

Opinion of Unmarried Women on Marriage, Cohabitation and Childbearing: Are There Prospects of The Second Demographic Transition in Kolkata?

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Abstract

Fertility decline is explained by change in attitude of the individual towards marriage and childbearing and preferences for number of children. This paper focuses on opinions and preferences of single women in a low fertility sub-population of Kolkata. A two-stage systematic random sampling method had been chosen with city wards as the first stage unit and married women as second stage unit. It is entirely based on primary information collected through semi structured questionnaires and face to face interview schedules. The study shows that preference for small families is high, idea of non marriage is not widespread and idea of sexual liberation is not accepted widely in practice. The phenomenon of voluntary childlessness is found little support in the studied population. The responses indicate that the low fertility in Kolkata has been achieved without actually following the path of Second Demographic Transition.

Keywords: *fertility behaviour, low-fertility, non marriage, education*

Introduction:

Fertility decline in the Asian countries have been taking place in the past decades. The Asian countries are grouped as two broad regions; east and southeast Asian countries and south Asian countries. The lowering of fertility in the former had been largely governed by change in marriage pattern where voluntary childlessness from voluntary non marriage played a substantial role in fertility decline of the region (Jones 2007: 453). Southeast Asian countries like Myanmar, Japan, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, South Korea and Indonesia had begun to avoid marriages or postpone their marriages; since it is likely that societies industrialize and urbanize when they converge towards western conjugal life (Cherlin 2012: 577); though this argument has received criticism from several quarters (Jones 1995: 184). In the past, in these countries, marriage was near universal but the trend is gradually changing. In general the age of marriage and proportion not marrying at all is

rising greatly with abandonment of traditional universal marriage and shift in preference towards singlehood.

After late 20th century, with increasing level of education among girls the rate of arranged marriages declined. This happened as there was less of structural need for sustenance of the arranged marriage system. Rather, increasing level of education and self reliance have prompted towards later marriages and subsequently less marriages in east and southeast Asia (Jones 2005: 93). The weakening of arranged marriages is a clear effect of remarkable development of women education in the urban areas and increased involvement of women in the economic activities (Anderberg & Yu Zhu 2009: 2). Besides economic security, education gave a fulfilling career thus giving an alternative route to self fulfillment through marriage and childbearing (Jones 2005).

Education in women makes them certain about their preferences and they often unwilling to marry unless expectations are met. It is likely that the lack of partner is compensated by peer group with same mental plane where likelihood of monotony is reduced (Jones 2010: 6). It was found that both highly educated women and less educated men faced difficulties in getting a partner. Opportunity cost of marriage and family formation was greater for educated women. Moreover, educated women develop values that were feministic while the male remained traditional in their value judgments and thinking. Thus, in addition to shortage of male partners it was more of scarcity in terms of thought (Quah 1998; Tsuya & Bumpass 2004).

Besides, it is still expected from a girl to de-prioritize their parents after marriage. Educated and self-reliant girls who are often a single child themselves avoid marriage as they feel that it will not be possible for them to look after their aging parents. Also, post marriage, instead of co-sharing of the household responsibilities by both the partners it is still expected that the effective functioning of the household will be the primary responsibility of the women. This is often anticipated as an added burden to the women. All these factors have led to wearing down of the idea that marriage has to be preserved at any cost.

On the other hand, in south Asia universal arranged marriages is still a norm in the society. In Bangladesh, and India around 99 per cent of marriages were estimated to be arranged (International Institute of Population Sciences [IIPS] & ORC Macro 2000; Islam, Mamun, & Bairagi 1998: 3). By 1990s, south Asian women from Bangladesh, India and Nepal were marrying before 20 years of age but there was an indication of rising age at marriage (Choe, Westley & Retherford 2002: 31). Particularly, in India the kinship involves principles like exogamous marriage, and non-inheritance of property by females (Jones 2010). In India arranged marriages is seen as an easy way to uphold the family honour, chastity and humility (Desai & Lester 2010: 686). Hindu system emphasize the absorption of the wife into the husband's family (Jones 2010). Marriage is generally viewed as a permanent arrangement,

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and divorce rates, although rising, are still quite low. Furthermore, a large regional diversity in age at marriage is intrinsic characteristics of the country (Visaria 2004).

The discussion reflects that the family norms in south Asia in general or India in particular are distinctively different and function differently from the way the east and southeast Asian do (Choe et al. 2002). The debate on demographic behaviour in India had been well explored under the framework of Demographic Transition Model which was driven by socio-economic needs. The popular academic discourses in the country is highly polarized towards the disparate demographic rates between the southern and the northern states in India (Dyson & Moore 1983: 39); where more emphasis was given to factors like traditional role of women, son preferences and early age at marriage (Uberoi 1993).

In contrast, there is pocket of sub-population in Kolkata where couples are going for late marriages or lesser number of children (Ghosh 2017: 26). For that matter West Bengal had been historically experiencing a low fertility regime (Basu & Desai 2016: 4). The Calcutta Fertility survey conducted in 1970 studied the fertility level in the Calcutta Metropolitan area. The marital fertility rates in European countries corresponding to early reproductive years were higher than those observed for Kolkata (Indian Statistical Institute, 1974). The fertility transition in Kolkata started in 1970 and achieved lowest TFR of 2.0 in India. Recent study based on reverse survival estimation using 2011 census revealed that TFR of the city-Kolkata had come down to 1.2 (Guilmoto & Rajan 2013: 15). It seems the value system of sub-population residing in Kolkata is inadequately captured in the history of demographic literature in the state (Basu & Amin, 2000: 4).

Summarizing the hypotheses

This paper hypothesizes that the probable divergence of low fertility in the sub-population of Kolkata may possibly be explained by Second Demographic Transition (SDT).

The phase of lowest-low fertility in the southern, central and eastern Europe (Kohler, Billari & Ortega 2002) led to the emergence of SDT (Van De Kaa 1987: 5). Some of the characteristics of SDT were non-marital childbearing, adoption of modern contraception, voluntary childlessness, and legitimization of cohabitation, individualism and emphasis on personal lifestyle (Van De Kaa 1994). The SDT theorized that a large proportion of women would forego marriage when they start getting educated and become economically independent and fertility decision would be primarily guided by individual choices. With the associated affluence of economic growth there will be shift from “irreducible needs” to “higher order needs” (Lesthaeghe & Surkyn 1988: 3). Higher order needs stressed on individualism, love, freedom, shift in value orientation and preferences (Maslow 1954: 100).

The idea of SDT had been criticised from various quarters. It has been argued that there is no clear cut transition between the first and second demographic transition (Cliquet 1992: 11). The terminology was also not accepted widely as it was argued that SDT deals more with transition in living arrangement rather than demographic behaviour (Coleman 2004: 12). It was argued that within Europe there was a large number of anomalies in family pattern and demographic behaviour which is not possible to accommodate under one umbrella of SDT (Micheli 2004: 127; Sobotka 2008: 213). Moreover, most of the propositions that surround SDT were based on European countries. Although the convergence of similar phenomenon has been noticed in developed countries of east and south east Asia with diverse family system and fertility behaviour (Sobotka 2008: 174).

In this paper the principal conjecture is that the divergence of low fertility in Kolkata and associated change in behaviour can be attributed to the onset of SDT. This will result in change of the socio-psychological perception of the society from traditional domestic roles to attainment of individual aspirations (Basu & Desai 2016: 5). Accordingly, this article tries to explore the following questions: Firstly, What will the attitudes and opinions of the singles be towards marriage and childbearing in a society that is experiencing sub-replacement fertility within broader societal framework where traditional notion of marriage and childbearing still exists? Secondly, can the shift in attitude be attributed to shift in value system in line with the SDT?

Methods and Materials

The psyche of the unmarried girls towards marriage and childbearing is significant as these women are probable future mothers and their inclination will indicate the course of family building and level of fertility in the population. The proportion of ever married women in the age group 30-34 years was about 93 per cent for urban female which showed that proportions never marrying were small (RGI 2014). So far, four rounds of the nationally administered demographic and health survey namely National Family and Health Survey (NFHS) had been conducted and the reports of these were published. The estimates from the third round (IIPS 2007) and fourth round (IIPS 2017) showed that proportion of unmarried girls in urban areas of West Bengal was about 13 per cent and 12.2 per cent in the age group 25- 29 years and 3.8 per cent and 4.2 per cent at age 40 to 49 years respectively. In India most of the fertility surveys in the past covered only married women; the NFHS covered unmarried women but did not collect information on attitudes towards marriage, cohabitation etc. In view of the need of the information from unmarried women, a field survey conducted by the researcher covered unmarried women in addition to married women. Particularly for this study primary survey becomes important to understand their views on education, career, necessity of marriage, attitudes towards childbearing, notion on family size and childbearing outside the ambit of marital institution.

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This paper is primarily based on the information collected from unmarried women in Kolkata. In a metropolis like Kolkata, the population is widely heterogeneous i.e., varies socially, economically and demographically. Therefore, a two-stage systematic random sampling method had been chosen with city wards as the first-stage unit and currently married and unmarried women from these as the second stage unit. Kolkata covers an area of 185 square kilometers and divided in to 141 municipal wards and four special wards (RGI 2011) and among these 141 wards, four wards were chosen for sample survey. Female Literacy Rate was chosen as an indicator to arrange the wards in descending order and a systematic sample of four were selected; this amounts to implicit stratification by female literacy. The data from the 2011 census were not available at the time of data collection and hence the selection of wards was based on the data from the previous census, that of 2001. From each ward two localities, one identified as poor and the other as non poor, were selected based on the local enquiries and perception of the researcher. After listing of households in each locality, it was proposed to select 25 currently married in the age group of 15-49 years and 12 unmarried women in the age group of 16-40 years at random but in order to allow for non-response up to 30 currently married women of reproductive age and 15 unmarried women in age group 15-40 years were selected from each locality (The findings associated with married women are discussed in a separate paper). Structured interview schedules were prepared.

The data were collected between February and March 2014. Unmarried girls were asked about career objectives, opinion on institution of marriage, ideal age of marriage, ideal family size and notions on childbearing outside marriage. Besides, information on socio-economic background was collected. The primary aim of the paper was to get an opinion of the respondents which is unlikely to change in recent times with the sustained low fertility in the studied region. The possible role of factors such as education, level of income (or poverty), female employment and religion on marriage and childbearing is well recognized in demographic literature. (Isen & Stevenson 2010: 2). Also, uncertainty of future jobs makes people go for higher education so that eventually they get better placed in the job market (Adsera 2004: 18). Family is one of the important institutions of our society. Thus, family system is one of the institutional factors that determine the value orientation, individual choices and in turn develop opinion about marriage and number of children. For example, joint family system encourages higher number of children (Bebarta 1966: 633; Shaw 1988: 329). In such families there are elders to look after the new member in the family. Moreover, members other than in-laws put pressure on women to bear children in the first few months of the marriage. Given India's caste structure, belonging to a caste, especially to highly deprived and traditionally socially excluded groups like the Scheduled Castes (SC) and tribes can have a bearing on institutions like marriage followed by childbearing. The influences of modern education and socio-economic transformations have led to enormous changes

in the existing pattern of choosing one's life partner and marriage practices in India (Goli, Singh & Sekhar 2013: 194). Besides, the role of cultural factors influencing low fertility in Bengali speaking population had been discussed in literature (Basu & Amin 2000:6).

In this paper caste (Scheduled Caste, 'others'), education (no education, primary, secondary, graduate, post graduate), mother tongue (Bengali, 'others'), religion (Hindu, 'others'), type of family (nuclear, non nuclear), household income (<10,000, 10001-25000, >25000 rupees per month) and type of locality (non poor and poor) were included as explanatory factors of attitudes on marriage and childbearing. It is to be noted that the information on household income is discussed as given by the respondents. Also, the nature of the locality was based purely on the perceived judgment of the researcher as assessed by personal observation and categorized as non poor and poor. Reporting of income was often incorrect but the purpose here was to obtain a broad categorization on the basis of income and not a precise estimation of income.

The differentials on opinions and attitudes were presented by background characteristics in the paper. It was recognized that some of the background factors were associated and ideally multivariate analysis should be carried out to assess net influences of various factors. However, the number of respondents was too small to permit a meaningful multivariate analysis. To find out the association chi-square test was carried out. Chi-square test is a statistical test commonly used to compare observed data with data that is expected to obtain according to a specific hypothesis. The distribution used in the paper will help in understanding the attitude and behaviour of the sample group. It must be noted that this paper is based on the responses of women from Kolkata. This is not an average or typical population of India and generalization to India or to urban India would not be appropriate.

Opinion of unmarried women on necessity of marriage

The changes that arrived with SDT brought along with it changes in value orientation and preference for marriage, family and childbearing. But it is also important to understand the significance of forming a family. Gary Becker in his Treatise on the family (Becker 1981: 135) commented that husband and wife complemented each other in a marriage as husband specializes in market activities and wife specializes in the domestic activities. But this production complementariness became weak in the twentieth centuries when there was an increase access to education, decline in labour market discrimination and increase in wage rate. Consequently the declining value of production efficiencies decreased the value of marriage. Delayed or avoidance of marriage can be assumed to be closely linked particularly in the southeast Asian countries (Jones 2007). On the other hand, in south Asia most of the unmarried women stayed at home and marriage signals the initiation of conjugal life and progression towards family building (Jones 2012: 89).

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In the survey, unmarried girls were asked whether they thought marriage is at all necessary for girls (Table 1). About four out of ten opined that marriage is not necessary for girls. A large proportion of girls believed that girls can do without marriage but it is indispensable for boys. They believed that economically independent women can take care of themselves and eventually marriages can be forgone. A higher proportion of women from older age cohort felt that marriage is not necessary for women. Often in the process of attaining higher education and pursuing challenging career women miss the right age as perceived by the society (Jones 2007). Moreover, they lack choice of a good partner who will be at the same or higher mental plane. The views shared by the respondents referred to marriage in general and may not be the same for the girls' own marriage. Many respondents linked non- marriage with economic independence and felt that 'marriage will curb their freedom and can be forgone if economic independence is achieved'. Some girls also associated marriage with 'increasing hassles and domestic troubles'. When the responses were cross-classified across the socio-economic background it was found that the preference for avoidance of marriage was significantly higher among Bengali speaking women. They were found to believe that one may forgo marriage and live a comfortable life. Thus among all the background variables ethnicity of the women was found to be more crucial in shaping the opinion of the respondents.

Similarly, when asked to the girls whether they think marriage is necessary for boys, about one-fifth said that marriage was not necessary for boys (Table 2). When the responses were cross-classified across the socio-economic background it was found that age of the women significantly affect the opinion on avoidance of marriage for boys. The women from higher age cohort gave more explicit responses and six out of ten women believed that marriage is indispensable for boys (Table 2).

In the sample population it was found that marriage is still an important institution and for a majority alternative living arrangements were not foreseeable in the recent future. However, at very nascent stage, there is an undercurrent of shift of opinion in favour of non marriage. The respondents generally believed that 'Marriage is necessary for girls as one gets a partner with whom they can share their feelings'. Some also said that 'Marriage provides a partner for old age and a support in the absence of their parents'. A few had also internalized marriage as being one of the important events of life and did not think of any deviation. Respondents also opined that 'Marriage is necessary to continue with their progeny and often remaining unmarried is a taboo in the society'. Girls generally believed that marriage is more important for boys and they (men) would not be able to do without it. Apart from established views like 'It is the responsibility of the boys to carry forward the family name', some of the responses were in favour of marriage for boys. Quite a handful of women felt that 'Boys are mentally weak' and as a result 'They need someone to take

care of them especially in the old age'. Therefore, from the survey it reflected that substantial proportion of young single women does not think that marriage is an absolute necessity. Thus, at least a non-negligible portion of unmarried women were thinking along the lines of the SDT.

Ideal age of marriage

In Indian context the conjugal life is believed to be starting after marriage. So the ideal age of marriage will give a direction towards childbearing and family building. Respondents during the survey were asked in general what they feel is an ideal age of marriage. Separate questions were asked for ideal age of marriage for a boy and a girl. The question was asked for an exact age but many responses were in the form of a range. Hence in the analysis the ideal age had been discussed in terms of range. The age ranges used were 15-19 years, 20-24 years, 25-29 years and 30 years or above respectively.

The median had been calculated to get the middle value as mean was liable to get affected by extremes. The respondents were categorized into three age groups 15-19 years, 20-24 years and above 25 years. Among younger girls about half said that an ideal age of marriage for girls was between 25-29 years. As the age of the single women increased most (for about 84 per cent) of them stated that the ideal age of marriage should be between 25-29 years. About one-fifth of the respondents above 25 years opined that ideal age is 30 years and above (Table 3). Among younger respondents, half felt that the ideal age of marriage for boys is between 25-29 years and about one-fifth believed that it is above 30 years. Over half of the girls above 25 years of age considered that boys should ideally get married after 30 years of age. A large section considered that age above 30 years is ideal for boys to get married.

When the respondents were probed about the age at which they themselves were comfortable getting married, the range varied with age. About four-fifths of the younger girls said they wanted to marry between 25-29 years and of the girls 25 and above, one-third preferred marriage after 30th year of age (Table 3). There can be a post facto rationalization as women stated higher ideal age of marriage than their own age. There was also a section of girls above 25 years, about one-fifth, who were either not sure of marriage or do not want to get married in the future. Thus, there is some preference among the respondents to postpone the age at marriage and some women of higher age cohort even wanted to forego marriage altogether.

Fertility preferences

Sociologists and demographers have tried to explain fertility decline by change in attitude of the individual towards marriage and childbearing and preference for the number of

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children (Hakim 2003). The set of preference in a population will bring about change in the fertility pattern only if the dynamics of the behavioral pattern changes. The respondents were asked "What do you think should be the ideal family size?" Four out of ten said that their ideal family size is one. About half of the girls preferred two as their ideal size. For less than four per cent the ideal family size was three or above. Thus, about half of the respondents considered two as the ideal family size. There were no respondents who preferred a childless family. This further points out to the fact that voluntary childlessness is still not acceptable in the society. Although, the survey results point to a shift in inclination towards one child family as women in Kolkata were keen to have small families.

The fertility preference of currently married women was also studied during the study (the details of the results have been dealt separately in another paper). A highlight of the result will help in understanding the purview from both the sides. Similar reflection was observed during the field investigations where 25 per cent of currently married women were inclined to have a one child family. The NFHS- III estimate also corroborated this as it showed that about 35 per cent of the currently married women in Kolkata and 27 per cent in urban West Bengal idealize a family with one child (IIPS and ORC Macro 2007). In recent estimates by NFHS-IV (2015-16) it showed that about 22 per cent of the women currently in union or living with a man idealize a family with one child.

The preference may also vary with socio-economic differentials and a chi-square analysis was done to see association of highly interlinked background variables. The result showed (Table 4) that the preference for a one child family was significantly higher among Bengali speaking women, who follow Hinduism and those with higher education. However, the phenomenon of voluntary childlessness which is one of the essential features of the SDT has found little support in the studied population.

Opinion of unmarried women on childbearing outside marriage

In the survey, girls were asked about their opinion on childbearing outside the institution of marriage. This was to find out how they feel about co-habitation and how much importance do they attach to marriage as a requirement for childbearing. About one-fifth of unmarried women said that they had no objections to 'Others' bearing children outside the wedlock but were reluctant to do the same themselves. About three-fourths (Table 5) said that 'The concept is still not acceptable in the society' and four per cent were not sure of the idea. Thus, sexual liberation does not seem to have caught up in the society and in this respect, the conditions of SDT have not developed to the extent seen in many European countries (Sobotka, Zemen & Kantorova 2003: 258).

When the responses were cross classified by socio-economic background it was found (Table 5) that age of the women and income of the household significantly affect the idea

of childbearing outside the institution of marriage. A chi-square analysis showed that the women from higher age cohort and who reside in a non poor locality were significantly more open to the idea of childbearing outside the institution of marriage. The progressive thinking may have developed because of education and more liberal family setup of the Bengali speaking population of the city. However, these attributes were associated and in the absence of a further rigorous multivariate analysis, it is difficult to pinpoint a specific one as the principal factor.

Conclusions

In this paper attitudes of singles towards marriage, fertility preferences, living arrangements and childbearing outside the ambit of marital institution in a sub-population experiencing low fertility were presented. The results indicated that almost everyone is adapted to urban lifestyle and hold views which are primarily liberating. It becomes imperative to understand the psyche of the people which has been framed over a long evolution of culture. This can be stretched long back in history when the phenomenon of having less number of children got a boost with renaissance in the eighteenth century, the change in socio-cultural milieu, and with the advent of modernization (McDonald 2008: 20).

Introduction of social customs, western education and education to girl child had a strong influence and gave rise to a new class popularly called as "*bhadrolok*". They were pioneers of modern thoughts and liberal outlook; thus infusing in the society a culture of liberal attitudes and social revolution. Eventually these liberal ideas were adapted by the larger non-elite classes and slowly the latter group adopted the idea (Hakim 2003). The status of women rose as a result and more and more emphasis was given to education. This was well translated in the size of the family; where importance was given to proper education and right nurturing of the child. This is also reflected in the present paper that education has fertility depressing effect. Education gives a woman basket of choices while taking decisions on life events like choosing a career, a life partner, and embracing motherhood. Apart from appreciating reproductive roles she also attaches importance to individual rights and accomplishments. The cultural factors like mother tongue and religion affiliation are more likely to influence the preferences and attitude of the respondents than the individual socio-economic factors.

It is logical that the various triggers had determined set of preferences in a population that changed marital norms and family building decisions. The study shows young girls continue to hold marriage as an important institution. It is seen that girls consider marriage as a natural progression though prefer to get married at relatively higher age. Respondents look for a partner from marriage and most of them have internalized the idea that marriage is part of life. At the same time, it is interesting to note that quite a few unmarried women

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believed that marriage can be forgone if economic independence is achieved. In the study it was found that there is tendency to postpone age at marriage. But the proposition of large number of girls avoiding marriage has been found not to be true in the studied sub-population.

Overall there is an undercurrent of desire for small families; the preference for one child is emerging rapidly among single women. Additionally, it was found that belonging to a particular ethnicity (Bengalis) have bearing on decision of choosing a particular number of children. The phenomenon of voluntary childlessness found little support in the studied population. Large proportion of unmarried women want to have at least one child and not many prefer to forego childbearing altogether. Therefore, it can be argued that the cultural shift may have taken place but the shift in demographic behaviour has not happened from family centric model to an individual model as envisaged in SDT.

Also, there is some acceptance of childbearing outside the conventional wedlock. Though a vast majority does not favour this, it can be considered as an initial phase towards more liberating and innovative society. This can be said as an extension of post-modernism which started in Europe in the mid 1960s and heralded the beginning of the SDT. Also, the idea of sexual liberation is accepted in principle by a small section of population yet is not in practice by vast majority. Thus, it will be prudent to say that although the women of Kolkata have moved along some dimensions of the SDT, the low fertility in the region has been reached without actually following the path of the European, east and southeast Asian countries.

Declaration of Conflicting Interest:

The Author declares that there is no conflict of interest. This work has not been used on any other platform, digital or print and that it is an original research study.

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Table 1 : Opinion of unmarried women on necessity of marriage for women, Kolkata

Background Variables	Categories	Marriage necessary	Marriage not necessary	Do not know	Chi Square coefficient	Total
Total		53.6	42.7	3.6		110
Age at survey	15-19	54.2	43.8	2.1	0.648	48
	20-24	55.3	36.8	7.9		38
	25+	50.0	50.0	0.0		24
Caste	SC/ST				0.552	11*
	Others	54.5	42.4	3.0		99
Education	No education/Primary	48.0	48.0	4.0	0.928	25
	Secondary/Higher secondary	53.7	42.6	3.8		54
	Graduation/Post graduation	58.1	38.7	3.2		31
Religion	Hindu	49.5	46.3	4.3	0.173	95
	Others					15*
Type of family	Nuclear	54.4	44.1	1.5	0.432	68
	Non Nuclear	52.4	40.5	7.2		42
Mother Tongue	Bengali	45.7	49.4	4.9	0.041	81
	Others	75.9	24.1	0.0		29
Income (Rs/ month)	< 10,000	55.6	44.4	0.0	0.266	36
	10,001-25,000	39.5	52.6	7.9		38
	> 25,000	64.7	32.4	2.9		34
Type of locality	Non-Poor	50.9	42.1	7.1	0.273	57
	Poor	56.6	43.4	0.0		53

Note: 1. Figures in parentheses are less than 20; 2.*: Distributions are not given if the total number of women in the category is less than 20.0

Source: Computed from primary data

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Table 2 : Opinion of unmarried women on necessity of marriage for men, Kolkata

Background Variables	Categories	Marriage necessary	Marriage not necessary	Do not know	Chi Square coefficient	Total
Total		54.5	20.0	25.4		110
Age at survey	15-19	58.3	20.8	20.8	0.083	48
	20-24	44.7	13.2	42.1		38
	25+	62.5	29.2	8.3		24
Caste	SC/ST				0.619	11*
	Others	52.5	21.1	26.3		99
Education	No education/Primary	68.0	8.0	24.0	0.559	25
	Secondary/higher secondary	51.9	24.1	24.1		54
	Graduation/Post graduation	48.4	22.6	29.0		31
Religion	Hindu	51.6	21.1	27.4	0.465	95
	Others					15*
Type of family	Nuclear	52.9	20.6	26.5	0.572	68
	Non Nuclear	57.1	19.0	23.8		42
Mother Tongue	Bengali	50.6	23.5	25.9	0.382	81
	Others	65.5	10.3	24.1		29
Income (Rs/ month)	< 10,000	58.3	19.4	22.2	0.895	36
	10,001-25,000	50.0	21.1	28.9		38
	> 25,000	55.9	20.6	23.5		34
Type of locality	Non-Poor	49.1	21.1	29.9	0.526	57
	Poor	60.4	18.9	20.8		53

Note: 1. Figures in parentheses are less than 20.; 2.*: Distributions are not given if the total number of women in the category is less than 20.

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table 3: Ideal age of marriage for girls and boys (in general) and for respondents themselves, Kolkata

Ideal age of marriage			Age group of the respondents				
15-19			20-24		25+		Total
Per cent	N	Per cent	N	Per cent	N		
Marriage for girls							
15-19	10.4	5	0	0	4.2	1	6
20-24	37.5	18	13.2	5	12.5	3	26
25-29	47.9	23	84.2	32	66.7	16	71
30 or more	2.1	1	2.6	1	16.7	4	6
Don't know	2.1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	100.0	48	100.0	38	100.0	24	110
Median Age	25.1		27.3		27.7		

Marriage for boys

15-19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20-24	12.5	6	0	1	4.2	1	7
25-29	50.0	24	50.0	19	37.5	9	52
30 or more	22.9	11	42.1	16	54.2	13	40
Don't know	14.6	7	7.9	3	4.2	1	11
Total	100.0	48	100.0	38	100.0	24	110
Median Age	28.1		28.3		30.8		

For respondents themselves

< 20	12.5	6	0	0	0	0	6
20-24	31.2	15	13.2	5	0	0	20
25-29	39.6	19	78.9	30	50.0	12	61
30 or more	2.1	1	2.6	1	33.3	8	10
Don't know	8.3	4	0	0	0	0	7
Not decided	2.1	1	2.6	1	0	0	2
Don't want	4.2	2	2.6	1	16.7	4	7
Total	100.0	48	100.0	38	100.0	24	110
Median age	24.8		27.2		29.7		

Source : Computed from primary data.

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Table 4 : Ideal family size expressed by unmarried women, Kolkata

Background Variables	Categories	Ideal Family Size			Chi Square coefficient	No. of women
(Number of children)						
Variables		1	2	>2		
Total		40.7	55.6	3.8		110
Age	15-19	37.0	58.7	4.4	0.412	46
	20-24	36.8	63.2	0.0		38
	25+	54.2	37.5	8.4		24
Caste	SC/ST				0.289	11*
	Others	41.2	55.7	3.1		97
Education	No education/Primary	20.8	62.5	16.4	0.005	24
	Secondary/higher secondary	41.5	58.6	0.0		53
	Graduation/Post graduation	54.8	45.2	0.0		31
Religion	Hindu	45.2	53.8	1.1	0.000	93
	Muslim					15*
Type of family	Nuclear	40.9	59.1	0.0	0.083	66
	Non Nuclear	40.5	50.0	9.6		42
Mother Tongue	Bengali	48.1	50.6	1.3	0.011	79
	Others	20.7	69.0	10.3		29
Income (Rs/month)	< 10,000	27.8	61.1	11.2	0.065	36
	10,001-25,000	54.1	45.9	0.0		37
	> 25,000	39.4	60.6	0.0		33
Type of locality	Non-Poor	45.5	54.5	0.0	0.188	55
	Poor	35.8	56.6	7.6		53

Note: 1. *: Distributions are not given if the total number of women in the category is less than 20.

Source: Computed from primary data.

Table 5 : Opinion of unmarried women on acceptability of child bearing outside marriage, Kolkata

Background Variables	Categories	No.	Yes	Can't say	Chi Square coefficient	Total
Total		73.6	21.8	4.5		110
Age	15-19	87.5	8.3	4.2	0.004	48
	20-24	52.6	39.5	7.9		38
	25+	79.2	20.8	0.0		24
Caste	SC/ST				0.376	11*
	Others	71.7	23.2	5.1		99
Education	No education/Primary	96.0	0.0	4.0	0.023	25
	Secondary/higher secondary	72.2	24.1	3.7		54
	Graduation/Post graduation	58.1	35.5	6.5		31
Religion	Hindu	70.5	25.3	4.2	0.087	95
	Others					15*
Type of family	Nuclear	77.9	17.6	4.4	0.392	68
	Non Nuclear	66.7	28.6	4.8		42
Mother Tongue	Bengali	72.8	24.7	2.5	0.129	81
	Others	75.9	13.8	10.3		29
Household Income						
(Rs per month)	< 10,000	97.2	2.8	0.0	0.004	36
	10,001-25,000	60.5	34.5	5.3		38
	> 25,000	64.7	29.4	5.9		34
Type of locality	Non-Poor	61.4	31.6	7.0	0.010	57
	Poor	86.8	11.1	1.9		53

Source: Computed from primary data.

Note: 1. Percentages based on denominator below 20 are shown in parentheses.

2. *: Distributions are not given if the total number of women in the category is less than 20.

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