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Gender Watch

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COVER STORY

THE GENDER GAP REPORT 2017

Introduction

Women constitute almost half of the world's population; despite this they are denied equal access to health, production, politics and education in most countries. The status of women is determined by the cultural context of the society they live in and it is unfortunate that barring a few countries egregious gender inequality continues to exist in most despite substantial national and international measures that have been taken towards gender equality. The Sustainable Development Goal 5 reflects the global attention to the issue of gender inequality and has also been providing the impetus for governments to eliminate gender inequality by 2030 that all UN member countries need to follow. Although there has been evident progress, many alarming issues regarding gender discrimination still prevail today. Therefore, there is an urgent need to realize that lack of gender equality not only limits women's access to resources and opportunities, but also restricts the life prospects of the future generation of women. Thus the solution also lies in providing equal opportunities to women in access to services, resources and infrastructure such as healthcare, education and employment.

What is a Gender Gap Report?

The **Global Gender Gap Report** was first published in 2006 by the World Economic Forum. The report consisted of a Global Gender Gap Index which was designed to measure gender equality. The Report is useful as it ranks 144 countries worldwide on a regular basis to calculate the gender imbalance between women and men in four key areas: health, education, economy and politics. The purpose of the report is to help the countries to assess whether they are making progress towards reducing gender inequality with the help of the above indicators. Thus, the report serves as a catalyst for greater awareness as well as greater exchange between policymakers.

The *World Economic Forum* (WEF) published its **annual report** on the global gender gap index in November 2017. While Iceland has topped the list for nine consecutive years now, India's performance has been consistently poor. It was ranked at 108 worldwide this year, (in South Asia, India ranks 3rd well behind Bangladesh, which despite being a poorer country has a rank of 47 and also behind Maldives 106), the last year India had seen a wide range of progress by gaining 21 spots and been ranked at 87 with improvements across economic participation and opportunity and educational attainment (2016) whereas it stood at 108 worldwide and was ranked at 139 under the economic participation and opportunity pillar in 2015.

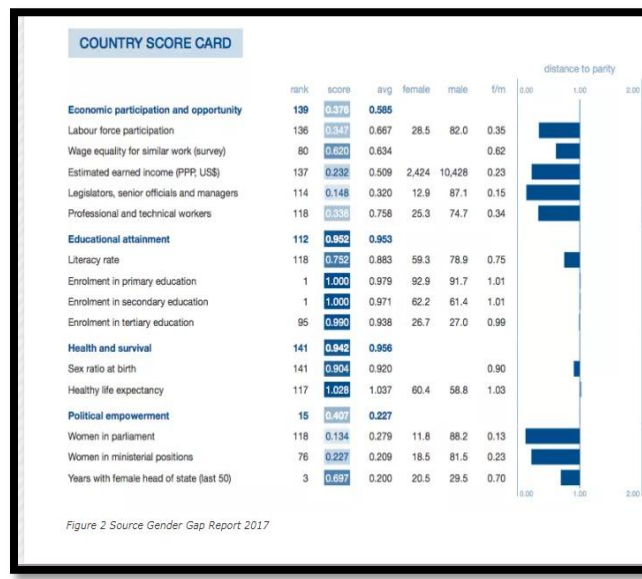
Year	Education	Health	Economic Participation	Positive Ranking/Negative Ranking
2015	125	143	139	<p>Positive: Political Empowerment-India ranked among the top 10 countries</p> <p>Negative: Economic Opportunities: India stood as the third lowest ranked country in Asia Pacific. Health: India stood at the bottom three countries.</p>
2016	113	142	136	<p>Positive: Political Empowerment-India ranked among the top 10 countries.</p> <p>Education- India managed to close its gap entirely in primary and secondary education.</p> <p>Negative: Health</p>
2017	112	141	139	<p>Positive: Political Empowerment-India ranked among the top 15 countries.</p> <p>Education- India for the first time nearly closed its tertiary education gender gap.</p> <p>Negative: Economic participation and Health</p>



(Source: <http://www.bcompetitive.in/india-slips-21-slots-in-gender-gap-index-2017/>)

The Gender Gap Report and India’s Worrying Performance

According to the indicators (health & survival, economic opportunities, educational attainment and political empowerment) on the basis of which the report has analyzed the status of women among the 144 countries, across all indicators except for political empowerment, India’s scores have fallen steeply. This implies that India has been regressing in three out of the four measures. Further, India’s score relative to other countries also indicates that they have managed to close the gaps faster than India has. Across all indicators, the country scores way below the average scores in the report while for some indicators like sex ratio at birth, life expectancy, labour force participation and estimated earned income, the results are particularly poor. Therefore, this article is an attempt to analyze the possible reasons behind India’s poor performance under each of the three indicators that are, economic opportunities, health and survival and educational attainment.



(Source: <https://feminisminindia.com/2017/11/08/global-gender-gap-report-2017/>)

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

Women's participation in work and the kind of work they do is an indicator of their status in a society. In India, where the economy grew at a very strong pace of 7.5% p.a. in the three years of 2014-17 with *growth* exceeding 8% in 2015-16 during the same period India has registered a decline of 11.4% when it comes to the present female labour force participation according to the report published by the World Bank in 2017, out of which approximately 53% of this drop occurred in rural India, among those aged between 15 and 24. It also showed that in eight years till 2012, 19.6 million women quit (or lost) jobs with the biggest decline occurring amongst two groups- illiterate women and post-graduates. This implies that at a time when jobs for men increased by 0.9 million, there was a decline of 2.4 million for women from the employment map. Currently only 27 per cent women are in the labour force which is the lowest among BRICS countries and among the G-20 countries. The National Sample Survey found that while in 1999-2000, 25.9% of all women worked; by 2011-12 this proportion had dropped to 21.9%.

Initially the long-standing inequalities in the gender distribution of economic and financial resources placed women at a disadvantage relative to men in their capability to participate in, contribute to and benefit from broader processes of development. Among several reasons, women are forced to quit jobs or chose not to work due to discrimination in terms of employment opportunities, unequal access to resources, unequal wages, and managerial positions (starting from the level of educational attainment). This is often accompanied by the fact that the continued absence of women from key decision-making forums shaping the allocation of economic and financial resources and opportunities has further perpetuated gender inequality. And finally, apart from decline in the labour workforce participation, exclusion of women who do "unpaid care work", referring to all unpaid services within a household including care of people, housework and voluntary community work portrays a discriminatory picture against women in the economy.

Economic Opportunity			
	female	male	value
Workforce Participation			
Non-discrimination laws, hiring women			yes
Youth not in employment or education	49.3	8.0	6.19
Unemployed adults	7.7	4.1	1.88
Discouraged job seekers	-	-	-
Workers in informal employment	70.3	75.7	0.93
High skilled share of labour force	1.8	8.1	0.23
Workers employed part-time	-	-	-
Contributing family workers	31.5	10.3	3.05
Own-account workers	51.2	67.6	0.75
Work, minutes per day	536.6	442.0	1.21
Proportion of unpaid work per day	65.6	11.7	5.60
Economic Leadership			
Law mandates equal pay			no
Advancement of women to leadership roles	-	-	0.04
Boards of publicly traded companies	11.4	88.6	0.13
Firms with female co-owners			0.12
Firms with female top managers			0.10
Employers	0.8	13.3	0.05
R&D personnel	14.7	85.3	0.17
Access to Assets			
Hold an account at a financial institution	42.6	62.5	0.68
Women's access to financial services			part
Inheritance rights for daughters			part
Women's access to land use, control and ownership			part
Women's access to non-land assets use, control and ownership			part
Mean monthly earnings (1,000s, local cur.)	5.4	8.1	0.67

Figure 4 Source Global Gender Gap Report

(Source: <https://feminisminindia.com/2017/11/08/global-gender-gap-report-2017/>)

What Explains Low Women Workforce Participation in India?

Over the last decade, India has made a considerable progress in increasing access to education for girls as increasing numbers of women of working age are enrolling in secondary schools. This is also visible in the last few GG Reports. The nature of economic growth in the country has meant that jobs

were not created in large numbers in sectors that which could have employed more people this time, especially for those in rural areas. So what does this tell us about India's growth story and its relation with low participation?

According to Preet Rustagi, Professor at the Institute of Human Development, as the education level among girls has improved and as aspirations have risen, more and more women want to be financially independent. Thus, better education opportunities for girls in the 15-24 years age group and higher incomes of households are one of the major reasons for the decline. For example, in urban areas, two thirds of women with college degrees are without jobs. Secondly, of the various sectors that are high in demand, while men could find jobs in manufacturing and service industries after leaving farming, there have been fewer openings for women. Added to this is the fact that many married women take the decision to leave work to look after children. In urban areas, two thirds of women with college degrees are without jobs. Working women, also face several challenges in the work place many of which many go unaddressed such as sexual harassment and lack of appropriate infrastructure in the work place, like separate toilets. These often act as de-motivators for women to join the work force. Finally, though most women in India work and contribute to the economy in some form, much of their work is not recognised in official statistics, and thus women's work tends to be under-reported. In India, a substantially high proportion of females report their activity status as attending to domestic duties both in rural and urban areas. As for the rural areas the main causes of concern for women employment are the declining farm sizes, rising mechanisation, and dwindling labour demands in agriculture.



Source: <https://www.bloombergquint.com/union-budget-india/2017/01/16/budget-2017-indias-missing-women-workers>)

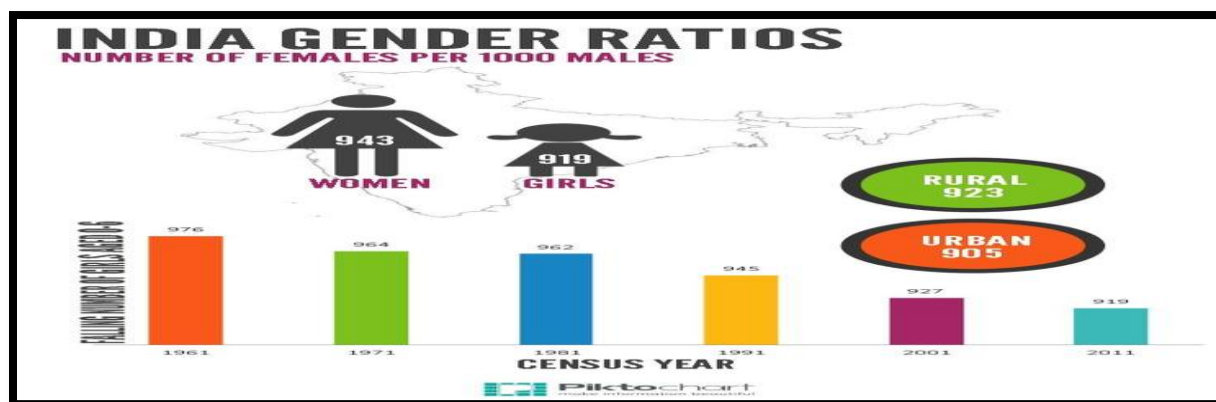
HEALTH AND SURVIVAL FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

Even though the Constitution of India does not provide for the right to health as a fundamental right, it does direct the State to take measures to improve the condition of health care of the people in order to secure for all its citizens justice-social and economic. While women in India face many serious health concerns that have serious repercussions not only for her but also their families, gender discrimination in India is one of the main reasons behind the poor health status of girls. Although there has been significant improvement in the health, education and employment status of women in India over time yet, health indices for girls and women compare much less favourably with those for boys and men.

What are the health issues faced by women in India?

The 2011 census data clearly indicates that selective sex abortion continues unabated in spite of stringent legislations and social reforms being in place. The child sex ratio further took a hit and tumbled to an upsetting average of 914 females born per 1,000 males, making it the lowest since independence. Although the overall sex ratio (number of women per 1,000 men) improved only marginally in rural areas from 946 to 947 between 2001- 2011, the sex ratio of children in 0-6 years suggested that the rural areas have seen a greater fall from 934 to 919 which is a drop of 15 points. A latest report titled Youth in India put together by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation projects that India's skewed sex ratio is set to further dip by 2031. Based on data from Census of India and World Bank, the report estimates that the overall sex ratio will drop to 898 girls from 940 (2011), regardless of the rising literacy levels and income rates¹. Attention also needs to shift towards those families who, under the influence of the prevalent small family norm and son preference, do not want to have children when one or two sons are born.

As for life expectancy, India, listed as a low-middle income country, records a difference of 3 years between life expectancy at birth for women and men. A recent study conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) as part of the Global Disease Burden survey showed an overall life expectancy also saw a rise from 1990 to 2016, with women's life expectancy increasing to 70.3 years, while that of men being 66.9 years.



(Source: <http://www.peinture-deco-bois.com/declining-sex-ratio/>)

Apart from the declining sex ratio and life expectancy rate, India is facing a dual challenge of under nutrition and obesity, according to a the 'Global Nutrition Report 2017' which looked at 140 countries and found significant burdens of three important forms of malnutrition used as an indicator of broader trends which includes childhood stunting, anaemia in women of reproductive age, and overweight adult women. According to the report, while India has addressed stunting among children aged less than five, it has made little or no progress in the percentage of reproductive-age women with anaemia. Also while 51 percent women in India are underweight, 22 percent are overweight.

¹ <https://yourstory.com/2017/10/child-sex-ratio-historically-low/>

Sl. No.	States	Registered Births		Registered Deaths	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1.	Andhra Pradesh	37.0	35.3	139.8	108.3
2.	Assam	36.1	32.8	58.2	48.6
3.	Bihar	83.0	76.7	91.9	51.7
4.	Chhattisgarh	27.7	25.7	89.6	60.3
5.	Gujarat	66.6	60.0	210.3	132.3
6.	Haryana	31.6	26.5	102.4	59.2
7.	Jharkhand	32.9	29.1	68.2	46.9
8.	Karnataka	55.0	51.9	255.9	157.7
9.	Kerala	27.6	26.0	147.5	112.6
10.	Madhya Pradesh	87.0	78.6	207.5	164.5
11.	Maharashtra	105.5	95.0	391.9	277.0
12.	Odisha	40.6	36.0	164.0	123.2
13.	Punjab	23.9	20.9	115.6	80.1
14.	Rajasthan	95.2	81.8	246.6	155.0
15.	Tamil Nadu	64.0	54.6	304.7	202.9
16.	Telangana	30.5	29.1	82.6	73.9
17.	Uttar Pradesh	206.9	182.7	435.2	345.7
18.	West Bengal	70.9	64.8	257.0	213.4

(Source: www.censusindia.gov.in)

Thus, this consistent decline in women's health conditions over the last decade, reinforces the existence of gender discriminatory practices which starts even before birth.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINEMENT FOR WOMEN IN INDIA

No country can progress unless its citizens are literate. In the recent decades, female literacy rate has shown a steady increase in India. A comparison of the 2001 and 2011 census data on literacy shows that the overall female literacy rate has gone up by 31% from 224 million in 2001 to 328 million in 2011. (the literacy rate in rural India has increased to 58% from 46%, the literacy rate for urban females shows a growth from 73% to 79% in the same time period). While in 2014, the situation improved further- how ?

age	literacy rate (%)								
	rural			urban			rural + urban		
	male	female	person	male	female	person	male	female	person
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
2014 (NSS 71st round)									
Age 5 & above	80	62	71	91	81	86	83	68	76
Age 7 & above	80	62	71	91	81	86	83	68	76
All age (age 0 & above)	72	57	65	84	75	80	76	62	69
2011-12 (NSS 68th round)									
Age 5 & above	78	61	69	90	80	85	82	66	74
Age 7 & above	79	61	70	91	80	86	83	66	75
All age (age 0 & above)	72	56	64	84	75	80	75	61	68
2007-08 (NSS 64th round)									
Age 5 & above	77	57	67	90	78	84	80	63	72
Age 7 & above	77	57	67	90	78	84	81	62	72
All age (age 0 & above)	68	51	60	82	72	77	72	56	65

Ref: Table 5, Appendix A and NSS Report Nos. 532 and 566 respectively for 64th and 68th rounds figures

(Source: http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/nss_rep_575.pdf)

Poverty is the root cause of many problems in India and also of low female literacy rate. More than one-third of population in India lives below the poverty line. According to *IndiaSpend* analysis, the crisis in education is highly apparent in the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh with 445.1 million of India's 1.2 billion population and some of the lowest literacy rates in the country, according to Census 2011.² Apart from state variation, between 2001 (53.7%) and 2011 (64.6%), the issue of illiteracy has also gained momentum. While population above the age of 7 grew by 18.65 crore, the decrease in the number of illiterates was just 3.11 crore. The current status of

² Bihar had a literacy rate of 61.8%, Rajasthan of 67.1%, Uttar Pradesh of 67.7% and Madhya Pradesh a rate of 70.6% in 2011, lower than the all-India average of 74%. Kerala has a literacy rate of 94%, the highest in the country.

enrolment of girls across the country at primary level is 48.21%, at upper primary level is 48.63% and at secondary level is 80.7%. This compares well with the percentage of girls population (6-10 yrs) i.e., 47.75% and 47.77% (11-13 yrs) level as per Census 2011. Over 12 years (2000-01 to 2013-14), the number of children who enrolled in primary schools increased by 1.86 crore, and at the upper primary level by just over 2 crore.

What are the barriers to education for women in India?

One of the core issues in education is retaining children in schools and colleges. An average of 326 out of 1,000 students in rural areas are dropping out, while the same is 383 per 1,000 in urban areas, according to the National Sample Survey Organisation's (NSSO) 71st round survey. This data counts people up to the age of 29. A detailed research study was commissioned in 2013 by the Central Government entitled "Survey for assessment of drop out at the elementary level in 21 States". According to the study, major factors of drop-out have been identified as lack of interest in studies, economic reasons; migration and involvement in domestic work to help the parents. Some of the barriers to women's education are sociological- rooted in gender stereotyping and gender segregation, while others are led by economic concerns and constraints. The negative attitude of parents towards the girl child and her education is one of the major reasons of low female literacy rate in India. In most of the families, boys at home are given priority in terms of education but girls are not treated in the same way. Right from the beginning, parents do not consider girls as earning members of their family, as after marriage they have to leave their parents' home. Pointing to the inhibitions parents feel, especially amongst the poor or backward sections of society, Sonalde Desai, in her book on Gender Inequalities and Demographic Behaviour, argues that 'another disincentive for sending daughters to school is a concern for the protection of their virginity. Parents are wary of sending girls to schools due to several factors- distance of school from home and lack of adequate transport, lack of female teachers in schools, lack of infrastructural facilities like toilets, and also co-education. A 2010 report conducted by the National Council for Teacher Education estimated that an additional 1.2 million teachers were needed to fulfil the RTE act requirements and merely 5 % of government schools complied with all the basic standards and infrastructure set by the act. Moreover 40% of classrooms had more than 30 students and over 60% didn't have any electricity and over 21% of the teachers were not professionally trained. Although much work has been done to improve the state of education in India, we are still a long way off from attaining standards comparable even to other developing nations..

Conclusion

The global scene as depicted by the report is depressing since the overall index has seen a dip for the first time since its inception in 2006. In all, the report estimates that it will now take about 100 years to bridge the overall gender gap whereas till last year, that estimate stood at 83 years. This means that legislative changes, conventions and promises alone cannot reverse the current situation of violence and injustice against women. The conversation today needs to highlight a woman's right to dignity, respect, and equality across all spheres of public and personal life. "While increasing representation of women in the public spheres is important and can potentially be attained through some form of affirmative action, an attitudinal shift is required for women to be considered as equal within their homes and in broader society," writes Smriti Sharma, research fellow, United Nations University. When it comes to India, its latest ranking is 10 notches lower than its reading in 2006 when the WEF

started measuring the gender gap. The indicator above attempts to account for a clear need of policy initiatives to empower women as gender disparities in India persist even against the backdrop of economic growth. India's greatest challenges lie in the economic participation and opportunity pillar where the country is ranked 139 as well as health and survival pillar where the country is ranked 141.

“No nation, no society, no community can hold its head high and claim to be part of the civilized world if it condones the practice of discriminating against one half of humanity represented by women.” – Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

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EQUALITY

Train tickets in India will soon offer ‘third gender’ option

Maddie Jones, Pink News

The Railway Board in India will soon introduce a third gender in all its systems which will be labeled as T. This move has been considered by the Board after activists protested the options of trans male and trans female which was incorporated in 2016, arguing that it still forced trans persons to identify with gender binaries. As a result, the option of “T(M/F)” has been revised to just “T”. These increased attempts by the law makers to prepare gender inclusive laws and policies can be attributed to the 2014 Supreme Court judgment in favour of gender fluidity and created a “third gender” status for transgender individuals. This judgement came after the Supreme Court’s regressive decision in the 2013 Naz Foundation case where it declared homosexuality illegal.

Read more: <http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2017/10/31/train-tickets-in-india-will-soon-offer-third-gender-option-for-transgender-individuals/>

Date Accessed: 19.12.2017

Women directors at top firms paid 46% less than their male counterparts

Divya Rajagopal, Economic Times

According to FY17 annual reports by ET, among the 30 Sensex companies the women directors apart from the issue of poor representation on board and absence from key committees on average were paid 46% less than men. This gap persists among independent directors, but to a lesser extent at 28%. Female directors who accounted for 46 out of 396 earned an average salary of Rs 1.4 crore against Rs 2.6 crore by men. Of the 133 independent directors, 25 were women earned an average salary of Rs 36.3 lakh compared with Rs 50.6 lakh for men. The gap further widens as women move up the career ladder.

Read more:

[//economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/62109690.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst](http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/62109690.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst)

Date Accessed: 18.12.2017

India’s internet has a massive gender problem—and its holding girls back

Ananya Bhattacharya, Quartz India

As per the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), across the world, 56% of all internet users were men in 2017, compared to 44% women. This implies that the internet in India has a serious gender problem with mere 29% of females accessing the Internet. The reasons stated for such gender disparity include the deep-seated cultural barriers, particularly in rural India and difference in mobile ownership (114 million more Indian men have their own handsets compared to women). For instance, one village governing body in rural Rajasthan stated that girls were not to use mobile phones or social media and another village in Uttar Pradesh banned unmarried girls from using mobile phones (and from wearing jeans), the report said. Another reason for fewer women accessing the internet in India as stated by the report is cost. “Even if mobile phones with internet capabilities were to become more affordable, the extreme poor would still have to contend with high airtime and data costs,” the report said.

Read More: <https://qz.com/1153841/indias-internet-has-a-massive-gender-problem-and-its-holding-girls-back/>

Date Accessed: 18 December, 2017

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

LGBTQ community protests against Transgender Persons Bill

Ilma Hasan, India Today

Recently, several LGBTQ activists from across the country had gathered at Sansad Marg in New Delhi to protest against the Transgender Persons (Protection Of Rights) Bill 2016, set to be introduced in the winter session of the parliament. Where on one hand the transgenders, who are socially isolated, claim the bill offers nothing in their favour, is against the April 2014 judgement passed by the Supreme Court that gave people the right to self identity and legal recognition, however, the government claims that passing of the bill will lead to legitimising the community and will help end discrimination. Maya, a transgender who came from Gujarat said, "This government is upturning everything promised to us by the SC. The Standing Committee recommendation had made it clear that any procedure for identification of transgender persons would violate human rights. But this bill will make it mandatory for transgenders to apply to District Magistrate for a certificate of identity."

Read More: <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/lgbtq-community-protests-against-transgender-persons-bill/1/1111971.html>

Date Accessed: 18.12.2017



Source: http://media2.intoday.in/indiatoday/images/stories/trans-tg-bill-story_647_121717014521.jpg

VIOLENCE AND SAFETY

Most Crimes against Dalits are against SC Women: NCRB Data

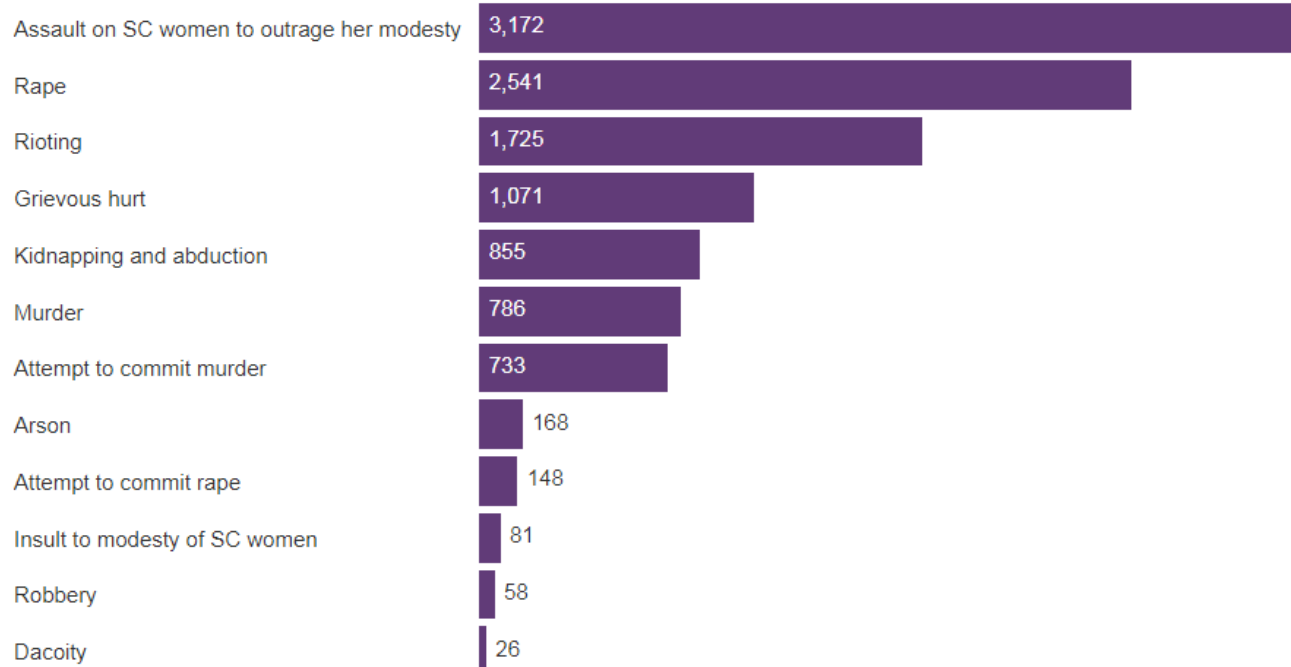
The Wire Staff, The Wire

The NCRB report of 2016 for the first time has released not just state-wise data, but also specific data on metropolitan cities. This data has negated the popular conception that caste identities matter less in metropolitan cities since the number of cases reported in the cities is almost the same as in rural areas. Uttar Pradesh accounted for the highest number of cases among the states while correspondingly, Lucknow had the highest number of atrocities reported followed by Patna and Jaipur. While Madhya Pradesh ranked fourth in terms of the number of crimes, it came in first on the crime rate which takes into account the SC population in the state. While atrocities against SCs were up in number from 40,801 from 38670 in 2015, the NCRB data also brought out that most of the crimes against SCs reported were crimes against women. Delhi ranked first in terms of the crime rate against women with 160.4 as compared to the national average of 55.2 which is a significant rise from 2015. Most of the cases were reported for domestic abuse or cruelty by husband and relatives.

Read more: <https://thewire.in/201113/ncrb-crimes-against-dalits-women/>

Date Accessed: 20.12.2017

Atrocities against Dalits, by crime



Source: <https://thewire.in/201113/ncrb-crimes-against-dalits-women/>

VIOLENCE AND SAFETY

Conviction Rate for Crimes against Women Hits Record Low

Chaitanya Mallapur, The Wire

The latest NCRB Report 2016, “Crime of India” shows a substantial rise in crimes against women in India with an increase at 55.2% in 2016, which is higher from 41.7% in 2012. According to the report, as many as 39 crimes against women were reported every hour in India, up from 21 in 2007 and at 18.9%, the conviction rate for crimes against women in 2016 was the lowest in since 2007. Where “Cruelty by husband or his relatives” was the most reported crime against women, accounting for 33% of all crimes in 2016, rape accounted for 11% of all crimes against women with 38,947 cases reported in 2016, or four every hour as per the report. The report also ranked cities according to the rate of crimes under which while Delhi stood first with the highest crime rate at 160.4 against the national average of 55.2, West Bengal reported the most cases of “cruelty by husband or his relatives” in 2016 (19,302) or two every hour.

Read More: <https://thewire.in/204644/conviction-rate-crimes-women-hits-record-low/>

Date Accessed: 18.12.2017

How India is battling sexual violence: gender classes for Delhi rickshaw drivers

Michael Safi, The Guardian

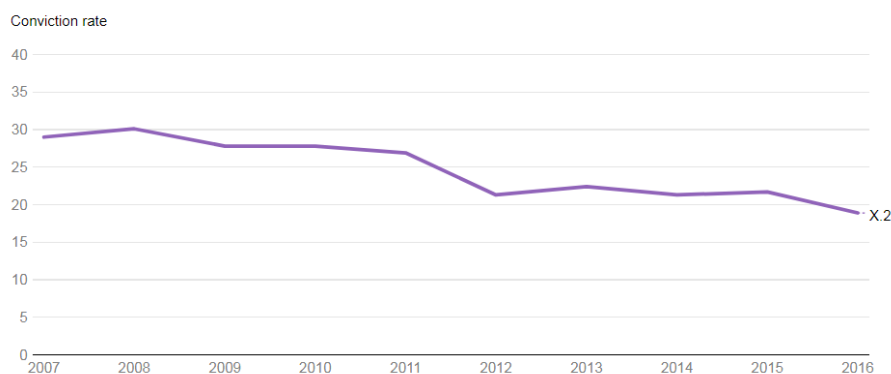
Post the Nirbhaya gang rape, gender sensitisation classes have become mandatory to renew commercial driving licences in the city in an attempt to curb violence in public transport and change the patriarchal culture. This was introduced keeping in mind the fact that increasing number of women venture out for work and come in frequent contact with commercial drivers some of whom might belong to backgrounds where they are not familiar with the the concept of a single working woman travelling alone or returning late night. However, social workers have stated that the have experienced a substantial change in the outlook of drivers after these classes despite the initial unwillingness. Workers in these sensitisation camps have also found that whenever moral persuasion fails, the economic aspect usually appeals to them. Most of the drivers realise that a large percentage of their passengers are single women who often have to travel alone at night and losing women passengers will not be economically viable for them. A report from Human Rights Watch this month found Indian laws for protecting women had significantly improved in the last five years but progress in the implementation stage is limited especially outside the cosmopolitan cities because of the attitudes of police, judges and village leaders.

Read more:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/25/india-battling-sexual-violence-gender-delhi-rickshaw-drivers>

Date Accessed: 19.12.2017

Crime Against Women: 2016 Had Lowest Conviction Rate In Decade



Source: <https://thewire.in/204644/conviction-rate-crimes-women-hits-record-low/>

VIOLENCE AND SAFETY

How People and a Phone App are Challenging Gender Violence in a Mumbai Slum Sanchari Pal, The Better India

National Family Health Survey 2016 findings stated that nearly 47% percent women in the country have faced some violence, and only 2% of these women have asked for institutional help. NCRB data shows that crime against women has increased by 34% since 2012 and that 43.6% of all these crimes are committed by relatives. This problem is further aggravated when the victim is illiterate and is unaware of her rights and remedies available. To make a change in this bleak scenario, NGO SNEHA used various technological and participatory approaches to prevent gender violence, ensure survivors' access to protection and justice, secure female rights, mobilise communities around 'zero tolerance', and respond to the needs of marginalised women. The organisation also sought to fight the patriarchal mindset by involving men in the entire process of raising awareness about issues like violence and sexual health. To identify and tackle gender based violence, the organisation harnessed technology by introducing an app called EyeWatch under its 'Little Sister' project wherein trained Sanginis would offer immediate assistance and crisis intervention when an alert is raised. This helped in recording, documenting and adopting a structured approach to building a support system. Crisis centres have been set up across Mumbai to provide legal aid and medical services for victims of gender based violence. The effectiveness of this approach is clearly illustrated by the fact that it has helped SNEHA successfully address over 5000 cases of violence, sensitize over 4500 police officers, and train over 2100 public hospital staff in counselling and crisis intervention.

Read more: <https://www.thebetterindia.com/124757/people-phone-app-challenging-gender-violence-mumbai-slum/>

Date accessed: 19.12.2017



Source: <https://www.thebetterindia.com/124757/people-phone-app-challenging-gender-violence-mumbai-slum/>

HEALTH

73 Per Cent Women In India Take Their Pharmacist's Help For Abortion: Study Snigda Basu, NDTV

According to a study, almost three out of every four women (73 per cent) in India who undergo abortion take the help of a pharmacist or an informal vendor. As per the first national study of the incidence of abortion and unintended pregnancy that accounted for 2015 done by International Institute of Population Sciences and the New York-based Guttmacher Institute concluded that, while the overall, 12.7 million (81 per cent) abortions were medication abortion, 2.2 million (14 per cent) abortions were surgical and 0.8 million (5 per cent) abortions were done through other methods that were probably unsafe. 'Women, especially unmarried girls, are often also at the mercy of quacks who run unregistered clinics in back-alleys due to the provider bias that exists... We must expand the provider base to include nurses who should also be trained to perform abortion,' Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India.

Read More: <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/73-per-cent-women-in-india-take-their-pharmacists-help-for-abortion-study-1786999>

Date Accessed: 18.12.2017

India's Road to Reproductive Justice

RECENT PROGRESSIVE JUDGMENTS DELIVERED BY THE INDIAN COURTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTIVE OF A RIGHTS-BASED INTERPRETATION OF INDIA'S ABORTION LAW.



"A woman's freedom of choice whether to bear a child or abort her pregnancy are areas which fall in the realm of privacy."

August 2017, Supreme Court of India



"A woman has a sacrosanct right to her bodily integrity and it is her choice."

July 2017, Supreme Court of India



"Let us not lose sight of the basic right of women: the right to autonomy and to decide what to do with their own bodies, including whether or not to get pregnant and stay pregnant."

September 2016, Bombay High Court



Source: <https://www.youthkiawaaz.com/2017/10/5-things-about-abortion-no-one-tells-young-women/>

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