



## INDIA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

October 2018

Welcome to the India Human Development Survey Forum

**A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the IHDS research community**

[Unsubscribe Link at the Bottom](#)

### *In this issue...*

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) continues to engage and inspire researchers throughout the world because of the vast array of data it offers through its spectrum of education, health, economy, family, and gender modules for both urban and rural samples across the country. In this issue of the IHDS newsletter, we showcase the inaugural data brief based on IHDS research, brought out by the National Data Innovation Centre (NDIC), which has been set up by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) with its consortium partners, University of Maryland and University of Michigan.

India's rapid transformation has led to a growing demand from researchers and policymakers for high-quality and policy-relevant data. Changing socio-economic conditions also necessitate rethinking of the kind of data that are collected, as also ways in which they are collated and made accessible to users. In this context, NDIC is envisaged as a national centre of innovation and excellence in data collection for building research capacity to strengthen India's data innovation system to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges.

The NDIC data brief highlights the key factors that account for the declining female work participation rate in rural India. The statistics show that much of this decline is located among poor and less educated women. However, when women are presented with greater work opportunities through an improved transportation infrastructure or better implementation of welfare programmes like MGNREGA, they take advantage of these opportunities.

- **Media Mentions**
- **Recent Publications Using IHDS**

---

## **Research Findings Based on IHDS Data**

**Supply or Demand:**

### **What Accounts for Declining Female Work Participation Rate in Rural India?**

*Sonalde Desai, Neerad Deshmukh, Bijay Chouhan*

The past three decades have seen the advent of major transformations in the Indian economy. While the economy has achieved average growth rates of 5–9 per cent, education has risen sharply for both men and women, fertility rates have declined, and infrastructure

facilities, particularly access to electricity, cooking gas and piped water, have improved. All these factors are expected to reduce the demand for women's time spent in domestic chores and increase their opportunities for paid work. Paradoxically, however, the National Sample Surveys document a substantial decline in women's Work Participation Rates (WPRs), particularly for rural women.

### Competing Explanations:

Two sets of explanations have been offered: (1) Rising household income reduces the reliance on women's income and with rising education, women prefer to invest their time in their children's education; (2) Jobs for women have declined.

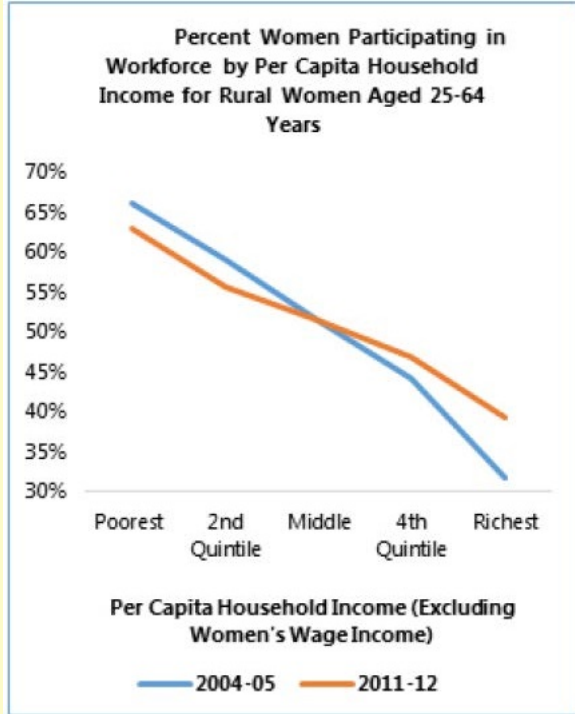


A research brief by newly set up NCAER-National Data innovation Centre (NDIC), using both NSSO and IHDS data suggests that the decline may be due to lack of work opportunities rather than voluntary withdrawal.

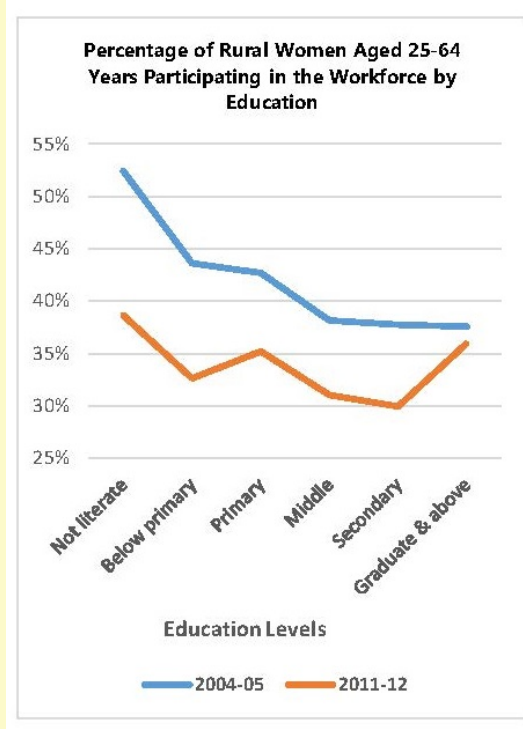
Key results highlighted in this brief are:

**1. Decline in women's work participation is located mainly among poor households**

**2. Decline in women's work participation has taken place mostly among women with less than primary education**



Source: IHDS I & II



Source: NSSO 61st and 68th Rounds

## But Public Policies Have a Role to Play: Women Take Advantage of Expanding Work Opportunities

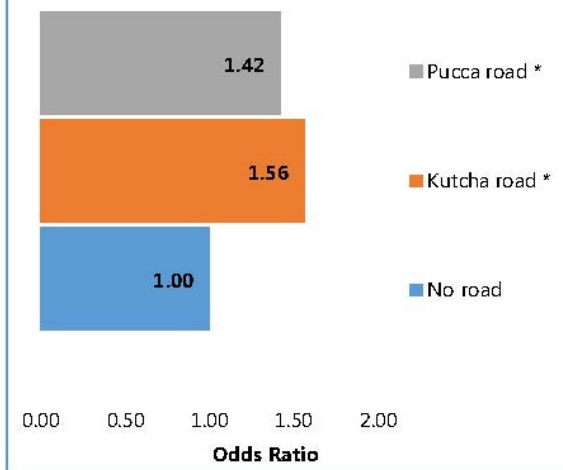
### 3. Road construction leads to increased non-farm work for women

Roads provide opportunities to travel to nearby villages and towns for work. The IHDS surveys find that the construction of either a kutchra or a pucca road increases the odds of women's participation in non-farm work by 1.5 and 1.4 times, respectively (presented above based on [Lei et al. 2017](#)) Men were also seen to benefit from road construction but women's gains were higher. These analyses control for caste, education, family income, and other background factors.

### 4. Introduction of MGNREGS increased women's participation in wage work in villages with strong implementation of the scheme

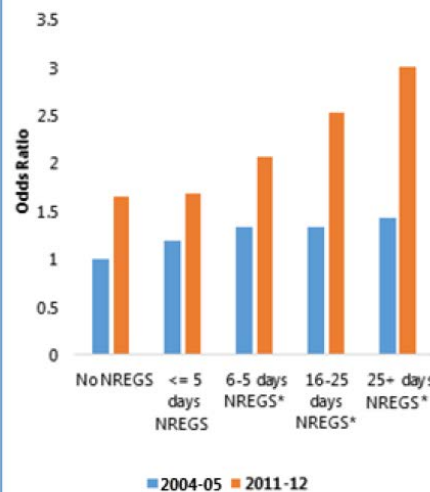
IHDS data show that in villages where NREGA was implemented more vigorously, there is greater increase in women's participation in wage work. This difference-in-difference analysis ([Desai 2018](#)) holds background characteristics such as age, education, caste/religion, land ownership and state of residence constant.

### Odds of Engaging in Non farm Work for Rural Women Aged 25-59 Years between 2004-5 and 2011-12 by Changes in Transportation



Source: [Lei et al. 2017](#) based on IHDS I & II

### Increase in Odds of Undertaking Wage Work by NREGS Work Availability between 2004-05 and 2011-12



Source: [Desai 2018](#) based on IHDS I & II

## Conclusion

The declining WPR for rural women appears to be associated with crowding of women in agriculture where land fragmentation has led to a reduction in both the size of farms as well as the demand for labour, be it household members or agricultural labourers. Hence, in order to reap the gender dividend, India needs to focus on augmenting women's economic participation by not only facilitating creation of new jobs for women but also offering them greater access to existing jobs.

[Full Data Brief Here](#)



**Sonalde Desai** is a Senior Fellow at NCAER with a joint appointment as Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland. She directs the NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre (NDIC), a newly established Centre by NCAER with its consortium partners, University of Maryland and University of Michigan. She is an internationally known demographer whose work deals primarily with human development in developing countries with a particular focus on gender and class inequalities. While most of her research focuses on India, she has also undertaken comparative studies across South Asia, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa. At present, Sonalde Desai is leading the India Human

Development Survey (IHDS), India's only nationally representative panel study with interviews in 2004–05 and 2011–12. The next wave of IHDS is planned for 2019-20. The IHDS is used by over 9,000 users worldwide and has led to nearly 500 papers and dissertations. Desai is a member of the editorial committee of Population and Development Review and has served on the editorial advisory boards of many Indian and international journals. At present, she chairs the International Outreach Committee of the Population Association of America. She has published articles in a wide range of Indian and international sociology and demography journals and is a frequent contributor to *The Hindu*.



**Neerad Deshmukh** is a Research Associate. His areas of interest include labour economics and studying informal industries. He is passionate about pursuing interdisciplinary research in social sciences. At NCAER he is working at the National Data Innovation Centre assisting in literature review, questionnaire development and data analysis. He has completed his MA in Development Studies from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in 2015 and has a bachelor's degree in Economics. His Master's thesis studied how informal industries are coping up with changes in the economy.

**Bijay Chouhan** is working as Data Manager with NCAER's National Data



Innovation Centre. His interest area includes advanced data and IT technologies. He has an experience of around 15 years in applying information technology to processes and systems. An IT professional with considerable experience in managing and analysis of high volume of primary/ secondary dataset, he has been associated with many national/international think-tanks and institutes as IT and Data Consultant.

## IHDS in the News

- Daniyal, Shoaib. "In Charts: Indians Have Low Upward Mobility (and Muslims Suffer the Most), Shows Study", *Scroll.in*, 28 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Counterview Representative. "Women Earn Rs. 18 per Hour in India, Half of What Men Do, Delay In Marriage Won't Help Increase Earnings: Study", *Counterview*, 27 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Counterview Representative. "Child Marriages in India Down by 20%, Weddings Delayed by 2.3 Years Where Women Are Panchayat Chiefs: Report", *Counterview*, 27 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Thacker, Hency. "CSR: The Fate of Love in India", *The CSR Journal*, 25 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- The Hans India. "Saga of Violence and Scorn", *The Hans India*, 23 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- The Financial Express. "Educational Reservation: Should Muslims Get It in Place of Other Well-Off Groups?", *The Financial Express*, 22 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Express News Service. "Explained Snippets| Inter-generational Mobility: Little Gains over Time, Major Variations by Geographic Region", *The Indian Express*, 21 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Pia, Nitin. "Inter-caste marriages Are Good for Health of Indians. That's what DNA Testing Tells Us", *The Print*, 20 September, 2018. [Link](#)
- Kumar, Sanjay and Pranav Gupta. "Are Marathas, Jats and Patels Economically Weak?", *LiveMint*, 20 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Sirur, Simrin. "More Than Husbands, Educate Moms-In-Law If You Want to Change Arranged Marriages in India", *The Print*, 16 September, 2018. [Link](#).
- Mehrotra, Karishma. "Uneducated, Unmarried Women Have Less Access to Mobiles: Study", *The Indian Express*, 11 September, 2018. [Link](#).

## Recent Publications Using IHDS

- Jaikumar, S., Dutta, S., Sreekumar, A., & Viswanathan, M. (2018). "Impact of Entrepreneurship on Objective and Subjective Economic Markets: A Longitudinal Study from India." *Working Paper Series, WPS No 812/August 2018*. Indian Institute of Management Calcutta. Accessed on September 25, 2018 from [link](#).
- Asher, S., Novosad, P., & Rafkin, C. (2018). "Intergenerational Mobility in India: Estimates from New Methods and Administrative Data." Accessed on September 25, 2018 from [link](#).
- Balakrishnan, U. (2018). *The Little Push: Role of Incentives in Determining Household Behaviour in India*. (Doctor of Philosophy Thesis 2018), University of Maryland, accessed on September 19, 2018. [Link](#).
- Choudhary, A., & Singh, A. (2018). Effect of intergenerational educational mobility on health of Indian women. *PLoS One*, 13(9), e0203633. Accessed on September 11, 2018. [Link](#).
- Bharati, S., Pal, M., & Bharati, P. (2018). "An Overview of Growth and Malnutrition among 5–18-Year Children in India." Paper presented at the Advances in Growth Curve and Structural Equation Modelling, Singapore. Accessed on September 8, 2018. [Link](#).
- Castilla, C. (2018). "Political Role Models and Child Marriage in India." *Review of Development Economics*, 0(0). doi:10.1111/rode.12513. Accessed on September 4, 2018. [Link](#).
- Motiram, S. (2018). "Inequality of Opportunity in India: Concepts, Measurement and Empirics." *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 12(2), 236-247. doi: 10.1177/0973703018792646. Accessed on September 1, 2018. [Link](#).



- Vani, B. P., & Madheswaran, S. (2018). "Inequalities of Human Opportunities in India: A State-level Analysis." *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 12(2), 248-264. doi: 10.1177/0973703018791385. Accessed on September 1, 2018. [Link](#).

## About IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) is a nationally representative, multi-topic survey of 41,554 households in 1503 villages and 971 urban neighbourhoods across India. The first round of interviews was completed in 2004-05; data are publicly available through ICPSR. A second round of IHDS re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for the same can be found here.

IHDS has been jointly organised by researchers from the University of Maryland and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi. Funding for the second round of this survey is provided by the National Institutes of Health, grants R01HD041455 and R01HD061048. Additional funding is provided by The Ford Foundation, IDRC and DFID.



### IHDS Principal Investigators

Sonalde Desai  
Professor, UMD  
Senior Fellow, NCAER

Reeve Vanneman  
Professor, UMD

Amaresh Dubey  
Professor, JNU  
Senior Consultant, NCAER

#### Contact Us:

Website: <http://ihds.umd.edu>

Mail: [ihdsinfo@gmail.com](mailto:ihdsinfo@gmail.com)

