



# DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

## India Human Development Survey Forum | August 2025

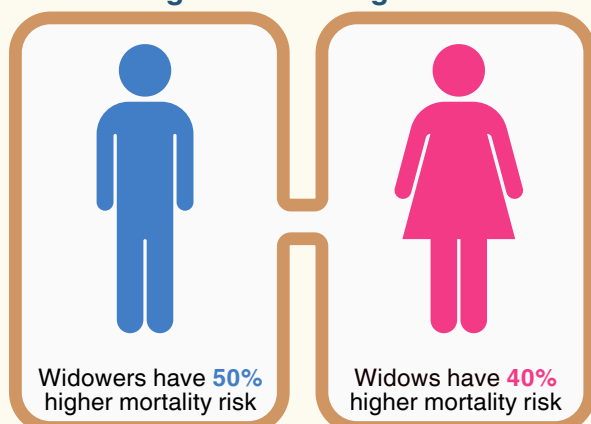
A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the IHDS research community.

### Widow and Widower Mortality in India: A Research Note

*Megan N. Reed, Babul Hossain, Srinivas Goli, K. S. James, & Aashish Gupta*

Widowhood is associated with elevated mortality risk in many social contexts. This research note is the first study to quantify and contextualize the mortality risk of widowhood for men (widowers) and women (widows) in India. Using data from the first wave of the India Human Development Survey (2004–05) and tracking survival status seven years later in the second wave (2011–12), the study finds no significant differences in mortality by widowhood status among adults aged 60 or older. However, for individuals aged 25–59, both widows and widowers face higher mortality risks compared to their married counterparts.

#### Among individuals aged 25–59



Despite the distinctive vulnerabilities faced by Indian widows, the analysis reveals similar elevated mortality risks for both genders in this age group. Additionally, higher mortality is observed among widows living in environments with conservative and less egalitarian gender norms. These findings suggest that while India reflects global patterns of elevated mortality for widowed men and women, unequal gender norms continue to shape life chances for Indian widows.

*compared to married counterparts even after controlling for region, household SES, and time-varying age*

## About the Authors



### [Megan N. Reed](#)

Megan N. Reed is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Emory University. She completed her PhD in Sociology and Demography at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research examines family and gender dynamics in India and the United States with a focus on extended kinship and life course transitions.



### [Babul Hossain](#)

Babul Hossain is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow in public health research at the Luxembourg Institute of Health. He completed his PhD in population studies at the International Institute for Population Sciences, and his research interests focus on determinants of health and health inequalities.



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Srinivas Goli is an Associate Professor of Demography at the IIPS, Mumbai. Previously, he served as a New Generation Network Scholar at the Australia India Institute and as an Assistant Professor at JNU, New Delhi. He has also been a visiting faculty at the Universities of Göttingen (Germany), Paris, and Strasbourg (France). His research focuses on population dynamics, health inequalities, and gender demographics.



### [K. S. James](#)

K. S. James is a Senior Visiting Scholar at the Newcomb Institute, Tulane University. With extensive research and teaching experience in demography, particularly focusing on South Asia, he has made significant contributions to demographic research and policy. Previously, he served as Director and Senior Professor at the International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, India.



### [Aashish Gupta](#)

Aashish Gupta is a sociologist and demographer. He is a Postdoctoral Associate at NYU Abu Dhabi. His research focuses on methodological innovations to understand interrelations between health, environment, and social inequalities. He was awarded the Dorothy Thomas Award for best graduate student paper by the Population Association of America.



# An Assessment of the Impact of Temporary Migration on Household Adaptive Capacity to Climate Variability (e.g., Drought) in Rural India

Badsha Sarkar

The paper examines the effects of temporary migration on household adaptive capacity to climate variability (e.g., drought) in rural India. Using propensity score matching with India Human Development Survey, 2011–12 data and India Meteorological Department's gridded files, the study measures adaptive capacity through monthly per capita consumption, livelihood diversity and the share of non-agricultural income. Results show that temporary migration has no statistically significant effect on household expenditure levels. However, its effect



on livelihood diversity is positive at the 10% significance level, suggesting some diversification benefits. The most notable outcome is the significant contribution of temporary migration to increasing the share of non-agricultural income. A disaggregated analysis across expenditure quintiles and social groups shows that the improved benefits of temporary migration, particularly the increase in non-agricultural income, were concentrated within certain groups. Overall, the study highlights both the potential and the limitations of temporary migration as an adaptation strategy.

**Table 1:** Propensity score matching results for aggregate sample (Radius matching with caliper 0.01)

Variable	Sample	Treated	Controls	Difference	S.E.	T-stat	p> t
MPCE	Unmatched	1390.539	1916.975	-526.436	64.478	-8.16	***
	ATT	1390.539	1408.563	-18.024	40.84	-0.44	
LD	Unmatched	1.518	1.483	0.035	0.015	2.27	**
	ATT	1.518	1.497	0.022	0.016	1.33	*
INCNAG	Unmatched	73.529	69.13	4.399	1.055	4.17	***
	ATT	73.529	70.602	2.927	0.968	3.02	***

Source: Author's analysis.

Notes: \*p < 0.1; \*\*p < 0.05; \*\*\*p < 0.01.

MPCE: Monthly per Capita Consumption Expenditure; LD: Livelihood Diversity; INCNAG: Share of non-agricultural income

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## About the Author



### **Badsha Sarkar**

Badsha Sarkar is a quantitative researcher with over eight years of experience in leading institutes working on sustainability and international trade. He aspires to further his career in research, management, and consultancy. His research interests include quantitative modelling, evidence-based policy research, development studies, climate change mitigation and adaptation, international trade, MSMEs, and population studies.

## Publications List

### Recent Publications using IHDS Data

Bansal, M. (2025). Essays on Labor Markets and Social Policy [Doctoral Thesis, School of Graduate Studies, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. 31933120.

[Link](#)

Bhalothia, A. (2025). Essays on Labor Markets in Developing Countries [Doctoral Thesis, University of California, San Diego]. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. 32045987. [Link](#)

Biswas, S., & Jain, R. (2025). The Road to Safety-Examining the Nexus between Road Infrastructure and Crime in Rural India. Journal of Quantitative Economics. [Link](#)

Chatterjee, S., & Dey, O. (2025). Conditionality matters: A Samaritan's Dilemma with in-kind transfers targeting educational attainment. IIMB Management Review, 100592. [Link](#)

García, J. L. (2025). How MNREGA reduced women's labour force participation. Ideas for India. [Link](#)

Jaikumar, S., Sarin, A., Narayanan, P., & Kumari, R. (2025). Effects of income inequality in an emerging economy on subjective economic well-being: suppressing effect of conspicuous consumption. Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 1-19. [Link](#)

Kumari, G., Gupta, N., & Narayanan, K. (2025). Credit accessibility and labour allocation decisions of workers in rural India. Agricultural Finance Review. [Link](#)

Nigar, K., & Pathak, P. K. (2025). Exploring the intersectional dynamics of co-morbidities and risk factors among the older population in India. Arch Public Health, 83, 208. [Link](#)

Paul, P. (2025). Marriage Customs and Practices in India: Continuity and Change. Economic & Political Weekly. 60(31). [Link](#)

Reed, M. N., Hossain, B., Goli, S., James, K. S., & Gupta, A. (2025). Widow and Widower Mortality in India: A Research Note. Demography, 12177893. [Link](#)

Taznin, M., Bhuyan, R., Bhuyan, R., & Ahmad, K. (2025). Institutional Confidence, Sociability and Stock Market Participation. International Journal of Finance (IJFIN), 38(4), 99–128. [Link](#)



## About IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) began as a nationally representative, multi topic survey of 41,554 households in 1,503 villages and 971 urban neighborhoods across India. The first round of interviews were completed in 2004-05; Data is publicly available via ICPSR. The second round re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for the same is available via ICPSR. Fieldwork for IHDS 3 was undertaken in 2022-24 and data is currently being cleaned and processed.

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.

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