



DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT



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IHDS research community.

**August 2022**

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IHDS DATA COMMUNITY RESULTS

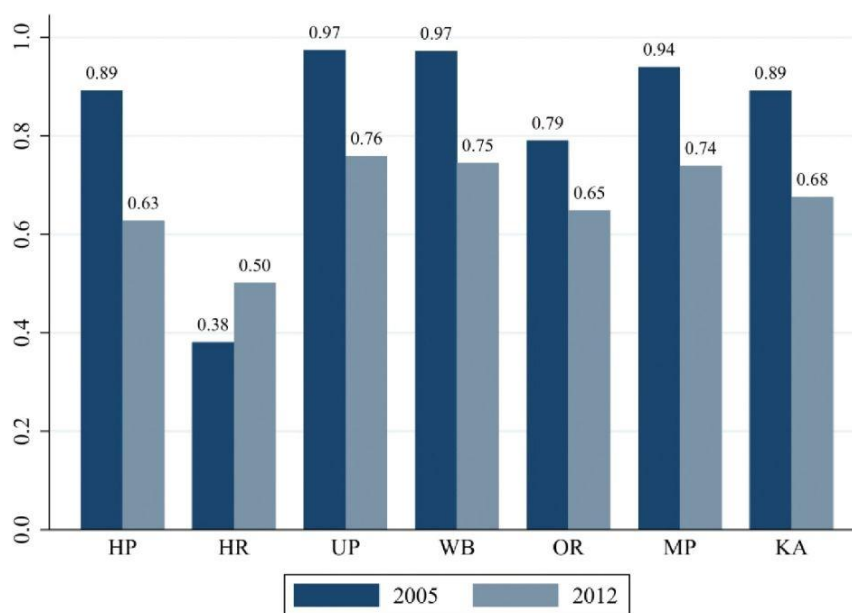
# ***The pursuit of simplicity: Can simplifying eligibility criteria improve social pension targeting?***

*By Viola Asri, Katharina Michaelowa, Sitakanta Panda,  
and Sourabh B. Paul*



Governments in developing countries struggle to reach intended beneficiaries when targeting social transfers towards vulnerable populations. The rates of eligible individuals not receiving social transfers and ineligible individuals receiving them tend to be high, constraining the effectiveness of such anti-poverty programmes. While interventions to incentivise or monitor local agents in charge of selecting beneficiaries are typically expensive, an important complementary and cost-effective approach could be to reform eligibility criteria in order to facilitate the selection of beneficiaries. Whether reforms should focus on reducing the number of rules, or selecting criteria which are easy to verify, or do both, remains an unanswered question. The authors address this knowledge

gap based on India's social pension scheme for the elderly poor using the two waves of the India Human Development Survey (IHDS), 2004-05 and 2011-12; and detailed administrative data on eligibility criteria. They find that making eligibility criteria easier to verify has the potential to achieve a substantial improvement in the targeting performance through a reduction in the exclusion error. Those who meet the relevant criteria have a much higher chance of becoming beneficiaries. Since eligibility criteria can be changed at low cost, this suggests a viable route for reform in many developing countries. However, a major caveat remains that the criteria must sufficiently well reflect actual poverty if the more accurate selection of beneficiaries according to formal criteria shall also translate into actual poverty reduction.



[Full Article Here](#)

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**Katharina Michaelowa** is Professor of Political Economy and Development at the University of Zurich and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Her research focuses on the policies and politics of developing countries, international development cooperation, and international climate policy. Until December 2020, she was a member of the Presiding Board of the Swiss National Science Foundation, responsible for the area of international research cooperation. After her studies in Economics at the Universities of Mannheim and Hamburg as well as at Delhi School of Economics, she initially held positions at the Hamburg Institute of International Economics and at the OECD. She is on the editorial board of several peer-reviewed journals in international studies and climate policy. Her research work is available [here](#).

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## ***Examining the Birth Weights of Children in India: Impact of Iron-Folic Acid Supplements during Pregnancy***

*By Poulami Chatterjee and Amaresh Dubey*



The objective of this paper is to evaluate the association between Iron Folic Acid (IFA) supplementation during pregnancy and children's birth weights in

India. The authors have used data from the second round of the India Human Development Survey (IHDS), 2011-12, to verify this relation. The association between the child's birth weight and mother's IFA intake during pregnancy, along with other potential factors, has been analysed using logistic regression. Approximately 24 per cent of the women were found to be never consuming IFA during pregnancy and 31 per cent of the pregnant women took IFA for less than three months, which is below the prescribed limit, in 2011-12. This study finds that IFA supplementation is significantly associated with a 23 per cent (and 31 per cent in Model 2) reduction in the odds of low birth weight outcome when it is consumed for more than three months during pregnancy. However, this association is not significant for a supplementation of less than three months. The study shows that factors like maternal nutrition (BMI taken as a proxy), maternal education, mother's age, and wealth quintile are likely to impact birth weight after adjustment for other covariates. The study also examines the socio-economic and demographic factors associated with birth outcome. The analysis would facilitate potential policy interventions to reduce the prevalence of low birth weight and to ensure access to nutritious food for pregnant women.

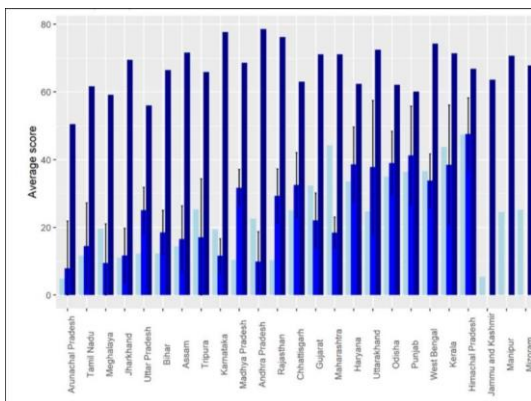
Variable	LBW (%)
<b>Place of residence</b>	
Rural	17.3
Urban	13.74
<b>Sex of the child</b>	
Boy Child	15.59
Girl child	17.18
<b>Mother's BMI</b>	
Underweight	18.92
Normal	15.42
Overweight	15.13
<b>Mother's age</b>	
15-19	22.96
20-24	18.47
25-29	15.92
30-50	14.97
<b>IFA supplements</b>	
No supplements	18.96
consumed for < 3 months	18.69
consumed for > 3 months	12.87
<b>Caste of household</b>	
General caste	15.64
OBC	15.03
SC	18.2
ST & others	18.77
<b>Religion of household</b>	
Hindu	16.45
Muslim	15.87
Christian	14.73
Sikh & others	14.01
<b>Income quintile</b>	
Poorest	19.89
Poor	18.03
Middle	16.41
Richer	14.85
Richest	11.29

[Full Article Here](#)

**Poulami Chatterjee** is an Assistant Professor at St. Xavier's University, Kolkata. Her primary research interests are in the field of health economics, gender, and impact evaluation. Her past and ongoing research evaluates the relationship between maternal autonomy and child nutrition; immunisation and child's cognitive performance, gender disparity in child immunisation uptake. She has published her work in peer-reviewed journals. She has a PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

**Amaresh Dubey** is currently Professor of Economics at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and Senior Consultant, National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). He is Co-PI for the India Human Development Survey (IHDS). He has earlier been Senior Fellow at NCAER, and on the faculty of North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India. He has been visiting Researcher/Professor at Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi Centre; University of Manchester; Queen's University and University of Ulster, Belfast; University of East Anglia, Norwich; University of Maryland, College Park; and Aarhus Business School and Aarhus University, Aarhus. His research interests include poverty assessment, human development, education and labour markets. He has published five books and monographs (three co-authored and two co-edited), including the widely acclaimed monograph on poverty, *Counting the Poor: Where are the Poor in India?* He has also published several articles and papers in peer-reviewed international and national journals and edited volumes. He received his MA in Economics from Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, and his PhD in Economics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai.

## IHDS DATA IN THE NEWS



OP-ED FROM RAHUL AHLUWALIA AND PRAKHAR SINGH: “Remedying poor

OP-ED FROM RAJIV SHAH: “Ghunghat still a prominent practice among



student assessment data in India”,  
*Ideas for India*, July 26, 2022. [Link](#).

young Hindu women in India:  
Survey”, *National Herald*, August 6,  
2022. [Link](#).

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### Recent publications from IHDS users:

Kandikuppa, S. and C. Gray, C. 2022. Climate change and household debt in rural India. *Climatic Change*, 173, 20(2022). [Link](#).

Siddiqui, L.A. and A. Singh. 2022. “Socio-economic Inequality in Longevity in India”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 57(32). [Link](#).

Berg, C., B. Blankespoor, M.S. Emran, and F. Shilpi. 2022. “Does Market Integration Increase Rural Land Inequality?: Evidence from India”, *Preprint*, July 22. [Link](#).

Maitra, P., R. Miller, and A. Sedai. 2022. “Household Welfare Effects of ROSCAs”, *Discussion Paper No. 2022-14*, Clayton, Victoria: Monash University. [Link](#).

Kandpal, D. and D. Maiti. 2022. “Social Identity, Local Neighbourhood Effect and Conspicuous Consumption: Evidence From India”, *Working Paper No. 327*, Delhi: Centre for Development Economics, Delhi School of Economics. [Link](#).

Khanna, A. 2022. ‘Three essays on development economics and human

Capital”, Dissertations and Theses Collection, Singapore Management University. [Link](#).

Pandeya, S., L. Bevisa, and T. Raob. 2022. “Food Price Subsidies and Nutrition in India: Is Less Targeting More?” Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting 2022, Anaheim, CA. [Link](#).

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## 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. IHDS 3 is in development and expected to be in the field in 2021.

IHDS 3 has been jointly organised by researchers from the University of Maryland, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), Indiana University and the University of Michigan. Funding for the second round of this survey is provided by the National Institutes of Health, grants R01HD041455 and R01HD061048. Additional funding is provided by The Ford Foundation, IDRC and DFID.

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