Constraints and limitations

Despite implementing a robust approach to estimate the cost of child marriage, it is important to acknowledge the existence of certain data-related limitations and constraints in this research. The estimation of the economic consequences of child marriage utilizing a macro-level simulation model necessitates a wide range of input indicators, including population age-sex distribution,³⁵ fertility rates, contraceptive usage, mortality rates (such as infant mortality, under-5 mortality and maternal mortality), education levels, health status, labour force participation, urbanization, agriculture and GDP per capita. These input indicators are predominantly obtained from sources such as censuses, sample surveys like DHS, MICS and LFS, as well as vital registration and official statistics from respective countries. In this study, the most recent available data was utilized,³⁶ and extrapolation of input indicators was performed when required. It is important to note that the consequences of child marriage are intricate and hierarchical in nature. Consequently, any costing exercise conducted through a macro-level simulation model tends to underestimate rather than overestimate the true impact, as it is impossible to include all parameters directly and indirectly influenced by child marriage.