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The prevalence and trends of educational homogamy

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The proposed paper will examine the prevalence and trends of educational homogamy (the tendency of partners to share educational characteristics) using data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey. Research from other countries universally indicates that there is a significant relationship between the educational attainment of a respondent and the educational level of their partner. In most countries educational homogamy is a stronger among partners than other socioeconomic indicators such as occupational homogamy or class origin. Further patterns from select countries indicate that grouping at either end of the educational scale is becoming more marked across time. This suggests educational barriers are increasingly difficult to cross for young people today when choosing a partner. As educational attainment increasingly determines the economic and social position of individuals and thus their offspring, such trends contribute to the rigidity of social boundaries and perpetuating inequality across generations. The proposed paper will examine education and other variables using data from HILDA such as; income, cohabitation, age at marriage, age of spouses, socio-economic status, religion and ethnicity; endeavouring to determine how relevant these factors are in spouse selection for people entering relationships today and historically.