

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE PREVALENCE AND DETERMINANTS OF GIRLS CHILD MARRIAGE IN WEST BENGAL AND REST OF INDIA

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Abstract

The present study aims to investigate the determinants of girl's child marriage in West Bengal and rest of India. The purpose of the study is to analyze various demographic, socio-economic, cultural and village level characteristics that are important in determining factor for child marriage in West Bengal and rest of India. The Binary logistic regression has been applied to analyze secondary data (DLHS-4) of 8509(125549) women in West Bengal (rest of India). In West Bengal, the Mean age at Marriage among women is lower than the other high prevalence state in India. In this study, I have shown, the largest drop in the prevalence of child marriage has been in the under-15 marriages, while marriages in the age group 15-17 years continue to occur quite common in a number of states in India (specially in West Bengal). As the present study shows, the Individual and household socioeconomic characteristics, such as place of residence, education, religion and caste are important in determining factor for child marriage (only females) in India as well as in West Bengal. Moreover, there is a greater tendency towards child marriage among rural women, irrespective of educational and wealth differences between rural and urban women in West Bengal and rest of India. However, wealth Quintile, village Infrastructure quintile and household BPL card (or not) are three crucial significant factor for child marriage in India, but not in West Bengal. Moreover, the girls with secondary and higher education had much lower chances of early marriage compared to illiterate ones. Thus, education and early marriage are closely linked. In this context, educational intervention (Balika Samridhi Yojana (1997)) and empowerment intervention (Kishori Sakti Yojana (2001)) by the Government of India and Kanyashree Prakalpa (girl's with secondary education, 2012) by the Government of West Bengal could be a good instrument to reduce the early age of marriage in India as well as in West Bengal.

Keywords: Child Marriage, Mean year of schooling, Village Infrastructure quintile, Wealth quintile

JEL classification: I10, I12, J15

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