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Title: Transition to adulthood in Urban Uttar Pradesh: An Event History Analysis

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Transition to adulthood in Urban Uttar Pradesh: An Event History Analysis

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Background and objectives of the study:

In most parts of developing world, adolescents and young adults face rapidly improving prospects for their future, as a result of economic development, modernization, and globalization. These changes have resulted in large increase in school participation and educational attainment among young peoples, which in turn have been associated with decline in child labor, delays in formation of marital union and childbearing as well. Some of these changes are occurring as part of the natural process of development; while others are occurring in response to the pressures and opportunities of the external environment that are affecting the economic, political, and cultural climates.

The developmental phase between childhood and adulthood is often labeled adolescence. This lifecycle phase, common to all societies, involves the acquisition of human and social capital, the consolidation of personal identity, and the emergence of a sense of personal efficacy (Mensch, Bruce, and Greene, 1998). It is a phase of life during which young people have many first-time experiences, including travel or residence away from home, paid work, sex, unemployment, marriage, and birth. It is also a time during which young people try to come out from dependency on their parental resources and acquire a growing scope for agency in their lives. Therefore, it would be important to investigate that what is the recent pattern of transition into adulthood in rapidly changing global world.

The formation of marital union is an important domain of adulthood where the effect of these changes (educational and economic development) could be observed because India is experiencing the increase in age at marriage similar to other developing nations. But at the same time, there is a vast regional as well as sex differential in the age at entry into marital union. For example, many adolescents of North India, particularly females, continue to marry before the age of 18 despite the fact that the legal for them is above 18 years while several others in South use to marry at later ages. The decision of when to marry and with whom to marry largely depends on socio-economic, demographic, cultural and environmental conditions at the time of marriage. Therefore, sometimes the basic factors like, level of education and decision making power, may not provide them ample environment to postpone their marriage due to cultural and social norms of the society. Thus, it is important to study the pathways through which they changes their marital status in light of their educational attainment, job opportunities and living arrangements; rather than just investigating the correlates of marriage age.

In this paper we would like to investigate, whether the high educational attainment, better job opportunity and parental living arrangements help in postponing the marriage age or it is mostly influenced by decisions of their parents or family members, and ii). For this we hypothesized that the individuals' life decision during adulthood is not independent of the decisions of their parents or family members.

There has been little opportunity to study transitions to adulthood in developing countries given the lack of longitudinal data or retrospective life event calendars covering the adolescent years. This paper makes an attempt to describe the transition to adulthood of females and males in an urban district of Uttar Pradesh, highlighting the timing and content of these transitions. Further, it is also tried to investigate that under which circumstances individual prefer to changes their marital status and make first time entry into wedlock. For example, job is the threshold condition for marriage in most of the societies, especially for men, this paper makes an attempt to analyze that, are there any individual who take entry into wedlock before getting an employment? And if so, then what are the reasons behind such a decision and what are the characteristics of those individual?

Data and methods:

Our analysis is based on the primary data collected from the urban areas of Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh in the year 2007-2008 from the young married and unmarried people of both sexes age 18-34 years covering the key aspects of adolescents' lives, including timing of specific transitions and a detailed accounting of time use. One of the important features of the study area is that it is widely known as a traditional capital of India, on one hand, and is also in the present wave of modernization on the other hand. So it will be useful to study this issue in such an area because the individual of this society would like to adopt the recent changes and at the same time they will have the pressure to maintain the predefined customs of the society.

Here, we concentrate on two measures of transitions: the transition to paid work and the transition to marriage. The life event calendar asked each respondent to trace his or her life story, locating key changes in status related to educational attainment, work status, living arrangements and marriage in relationship to each other and in calendar time going back to the age of fifteen for female and eighteen for male. The event history analysis is used to explain who are at a higher risk of experiencing the event(s) of interest than others.

Preliminary Results:

The preliminary findings suggest that despite the high level of education in study area, employment is not the threshold condition for marriage. We found that among the married individuals interviewed, more than half of them had formed their first marital union before acquiring their permanent source of income. Further, there was a significant sex differential in the formation of marital union before getting any employment. Among married females, more

than three-fourth were those who had started their marital relationship before acquiring any kind of job, while among married male, almost half of them were of the same kind ($p < 0.01$).

On analyzing the data, in order to find that what are the reasons behind such type of behavior by the individuals?, it is found that, in most of the cases, individuals are bound to get married just after the completion of their education or even before due to their family pressure. Since these individuals were forced to follow the family decision, hence, their chances of being employed before the marriage become much lower than others. Further, analyzing such behavior in more detail we found that for married male the reasons like, ***'Due to own family business, pressure of family members/relatives, and job was not a threshold condition for marriage'*** provided them the path to get marry even before employment. While the reasons like ***'Job is not necessary for females to marry, parents got good spouse, pressure of family and relatives, and more number of unmarried siblings'*** were more prominent for married females. Thus, for instance, it can be said that preliminary finding contradicts the general perception that educated individual first acquire permanent employment before entering into wedlock and suggests that individuals' life cycle decisions are largely influenced by socio-cultural setup of the community and more over guided by parents decision.

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