

Patterns of Intermarriages and Cross-Generational In-Marriages among Native-Born Asian Americans

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This article examines patterns of post-1965 native-born Asian Americans' intermarriages and cross-generational in-marriages using a combined sample of the 2001–2006 American Community Surveys from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. The analysis focuses on ethnic and gender differences in intermarriage and cross-generational in-marriage rates and patterns. About 55 percent of native-born Asian Americans are found to be intermarried while another 23 percent are married to 1.5-generation or first-generation co-ethnic immigrants. Thus only 22 percent of native-born Asian Americans are married to co-ethnic native-born Asian Americans. As expected, there are significant ethnic and gender differences in intermarriage and cross-generational in-marriage rates and patterns. This study is significant because it is the first study that has examined intermarriage patterns among post-1965 native-born Asian Americans, the majority of whom are likely to be children of post-1965 Asian immigrants, using the most recent Census data available. It is also significant for studies of the new second generation in general in that it is the first study to show patterns of cross-generational in-marriage among members of the new second generation.

INTRODUCTION

Researchers of the new immigrants began to conduct research on the “new second generation” in the early 1990s when large numbers of their children were enrolled in high school. As a result of fifteen years of research activities, many articles and books focusing on the new second generation have been published. Most studies of the new second generation have focused on two issues: socioeconomic adaptation and/or

ethnic identity. Researchers have neglected to study the new second generation's marital patterns, family characteristics, and their implications for cultural transmission. This article intends to contribute to studies of the new second generation by systematically examining marital patterns among native-born Asian Americans. It is based on a sample of married Asian Americans 18 years old and over, born in the United States in 1965 and after, selected from the aggregate data of the 2001–2006 American Community Surveys. This article has two related objectives and each of them makes a significant contribution to studies of not only native-born Asian Americans but also the new second generation in general.

First, this study intends to contribute to our understanding of intermarriage rates and patterns among native-born Asian Americans. By virtue of their immigrant parents' high class background and their strong achievement orientations, native-born Asian Americans generally have an exceptionally high educational level, a much higher level than white Americans (Farley and Alba, 2002; Min, 2006; Sakamoto and Xie, 2006). Moreover, their exceptionally high educational level and their fluency in English, combined with the polarized occupational structure in post-industrial American society, have helped them move into the mainstream economy. They are disproportionately concentrated in high-paying and high-status professional and managerial occupations (Farley and Alba, 2002; Sakamoto and Xie, 2006). An important question then is whether native-born Asian Americans' high cultural and structural assimilation has helped to break down the white-Asian racial boundary. If the white-Asian racial boundary has been significantly moderated, native-born Asian Americans should have high rates of intermarriages to white Americans.

Thus examining native-born Asian Americans' intermarriage rates and patterns is important for understanding their social integration into the mainstream society. Several studies have examined Asian Americans' intermarriage patterns using the 1980, 1990, or 2000 Census data (Hwang and Saenz, 1990; Hwang, Saenz, and Aguirre, 1997; Lee and Boyd, 2007; Lee and Fernandez, 1998; Lee and Yamanaka, 1990; Liang and Ito, 1999; Okamoto, 2007; Qian, 1997; Shinagawa and Pang, 1996; Spickard, 1989; Sung, 1990; Wong, 1989). These studies show that most native-born Asian groups have exceptionally high intermarriage rates, especially high rates of intermarriages to white Americans. However, since the vast majority of native-born Asian Americans included in the 1980 and 1990 Censuses and the majority of those included in the 2000 Census

were born before 1965, the samples do not accurately reflect the intermarriage patterns of children of post-1965 immigrants.

Because those Asian Americans born in the 1950s and before grew up in white neighborhoods with little interaction with co-ethnic members, most of them are likely to have engaged in intermarriages. But those Asian Americans born in the post-1965 era mostly grew up in a large or at least a medium-sized ethnic community, with much interaction with co-ethnic members. Thus they have had the benefit of a larger pool of co-ethnic marital partners than pre-1965 native-born Asian Americans. As a result, they have been able to select co-ethnic or other Asian partners more easily than their predecessors (Blau, 1977; Stevens and Swicegood, 1987). Therefore, this study, based on a sample of married Asian Americans born in the post-1965 era, can assess intermarriage rates and patterns among native-born children of post-1965 Asian immigrants more accurately than previous studies.

Second, this study intends to contribute to studies of the new second generation by providing data on cross-generational in-marriage rates and patterns among native-born Asian Americans. To our knowledge, this is the first study that provides information about patterns of cross-generational marriages among new Americans. Researchers interested in marital patterns of ethnic and racial minority groups have exclusively focused on intermarriage patterns, but endogamous marriages also have different patterns depending upon combinations of generations. Cross-generational marriages, especially the marriages between native-born Asian Americans and first-generation co-ethnic immigrants, constitute an important research issue for scholars of immigration and ethnicity, because of their positive effect on the retention of mother tongue and other ethnic traditions, and transnational ties with parents' home countries.

When thinking about native-born Asian Americans' in-marriage, many people tend to presume that they are usually married to other co-ethnic native-born partners. But, as will be shown later in this article, the majority of post-1965 native-born in-married Asian Americans are married to 1.5- and first-generation immigrants. There are three major factors that have contributed to a greater tendency of native-born Asian Americans to marry co-ethnic immigrant partners in the post-1965 era than their predecessors. First of all, the uninterrupted and increasing immigration flows from Asian countries since the enforcement of the 1965 liberalized immigration laws have facilitated the social interactions between young native-born Asian Americans and their co-ethnic

immigrants. They can meet with young co-ethnic immigrants in religious organizations, community centers, college campuses, immigrant enclaves, and other places. Second, immigrants' transnational ties to their home countries, the convenience of air travel between Asian countries and the United States, and advances in international communications are likely to have facilitated the arranged marriages between native-born Asian American partners and their co-ethnic partners in Asian countries. Finally, closely related to the second factor described above, the globalization of language, popular culture, and the mass media has greatly reduced the cultural barrier between native-born Asian Americans and young people in Asia at marital ages. While most young adults in Asian countries are familiar with English and American popular culture, many native-born young Asian-American adults also understand their mother tongue and ethnic customs.

In addition to the above-mentioned general factors, specific practical considerations on the part of involved partners and their parents have also contributed to native-born Asian Americans' cross-generational marriages. Many Asian immigrant families experience generational conflicts between immigrant parents and their Americanized children. Asian immigrant parents often try to arrange their children to marry co-ethnic immigrant partners because they consider immigrant daughters-in-law or sons-in-law more suitable for maintaining their ethnic and family traditions than American-bred in-laws. Asian immigrant parents seem to try to arrange their American-born sons' marriages to immigrant partners more often than their daughters' marriages. Young people in many Asian countries are attracted to American-born or American-raised co-ethnic partners because of a higher standard of living in the United States. Some of these parents in Asian countries offer financial incentives to help their children marry co-ethnic American citizens (Lessinger, 1995: 123). Highly educated Asian international students in the United States often marry co-ethnic American citizens or permanent residents for the benefit of the green card.

DATA SOURCES

We use data from the American Community Survey (ACS) conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The ACS is a nationwide representative survey based on a "rolling sample" design in which independent monthly samples are collected throughout the year to produce annually aggregated data (U.S. Census Bureau 2006). Designed as the replacement for the long-form

questionnaire of the 2010 Census, the ACS provides timely and accurate data about the changing demographics and housing characteristics every year. While the Public Use Micro-data Sample of the decennial Census was a once-in-ten-years snapshot, the ACS is a continuous measurement of the changing demographics and housing characteristics every year. Although the ACS uses a far smaller sample than the PUMS of the decennial Census, one can easily obtain a sample of desirable size by pooling the ACS data from subsequent years because there are no overlaps in observations.

This paper uses a combined ACS sample of six survey years (2001–2006) from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS, *see* Ruggles *et al.*, 2008). The sample drawn from the 2001–2006 ACS is significantly larger than that from the PUMS of the 2000 Census. The universe of our study is restricted to married Asian Americans, 18 years old and over, born in the United States in 1965 and after. Like the 2000 Census, the ACS allows respondents to identify with more than one race. This study selected only single-race Asian Americans to examine patterns of intermarriages and cross-generational marriages by ethnic group and gender. The data were weighted in the analysis to represent the proportion of actual persons in the population from which the sample was drawn.¹ We utilize cross-tabulation analysis as the main statistical technique in this descriptive study. We intend to explain ethnic and gender differences in intermarriage and in-marriage patterns with reference to the history and contemporary patterns of immigration, demographic characteristics, culture, and assimilation.

As already pointed out, previous studies of Asian Americans' intermarriage include those born before 1965. For this reason, results of previous studies did not accurately capture marital patterns of children of post-1965 Asian immigrants. Asian Americans born in 1965 and after may include a small number of children of pre-1965 Asian immigrants, but the majority of them are likely to be children of post-1965 immigrants. A significant proportion of them are likely to belong to the third or higher generation. Moreover, the predominant majority of them are likely to have got married in 1990 and after, indicating that data reflect a recent trend of native-born Asian Americans' marital patterns.

¹As we have aggregated the six-year (2001–2006) ACS weighted data, we have overestimated the post-1965 native-born Asian population by approximately six times. But this is not a problem in this article because we are mainly interested in native-born Asian Americans' marital patterns.

INTERMARRIAGE

Table 1 reveals that 55 percent of native-born Asian Americans are married to non-ethnic partners. Although major native-born Asian groups have had large pools of co-ethnic partners consisting of native-born, 1.5-generation (those who came to the United States before 13 years old) and immigrant members since the late 1980s, the majority of native-born Asian Americans have selected partners outside of the ethnic group.

The high intermarriage rate of native-born Asian Americans reflects two important things regarding their adaptation and incorporation to American society. First, it indicates a high level of their acculturation to American society and their own and their parents' tolerance of interracial

TABLE 1
PATTERNS OF INTERMARRIAGE AMONG POST-1965 NATIVE-BORN ASIAN AMERICANS BY ETHNIC GROUP
AND GENDER, 2001–2006

Ethnicity	N (Weighted)	Endogamy	Race of Spouse among the Intermarried			
			Total Exogamy	Asian Interethnic	White Interracial	Other Interracial ^a
Total Asian	1,162,539	44.9	55.1	9.2	35.0	10.9
Men	525,074	47.4	52.6	11.4	31.3	9.9
Women	637,465	42.7	57.3	7.5	38.0	11.8
Chinese	252,584	43.6	56.4	16.0	34.9	5.5
Men	116,423	47.2	52.8	21.9	26.0	4.9
Women	136,161	40.5	59.5	10.9	42.5	6.1
Filipino	339,534	37.5	62.5	5.6	39.1	17.8
Men	156,540	43.2	56.8	6.2	34.7	15.8
Women	182,994	32.7	67.3	5.1	42.9	19.4
Indian	161,390	67.9	32.1	2.2	24.0	5.9
Men	72,794	64.1	35.9	2.9	27.3	5.7
Women	88,596	71.1	28.9	1.7	21.2	6.0
Japanese	185,359	30.7	69.3	15.0	40.8	13.4
Men	84,260	33.3	66.7	16.9	38.4	11.3
Women	101,099	28.5	71.5	13.4	42.9	15.2
Korean	95,697	46.0	54.0	8.2	39.8	5.9
Men	45,377	53.1	46.9	8.9	34.0	4.1
Women	50,320	39.7	60.3	7.6	45.1	7.6
Vietnamese	62,205	60.4	39.6	5.7	22.5	11.5
Men	25,920	60.6	39.4	8.0	20.8	10.6
Women	36,285	60.2	39.8	4.0	23.7	12.1
Other Asian ^b	65,770	54.4	45.6	7.9	29.2	8.5
Men	23,760	49.8	50.2	8.2	28.7	13.3
Women	42,010	57.0	43.0	7.8	29.4	5.8

Source: 2001–2006 American Community Surveys from IPUMS.

Notes: ^aOther interracial includes those whose spouses are identified as Hispanic, Black, American Indian, Pacific Islander, or multiracial.

^bOther Asian includes Bangladeshi, Cambodian, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, and Thai.

marriage. Second and more importantly, it also reflects a breakdown of the racial boundary and social distance between white and Asian Americans. Native-born Asian Americans' high socioeconomic status, their participation in the mainstream economy, and their spatial assimilation seem to have contributed to the elimination or moderation of the racial boundary between white and Asian Americans.

Ethnic Differentials in Inter-marriage

Table 1 also shows significant intergroup differentials among native-born Asians in intermarriage rate, which explains why we need to treat Asian ethnic groups separately. Native-born Japanese Americans have the highest intermarriage rate with 69 percent, closely followed by Filipinos with 63 percent. As a result of Japanese Americans' unique immigration history, the vast majority of post-1965 native-born Japanese Americans belong to third or higher generations whereas the majority of post-1965 native-born other Asian Americans belong to the second generation. The higher generational status of native-born Japanese Americans than other Asian ethnic groups seems to be the major contributing factor to their highest intermarriage rate.

Using data from the 1990 Census, Lee and Fernandez (1998) and Shinagawa and Pang (1996) show that Japanese Americans had a surprisingly low intermarriage rate with 32 percent, which is lower than any other Asian group except the Vietnamese. Using data from the 2000 Census, Lee and Boyd (2007:321) also reveal that native-born Japanese Americans have the lowest intermarriage rate (39 percent) among the native-born Asian groups. Given the highly multigenerational characteristic of native-born Japanese Americans, readers had difficulty in understanding why they had a lower intermarriage rate than most other Asian groups in the 1990 and 2000 Censuses. But we can explain why those studies estimated a low intermarriage rate of native-born Japanese Americans.

Previous studies based on the 1980 and 1990 Censuses included pre-1965 native-born Japanese Americans, who are likely to have composed the majority of the Japanese subsample and the vast majority of whom may have belonged to the second generation. Pre-1965 second-generation Japanese Americans mostly grew up in Japanese enclaves in California, Hawaii, and Washington (Fugita and O'Brien, 1991). Their strong ethnic networks and active participation in the ethnic economy

seem to have helped them maintain a high level of endogamy (Fugita and O'Brien, 1991). But our Japanese subsample of post-1965 native-born married Asian Americans seems to consist largely of multigenerational Japanese Americans who are likely to have a much higher intermarriage rate than second-generation Japanese Americans. Also, a higher proportion of post-1965 native-born Japanese Americans have grown up in predominantly white neighborhoods and worked in the mainstream economy than their pre-1965 counterparts, as Japanese Americans have achieved residential and occupational assimilation in the post-war era (Nishi, 1995:111, 123).

As reflected in the largest Filipino subsample ($N = 339,534$), post-1965 Filipino immigrants comprise the largest Asian immigrant group and residentially highly concentrate in the West Coast. This suggests that native-born Filipino young people have an advantage in finding co-ethnic partners over other Asian groups. Nevertheless, they have a higher intermarriage rate than any other Asian group except Japanese Americans with a heavy multigenerational status. Native-born Filipinos' loss of their mother tongue² and lack of involvement in ethnic institutions³ seem to be mainly responsible for their extremely high intermarriage rate. Their colonial heritage and sub-ethnic diversity are known to be the main causes of their low level of retention of mother tongue and cultural traditions (Bankston, 2006:196; Rimonte, 1997). The heavily Christian religious background of Filipino Americans is also likely to have facilitated their intermarriages to whites and other minority members.

Based on data from the 1990 Census, Lee and Fernandez (1998) and Shinagawa and Pang (1996) also show that native-born Koreans had the highest intermarriage rate (70 percent) among all Asian groups in 1990. Based on data from the 2000 Census, Lee and Boyd (2007:321)

²For example, Rumbaut's analysis of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study data reveals that only a tiny proportion of U.S.-born Filipino high school students spoke a non-English language, a much lower proportion than students of other ethnic backgrounds (Rumbaut, 1999:182).

³Although about 80 percent of Filipino immigrants are Catholics, they usually attend white American churches. For example, results of a survey study conducted in Chicago in the 1980s show that only 17 percent of Filipino Catholics participated in a Filipino congregation (Mangiafico, 1988:174). According to results of the 2004 Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles survey conducted by Rumbaut, about 70 percent of Filipinos identified themselves as Catholics and only 18 percent participated in an all- or majority-Filipino congregation.

also reveal that native-born Koreans had a much higher intermarriage rate (63 percent) than native-born Japanese Americans (39 percent). Given Korean immigrants' great group homogeneity and strong ethnic networks (Min, 2001), readers also have difficulty in understanding the finding about native-born Koreans' exceptionally high intermarriage rate.⁴ But the inclusion of pre-1965 native-born married Korean Americans in these studies seems to be the major cause of the overestimation of native-born Koreans' intermarriage rate. A small group of children of Korean pioneer immigrants grew up with little interaction with co-ethnic members in the West Coast and thus they had an exceptionally high intermarriage rate (Harvey and Chung, 1980). However, our analysis of the 2001–2006 American Community Surveys shows a much lower intermarriage rate (53 percent) among native-born Koreans. This figure is slightly lower than the overall intermarriage rate of native-born Asian Americans (55 percent). Once again, this demonstrates the advantage of our study over previous ones in examining the current trend of native-born Asian Americans' intermarriages.

Native-born Indians and Vietnamese have the lowest intermarriage rates with 32 percent and 40 percent, respectively. As shown in Table 1, both Indians and Vietnamese have much lower rates of intermarriages to white Americans (24 percent and 23 percent, respectively) than any other Asian group, which mainly contributes to their overall lower intermarriage rates. Native-born Indians and Vietnamese seem to have substantially lower rates of intermarriages to white Americans partly because they maintain stronger family ties and ethnic attachment, including retention of mother tongue (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006:275; Sakamoto and Xie, 2006:73). Also, Indian immigrants' traditional, non-Christian religious background and their practice of arranged marriages are likely to contribute to their very low intermarriage rate (Khandelwal, 2002:154–155). By contrast, native-born Filipinos and Koreans, with their heavily Christian background, have much higher rates of intermarriages to white Americans than Indians.

Another set of findings that deserves our attention in Table 1 is much higher rates of intermarriages to racial minority groups (blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders) among Filipinos and Japanese than among Chinese, Koreans, and Indians. About 18 percent of Filipino and 13 percent of Japanese Americans engage in intermarriages to other racial minority groups, compared to less than 6 percent among

⁴Neither group of the authors tried to explain this surprising finding.

Chinese, Korean, and Indian Americans. It is not difficult to understand why Filipinos have the highest rate of intermarriages to other minority members. Native-born Filipinos have more social interactions with members of three other minority racial and ethnic groups (Latinos, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders), as they are highly concentrated in the West Coast, where these three minority groups are also concentrated (Bankston, 2006). Also, under the impact of Spanish colonization Filipinos and Latinos share some important cultural features, including religion and surnames. In addition to their higher generational status, their concentration in the West Coast seems to contribute to the greater tendency of Japanese Americans to marry other minority members.

Gender Differentials in Intermarriage

Going back to Table 1, a higher proportion of native-born Asian women (57 percent) than men (53 percent) are involved in intermarriage. This gender differential in intermarriage rate is much greater for Asian immigrants than for native-born Asian Americans. Using data from the 1990 Census, for example, Lee and Fernandez (1998:335) showed that 24 percent of Asian female immigrants, compared to only 9 percent of their male counterparts, engaged in intermarriage. This can be explained partly by the fact that Asian female immigrants often choose white or even other minority partners because Asian male immigrants tend to be highly or at least moderately patriarchal.⁵ American-born Asian American men are likely to be less patriarchal than their immigrant parents. But they are slower than women in adopting more egalitarian marital relations and thus the gender gap in intermarriage still persists even for native-born Asian Americans. Moreover, the gender differential in intermarriage rate for native-born Asian Americans may have been influenced also by white men's preference for Asian women based on their assumption that Asian women are more subservient to husbands than white women. By contrast, fewer white women than men may turn to native-born Asians for dating and marriage probably because of their negative perceptions of Asian men in gender issues.

⁵The other important reason for Asian female immigrants' much higher intermarriage rate than male immigrants' is that many Asian women got married to American servicemen stationed in Asian countries and subsequently immigrated to the United States accompanied by their American husbands.

Looking at Table 1 more closely, we find that the gender differential in intermarriage is more salient for particular Asian groups. For example, 60 percent of native-born Korean women, compared to only 47 percent of Korean men, are intermarried. The Filipino group has the second-highest gender differential in intermarriage rate. The other Asian groups have moderate gender differentials in intermarriage rate. Interestingly enough, for native-born Indians more men (36 percent) than women (29 percent) are involved in intermarriage. It is known that in selecting or approving their children's marital partners Indian immigrant parents tend to control their daughters to a greater extent than their sons. Many Indian immigrants, especially upper-class immigrants, still arrange their children's marital partners through their personal networks and/or matrimonial advertisements in the Indian immigrant community or in India (Khandelwal, 2002:145–155; Lessinger, 1995:111–116). They try to arrange their daughters' marriage more often than their sons'. Thus native-born Indian women seem to have more difficulty in choosing non-Indian marital partners than their male counterparts.

For "other Asians," consisting of Pakistanis, Taiwanese, Bangladeshis, Cambodians, Indonesians, and Thais, native-born women have a slightly lower intermarriage rate than their male counterparts. These other Asians are predominantly non-Christian religious groups (Muslims and Buddhists). Like Indian immigrants, these non-Christian immigrant groups may apply the sexual double standard in arranging or approving their native-born children's marital partners, making it more difficult for their daughters to choose non-ethnic partners.

Another noteworthy finding in Table 1 is that men consistently have higher rates of interethnic marriage (marriages to other Asian partners) than women while women have higher interracial marriages to both whites and other minority members. We can explain this pattern of intermarriage by the possibility that native-born Asian women are more likely than their male counterparts to consider the benefit of egalitarian gender relations in selecting non-ethnic partners. Other things being equal, native-born Asian women are less likely to choose non-ethnic other Asian marital partners than their male counterparts because they do not consider that type of intermarriage an advantage over ethnic endogamy in terms of more egalitarian marital relations. But they are more likely to choose white and other minority marital partners than men because they expect to get the benefit of more equal marital relations from the non-Asian interracial marriage.

Multiple Pan-Asian Ethnic Boundaries

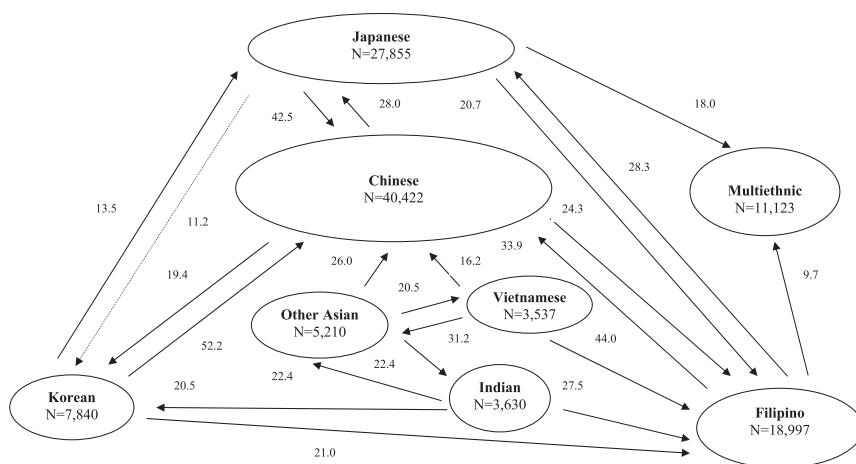
In their study of Asian Americans' intermarriage patterns, Shinagawa and Pang (1996) showed that the proportion of Asian-Asian interethnic marriages increased between 1980 and 1990, while Asian-white interracial marriages decreased during the period. In order to put their finding in the context of Asian American studies, they cited the pan-Asian ethnic movement literature associated with Omi and Winant (1986) and Espiritu (1992). As previously pointed out, our intermarriage data focusing on post-1965 native-born married Asian Americans are not comparable to data from the 1980 and 1990 decennial Census data including all native-born married Asian Americans. But, in terms of the interethnic-interracial marriages ratio, Asian interethnic marriages decreased between 1990 and 2001–2006. While the ratio of Asian-Asian interethnic marriages to Asian-white interracial marriages was about one to three in 1990, it was about one to four (3.8) in 2001–2006. In fact, during the 2001–2006 period the proportion of interethnically married Asian Americans (9 percent) is smaller than that of Asians married to other minority members (11 percent). The fact that the ratio of Asian-Asian interethnic marriages to Asian-white interracial marriages decreased despite the radical increase both in the total number and proportion of Asian Americans during the period suggests that the integration to white society, rather than the pan-Asian racial formation, is a potent force.

In addition, we would like to point out that Shinagawa and Pang's suggestion that the increase in the proportion of Asian-Asian interethnic marriages between 1980 and 1990 reflects the increasing pan-Asian political consciousness is not a meaningful interpretation of data under consideration. As Espiritu (1992) and others showed, members of various Asian ethnic groups being lumped together both by the U.S. government and American society in general mainly contributed to pan-Asian solidarity or coalition building. Thus pan-Asian solidarity in education, politics, social services, and responses to anti-Asian violence is based on the political or collective identity, the sense that "we are in the same boat." By contrast, members of one Asian ethnic group maintaining close ties with members of other Asian ethnic groups in the form of friendship, dating, and intermarriage, which can be labeled as "pan-Asian attachment," is based on private identity. Similarities in cultural/physical characteristics and social class, rather than the lumping together, are the major contributing factors to pan-ethnic attachment (Min and Kim 2000). Asian Americans consist

of dozens of ethnic groups that have significant differences in language, culture, and class background. Thus members of a particular Asian ethnic group maintain a high or moderate level of pan-ethnic social attachment with members of one or two other Asian groups that share these similarities. Therefore, it is more meaningful to examine patterns of pan-Asian intermarriages among particular Asian ethnic groups than to assess the overall interethnic marriage rate of all Asian ethnic groups.

In order to examine possible separate pan-Asian social boundaries, we show in Figure I three major ethnic groups to which each native-born Asian group is most strongly linked through interethnic marriage. The number inside each circle indicates the number of all interethnically married individuals for each ethnic group. The number along each arrow line indicates percentage of members of each group who are married to members of the other Asian group. Not only social distance between particular two Asian groups, but also their group sizes and physical proximity (settlement patterns) have effects on intermarriage linkages presented in Figure I. Nevertheless, we can discern the effect of social distance on Asian Americans' interethnic marriage linkages.

Figure I. Interethnic Marriage Linkages among Post-1965 Native-Born Asian Americans, 2001–2006.



Note: Arrow lines from each ethnic group represent three most frequent interethnic marriage linkages. Number along each arrow line indicates percentage of members of each group who married members of the other Asian group. Other Asian includes Bangladeshi, Cambodian, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, and Thai.

Source: 2001–2006 American Community Surveys from IPUMS.

Sharing similarities in cultural and physical characteristics, the three East Asian groups (Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans) are likely to maintain close social relations in the forms of friendship, dating, and intermarriage. Figure I shows that native-born Chinese Americans are strongly linked to both Japanese and Korean Americans through intermarriage. A few studies have indicated that Chinese and Korean Americans in particular engage in close friendship and intermarriage (Kibria, 2002; Hong and Min, 1999; Kitano *et al.*, 1989). Confirming the findings from these studies, Figure I shows that the majority of native-born interethnically married Koreans are married to Chinese Americans. Despite their similarities in culture and physical characteristics, Korean Americans are moderately linked to Japanese Americans through intermarriage, partly because the great generational difference between the two groups⁶ and partly because of Korean Americans' memory of Japan's colonization of Korea.

We noted in Table 1 that only a tiny fraction of native-born Indian Americans (2.2 percent) – a much lower proportion than East Asian groups (16 percent for Chinese, 15 percent for Japanese, and 8 percent for Korean Americans) – engage in interethnic marriages to other Asian Americans. This indicates that, due to their cultural, religious, and physical differences from other Asian American groups, native-born Indian Americans do not maintain active social relations with other Asian groups. Filipinos and Koreans are two of the three Asian groups to whom native-born Indians have the strongest linkages through intermarriage. But, since only a small number of native-born Indians ($N = 3,630$) are married to other Asians, the moderate levels of their intermarriage to the two Asian groups are practically insignificant. Over 22 percent of the interethnically married Indians are married to “other Asians.” More than three-fourths of these other Asians are other South Asians, mostly Pakistanis, because South Asians share not only food, music, language, and other cultural elements but also pre-migrant colonial historical experiences. In particular, Indian Muslims have a great tendency to marry Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims. Moreover, they have had common racial experiences in the United States, but different from East Asian Americans, partly due to their in-between physical characteristics and partly due to the impact of violent reactions to the 9/11 event (Kibria 1996; Kibria, 2006:215–217). These factors have contributed to the South Asian

⁶A predominant majority of native-born Korean Americans are children of post-1965 immigrants, while most of native-born Japanese Americans belong to third or higher generations.

pan-ethnic formation in the forms of South Asian organizations, including religious organizations, and social networks (Gupta, 1998; Mediratta, 1999). Because native-born other South Asians still comprise a small population, a relatively small number of native-born Indians are married to other South Asians. But more and more native-born Indians are likely to marry other South Asians in the future as the numbers of other South Asian groups will continue to increase.⁷

Figure I shows that Chinese, Japanese, and three other small and newer native-born Asian groups are strongly or moderately linked to Filipinos through intermarriage. This seems to be due to two factors. First, Filipino Americans are heavily (about 60 percent) concentrated in three West Coast states (Hawaii, California, and Washington) where these other Asian American populations are concentrated. Second, Filipino Americans' linkages to multiple Asian groups suggest that they can interact with all three pan-Asian groups (East, South, and Southeast Asians) fairly well.

CROSS-GENERATIONAL IN-MARRIAGE

Table 2 shows that, while 55 percent of native-born Asian Americans are intermarried, only 22 percent are married to native-born co-ethnic members. The other 23 percent are married to foreign-born co-ethnic members, with 10 percent to 1.5-generation members and 13 percent to immigrants. Among those in-married, the majority are involved in cross-generational marriages. Also, a significant proportion of in-marriages between two native-born partners are likely to be cross-generational marriages involving different generations, although neither the decennial Census nor ACS data provide information about generation for native-born Americans. Thus less than 20 percent of post-1965 native-born Asian Americans are presumed to be involved in co-ethnic and co-generational marriages. Since native-born Asian Americans' cross-generational in-marriages, like their intermarriages, have significant implications for other aspects of their adaptations, it is important for social scientists to examine in-marriage patterns too.

⁷The Hindu-Muslim religious difference is an important sub-ethnic social boundary in the Indian community. But this religious boundary will facilitate a pan-South Asian intermarriage within both Muslim and Hindu groups.

TABLE 2
PATTERNS OF IN-MARRIAGE AMONG POST-1965 NATIVE-BORN ASIAN AMERICANS BY ETHNIC GROUP AND GENDER, 2001–2006

Ethnicity	N (Weighted)	Exogamy	Generation of Spouse among the In-Married			
			Total Endogamy	Native-Born	1.5 Generation ^a	First Generation
Total Asian	1,162,539	55.1	44.9	22.2	9.8	12.9
Men	525,074	52.6	47.4	23.2	9.6	14.6
Women	637,465	57.3	42.7	21.3	9.9	11.5
Chinese	252,584	56.4	43.6	23.3	11.2	9.1
Men	116,423	52.8	47.2	24.8	11.3	11.0
Women	136,161	59.5	40.5	21.9	11.2	7.5
Filipino	339,534	62.5	37.5	17.0	9.2	11.3
Men	156,540	56.8	43.2	18.0	9.8	15.4
Women	182,994	67.3	32.7	16.2	8.7	7.8
Indian	161,390	32.1	67.9	24.8	13.1	30.0
Men	72,794	35.9	64.1	26.4	11.8	25.9
Women	88,596	28.9	71.1	23.5	14.2	33.4
Japanese	185,359	69.3	30.7	24.6	1.8	4.3
Men	84,260	66.7	33.3	23.6	2.8	6.9
Women	101,099	71.5	28.5	25.5	0.9	2.2
Korean	95,697	54.0	46.0	22.4	11.4	12.3
Men	45,377	46.9	53.1	22.5	12.4	18.2
Women	50,320	60.3	39.7	22.3	10.5	7.0
Vietnamese	62,205	39.6	60.4	35.4	11.2	13.8
Men	25,920	39.4	60.6	38.2	7.5	14.8
Women	36,285	39.8	60.2	33.4	13.8	13.0
Other Asian ^b	65,770	45.6	54.4	18.5	17.9	18.1
Men	23,760	50.2	49.8	22.7	14.7	12.4
Women	42,010	43.0	57.0	16.1	19.7	21.2

Source: 2001–2006 American Community Surveys from IPUMS.

Note: ^aThe 1.5 generation are defined as those who arrived in the United States before age 13.

^bOther Asians include Bangladeshi, Cambodian, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Malaysian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Taiwanese, and Thai.

Ethnic Differentials in Cross-Generational In-Marriage

Small native-born Asian ethnic groups, such as Bangladeshis, Pakistanis, and Cambodians, have difficulty in finding native-born co-ethnic partners. Members of these groups are likely to expand their pools of co-ethnic marital partners to co-ethnic immigrants. As expected, “other Asians” in Table 2 show the highest rate of cross-generational marriages, with about two-thirds of them married to 1.5-generation members or immigrants. However, although the Vietnamese group is the smallest in size among the six major Asian ethnic groups, the majority of native-born Vietnamese are married to native-born co-ethnic partners. The low cross-generational marriage of native-born Vietnamese Americans is even more surprising,

given that almost all of them belong to the second generation. Between 1977 and 1994, the U.S. government did not allow Vietnamese exiles to visit their home country or invest there (Espiritu and Tran, 2002; Rumbaut, 2006). The visit of Vietnamese refugees and their children to the home country is likely to have increased only gradually even after the United States normalized diplomatic relations with Vietnam in 1994. The difficulty of visiting their homeland until recent years seems to be the main contributing factor to the relatively low rate of cross-generational marriages among native-born Vietnamese Americans.

Native-born Japanese Americans show the lowest rate of cross-generational marriage. Only 20 percent of native-born in-married Japanese Americans are married to 1.5- or first-generation immigrants. They comprise only 6 percent of all native-born married Japanese Americans. Given that the native born comprise more than 75 percent of Japanese Americans (Yang, 2006:295), they have a much greater chance for finding native-born Japanese partners. Moreover, the multigenerational status of the predominant majority of native-born Japanese Americans makes it more difficult for them to choose Japanese immigrant partners crossing two or more generations than other native-born Japanese Americans. We have previously noted that native-born Japanese Americans have an extremely high intermarriage rate for the same reason (their multigenerational background).

The Indian group shows the highest rate of cross-generational marriage among all major Asian ethnic groups. Forty-three percent of all native-born married Indians are married to first- or 1.5-generation Indian immigrants. More significantly, the majority of native-born Indians involved in cross-generational marriage (30 percent of all married Indians) are married to first-generation immigrants. As discussed earlier, the custom of arranged marriage is still practiced in the Indian immigrant community as a means to preserving their family, regional, and ethnic traditions over generations (Khandelwal, 2002:145–155; Lessinger, 1995:110–116). The continuation of arranged marriage in the Indian immigrant community helps native-born Indians maintain not only a much higher rate of endogamy but also a higher rate of cross-generational marriages relative to other Asian groups.

Gender Differentials in Cross-Generational In-Marriage

Looking at Asian Americans as a whole, there is only a moderate level of gender differential in the proportion of native-born Asian Americans'

marriages to Asian immigrants: 15 percent for men compared to 12 percent for women. But for some Asian groups the gender differential in the rate of the cross-generational marriage is significant. For example, native-born Korean and Filipino men are more than twice as likely to marry co-ethnic immigrant partners as their female counterparts. Even for the native-born Japanese Americans of predominantly multigenerational background, 10 percent of men, compared to only 3 percent of women, are married to co-ethnic first- or 1.5-generation immigrants.

Two factors explain native-born men's greater tendency to marry immigrant partners than native-born women. First, as already noted in the previous section, native-born Asian women have a greater tendency to marry white and other minority partners than their male counterparts. This means that demographically many native-born Asian American men need to turn to co-ethnic first- or 1.5-generation immigrants to find their marital partners.

Second, native-born Asian American women have a lower rate of marriage to co-ethnic immigrants than their male counterparts because of their greater difficulty in marital adjustments expected than the opposite combination (Min, 1993). People in Asian countries are more patriarchal than Americans and thus Americanized native-born Asian American women are likely to have a greater difficulty in living with Asian immigrant men than living with white American or co-ethnic native-born men. Therefore, few of them are likely to choose co-ethnic immigrant partners. But many native-born Asian American men may seek co-ethnic immigrant partners because they consider such a cross-generational marriage more beneficial to them in terms of preserving their marital power. Also, moderately educated native-born Asian American men often find co-ethnic Asian women, such as international students, who have a higher education. Some women from Asian countries – often temporary visitors and international students – are motivated to marry co-ethnic native-born Asian American men with a lower socioeconomic status because they can not only change their nonresident status through such a cross-generational marriage but also expect to maintain more egalitarian marital relations with American-raised co-ethnic partners than partners in their home countries.

Unlike most other Asian groups, Indian women have a greater tendency to engage in cross-generational marriage than their male counterparts. In fact, about one-third of all married Indian women are married to Indian immigrants. The same cultural practices of arranged marriage and sexual double standard that discourage Indian women from pursuing

intermarriage seem to contribute to their relatively high rate of cross-generational marriage to co-ethnic immigrants. Due to their traditional religious values, native-born Indian women may be more ready to sacrifice egalitarian gender relations for the benefit of ethnic retention than other native-born Asian women.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Our analyses of post-1965 native-born married Asian Americans reveal that native-born Japanese Americans have the highest intermarriage rate while native-born Koreans have a substantially lower intermarriage rate than what previous studies showed. By using more current data and selecting only post-1965 native-born married Asian Americans, this study provides more accurate estimates of intermarriage rates and patterns among native-born children of post-1965 Asian immigrants.

Our analyses of post-1965 native-born Asian Americans' intermarriage rates and patterns show that about 55 percent of them are intermarried and that the majority of them are married to white Americans. Since we have selected only post-1965 native-born married Asian Americans, our sample largely reflects marital patterns among second-generation Asian Americans who have got married most recently, predominantly since 1990. The majority of native-born Asian Americans, mostly the second generation, have married partners outside of their own group during recent years, despite a phenomenal increase in the pool of co-ethnic marital partners. This indicates that a form of assimilation is a potent force for post-1965 native-born Asian Americans' adaptation to American society. Their exceptionally high rate of intermarriages, especially to white Americans, indicates both Asian Americans' high acculturation and a significant moderation of the white-Asian racial boundary. No doubt, their high educational level and their structural assimilation have facilitated their social integration to the mainstream society.

The Asian American population has experienced a phenomenal increase over the past four decades, especially since 1990 when the vast majority of our native-born Asian American sample began to get married. Nevertheless, the ratio of native-born Asian-Asian interethnic marriages to Asian-white interracial marriages has not increased during the same period. The rate of their interethnic marriages to other Asians is surprisingly low, compared to the high rate of their interracial marriages to white Americans. This suggests that pan-Asian racial formation through intermarriage is not

a significant mode of Asian Americans' adaptation to American society, although building pan-Asian coalitions to protect common interests has often been used, as documented by many pan-Asian studies.

What is a sociologically more important aspect of their interethnic marriages is not the percentage of interethnic marriages for all Asian Americans, but intermarriage linkages among particular Asian groups. Our data analysis indicates that three East Asian groups with cultural and physical similarities are strongly or moderately linked to one another through intermarriage. Filipino Americans have a strong or a moderate intermarriage linkage to five other Asians groups, which seems to have been mainly caused by the proximity of Filipinos to these other Asian groups in Hawaii, California, and other West Coast states. Most significantly, Asian Indians show an extremely low rate of intermarriages to other Asians, but maintain a moderate rate of intermarriages to other South Asians. As these South Asian populations are expected to continue to grow, Indians' interethnic marriages to other South Asians are likely to increase in the future. These findings suggest that South and East Asians may maintain more or less separate pan-ethnic social boundaries in the future.

Researchers interested in native-born Americans' marital patterns have focused on intermarriage rates and patterns, assuming that in-married native-born individuals usually marry other native-born individuals. But this study shows that the majority of in-married native-born Asian Americans are married to 1.5-generation or first-generation immigrant partners. Cross-generational marriages between native-born Asian Americans and co-ethnic immigrants frequently occur especially for small native-born Asian groups with small pools of native-born co-ethnic marital candidates. Native-born Asian Americans at marital ages can meet with and start dating co-ethnic immigrant partners in ethnic religious organizations, community centers, schools, and workplaces. Our data show that native-born Indians have an exceptionally high rate of cross-generational marriages to Indian immigrants, which we attribute to the still widespread practice of arranged marriage in the Indian immigrant community.

When examining native-born adults' assimilation and ethnic attachment, researchers have tended to focus on their generation as a major determinant. And they have not paid much attention to native-born Americans' marital patterns as an important independent variable. This neglect reflects their assumption that the second generation usually engage in co-generational in-marriage. But our analyses of married native-born Asian Americans show that only a small proportion of them (about 20

percent) are involved in co-generational in-marriages. The majority of post-1965 native-born Asian Americans are intermarried, with the majority of the remaining in-married Asian Americans married to co-ethnic 1.5-generation members or immigrants. Depending upon their marital pattern, the levels of their assimilation and ethnic retention differ significantly. For example, the three-generation hypothesis about language retention in the United States claims that use of mother tongue is drastically reduced in the second generation and that it will almost completely disappear in the third generation (Alba *et al.*, 2002; Fishman *et al.*, 1966; Veltman, 1983). But our data analyses, not presented in this article, reveal that most (67 percent) of the post-1965 native-born Asian Americans married to co-ethnic immigrants use another language than English – most likely their mother tongue – at home while only a small proportion (15 percent) of those married to white Americans do so. Most of those married to co-ethnic immigrants are likely to speak mother tongue fluently. Based on his analysis of survey data on 1.5- and second-generation young adults, Rumbaut (2002:91) concludes that “there is very little evidence that the kinds of attachments that are fundamental to pursuing a meaningful transnational project of “dual lives” are effectively sustained in the post-immigrant new second generation.” This somewhat pessimistic conclusion is not likely to be applicable to the second-generation Asian Americans who are married to co-ethnic immigrants.

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