CONTINGENCIES OF MARRIAGE TO HIGH-STATUS MEN

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ABSTRACT

This paper develops a four-variable “opportunity model” regulating women’s access to men of high social status. Hypotheses based on occupational attainment, educational attainment, socioeconomic background, and community size are tested using longitudinal data from two surveys of Wisconsin high school seniors in 1957 and 1964. The analysis focuses on 296 girls who selected nursing as their occupational choice in 1957 and were married at the time of the follow-up survey in 1964. It is concluded that, of these four variables, socioeconomic background is the most important determinant of husband’s status. Occupational attainment is of lesser overall importance but still crucial in some cases. For example, noncollege-going girls who become nurses marry high-status men just as often as college-going girls who do not become nurses. In this sense, becoming a nurse “equals” their opportunity for access to high-status men. These and other findings are discussed in relation to the question of how women gain access to the upper levels of the stratification system through marriage to high-status men.

While women constitute a sizeable segment of the population of American society, sociologists have not dealt extensively with determinants of the social status of women. This is largely a consequence of the view held by major theorists of stratification that family members share an “equalitarian status.” In other words, a woman’s social status is regarded as determined by or a reflection of the social status of her husband. While

1 Like most generalizations, this one has its exception. Closely related to the question of women’s social status is Ralph H. Turner, “Some Aspects of Women’s Ambition,” American Journal of Sociology, 70 (November 1964), pp. 271-285.

2 For example, see Kingsley Davis, Human Society (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949). Davis says: “It [the family] could not very well perform this function [status ascription] if it did not, as a family, occupy a single position in the scale. Children are said to ‘acquire their parents’ status,’ with the implication that the two parents have a common status to transmit and that the child gets the status automatically as a member of the family. In the same way husband and wife are treated as social equals” (p. 364, italics added).

A similar position is taken by Robin M. Williams, Jr., American Society (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1960). According to Williams: “Since husband and wife constitute the most basic solidarity group in the kinship order, they must, partly because of peculiar features of the stratification system, be treated by the wider community as a unit and thus as social equals in important respects” (p. 60, italics added). Bernard Barber, Social Stratification: A Comparative Analysis of Structure and Process (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1957) argues that: “In order to maintain its solidarity and effectively perform its several different social functions, the family is composed of members all of whom share the same prestige and the same degree of social privilege” (pp. 73-74, italics added). Also relevant is Talcott Parsons, “A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification,” in Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, Class Status and Power (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press,
this view has been ably criticized by Watson and Barth, it nevertheless suggests an important research problem. If women's social status and, by implication, their position in the stratification system is dependent upon that of their husbands, what determines their access to men of different social status?

The major purposes of this paper are (1) to suggest some factors that restrict and enhance women's access to high-status men, (2) to specify several hypotheses based on these factors, and (3) to test these hypotheses.

TOWARD A MODEL OF ACCESS TO HIGH-STATUS MEN

The notion that the opportunity to achieve goals that are socially defined as desirable is differentially distributed in a society is by no means new. The concept of differentially accessible opportunity structures represents a major tradition in the study of deviant behavior. We suggest that an analogous opportunity structure regulating women's access to high-status men can be delineated. Our task here is to specify factors that define this structure.

1953), pp. 92-128. Parsons states that: "Its [the family's] members must, therefore, to a fundamental degree share a common status in the larger system; which means that they must, in spite of their differentiation by sex and age, be evaluated in certain respects as equals" (pp. 116-117, italics added).


5 In using the opportunity structure analogy we are assuming that marriage to a man of high social status is a desired goal among women. There is some evidence that this is not an unreasonable assumption. For example, in Turner's study of Los Angeles high school seniors, only 15.0 percent of the girls mentioned blue-collar occupations as the kind of occupations they would like their future husbands to have. On the other hand, 58.5 percent of the girls said that they would like their future husbands to have an occupation in the "professional" or "large-business owners, officials" category. See Ralph H. Turner, The Social Context of Ambition (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1964), esp. pp. 39-41 and Table 40.


8 For a discussion of the function of the college sorority in marital selection see John Finley Scott, Socioeconomic Background

Socioeconomic background is undoubtedly a crucial factor in this opportunity structure. A good deal of writing and research has dealt with the limits and restrictions placed on marital choice by such "cultural factors" as socioeconomic background. For a variety of reasons, including residential propinquity, socialization to similar values and life-style preferences, etc., class endogamy is a common pattern. Consequently, we would expect a woman's opportunity for access to men of high social status to be directly related to her own socioeconomic background.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment, that is, acquiring a college education, is also an important means of access to "potentially" high-status men. The very fact of going to college places a young woman in a situation where the probability of meeting men destined for at least white-collar occupations is higher than it is for noncollege-going women. While this should not be taken to imply that the sole or even major function of college for women is providing an arena for marital selection, it is nevertheless an important latent function. Clearly, educational attainment
is not independent of socioeconomic background. A large amount of research has indicated that the likelihood of going to college increases as socioeconomic status increases. However, not all college-going women are from middle- and upper-class backgrounds; some young women from working-class backgrounds do go to college. While the correlation between socioeconomic background and college-going is high, it is low enough to warrant considering educational attainment as a separate or additional variable affecting women's access to men of high social status.

Occupational Attainment

Occupational attainment may also be a factor affecting access to high-status men. Preparation for a relatively high-status occupation may bring a woman into contact with high-status men. For example, the woman who attends college in order to prepare for a career in teaching has many opportunities for meeting potentially high-status men. In this case, however, the effects of educational attainment are difficult to distinguish from those of occupational attainment. Occupational attainment might also affect access to high-status men through the work-setting in which women in specific occupations find themselves. For example, while secretaries in large business concerns do not necessarily marry their bosses, they do have greater access to and contact with men in managerial and executive-level occupations than do drugstore waitresses. Propinquity, by bringing a woman into contact with men in a particular range of occupational statuses, may limit or enhance her access to high-status men. Consequently, the requisite training and education for the occupation and the work-setting are separate dimensions of occupational attainment which may enhance or diminish a woman's chances of marrying a man of high social status.

Community Size

Community size is the final factor to be dealt with here in relation to access to high-status men. The size of the community in which a young woman resides seems important insofar as men of high social status (particular men in professional and managerial occupations) are disproportionately concentrated in urban areas. Thus, in terms of probabilities, women from urban areas would have a better chance of meeting high-status men than would those from rural areas. An important qualification regarding the operation of community size in this opportunity structure should be noted. If our earlier reasoning about educational attainment is correct, the relationship of community size to access may be spurious since the likelihood of going to college increases with increasing community size. However, this relationship is not so strong as to preclude any independent effect of community size on opportunity for access to men of high social status.

Before stating some hypotheses regarding marriage to high-status men suggested by this discussion, it is necessary to discuss the sample and data with which we will be dealing, since the hypotheses are specific to some of the sample characteristics.

Sample, Data, and Hypotheses

The data on which this paper is based are from two surveys—a survey of Wisconsin high school seniors in 1957 and a follow-up survey of these former students in 1964. In 1957 a questionnaire dealing with post-high school educational and occupational plans, parental educational and occupational status,
residential characteristics, etc., was administered to virtually the entire population of seniors in the public, private, and parochial high schools in Wisconsin. From this population of high school seniors a one-third random sample of 10,321 usable cases (5,004 boys and 5,317 girls) were selected.

In 1964, seven years after these students completed high school, a follow-up survey of the one-third sample was initiated. The major objective of this phase of the study was to determine the educational and occupational attainment of the former seniors. A postage-paid double postcard questionnaire was sent to the parents of the students at their 1957 addresses informing them of their son’s or daughter’s participation in the study and asking them to provide information on their child’s educational activities since high school and current occupational status. Information was also requested on marital status and, in the case of girls, on the occupational status of their husbands.

Four mailings of the questionnaire were conducted. If the first questionnaire was not returned, a second questionnaire stamped “Urgent Second Request” was sent. Nonrespondents after the second wave were sent the same questionnaire stamped “Urgent Third Request.” Third-wave nonrespondents were sent a letter explaining again the nature and purposes of the survey, the returnable portion of the questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. An attempt was also made to obtain a telephone interview with those persons who were still nonrespondents after four mailings. This technique was highly successful once the respondent was contacted. However, accurate telephone numbers could be found for only about half of the fourth-wave nonrespondents.

Approximately 20 percent of the initial mailing was returned by the post office as undeliverable for a variety of reasons, such as “moved, left no address,” “forwarding period expired,” etc. Accurate, up-to-date addresses for over three-fifths of these persons were obtained from the State of Wisconsin tax rolls. Contact was then attempted by successive mailings and, if necessary, by telephone. In all, 91.1 percent of the parents were contacted, and 95.8 percent of those contacted provided the information requested. Thus, follow-up information was obtained for 87.3 percent (9,007 cases) of the original sample.12

The hypotheses and analysis presented here will deal with girls who selected nursing as their occupational choice when they were high school seniors in 1957. Of the 411 girls who selected nursing, 377 (90.2 percent) were successfully followed-up in 1964. Since we are concerned with husband’s social status, the sample to be dealt with here is reduced to 296 “nursing aspirants” who were married as of 1964. By restricting the analysis to this occupational choice cohort it will be possible to examine the relationship between attainment of occupational choice and husband’s social status. It should also be pointed out that the use of a cohort of this type controls any “contaminating” effect that age might have on the relationships to be examined.

For the purpose of stating hypotheses, we will assume that occupational attainment is the most important determinant of husband’s status. Thus, occupational attainment will be treated as the independent variable and husband’s status as the dependent variable. Educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and community size will be treated as control variables.

Our First Hypothesis is that those girls who became nurses will be more likely to marry high-status men than will those who did not become nurses.

A Second Hypothesis suggested by our earlier discussion can best be stated in the form of a rank ordering. When educational attainment is controlled, those who became nurses by attending college will be most likely to marry high-status men; those who became nurses but did not attend college will be next most likely to marry high-status men; those who attended college but did not become nurses will be next most likely to marry men of high

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12 A more detailed discussion of the follow-up survey and an analysis of factors related to early and late response is presented in Kenneth G. Lutterman and Ronald M. Pavalko, “Characteristics of Willing and Reluctant Respondents: Contingency Table versus Multivariate Analysis,” paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago, 1965. In this analysis, comparisons on known student characteristics indicate no significant differences between respondents and nonrespondents.
status; and those who neither became nurses nor attended college will be least likely to marry high-status men.

The Third and Fourth Hypotheses are that the relationship between occupational attainment and husband's status will persist when — Third — socioeconomic background, and — Fourth — community size are separately controlled.

Three additional hypotheses can be specified by taking into account two of the three control variables simultaneously. Thus, a Fifth Hypothesis is that the status of a high-status dependent variable, occupational attainment, those analysis are defined as follows. For the independent variable, occupational attainment and socioeconomic background are simultaneously controlled. The Sixth Hypothesis is that husband's status will be directly related to attainment of occupational choice when educational attainment and socioeconomic background are simultaneously controlled. The Seventh Hypothesis is that husband's status will be directly related to attainment of occupational choice when socioeconomic background and community size are simultaneously controlled.

In testing these hypotheses, Chi-square will be used as the test of statistical significance. Chi-square values at or exceeding the .05 level of significance will be taken as statistical support for the hypothesis.

A final task of this analysis will be to attempt an evaluation of the relative importance of occupational attainment, educational attainment, socioeconomic background, and community size as factors affecting husband's status.

Operationally, the variables used in this analysis are defined as follows. For the independent variable, occupational attainment, those girls who became registered nurses (through either a hospital or collegiate program) are treated as having become nurses. All others are defined as not having become nurses. The dependent variable, husband's status, is based on the occupation of the girl's husband. High occupational status men are defined as those in "professional" and "business manager or proprietor" occupations. All others are defined as low status. The control variable, educational attainment, is based on whether or not the girl attended a college or university. The control variable, socioeconomic background, is based on a factor-weighted combination of father's occupation, father's and mother's education, an estimate of the funds the family could provide if the student were to attend college, the degree of sacrifice this would entail for the family, and the student's perception of the relative wealth and income status of her family. Students of high socioeconomic background are defined as those in the upper half of the distribution, and low socioeconomic background refers to those in the lower half of the distribution. The final control variable, community size, is based on the size of the community in which the student resided in 1957. Rural—small town refers to communities with less than 25,000 population. Those who resided in cities over 25,000 population are classified as urban.

**FINDINGS**

Data bearing on the first two hypotheses are presented in Table 1. From the total column it is apparent that those girls who became nurses more often marry high-status men than do those who do not become nurses, thereby supporting the First Hypothesis.

**Table 1. Percentage Who Married High Occupational Status Men by Occupational Attainment and Educational Attainment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No College</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>45.0 (120)*</td>
<td>66.8 (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>33.3 (96)</td>
<td>41.7 (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>39.3 (216)</td>
<td>52.5 (80)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In this and the following tables numbers in parentheses indicate the number of cases on which the percentage is based.

In this and the following tables numbers in parentheses indicate the number of cases on which the percentage is based.

Partial support for the Second Hypothesis can also be found in Table 1. As predicted, college-attending girls who became nurses are most likely to marry high-status men (68.8 percent). While the noncollege-attending girls who became nurses are next most likely to marry high-status men (45.0 percent), they do not differ substantially from the college-attending girls who did not become nurses (41.7 percent). Those girls who neither attended college nor became nurses are least likely to marry high-status men (33.3 percent). The difference between them and the noncollege-attending girls
who became nurses is not statistically significant. However, it is in the predicted direction.

The fact that a girl can become a nurse through either a collegiate or hospital training program provides an opportunity for contrasting the access to high-status men provided by college versus noncollege training for the occupation. Thus, becoming a nurse without going to college is as effective a way of marrying a high-status man as attending college but not becoming a nurse. Whatever advantages in access that may accrue to the college-going girl can apparently be offset by the noncollege-going girl by becoming a nurse.

### Table 2. Percentage Who Married High Occupational Status Men by Occupational Attainment and Socioeconomic Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>Socioeconomic Background</th>
<th>Community Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low*</td>
<td>High*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>32.0 (43)</td>
<td>56.9 (106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>27.8 (34)</td>
<td>41.1 (90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.9 (47)</td>
<td>49.8 (109)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*χ²=0.86; not significant at .05 level.

The Third Hypothesis, that occupational attainment would be related to husband’s status when socioeconomic background is controlled, is partially supported by the data in Table 2. This relationship holds only among girls of high socioeconomic background. Thus, by becoming nurses girls from high socioeconomic backgrounds enhance their already favorable chances of marrying high-status men, relative to girls from similar backgrounds who do not become nurses. Among girls from low socioeconomic backgrounds, no such incremental value can be attached to becoming a nurse. The lower accessibility of high-status men attributable to low socioeconomic backgrounds is not mitigated by occupational attainment.

Data bearing on the Fourth Hypothesis, that occupational attainment would be related to husband’s status when community size is controlled, is presented in Table 3. The hypothesis is partially supported. It holds among rural-small town girls, but not among those from urban areas. In other words, while girls from rural areas and small towns are at a disadvantage in their opportunities for meeting high-

### Table 3. Percentage Who Married High Occupational Status Men by Occupational Attainment and Community Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>Community Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural-Small Town*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>45.8 (96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>28.5 (77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38.2 (173)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*χ²=5.60; significant at .06 level.

status men, becoming a nurse apparently increases these opportunities. In fact, rural-small town girls who become nurses are just as likely to marry high-status men as are urban girls who do not become nurses (45.8 percent and 44.8 percent, respectively). Among urban girls whose access to high-status men is greater to begin with, those who become nurses marry high-status men more often than those who do not become nurses, as predicted (12.3 percent difference). However, this difference is not statistically significant.

Hypotheses Five, Six, and Seven, pertaining to the relationship of occupational attainment and husband’s status with two of the three control variables taken into account at the same time, receive only partial support.

At each educational attainment and socioeconomic background level, those girls who became nurses marry high-status men more often than do girls who did not become nurses (Table 4), as predicted in Hypothesis Five. However, this relationship is statistically significant only in the case of girls from high socioeconomic backgrounds who went to college. For them becoming nurses increases their access to high-status men despite the fact they are already in a favored position by virtue of their high socioeconomic background and college attendance. Among girls who are, in a sense, disadvantaged by either coming from a lower socioeconomic background or not going to college, becoming nurses does not significantly increase their access to high-status men.

When educational attainment and community size are controlled simultaneously the hypothesized relationship between occupational attainment and husband’s status is statistically significant only in the case of rural-small town girls.
TABLE 4. PERCENTAGE WHO MARRIED HIGH OCCUPATIONAL STATUS MEN BY OCCUPATIONAL ATTAINMENT, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>No College</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low SESa</td>
<td>High SESb</td>
<td>Low SESc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>32.4 (37)</td>
<td>50.6 (83)</td>
<td>33.3 (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>27.5 (40)</td>
<td>37.5 (56)</td>
<td>28.6 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29.9 (77)</td>
<td>45.3 (139)</td>
<td>30.0 (20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*x^2=0.23; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*x^2=0.56; not significant at .06 level.
\*\*\*x^2=0.31; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*\*\*x^2=5.48; significant at .05 level.

TABLE 5. PERCENTAGE WHO MARRIED HIGH OCCUPATIONAL STATUS MEN BY OCCUPATIONAL ATTAINMENT, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, AND COMMUNITY SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>No College</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural-Small Towna</td>
<td>Urbanb</td>
<td>Rural-Small Townc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>41.5 (82)</td>
<td>52.6 (38)</td>
<td>71.4 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>35.1 (57)</td>
<td>30.8 (39)</td>
<td>10.0 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38.9 (139)</td>
<td>41.6 (77)</td>
<td>35.3 (34)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*x^2=0.56; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*x^2=3.79; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*\*x^2=18.61; significant at .05 level.
\*\*\*\*x^2=0.05; not significant at .06 level.

TABLE 6. PERCENTAGE WHO MARRIED HIGH OCCUPATIONAL STATUS MEN BY OCCUPATIONAL ATTAINMENT, SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND, AND COMMUNITY SIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural-Small Towna</td>
<td>Urbanb</td>
<td>Rural-Small Townc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Became nurses</td>
<td>26.7 (30)</td>
<td>46.2 (13)</td>
<td>54.6 (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not become nurses</td>
<td>25.0 (32)</td>
<td>31.8 (22)</td>
<td>31.1 (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25.8 (62)</td>
<td>37.1 (35)</td>
<td>45.0 (111)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\*x^2=0.28; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*x^2=0.72; not significant at .05 level.
\*\*\*x^2=8.94; significant at .05 level.
\*\*\*\*x^2=0.78; not significant at .05 level.

who attended college. In the case of urban girls who did not go to college, the Chi-square value for the difference between those who did and did not become nurses is 0.05 below that necessary for a statistically significant relationship. For rural–small town girls, going to college and becoming a nurse seems to be a way of improving their disadvantageous position in the opportunity structure. In fact, they marry high-status men a little more often than do urban girls who also go to college and become nurses (71.4 percent to 66.7 percent, respectively). The disadvantage of coming from a rural–small town background is not overcome by simply becoming a nurse, however. This can be seen in the fact that among non-college-going girls from rural–small town backgrounds, those who become nurses are no more likely
to marry high-status men than are those who do not become nurses.

Data for Hypothesis Seven, that occupational attainment would be related to husband's status when socioeconomic background and community size are simultaneously controlled, are presented in Table 6. The predicted relationship holds only for rural—small town girls of high socioeconomic background. They are, at the same time, favored by high socioeconomic background and disadvantaged by the size of the community in which they reside. Becoming nurses enhances their opportunity for access to high-status men. It should also be pointed out that high socioeconomic background girls from rural—small town areas who do not become nurses are no more likely to marry high-status men (31.1 percent) than are low socioeconomic background girls from both residence categories who do not become nurses (25.0 percent for the rural—small town and 31.8 percent for the urban girls).

An alternative way of examining the relevance of occupational attainment, educational attainment, socioeconomic background, and community size to the dependent variable, husband's status, is to ask how much of the variation in husband's status is explained by these variables, both singly and in combination. In this way the relative extent to which these factors are contingencies affecting access to high-status men can be ascertained.

Coleman's measure of "effect parameters," explicitly designed for attribute data, is highly suitable for this task. Table 7 presents these effect parameters computed directly from the data in Tables 4 through 6.

The data in Table 7 indicate that almost half (.474) of the variation in husband's status is explained by occupational attainment, educational attainment, and socioeconomic background. These variables explain more of the variation in husband's status than does any other combination of variables. The effect parameters computed from Table 4 also indicate that socioeconomic background explains nearly twice as much of the variation in husband's status as does either occupational attainment or educational attainment.

When the effects of occupational attainment, educational attainment, and community size are examined (based on data in Table 5), occupational attainment explains a little more of the variation in husband's status than does either educational attainment or community size.

The final combination of variables—occupational attainment, socioeconomic background, and community size—explains a total of .425 of the variation in husband's status. About the same amount of variation is explained by occupational attainment and community size, while slightly more is explained by socioeconomic background.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This paper is concerned with determinants of the social status of women. Accepting the view of stratification theory that women's social status is generally determined by that of their husbands, we have attempted to specify some factors that function as contingencies affecting opportunity for access to high-status men.

Of the four factors suggested as defining this structure of opportunity, the data examined indicate that socioeconomic background is relatively more important than occupational attainment, educational attainment, and community size (Table 7).

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**Table 7. The Effect of Four Variables in Combination of Threes on Husband's Occupational Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computed from Table</th>
<th>Occupational Attainment</th>
<th>Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Socioeconomic Background</th>
<th>Community Size</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.223</td>
<td></td>
<td>.474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.169</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>.453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>.125</td>
<td></td>
<td>.131</td>
<td></td>
<td>.425</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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However, there are several important circumstances in which occupational attainment is related to husband's status. This occurs in the cases of high socioeconomic background girls who went to college (Table 4), girls from rural–small town backgrounds who went to college (Table 5), and high socioeconomic background girls from rural and small town areas (Table 6). In these cases, those who became nurses were significantly more likely to marry high-status men than were those who did not become nurses. Also, occupational attainment (in this case becoming a nurse) seems to be a way in which noncollege-going girls can “equalize” their opportunity for access to high-status men relative to that of college-going girls who do not become nurses (Table 1).

We conclude then that the “opportunity structure model” dealt with here has considerable relevance to the question of how women gain access to high-status men and, concomitantly, to the upper levels of the stratification system. However, at least two additional lines of inquiry can be suggested. These are, first, specification of additional variables that might be related to access to high-status men and, second, investigation of the extent to which other female occupations (e.g., teaching) might provide opportunities for access to men of high status.

DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITIONS AND EXTENDED FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS: EGYPTIAN DATA

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ABSTRACT

It has generally been supposed that households composed of three or more generations are the typical residence arrangement among a sizeable segment of the world's population. However, proponents of this view have failed to consider the extent to which demographic conditions may limit opportunities to form and maintain extended family households. Data from two interview studies conducted in Egypt, one of several Middle Eastern countries where an extended family system is thought to prevail in terms of both expected and actual behavior in rural, if not urban, locales are cited to illustrate this phenomenon.

The possibility that demographic factors may hold the number of three-generation households existing at any given point in time to a minority even in areas where an overwhelming majority of the population favors extended family residence arrangements and economic conditions encourage them is just beginning to receive the attention it merits in literature on comparative family and kinship structure.

Prior to publication of Goode's World Revolution and Family Patterns in 1963, it had generally been supposed that households composed of three or more generations were the typical residence arrangement among a sizeable segment of the world's populace. Goode and Levy raise serious questions about the validity of this view. They point out that proponents of this view

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3 See, for example, George Peter Murdock, Social Structure (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1949), chaps. 1 and 2. Also see Goode's and Levy's comments in this regard in the works cited above.