DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

India Human Development Survey Forum | May 2024

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

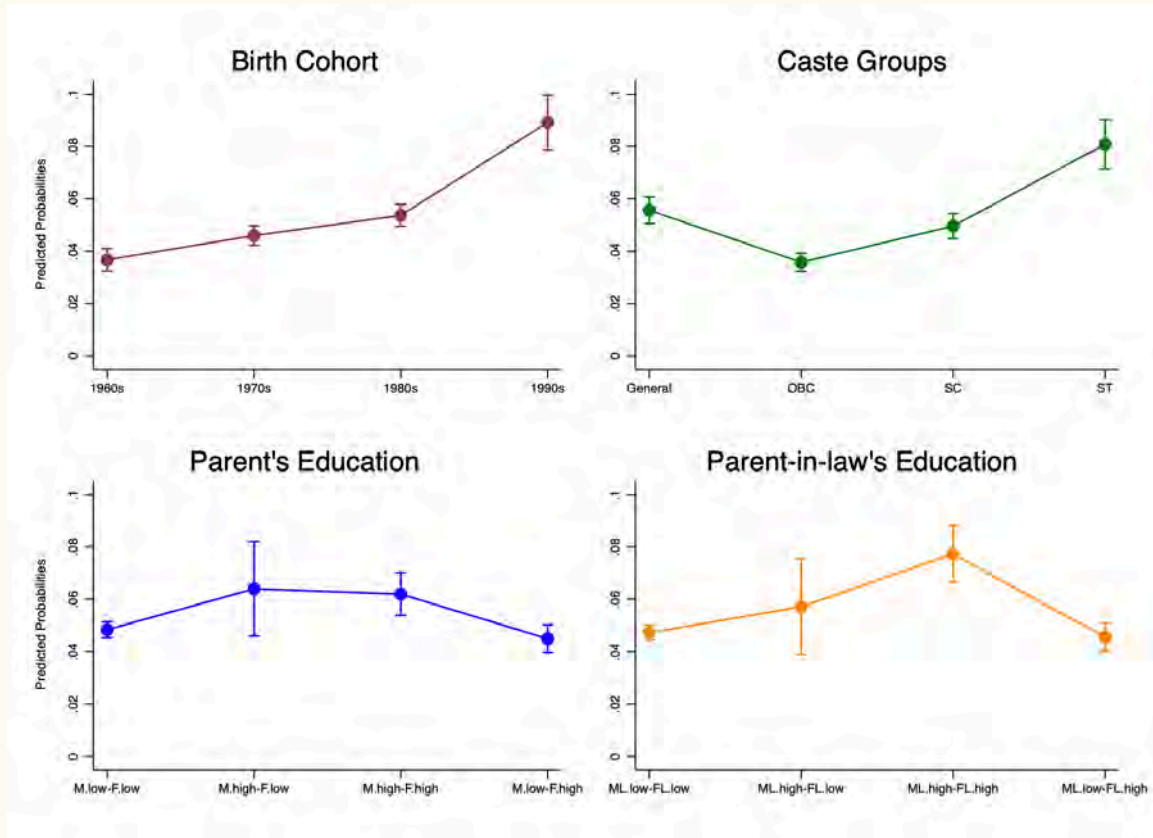## Self-Arranged Marriages in India: Change Amidst Sociocultural Underpinnings and Hanging Norms

-Koyel Sarkar, Ester Lucia Rizzi

While marriages arranged by families remain the majority in India, there's a rising trend among younger generations towards self-arranged unions. Utilizing data from the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) 2011–2012, we delve into the relationship between self-arranged marriages and various socioeconomic and cultural factors. Our analysis reveals that the likelihood of individuals opting for self-arranged marriages is positively associated with higher levels of parental education, particularly among parents-in-law. Additionally, there's a notable U-shaped relationship between self-arranged marriages and caste hierarchy, with both higher and lower caste groups showing an increased inclination towards this trend. These findings suggest that while marriage dynamics in India are transforming, such changes aren't uniform across all segments of society. Sociocultural barriers persist, impeding the pace of this evolution.

Figure 1. Predicted Probabilities of Self-Arranged Marriages in India.

About the Authors

Koyel Sarkar

Koyel is a demographer interested in the shifting pathways to family formation, marriage-fertility linkage, intergenerational dynamics, sociocultural underpinnings, and changing gender equity in light of the rapidly modernizing society in India. She is currently working as a Postdoctoral Associate at the New York University, Abu Dhabi.
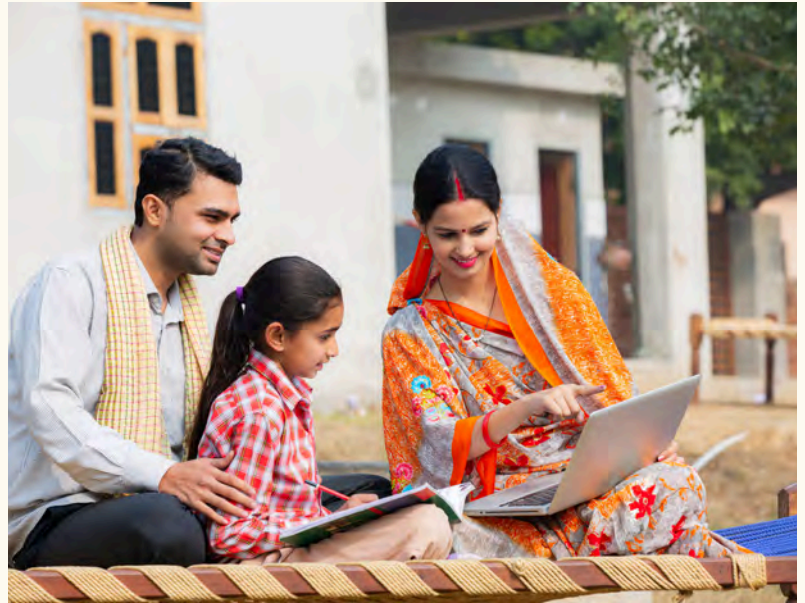
Ester Lucia Rizzi

Ester Lucia Rizzi is a professor of demography at the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium). Her expertise lies in cross-national research on families, including fertility, unions, family policies, intergenerational relations, and gender relations, while trying to unravel the impact of incentives and norms on family dynamics.

Do Technology Resources Influence Income Mobility? The Role of Regional and Caste Spillovers from Computer Ownership
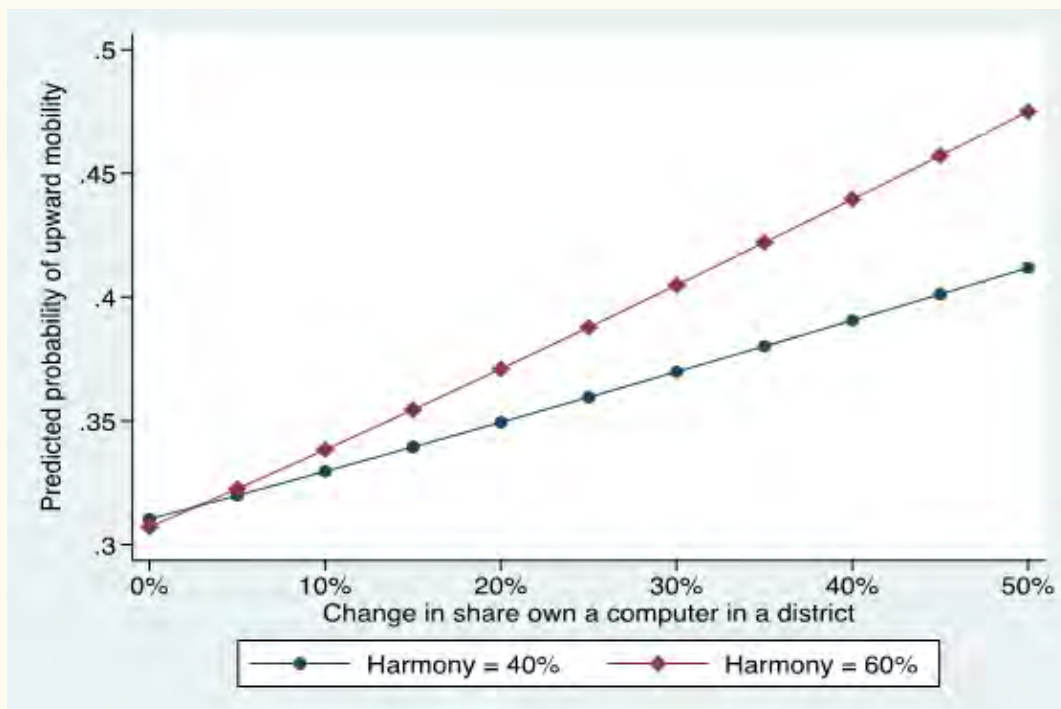
-Che-Wei Liu, Sunil Mithas and Terence Saldanha

How does computer ownership create equality of opportunity and household income mobility? We address this important question by examining the spillover effects of computer ownership considering spatial proximity and social proximity. We posit that households are likely to experience upward income mobility due to increased computer ownership among other households in spatial proximity in the region. This effect is more pronounced when other households in the region are socially proximate or of the same caste as the focal household. Our analyses of data from over 32,000 households in India from two waves of India Human Development Survey (IHDS) in 2005 and 2011 support our hypotheses. Further exploratory analyses suggest that households in regions with high social harmony experience higher upward income mobility from increased computer ownership of other households in the region. Also, increased computer ownership of other households in the region helps households of disadvantaged castes overcome their low income mobility. A key implication for policy to foster equality of opportunity from technology resources is to create social harmony as a lever for facilitating income mobility, instead of a sole focus on technology resources alone.

Figure 1. Spillover from Spatial Proximity on Upward Income Mobility at High and Low Levels of Regional Harmony

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About the Authors

Che-Wei Liu

Che-Wei Liu, an Assistant Professor of Information Systems at Indiana University's Kelley School of Business, was honored with the Jerome Bess Faculty Fellowship in 2024. His research focuses on Healthcare IT, IT Workers, and FinTech & Artificial Intelligence Adoptions. His work is recognized in top journals including MS, MISQ, and ISR.

Sunil Mithas

Sunil Mithas is a professor at the Muma College of Business. Previously, Sunil was the Ralph J. Tyser Professor of Information Systems at the Robert H. Smith School of Business at the University of Maryland. He is a distinguished fellow of the Information Systems Society of INFORMS, an AIS fellow, a Marketing Science Institute Young Scholar, and a Vaishwik Bhartiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) fellow. He earned his Ph.D. from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and an engineering degree from IIT, Roorkee.

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Terence Saldanha is an associate Professor and Becky & Howard Young Distinguished Professor of Information Systems at University of Georgia at Terry College of Business. His research interests include the role of information systems in strategy, business value, and innovation. He earned a Ph.D. in information systems from the University of Michigan.

Field Perspectives
Insights and Observations corner

SurveyTrak: IHDS-3 Sample Management Tool
- Stephanie Chardoul, Sarah Broumand

NCAER partnered with the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center (Ann Arbor, MI USA) to help transition the IHDS-Wave 3 from paper questionnaire administration to computer-assisted interviewing (CAI). CAI means that interviewers are using an electronic questionnaire application to read the survey to participants, and to enter responses directly into the computer. CAI requires not only electronic surveys, but also an electronic sample management system. The sample management system SurveyTrak, developed by the Survey Research Center (SRC), is robust enough to manage the extremely complex protocol of the IHDS – with almost 48,000 study households in approximately 3,000 communities, 13 different questionnaires, and 12 interviewer observation instruments, all translated into 11 different languages resulting in 321,000 completed surveys.

We modified SurveyTrak to meet the needs of IHDS-3, which included the ability to import all IHDS household data, allow for locating activity and recording of updated contact information, completing a roster of each household to identify eligible members, and the generation of appropriate new questionnaires. For IHDS, there were several sub-projects (Household, Community, Migrant), each with multiple respondents and separate questionnaires. SurveyTrak was required to track the generation of new respondents, the status of each questionnaire, and link them all together under the original IHDS household. SurveyTrak allowed for the allocation of original households to 14 separate agencies who were able to monitor and report on the work of their interviewing teams, while the NCAER management
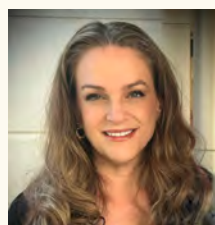
team was able to oversee the entire project. SurveyTrak managed the distribution of cases to individual interviewers, the transfer of cases between interviewers, and the secure transmission of data from the field to IHDS project servers at the University of Michigan. SurveyTrak reporting was used to know the current status of every single component of every single case.

About the Authors

Stephanie Chardoul

Stephanie Chardoul is Director of Survey Research Operations (SRO), University of Michigan Survey Research Center. Her substantive interests include cross-cultural survey methods, building survey research infrastructure, and mental health. Stephanie has been a member of the Data Collection Coordinating Centre for World Mental Health Survey Initiative (30+ countries, since 1999), and is Director of the WHO Composite International Diagnostic Interview Training Centre. As SRO Director, Stephanie leads a department of 170 staff and up to 1000 interviewers across the U.S.

Sarah Broumand

Sarah Broumand is an Operations Engineer in Survey Research Operations (SRO), University of Michigan Survey Research Center. Sarah has been with SRO for 30 years in multiple roles from Survey Interviewer to Technical Lead. She collaborates on a wide range of data collection and processing services both in domestic and international projects.

Publications List

Recent Publications using IHDS Data

Azad, P., & Hari, K. S. (2024). Wage inequality across regions in India: Exploring the role of Education and Skills. Journal of Public Affairs, 24(2): e2919 Link

Bera, M., & Dubey, A. (2024). Does Caste Matter in Business Earnings in India?: Comparing States from Three Regions with Different Socio-economic and Political Settings. Revisiting Inequality (1st Edition), 118-139. Routledge India. Link

Bharti, N. K., Chancel, L., Piketty, T., & Somanchi, A. (2024). Income & Wealth Inequality in India, 1922-2023: The Rise of the Billionaire Raj. Working Paper No. 9, World Inequality Lab. Link

Chandra, S., & Chong, T. T. L. (2024). The Impact of Caste on Income Disparity in India Today. A Pan-India Panel Data Approach. MPRA Paper 120639, University Library of Munich, Germany. Link

Sharma, S., Desai, S., Barik, D., & Sharma, O. P. (2024). Gone and forgotten? Predictors of Birth History omissions in India. Demographic Research, 50, 929-966. Link

Vhawal, V., Kapale, R. J., & Kanase, N. V. (2024). The role of Maternal Education in Enhancing Child Health: Focus on Vaccination and Nutritional status. Obstetrics and Gynaecology Forum, 34(3s), 586–593. Link

IHDS in Media

Moudgil, M. (2024, 24/04/2024). Study highlights Difference in Environmental footprints between Economic strata in India, Mongabay. 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 neighborhoods across India. The first round of interviews were completed in 2004-05; Data is publicly available through ICPSR. The second round re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for the same can be found via ICPSR. IHDS 3 is currently in progress with field work and data compilation.

IHDS 3 has been jointly conducted by researchers from the University of Maryland, the National Council of Applied Economic Research, Indiana University and 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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Thank you for your support.