**Additional file 1: Mean age at childbearing by socio-economic status, India, 1981**

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| **Socio-economic status** | **Female** | **Male** |
| Illiterate | 27.87 | 34.20 |
| Literate | 25.51 | 31.83 |
| General and OBC\* | 27.00 | 33.32 |
| SC | 27.48 | 33.80 |
| ST | 27.70 | 34.03 |
| Hindu | 27.21 | 33.53 |
| Non-Hindu | 27.52 | 33.85 |
| **All** | **27.26** | **33.59** |

Source: Authors’ own calculation from Census of India, 1981

Note: 1) Mean age at childbearing is not available by income category and offspring’s educational status in census data. Therefore, we use all India figure in all income groups. We used the mean age at childbearing of illiterate parents for the illiterate offspring and the mean age of childbearing of the literate parents for all the other educational groups of offspring

2) The average age gap between spouses is 6.32 (calculated from 1981 census) years and kept constant across population groups. 3) Since Census does not give fertility information for Other Backward Caste separately, we assume non SC-ST mean age at child bearing for general and other backward castes population.