

Youth in India: Situation and Priorities for action

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Why a focus on youth?

Magnitude of the youth population:

India: 358 million young people (aged 10-24) in 2011, 30% of India's population

Policies and programmes for youth exist but:

- Programme operationalisation handicapped by lack of comprehensive information on youth needs and preferences
- Benchmarks not available with which to evaluate programme achievements

India's development depends on the situation and experiences of youth:

- Achievement of XIth Plan targets and MDGs
- Population stabilisation
- Realisation of the demographic dividend

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India's XIth Plan targets: Selected key indicators

Income and poverty

- Increase GDP growth from 8% to 10%
- Reduce the headcount ratio of consumption poverty by 10 percentage points

Education

- Universal enrolment of 6-14 age group children
- Eliminate gender, social and regional disparities in enrolment
- Eliminate discontinuation at primary level and reduce discontinuation at elementary level to 20%
- Achieve 80% literacy rate
- Reduce gender gap in literacy to 10%

Gender equality and women's empowerment

- Raise child sex ratio to 935 by 2011-12 and to 950 by 2016-17
- Ensure that at least 33% of direct and indirect beneficiaries of all government schemes are women and girl children

Health

- Reduce IMR to 28/1,000 live births
- Reduce MMR to 100/100,000 live births
- Reduce TFR to 2.1
- Reduce malnutrition among children (0-3 years) to half its present level
- Reduce anaemia among women and girls by 50%

Source: Planning Commission 2011

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Objectives

Are youth needs met and are youth in India endowed with the skills and resources that would enable the nation to harness its demographic dividend and meet its goals and targets?

- **To what extent are youth adequately educated and equipped with the vocational skills needed to compete in a globalised world?**
- **Do youth exhibit the personal competencies that enable them to make informed choices?**
- **Are youth growing up healthy and are they equipped to make informed health related choices?**
- **To what extent do youth participate in civil society?**

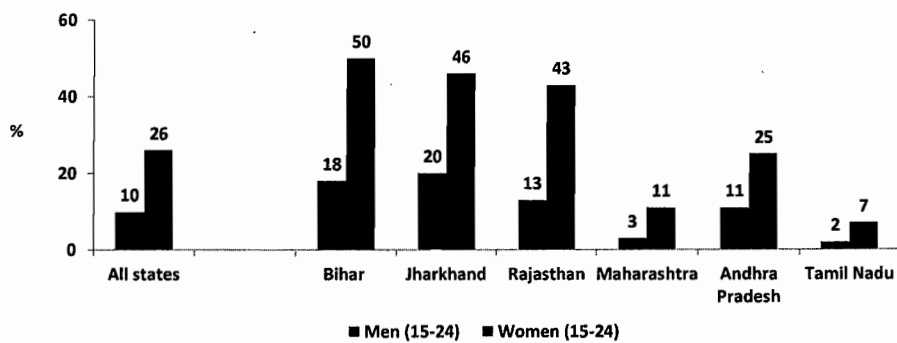
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To what extent are youth adequately educated and equipped with the vocational skills needed to compete in a globalised world?



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Percentage of youth who had never been to school



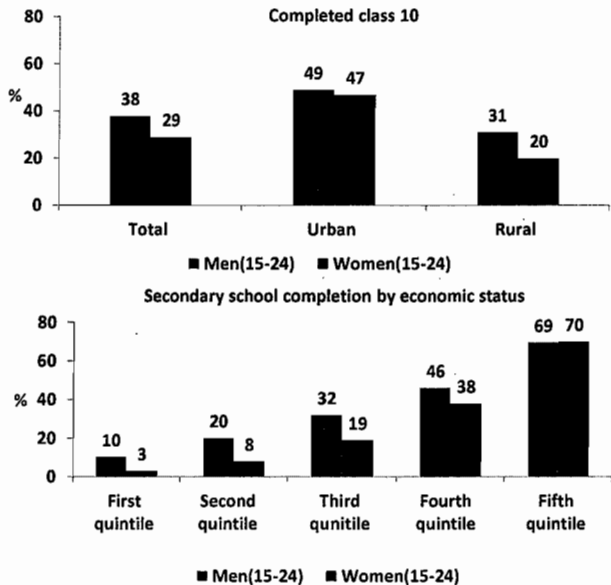
- School enrolment almost universal among young men, but far from universal among young women
- 1 in 4 young women had never been to school
- State-wise differences remarkable

Source: IIPS and Macro International 2007

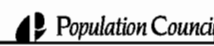
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Secondary school completion

- Just 38% of young men and 29% of young women had completed Class 10
- Young women and rural youth were particularly disadvantaged
- Differences by economic status are stark
- Gender differences are evident across all wealth quintiles, except the wealthiest

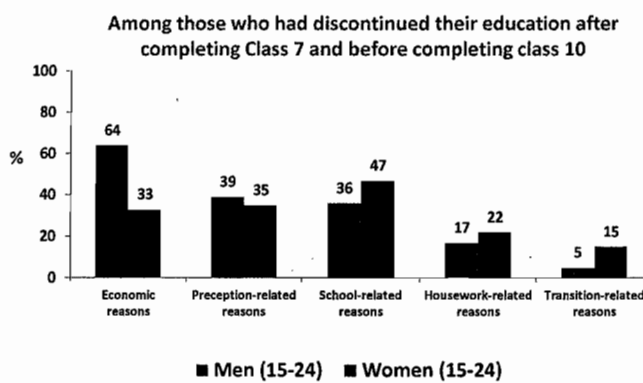


Source: Parasuraman et al. 2009



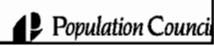
Leading factors inhibiting secondary school completion

- Gender differences in leading reasons apparent
- The leading reason for young men is economic, followed by perception- and school- related
- Leading reason for young women is school-related, followed by perception-related, economic and housework- related
- 1 in 7 young women discontinued to marry



Economic related : work on family farm or business, wage earning work, family poverty
 Perceptions-related: unsafe to send children to school, education not necessary, lack of interest
 School-related: academic failure and distance to school
 Housework related : care of siblings or housework
 Transition-related: engagement/marriage and getting job

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010



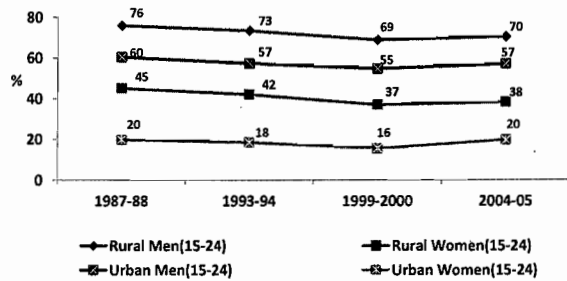
Labour force participation

- LFP rates have fallen for rural youth; not much indication of real increase in urban areas either

- 4-6% of rural youth and 11-20% of urban youth unemployed (available and seeking work but not finding it)

- Gender differences:

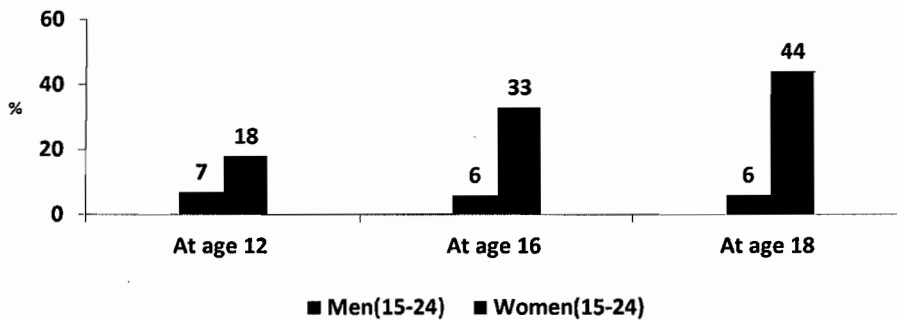
- Young women much less likely to be in the LF
- Of urban youth aged 20-24 in LF, unemployment much higher for young women than men



Source: NSSO 2006

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Activity status: Not in school and not working



- Increasing proportions of young women (but not men) were neither in school nor working:

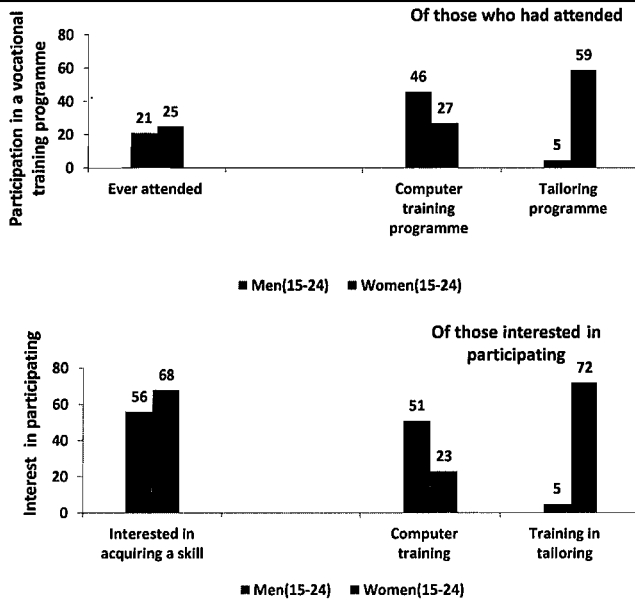
- 18% vs 7% at age 12
- 33% vs 6% at age 16
- 44% vs 6% at age 18

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Vocational skills

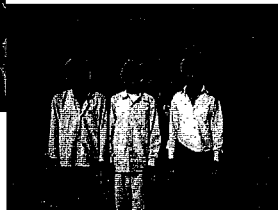
- Just 21-25% had attended a vocational training programme
- Young men more likely than young women to opt for marketable skills (computer training, auto mechanics vs tailoring, handicrafts)
- Unmet need: about 3/5 of young men and 2/3 of young women
- Gender difference in training preferences: leading skill tailoring for women, computer training for men



Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Do youth exhibit the personal competencies that enable them to make informed life choices?



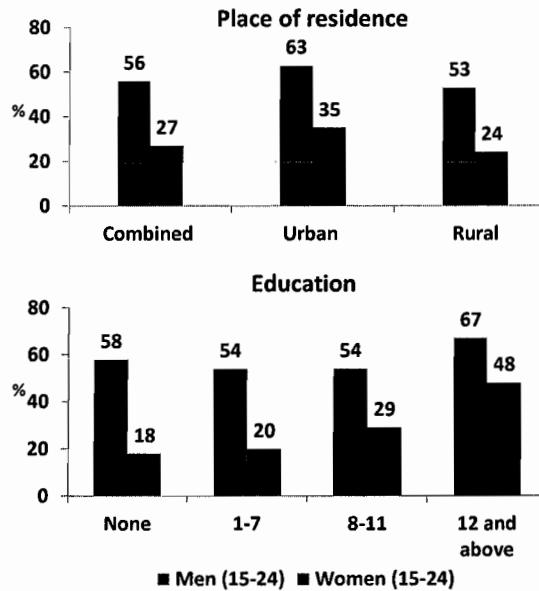
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Decision-making autonomy: % who made decisions independently on choice of friends, spending money and buying clothes for themselves

- More than half of young men and a quarter of young women made decisions about everyday life

- Wide differences by rural-urban residence and educational attainment

- Even the least educated young men were more likely than the most educated young women to report decision-making

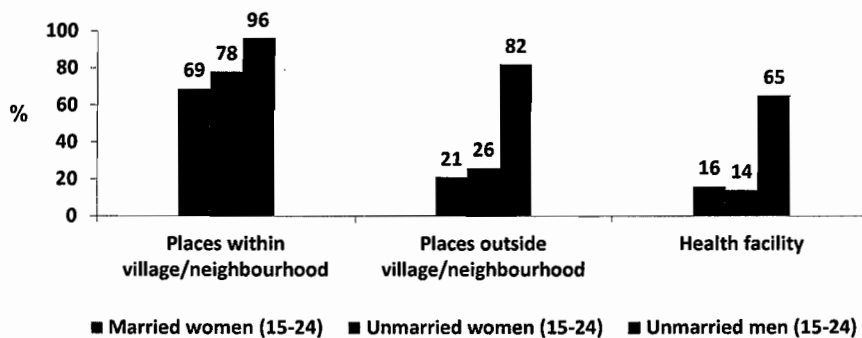


Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Freedom of movement

% reporting freedom to visit various places unescorted



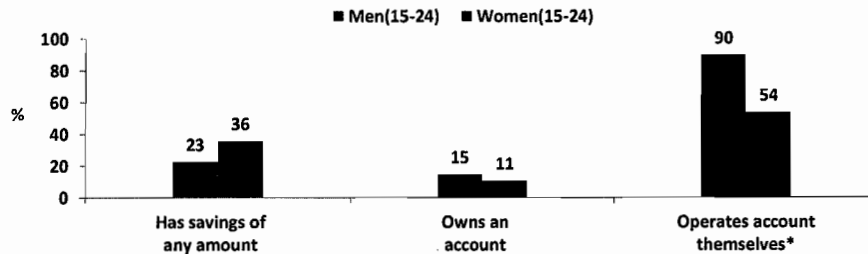
- Gender differences stark in freedom to move around unescorted

- Freedom of movement even within the village or neighborhood not universal among young women

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Control over financial resources



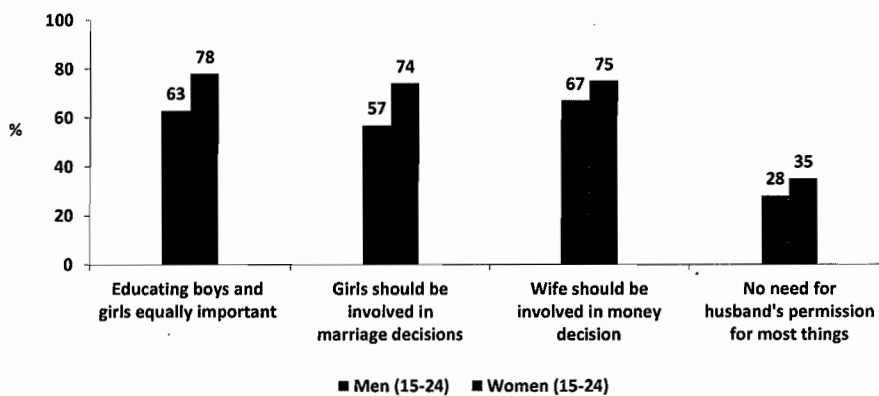
- Control over financial resources limited among youth
- Just one-quarter of men and one-third young women reported any savings
- Although young women were more likely than young men to have savings, they were slightly less likely to own a bank/post office account and far less likely to operate those accounts

*Among those who own an account

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Expression of egalitarian gender role attitudes



- Proportion espousing egalitarian gender role attitudes varies by topic
- More women than men espouse egalitarian gender roles in each topic

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Marital violence

- Violence in marriage: 25% had ever experienced physical violence and 32% sexual violence; and for large proportions, violence was initiated early in marriage
- Young women who experience physical and/or sexual violence are much more likely than others to: experience
 - Symptoms of gynaecological morbidity (OR : 1.5-2.6)
 - Unwanted or mistimed pregnancy (OR 1.2-1.6)
 - Abortion (OR 1.4-2)
 - Pregnancy loss (1.1-1.5)



Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Are youth growing up healthy and are they equipped to make informed health related choices?

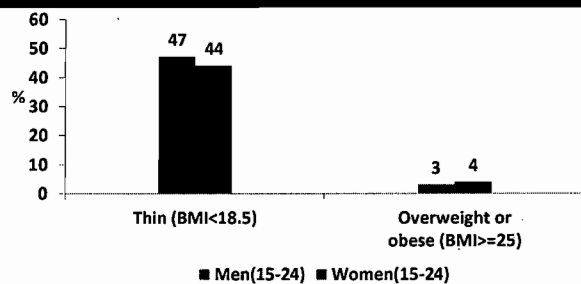


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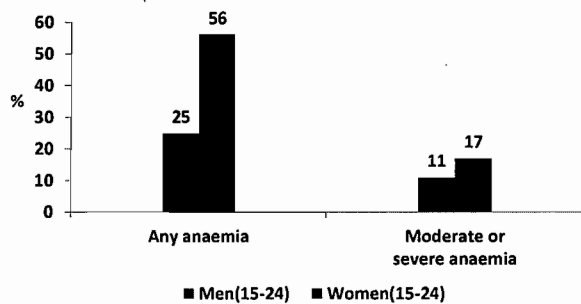
Nutritional status

Nutritional status and anaemia

- 44-47% of young men and women abnormally thin (BMI<18.5)



- 56% of young women and 25% of young men are anaemic

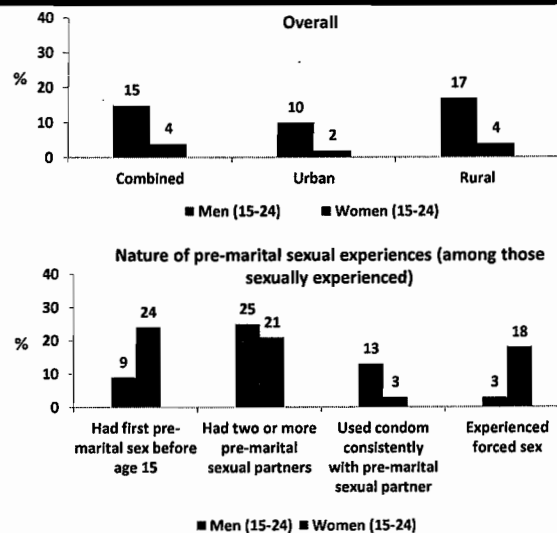


Source: Parasuraman et al. 2009

Sexual and reproductive health

Pre-marital sexual experiences: Extent*

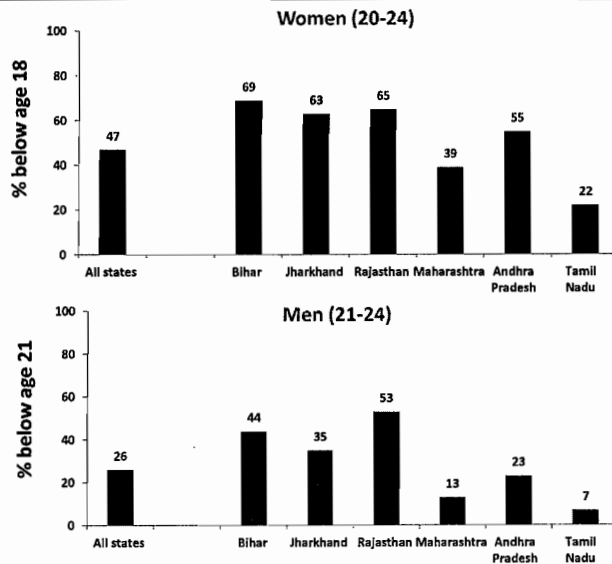
- One in 7 young men and 4% of young women had pre-marital sex
- Among the sexually experienced, early initiation, multiple partner relations
- Limited condom use
- For 18% of young women, pre-marital sex was forced



*Face-to-face interview or anonymous format (sealed envelope). Partners include romantic partner, forced sex, exchange sex, casual partner or spouse before marriage and for young men also same-sex partner, sex worker relations, sex with married woman

Magnitude of early marriage: % of 20-24 year-old women and 21-24 year old men married before the legal minimum age

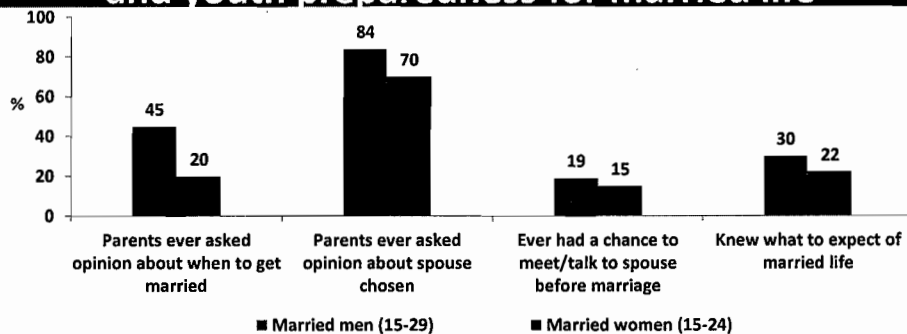
- Child marriage continues among young women: 47% married before age 18
- Decline very gradual: 54% in 1992-93
- one in 5 married before 15 (not shown)
- Very few young men marry <20, but one quarter before the legal minimum age (21)
- State-level differences in child marriage notable



Source: IIPS and Macro International, 2007

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Involvement of married youth in marriage planning and youth preparedness for married life



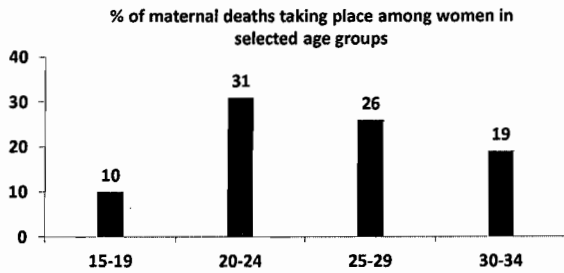
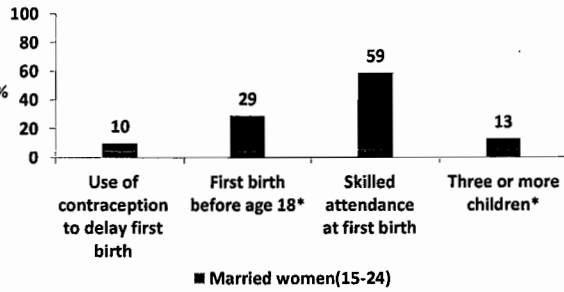
- Almost all youth had an arranged marriage
- Large proportions, especially of young women, were not consulted about the timing of marriage or the choice of spouse
- Very few youth – 15-19% -- had a chance to meet their spouse before marriage
- Few were aware of what to expect of married life: just 30% of young men and 22% of young women

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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AMONG THE MARRIED Risky childbearing

- Use of contraception to delay first pregnancy rare: 10%
- Non-use of contraception translates into early childbearing: 29% of married young women initiated childbearing before age 18
- Although the riskiest ages, just 59% reported skilled attendance at first birth
- Births too closely spaced: 13% already had 3 or more children
- Young women account for a major chunk of maternal deaths: 2/5th of maternal deaths

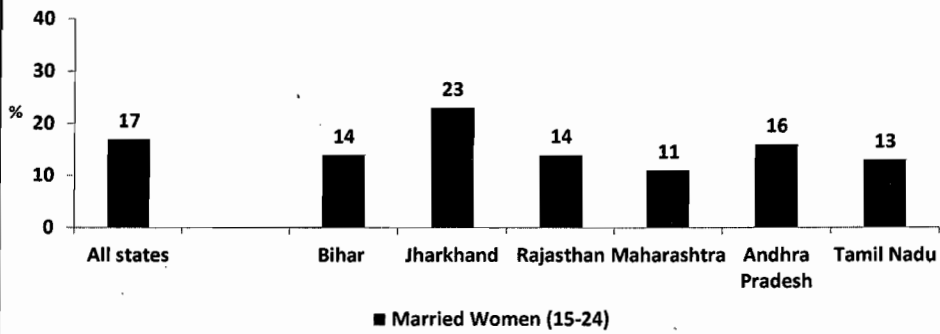


* Married women aged 20-24

Source: IIPS and Macro International 2007; Office of Registrar General 2009

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Percentage of youth reporting that the last pregnancy was mistimed or unwanted



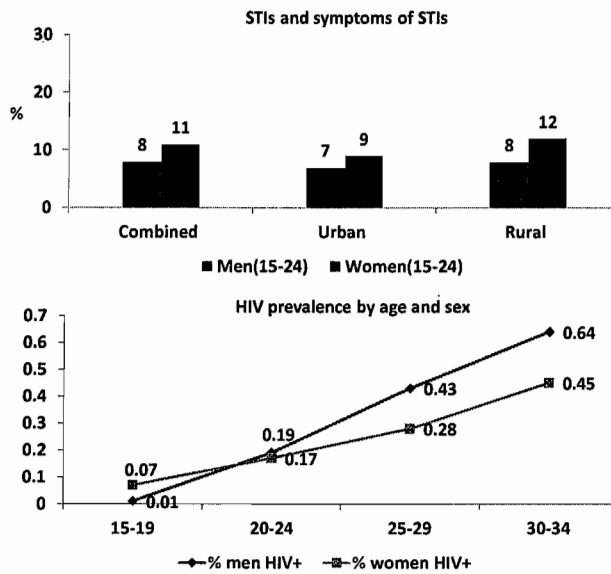
- 17% young women reported that the last pregnancy was mistimed or unwanted

Source: IIPS and Macro International 2007

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STIs and Symptoms of STIs reported by sexually experienced youth, 15-24

- About 10% of young men and women reported symptoms of infection
- HIV prevalence: evident from a young age

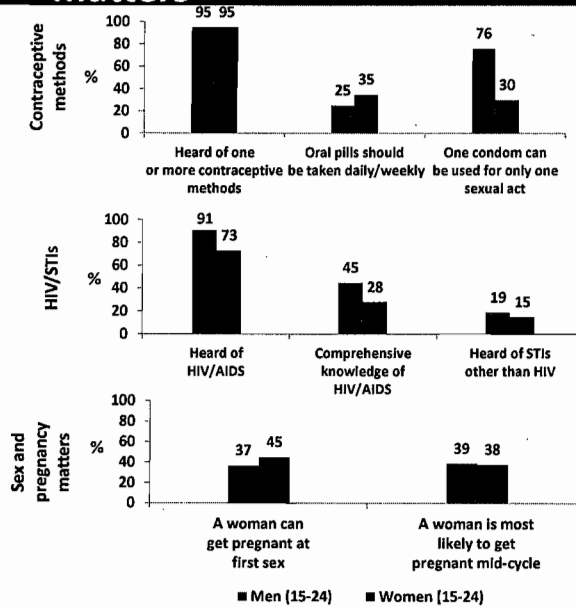


Source: Parasuraman et al. 2009; IIPS and Macro International 2007

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Awareness of sexual and reproductive health matters

- Contraceptive awareness universal but in-depth awareness limited
- HIV awareness widespread among youth; however, comprehensive awareness of HIV limited
- Knowledge of other STIs very limited
- Awareness of even basic pregnancy related issues limited



Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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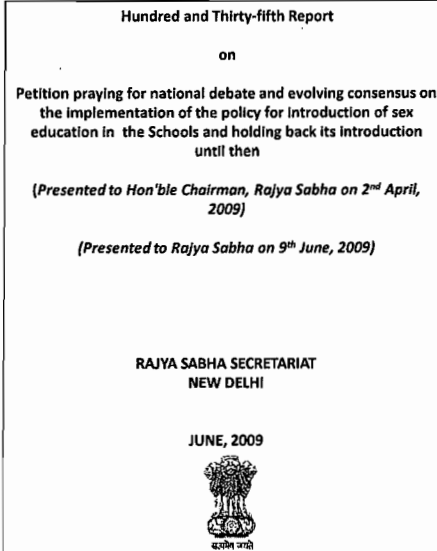
Limited access to information from key gatekeepers

About 80% youth expressed a need for sexuality education, BUT

- Only 15% of young men and women had received sex education in or outside school
- <10% parents discuss these matters
- leading sources of information are peers and the media
- Considerable hostility towards sexuality education among politicians and others

Rajya Sabha Committee formed to evolve a consensus on the implementation of the Adolescent Education Programme:

- Such education "has the potential to pollute young and impressionable minds by exposing them to indecent materials.."
- "There should be no sex education in schools"

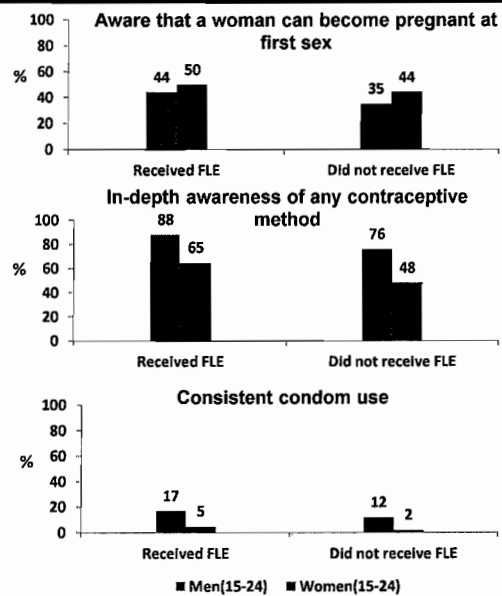


Source: Rajya Sabha Committee on Petitions, 2009. Hundred and thirty-fifth report on petition praying for national debate and evolving consensus on the implementation of the policy for introduction of sex education in the schools and holding back its introduction until then. Accessed 03 June, 2009 at <http://164.100.47.5:8080/committeereports/reports.aspx>

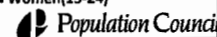


Association between exposure to family life education and SRH awareness and sexual risk-taking among the sexually experienced

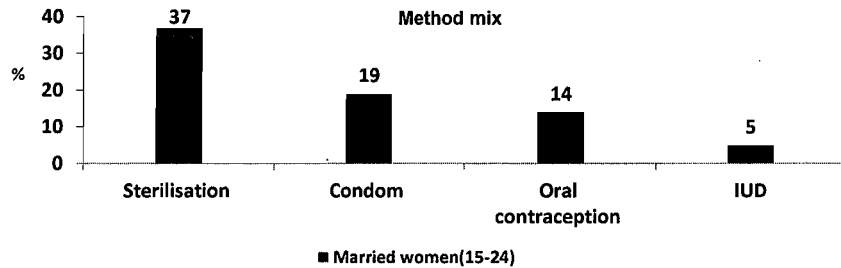
- Youth who have had sex education are more likely than others to:
 - Be correctly aware that a woman can become pregnant at first sex
 - Have in-depth awareness of contraceptive methods
 - (In pre-marital relations) have practised contraception consistently



Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010



Despite young age, method mix reported by married young women skewed towards female sterilisation



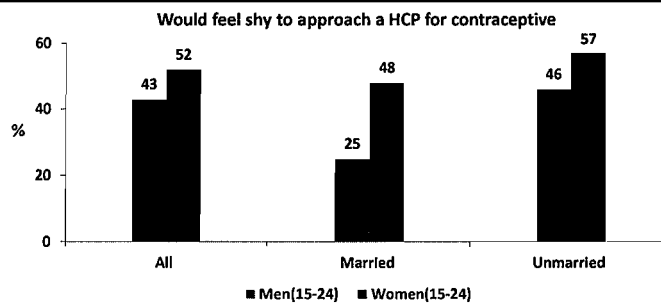
- Female sterilisation is the leading method used, even among young women
- Half of all women practising contraception were sterilised
- Non-terminal methods, far more appropriate for the young practised by just half:
 - 19% used condoms
 - 14% used OCs
 - 5% IUD

Source: IIPS and Macro International 2007

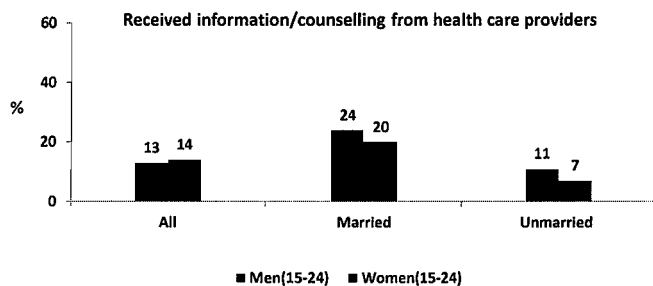
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Access to SRH services is limited

- Large proportions of young men and women would hesitate to procure contraceptives from health care providers or pharmacies



- Just 13-14% had received information or counselling from a health care provider



Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

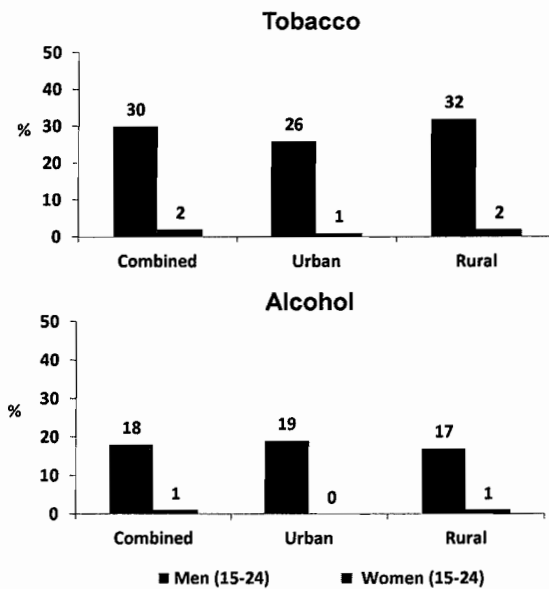
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Substance use

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Substance use

- 30% young men reported consumption of tobacco
- One-fifth of young men and a few young women reported that they had consumed alcohol
- Rural-urban differences were narrow



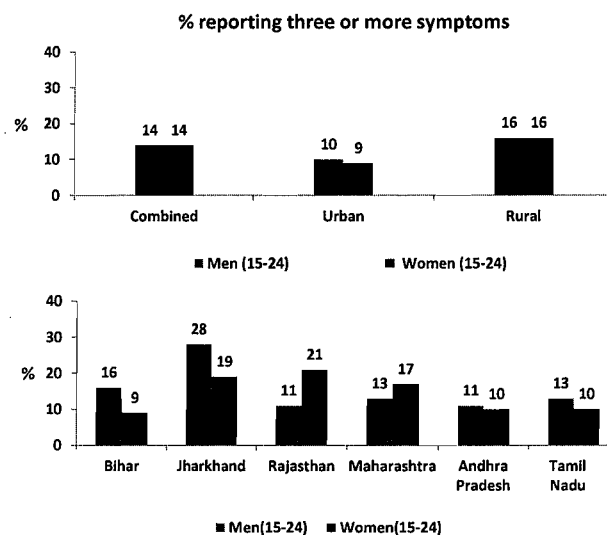
Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Mental health

Experience of symptoms suggestive of mental health disorders

- Mental health status assessed using GHQ-12*
- 1 in 7 young men and women reported responses indicative of mental health disorders
- Rural-urban differences narrow
- Considerable state wise variation



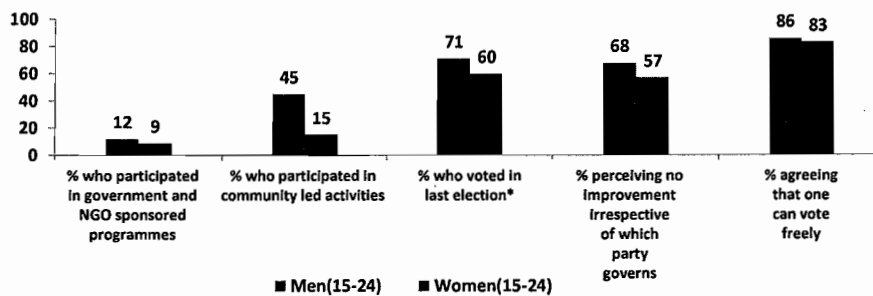
*WHO questionnaire (Goldberg 1990): 12 Items including inability to concentrate, sleeplessness, loss of confidence, depression etc

To what extent do youth participate in civil society?



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Participation in government and NGO sponsored programmes



- Only 9-12% youth participated in government/NGO programmes
- 45% of young men and 15% of young women participated in community led activities
- Just 60% of young women and 71% of young men had voted
- Some disillusionment with political processes

* 20-24 (those eligible to vote in the last election)

Source: IIPS and Population Council 2010

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Towards a multi-sectoral response

Address obstacles to universal school enrolment and secondary school completion

Economic: reduce the cost of education to parents (books, uniform schemes), consider conditional cash transfers for disadvantaged families

School level: address access issues (bicycle schemes etc); infrastructure (including toilets for girls); make education more relevant (integration with livelihoods skill building); accountability and training of teacher; accommodate the working child (timings, second chance)

Attitudes and perceptions: Promote positive attitudes to schooling and school completion among parents; address negative attitudes to girls' schooling

Premature exit into adult roles: Efforts to delay marriage, explore subsidies and cash transfers linking school retention and delayed marriage

Build vocational skills among youth

Vocational skill building: Invest in enabling youth to acquire vocational skills for which there is an established demand, and that link eligible youth to market opportunities (Implement the National Skills Development Initiative)

Special attention to young women

Promote agency and gender equitable norms among youth

Life skills education to empower girls and young women: Raise awareness of new ideas, putting information into practice, question gender stereotypes, develop self-esteem, strengthen skills in problem-solving, decision-making, negotiation

Safe spaces for young women: Break the social isolation of young women (married and unmarried) by providing legitimate spaces (community programmes, SHG and other groups etc) where they can meet and build social networks and gain peer support

Engage young men: Emphasise new concepts of masculinity and femininity, encourage respectful relations with women

Accelerate efforts to address malnutrition among the young

Meet XIth Plan targets for reducing anaemia among women and girls by 50%

- Explore ways of addressing the nutritional needs of a larger group of girls (eg through KSY/Sabla)
- Address household level disparities in feeding practices

Ensure that young people in and out of school are well informed about sexual and reproductive health

End the controversy over AEP and ensure content:


- Enables youth to acquire the communication and negotiation skills that facilitate the adoption of safe practices
- Ensures that content addresses youth needs

Train the trainers: Teacher and trainer sensitisation, dispel the myths they hold, improve communication skills, technical knowledge, non-judgemental attitudes

Engage parents: Provide them accurate information, overcome inhibitions about informing adolescent children, especially girls

Realise the commitments of NRHM/RCH2 programme and its adolescent strategy for adolescent friendly services


- **Bold and imaginative changes in the service delivery structure to make available counseling and SRH services – infection prevention and family planning – to ALL young people – married-unmarried, male-female -- in a non-threatening, non-judgmental and confidential environment**
- **Orient health care providers about the special needs of different youth, about overcoming biases about SRH service provision to the young; recognise youth vulnerability and their right to SRH services, including contraception**
- **Support newlyweds to postpone the first pregnancy and promote pregnancy-related care if pregnant**
- **Engage boys and young men: services must be inclusive of young men and boys**

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Eliminate the practice of early marriage

Multipronged efforts to change norms, implement the law, highlight the adverse consequences of early marriage etc:

- **Community level, including key religious and political leaders**
- **Law enforcement: Ensure greater commitment and action on the part of law enforcement agencies**
- **Parents: Build awareness about laws, sensitise them about adverse consequences**
- **Young people, especially girls: Build awareness of rights, laws, change attitudes, provide girls viable alternatives – schooling, livelihood skills building opportunities**

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Establish systems that address young people's mental health

- National Mental health Programme needs to address both rural and urban youth
- Efforts to screen young people for mental health disorders when they avail of other primary health services and refer those in need

INVEST MORE IN YOUTH

Opportunities in the new Youth Policy and the XIIth Plan to focus on youth needs

More vigorous implementation of policies and programmes

Youth needs span many sectors and call for multi-sectoral responses and inter-sectoral linkages

Specific youth focused targets for the XIIth Plan?

