

Economics 7340 - Growth and Development I

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University of Houston, Spring 2020

January 29, 2020

Cousin Marriage Short Paper

Family structure is one of tangible ways culture manifests itself. In particular, consanguinity, or cousin-marriage, appears to be a sign of strong kin-based families and a focus on within-kin-group trust. In contrast, restrictions on cousin marriage are associated with less reliance on kin-groups, and possibly more universal trust. There are questions about whether we can observe these differences outside of the European or cross-country context, and about what the sources of variation in cousin-marriage are.

For this short paper, you should (1) provide a summary of the arguments for the relationship of cousin-marriage and development, (2) provide summary statistics showing variation in cousin-marriage either across ethnic groups, countries, or within countries, and (3) explain a research design you could use to find whether the summary stats in fact represent causal effects of cousin-marriage on development.

Reading list

For the purposes of this short paper, there are a few papers that we talked about in class already. But you can also look through some of these sources as well.

Reading list:

- J. F. Schulz (2016). *The Churches' Ban on Consanguineous Marriages, Kin-networks, and Democracy*. Tech. rep. CEDEX
- J. F. Schulz et al. (2018). *The Origins of WEIRD Psychology*. Tech. rep.
- J. F. Schulz (2018). "The Catholic Church, Kin Networks, and Institutional Development". Working paper
- A. Alesina and P. Giuliano (2010). "The power of the family". *Journal of Economic Growth* 15.2, pp. 93–125
- A. Greif and G. Tabellini (2017). "The clan and the corporation: Sustaining cooperation in China and Europe". *Journal of Comparative Economics* 45.1, pp. 1–35
- M. Mitterauer (2010). *Why Europe? The Medieval Origins of its Special Path*. University of Chicago Press [Chapters 1-4 at least]
- J. Goody (1983). *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe*. Cambridge University Press

Data sources

To work on this topic, I'm going to point you more specifically towards some data on the prevalence of cousin marriage. The DHS has, in a few surveys, specific questions about whether women were related to their husbands prior to marriage, and how they were related (i.e. first cousin on fathers side, second cousin on mothers, etc.).

- IPUMS-DHS
- Ethnographic Atlas