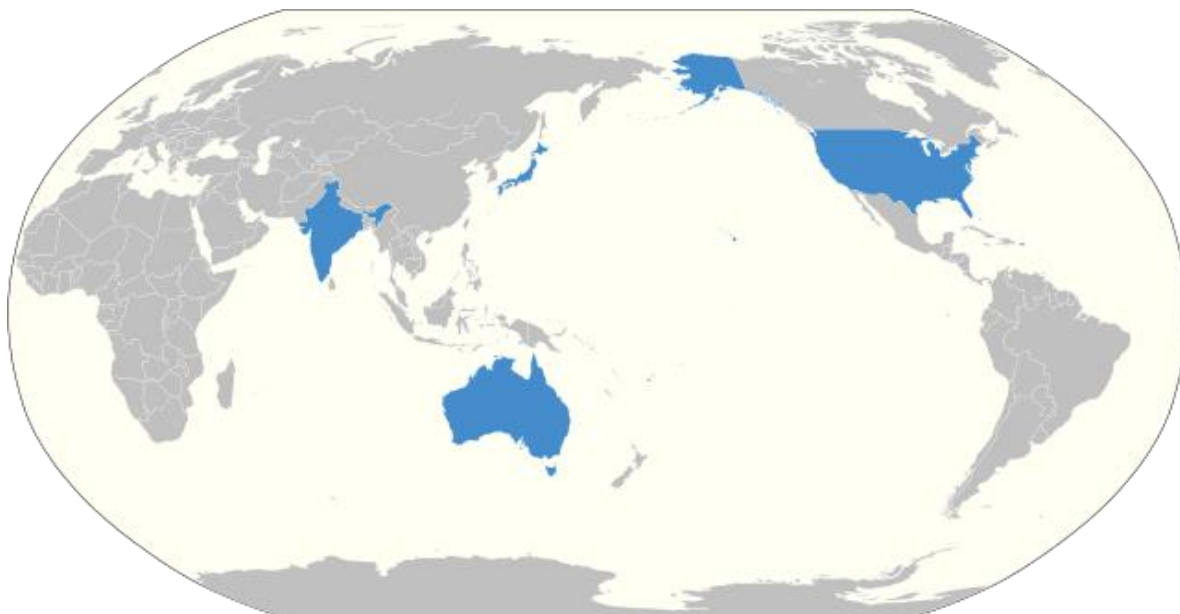




Current Affairs of the Day

‘India is the natural leader of Quad in the Indo-Pacific’

1. India is clearly the natural leader in the region in terms of the vision the Quad signs up to in the Indo-Pacific region, and the multi-nation defence exercise, MILAN, in Vishakapatnam demonstrates the cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, Australian High Commissioner to India said.
2. The exercise MILAN where 14 countries, including Australia, took part, demonstrates the cooperation across countries in the Indo-Pacific to secure a free, open and prosperous Indo-Pacific. In terms of the vision the Quad signs up to with relation to the Indo-Pacific, India is clearly the natural leader in the region.
3. The good news is that all four countries [India, Australia, the U.S. and Japan] are working together, whether it is on vaccine roll-out, disaster relief and other issues like climate change.
4. He said there were four bright spots in the relationship between India and Australia — defence, economic issues, education and tourism.





Charts that capture the persisting problem of patriarchy in India

- Women have historically been discriminated against in India and the rest of the world. Therefore, the Indian Constitution not only prohibits gender discrimination, but it also allows the government to make special provisions for women.
- However, to solve what remains of the problem, it is important to understand what the problem looks like today.
- A survey of 29,999 Indian adults conducted between November 2019 and March 2020 by the Pew Research Center has tried to describe the problem.
- The results of the survey were released in a report titled “How Indians View Gender Roles in Families and Society”.

1 Indians don't think women are inferior, but still prefer men when it comes to employment

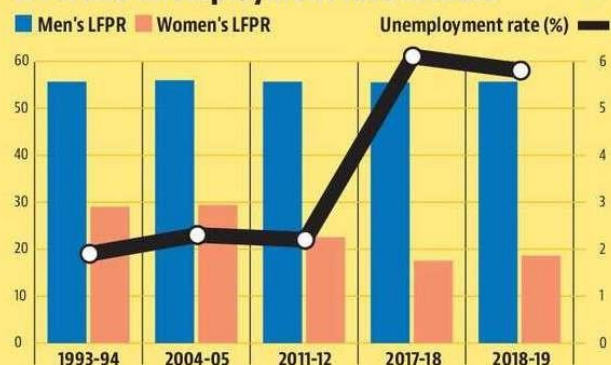
Around 80% Indians in the Pew survey agreed that it is very important for women to have the same rights as men. This view did not vary widely by gender. That Indians do not always view women as inferior to men is also reflected in their view of how they view women political leaders. Only 25% Indians think men are better political leaders than women, while 55% think gender makes no difference, and 14% think women are better political leaders.

These attitudes take a U-turn when it comes to employment opportunities. 80% Indians also think that men should have more rights to jobs than women when jobs are scarce. This is in line with trends in women's labour force participation rate (LFPR) or the share of their population that is working or seeking work. A rise in unemployment rates has been accompanied with a sharp drop in women's LFPR but not in men's, according to employment surveys conducted by the National Statistical Office (NSO). The analysis of a private survey conducted by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) has shown similar results. In a paper titled “Dropping Out, Being Pushed Out or Can't Get in? Decoding Declining Labour Force Participation of Indian Women”, Ashwini Deshpande and Jitendra Singh, professor and PhD candidate respectively at the Department of Economics at Ashoka University, suggest that one of the reasons for women's falling LFPR could be men displacing women at work when job growth is slow. This is not simply a result of stigma associated with women's work, because a much larger proportion of women is present for shorter periods in the labour force than their LFPR for the major part of the year would suggest, the paper shows.

How Indians view gender equality



LFPR and unemployment rate in India



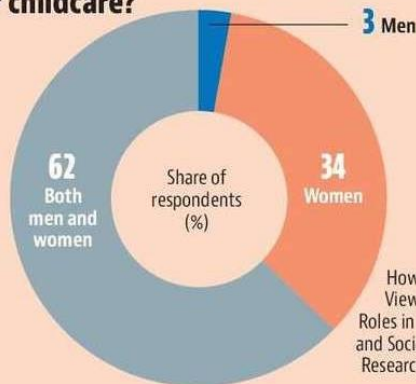
Source: EUS, PLFS



2 Attitudes about bringing up children may not translate into action

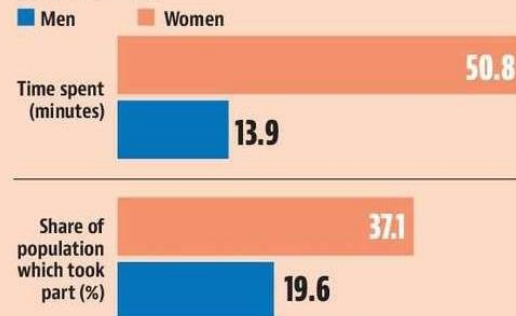
A comparison of the results of the Pew survey with the Time Use Survey (TUS) conducted by NSO in 2019 shows another such divergence between attitudes and outcomes. About two-thirds of those surveyed for the Pew study agreed that men should also participate in taking care of children. TUS data shows that married women (TUS did not explicitly ask if people had children) spend almost four times as much time as men on childcare and instruction. Women's participation in childcare was also twice as much as men.

Who should be primarily responsible for childcare?



Source: How Indians View Gender Roles in Families and Society, Pew Research Center

Actual participation in 'childcare and instruction'



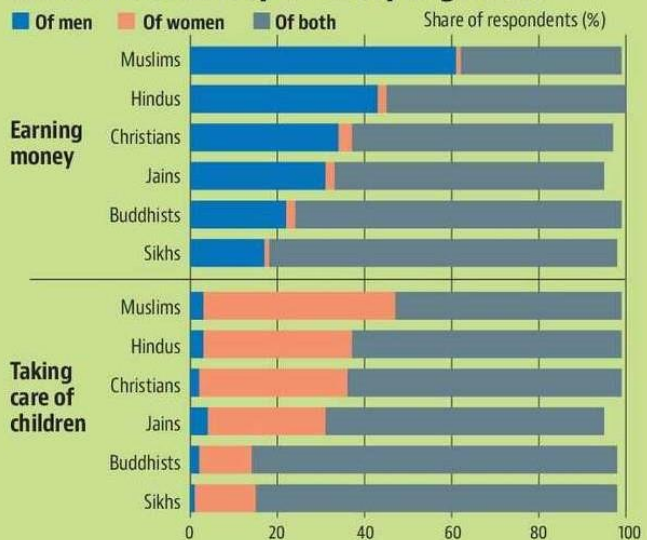
Source: Time Use Survey 2019
Note: Data for married people of age 21 years and above

3 Views about discrimination at odds with responsibilities and mobility of women

Only about a fourth of Indians (23%) think there is a lot of discrimination against women in India today, according to the Pew survey, Sikhs (18%), Buddhists (18%), Muslims (21%), Hindus (23%), and Jains (23%) perceive a much lesser degree of discrimination than Christians (30%). This is at odds with the proportion of these groups that believes men should earn money and women should take care of children. Muslims, more than other groups, think men should be responsible for earning money and making decisions about expenses, while women should take care of children. To be sure, the views held by these groups may not necessarily be compatible with how they act.

When married women were asked about decisions related to major household purchases in the 2015-16 National Family Health Survey (NFHS), a similar share of Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims (72%-73%) reported that they took such decisions alone or jointly with their husbands, while the share was higher among Christians, Buddhists and Jains (79%-83%). On the other hand, the mobility of Muslim women was far less than the mobility of women from other religions in NFHS. Despite these contradictions, two trends seem to hold true across both these surveys. One, women not from the two major religious groups – Hindus and Muslims – are relatively more likely to be independent in both financial decisions and mobility. Two, perceptions of discrimination against women may not be dependent on such relative freedom across religions.

India's views on responsibility of genders



Source: How Indians View Gender Roles in Families and Society, Pew Research Center



4 A large proportion of Indians supports sex-selective abortion

India had an adverse sex ratio at birth in the NFHS conducted in 2019-21 although the overall sex ratio in the survey was not. Part of the reason why more boys than girls were born even in the latest survey could be because Indians continue to see sex-selective abortion as an acceptable practice.

Around 40% Indians in the Pew survey thought that checking the sex of the child to balance the number of boys and girls in the family was okay although the practice is illegal. To be sure, this does not mean that 40% Indians participate in sex-selective abortion. According to the 2015-16 NFHS – the latest NFHS for which this number is available – only 3.4% pregnancies resulted in abortion. Only a fraction of those could possibly be sex-selective abortions. However, that the view is widely prevalent suggests that it is likely that only the law holds the practice at bay.

Views on son-preference & pre-natal sex determination



Source: How Indians View Gender Roles in Families and Society, Pew Research Center

MAINS DAWP

Q1. “The time may have come for clarifying the role and functions of Governors.” Comment.

MCQs

Q1. Which of the following weapons is/are being imported by India from Russia?

1. AK-203
2. S-400
3. Apache helicopter

Select the correct answer from the codes given below

- a. 1 and 2 only
- b. 2 and 3 only
- c. 2 only
- d. 1, 2 and 3