	-0.0927 (0.0614)	0.000592 (0.0696)	0.0332 (0.0356)
post \times HEX	-0.0773** (0.0319)	-0.00846 (0.0383)	-0.137*** (0.0382)	-0.121*** (0.0316)	-0.0159 (0.0317)	-0.0363 (0.0249)
DDD	0.0976 (0.102)	-0.0293 (0.106)	0.355*** (0.103)	0.309*** (0.0883)	0.00996 (0.0963)	0.105** (0.0456)
Constant	2.400*** (0.0317)	1.984*** (0.0391)	2.403*** (0.0388)	2.682*** (0.0362)	2.493*** (0.0327)	3.512*** (0.0151)
N	8398	8399	8398	8399	8398	24638

Husband's Life Satisfaction

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Overall	HH Income	Living Condition	Family	Social
post	-0.00261 (0.0687)	-0.117 (0.0761)	0.187** (0.0743)	-0.0503 (0.0632)	0.0318 (0.0633)
post \times HSR	0.0696 (0.0825)	0.000669 (0.0763)	-0.0970 (0.0758)	0.0515 (0.0612)	0.0734 (0.0730)
post \times HEX	-0.0829*** (0.0321)	-0.0507 (0.0359)	-0.137*** (0.0382)	-0.0818*** (0.0302)	-0.00901 (0.0318)
DDD	0.0805 (0.105)	0.0522 (0.105)	0.355*** (0.103)	0.165* (0.0929)	0.0775 (0.101)
Constant	2.455*** (0.0358)	1.997*** (0.0402)	2.403*** (0.0388)	2.769*** (0.0334)	2.518*** (0.0332)
<i>N</i>	8376	8373	8398	8372	8372

Incidence of Divorce

	(1)	(2)
	# Divorce	
	Level	Log
post	-69.26*** (17.48)	-0.00599 (0.0282)
post \times HSR	98.50*** (18.03)	0.0669** (0.0311)
post \times HEX	63.03** (29.89)	0.132 (0.0844)
DDD	-70.36** (30.63)	-0.177** (0.0897)
Constant	384.5 (236.9)	5.443*** (0.911)
N	1374	1374

Composition Change in Reason for Divorce

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Reasons for Divorce						
	Irreconcilable Difference	Abuse	Economic Hardship	Family Conflicts	Spousal Infidelity	Health	Other
post	-0.0503*** (0.00763)	-0.00425*** (0.00162)	-0.0175*** (0.00378)	-0.0134*** (0.00253)	0.00185 (0.00251)	-0.000703* (0.000412)	0.0843*** (0.00779)
post × <i>HSR</i>	0.0370*** (0.0131)	-0.00243 (0.00251)	0.0000533 (0.00670)	-0.00692 (0.00604)	-0.0102*** (0.00371)	0.000650 (0.000964)	-0.0181 (0.0113)
post × <i>HEX</i>	0.0320*** (0.0108)	-0.00655*** (0.00209)	-0.0114** (0.00518)	0.00202 (0.00518)	-0.00603* (0.00321)	0.000640 (0.000635)	-0.0107 (0.00985)
<i>DDD</i>	-0.0323* (0.0178)	0.00857** (0.00425)	0.00838 (0.00973)	0.00744 (0.00936)	0.00248 (0.00585)	-0.00279 (0.00177)	0.00826 (0.0143)
Constant	0.527*** (0.00221)	0.0438*** (0.000499)	0.152*** (0.00112)	0.0834*** (0.00106)	0.0760*** (0.000712)	0.00627*** (0.000157)	0.111*** (0.00212)
<i>N</i>	394196	394196	394196	394196	394196	394196	394196

Concluding Remarks

- We studied intra-household implications of immigration reforms in South Korea
- We exploited the unintended impact of the reforms on local marriage markets as a plausibly exogenous shift in the marriage market conditions
- The reforms influenced intra-household dynamics and economic outcomes associated with:
 - ① Greater female bargaining power over their labor market participation
 - ② Shift in time allocation favoring paid labor over domestic tasks
 - ③ Improved satisfaction with life (and marriage) for both spouses
 - ④ Decreased incidence of marriage dissolution.
 - ⑤ Composition change in the reason for divorce
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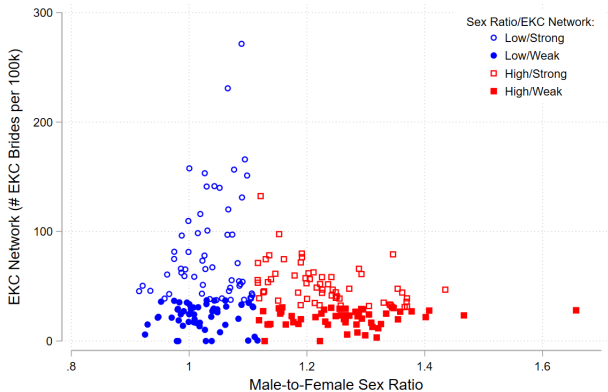
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Thank you!

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Excess demand for Brides vs. Migrant Network



Changes in the Number of Marriages

	(1)	(2)
	# Marriages	
post	-69.95** (28.38)	-241.2*** (42.29)
post \times HSR	77.88** (35.49)	243.2*** (57.97)
post \times HEX	50.07 (34.86)	84.84 (55.73)
DDD	-99.07** (41.12)	-157.2** (68.77)
Constant	1392.0*** (6.170)	1417.9*** (6.887)
Survey Sample Period	No	Yes
N	2290	1145

Foreign Brides on Marriage Visa

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	China (Ethnic Korean)					
post	-59.76*** (12.96)	-94.68*** (17.10)				
post \times HSR	48.05*** (13.10)	78.69*** (17.31)				
post \times HEX	45.46*** (14.38)	75.20*** (18.85)				
DDD	-38.34*** (14.62)	-64.48*** (19.22)				
Constant	115.0*** (2.184)	111.2*** (1.914)				
Survey Sample Period	No	Yes				
Observations	2290	1145				

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Foreign Brides on Marriage Visa

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	China (Ethnic Korean)		Southeast Asia			
post	-59.76*** (12.96)	-94.68*** (17.10)	161.6*** (13.60)	215.1*** (19.16)		
post \times HSR	48.05*** (13.10)	78.69*** (17.31)	-85.70*** (16.20)	-113.6*** (22.81)		
post \times HEX	45.46*** (14.38)	75.20*** (18.85)	13.72 (20.82)	25.60 (28.99)		
DDD	-38.34*** (14.62)	-64.48*** (19.22)	-26.46 (23.45)	-46.03 (32.61)		
Constant	115.0*** (2.184)	111.2*** (1.914)	109.7*** (3.511)	88.19*** (3.255)		
Survey Sample Period	No	Yes	No	Yes		
Observations	2290	1145	2290	1145		

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Foreign Brides on Marriage Visa

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	China (Ethnic Korean)		Southeast Asia		Other	
post	-59.76*** (12.96)	-94.68*** (17.10)	161.6*** (13.60)	215.1*** (19.16)	146.7*** (20.85)	199.6*** (28.26)
post \times HSR	48.05*** (13.10)	78.69*** (17.31)	-85.70*** (16.20)	-113.6*** (22.81)	-111.4*** (21.93)	-154.1*** (29.70)
post \times HEX	45.46*** (14.38)	75.20*** (18.85)	13.72 (20.82)	25.60 (28.99)	-36.11 (24.91)	-48.49 (33.64)
DDD	-38.34*** (14.62)	-64.48*** (19.22)	-26.46 (23.45)	-46.03 (32.61)	25.01 (26.14)	33.63 (35.32)
Constant	115.0*** (2.184)	111.2*** (1.914)	109.7*** (3.511)	88.19*** (3.255)	135.9*** (3.908)	120.7*** (3.521)
Survey Sample Period	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	2290	1145	2290	1145	2290	1145