

# The Long-Term Effect of Exposure to the Taliban Regime on Women's Age at Marriage in Afghanistan

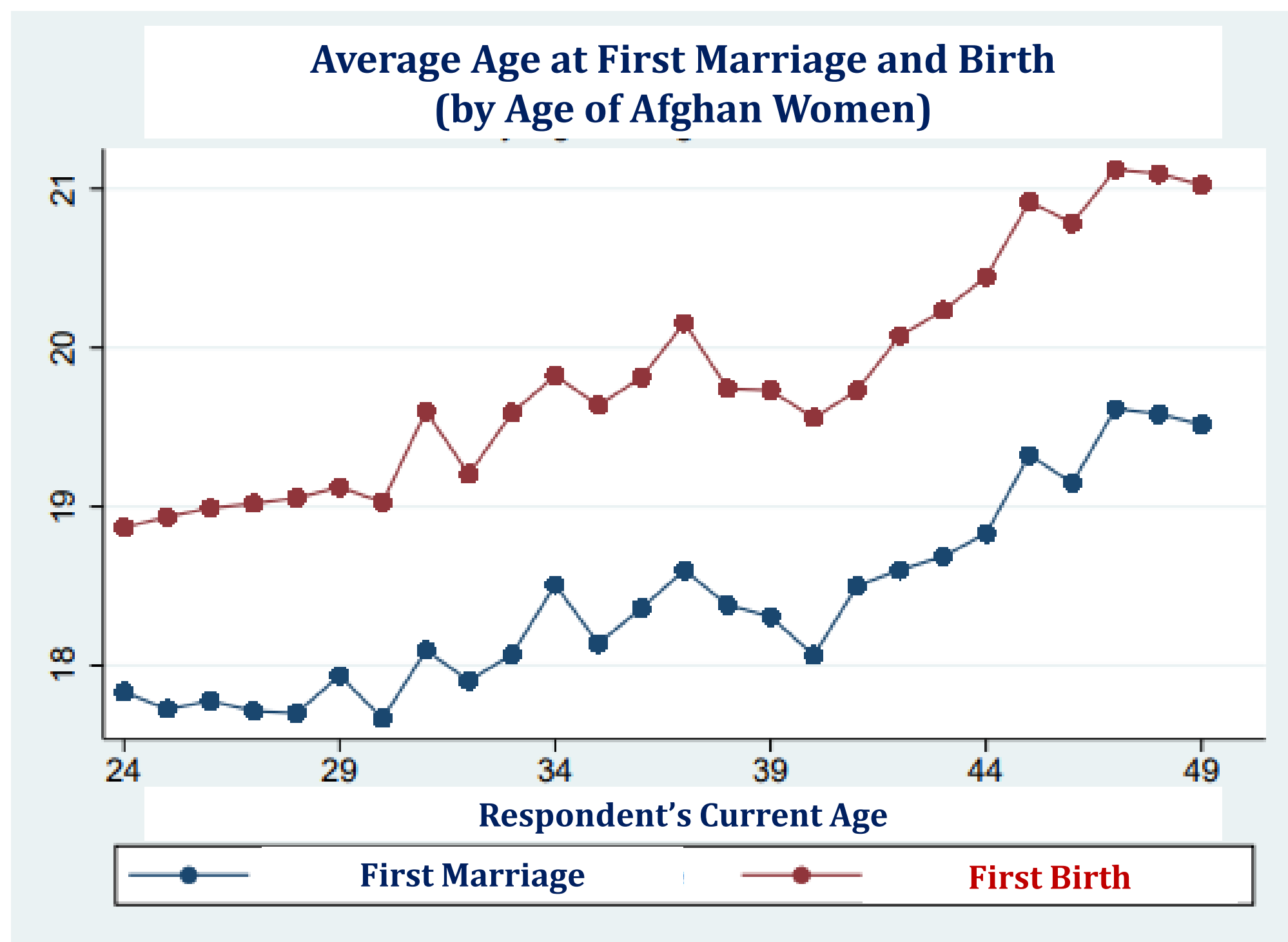


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## RESEARCH QUESTION:

- Women's age at marriage influences women's education completion, exposure to IPV, maternal survival & children's welfare.
- Using exposure to the first Taliban regime (1996-2001) as a natural experiment, we study its causal impact on women's age at first marriage in Afghanistan.



## ECONOMETRIC SPECIFICATION:

$$y_{icp} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{TajikUzbek}_{icp} + \sum_{c=2}^5 \beta_{2c} \text{CohortStartTaliban}_{icp} + \sum_{c=2}^5 \beta_{3c} \text{TajikUzbek}_{icp} * \text{CohortStartTaliban}_{icp} + \gamma X_{icp} + \delta_{icp} + \text{YOB}_{icp} + \varepsilon_{icp}$$

## DATA SOURCE:

- Afghanistan Demographic and Health Survey (AfDHS), 2015

## VARIABLE DESCRIPTION:

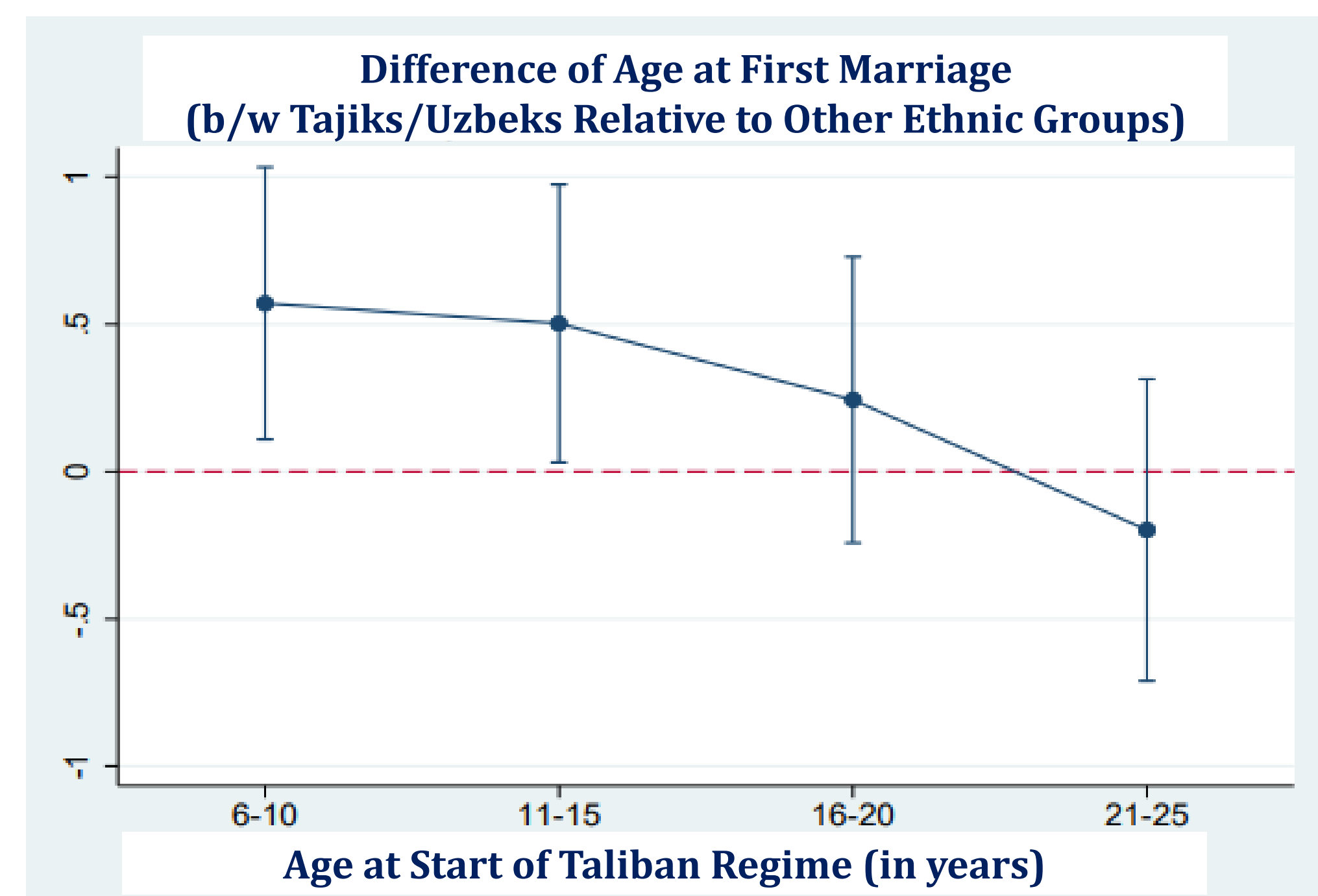
$y_{icp}$ : Age at first marriage (in years) of woman  $i$  belonging to age cohort  $c$  and residing in province  $p$ .

$\text{TajikUzbek}_{icp} * \text{CohortStartTaliban}_{icp}$ : Capture difference in the age of exposure to the first Taliban regime by ethnic identities.

$X_{icp}$ : Socioeconomic, household-specific controls.

## EMPIRICAL STRATEGY:

- Exploit the exogenous variation in age at exposure to the first Taliban regime across ethnic identities in the spirit of a difference-in-difference estimation framework.
- Identification requires no differential pre-trends across ethnicities among cohorts "old enough" to have been already married at the start of the regime – indeed no such difference between the oldest (above 26 yrs.) and second oldest (21-25 yrs.) at the start of the regime across ethnicities.



"OLD ENOUGH" to have been already married  
At least 26 yrs. old.

"RELATIVELY YOUNG" about to enter marriage market  
5 yr. age brackets:  
6 – 10 to 16-20 (also, 21 – 25 for falsification exercise)

AGE AT START OF FIRST TALIBAN REGIME

TAJIK/UZBEK – dominant groups politically opposed to the Taliban, forming the Northern Alliance.

ETHNIC IDENTITY

PASHTUN – dominant group comprising the Taliban (& other ethnic minorities such as Hazaras)

## RESULTS & MAIN MESSAGE:

- Exposure to the Taliban regime at younger ages raised the age at first marriage for Tajik/Uzbek women relative to those belonging to other ethnic groups by ~ 7 months.
- Divergence in age at marriage between Tajik/Uzbek women who were "younger" at the start of the regime from those of other ethnicities (similarly for age at first birth).
- Finding indicate welfare improvement for "younger" Tajik/Uzbek women while being detrimental to women of other ethnicities of similar age cohorts.
- Indicate potentially lasting human capital effects of the first Taliban regime on Afghan society.