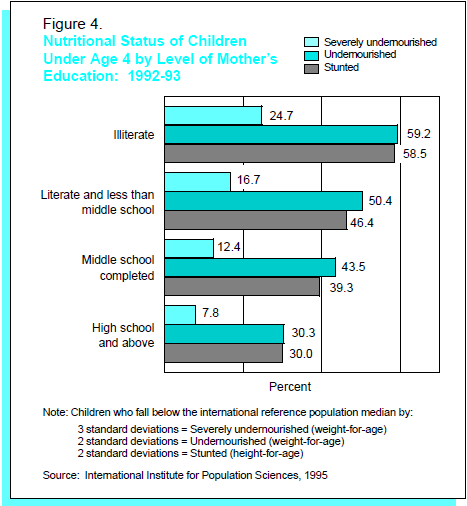
**Education:**

The decade of the 1990s has seen noteworthy progress in the field of elementary education. There has been progressive improvement in overall literacy levels across the country. The problem of access has been addressed to a significant degree with close to 90 per cent children in the 6-11 age group currently enrolled in primary schools – formal, alternative and private taken together. The country has witnessed a decadal jump (1991–2001) of 13.17 per cent for men and 14.87 per cent for women in literacy rates and for the first time, a decrease in the absolute number of illiterates



* Discussion of the social and cultural barriers to girls’ education brings us to the issue of women’s status and their access to intellectual resources
* The problem of girls’ education needs to be located in the overall situation of women on our society
* Regional differences women across the country have not had equal access to education. Girls from higher social and economic classes record better achievement than boys in poorer communities
* Gender stereotyping. Perpetuation of gender-bias

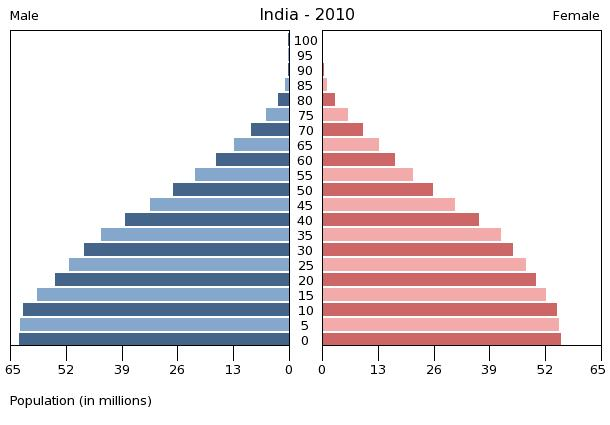
Despite rapid growth of private and aided schools in many areas of the country it has been noted that the proportion of girls is much higher in government schools as compared to private schools. “The proportion of girls in unrecognized schools was very low as compared to their share in the government schools. The gender bias in school choice by parents is quite evident. Many villagers report that girls are sent to government schools because they are entitled to various types of incentives”

Girls’ lack of access to education isn’t always related to scarcity of places in schools. It also emerges from expectations, attitudes and biases in communities and families. Economic costs, social traditions, and religious and cultural beliefs limit girls’ educational opportunities. Whatever the underlying reason(s), having large number of girls outside the formal schooling system brings developmental challenges to both current and future generations. Individuals, families, communities and nations are affected. Inability to read, write and calculate complicates a girl’s efforts to engage in both market-focused production and household activities as effectively and efficiently possible. This affects her family’s welfare and diminishes her potential contribution to the development of the household, local and national economy.

Education is widely recognized as the gateway to economic security and opportunity- particularly for girls and women.

World figures in literacy relate a sorry tale. Of the 130 million 6-11 year-old children not in school - a majority - 60 percent are girls. The figures only go to show how in most regions of the world, specially the developing societies, gender bias impinges on girls' education.

**Birth ratios:**



* Trend data based on the three NFHS surveys provide strong evidence of declines in the sex ratio (females per 1,000 males) of the population age 0-6 and in the sex ratio at birth for births in the five years preceding each survey.
* Females are under-represented among births and over-represented among births that die.
* Sex ratios at birth decline with wealth, suggesting that sex selection of births is more common among wealthier than poorer households.
* Ultrasound tests are being widely used for sex selection, with sex selection being

more evident for the wealthiest women than for women in the other wealth

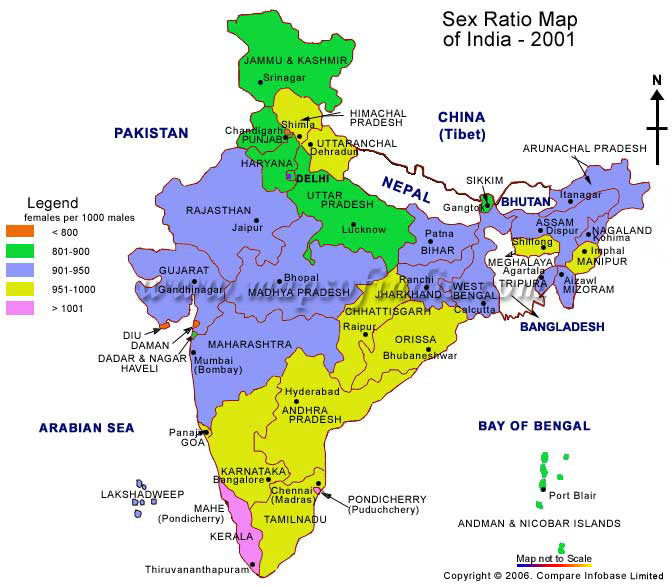
quintiles.

* Sex ratios of all last births and last births of sterilized women show clearly that

couples typically stop having children once they have the desired number of sons.

* The child mortality rate, defined as the number of deaths to children age 1-4 years

per 1,000 children reaching age 1 year, is 61% higher for girls than for boys.

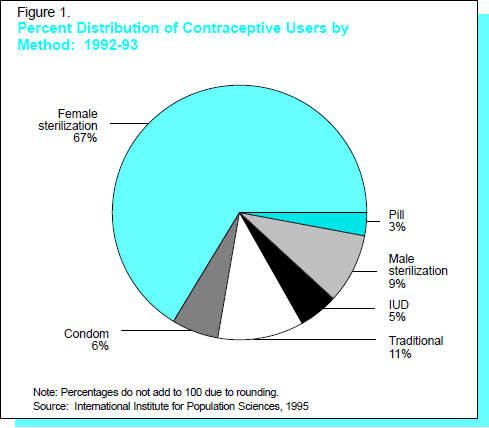


**Health:**

Women in India especially those in rural areas bearing double burden on their shoulders, have never publicly voiced their concern over health needs. Even in urban areas where infrastructures and physical access to public health services is relatively far better, women get a raw deal. Even women’s general health needs do not get the necessary attention.

Gender bias in nutrition and health care in childhood, early marriage and conception, lack of voluntary check on family size and poor state of pre-natal and maternal health care services only intensify women’s health problems.

This situation is mainly due to women’s health needs getting the least priority in the family. The negative effect of poverty is even more acute because of the existing gender bias against women. Poverty also leads to the belief that more mouths to feed also mean twice the number of hands to work. Thus due to poverty, illiteracy and lack of awareness, children are considered as economic assets This, in turn results in the worsening health conditions of women. The gender inequality and women’s health in India in general and the state of Rajasthan.



The health of Indian women is intrinsically linked to their status in society. Research on women’s status has found that the contributions Indian women make to families often are overlooked, and instead they are viewed as economic burdens. There is a strong son preference in India, as sons are expected to care for parents as they age. This son preference, along with high dowry costs for daughters, sometimes results in the mistreatment of daughters.

Many of the health problems of Indian women are related to or exacerbated by high levels of fertility. Overall, fertility has been declining in India; by 1992-93 the total fertility rate was 3.4 (International

Institute for Population Science (IIPS), 1995).1 However, there are large differences in fertility levels by state, education, religion, caste and place of residence. Utter Pradesh, the most populous state in India, has a total fertility rate of over 5 children perm woman. On the other hand, Kerala, which has relatively high levels of female education and autonomy, has a total fertility rate under 2.

**Employment:**

* Women age 15-49 are about half as likely as men in the same age group to be

employed: 43% vs. 87%.

* Controlling for wealth and education, women in rural areas are more likely than

women in urban areas to be employed; but the reverse is true for men.

* Although uneducated women are more likely to be employed than educated

women, some of this effect is due to the positive association of no education with

poverty. Once wealth is controlled for, women who have 12 or more years of

education have higher odds of being employed than women with no education. For

men, with or without controls for wealth, education is negatively associated with

employment.

* The relationship of employment and wealth for women suggests that, for many

women, employment is largely a result of economic necessity.

* Even with controls for education, age, and wealth, marriage is negatively

associated with a woman’s likelihood of being employed and is positively

associated with a man’s likelihood of being employed.

* Most employed women work for someone else, away from home, and continuously

throughout the year; about one in three women do not receive monetary

compensation for their work or receive at least part of their payment in kind.

* Most employed women work in agriculture; only 7% work in professional,

technical, or managerial occupations***.***

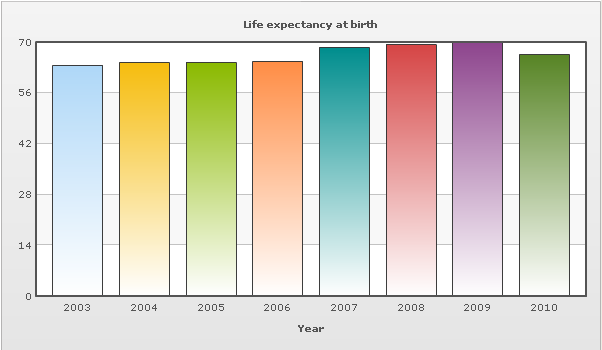
**Employment by age** Among women, employment peaks in the age-group 30-39 years in each marital category and is highest, at 76%, in this age group for women who have had a marital disruption. Notably, the majority of never married women age 30 and over are employed. Among men there is very little variation in employment by age beyond the age-group 15-19, and even this variation is mainly due to the variation in employment among the never married.

**Employment by education** Women who have no education are much more likely to be employed than women with education, irrespective of education level. However, it is notable that employment, after first declining with years of education, increases in every marital category for women with the highest level of education (12+ years). This suggests that while low levels of education do little to enable women’s employment, higher levels contribute to women’s increased labour force participation. By contrast, most ever-married men are employed irrespective of education and marital status. Even among the never married, virtually all men with no or early primary education are employed. However, the limited data on never married men with higher levels of education suggests that employment is much less common in these groups, perhaps because, at these young ages, many men are still engaged in the process of acquiring education.

**Employment by wealth** Employment declines sharply by wealth for women, irrespective of marital status. For example, among currently married women, the percentage employed declines from 62% for women in the lowest wealth quintile to 22% for women in the highest wealth quintile. Employment also declines by wealth for men, but only from 94% for those in the lowest wealth quintile to 79% for those in the highest wealth quintile. Among ever-married men, virtually all men are employed in most wealth and marital categories. For never married men, the proportion employed falls from 78% in the lowest wealth quintile to 53% in the highest wealth quintile. The relationship of employment and wealth for women suggests that women’s employment continues to be linked closely to economic necessity, rather than being an expression of choice and self-fulfillment.

**Life Expectancy:**

* India is one of the few countries in the world where women and men have nearly the same life expectancy at birth. The fact that the typical female advantage in life expectancy is not seen in India suggests there are systematic problems with women’s health. Indian women have high mortality rates, particularly during childhood and in their reproductive years.



**male:** 65.46 years **female:** 67.57 years

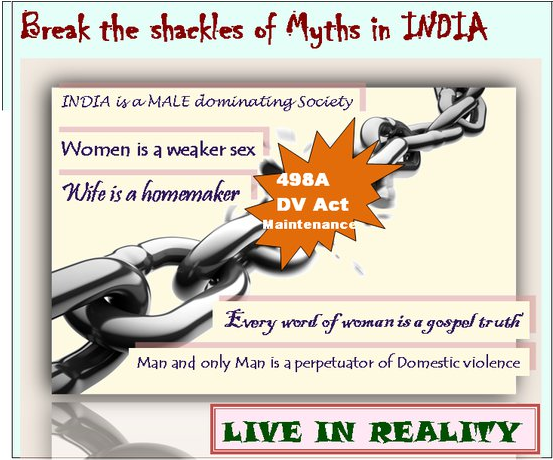
* India’s life expectancy is very low because of health problems. Women in other countries live longer because they have better health systems.

**Migration:**

* Since about 3 centuries ago, Indian female immigrants have gone to Malaysia.
* The dominance of males in Indian temporary labour migration led to immigrant communities with few women and families. Bringing in female sex workers became a profitable enterprise. Colonial authorities were tolerant on this matter.
* The role of gender in the process and context of international migration is gaining recognition. International labour migration is a persistent phenomenon. There is a need to understand this gendered labour export system as being built on the personal relationship between women and men in the exporting country.
* Besides that, it can also be seen in terms of the changing structural conditions that transforms labour migration as a male-dominated phenomenon to one whereby women figure as the dominant migrant labour. This process may also contribute to impeding the transformation of gender relations in the labour importing country.

**Legal rights:**

* The constitution declares that the equality before the law and the equal protection of laws shall be available for all.
* Besides, directive principle of state policy which concern women directly and have a special bearing on their status directly and have a special bearing on their status include Article 39(a) right to an adequate means of livelihood; (d) equal pay for equal wok both men and women, (e) protection of health and strength of workers –men, women, children and Article 42 provides for just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.



* In India, since independence, a number of laws have been enacted in order to provide protection to women. For instance the Dowry prohibition Act 1961, The Equal Remuneration Act 1986, The Hindu Marriage Act 1956, The Hindu Succession Act 1956, The Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act, 1986, the commission of Sati (prevention) Act 1987, Protection of the Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005, etc. But, the laws have hardly implemented in their letter and spirit.
* The sense of insecurity, humiliation and helplessness always keep a women mum. Our whole socialization is such that for any unsuccessful marriage which results in such violence or divorce, it is always the woman, who is held responsible.

**Land Tenure:**

* Homes and land may be very asymmetrically shared. The absence of claims to property can not only reduce the voice of women, but also make it harder for women to enter and flourish in commercial, economic and even some social activities. This type of inequality has existed in most parts of the world, though there are also local variations. For example, even though traditional property rights have favored men in the bulk of India.
* Urban researchers are increasingly asserting that access to ‘house and land’ is a key

determinant of women’s empowerment in urban areas (Tinker and Summerfield, 1999).

Other authors like Mearns (1999) describe how women are excluded from holding title

to land either through legal or cultural means, and that this lack of access and control is

a key determinant of women’s economic status. Although men and women in India

enjoy the same legal rights with regard to property ownership, many cultural traditions

deny women the right to property inheritance or management. Since the struggle for

women’s property rights requires legal, institutional, and cultural transformation, tenure

reform without explicit concern for women can disadvantage them even further. The

next section outlines some key issues that must be addressed in order to develop a gendered vision on land rights, reform and tenure in urban areas

Urban researchers are discovering that access to ‘house and land’ is a key determinant of women’s empowerment in urban areas. Something else that is described is that women are excluded from holding title to land either through legal or cultural means, and that this lack of access and control affectswomen’s economic status a lot. Although men and women in India enjoy the same legal rights with regard to property ownership, many cultural traditions deny women the right to property inheritance or management. Because in order to get equal rights for women requires legal, institutional, and cultural transformation, land tenure reform without explicit concern for women can disadvantage them more.

* Men in slums are generally better informed on land tenure matters and are more involved in the politics of negotiating informal tenure security.

Some landlords openly declared reservations about renting to women because of speculations regarding the economic security of female-headed households. Building a religious structure, a temple, church or mosque, in a certain location is a fairly common practice even in slums where the quality of housing is extremely poor. According to slum residents, in addition to these structures being places of worship, they also serve as community halls and provide shelter from bad weather for those who could not afford to secure their homes against it. They also serve with the purpose of enhancing security of tenure.

* While women benefited as much as men from the security of having a religious building in their community, this study suggests that they were less likely to take advantage of its use as a gathering place because of social restrictions on female mobility and public interaction. The ideology of female seclusion in many parts of India restricts contact with men through territorial gendering of public and private space.
* Regardless of their social class and economic status, very few women in India own landed property. In Keshav Nagar, a slum with full legal tenure, both male and female residents had contributed money and labour towards the acquisition of their plots, but the land revenue officials gave clear preference to male household heads in issuing property titles. There were no joint titles for married couples, and the only two women in the community who received independent titles did so because there was no male household head in their families.

**Household:**

* There are often enough, basic inequalities in gender relations within the family or the household, which can take many different forms. Even in cases in which there are no overt signs of anti-female bias in, say, survival or son-preference or education, or even in promotion to higher executive positions, the family arrangements can be quite unequal in terms of sharing the burden of housework and child care. It is, for example, quite common in many societies to take it for granted that while men will naturally work outside the home, women could do it if and only if they could combine it with various inescapable and unequally shared household duties. This is sometimes called "division of labour," though women could be forgiven for seeing it as "accumulation of labour." The reach of this inequality includes not only unequal relations within the family, but also derivative inequalities in employment and recognition in the outside world. Also, the established fixity of this type of "division" or "accumulation" of labour can also have far-reaching effects on the knowledge and understanding of different types of work in professional circles.



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