



The *Ojadeung gwaja* System in the Joseon Dynasty: Institutionalizing Confucian Education and Family Rewards

Sangmoo LEE, Daekwon PARK, and Ying ZHOU

Abstract

This article examines the ojadeung gwaja program of the Joseon dynasty, which institutionalized rewards for families with five sons who passed the civil service examinations. Rooted in Confucian values, this unique reward system, unlike similar achievements in China, emphasized the role of family education in fostering academic excellence. By analyzing historical records, this study explores how the program developed, highlighting its significance in promoting learning and virtue in Korean society. The research also compares similar Chinese traditions, offering a nuanced understanding of the cultural and educational context of both regions.

Keywords: *ojadeung gwaja*, Joseon dynasty, civil service examinations, Confucian education, family rewards

First author: Sangmoo LEE is an assistant professor at Seoul National University. E-mail: noproblem@snu.ac.kr.

Second author: Daekwon PARK is an associate professor at the Academy of Korean Studies. E-mail: topgun@aks.ac.kr.

Corresponding author: Ying ZHOU is a PhD at the Academy of Korean Studies. E-mail: jiaoyuxuezy@163.com.

Introduction

The Joseon dynasty established the *ojadeung gwaja* 五子登科者 (families with five sons who passed the civil service examination) program to reward parents for their exemplary educational practices. This program was rooted in the “*Janggwon*” 獎勸 (Codicils on Ritual and Encouragement) section of the *Gyeongguk daejeon* 經國大典 (Great Code of Administration), which outlined the royal awards system for individuals who performed commendable deeds, thus encouraging the setting of positive examples within society. The first clause of the “*Janggwon*” addressed rewards for filial sons and virtuous women, while the second focused on *ojadeung gwaja*.

The Korean term *ojadeung gwaja* derives from the Chinese *wuzi dengke* 五子登科, which literally means “five sons who succeeded in the imperial examination.” The term first appears in the *Sanzijing* 三字經 (Three-Character Classic), an ancient textbook designed to teach Chinese characters to children. Because China maintained the civil service examination system over a long historical period, there were indeed documented cases of *wuzi dengke*—in fact, a total of 26 verifiable instances from the Five Dynasties through the Qing dynasty.¹ However, research into historical sources has found no evidence of any systematic or codified reward mechanism specifically established for families with five sons who passed the examinations. Instead, the honors

-
1. Through research in digital archives like the *Zhongguo jiben gujiku* 中國基本古籍庫 (Database of Chinese Classic Ancient Books), *Zhongguo fangzhiku* 中國方誌庫 (Database of Chinese Local Records), *Zhongguo congshuku* 中國從書庫 (Database of Chinese Collectanea), and *Zhongguo leishuku* 中國類書庫 (Chinese Ancient Encyclopedia), this study identified 26 instances of *wuzi dengke* from the Five Dynasties 五代 period through the Qing dynasty 清代. In addition, during the Qing, there were 4 instances of 6 sons passing the civil service examination (*liuzi dengke* 六子登科) and 2 instances of 7 sons passing the examination (*qizi dengke* 七子登科) (Airusheng Dianhai Platform, accessed March 16, 2024). To further validate the authenticity of the records, an investigation was conducted into the information regarding the aforementioned successful candidates. Their examination results were confirmed through the *Ming qing jinshi timing beilu suoyi* 明清進士題名碑錄索引 (Index to the Inscription Records of Jinshi from the Ming and Qing Dynasties) (Zhu and Xie 1979), the *China Biographical Database* (CBDB) (Harvard University, accessed March 18, 2024), and the *Renming quanwei renwu zhuanji ziliao ku* 人名權威人物傳記資料庫 (Authoritative Biographical Database of Historical Figures) (Academia Sinica, accessed March 16, 2024).

granted to such families—such as inscribed plaques, the construction of archways, or the conferral of honorary titles—were largely symbolic in nature.

The Joseon dynasty adopted and promoted *ojadeung gwaja* as a national award program to encourage learning and virtue in line with Confucian teachings. This program required that families meet certain conditions: an open competitive examinations—*gwageo* 科擧 (civil service examination)—had to be held; five or more sons from a single family had to pass; and the government needed to acknowledge these cases by awarding a prize. Given that the civil service examinations selected candidates based on specific subjects, the program emphasized academic mastery. The *ojadeung gwaja* program, which rewarded parents for raising successful sons, was unique and unparalleled in other parts of the world. The existence of this system also indirectly supports the statement made by Klaus Dittrich and Dolf-Alexander Neuhaus that “Confucianism and the civil service examinations have shaped the longue durée history of Korean education” (Dittrich and Neuhaus 2023, 541).

This study aims to investigate how the *ojadeung gwaja* program was implemented in the Joseon dynasty. While the *gwageo* examination system has been widely discussed, relatively little attention has been given to *ojadeung gwaja*. Previous studies have only briefly mentioned the related regulations and examined only a few cases (S. Lee 1994; Cho 1974). Over the past decade, two major Korean journals on the history of education have published several articles on the Joseon-era *gwageo* (Kim 2018; S. Lee 2013; S. Lee 2014; S. Lee 2015). However, the *ojadeung gwaja* is scarcely mentioned in these studies.

This article comprehensively examines how the reward regulation for *ojadeung gwaja* was initiated, developed, and sustained based on official Joseon records. The implementation of the *ojadeung gwaja* program is analyzed, highlighting its main features and correlating the lists of target parents found in official records.

History of *Ojadeung gwaja*

As previously mentioned, while the concept of *ojadeung gwaja* originated in China and numerous instances of this achievement can be found in Chinese

history, it was only on the Korean Peninsula that this accomplishment was institutionalized as part of a formal reward system. The *ojadeung gwaja* reward system of the Joseon dynasty was, in fact, an extension of similar traditions from the preceding Goryeo dynasty.

Records indicate that *ojadeung gwaja* was first established when Kim Bucheol's 金富轍 mother received 40 *seom* 石 (1 *seom* =144 kg) of rice after four of her sons passed the civil service examination in 1097.² It can be inferred from this record that the relevant system began operating in Goryeo in 1097.

Similarly, there is another record for the year 1192 of parents being rewarded for their four sons passing the exam.³ Records from 1097 and 1192 state that the parents received additional rewards because four of their sons had passed the examination, implying that the minimum number of sons required to receive the reward was three.

Additionally, records of rewards for families with three or four sons passing the examination can also be found in documents related to figures such as Bak In-ryang 朴寅亮,⁴ Kim Bu-il 金富佾,⁵ Sul Gong-geom 薛公儉,⁶ and Kim Tae-hyeon 金台鉉.⁷ These records, found in the “Biographies” section of the *Goryeosa*, illustrate the rewards granted to families with three or four sons who passed the civil service examination.

The *Sejong sillok* 世宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Sejong) records the case of U Hyeon-bo 禹玄寶, a civil servant from the late Goryeo dynasty, who had five sons who all passed the civil service examination.⁸ The “Chiriji” 地理誌 (Geography) monograph of the *Sejong sillok* introduces U Hyeon-bo as a figure from Danyang-gun 丹陽郡. The accomplishment of his five sons—U

2. *Goryeosa* 高麗史 (History of the Goryeo Dynasty), *gwon* 74, “Seongeoji” 選舉志 (Monograph on Recruitment), “Sungjang jeollye” 崇獎典例 (Statutes on Commendation and Rewards).

3. *Goryeosa*, *gwon* 74, “Seongeoji,” “Sungjang jeollye.”

4. *Goryeosa*, *gwon* 95, “Yeoljeon” 列傳 (Biographies).

5. *Goryeosa*, *gwon* 97, “Yeoljeon.”

6. *Goryeosa*, *gwon* 105, “Yeoljeon.”

7. *Goryeosa*, *gwon* 110, “Yeoljeon.”

8. *Sejong sillok* (Veritable Records of King Sejong), *gwon* 149, “Chiriji” 地理誌 (Monograph on Geography).

Hong-su 禹洪壽, U Hong-bu 禹洪富, U Hong-gang 禹洪康, U Hong-deuk 禹洪得, and U Hong-myeong 禹洪命—can be confirmed in the records of civil service examination passers during the Goryeo dynasty.

The reward regulations from the Goryeo dynasty were maintained into the early years of the succeeding Joseon dynasty. The first king of Joseon, King Taejo, ordered a stipend be granted to mothers who had three sons who had passed the state examination, in accordance with the system of old times.⁹ This “system of old times” refers to the reward regulation for *samjadeung gwaja* 三子登科者 (families with three sons who passed the civil service examinations) in effect during the Goryeo dynasty. There is also a record from the reign of King Sejong of a mother being rewarded when her five sons passed the state examination.¹⁰ As these examples suggest, the reward regulation for *samjadeung gwaja* from the Goryeo period was indeed carried over into the early Joseon.

This regulation was seen as a way of encouraging study.¹¹ In 1412, the Saganwon 司諫院 (Office of the Censor-General) requested the king to continue this system, emphasizing that rewarding *samjadeung gwaja* was an excellent method for fostering academic pursuit, even though it originated in the previous Goryeo dynasty. When one son passed the state examination, the other sons were encouraged to study diligently, creating an environment that promoted learning.

This favorable attitude toward the reward system of the Goryeo dynasty persisted into the Joseon era. Although a new dynasty had been established, the old regulation remained in place. The continuation of this tradition in the Joseon dynasty is also documented in external sources, such as the *Chaoxianzhi* 朝鮮誌 (Record of Joseon) from the Ming dynasty. This text highlights how the Joseon government not only maintained the reward system but also celebrated these achievements with specific ceremonies, such as the Yeongjinhyeon 榮親宴 (Banquet in Honor of Parents) for living parents

9. *Taejo sillok* (Veritable Records of King Taejo), 14th day of the 7th lunar month, 1393.

10. *Sejong sillok*, 30th day of the 10th lunar month, 1447.

11. *Taejong sillok* (Veritable Records of King Taejong), 19th day of the 5th lunar month, 1412.

and the Yeongbun 榮墳 (Honorary Tomb) for deceased parents.¹²

In 1459, during the Joseon dynasty, the first recorded discussion of rewards for families whose five sons passed the examination took place. King Sejo 世祖 ordered the Yejo 禮曹 (Ministry of Rites) to grant parents of such families 20 *seom* of rice annually, to bestow posthumous titles on deceased parents, and to hold memorial ceremonies in the local county,¹³ a decision that was reaffirmed in the 7th month of 1459.¹⁴

A comparison of the *Sejo sillok* records from 3rd and 7th months of 1459 shows the first formal resolution on the actions to take when five sons passed the state examination. The only difference between the two decrees is the use of the terms *chubong* 追封 in the 3rd month and *chujeung* 追贈 in the 7th. But as both *chubong* and *chujeung* mean to bestow a government post upon the deceased, the two resolutions are the same in intent.

Not long after this discussion, the regulation was applied in practice. The Ministry of Rites submitted a request to the king, stating: “Since Yi In-son’s 李仁孫 five sons and Yi Sa-gwan’s 李士寬 six sons have all passed the state examination, Yi In-son, who is still living, should receive 20 *seom* of rice annually, while the deceased Yi Sa-gwan should be honored with a memorial ceremony.” To this the king assented.¹⁵ This decision aligned exactly with what King Sejo had decreed in 3rd and 7th months of 1459.

Another example of the application of this regulation can be confirmed in the following year. The Ministry of Rites reported that since An Gyeong’s 安璟 five sons had passed the civil service examinations, it was required that their mother receive rice and their deceased father be honored with ancestral rites, in accordance with tradition. Again, the king approved this request.¹⁶ This case also proves that parents received rewards when their five sons passed the state examinations. The mother, who was still living, received rice, while their deceased father was honored with a memorial ceremony.

12. *Chaoxianzhi* 朝鮮誌 (Records of Joseon), Ming dynasty, *juan shang* 卷上 (Upper Fascicle), “Fengsu” 風俗 (Customs).

13. *Sejo sillok* (Veritable Records of King Sejo), 3rd day of the 4th lunar month, 1459.

14. *Sejo sillok*, 7th day of the 4th lunar month, 1459.

15. *Sejo sillok*, 16th day of the 7th lunar month, 1459.

16. *Sejo sillok*, 29th day of the intercalary 11th lunar month, 1460.

Afterward, such actions were incorporated into the *Yejeon* 禮典 (Code of Rites) of the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, as follows: “If the *ojadeung gwaja* are living, they shall be granted an annual rice stipend; if deceased, they shall be posthumously awarded an official title and honored with a memorial ceremony.”¹⁷ In short, this regulation, inherited from the Goryeo dynasty, was incorporated into the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, the foundational legal code of the Joseon dynasty, thus maintaining the tradition of rewarding parents whose multiple sons succeeded in the civil service examination.

Because the reward regulation for *ojadeung gwaja* in the *Gyeongguk daejeon* was stated in a very succinct manner, the application of this regulation required further clarification and elucidation. Key issues included determining the appropriate title to be conferred upon a deceased father, defining which types of examinations qualified as passing the civil service examination, and specifying the amount of rice to be awarded to living parents. Whenever such issues arose, the Joseon government addressed them through consultation and deliberation.

The first concern was about the title to be conferred upon a deceased father. Cases of rewarding parents whose five sons passed the state examination, as mandated by the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, continued to emerge throughout the Joseon dynasty. If the parents were deceased, they were posthumously granted a government position and honored with a memorial ceremony. However, discussions often arose regarding the appropriate rank to be bestowed. For example, in 1533, when Bak Geo-rin 朴巨麟 and his five siblings passed the civil service examination, the government performed ancestral rites for their father and conferred upon him an official post. Similarly, in 1516, when Yi Haeng 李荇 and his five brothers passed the examination, their father was bestowed with the senior second rank (正二品). This decision was reported to the king because there was no specific regulation explaining why the senior second rank was chosen.¹⁸

The *Gyeongguk daejeon* only stipulated that a title and a memorial

17. *Gyeongguk daejeon* 經國大典 (Great Code of Administration), *Yejeon* 禮典 (Code of Rites), “Janggwon” 獎勸 (Codicils on Ritual and Encouragement).

18. *Jungjong sillok* (Veritable Records of King Jungjong), 8th day of the 10th lunar month, 1533.

ceremony be granted, without specifying the rank of that title. According to the *Gyeongguk daejeon's Ijeon* 吏典 (Code of Personnel), the senior second rank was a minister-level position, while the junior second rank (從二品) was a vice minister or undersecretary. Thus, an individual who had held no official position during their lifetime could be posthumously granted a ministerial title solely because five of their sons had passed the state examination. King Jungjong 中宗, after being informed of this, ordered this precedent be followed when rewarding parents whose five sons had passed the examination.¹⁹ As a result, Bak Geo-rin's father was bestowed the senior second rank and honored with a memorial service.

This issue of office rank was again raised during the reign of King Seonjo 宣祖, when the posthumous conferment of a title on Eo Su-hon 魚守渾 was deliberated. King Seonjo, pointing out the potential problem with bestowing honors posthumously, inquired about the origin of the practice of awarding *ojadeung gwaja* the second rank title.²⁰ There were questions about the appropriateness of granting a senior or junior second rank to deceased fathers with no prior government position or to minor military officials. The ministers were instructed to review and discuss the matter. Three months later, the conclusion of the consultation was reported. The ministers agreed that ancestral rites could be performed without conferring the second rank, and that it was excessive to award the senior or junior second rank to individuals with no previous government position or military role. They decided that those without prior official rank should be posthumously awarded the sixth rank (六品), and those who had held government positions should be promoted by one rank. This decision became the basis for modifying the existing posthumous conferment system.²¹ This decision from 1604 appears to have systematized to some extent the titles granted to deceased *ojadeung gwaja*. Following this ruling, no further discussions on the issue are recorded.

The second issue was that of the reward. One of the controversies surrounding *ojadeung gwaja* was the eligibility criteria for the award. The

19. *Jungjong sillok*, 8th day of the 10th lunar month, 1533.

20. *Seonjo sillok* (Veritable Records of King Seonjo), 2nd day of the 4th lunar month, 1604.

21. *Seonjo sillok* (Veritable Records of King Seonjo), 1st day of the 5th lunar month, 1604.

Joseon dynasty's examination system included the *saengwonsi* 生員試 (classics licentiate examination), *jinsasi* 進士試 (literary licentiate examination), *mungwa* 文科 (civil service examination), *mugwa* 武科 (military service examination), and *japgwa* 雜科 (miscellaneous examination), as well as the frequently held *chwijae* 取才 (talent-recruitment examination), the last of which selected low-ranking government officials through a simple test. A key question arose: could passing any kind of examination be recognized as passing the higher civil service examination? This issue was debated in 1717, during the reign of King Sukjong 肅宗. At that time, Min Jin-hu 閔鎭厚 suggested to the king that only passing the *daegwa* 大科, the higher civil service examinations, should qualify for *ojadeung gwaja*, explicitly excluding the miscellaneous examinations.²²

Min Jin-hu argued that, while rewarding *ojadeung gwaja* was important, it was overly generous to reward those whose five sons had merely passed miscellaneous examinations. He suggested that *passing the higher civil service examination* should refer solely to the literary and military examinations, excluding even the *saengwonsi* and *jinsasi*, which were not considered part of the higher exams. King Sukjong agreed with Min Jin-hu, saying, "Lower examinations should not receive this prize; it goes without saying that the miscellaneous examination should be excluded. Hereafter, do not reward *ojadeung gwaja* save for success on the higher examinations."²³

The higher civil service examinations (*daegwa*) comprise the literary examination (*mungwa*) and the military examination. Although the higher examinations were usually equated with the civil service examinations, given diverse examples, those whose five sons passed the military service examinations continued to be rewarded. Thus, the higher civil service examinations referred to both the literary examination and the military service examination.

At the time, the literary examinations were legally equivalent to the military examinations. According to the *Yejeon* and *Jegwa* sections of the

22. The miscellaneous examinations included the *yeokgwa* 譯科, *uigwa* 醫科, *eumyanggwa* 陰陽科, and *yulgwa* 律科.

23. *Sukjong sillok* (Veritable Records of King Sukjong), 5th day of the 7th lunar month, 1717.

Gyeongguk daejeon, the two examinations had similar requirements for participation. Both examinations awarded the red certificate (*hongpae* 紅牌) to those who passed. By contrast, the *saengwonsi* and *jinsasi* examinations, along with the miscellaneous examinations, awarded the white certificate (*baekpae* 白牌). This distinction clearly shows that the literary and military exams were treated with special importance.

Moreover, according to the *Yejeon* and *Jegwa* sections of the *Sok daejeon* 續大典 (Supplement to the Great Code of Administration), the literary and military service examinations were conducted simultaneously. For regular exams (*singnyeonsi* 式年試) and irregular exams, (*jeunggwangsi* 增廣試), all types of exams—literary, military, *saengwonsi*, *jinsasi*, and miscellaneous—were administered. However, for certain exams like *byeolsi* 別試, *jeongsi* 庭試, *alseongsi* 謁聖試, and *chundangdaesi* 春塘臺試, only the literary and military service exams were given.

The key disparity between the military service examinations and the miscellaneous examinations lies in the complexity of the examination process. Previous research has tended to underestimate the status of the military exams, likely due to the heavy emphasis placed on the literary exams. However, in terms of the examination structure, the military exams involved a more rigorous process compared to the miscellaneous examinations. According to the *Byeongjeon* 兵典, and *Sichwi* 試取 sections of the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, *mugwa* 武科 were comprised of three stages: *chosi* 初試 (first round), *boksi* 覆試 (second round), and *jeonsi* 殿試 (final round). By contrast, the miscellaneous examinations, such as the *yeokgwa* 譯科 (interpretation examination), *uigwa* 醫科 (medical examination), *eumyanggwa* 陰陽科 (astronomy examination), and *yulgwa* 律科 (law examination) only involved two stages.

In the regular exams (*singnyeonsi*), the literary exams required an oral test on the Seven Classics—that is, the Four Books and Three Classics (*saseo samgyeong* 四書三經), while the military service exams required knowledge of Confucian scriptures, but the miscellaneous examinations did not require either of these (*Gyeongguk daejeon*, *Byeongjeon*, *Sichwi*). Considering these differences, while the military service exams were often regarded as inferior to the literary exams, they were still considered more rigorous and higher in

status than the miscellaneous examinations.

Finally, there was the question of the amount of rice to be awarded. The amount of rice awarded to the living parents of *ojadeung gwaja* varied slightly depending on the period. During the Goryeo dynasty, the parents of *samjadeung gwaja* received 30 seom of rice by convention. However, in the Joseon period, the *Gyeongguk daejeon* regulation reduced this amount, specifying that 20 seom of rice be awarded. Nevertheless, records from the 17th century indicate that the amount given sometimes deviated from that regulated by the *Gyeongguk daejeon*. This suggests that while the foundational law set one standard, adjustments were made over time to the rewards system.

According to an entry in the *Seungjeongwon ilgi* from 2nd day of the 2nd month, 1663, two individuals, Jeong Hyo-jun 鄭孝俊 and Won Hae-gwoeng 元海宏, were rewarded when their five sons passed the civil service examination. Jeong Hyo-jun received 5 seom of rice, while Won Hae-gwoeng was given 3 seom. This discrepancy in the amount of rice awarded led to a petition to King Hyeonjong 顯宗. King Hyeonjong ordered that 5 seom of rice be granted to both.²⁴

This decision of King Hyeonjong set a precedent, influencing future reward practices. From that point forward, fathers whose five sons passed the examination generally received 5 seom of rice. Relative to the Goryeo dynasty, where the reward for *samjadeung gwaja* was 30 seom of rice, the scale of reward in the Joseon dynasty had greatly decreased.

The *Gyeongguk daejeon* regulation regarding *ojadeung gwaja* was partially modified in the *Sok daejeon* such that the *ojadeung gwaja* was rewarded with both a memorial service and a posthumous government position (*Sok Daejeon, Yejeon, Janggwon*). This regulation slightly differs from that in the *Gyeongguk daejeon*. According to the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, if the father was deceased, a memorial service was held, and if the father were still living, he was awarded rice. However, under the *Sok daejeon*, the regulation was adjusted to include the conferral of a promotion. But while the specific rewards varied, the essence of the system remained the same: the *ojadeung gwaja* were always rewarded. This continuous practice of rewarding *ojadeung gwaja* demonstrates the

24. *Seungjeongwon ilgi* (Diary of the Royal Secretariat), 1st day of the 5th lunar month, 1664.

enduring stability of the reward system throughout different periods of both the Goryeo and Joseon dynasties.

The award for *ojadeung gwaja* was typically granted only when all five sons successfully passed the civil service examination. However, more flexible interpretations of this rule began to appear during the late Joseon period. In a notable case from 1753, four of six sons of Song Seok-hu 宋錫後 passed the literary examinations, while the other two passed the lower examinations, while his first grandson also passed the exam. Since there was no regulation accounting for the achievement of a grandson, officials consulted King Yeongjo 英祖, who then ordered that Song Seok-hu be awarded a government position.²⁵

A similar situation occurred under King Gojong 高宗 in 1876. In this instance, Kim Ik-jeong 金益鼎 had three sons and two grandsons who passed the examinations. Prime Minister Yi Choe-eung 李最應 noted, “This is a very rare case, and there is little difference between this and the case wherein four sons and one grandson pass the exams, so it merits a reward,” and he requested that Kim Ik-jeong be honored. King Gojong agreed, and Kim Ik-jeong received the reward.²⁶

These above cases illustrate that during the late Joseon dynasty, exceptions were sometimes made for exemplary cases where families did not strictly meet the five sons requirement. The reward system was applied flexibly in recognition of the rarity and significance of such achievements.

Ojadeung gwaja Cases

The exact number of individuals who were awarded in accordance with the *ojadeung gwaja* reward regulation is difficult to determine. While a comprehensive list of recipients is not readily available, several partial lists have been identified in various official records of the Joseon dynasty. These lists are found in sources such as the *Joseon wangjo sillok* (Veritable Records of

25. *Seungjeongwon ilgi*, 27th day of the 10th lunar month, 1753.

26. *Gojong sillok* (Veritable Records of King Gojong), 27th day of the 2nd lunar month, 1876.

the Joseon Dynasty), *Seungjeongwon ilgi* (Diary of the Royal Secretariat), and *Gwageo deungnok* (Chronological Compilation of Civil Service Examination Records). In many cases, only the names of the fathers are mentioned, though in a few instances, the names of both father and sons are recorded. Table 1 lists the individuals identified as recipients based on the aforementioned sources.

Based on the available sources, a total of 64 individuals were identified as *ojadeung gwaja* recipients. While most of these cases are directly recorded, some are inferred or identified through discussions of rewards. When comparing lists of relevant individuals from the late Joseon period, fewer names appear in the *Joseon wangjo sillok* than in records like the *Seungjeongwon ilgi* and *Gwageo deungnok*. This discrepancy suggests that omissions are more likely in the early Joseon period, where fewer sources exist beyond the *Joseon wangjo sillok*.

Additionally, certain individuals, such as Song Seok-hu 宋錫後, whose four sons and one grandson passed the exam in 1753, and Kim Ik-jeong 金益鼎, who had three sons and two grandsons pass, are not included in the list. Therefore, it is difficult to assert that the 64 recorded individuals represent a comprehensive total of those rewarded. However, the general trend is still observable.

Notably, *ojadeung gwaja* recipients continued to be recognized until the end of the Joseon dynasty. The final recorded case of an *ojadeung gwaja* reward dates to 1893, just one year before the abolition of the civil service examination in 1894. This indicates that the reward regulation for *ojadeung gwaja* remained in effect throughout the entire Joseon period. It also suggests that passing the civil service examination referred to both the military examination and the literary examination. There were more *ojadeung gwaja* awarded for the military examination than the literary examination. In one notable case from the reign of King Sukjong, 14 were rewarded for *ojadeung gwaja* at the same time reign, all for the military examination. In 1676, some 18,251 passers of the military examinations. As this was a significantly large number, there were cases of six sons passing the examination and even that of grandfather and grandson passing the exam simultaneously.²⁷ This explains

27. *Sukjong sillok*, 3rd day of the 4th lunar month, 1676.

Table 1. List of *Ojadeung gwaja* (Joseon Dynasty)

Source	Year	Month	Day	Name	Source	Year	Month	Day	Name
Joseon wangjo sillok	1459	7	16	李士寬	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1678	1	23	趙弘廷
Joseon wangjo sillok	1460	7	16	李仁孫	Gwageo deungnok	1684	12	18	申惟賢
Joseon wangjo sillok	1460	11*	29	安環	Joseon wangjo sillok	1689	5	11	沈光泗
Joseon wangjo sillok	1516	1	21	李宜茂	Gwageo deungnok	1711	5	30	朴廷豪
Joseon wangjo sillok	1533	8	10	朴訥	Joseon wangjo sillok	1727	7	22	李漢珪
Joseon wangjo sillok	1604	2	4	閔諧	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1762	4	17	金萬晃
Joseon wangjo sillok	1604	2	4	魚守渾	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1770	9	27	李泰祥
Seungjeongwon ilgi	1639	8	11	高起春	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1771	9	10	李泰起
Gwageo deungnok				鄭應聖	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1797	8	30	韓壽福
Gwageo deungnok				金仁潔	Joseon wangjo sillok	1799	12	13	元最鎮
Gwageo deungnok				高愛生	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1807	3	20	申啓文
Gwageo deungnok				金駟	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1813	9	23	禹昌世
Gwageo deungnok				李大根	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1815	12	4	金光魯
Joseon wangjo sillok	1663	4	2	鄭孝俊	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1828	1	13	韓泳
Joseon wangjo sillok	1663	4	2	元海宏	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1835	10	21	李鼎會
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	李應先	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1843	5	16	崔柔植
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	高俊	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1864	4	29	李圭徹
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	高汝崇	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1864	5	13	李應植
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	趙啓遠	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1865	5*	3	金在璣
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	李汝璇	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1868	4*	21	金仁錫
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	鄭應立	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1870	4	23	姜顯周
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	辛萱	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1872	2	22	蔡寅默
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	金德明	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1873	6	13	金錫冕
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	鄭好信	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1875	5	23	李熙鐵
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	方智圓	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1875	6	15	李根永
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	金重南	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1875	6	15	李龍求
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	龍仁立	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1875	6	15	李種友
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	林希逸	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1880	10	29	具載善
Gwageo deungnok	1676	6	16	李得龜	Seungjeongwon ilgi	1881	11	21	李基振
Seungjeongwon ilgi	1676	12	8	鄭應三	Gojong Sunjong sillok	1890	2*	2	金晉性
Seungjeongwon ilgi	1677	4	26	金重南	Gojong Sunjong sillok	1890	2*	2	鄭愚植
Seungjeongwon ilgi	1678	1	23	宋智祥	Gojong Sunjong sillok	1893	6	12	李周兢

Note: * indicates a bissextile month.

Table 2. Cases of Different Types of Exam Passers among Sons (Joseon Dynasty)

	Father	Son 1	Son 2	Son 3	Son 4	Son 5	Son 6
Name	李士寬	李義長	李禮長	李智長	李孝長	李誠長	李恕長
Type of exam	Not verifiable	military	literary	literary	literary	literary	literary
Name	趙啓遠	趙晉錫	趙龜錫	趙師錫	趙嘉錫	趙厚錫	
Type of exam	literary	literary	literary	literary	literary	military	

the marked increase in the number of people rewarded for being *ojadeung gwaja* following the military examination of 1676.

In addition, most cases where sons' names are difficult to identify are for passers of the military examination. While the *mungwa bangmok* 文科榜目 (civil examination roster), a list of those who passed the civil examination during the Joseon dynasty, survives, only small remnants of the *mugwa bangmok* 武科榜目 (military examination roster), a list of those who passed the military examination during the Joseon dynasty, survive, and only for a few top passers. If there is record of a father receiving an award but the son's name is difficult to identify, it is most likely to be a case of the military examination.

There are instances of successful candidates of both the literary and military exams hailing from the same family at the same time. Notable examples include Yi Sa-gwan 李士寬 in 1459 and Jo Gye-won 趙啓遠 in 1676, as shown in Table 2.

Yi Sa-gwan had six sons who passed the civil service examination—five succeeded in the literary exam, while one passed the military exam. Similarly, Jo Gye-won had five sons who passed the civil service examination, with one passing the military exam. Interestingly, Jo Hu-seok 趙厚錫, Jo Gye-won's son who passed the military exam, was born to a secondary consort. This suggests that success in the literary and military examinations was considered equally prestigious.

There were also cases where fathers and sons took different types of examinations. Even if a father only passed the lower examination or failed to pass any exam, his five sons could still succeed. In some instances, a father and his sons passed different types of exams. For instance, Kim Seok-myeon 金錫冕 passed the *yulgwa* 律科, while his five sons passed the civil service exam.

Given that their names do not appear in the *mungwa bangmok*, it is likely that Kim Seok-myeon's sons passed the military exam, meaning that while the father passed the law exam, the sons passed the military one.

The way father-son relationships were defined in the records is also interesting. Even in cases of adoption, the biological father was still acknowledged. Sim Gwang-sa 沈光泗, who was rewarded in 1689, had four sons pass the exams. However, for one of those sons, Sim Be-ak 沈栢, Sim Gwang-sa was the biological father though not the legal one. Be-ak's legal father was Sim Gwang-su 沈光洙. In the Joseon period, it was common to adopt a nephew or relative when a family had no sons in order to carry on the lineage. In this case, Sim Gwang-su adopted Sim Be-ak, the son of Sim Gwang-sa, likely because he had no sons. Despite having legally adopted out his son, Sim Gwang-sa was still rewarded as *ojadeung gwaja*. This shows that both adoptive and biological fathers were recognized under the regulation.

Additionally, the regulation acknowledged sons from secondary consorts. As mentioned earlier, Jo Gye-won's son, Jo Hu-seok, was born to a concubine. Although Jo Gye-won had four sons by his primary wife who passed the literary exams, it was only after his concubine's son passed the military exam that he was rewarded as an *ojadeung gwaja*. Despite the social discrimination against sons of concubines, from the perspective of this regulation, they were treated equally with sons of the primary wife.

As discussed above, the *ojadeung gwaja* system in Joseon was not only maintained over an extended period, but also characterized by legal codification, diversified reward mechanisms, and an inclusive scope of eligibility—covering civil and military exam passers, legitimate and illegitimate sons, and even adopted heirs. The system exemplifies a highly institutionalized policy framework through which the state formally recognized and incentivized family-based educational achievement.

To better understand the uniqueness of this system, it is necessary to examine how similar achievements were treated in China during comparable historical periods.

As previously noted, although China also had families with multiple sons passing the civil service examinations—26 such cases have been identified from the Five Dynasties period to the Qing dynasty—these achievements

were not incorporated into a formal state reward system. Instead, they were largely recognized through symbolic and locally administered honors. The following section presents and organizes such cases.

The Song dynasty encyclopedia *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜, in the section on “Commending the Worthy” within the “Emperor Section,” lists various ways of bestowing honors, such as “granting official ranks, providing benefits to descendants, honoring gateways, bestowing grain or silk, exemption from taxes, or conferring sacrificial rites”.²⁸ Since cases of *wuzi dengke* (five sons passing the civil service examination) were extremely rare in the Song dynasty, records of such honors being bestowed on these families are found mainly in the Qing dynasty. The most typical way of honoring these families was by “honoring gateways,” which often involved constructing an archway or bestowing a plaque. For example, after Li Tinggui’s 李廷桂 five sons passed the exam, to honor them local authorities presented a plaque inscribed with “Five Sons Passed the Examination” to honor them.²⁹ After Zeng Huichun’s 曾暉春 five sons passed the exam, “Wei Yuanlang 魏元琅, the magistrate, honored them with a plaque inscribed with ‘Five Sons Passed the Examination’”.³⁰ After Zhang Mengqiu’s 張孟球 death, a plaque with the inscription “Five Sons Passed the Examination” was hung in his ancestral hall.³¹ In addition, other families received plaques such as “Five Phoenixes Flying Together” and were granted permission to construct a so-called Five Gui Pavilion (五桂樓) or Five Gui Archway (五桂坊).³²

28. *Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (Outstanding Models from the Storehouse of Literature), *juan* 137, “Diwangbu” 帝王部 (Emperor Section), “Jingbiao” 旌表 (Commending the Worthy).

29. *Zouping xianzhi* 鄒平縣志 (Gazetteer of Zoupingxian), *juan* 15.

30. *Changchuzhai suibi* 荖楚齋隨筆 (Essays from Changchuzhai), *juan* 2.

31. *Wuxianzhi* 吳縣志 (Gazetteer of Wuxian), *juan* 33. All three individuals mentioned above belonged to families recognized for having five sons who passed the civil service examination during the Qing dynasty. For detailed information, see Appendix, Table 2.

32. Here *gui* 桂 means “osmanthus,” a tree that traditionally symbolized success in the civil service examinations. This symbolism derives from classical texts such as the *Book of Jin*, where the phrase “a branch from the osmanthus forest” (桂林之一枝) was used as a metaphor for outstanding talent. Later, the idiom “to pluck the osmanthus” (*zhe gui* 折桂) came to mean passing the metropolitan examination, because the civil service examinations were held in autumn when osmanthus blossoms. Thus, a Five Gui Pavilion or Five Gui Archway symbolized multiple sons of the same family having “plucked the osmanthus,” that

In fact, it was a widespread custom during the Qing period to grant silver for the building of archways for those who passed the *juren* 舉人 (provincial graduate) or *jinshi* 進士 (metropolitan graduate) examinations. According to the Regulations in Imperially Commissioned Regulations of the Ministry of Revenue (*Qinding hubu zeli* 欽定戶部則例), “Upon succeeding in the examinations, new *juren* were each granted 20 taels of flag and tablet allowance. For new *jinshi*, grants were provided for the construction of an honorary arch: those in the first rank were given 80 taels, while those in the second and third ranks were given 30 taels” (Zhang 1955, 37). The plaques or archways granted to families with five sons passing the examination were a special form of honor specifically for these families.

Apart from these honors, it was also common for the parents of those who passed to be granted official titles. However, the conferral of titles was not due to the fact that five sons passed, but rather because one of the sons became particularly prominent or made significant contributions. For instance, Feng Zhongsu 馮鍾宿 was granted the title of *chaoyi dafu* 朝議大夫 (senior official) due to his son’s rise to high office.³³ Li Xue 李學 was posthumously awarded the title of *rulin lang* 儒林郎 because of his son’s achievements.³⁴ And Chen Chengqiu 陳承裘 was awarded the title of *zhongxian dafu* 中憲大夫, while his wife was conferred the title of Lady Gongren 恭人 because of their son’s success.³⁵

In addition, individuals who passed the *juren* or *jinshi* examinations and their families enjoyed privileges that set them apart from the general population. These included legal and economic privileges. Regarding legal privileges, if a member of the gentry committed a crime, they could not be humiliated, that face corporal punishment in public. If the offense was serious enough to warrant punishment, the individual’s honors would first be stripped away (Zhang 1955, 43). Next, there were economic privileges. Special arrangements were made for tax payments and exemption from labor service,

is, succeeded in the civil service examinations.

33. *Zhili daizhouzhi* 直隸代州志 (Gazetteer of Zhili daizhou), *juan* 6.

34. *Zhili taicangzhouzhi* 直隸太倉州志 (Gazetteer of Zhili taicangzhou), *juan* 65.

35. *Luojiang chenshi jiapu* 螺江陳氏家譜 (Luojiang Chen Clan Genealogy).

and their families could also benefit from these privileges (Yue 2018, 555).

These practices demonstrate that in China, unlike the legally codified and centrally administered reward system in Joseon, recognition of parents with five sons passing the examination remained largely symbolic, individualized, and locally executed, reflecting a fundamentally different approach to the institutionalization of educational merit.

Conclusion

This study examined the reward system and its evolution within the *ojadeung gwaja* program during the Joseon dynasty. The Joseon government rewarded parents when five sons in a family passed the civil service examinations. This reward system was based on the *samjadeung gwaja* program of the Goryeo dynasty and continued until the civil service examination system was abolished in 1894. According to the *Gyeongguk daejeon*, the government awarded a certain amount of rice to the living parents of five successful civil service examinees, and a memorial service was held in their honor if the parents were deceased. The *Sok daejeon* later revised this system to allow for the promotion of the father's official rank as part of the reward. In the late Joseon period, the government expanded the reward criteria to include not only families with five successful sons but also those with four sons and one grandson or three sons and two grandsons who had passed the civil service exams, whether literary or military. Additionally, sons born to concubines or legally adopted sons were also counted as part of the five sons, a progressive policy that contrasted with the societal norms of the time. The *ojadeung gwaja* program played a significant role in promoting Confucian learning across society, creating an environment that encouraged educational achievement and moral development.

The legal clause regarding the *ojadeung gwaja* reward program was recorded in the "Janggwon" section of the *Gyeongguk daejeon*. The *Gyeongguk daejeon*, compiled during the Joseon dynasty, was successor to the legal code of the Goryeo dynasty and incorporated elements from Chinese legal traditions. The "Janggwon" outlines how the Joseon government officially

implemented various measures to promote Confucian virtues. These included numerous reward regulations designed to set exemplars with the aim of spreading Confucian learning throughout the nation. These regulations primarily focused on rewarding students who excelled academically. The reward system of *ojadeung gwaja* aligned with this goal of encouraging scholarship, as stipulated in the “Janggwon,” reflecting the dynasty’s commitment to promoting education and Confucian ideals.

While passing the civil service examination was of practical importance for individuals in the Joseon dynasty, it was not viewed as the primary goal of study. Yi Hwang 李滉 (1501–1570), a prominent Confucian scholar of mid-Joseon period, expressed this view that “Studying to prepare for and pass examinations is not a central activity but a marginal one.”³⁶ Similarly, Yi I 李珣 (1536–1584) implemented a rule at Eunbyeong Study Hall (*Eunbyeong jeongsa* 隱屏精舍) that banned studying solely for the civil service examinations.³⁷ While students could not entirely avoid the exams, intrinsic motivation and the pursuit of self-improvement were highly encouraged in theory.

In reality, the civil service examinations served as a powerful extrinsic motivator for rigorous study. As mentioned earlier, one reason the *ojadeung gwaja* program survived through the Goryeo-Joseon transition was its role in promoting the study of Confucian knowledge. The Joseon dynasty, known for its practical and policy-driven approach, used this reward system to reinforce its emphasis on Confucian learning and family values. The *ojadeung gwaja* program, which rewarded families with five sons who passed the civil service exams, was a clear symbol of the dynasty’s commitment to encouraging both scholarly achievement and the preservation of Confucian ideals.

An analysis of the lists of those rewarded reveals that, according to regulation, the literary and military divisions were treated equally. Although the literary division was more highly valued and respected socially and culturally at the time, the military division did not face legal or institutional discrimination. This parity is understandable, as the term yangban 兩班 refers

36. “Isan seowon wongyu” 伊山書院院規 (Rules of Isan Academy), in *Toegyejip* 退溪集 (Collected Works of Toegye Yi Hwang), *gwon* 41.

37. *Yulgok jeonseo* 栗谷全書 (Complete Works of Yulgok Yi I), *gwon* 15.

to both civil and military officials. Thus, it is not surprising that the military division, responsible for recruiting military officials, was afforded the same treatment as the literary division, which focused on civil officials.

In practice, when the civil service examinations were administered, the military exams were often held alongside the literary exams. In rare instances, the two divisions would support each other in the examination process. In this way, the *ojadeung gwaja* program applied equal rewards to those who passed the military division exams, reflecting the program's commitment to equality between the two divisions.

It can be inferred that the *ojadeung gwaja* program, which rewarded families whose five sons passed the civil service examinations, culturally and institutionally reinforced the notion that educating children was primarily a parental responsibility rather than that of the state. Unlike other countries at the time, the Joseon Korea did not establish or mandate compulsory education, even for children from the highest social ranks. There were no legal provisions requiring parents to send their children to school. Instead of providing direct public education, the Joseon government promoted education through indirect incentives, such as reward programs, thereby delegating the responsibility for education to families.

The historical practice of rewarding parents whose sons achieved outstanding results in the civil service exams was an innovative policy tool in a society without compulsory schooling. This approach represented one of the most proactive efforts to foster education without relying on direct governmental control. To cultivate a societal commitment to learning, the Joseon dynasty employed Confucian principles to encourage study by highlighting role models and fostering a scholarly atmosphere, rather than enforcing or directly providing public education.

The *ojadeung gwaja* program underscored the importance of family education, a principle confirmed through legal clauses and widely reflected in the literature of the Joseon period. Yi I, for instance, wrote *Hakgyo mobeom* 學校模範 (A Model for Schools) as a supplement to the *Hangnyeong seonggyungwan* 成均館學令 (Rules of the *Seonggyungwan*), revising and updating educational laws in obedience to King Seonjo's command. This work, composed of 16 articles, included Article 9, "Geoga" 居家 (In the Home),

which addressed domestic life and how parents should raise their children. Additionally, Yi Sajudang 李師朱堂 emphasized parental responsibility in her guidebook *Taegyo singi* 胎教新記 (New Records for Prenatal Care), stating that a child's character was shaped at home under parental guidance. Misbehavior at school, the text argued, should be attributed to parents rather than teachers. This demonstrates that, in both theory and practice, the home was considered the fundamental place for education. The *ojadeung gwaja* program not only highlighted this importance but also institutionalized parental responsibility through government rewards and promotions.

Rather than establishing public or royal educational institutions and providing direct educational services, the Joseon dynasty utilized indirect policy tools to encourage education. As a result, private educational institutions proliferated during this period, a trend that has continued even through the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945) into the era of the Republic of Korea (1948–). Education in Korea, especially in early childhood and higher education, has historically been more dependent on private institutions than public ones. This reliance on private education is rooted in a long-standing tradition rather than being a modern development borrowed from foreign systems. The Joseon dynasty's adoption and implementation of the *ojadeung gwaja* program exemplifies an early form of modern policy tools that successfully encouraged Confucian learning and fostered a societal commitment to education.

It is worth noting in conclusion that although the civil service examination system was implemented in China for over a thousand years, and, as previously mentioned, there are historical records of families with five successful sons being honored with plaques, memorial arches, and other symbolic forms of recognition, such honors were largely ceremonial in nature, administered locally, and not institutionalized through national legal or policy frameworks. In contrast, the Joseon dynasty formalized such rewards as a national system, reflecting not only the distinctiveness of its institutional design but also the effectiveness of using legal structures to promote Confucian values. The institutionalization of the *ojadeung gwaja* program played a crucial role in reinforcing Joseon society's long-standing commitment to education and Confucian ideals, making it one of the most representative policy models in

the history of Korean educational institutions.

While this study focuses on the structural features, legal foundations, and educational functions of the *ojadeung gwaja* system, we also recognize that that system's original intent remains difficult to determine due to a lack of direct historical sources. It is yet to be clarified whether the system was a top-down policy initiative aimed at promoting family education or a formal institutional response to an already established tradition of home-centered learning. Future research may draw on royal deliberations, policy memorials, and local administrative records to explore the system's institutional origins and intent, thereby further clarifying the function and position of the *ojadeung gwaja* within the state's Confucian educational framework.

REFERENCES

Primary Sources

- Cefu yuangui* 冊府元龜 (Outstanding Models from the Storehouse of Literature).
Changchuzhai suibi 萇楚齋隨筆 (Essays from Changchuzhai).
Chaoxianzhi 朝鮮誌 (Record of Joseon).
Gojong sillok 高宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Gojong).
Goryeosa 高麗史 (History of the Goryeo Dynasty).
Gujin hebi shilei biyao 古今合璧事類備要 (Complete Information on All Matters Ancient and Modern Grouped by Category).
Gwageo deungnok 科擧臚錄 (Chronological Compilation of Civil Service Examination Records).
Gyeongguk daejeon 經國大典 (Great Code of Administration).
Jungjong sillok 中宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Jungjong).
Luojiang chenshi jiapu 螺江陳氏家譜 (Luojiang Chen Clan Genealogy).
Sejo sillok 世祖實錄 (Veritable Records of King Sejo).
Sejong sillok 世宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Sejong).
Seonjo sillok 宣祖實錄 (Veritable Records of King Seonjo).
Seungeongwon ilgi 承政院日記 (Diary of the Royal Secretariat).
Sok daejeon 續大典 (Supplement to the Great Code of Administration).
Songshi 宋史 (History of the Song Dynasty).
Sukjong sillok 肅宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Sukjong).
Taegyo singi 胎教新記 (New Records for Prenatal Care).
Taejo sillok 太祖實錄 (Veritable Records of King Taejo).
Taejong sillok 太宗實錄 (Veritable Records of King Taejong).
Toegyejip 退溪集 (Collected Works of Toegye Yi Hwang).
Wuxianzhi 吳縣志 (Gazetteer of Wuxian).
Yulgok jeonseo 栗谷全書 (Complete Works of Yulgok Yi I).
Zhili daizhouzhi 直隸代州志 (Gazetteer of Zhili daizhou).
Zhili taicangzhouzhi 直隸太倉州志 (Gazetteer of Zhili taicangzhou).
Zoupingxianzhi 鄒平縣志 (Gazetteer of Zoupingxian).

Secondary Sources

- Academia Sinica. “Renming quanwei renwu zhuanji ziliaoku” 人名權威人物傳記資料庫 (Authoritative Biographical Database of Historical Figures). <https://newarchive>.

- ihp.sinica.edu.tw/sncaccgi/sncacFtp?@@@0.09420474625506592 (accessed March 15, 2024).
- Beijing Erudition Digital Research Center. "Airusheng Dianhai Platform." <http://dh.ersjk.com/> (accessed March 16, 2024).
- Cho, Jwa-ho. 1981. *Hakje-wa gwageoje (Educational System and the Civil Service Examination)*. Gwacheon: Guksa pyeonchan wiwonhoe (National Institute of Korean History).
- Dittrich, Klaus, and Dolf-Alexander Neuhaus. 2023. "Korea's 'Education Fever' from the Late Nineteenth to the Early Twenty-First Century." *History of Education* 52.4: 539–552.
- Harvard University. "China Biographical Database (CBDB)." <https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/cbdb> (accessed March 18, 2024).
- Kim, Kyung-yong. 2018. "Sahakgwasi chulsinja-ui saengwon, jinsa jinchul siltae bunseok: 1846-nyeong singnyeon saengwon jinsasi-reul jungsim-euro" (Analytic Study on Advance to Scholarly Degrees of Confucian Learners Who Passed the Literary Tests of Traditional Four Schools [四學課試] in the Late Joseon Dynasty: Focusing on the 1846 Civil Service Examination). *Gyoyuk sahak yeongu (History of Education)* 28.1: 1–28.
- Lee, Sangmoo. 2013. "17–18-segi jibangyusaeng-ui gwageo eungsi yeogeon-e daehan jaeron: Gwageo deungnok-ui naeyong-eul jungsim-euro" (A Reconsideration of the Conditions for Provincial Confucian Scholars' Participation in the Civil Service Examination in the 17th–18th Centuries: Focusing on the Contents of the Gwageo deungnok). *Gyoyuk sahak yeongu (History of Education)* 23.1: 85–114.
- Lee, Sangmoo. 2014. "17–18-segi singnyeonsi seonggyungwan wonjeombeop unyeong-e gwanhan yeongu" (A Study on the Operation of the Seonggyungwan [成均館] Wonjeom [圓點] Policy in the 17th–18th Centuries). *Hanguk gyoyuk sahak (Korean Journal of History of Education)* 36.3: 107–128.
- Lee, Sangmoo. 2015. "17-segi jeunggwangsi wonjeombeop-ui unyeong-gwa pyeji gwajeong" (Operation and Abolition Process of the Wonjeom Method in the 17th-Century Jeunggwang Exam). *Gyoyuk sahak yeongu (History of Education)* 25.1: 107–133.
- Lee, Seongmu. 1994. *Hanguk-ui gwahak jedo (Civil Service Examination System of Korea)*. Seoul: Jeopmundang.
- Yue, Chih-chia. 2018. "Household Registration and Service Obligations of Military-Household Families during the Ming: A Case Study of the Shuicheng Lius." *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 89.3: 541–604.
- Zhang, Zhongli. 1955. *The Chinese Gentry: Studies on Their Role in Nineteenth-Century*

Chinese Society. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Zhu, Baojong 朱保燭, and Peilin Xie 謝沛霖. 1979. Ming qing jinshi timing beilu suoyi 明清進士題名碑錄索引 (*Index to the Inscription Records of Jinshi from the Ming and Qing Dynasties*). Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe.

Appendix 1: List of *wuzi dengke* (pre-Qing)

	Father	Son 1	Son 2	Son 3	Son 4	Son 5	Dynasty
Name	竇禹鈞	竇儀	竇儼	竇倂	竇侃	竇僖	Wudai (Five Dynasties)
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	
Name	黃汝楫	黃開	黃閱	黃閣	黃聞	黃聞	Song
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	
Name	莫琮	莫元忠	莫若晦	莫似之	莫若拙	莫若冲	Song
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	

Appendix 2: List of *wuzi dengke* (Qing dynasty)

	Father	Son 1	Son 2	Son 3	Son 4	Son 5
Name	陳訖	陳世雋	陳世儼	陳世仁	陳世信	陳世侃
Degree type	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	徐乾學	徐樹穀	徐烱	徐樹敏	徐樹屏	徐駿
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	黃華蕃	黃叔琳	黃叔琬	黃叔琪	黃叔璈	黃叔瑄
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren
Name	儲方慶	儲右文	儲大文	儲在文	儲鬱文	儲雄文
Degree type	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	張孟球	張學庠	張紹賢	張應造	張企齡	張景祁
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren
Name	莊絳	莊楷	莊樸	莊敦厚	莊大椿	莊柱
Degree type	Jiansheng 監生	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi
Name	李日垵	李光燠	李光型	李光北	李光燠	李光袁
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren
Name	李鍾僑	李清載	李清芳	李清江	李清愷	李清時
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Jinshi
Name	陳允恭	陳齊睿	陳齊賢	陳齊芳	陳齊庶	陳齊紳
Degree type	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	Juren	Jinshi
Name	金懷璋	金澍	金溶	金潢	金洪	金潛
Degree type	Jinshi (military)	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren

	Father	Son 1	Son 2	Son 3	Son 4	Son 5
Name	馮鍾宿	馮履鹹	馮履泰	馮履謙	馮履豫	馮履豐
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Juren
Name	康基淵	康儀鈞	康綸鈞	康文鐸	康紹鏞	康維錦
Degree type	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren
Name	李廷桂	李鵬	李景岱	李鵠	李景嶧	李震
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi
Name	李學	李錫恭	李錫信	李錫瓚	李錫惠	李錫晉
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	Juren
Name	葉觀國	葉申棗	葉申藹	葉申苞	葉申萬	葉申鄉
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	廖岡陵	廖鴻翔	廖鴻禧	廖鴻苞	廖鴻藻	廖鴻荃
Degree type	Not verifiable	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	李光先	李藩	李藹	李萼	李莊	李鄉
Degree type	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren
Name	曾暉春	曾元基	曾元炳	曾元海	曾元燮	曾元澄
Degree type	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren
Name	李鎬	李國杞	李國榛	李國梓	李國楠	李國棠
Degree type	Not verifiable	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi
Name	呂子班	呂佺孫	呂佺孫	呂份孫	呂佺孫	呂佺孫
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Juren
Name	郭階三	郭柏心	郭柏蔭	郭柏蔚	郭柏蒼	郭柏鄉
Degree type	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren
Name	李光庭	李藻	李萼	李棗	李慕	李敬
Degree type	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren
Name	楊鴻弼	楊士燮	楊士晟	楊士驥	楊士琦	楊士銓

Appendix 3: List of *luzi dengke* and *qizi dengke* (Qing dynasty)

	Father	Son 1	Son 2	Son 3	Son 4	Son 5	Son 6	Son 7
Name	邵大業	邵自昌	邵自華	邵自悅	邵自本	邵自彭	邵自巽	
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	
Name	雷鐔	雷學海	雷學淦	雷學淇	雷學濤	雷學瀛	雷學潮	
Degree type	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	
Name	葉雲滋	葉大同	葉大湜	葉大泳	葉大洵	葉大焯	葉大涵	
Degree type	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	
Name	陳承裘	陳寶琛	陳寶璿	陳寶璐	陳寶琦	陳寶瑄	陳寶瑗	
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	
Name	許學範	許乃來	許乃大	許乃濟	許乃穀	許乃普	許乃釗	許乃恩
Degree type	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Jinshi	Juren	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren
Name	許祥光	許應駮	許應鏘	許應鑾	許應鏞	許應鏘	許應錯	許應鎔
Degree type	Jinshi	Jinshi	Jinshi	Juren	Juren	Juren	Juren	Juren