

# Diversity of timing

## – Focused on “family formation” in Germany and South Korea

Hyunsuk Lee

Sozialwissenschaft, Ruhr Universität Bochum, Germany / Family welfare, Sangmyung University, Seoul, Republic of Korea



### Abstract

This study (in press) shows that there are differences in family formation for Germany and South Korea in terms of the meanings and periods depending on the respective socio-cultural backgrounds.

**Germany and South Korea** in particular have **similar statistical demographical trends** in terms of them both being **low fertility countries** where marriage rates are decreasing, population is aging, the number of single-person households is increasing, and divorce rates are increasing. **However, it was found that there are differences between the two countries when it comes to the socio-cultural meaning** and the rate at which these things are taking place.

Given such differences, it was considered that when examining variable-related characteristics for “family,” which has definite cultural background qualities, rather than analyzing the superficial trend in a fragmentary way, it was more important to gain an understanding of the contextual meaning of “family” for the respective societies.

For the feasibility of comparing different cultures, G. Simmel’s theory of culture and his concept of the stranger, and E. Todd and G. Hofstede’s theories were used to examine how families get classified and how cultural characteristics get classified.

R. König and H. Rosenbaum’s viewpoints on family formation were examined, and with a structural approach and a contextual approach, concepts of „temporalization,“ „task,“ and „role“ were identified and used as a basis for the variables analyzed.

### Methodology

#### 1. Using data.

To compare data of different countries, **OECD data** were used, as well as **ISSP** (The International Social Survey Programme) 2012 data provided by GESIS (<http://www.gesis.org/en/issp/home/>), in particular the database on **Germany and South Korea included the family and changing gender roles IV questionnaire**.

#### 2. Data analysis

- Frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were found with descriptive statistics.
- T-test, chi square test, and one-way ANOVA (Duncan’s test for post-hoc test) were performed.
- Internal consistency verification was done using Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient to ensure reliability.

### The analysis was conducted as follows.

#### Step 1)

Compare specific items between German and South Korean respondents (continuous mean comparison, categorical chi-squared test) → To obtain a P-value

- Describe the meanings of specific items for each country.

#### Step 2)

Compare the male and female groups for Germany (sex was used as the example; other items applied similarly) → P-value

Compare the male and female groups for South Korea (sex was used as the example; other items applied similarly) → P-value

- Describe individual characteristics for each country’s respondents by making comparisons within the scope of Germany and South Korea

### Findings - About error discovery

Results of frequency analysis revealed an error in which recoding was done with differing concepts for South Korea and Germany with respect to **marital status**. Hence, this study performed missing value handling for civil partnership using modes.

MARITAL – Legal partnership status

	National Language	English Translation
Question no. and text	S033 Welchen Familienstand haben Sie? Sind Sie -	S033 What is your marital status? Are you...
Interviewer Instruction	Vorgaben bitte vorlesen!	Please read statements aloud.
Codes/ Categories	1. Verheiratet und leben mit Ihrem Ehepartner zusammen 2. Verheiratet und leben getrennt 3. Verwitwet 4. Geschieden oder 5. Ledig Nur für gleichgeschlechtliche, amtlich eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaften: 6. Eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaft, zusammenlebend 7. Eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaft, getrennt lebend 8. Eingetragener Lebenspartner verstorben 9. Eingetragene Lebenspartnerschaft aufgehoben 99. KA	1. Married and living with your spouse 2. Married and living separated from spouse 3. Widowed 4. Divorced or 5. Never married For same-sex, formally legalised partnerships: 6. Civil partnership and living together 7. Civil partnership and living separated from partner 8. Civil partner deceased 9. Legally separated from civil partner 99. NA*
Translation Note	—	—
Note	*R: Marital status” taken from ALLBUS 2012; categories 7-9 unoccupied	

#### Construction/Recoding:

Country Variable Codes/Construction Rules	→ Marital
S033	
1	1. Married
6	2. Civil partnership
2	3. Separated from spouse/civil partner (still legally married/still legally in a civil partnership)
4	4. Divorced from spouse/legally separated from civil partner
3	5. Widowed/civil partner died
5	6. Never married/never in a civil partnership
—	7. Refused
99	9. No answer

#### Optional: Recoding Syntax

--

\*\* Translated by the German ISSP team.

\* Answer categories marked by an asterisk are not read aloud.

MARITAL – Legal partnership status

	National Language	English Translation
Question no. and text	40.1.4. 이 분의 혼인상태는 기혼, 사별, 이혼, 별거, 미혼, 동거 중에서 어디에 해당합니까?	40.1.4. Is [PERSON] now married, widowed, divorced, separated, cohabiting, or never married?
Codes/ Categories	① 기혼 ② 사별 ③ 이혼 ④ 별거 ⑤ 미혼 ⑥ 동거	① Married ② Widowed ③ Divorced ④ Separated ⑤ Never married ⑥ Cohabiting

#### Construction/Recoding:

Country Variable Codes/Construction Rules	→ MARITAL
If Q33.1.4=1, then MARITAL=1	1. Married
If Q33.1.4=6, then MARITAL=2	2. Civil partnership
If Q33.1.4=4, then MARITAL=3	3. Separated from spouse/civil partner
If Q33.1.4=3, then MARITAL=4	4. Divorced from spouse/legally separated from civil partner
If Q33.1.4=2, then MARITAL=5	5. Widowed/civil partner died
If Q33.1.4=5, then MARITAL=6	6. Never married/never in a civil partnership

2012 ISSP Background Variable Documentation for South Korea

### Results

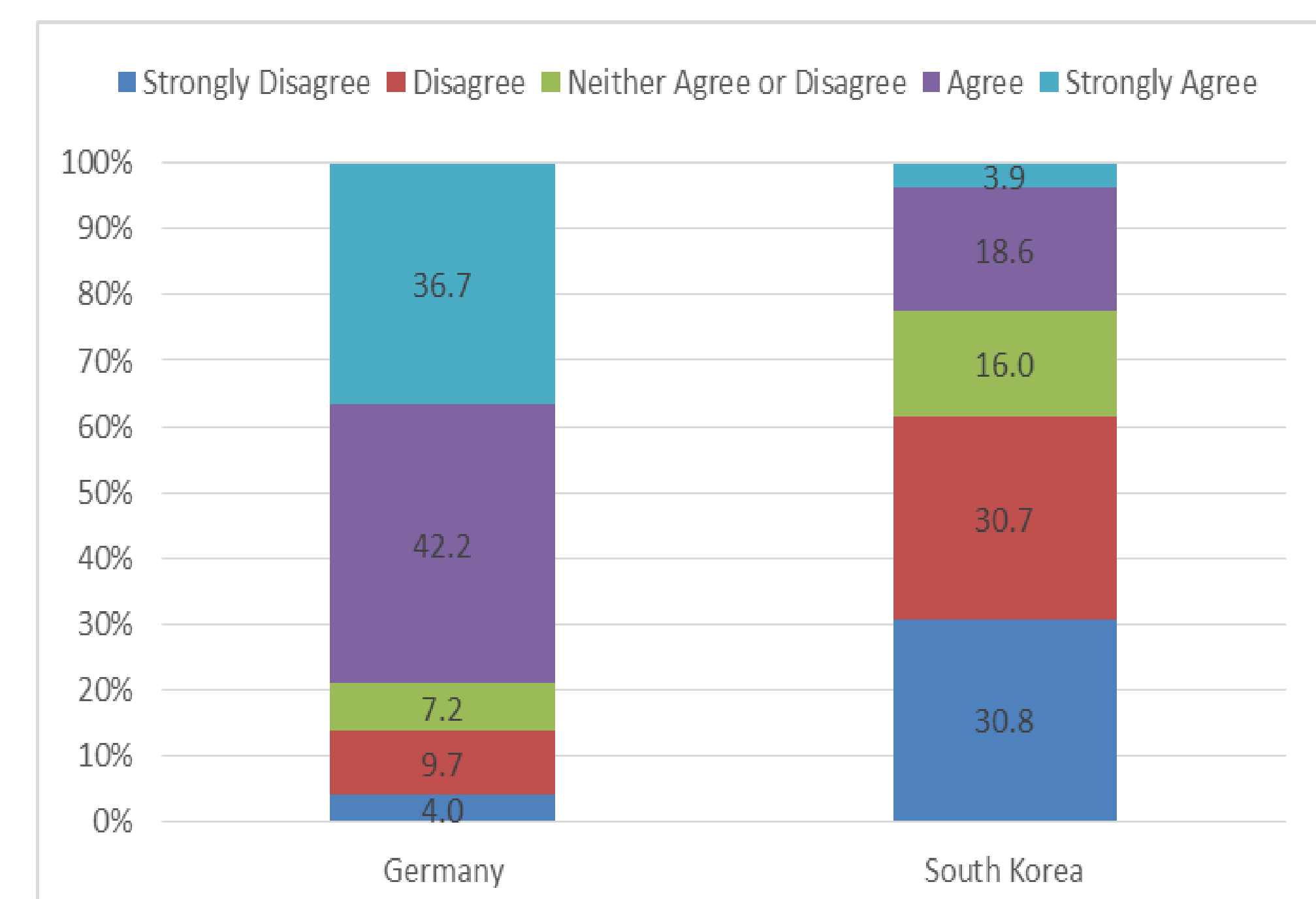


Figure 4-13 Verification of Differences in attitude toward cohabitation

### Interpretation

Phenomenon : low fertility states : similarities

Culture Context : difference family concept

A different policy direction depending on their perceptions of the family and the right time for family formation.

