

# MARRIAGE AGE PATTERNS IN INDIA

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Decennial censuses produce distribution of population by marital status in the different age group. It is possible to deduce from it good information on marriage age patterns among men and women. Hajnal<sup>1</sup> has given a simple formula for calculating mean age at first marriage from proportion single. Here, single is used in the sense of 'never married' and is complementary of 'ever married', which includes currently married, widowed, divorced or separated. Remarriage keeps the person in the ever-married group unchanged. Hence the calculations give the age at first marriage; remarriages are not taken into account. Hajnal's formula has been extensively applied to estimate mean marriage age and its trends for countries like India, which do not have a system of registration of marriages. His exact expression for the mean marriage age  $M$  of persons, who marry between ages  $d$  &  $D$  is

$$M = \frac{\int_d^D x n(x) dx}{\int_d^D n(x) dx} = d + \frac{1}{s(d) - s(D)} \left[ \int_d^D s(x) dx - (D-d)s(D) \right] \dots (1)$$

where  $x$  is the age at marriage,  $n(x)$  is the proportion marrying at age  $x$  and  $s(x)$  is the proportion at age  $x$ , who never married.

If  $d$  is the age below which nobody marries,  $s(d) = 1$ . The integral is simply obtained from the relationship  $d[s(x)] = -n(x) dx$ .

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<sup>1</sup> HAJNAL, JOHN, 'Age at Marriage and Proportion Marrying', *Population Studies*, Vol. VII No. 2, Nov. 1953.