



INDIA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

September 2018

Welcome to the India Human Development Survey Forum

A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the IHDS research community

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In this issue...

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) continues to engage and inspire researchers throughout the world because of the vast array of data it offers through its spectrum of education, health, economy, family, and gender modules for both urban and rural samples across the country. In this issue of the IHDS newsletter, we showcase two papers on the sensitive topic of marriage, one of the vital and enduring institutions that have shaped the lives of people across the geographic landscape of India and sustained its social fabric for centuries. IHDS records the significant changes occurring not only in the concept of marriage per se but also in the dynamic of interpersonal relations it has entailed during a crucial period of socio-economic transition in the country.

- In her paper that estimates the effect of Panchayati Raj institutions on child marriage, **Carolina Castilla** uses data from IHDS-II to show that the presence of women in local government helps reduce the incidence of child marriage by delaying both the age at first marriage for the bride and groom as well as the *gauna* ceremony, which marks the beginning of marital life for the couple and consummation of their marriage. Thus, the induction of more women into public life could have a desirable societal outcome as these women could become role models for parents, thereby preventing them from marrying off their pre-pubescent sons and daughters.
- The second paper by **Gaurav Dhamija and Punarjit Roychowdhury** assesses the relationship between women's age at marriage and labour market outcomes in a developing country like India. The authors rely on IHDS-II to provide evidence of the fact that women's active role in the selection of their partners has a positive impact in determining both their own and their spouses' labour market outcomes.
- Media Mentions
- Recent publications using IHDS

Research Findings Based on IHDS Data

Political Role Models and Child Marriage in India

By Carolina Castilla

Drawing data from the most recent wave of the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) and the year of the first election with reserved seats for women, this paper estimates the effect of the Panchayati Raj institutions on child marriage. In India, marriage traditions dictate that two ceremonies take place: the wedding and the *gauna* ceremony. These differ in timing and purpose. After the wedding, the bride and groom do not necessarily live together. The *gauna* ceremony indicates the start of marital life and the consummation of the marriage. The results indicate that women in local government decrease the likelihood of child marriage, and delay the age at first marriage and the *gauna* ceremony. Delaying marriage has important policy implications for both the bride and her future children as it improves education, autonomy over fertility, and health. The results indicate that after 18 years of implementation, exposure of women in government can reduce the prevalence of child marriage.

Table: Effect of woman Pradhan on child marriage

Dependent variable	Child bride		Age at first marriage		Age at Gauna	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Married Post Pradhan	-0.241*** (0.019)	-0.191*** (0.017)	2.738*** (0.169)	2.298*** (0.150)	2.015*** (0.131)	1.607*** (0.118)
Constant	1.076*** (0.022)	1.119*** (0.032)	12.583*** (0.153)	12.072*** (0.222)	13.796*** (0.113)	13.372*** (0.175)
Observations	18,089	16,928	18,089	16,928	18,088	16,928
R-squared	0.213	0.301	0.270	0.384	0.258	0.389
Birth Cohort FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
District FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Controls		YES		YES		YES

Note: Standard errors clustered at the district level in parentheses. Controls include district and birth-cohort fixed effects, age rank, years of schooling of both spouses, religion, caste, household income, household size, and an asset index that varies from 0 to 33. *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

[Full Paper Here](#)



Carolina Castilla is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Colgate University, Hamilton, New York. She is primarily interested in the intersection between intra-household allocation of resources, gender, and economic development. She seeks to identify if and when spouses in poor households fail to allocate their scarce resources in ways that can be more beneficial for their families, what leads spouses to behave that way, and how spouses cope with constraints imposed by poverty, all of which have implications for development policy. Second, she works on behavioral economics, focusing on the study of non-standard preferences and non-standard decision making. In her ongoing research, she examines the effects of government interventions on intimate partner violence in various developing countries. She received her B.A. and M.S. in Economics from Universidad de las Americas Puebla, and her PhD in Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics from the Ohio State University.

The Impact of Women's Age at Marriage on Own and Spousal Labor Market Outcomes in India: Causation or Selection?

By Gaurav Dhamija & Punarjit Roychowdhury

This paper provides the first comprehensive assessment of the relationship between women's age at marriage and own as well as spousal labour market outcomes specifically in the context of a developing country. Using data from the Indian Human Development Survey (IHDS), 2011–12, the authors find evidence of positive effects of women's age at marriage on their own and their spouses' labour market outcomes. To examine whether these effects are causal or arise due to selection into marriage, they use an instrumental variables-based empirical strategy that utilises variation in age at menarche to obtain exogenous variation in women's age at marriage. The results indicate that the positive effects of age at marriage of women on own as well as spousal labour market outcomes are not causal and arise purely due to selection. The results are robust to addressing biases due to non-random selection of individuals into the

Full Paper Here



Gaurav Dhamija is currently pursuing his PhD in Economics at the Shiv Nadar University, India. He obtained his M.A. in Economics from the Jawaharlal Nehru University and B.A. in Economics from the Delhi University. His research interests lie in the fields of development economics, health economics and labour economics. Prior to enrolling for the PhD programme at the Shiv Nadar University in August 2015, Gaurav was an Assistant Professor at the Indian School of Business and Finance, New Delhi.

Punarjit Roychowdhury is currently an Assistant Professor in the economics area at the Indian Institute of Management Indore. Primarily an applied microeconomist, Punarjit's research interests lie in the fields of microeconometrics, labour economics, development economics, and behavioral economics. His current research focuses on economic inequality and mobility, social effects in consumption, economics of marriage, and dynamics of children's academic achievement. Prior to joining the Indian Institute of Management Indore, Punarjit was an Assistant Professor at the Shiv Nadar University, Uttar Pradesh. Punarjit holds a PhD in Economics from the Southern Methodist University, USA, a Master's degree in Applied Economics from Presidency College, Calcutta, and a Bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Calcutta.



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- Layak, Suman. "Startups Bet on Tech, Smart Logistics to Carve a Big Chunk Off Meat & Fish Market", *The Economic Times*, 19 August, 2018. [Link](#).
- Agarwal, Sapna. "Opinion| What the Shrinking Trend of Urban Households Tells about us Indians", *LiveMint*, 16 August, 2018. [Link](#).
- Bhalla, Surjit S. "Inequality, Myth and Reality", *The Indian Express*, 11 August, 2018. [Link](#).

Recent Publications Using IHDS

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- Mukherji, R. (2018). "Local Leadership and Public Good: Evidence from the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India." *Journal of Quantitative Economics*. doi: 10.1007/s40953-018-0138-3. Accessed on August 21, 2018. [Link](#).
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- Jain, S. (2018). *Own and Spillover Effects of a Conditional Cash Transfer Program Targeting Young Girls: Evidence From India*. (Ph.D. Dissertation), University of Houston, Retrieved on August 8, 2018 from [Link](#).

About IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) is a nationally representative, multi-topic survey of 41,554 households in 1503 villages and 971 urban neighbourhoods across India. The first round of interviews was completed in 2004-05; data are publicly available through ICPSR. A second round of IHDS re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for the same can be found here.

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