

Indian Youth: Aspirations and Vision for the Future



Indian Youth: Aspirations and Vision for the Future

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Youngsters enjoying a walk during sunset at Suruchi Beach, Palghar, Maharashtra, 2018. Manu Yadav

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Executive Summary



A young woman performs a street play as people gather to raise awareness for safety and security of women amid rising cases of sexual violence in New Delhi, India, December, 2012. Manjesh Rana

Executive Summary

Indian Youth: Aspirations and Vision for the Future is a collaborative study involving Lokniti, a programme of the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. Young people aged between 15 to 34 years, accounts for a little over one-third of the Indian population. Such a large young population is an asset for any nation as these young people have the potential to play an active role in shaping of the socio-economic and political development of the country. But today, young Indians are grappled with multiple challenges such as financial difficulties for pursuing their education, lack of employment opportunities and the issues of mental health. Some even face pressure from their families and peers for doing well in life. Some of these issues have been discussed in the previous rounds of the youth studies conducted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). This report is based on the fourth round of youth study, which aims to analyse if there have been any changes in the attitudes and behaviour of the youth, their levels of anxieties and their emerging aspirations. This report also tries to focus on the new challenges that Indian youth might be facing.

The previous round of the study conducted in 2016 indicated that unemployment was the biggest concern for the young Indians and many were not getting a job after completing their education. When asked in an open ended question what youth thought to be the most important issue facing India, a plurality (18%) said it was jobs and unemployment. The data from 2016 study also showed that the occupational profile of India's youth had undergone a significant change over the last one decade, with a third (32%) of the country's youth reporting their main occupation as being a 'student'. The study also

showed that two of every ten (19%) of the youth reported experiencing a significant degree of stress from their studies or their jobs. Seeking a job or gainful employment can be a stressful experience even during normal times as seen in the data from the study conducted in 2016. The global COVID-19 pandemic seems to have made this situation even worse. The pandemic has negatively impacted the employment opportunities and further worsened the already existing jobs crisis. Its impact is going to be felt much more severely in the coming years. The pandemic has undoubtedly affected the young in regards to education, employment, relationships and mental well-being, though in different degrees. In the wake of these issues, this study seeks to decode the career aspirations and job preferences, expectation and aspiration about the livelihood opportunities of Indian youth. It also focuses on the youth's opinions on the institutions of kinship and other social ties, religion and marriage, and also taps into the mental health and well being of young Indians.

This report on Indian youth draws heavily from the survey data of the youth study, conducted amongst 6277 young people aged between 15-34 years, spread across 18 states of India.

The data from the study shows that close to two-fifths (39%) of the youth reported their main occupation to be that of a 'student'. This figure is up by seven percentage points since 2016 when 32 percent of young people reported that they were pursuing their studies. Additionally, there are six percent of the youth who are both studying and working, and a little over one in four (28%) who are earning. However, one-fifth (21%) of the youth are neither studying nor earning and six percent of the youth said that they are in search of employment opportunities.

Humanities emerged as the most sought-after stream among the students with two-fifths of the youth stating that they had either studied it, or are pursuing their education in this field followed by science stream, which was a preferred choice for close to one in every four (23%) young persons. Commerce and management was preferred by one in every ten (11%) youth and six percent opted for engineering and technology.

Data highlights that the youth of the country continues to face the problem of joblessness, as in the survey, unemployment emerged as the biggest problem with almost half (45%) of the youth identifying this as the problem. 'Poverty' and 'inflation' emerged at the distant second and third position respectively. Furthermore, the overall perception among the youth regarding the employment opportunities in their respective states appears poor with two in every five rating the employment opportunities in their states as bad, while merely one in seven giving it a good rating.

While the majority of youngsters believed it to be the government's responsibility to create employment opportunities in the country, about two-fifths agreed that the youth themselves are responsible for creating new avenues. Furthermore, youngsters felt that the ability related characteristics (qualification, degree, work experience and communication) were the most impactful in finding a job in India. On a positive note, youth are least likely to consider identity-related factors to be playing a decisive role in getting a job.

Preference for government jobs has seen a sharp decline since 2016. Back in 2016, 65 percent youth preferred a government job, if they had a choice. This figure has seen a decline of ten percentage points. On the other hand, setting up one's own business saw a greater attraction amongst the youth during the last five years. In 2016, 19 percent of the youth wanted to set up their own business, this figure has increased by five percentage points. It may be important to highlight here that, this rise represents an aspiration and is not a reflection of reality. There was hardly any change in the preference for a private job during this period and it has remained stable at seven percent.

The study also aimed to explore what kind of a job Indian youth would like to give priority to- a permanent job even if it means drawing a little less

salary, a job with a good salary even if the job is not permanent or a job of one's choice without bothering about salary and permanency. Forty six percent of the youth gave priority to a permanent job and this figure has seen an increase by 13 percentage points during the last five years. Job of one's choice was reported by a quarter of the respondents, followed by a job which gives a decent salary (16%).

On account of youngsters' relationship with friends and family, one notes that half of the youth said that their relationship with their parents has not changed much in the last 2-3 years and is the same, while 35 percent reported that their relationship has strengthened as compared to earlier. Nine percent reported that their relationship has somewhat weakened and only a small proportion of four percent youth reported that the relationship has weakened a lot. A similar pattern can be noticed with regard to their bonding with their friends, where close to half (49%) stated that their relationship has not changed much, 29 percent reported that it has strengthened and about 20 percent said that it has weakened from before (15% said weakened to some extent and 5% reported that it has weakened a lot).

The study also delved into the attitudes, preferences and practices with respect to marriage. It seems that the average age of marriage has gone up amongst Indian youth; many of them are now marrying at an older age as compared to before. The study indicates that the proportion of married youth has decreased by 13 percentage points since 2007 and five percentage points since 2016. In the present survey, a little over two-fifths (42%) of the Indian youth said they are married.

Indian youth are also quite receptive to the idea of inter-caste marriage. Six in ten youth (61%) were in support of inter-caste marriage. Yet there is limited empirical evidence of this aspiration being translated to reality. The support for inter-faith marriage (inter-religious marriage) is still not accepted well by youth at large with 45 percent of the youth standing in its favor and 42 percent opposing it.

The study also found that, not only a large majority of youth are engaged in routine religious activities such as praying, fasting and visiting their place of worship, but, a sizeable proportion of them are also spending time on activities such as watching religious programmes on TV and reading religious texts and activities that are usually perceived as being

performed by the older age groups. Furthermore, their religiosity does not seem to have seen any significant decline during the last few years. They are nearly as likely to be engaged in certain religious activities today, as they were five years ago with the dips being very minor in overall terms.

As this study was conducted during the second wave of COVID-19 which was an unprecedented time for everyone and resulted in enormous disruptions to everyone's lives, the survey tried to throw light on what worries the young Indians. Family's financial security (61%), followed by one's health (60%), emerged as something that youth worried about the most. Worrying about one's job was reported by about six in ten youth (56%). One's physical appearance – one's looks, their body shape or weight was a cause of worry for more than five in every ten youth (54%). Family tensions related to disputes and domestic violence was a matter of concern for almost five and over four out of ten youth respectively. The least amount of worry was caused by marriage which was reported by three in every ten youth.

The study also tried to tap into self-reported symptoms of emotional distress among the youth. More than 50 percent of the youth in the study reported becoming angry over small matters. While, 49 percent youth reported feeling sad and experiencing loss of interest in daily activities during the last two to three years, about two in four youngsters reported to be affected by loneliness (46%). Close to four in ten said that they often had sleep disturbances, where either they would sleep too much or sleep very less and almost a similar proportion reported that they often avoided friends and other people because they wanted to be alone. The incidences of feeling worthless were reported by three in ten youth (31%). All the symptoms of emotional distress were higher among youth who worried a lot on various issues (be that body shape, family disputes, personal health, domestic violence,

jobs or marriage), than those who never worry about these issues. There also seems to be a correlation between social media usage and emotional distress. Youth having high exposure to social media were found to be more emotionally distressed compared to those with low or no exposure to social media.

The study also tried to measure suicidal tendencies among Indian youth and found that, over two in ten youth (21%) have had suicidal thoughts either many times or sometimes in the last two to three years. However, the data shows that only about 10 percent of the young have consulted a doctor for mental issues and mental health. It is worrisome that a fairly large proportion of those who suffer from these issues or have had suicidal thoughts have not sought any medical help for it. This could be due to the lack of awareness on mental health issues or the social stigma attached to it.

The current study provides a useful prism to assess and explore the aspirations, expectations, anxieties and challenges faced by the youth in the country. It is important to highlight the fact that, while there is a strong element of continuity in the attitude and approach of the young people, there are also visible traces of change. The continuity represents the fact that the 'contours of life' and the 'canvas of living' remains unchanged in significant ways. This report does focus on the key areas that witness a change in terms of attitudes and preferences, and these reflect the changing realities of the 21st century world in its second decade.

This report is indicative of the momentum and direction of change and attempts at offering an explanation of the drivers of the said shifts in perspectives and attitudes. The advantages of an analysis of youth attitudes across time, allows for a meaningful assessment of continuity with change in the way of the aspirations and attitudes of Indian youth.

Introduction

Section 1



People standing on roof and enjoying sunset in Uttar Pradesh, February 3, 2020. UNSPLASH/Ashwini Chaudhary

Introduction

Youth: Definition and demographic changes

There is no standard definition of youth but usually a segment of population who is in their adolescence to middle age is referred to as youth. Different agencies use a different age range to define youth; nonetheless, age is the main determinant for defining and categorizing the population as youth. For instance, in India, the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (Government of India) initiated the ‘National Youth Policy’ (NYP) in 2003, which defined the group of people in the age bracket of 13-35 years as youth. The main objective of the NYP was to provide meaningful opportunities to the youth so that they can exhibit their full potential for their own development and the development of the country as a whole. But at the later stage, the agency itself revised its age bracket and defined the segment of the population in the age group of 15-29 years as youth while drafting the NYP 2014.¹ The lack of a common denominator that identifies the Indian youth prevents uniformity, and this could be a reason why different government agencies and institutions estimate different findings in their studies. In the present study, we have defined the age group of 15-34 years as ‘youth’. In our past reports² too, the same definition of youth was used. It helps us to make comparisons and show different trends and changes within the same age groups over a period of time.

Youth population is an asset for a nation and its development. Timely interaction with youth is required to understand their attitudes and

¹ Youth in India, 2016. Central Statistics Office. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Government of India. Retrieved from http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Youth_in_India-2016.pdf

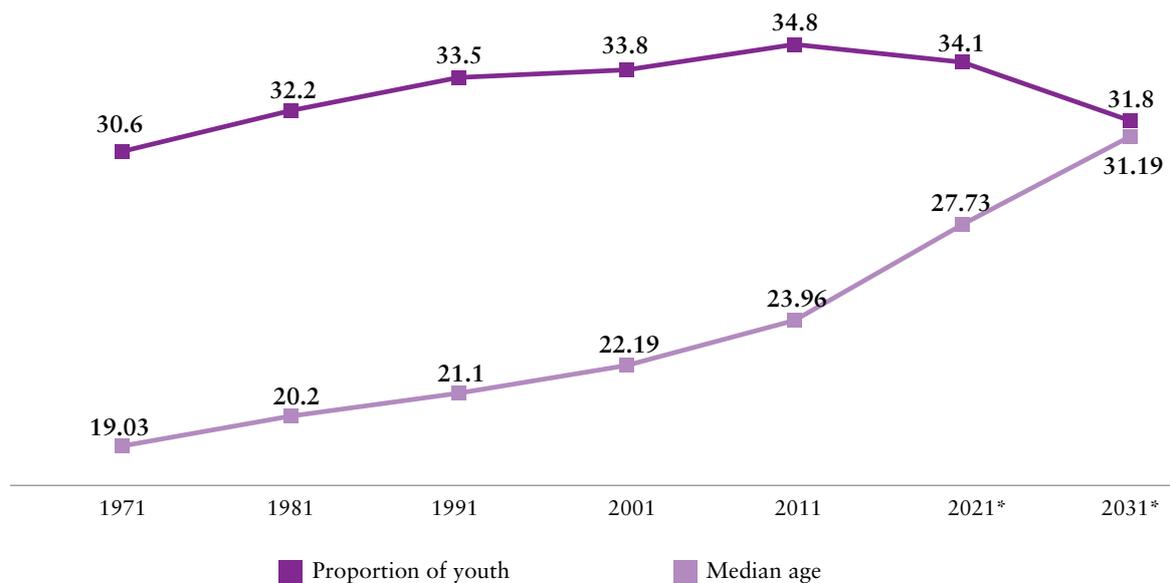
² Three previous rounds of the youth studies were conducted by the Lokniti-CSDS in collaboration with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung in the year 2007, 2011, and 2016.

perspectives on various socio-economic and political issues. India is amongst the ‘young’ countries of the world. The share of the young population (age groups of 15-34 years) is 34.8 percent as per the Census 2011 and the median age is 23.96 (Figure 1.1). On the contrary, in many developed countries, mainly situated in Europe and North America, the age structure has changed and median age in these countries has already increased. This demographic change has forced them to be dependent on the countries having young population for their labour market and economic development.

It is observed that India has the relative advantage at present over other countries in terms of distribution of youth population. India’s advantage in young population is also evident when it is compared with other Asian Countries. India is seen to remain younger longer than China and Indonesia, the two major countries other than India which determine the demographic features of Asia. These three countries together account for 68 percent of population of Asia in the year 2010 and the share of Asia itself is about 60 percent in world population. When we look at the Census data of India for the past few decades, we find that the youth population was constantly rising till the last census conducted in 2011. In 1971, the youth population was 168 million (30.6%) which has gone to 422 million (34.8%) in 2011 (Figure 1.1). The increase in the population was in the form of annual addition of nearly 5.3 to 6.6 million persons during the decades of seventies, eighties and nineties. In the decadal span of 2001-2011, this share of youth population has increased to 7.4 million.

On one hand, the share of young Indians is rising, while on the other, the median age in India is increasing which is not a good demographic indicator. According to the Ministry of Statistics and

Figure 1.1: Proportion of youth (15-34 years) to total population



Note: All figures in percent. The * indicates projected figures for those years by the World Bank.
 Source: Youth in India, 2016, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India.³

Programme Implementation (MoSPI), median age of Indian population was around 22 years in 2001; in another decade it has gone up to around 24 years. The MoSPI estimated that the median age of India for 2021 would be around 28 years and which may increase to 31 years by 2031. Unlike the past, when despite the rise in median age, the share of youth in Indian population was increasing, the estimates of MoSPI further indicate towards the declining share of youth in Indian population along with growing age. As per the estimates, in 2021, the share of youth will decline to 34.1 percent and that will further go down to 31.8 percent by 2031. The pattern of aging may lead India to face China’s situation termed as ‘middle income trap’ where the population seems to be growing older before it can become rich resulting in burdening the youth more than ever, as they would have to support their parents and grandparents. China was seen to have reached the highest share of the youth in the year 1990 at 38.28 percent and was projected to have the share of the youth force shrinking to 27.62 percent by the year 2020; similar situation was experienced by Japan in 2000. That is why it is even more pertinent for India to capitalize on its current youth boom before plummeting fertility rate strikes the economy, a scenario that China has passed through already in the 1990s.³

Why study youth?

As mentioned earlier, at present, India has the highest population of youth. But the population estimates for future indicate that the proportion of young population will see a decline in the coming few years. The young cohorts (15-34 years) are the leaders of the future but, they will be able to recognize their full potential only if they have the skills, choices, good health and decision-making powers. They should be provided with the appropriate conditions which allows them to progress and play an active role in society and nation-building. It becomes very important for a country to meet the needs and aspirations of young people as these young persons will later become adult members of the society. The transition from youth to adulthood can be a complex phenomenon. In this process, they have to deal with a range of issues which involves expectations and pressure to do well, maintaining social relationships with friends and peers, and the need to be recognized by family and friends for what they are, and what they believe in. Additionally, they also have to face new challenges that emerge from growing up in a digital age, the pressure to look a certain way which may result in body image issues, managing one’s love life, heartbreak and marriage, the issue of substance abuse, bullying, pressure to fit in a group, and at times discrimination and violence on the basis of gender, caste and religion. This age is an age of transition from school to work, and the youth also deals with pressures related to jobs-

³ Youth in India, 2016. Central Statistics Office. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Government of India. Retrieved from http://mospi.nic.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/Youth_in_India-2016.pdf

limited job opportunities, lack of job security and low wages. In short, this transition into adulthood can be a daunting task. Not being able to successfully navigate through this journey into adulthood can take a toll on their minds. To gauge their opinion and views on all these issues, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in partnership with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) has been carrying out youth studies in India since the year 2007. This is the fourth round in the series of youth study, with the earlier studies conducted in 2007, 2011 and 2016.

With so much on youth's mind, it becomes pertinent to capture the youngsters' preferences, goals and beliefs about the opportunities that are provided to them and their aspirations for future. Although, many of these issues have been captured in the previous three rounds of the youth study, with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, youth who are studying or working or doing both have been adversely affected by the closing down of educational institutions, training centers and offices. The Director of International Labour Organization (ILO), General Guy Ryder had rightly stated that the pandemic has inflicted multiple shocks on the young people by not only destroying their jobs and employment prospects but has also disrupted their education and training which could have a serious impact on their mental well-being⁴. There is no doubt that the pandemic had a devastating effect on millions of people, but children and youth have been the most vulnerable. According to the data released by ILO, the pandemic has posed immense psychosocial impact on young people. Disruption in education and economic opportunities, family stress, social isolation, risk of domestic abuse and uncertainty about the future have led to reduced well-being of young people globally.⁵ Even before the onset of the crisis, the social and economic integration of young people was an ongoing challenge but COVID-19 only made this situation worse.

In such an unprecedented context, this report aims to analyse the career aspirations and job preferences, expectations and aspiration about the livelihood

4 ILO (2020). COVID-19 disrupts education of more than 70 per cent of youth. Retrieved from: https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_753060/lang--en/index.htm. Accessed on 26th November 2021.

5 Urmila Sarkar, Hana Sahatqija, Mami Kyo (2021). The impact of COVID-19 on young people. Retrieved from: <https://www.generationunlimited.org/stories/impact-covid-19-young-people>. Accessed on 26th November 2021.

opportunities of India's youth. It also focuses on the youth's opinions on the institutions of kinship and other social ties, religion and marriage and also taps into the mental health of the young Indians.

About the survey

The CSDS-KAS Youth Survey 2021 was conducted in 18 States of the country among 6277 respondents in the age group of 15-34 years in the months of July and August, 2021. The states which were selected for the study were the larger states of India in terms of population based on the Census, 2011. These include, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Gujarat, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand, Assam, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Delhi. Further, the localities were selected in a way to have an equal representation of the big and small cities as well as towns and villages to have an inclusive study and to compare the experiences and views of youth with different levels of urbanization. For more technical details of the study design and sample see **Appendix I**.

The survey was conducted using a standardized interview schedule (**Appendix II**) which was administered face to face at the residence of the respondents. Due to Covid-19, the survey was administered on an App, so the training for it was also given to the investigators with practice interviews done by each of them before going to the field. Keeping in mind the safety of the field investigators and the respondents during the times of Covid-19, the field investigators were required to follow all the necessary COVID protocols and guidelines. In each of the 18 States where the survey was conducted, the questionnaire was translated in the local language that is understood by most of the people in the state. For example, in Kerala it was in Malayalam, in Gujarat in Gujarati, in Assam in Assamese, and in Rajasthan in Hindi. Most questions in the questionnaire were structured, i.e., close-ended. However, there were some that were kept open-ended in order to find out the respondent's spontaneous feelings about an issue without giving him/her a pre-decided set of options.

Structure of the report

The report is organized into seven sections. Section 2 explores the social ties of Indian youth with their

family, friends and society. It taps into their bond with their friends, family, and place of residence, state and country at large. Additionally, it presents the considerations of youth while making friends. Section 3 discusses the religious practices and attitudes of young Indians to religion. It attempts to understand the role religion plays in the lives of the young, the extent of their tolerance on matters that involves religion, their level of optimism regarding religious harmony, and their religion-related experiences of discrimination. Section 4 highlights the marriage preferences of Indian youth. It also reports their opinion on various marriage practices such as inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. Furthermore, this section also taps into the youth's opinion on divorce in case of a problematic marriage and their views on same-sex relationships. Section 5 discusses the educational profile and occupational engagement of young Indians. It also delves into the job aspirations of youth and explores the factors that makes a few career choices more attractive and explores the avenues that appear more favourable

than others. Section 6 examines mental health-related matters as perceived by the youth. It taps into their self-reported worries and tries to ascertain their emotional state of mind. Section 7 of the report highlights the youth's perception of livelihood and employment opportunities in India, and the challenges they face while finding a job. It also seeks to understand the potential role of the government in helping the youngsters meet their expectations.

One main feature of this Report is that, wherever possible, it takes the reader back in time to the earlier reports by Lokniti-CSDS, undertaken on the same issues and thus, presents the findings of the latest study in a temporal context. This will help the readers to make out for themselves how much continuity and how much change we can locate in the attitudes and way of thinking of India's youth. We hope that these findings will be of larger public interest and in particular will be used by academics, studying the patterns of behaviour among the youth and also by policy makers.

Social Ties: Kinship, Friendship, and Society

Section 2



Revellers take part in a re-enactment of the traditional Spanish festival of “La Tomatina”, during which participants throw tomatoes at each other, to mark Friendship’s Day in Hyderabad, August 7, 2011. REUTERS/Krishnendu Halder

Social Ties: Kinship, Friendship, and Society

Introduction

Humans are connected with social networks and these connections, with different social actors, starting from their own families, friends and society at large, shapes their social development. This social development is continuous in nature which starts from as early as childhood, passes through adulthood and continues till the later stages in life. The social structure, norms and values change within generations and it is believed that, with the entry of new technologies and modernization, the social ties have started weakening. Some of the studies in Western democratic societies indicate significant changes in the social and personal ties and provide several reasons for these changes and their effects on the society.¹ Amongst the many reasons, decline in marriages, higher divorce rates, rise in single-person households and online sociality are a few underlying reasons (ibid). Contrary to this argument, there are some other studies which indicate the positive effects of modern technologies on social ties.² In this section, we try to explore the social ties of Indian youth with their family, friends and society. The youth were asked to assess their bond with their friends, family, and place of residence, state and country at large. They were asked whether their affinity with these have strengthened or weakened compared to some years ago. This section also assesses the considerations of youth while making friends.

Living arrangements of the youth

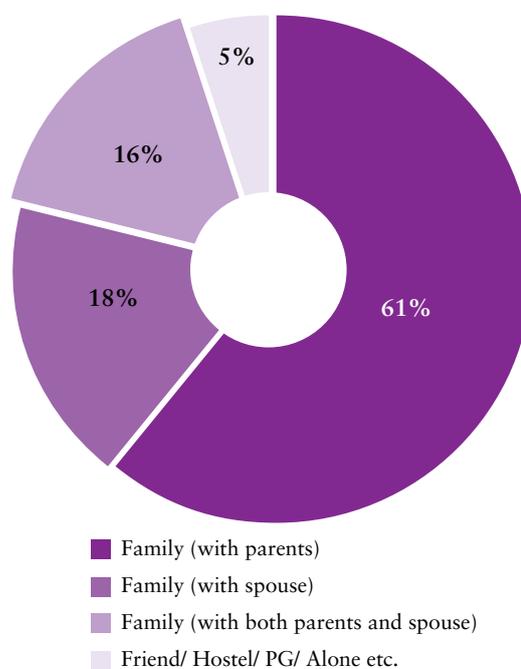
In India, traditionally, joint living arrangement is the most common practice in which a couple lives

1 Chambers, D. (2006). *New social ties*. McMillan; Hutter, M. (1970). Transformation of identity, social mobility and kinship solidarity. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 133-137.

2 Al-Haj, M. (1995). Kinship and modernization in developing societies: The emergence of instrumentalized kinship. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 311-328; Ling, R. (2010). *New tech, new ties: How mobile communication is reshaping social cohesion*. MIT press.

with their unmarried as well as married children and their families. But the time-series data from various rounds of studies conducted by the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) indicate the emerging trends of changing family structures and a shift from joint families to nuclear families; and in some cases, single-person households. In this study, we try to understand the living arrangements of the Indian youth as well. It is found that close to three-fifths (61%) of the youth are living with their parents and another 16 percent are living with their parents along with their spouse. There were 18 percent of the youth who said that they live with their spouse only. Around five percent of the youth said that they live away from their families and stay alone in a PG facility or a hostel (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Majority of the youth stay with their parents



Note: All figures in percent.

When we disaggregated the pattern of living arrangements of Indian youth by different age

groups, it was found that the probability of staying with parents goes down as the age of the person increases. Factors such as marriage and employment could be contributing to this change as well. It was found that nine out of ten youth in the age group of 15-17 years stay with their families. On the contrary, a quarter of the youth in the age group of 30-34 years stay with their parents; while, three in ten of them stay with their parents along with their spouse. Overall, two-fifths (39%) of the older youth (30-34 years old) stay with their spouse. In any case, what is noteworthy is that, not many amongst the youth live alone or with their friends (Figure 2.2).

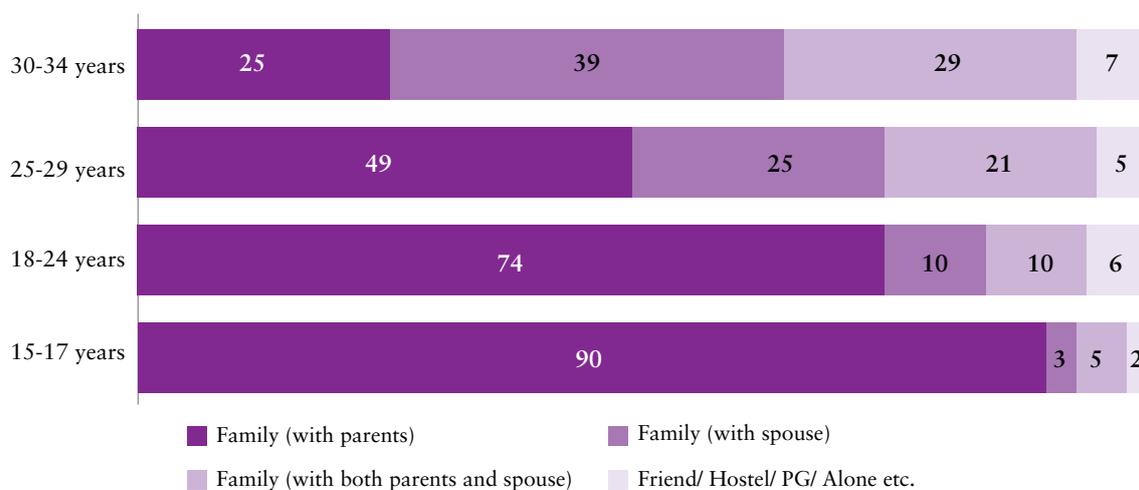
As underlined earlier, marriage is one of the reasons for the changing living arrangements of the youth. When we look at the living arrangements of the married and unmarried youth, we find that the unmarried youth were more likely to be staying with their parents as compared to the married youth. Nine out of ten unmarried youth stay with their parents, whereas, a quarter of the married youth

stay with their parents. A third of the married youth also stated that they stay with their parents along with their spouse. However, a significant proportion (two-fifths) of the married youth stay only with their spouse (Figure 2.3).

Traditionally, women had to relocate their place of residence after marriage and it changed their living arrangement. In the study, when we tried to see the living arrangements of young men and young women, we found that close to two-thirds (65%) of the young men were staying with their parents and 16 percent were staying with their parents along with their spouse. On the contrary, a little less than three-fifths (57%) of the young women live with their parents and close to a quarter (24%) of the young women said that they live with their spouse (Figure 2.4).

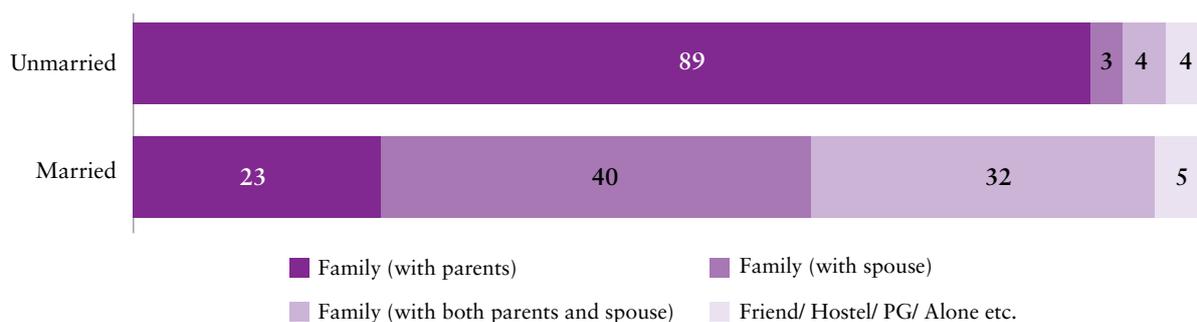
There was no notable difference in the living arrangements of the youth across localities. A more or less similar proportion of the youth were staying

Figure 2.2: Youngest cohort stay with their parents; the older ones mainly stay with their spouse



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 2.3: Two-fifths of the married youth stay only with their spouse



Note: All figures in percent.

with their parents (61-63%) and spouses (16-18%) across all four types of localities. However, one exception can be noted when we look at the proportion of the youth who stayed with their parents along with their spouse. It was found that, in big cities, this kind of living arrangement was comparatively lower (11%) as compared to the other localities (figures ranged between 16-17%). However, a larger proportion of youth in the big cities, as compared to other localities, stay with their friends, in a hostel/PG facility or any other kind of accommodations (Figure 2.5).

Ties with the family

Family is the primary institution for socialization and it plays an important role in the social network of the youth. However, there are a few theories which indicate the weakening of kinship ties mainly among the youth³, but on the other hand, some argue that with the penetration of modern technologies, the family ties have been strengthened.⁴ In this section, we try to explore youth's ties with their families.

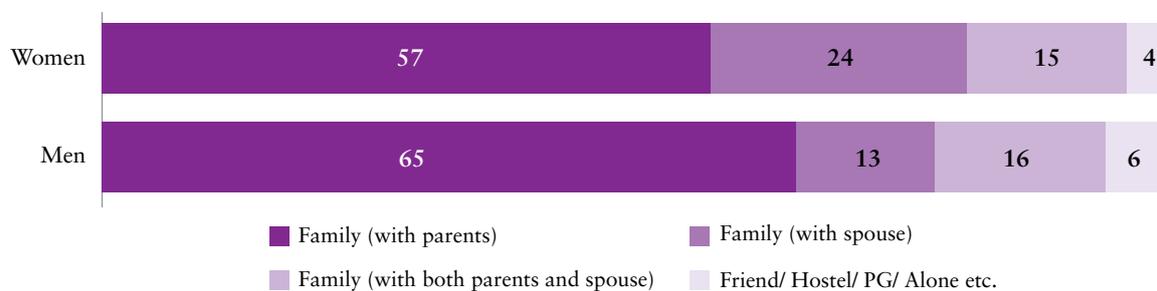
³ Hutter, M. (1970). *Op.cit.*

⁴ Al-Haj, M. (1995) and Ling, R. (2010). *Op.cit.*

They were asked to share their experiences regarding their bond with their families and whether this bond has strengthened or weakened in the last 2-3 years. A little over one-third (35%) of the youth said that their bond with their family has strengthened compared to before and almost half of the youth said that their bond with their family is the same as it was before. Overall, 13 percent of the youth said that their bond with their family has weakened; with nine percent saying that it has weakened to some extent and another four percent saying that it has weakened a lot (Figure 2.6).

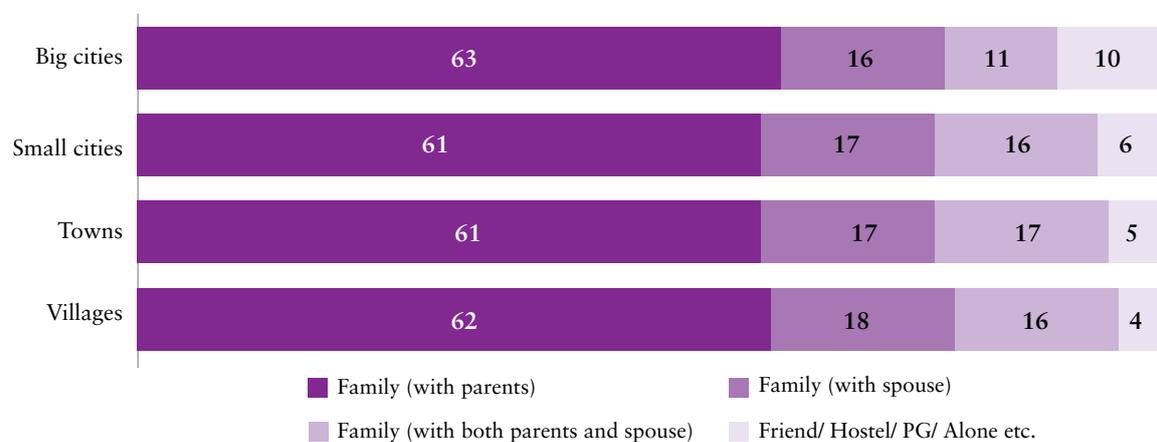
Though one notes no significant difference in the kind of bond the youth share with their family across age groups, the youngest cohort was slightly more likely to say that their bond with their family has strengthened than before as compared to the youth in the other age groups. Thirty-seven percent of the youth in the age group of 15-17 years said that their bond with their family has strengthened than before, whereas, the figures for other age groups ranged between 32-35 percent (Figure 2.7). A possible reason for this could be that the youngest

Figure 2.4: Living arrangements across gender



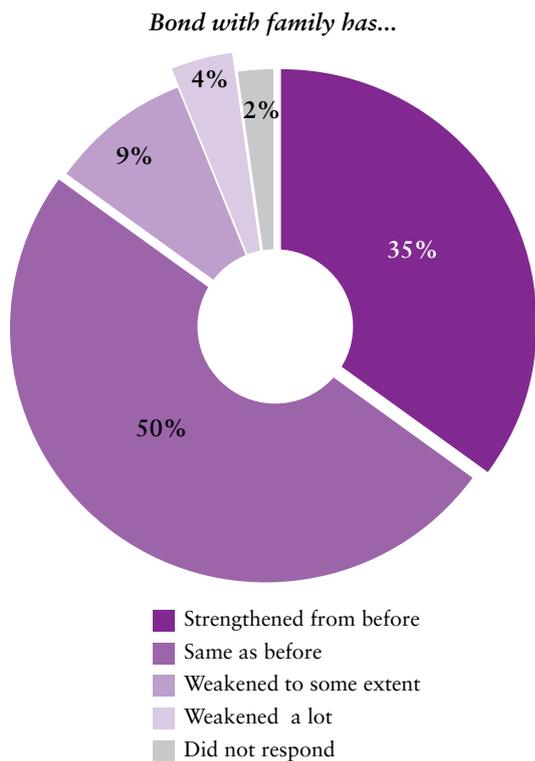
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 2.5: Similar living arrangements across localities



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 2.6: For one-third of the youth, bond with their family has strengthened



Note: All figures in percent.

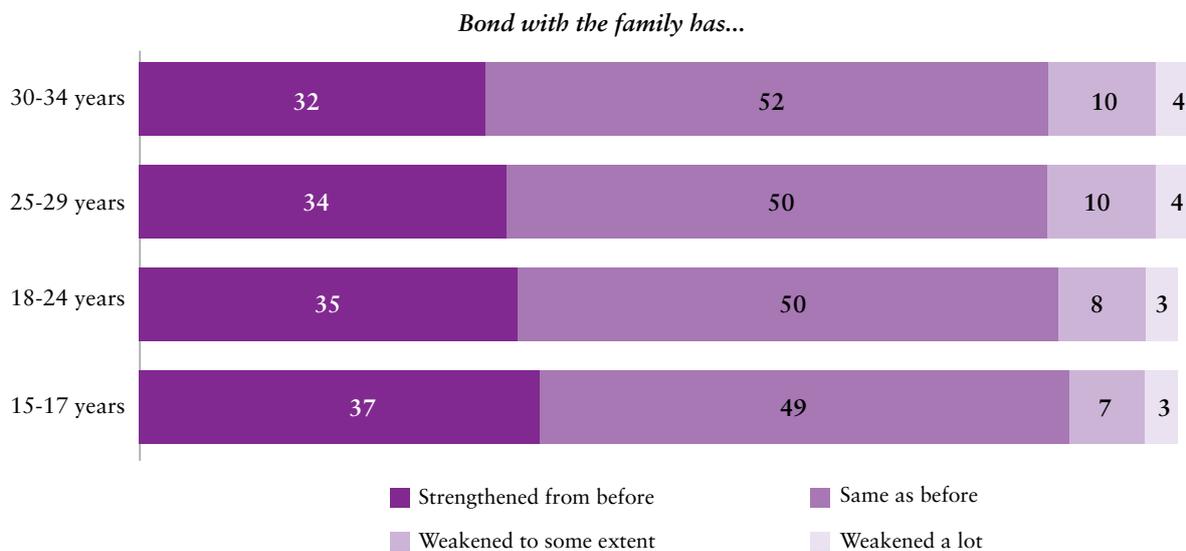
cohort is mostly unmarried and stays with their parents, whereas, the older youth stayed either with their spouse or with their parents along with their spouse. Youngest cohort of the youth are pursuing their studies whereas, the older ones are engaged in their livelihoods. It was found that those who are currently studying were more likely to say that their

bond with their family has strengthened (41%) as opposed to those who are working (32%).

When we look at the relationship of married and unmarried youth with their families, it is found that unmarried youth were more likely to say that their bond with their family has strengthened as compared to the married ones. Thirty-six percent of the unmarried youth said that their bond has strengthened against 33 percent of the married youth. The latter were comparatively more likely to say that their bond has weakened (stated by 15% of the married youth as opposed to 10% of the unmarried youth, on clubbing the categories of 'to some extent' and 'a lot') (Figure 2.8).

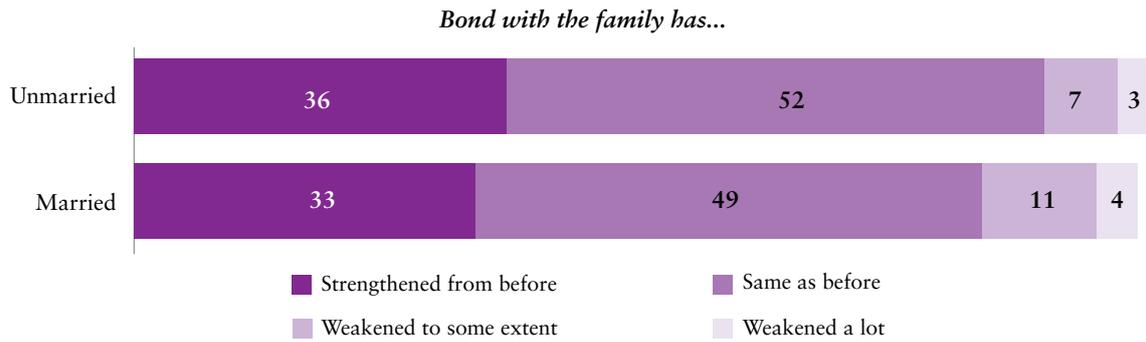
The kind of living arrangements also affects the relationships within the family. It was found that those who stay with their families (either with parents or with spouse or with both parents and spouse) were more likely to say that their bond with their family has strengthened. However, those who live with their parents are more likely to say that their bond with their family has strengthened from before as compared to those who stay with both their parents and spouse; the figures for which are 37 and 32 percent respectively. But, the major difference can be seen among the youth who stay away from their families. It was found that 30 percent of such youth said that their bond with their families has weakened (if we look at the combined figures of 'a lot' and 'to some extent' categories), whereas, only 15 percent of them said that their bond with their family has strengthened from before (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.7: Not much variation across age groups with regard to their bonds with their families



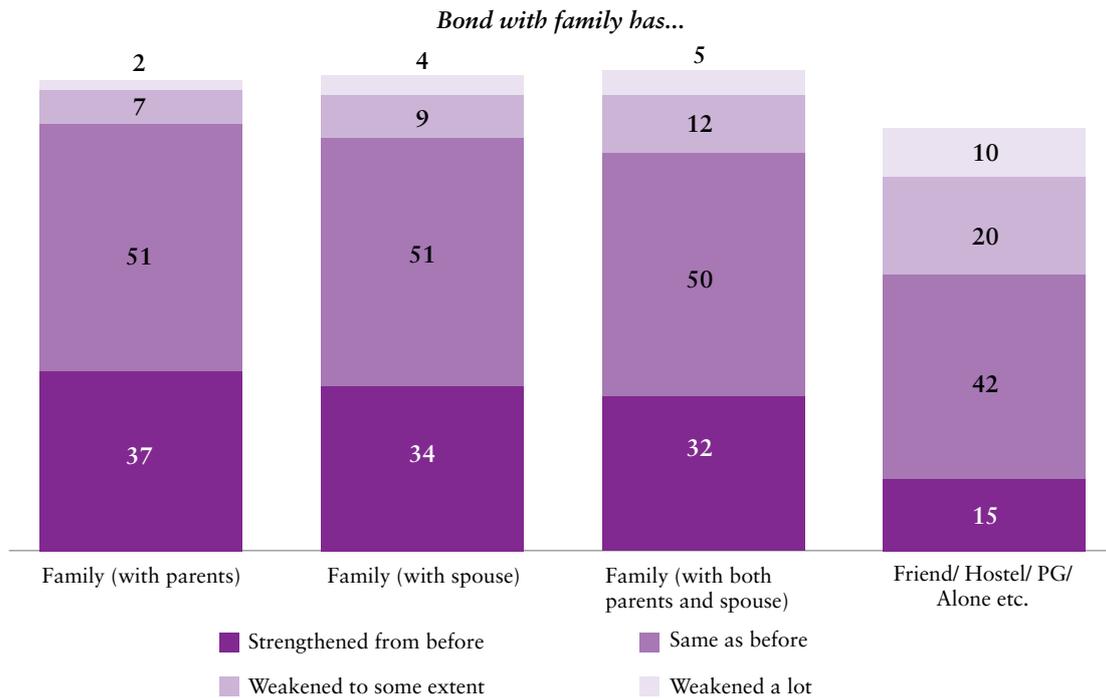
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.8: Bond with family has strengthened more among the unmarried youth



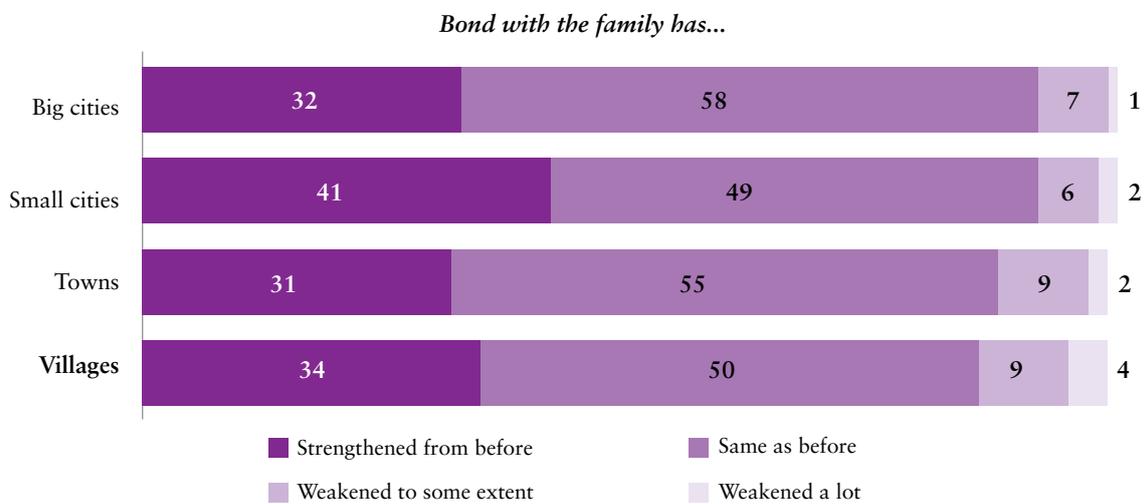
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.9: Bond with family has weakened among youth who live away from their families



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.10: Bond with family across localities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

When we look at youth's self-perception on their bond with the family across localities, it was found that close to two-fifths (41%) of the youth living in small cities said that their bond with the family has strengthened than before, whereas, in other localities, figures for those who said that their bond with their family has strengthened than before were in the range of 31 to 34 percent (Figure 2.10).

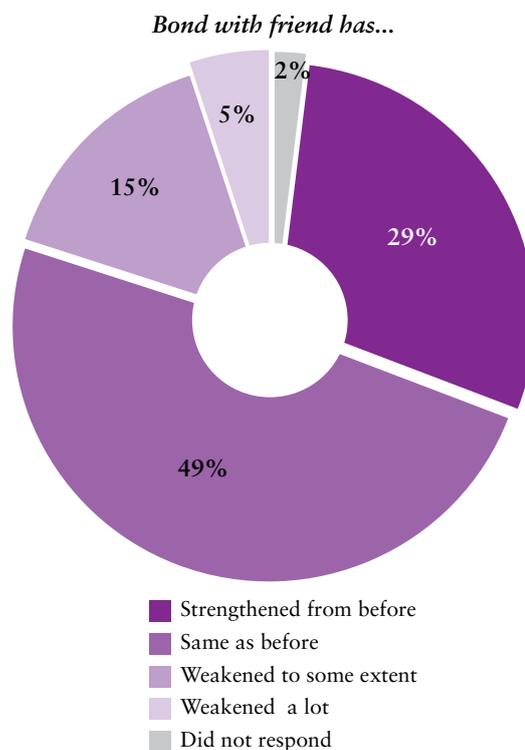
As some studies⁵ suggest that the emergence of new technologies has strengthened the kinship rather than weakened it, we also tried to test this hypothesis by looking at the relationship between usage of social media and youth's bond with their family. In the present study, we too found that the youth who frequently use social media were more likely to state that their relationship with their family has strengthened than before as compared to the ones who never used social media. This was also true for those having phones, mainly a smartphone (Figure 2.11).

Ties with friends

Friends are another important and immediate social group for the youth after their family. Friendships play a key role in youth's lives. In this section, we try to explore whether the bond between youth and their friends has strengthened or weakened in the past 2-3 years. We found that close to three in ten (29%) youngsters said that their relationship with their friends has strengthened as compared to the

past while another half said that the nature of their bond with their friends has not changed and is the same as before. However, one-fifth (20%) of the youth also stated that their bond with their friends has weakened compared to before; 15 percent said it has weakened to some extent and five percent said it has weakened to a great extent (Figure 2.12).

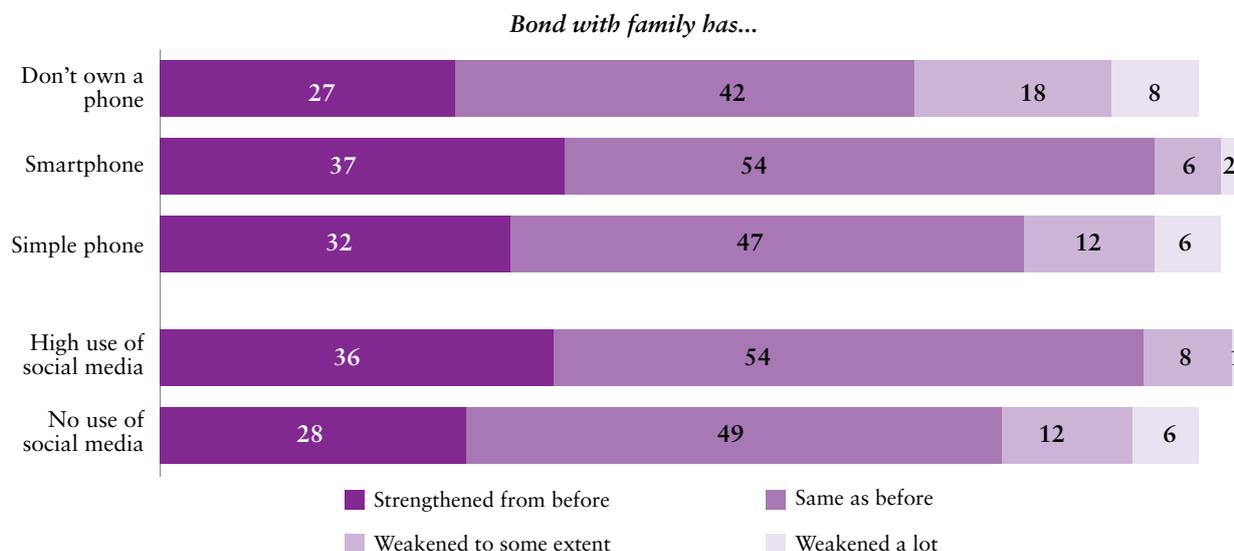
Figure 2.12: Proportion of youth's bond with their friends



Note: All figures in percent.

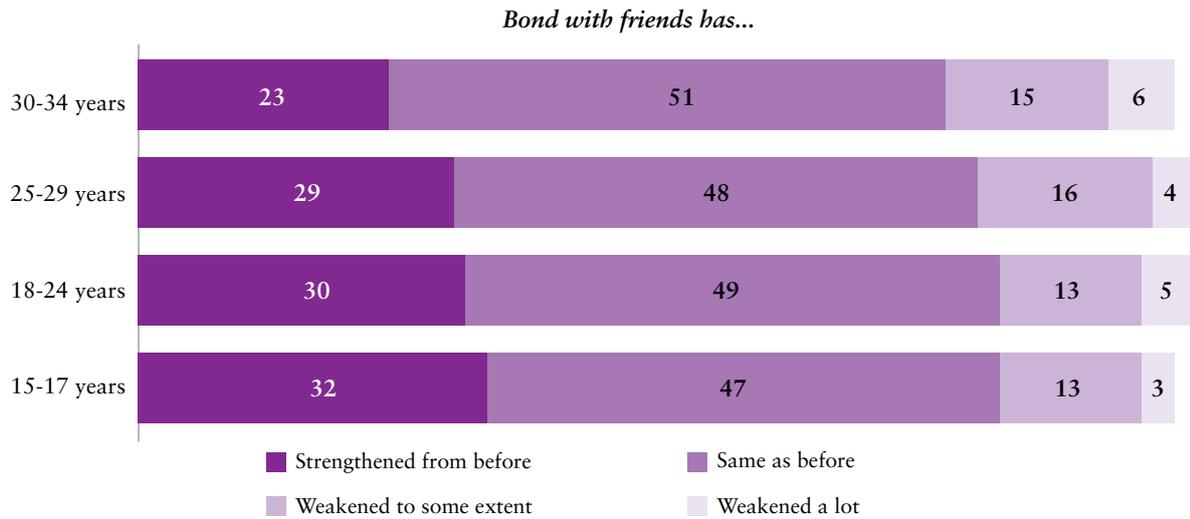
5 Al-Haj, M. (1995) and Ling, R. (2010) *op.cit.*

Figure 2.11: Bond with family strengthens with the usage of social media and smartphones



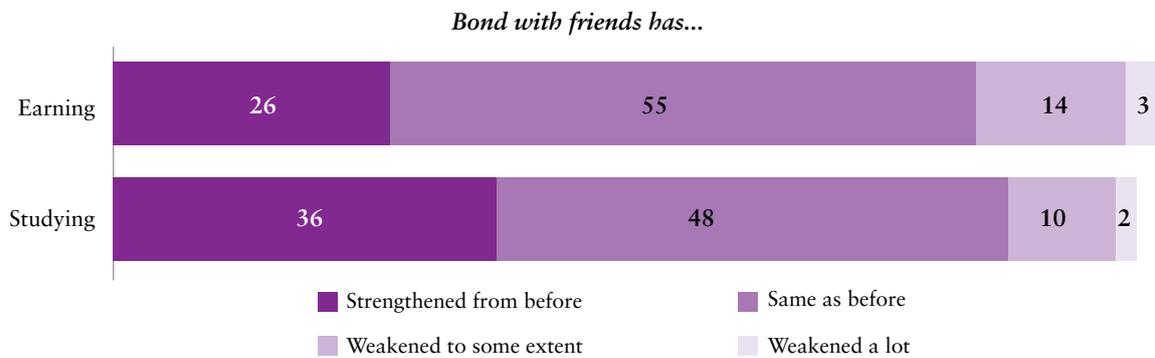
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.13: Bond with friends have strengthened the most for the youngest cohort



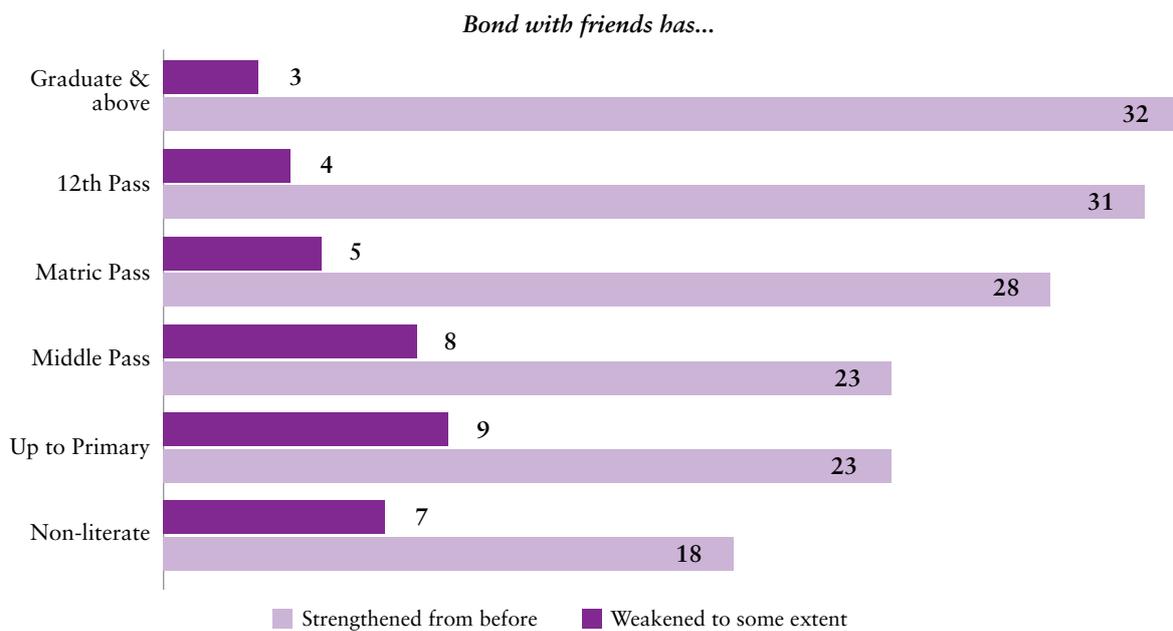
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.14: Students' relationship with their friends has strengthened from before



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.15: Bond with friends has strengthened more among the youth having higher educational attainment



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Age of the youth indicates a trend when we look at the figures of those who said that their bond with their friends has strengthened as compared to the past. The younger ones were more likely to say that their bond with their friends has strengthened than their older counterparts. Close to one-third (32%) of the youth in the age category of 15-17 years said that their bond with their friends has strengthened, whereas, the proportion declines to one-fourth (23%) among the youth in the age group of 30-34 years. This could be due to the fact that a larger proportion of the older youth is married and employed and usually gets busy with their families and jobs with less time for their friends (Figure 2.13).

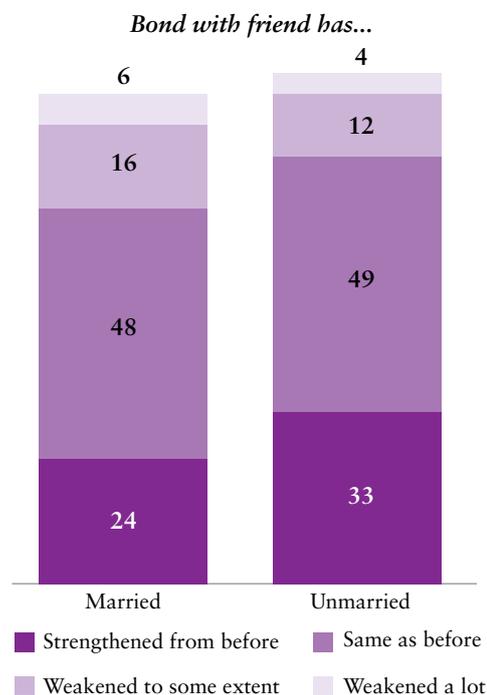
When we look at the occupational engagement of the youth and their opinion about their bond with their friends, it was found that the youth who said that they are presently studying, a little over one-third (36%) of them said that their bond with their friends has strengthened as compared to the past. On the other hand, amongst those who said that they are earning, a little over one-fourth (26%) said that their bond with their friends has become stronger compared to the past (Figure 2.14).

Though, one makes friends from different circles (neighborhood, place of work or schools and colleges), youth shares a special bond with their friends from schools and colleges as they spend most of their time with them. It was found that the youth with higher education were more likely to say that their bond with their friends has strengthened than before as compared to those who have no or less educational attainment. Eighteen percent of the youth who have not availed any education said that their bond with their friends has strengthened as compared to the past 2-3 years, whereas, the figure goes up to one-third among the highly educated youth (31% among 12th pass and 32% among graduated youth). A possible reason for this could be that higher educational attainment also signifies spending more years in educational institutions resulting in spending more time with friends (Figure 2.15).

It was also found that as compared to the married youth, the unmarried youth were more likely to say that their bond with friends has strengthened than before. One-third of the unmarried youth against a quarter of married youth said that their bond with their friends has strengthened in the past 2-3 years. A possible reason for this could be that the married youth are preoccupied with other responsibilities

like managing family and their jobs etc. and are not able to take out time for their friends compared to the unmarried youth (Figure 2.16).

Figure 2.16: A third of the unmarried youth have strengthened relations with their friends than before



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

The kind of bond youth shares with their friends is not very different across localities; but the youth living in small cities were more likely to say that their bond with their friends has strengthened than before as compared to the youth living in other localities; a little over one-third of the youth in small cities said that their bond with their friends has strengthened than before, whereas, the figures for youth living in villages, towns and big cities were 29, 26 and 27 percent respectively. In towns and big cities, youth were more likely to say that there was no change in the kind of bond they share with their friends, 56 and 52 percent respectively said that they have the same bond with their friends as before (Figure 2.17).

Social media exposure and usage seems to make a substantial impact on the strengthening and weakening of their bond with their friends. Youth with higher social media usage were more likely to say that their bond with their friends have strengthened than in the past as compared to the ones with no social media usage. A little over one-third (35%) of the youth with a high social media usage said that their bond has strengthened from

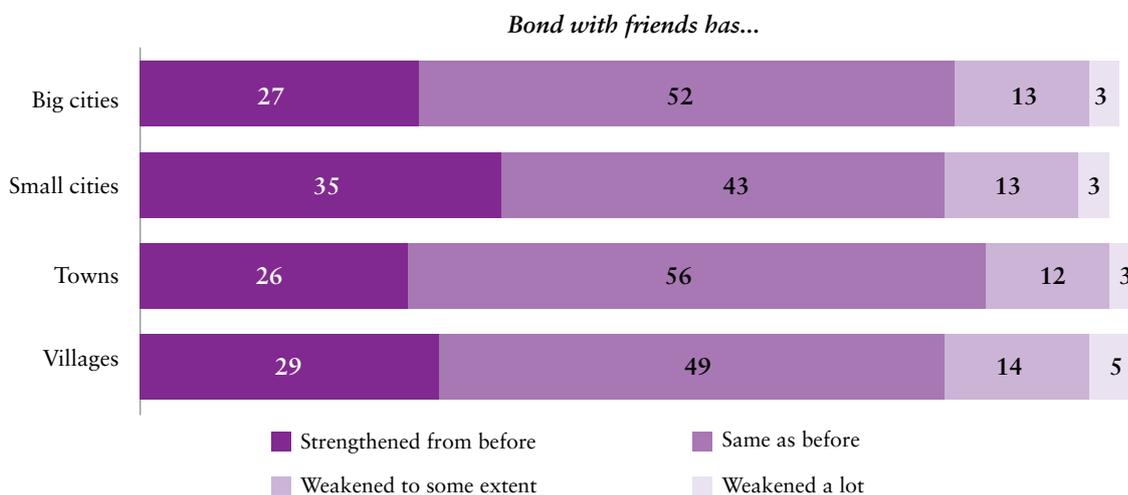
before, whereas, 18 percent of the youth who do not use any social media platform said that their bond has strengthened with their friends. Smartphones help people to access social media platforms along with verbal communication and it was found that those who have smartphones were more likely to say that their bond with their friends have strengthened from before (Figure 2.18).

Friendship choices of the youth

Friendships play a key role in many areas of a youngster's life. In order to tap into how the young Indians choose their friends, a series of questions were asked to them about some of the factors which one considers while choosing his/her friends such as - one's religion, caste, economic status, gender, their ability to speak in English, or their language

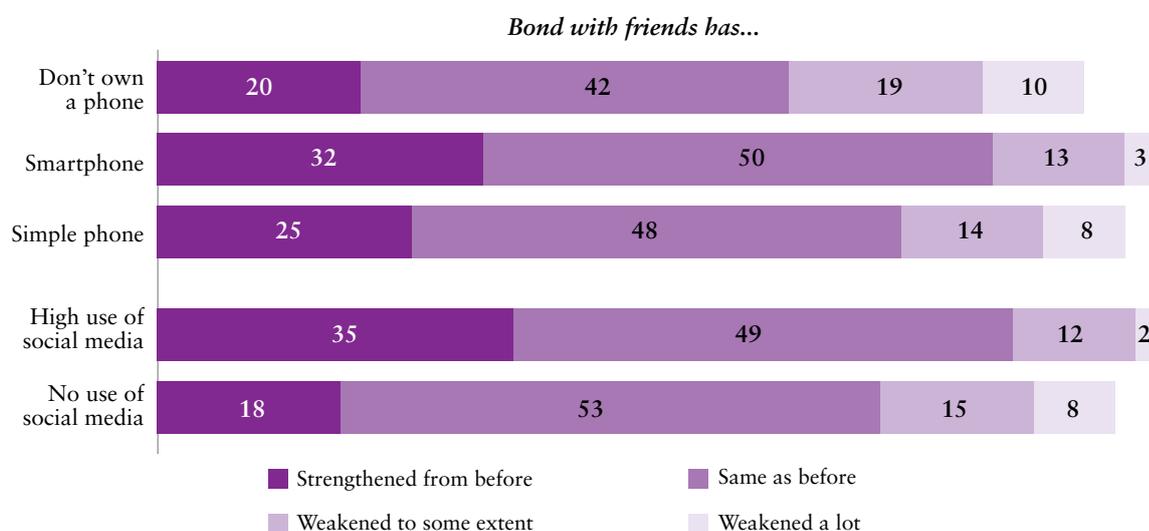
and their thinking/opinion. Notably, people's thinking/opinion emerged as the most important consideration for the youth while choosing their friends; close to half (48%) of the youth said that they pay attention to one's thinking/opinion while making friends (Figure 2.19). Nonetheless, the language and the gender of their friends was also important to some extent as close to three in ten (28% each) said that they pay attention to whether they speak their language and their gender. Only about one-sixth mentioned one's religion, caste, economic status and their ability to speak in English as an important criterion while choosing friends. A greater preference for one's thinking/opinion over religion, caste or economic status while making friends is a great indicator of social cohesion among Indian youth. Here it must be noted that the youth

Figure 2.17: Bond with friends across localities



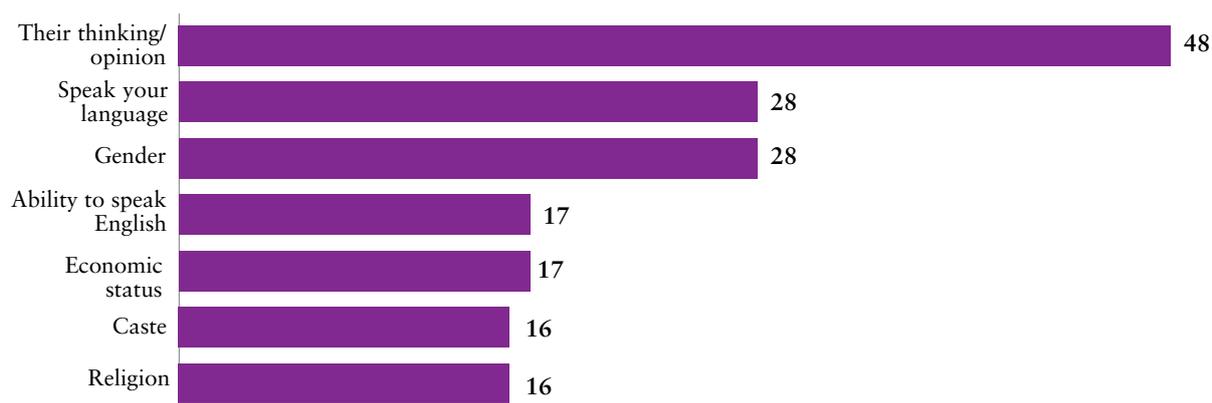
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.18: Social media and smartphone usage seems to strengthen bond with friends



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 2.19: People’s opinions identified as the biggest quality that the youth pays attention to while choosing friends



Note: All figures in percent.

were not asked to rank these qualities; instead, they were separately asked about each attribute and were simply asked whether or not they pay attention to it while making friends. The pattern remained more or less similar for youth across all age groups with people’s thinking emerging as the biggest factor that the youth consider while making friends. However, a greater proportion of the young in the age group of 18-24 years (50%) said that one’s thinking was an important factor (Table 2.1).

An analysis by educational attainment shows that education greatly impacts the perceptions of the youth and the preferences they hold while making

friends. In making friends, a larger percentage of the less-educated youth had a greater inclination towards religion, caste, economic status, gender and linguistic bias. These preferences see a decline as the education level of the youth seems to increase. The more-educated youth gave less preference to the above mentioned criterion and gave greater importance to thinking and opinion while choosing friends. Though, youth with both high education and those who have attained low or no education gave the most consideration to thinking and opinion while choosing friends but the proportion was much higher for the graduate and above (51%) and 12th pass (50%) youth (Table 2.2).

Table 2.1: One’s thinking was the top consideration of the youth while choosing friends across age groups

	While making friends, paying attention to their..						
	Religion	Caste	Economic status	Ability to speak in English	Gender	Speak your language	Their thinking/opinion
15-17 years	14	13	13	16	30	32	46
18-24 years	17	16	18	17	27	28	50
25-29 years	14	18	17	17	27	26	46
30-34 years	16	17	16	17	28	28	47

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 2.2: Impact of education on the considerations of the youth while choosing friends

	While making friends, paying attention to their..						
	Religion	Caste	Economic status	Ability to speak in English	Gender	Speak your language	Their thinking/opinion
Non- Literate	21	25	23	18	33	41	42
Up to Primary	24	24	26	21	34	32	41
Middle Pass	20	20	21	22	32	32	45
Matric Pass	19	21	18	18	34	33	43
12th Pass	14	13	15	18	25	28	50
Graduate and above	12	13	13	15	22	22	51

Note: All figures in percent.

Disaggregating responses on this question by gender, one notes that, while a greater proportion of men looks at one's religion, caste, economic status and ability to speak English or their language, a greater percentage of women compared to men prioritized gender and one's thinking and opinion. The two places where there is a stark difference amongst the two is the economic status where 20 percent of the young men said that class of a person is important; this figure drops to 14 percent for young women. On the question of gender, 31 percent of women said that they take gender into consideration while making friends compared to 25 percent of young men (Figure 2.20).

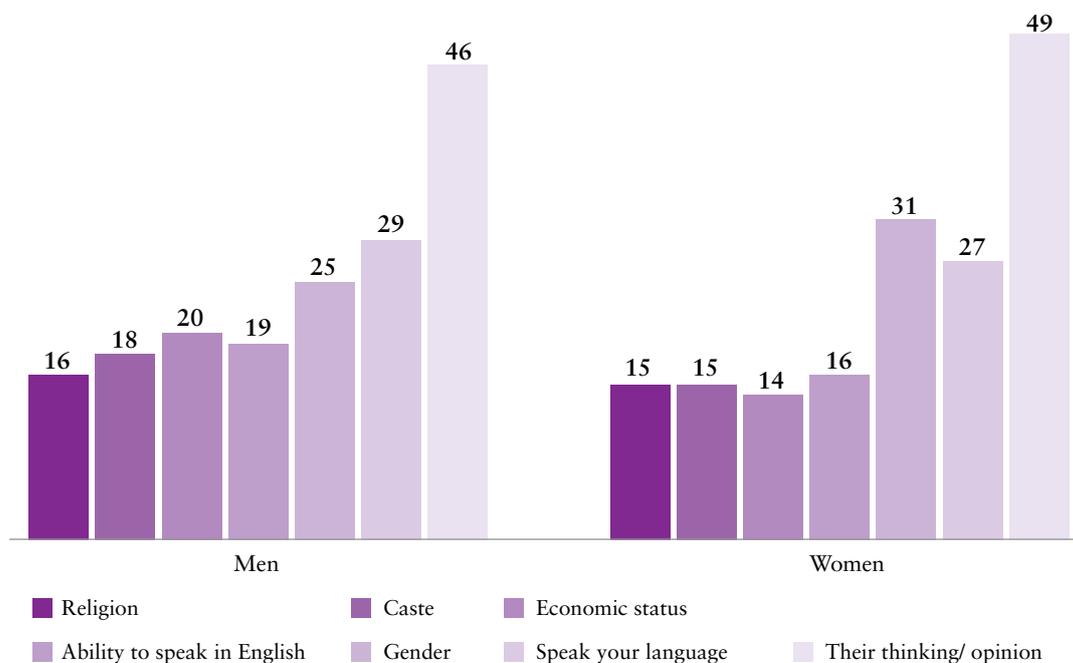
A substantial difference can be noticed in how youngsters choose their friends and their preferences

when compared to the localities they live in. Here too, a majority of the youth across localities consider one's thinking to be an important consideration while choosing friends. The data shows that the youth in villages and towns pay much more attention to the religion, caste, economic status, their ability to speak in English or their language and gender while making friends compared to the youth living in small and big cities (Table 2.3).

Between family, friends and career

One of the many challenges faced by the young people today is balancing family, friends and career. Somewhere along the way, all of us are required to prioritize things and people in our lives. We asked the youth to rank three things- fulfilling friendship

Figure 2.20: Men focus more on the caste, economic status and their ability to speak in English while making friends compared to the women



Note: All figures in percent.

Table 2.3 Youth in villages and towns pay more attention to religion, caste, economic status and gender while making friends

	While making friends, paying attention to their..						
	Religion	Caste	Economic status	Ability to speak in English	Gender	Speak your language	Their thinking/opinion
Villages	16	17	17	18	29	30	50
Towns	20	21	23	19	32	32	45
Small cities	7	9	9	8	15	17	39
Big cities	8	9	9	10	20	19	45

Note: All figures in percent.

at all costs, maintaining good relationships with family and focusing on one's career regardless of friendship and family, based on how important each of it was for them. They were asked to rank each in order of their preference and what they consider the most important, second most important and least important of all the three things.

For about half of the respondents (45%), maintaining good relations with family was the top most priority. Almost an equal proportion stated friendship (28%) and career (27%) (Figure 2.21). Age made no significant difference. Youth across age groups placed maintaining good relations with their family as their biggest priority compared to their friendships and careers. Both men and women show greater priority towards family over friends and career, but, preference for family was greater among young women than men (47% vs 43%). On

the other hand, a greater proportion of young men prioritized their friends over family and career as compared to young women (30% vs 26%). More or less a similar proportion of both men and women gave priority to their career over their friends and family (Figure 2.22).

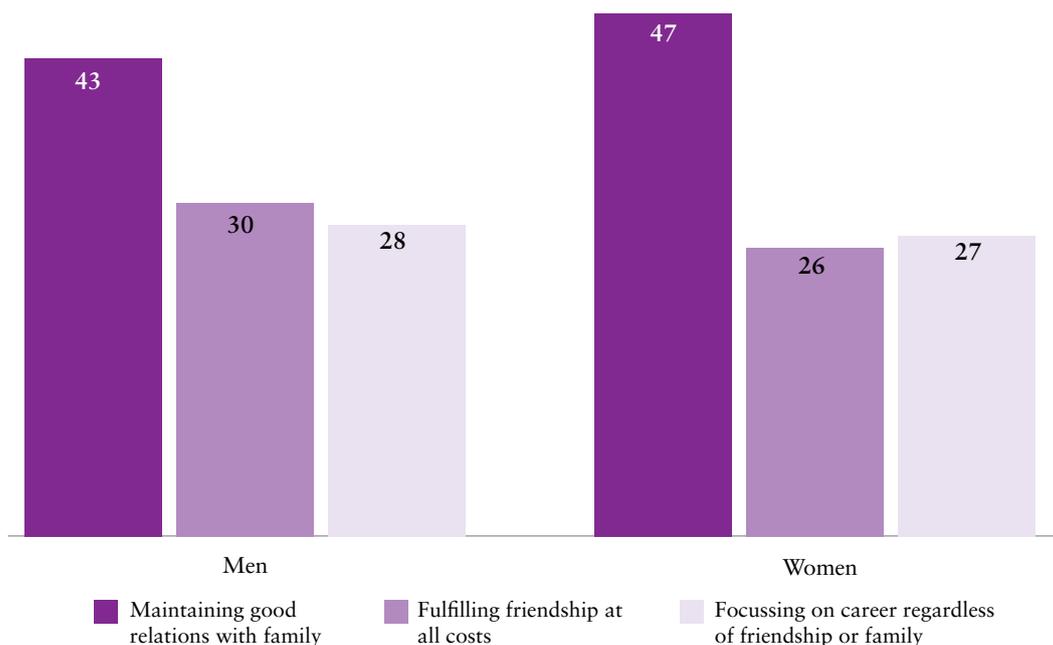
Maintaining good relations with family was the top most priority for youth across localities, but, the youth in big cities were much more likely to place maintaining good relations with family members at rank one, as their topmost priority (53%). The corresponding figures for small cities was 48 percent, for towns 42 percent and for villages 43 percent. Surprisingly, only 23 percent of the youth in big cities gave priority to their career which was the least when compared to other localities. Fulfilling friendship at all costs was more important for the youth living in towns (33%) followed by the youth

Figure 2.21: Youth prioritize family over friends and career



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 2.22: Men give more importance to their friendships than women while women prioritize their family more than men do



Note: All figures in percent.

living in villages (27%) as compared to the youth living in other localities (Figure 2.23).

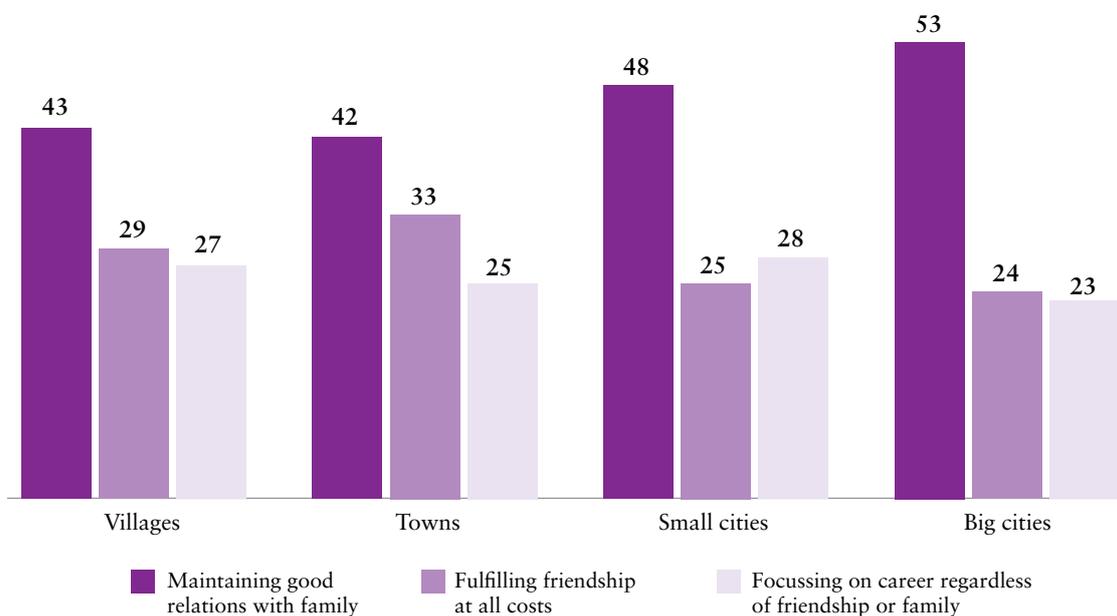
Spatial Affinity: Local, state and nation

There is a sense of belonging and common identity that one has with their place of residence, state and country on which we report in this section. Three questions were asked to the youth regarding their affinity with their village/ town/ city, state and country and whether their affinity with these places has increased or decreased in the last 2-3 years. The data suggests that most youngsters do not feel

any significant change as far as their affinity with these places is concerned- the majority felt that their affinity with all these three places has remained the same (villages, town and city – 46%, state – 49% and country – 48%). Close to one in three stated that their affinity with all the three places has increased and about one in ten stated that their affinity with all the three places has decreased (Figure 2.24).

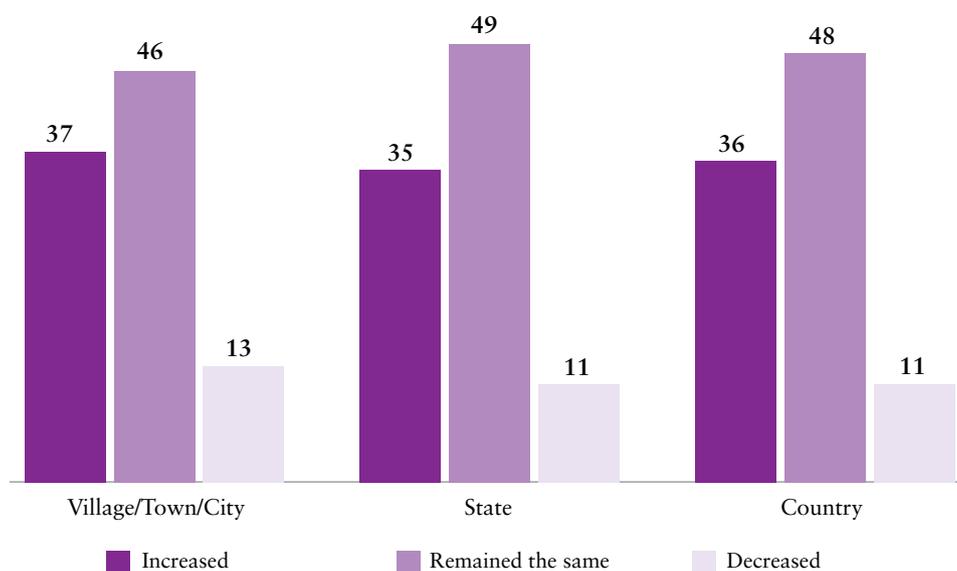
On delving deeper into the data, one notes that the youth across all the age groups, barring youth in the age bracket of 30-34 years, witnessed the greatest increase in their affinity with their village, town or city which is the location they are in the

Figure 2.23: Ranking of priorities across localities



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 2.24: Youngsters affinity with their locality, state and country



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

closest proximity with. Youth in the age group of 30-34 years witnessed a more or less similar increase in their affinity with their village/town/city, state and country (Figure 2.25).

Taking gender as a parameter, one notes that women exhibit a greater increase in their affinity with their locality, state and nation compared to men. Additionally, a greater proportion of young men saw an increase in their affinity with their village/town/city, whereas, for women, it a more

or less an equal increase across localities, state and nation (Table 2.4).

Education can be understood as an important factor in determining the affinity of an individual with their village/town/city, state and country as it shapes the thought process, fosters various values and creates a sense of common identity that can determine an individual's affinity to various institutions in the society like one's country and state. One notes that the college and above educated

Figure 2.25: Most of the youngsters witnessed greatest increased in their affinity with their village/town/city



Note: All figures in percent.

Table 2.4: Young women saw a greater increase in their affinity with their locality, state and nation compared to men

	Affinity with their...					
	Village/ Town/ City		State		Country	
	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased
Men	37	15	33	14	34	14
Women	38	10	37	8	38	9

Note: All figures are in percent. The rest of the respondents said that their affinity 'remained the same' or gave no response.

Table 2.5: The better educated displayed an increased affinity with their locality, state and nation

	Affinity with their...					
	Village/ Town/ City		State		Country	
	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased
Non- Literate	32	19	36	13	34	9
Up to Primary	33	16	35	10	37	12
Middle Pass	37	13	33	16	34	14
Matric Pass	35	14	32	14	33	13
12th Pass	36	12	33	12	34	12
Graduate and above	40	11	37	10	38	10

Note: All figures are in percent. The rest of the respondents said that their affinity 'remained the same' or gave no response.

youth were more likely to state that their affinity with their village/town/city, state and country has increased in the last 2-3 years, compared to the less educated youth (Table 2.5).

Those residing in small cities were the most likely to say that their affinity with their city (41%), state (38%) and country (40%) has increased, and those in towns were the least likely to report an increase in affinity with their town (28%), state (26%) and country (28%) (Table 2.6).

There is a substantial difference in the affinity of the youth with different localities – based on the caste community of the youth. The study finds that, Muslim youth and those belonging to other religious minorities stated the least increase in their affinity with their village/town/city, state and country. On the other hand, the youth from Hindu OBC followed by Hindu Adivasi were the most likely to state that their affinity has increased (Table 2.7).

Conclusion

Based on the findings, one notes that the youngsters are reasonably well integrated with the larger society and their bond with their family and friends has either strengthened or remained the same since the last two to three years. Only a small proportion of the youth said that their bond has weakened.

This strengthening bond was greater with family than friends. Due to the global pandemic, this was probably the first time in many years that parents, kids and even other family members spent a lot of time together under one roof for an extended period. This probably could have deepened the relationship with one's family. Importance of one's family is also highlighted by the fact that, when youth were asked to rank family, friends and career, for about half the respondents, maintaining good relations with family ranked number one. Only about one in four ranked friendship and career at number one.

With regards to friendship, people's thinking/opinion emerged as the most important consideration for youth while choosing their friends and factors like caste, religion and economic status took a back seat when it came to choosing friends.

On the question of one's spatial affinity, one notes that only a small fraction of youth said that their affinity with their village/town/city, state and country has decreased in the last two to three years. Close to half saw no significant change and about one in three stated that their affinity with all the three places has increased. Overall, the section highlights youth to be having a stronger bond with their family and this bond has only strengthened with time.

Table 2.6: Youth in small cities witnessed greatest increase in their closeness with their city, state and country

	Affinity with their...					
	Village/ Town/ City		State		Country	
	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased
Village	39	13	37	12	36	12
Town	28	14	26	15	28	15
Small cities	41	9	38	7	40	7
Big cities	35	7	34	7	35	8

Note: All figures are in percent. The rest of the respondents said that their affinity 'remained same' or gave a no response.

Table 2.7: Spatial affinity across caste communities

	Affinity with their...					
	Village/ Town/ City		State		Country	
	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased	Increased	Decreased
Hindu Upper Caste	37	14	34	11	36	13
Hindu OBC	47	9	45	9	48	9
Hindu Dalit	34	10	32	12	33	10
Hindu Adivasi	40	12	40	8	38	7
Muslims	26	18	21	16	21	15
Other Minorities	30	15	29	12	24	16

Note: All figures are in percent. The rest of the respondents said that their affinity 'remained same' or gave a no response.

Religious Practices and Attitudes of Youth

Section 3



Suresh Shankar Hingole, 20, who runs a mobile temple, poses along a roadside in Mumbai March 11, 2014. REUTERS/Danish Siddiqui

Religious Practices and Attitudes of Youth

Introduction

Along with caste and language, religion has always been a crucial explanatory variable for making sense of Indian society and politics. However, in the last decade or so, especially after a turn towards majoritarianism in the country's politics since 2014, the salience of religion in understanding societal and political happenings has only grown stronger and to a large extent overshadowed other identities. It could be argued that religion has re-emerged as a major fault line in India in the past couple of years and this has manifested itself not just in the political arena through governmental priorities and religious identity-guided vote consolidations during elections, but also in the socio-cultural and economic spheres via an assertion of majoritarian identity and religious practices by people, increasing communal animosity, strained relationships, hurt sentiments, economic marginalisation of minorities and a proliferation of violent attacks on them.

In this overall context of a definite shift towards the importance accorded to religion in politics and public affairs, and a clearly perceptible deepening of the religious divide in the country, especially the one between Hindus and Muslims, the 'Youth Survey' asked young Indians certain specific questions that sought to understand the role religion played in their

lives, the extent of their tolerance on matters that involved religion, their level of optimism regarding religious harmony, and their religion-related experiences of discrimination. This section shares some of the key findings that emerge from these survey queries.

Religious practices

One indicator of the importance accorded to religion by young Indians would be the observance or practice of certain religious activities by them. The survey hence asked young respondents five questions related to some of the usual religious activities and pursuits that people engage in - how often they pray, observe fasts for religious reasons, visit their place of worship, watch religion-related programmes on television, and read a religious book. The responses to these questions point towards a Youth that is quite religious.

It was found that merely one out of ten youngsters in India today never pray at all, a similar proportion never visits the place of worship of their religion, only two out of ten don't ever observe fasts for religious purposes and around four out of ten never read a religious text or watch religious content on TV (Table 3.1). This means that an overwhelming or large majority of young Indians are engaged in

Table 3.1: Regularity with which youth in India are doing certain religious activities, 2021

	Regularly	Sometimes	Only on festivals	Never	No response
Praying	36	34	18	9	4
Fasting	12	31	34	19	5
Visiting their place of worship	17	39	29	11	4
Watching religious shows on TV	9	30	20	35	6
Reading religious books	11	29	19	35	6

Note: All figures in percent.

important religious practices, even if they might not be doing them regularly but only at times or occasionally.

More importantly, their practice of doing most of these activities has decreased only slightly during the last five years. Whereas 92 percent of youth were found to pray (even if occasionally) in the 2016 youth survey conducted by Lokniti, the figure in the latest round has come down only marginally to 88 percent (Figure 3.1). Similarly the practice of fasting has remained nearly as prevalent among youngsters as it was earlier, declining only by a point from 78 percent to 77. Visiting one’s place of worship has also come down only somewhat from 91 to 85 percent and the viewing of religious shows on TV is now done by 59 percent of young Indians as opposed to 62 percent five years ago. The practice to have registered an increase is that of reading a religious text – it was being done by a little over half (52%) of young Indians in 2016 and is now being done by nearly three-fifths (59%) of them.

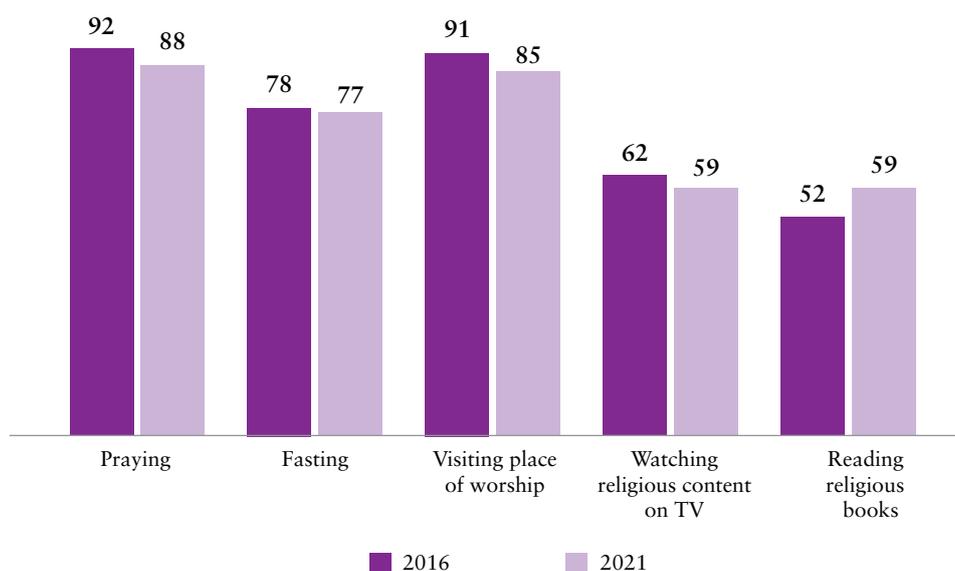
Barring a few exceptions, the majority of youth across all religions were found to be engaged in all these religious activities. The differences that existed were only with respect to the regularity with which they are being done. In fact, on looking at the frequency with which young Indians belonging to different religions are performing these activities, we noticed some unique patterns that are worth reporting.

Praying

With regard to the activity of praying, we find that of all religions, those following Christianity are most likely to engage in it on a regular basis. Over half (53%) of young Christian respondents reported praying ‘regularly’ and 21 percent said they do so at times (Figure 3.2). Muslim youth came next with 45 percent reporting that they offer *namaaz* regularly and 27 percent saying they do it sometimes. As far Hindu and Sikh youth are concerned, only about a third of them reported praying regularly. While half the Sikh youth said they pray sometimes, only a third of Hindu youth reported doing it some of the times.

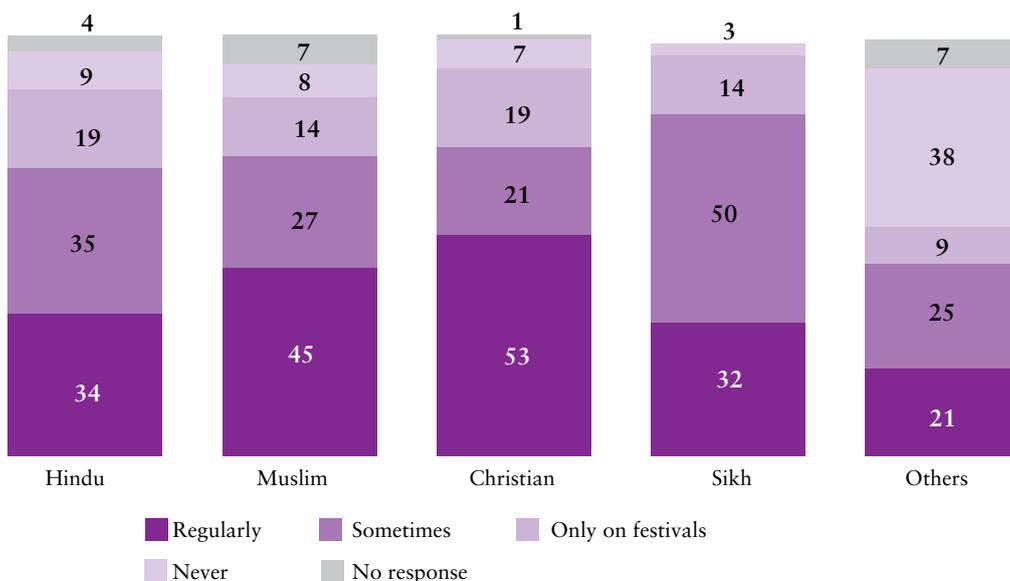
We must add here that we are not in a position to report the percentages of Buddhist youth (a small but significant religious minority in India) due to an inadequate sample size of less than 100. They have been clubbed with Jains and others as part of the ‘Others’ category in Figure 3.2 and other Figures in this section. What we can reveal however is that over four-fifths of Buddhists in our sample were Dalit Buddhists mostly residing in Maharashtra and that most of them said that they never prayed. This is in fact true for all religious activities being discussed in this section - the majority of the few Buddhist respondents in our survey also reported that they don’t fast, visit a monastery, watch religious programmes on TV or read a religious book.

Figure 3.1: Not much change in observance of certain religious practices by Indian youth since 2016



Note: All figures in percent; they include percentage of rare/occasional practice.
Source: Youth Surveys by Lokniti-CSDS in 2016 and 2021.

Figure 3.2: Christian and Muslim youth are most likely to pray frequently



Note: All figures in percent. The category of ‘Others’ includes Buddhists, Jains, other smaller religious communities and those who said they do not follow any religion.

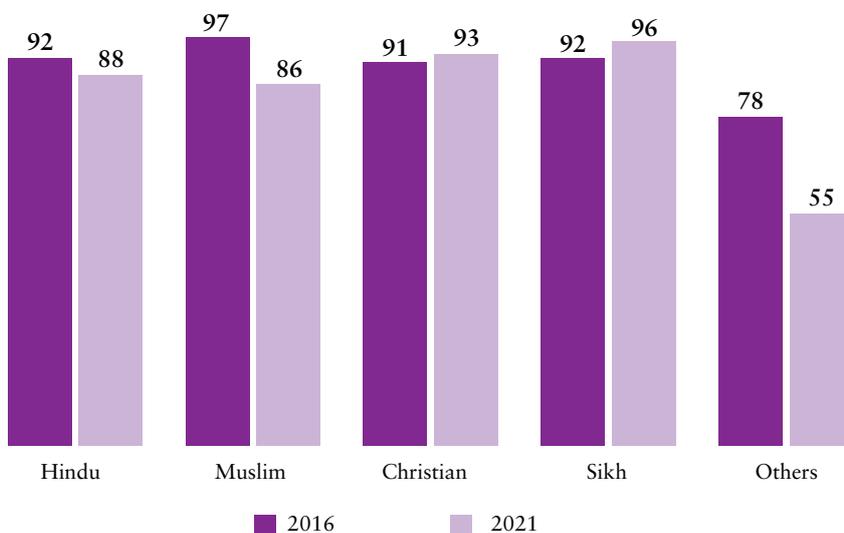
A temporal comparison of the ‘praying’ numbers with data from the 2016 Youth Survey shows that the proportion of Muslim youth offering *namaaz* (including the ones who do so only on festivals) has dropped from 97 percent to 86 percent (Figure 3.3). The tendency to pray among Hindu youth has also declined but the decline is not as sharp falling from 92 percent to 88 percent. Christian and Sikh youth, on the other hand, seem to be praying more than they were in 2016. Interestingly, five years ago Muslim youth were most likely to pray compared to youth from other major religious communities; now they are the least likely to do so.

Observing fasts

As far as the practice of observing fasts for religious reasons is concerned, it was found to be highly prevalent among Muslim youth with 85 percent of them being engaged in it with varying degrees of regularity (Figure 3.4). Over one in every five (21%) Muslims reported doing so regularly, 24 percent said they do it sometimes and 40 percent said they do so only during festivals which would most probably be during the month of *Ramzaan*.

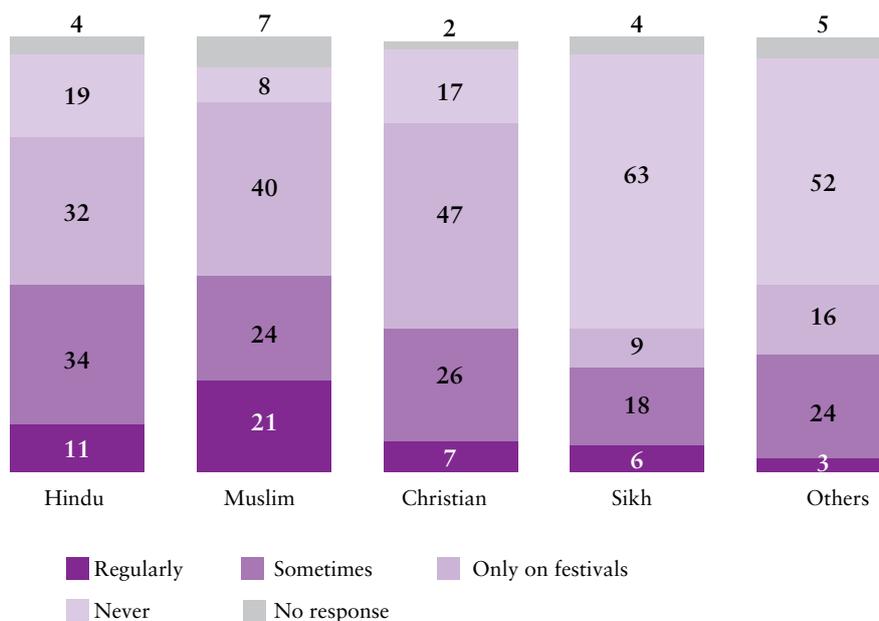
That being said, we also find that fasting for religious reasons has decreased among Muslim

Figure 3.3: Of all major communities, sharpest fall in practice of praying seen among Muslim youth



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.4: Christian and Muslim Youth most likely to fast, particularly during festivals



Note: All figures in percent.

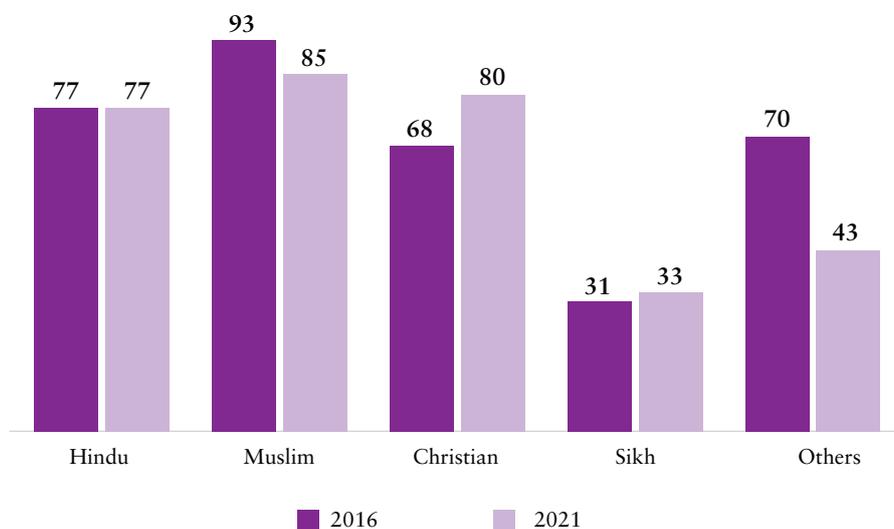
youth over the last five years even though they continue to be the community most likely to do so. In 2016, 93 percent of young Muslim respondents had said that they fast whereas 85 percent said so now (Figure 3.5). Hindu and Christian youth also revealed a high tendency to fast but this practice of going without food for religious reasons was mostly an occasional or seasonal feature among them. However, unlike Muslim youth, Christian youth seem to be undertaking fasts far more (80% do so now) than they were in 2016 (68%). A majority of Sikh youth and those belonging to other religious faiths were found not to be into fasting at all perhaps

because their religion doesn't mandate or expect them to do so.

Visiting place of worship

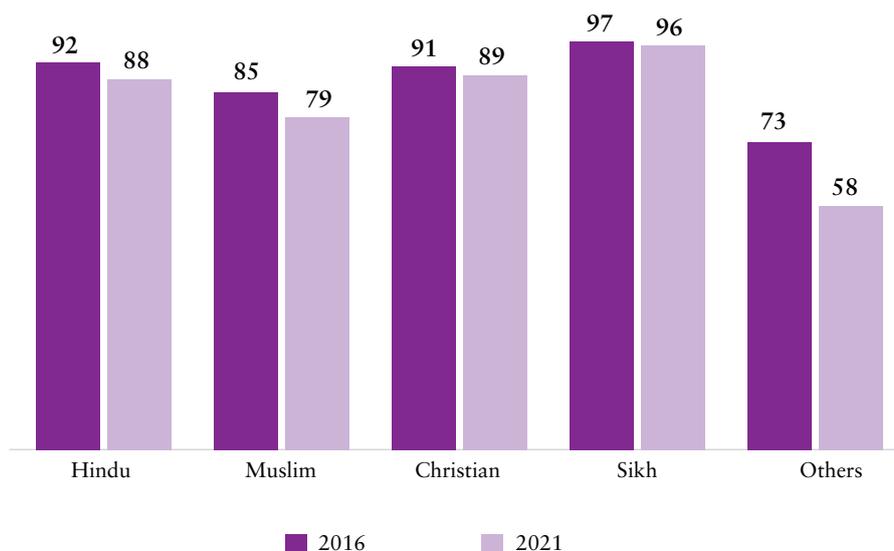
As mentioned earlier, the practice of visiting their place of worship has declined somewhat among young Indians and this is true across the board. Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh youth are less likely to visit a temple, mosque, church and a gurudwara, respectively than they were five years ago (Figure 3.6). But this drop is minor and on the whole large majorities of youth across religions continue the practice. Interestingly though, once

Figure 3.5: Practice of observing fasts has gone up significantly among Christian youth



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.6: Muslim youth continue to be least likely to visit their place of worship



Note: All figures in percent.

again the Muslim community is likely to report the sharpest decline of all major religions compared to 2016. While 85 percent visited a mosque (even if occasionally) in 2016, 79 percent do so now – a drop of six percentage points. The decline noticed among Hindus was of four percentage points, among Christians of two points and among Sikhs of one point.

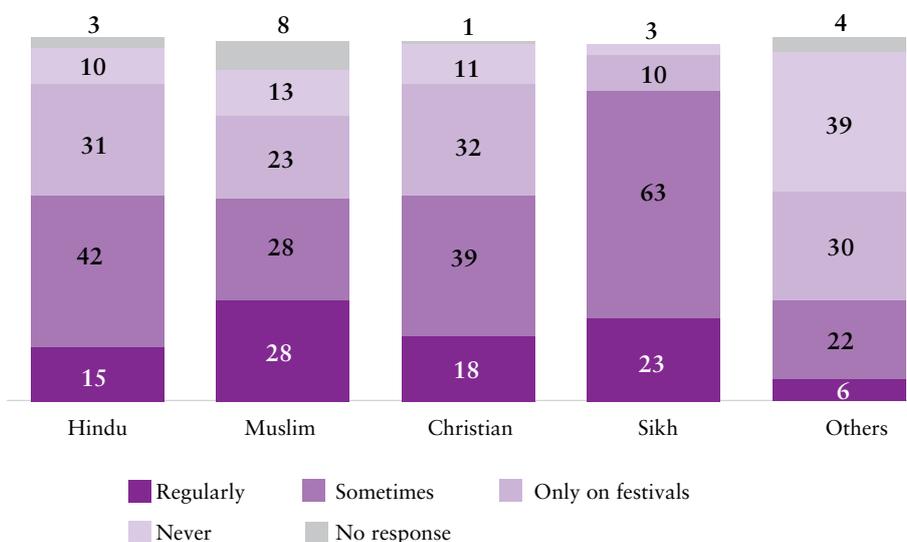
As far as the regularity of place of worship visits among youngsters is concerned, Muslim and Sikh youth seem to be more regular than others. While 28 percent of Muslim youth visit a mosque regularly and another 28 percent do so sometimes,

the corresponding figures for Sikh youth visiting a gurudwara are 23 and 63 percent respectively (Figure 3.7). Sikhs are in fact the least likely of all communities to never go to their place of worship. In fact, it appears that a huge majority of them visit gurudwaras even when there isn't a festival taking place.

Watching religious TV

Young Sikhs are also more likely than their counterparts from other religions to watch religious programmes on TV. Only 15 percent of them reported never doing so as compared to one-third Hindus, two-fifths Muslims and nearly half of the

Figure 3.7: Sikh youth most likely to visit their place of worship even when a festival is not on



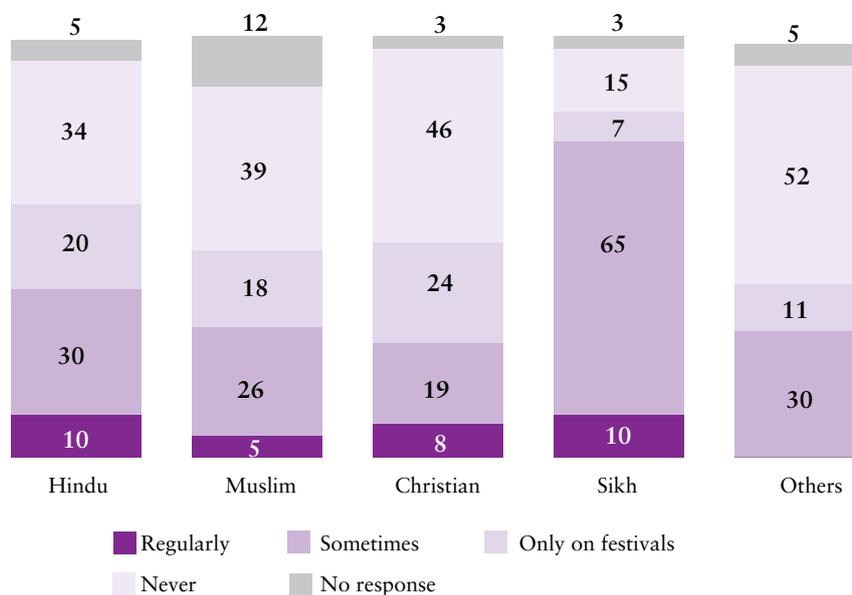
Note: All figures in percent.

Christian youth (Figure 3.8). In fact, like visiting a gurudwara, this is another activity that young Sikhs are far more likely to do even in non-festival times compared to youngsters following other religions. While 10 percent of Sikhs said they watch religious shows on TV regularly, 65 percent said they do so sometimes and only 7 percent reported doing so only on festivals. The corresponding figures for Hindus were 10, 20 and 30 percent, for Muslims 5, 26 and 18 percent and for Christians, 8, 19 and 24 percent. The proliferation of *Shabad Kirtan Gurbani* channels in Punjab during the last few years may account for the relatively higher tendency among Sikhs to watch religious programmes on TV, although the trend

towards an increase in religious programmes on TV and the launch of channels exclusively dedicated to religious discourse is not limited to Punjab alone.

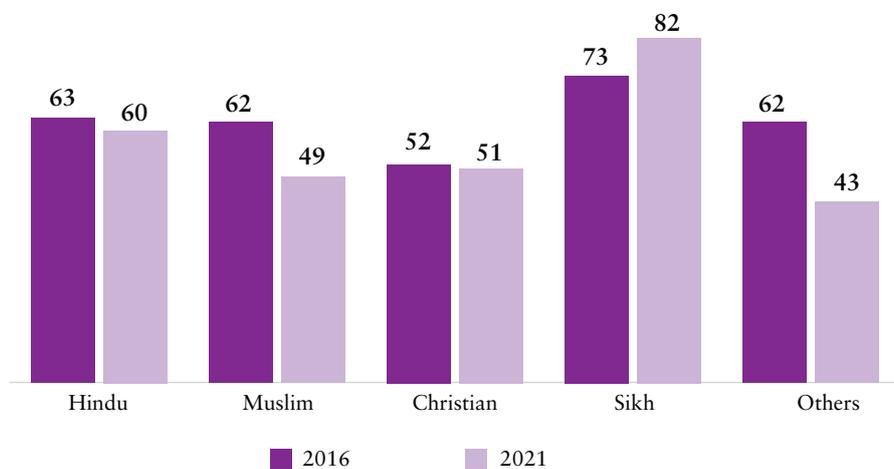
Also interesting is the fact that while this tendency to watch religious shows on TV has more or less remained the same among Hindu and Christian youth during the last five years and declined significantly among Muslim youth, it has registered a significant 9-point increase among Sikh youth increasing from 73 percent in 2016 to 82 percent now (Figure 3.9). In other words, young Sikhs were always more likely to watch religion-related content on TV and they are even more likely to do so now.

Figure 3.8: Sikh youth most likely to watch religious shows on TV followed by Hindu youth



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.9: Sikhs only community to have seen a rise in viewing of religious programmes on TV



Note: All figures in percent.

Reading religious books

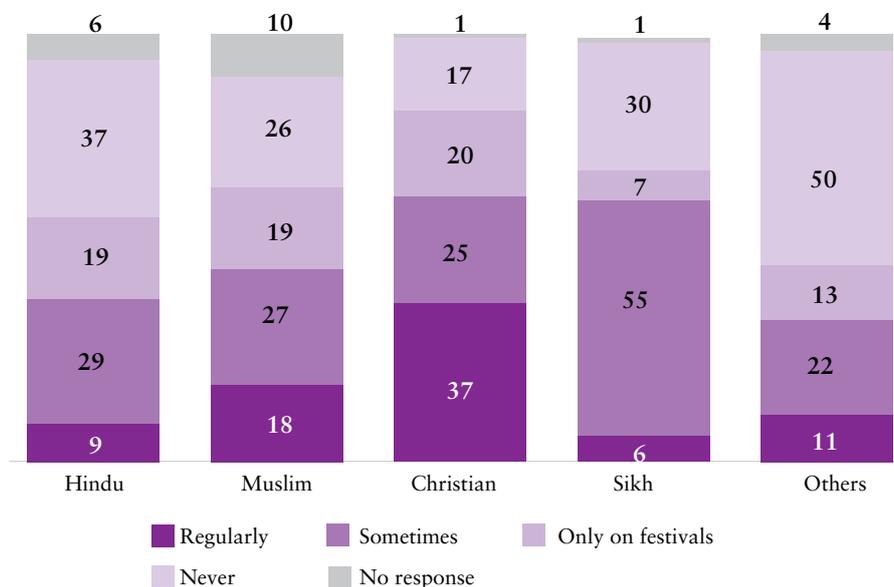
Finally, with regard to reading a religious book young Christians are far more likely to do so regularly as compared to youth from other religious communities. Nearly two-fifths (37%) of them reported reading a religious book (most likely the Holy Bible mostly) on a frequent basis, one in every four (25%) do so sometimes and one in every five (20%) only on festivals (Figure 3.10). Muslim youth come next with 18 percent reading a religious book (most probably the Holy Quran mostly) regularly, 27 percent sometimes and 19 percent on festivals only. Of all religions, Hindu youth are least likely to read a religious book as around two-fifths of them reported never doing so.

That being said Hindu youth are more likely to read a religious book now (57%) than five years ago (50%; Figure 3.11). The tendency to spend time reading religious text however has increased the most among Christian and Sikh youth rising from 64 to 82 percent among the former and from 50 to 68 percent among the latter. Once again, as was the case with other religious activities, the only segment to have **not** registered an increase is that of Muslim youth.

Gender divide in participation

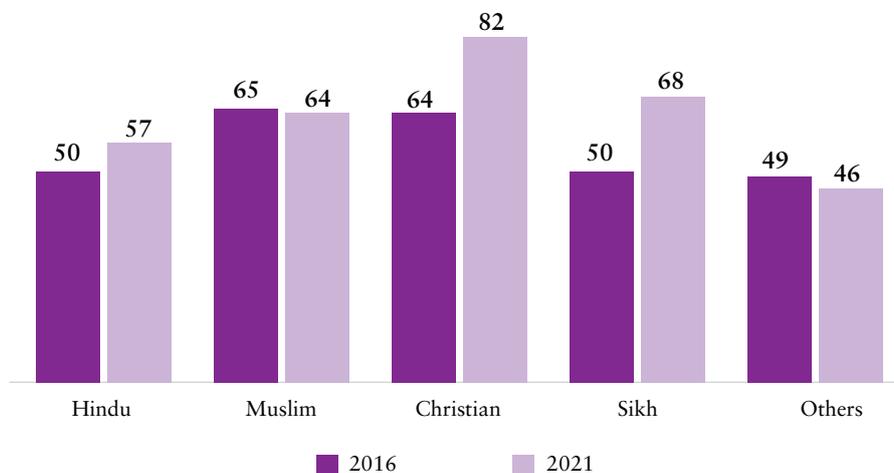
Muslim youth also stood out among all the communities with respect to the not so clear gender divide among them. Whereas young women in all

Figure 3.10: Christian youth most likely to read a religious book followed by Muslim youth



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.11: Significant increase in Christian and Sikh youth's tendency to read religious books



Note: All figures in percent.

Table 3.2: Barring young Muslim women, young women from all other religions tend to participate more in all religious activities compared to their male counterparts

	Pray	Fast	Visit place of worship	Watch religious TV	Read a religious book
Overall Men	83	69	82	56	57
Overall Women	91	85	89	61	61
Hindu Men	83	67	82	59	55
Hindu Women	92	87	92	62	59
Muslim Men	86	84	82	49	65
Muslim Women	84	86	73	51	61
Christian Men	90	66	87	37	72
Christian Women	93	90	88	59	91
Sikh Men	96	32	96	75	58
Sikh Women	98	34	98	88	81
Other Men	43	33	48	40	31
Other Women	66	55	67	47	59

Note: All figures in percent.

other communities were found to be more likely than their male counterparts to take part in each of the five religion-related activities about which questions were asked, among Muslim youth the pattern was not found to be as neat (Table 3.2). Even as young Muslim women were more likely than young Muslim men to observe fasts and watch religious programmes on TV, the trend was the opposite with respect to praying, visiting the mosque and reading a religious book. Put simply, young Hindu, Sikh and Christian women were far more religiously active than young Hindu, Sikh and Christian men, whatever the religious activity, but this was not entirely the case among Muslims.

Age as a factor

On disaggregating the religious participation data by age group, we find that the age of a respondent does not make much of a difference to his or her tendency to observe religious activities. The youngest among the youth, i.e. 15-17-year-olds were only slightly less likely than their older counterparts to fast, watch religious programmes on TV or read a religious book and as likely to visit a place of worship or pray (Table 3.3). Moreover, there was no clear age-group wise linearity noticed for most activities. The only clear sequential trend seen was with respect to fasting for religious purposes, that is, the youth's tendency to fast was found to increase with increasing age and there was a good 11 percentage

Table 3.3: No major age divide in observance of religious activities

	Pray	Fast	Visit place of worship	Watch religious TV	Read a religious book
Overall	88	77	88	59	59
15-17 year-olds	86	69	85	55	55
18-24 year-olds	87	78	85	58	61
25-29 year-olds	85	78	87	61	57
30-34 year-olds	89	80	85	60	57

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 3.4: OBC Hindu youth most likely of all Hindu caste-communities to practice religious activities

	Pray	Fast	Visit place of worship	Watch religious TV	Read a religious book
Upper caste	87	74	87	60	59
OBC	91	82	91	65	61
Dalit	83	76	83	56	47
Adivasi	88	82	83	64	57

Note: All figures in percent.

point difference between the youngest and the oldest cohorts of the youth. The other activity where there was somewhat of a significant difference was the viewing of religious TV. Youngest respondents were five to six percentage points less likely to watch religious programmes on TV than the 25 to 34 year olds. However, on disaggregating the age group-wise practice of religious activities further by the religion of the respondent, the linear trend witnessed at the overall level did not apply to all communities but only some and that too only with respect to fasting. It could be argued therefore that age was not a crucial determinant of religious practice except for the fact that the youngest cohort displayed a slightly less proclivity towards observing the religious activities compared to the general norm.

Caste among Hindus as a factor

We also looked at whether caste identity made any difference to the practicing of religious activities among Hindu youth. We found that while a majority or close to a majority of youth across all caste-

communities was engaging in all the activities, OBC Hindu youth (as a whole) were most likely to do that and Dalit Hindu youth were least likely except with respect to fasting (Table 3.4). For instance, when it came to doing pooja and visiting a temple, 91 percent of young OBC Hindus said they did so, even if occasionally, whereas the same figure for the two activities among young Dalits was eight percentage points lower at 83 percent. Similarly, the propensity to watch religious TV and read a religious book was the greatest among OBCs and lowest among Dalits. Quite surprisingly, there wasn't a single religious activity that the Hindu upper caste youth observed more than some other Hindu caste-community. Moreover, in three out of five activities about which questions were asked, they were a little less active than either Dalits or Adivasis or both.

Self perception regarding changing religiosity

Apart from asking the youth about their tendency to practice specific religious activities, the survey

Figure 3.12: Christian youth were most likely to perceive both an increase and decrease in their religious participation compared to youth from other communities



Note: All figures in percent.

also asked them if they thought their participation in religious activities in general had increased or decreased during the last two to three years. In response to this question, Christian youth were most opinionated/vocal and hence more likely than other communities to perceive/report both an increase and a decrease in their participation in religious activities (Figure 3.12). Youth belonging to other religions were more likely than Christian youth to report a status quo, that is, their participation in religious activities had neither increased nor decreased according to them. This of course is a matter of perception or self-appraisal and as the temporal comparisons shown earlier show, it is Muslim youth more than Christian youth who seem to be participating less in religious activities compared to five years ago.

Religious consultation and advice seeking

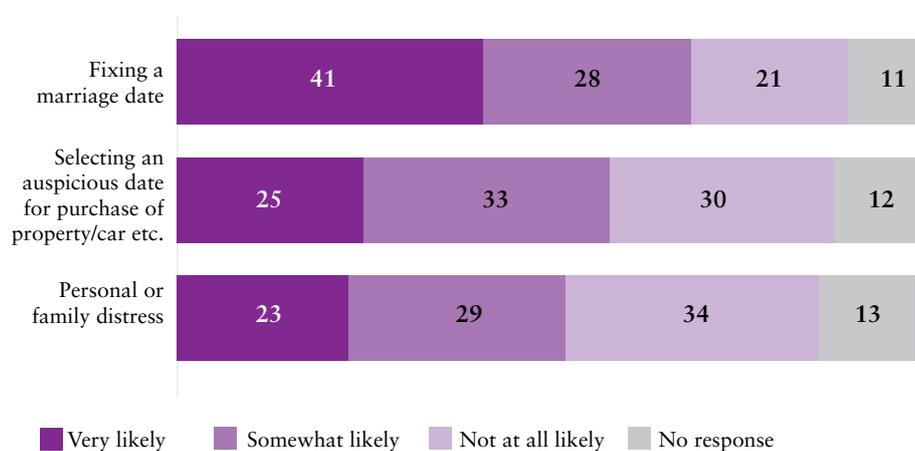
Staying on with practices that could be considered as part of the religious domain, the survey also tried to gauge the tendency among young Indians to consult priests or religious leaders (*dharma gurus*) for advice on issues such as family troubles and selecting an auspicious date for marriage or the purchase of property and other valuables. While a majority of youth did show a proclivity towards such consultation or advice-seeking, their high (i.e., ‘very likely’) chances of doing so were dependent on the nature of the issue at hand. Even as only about a quarter of the youth said they were very likely to seek the advice of a priest or *dharma guru* for resolving family troubles and fixing the date for buying property or a valuable item, when it came to the issue of deciding the marriage date, two-fifths of youngsters said that it was ‘highly likely’ that

they would consult a religious head for this specific purpose (Figure 3.13).

When the responses were disaggregated by religious identity, Hindu youth were found to show a much higher inclination towards seeking the counsel of a religious head with respect to each of the three matters than youths from other religious communities (Figures 3.14, 3.15 and 3.16). For instance, 48 percent of the Hindu youth said they were very likely to go to a priest or *guru* or *baba* for fixing a marriage date, as opposed to 29 percent Christian youth, 14 percent Muslim youth and 10 percent Sikh youth. The corresponding figures for the high likelihood of seeking advice for selecting an auspicious date for buying property or valuables were 29, 16, 11 and 5 percent respectively. What is also noteworthy is that for all the three matters, an overwhelming majority of young Sikhs ruled out the prospect of seeking any kind of consultation from a priest or religious head. Muslim and Christian youth were also more likely to **not** consult a religious head on such matters than consult them. It was only among Hindu youth that a majority said they would consult, even if such consultation was only somewhat likely to happen. As far as the few Buddhist respondents in our sample are concerned, a large majority of them, like Sikhs, did not show any interest in such religious consultation.

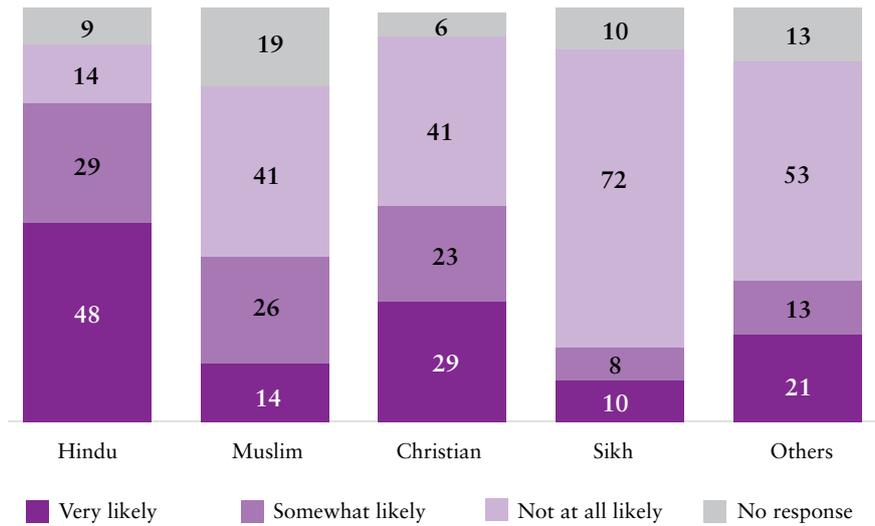
The survey also asked the youth whether they had ever consulted a priest/ *dharma-guru/baba* for the purposes of ensuring good luck and health. Here the trend was a little different with Muslim youth being as likely as Hindu youth to have done so. While 28 percent of Muslim youth said they had consulted a

Figure 3.13: Two-fifths of youth highly likely to seek advice of a priest or religious leader for fixing a marriage date



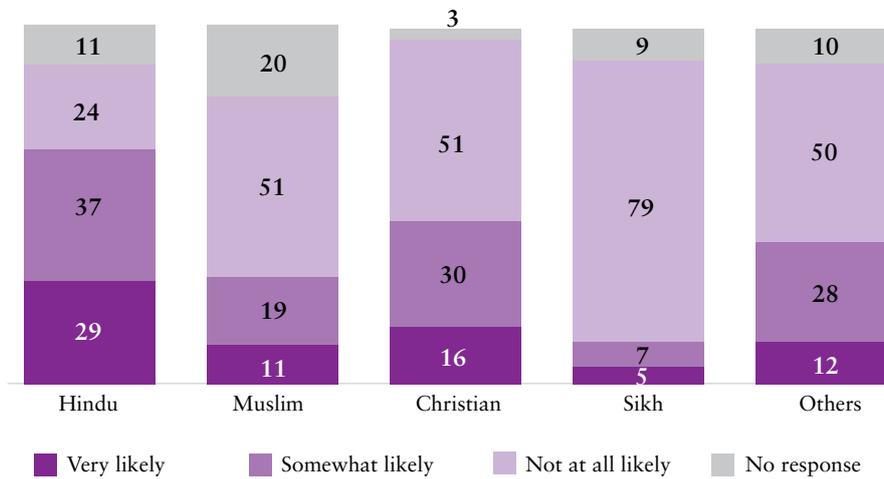
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.14: Likelihood of consulting a priest/guru/baba for marriage date



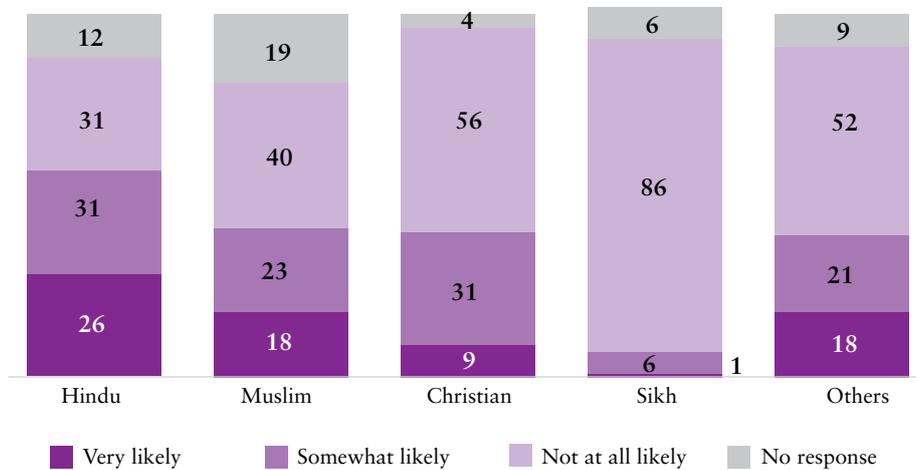
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.15: Likelihood of consulting a priest/guru/baba for date for purchasing property/valuable



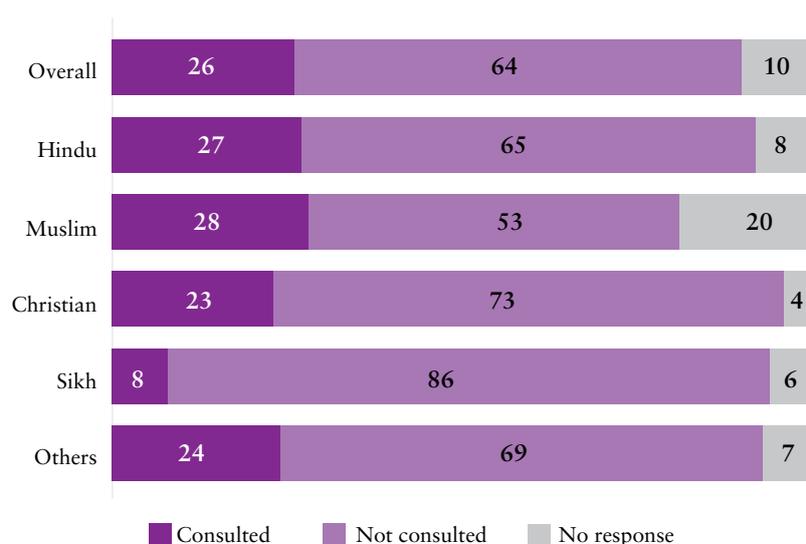
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.16: Likelihood of consulting a priest/guru/baba for personal/family member's distress



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.17: Muslim and Hindu youths are most likely to have consulted a priest or religious guru for good luck and health



Note: All figures in percent.

religious leader for luck and health, the proportion of Hindu youth to have done so was 27 percent (Figure 3.17). Interestingly, Christian youth too weren't too far behind with 23 percent having sought such advice. Sikh youth however once again showed very little propensity to seek such advice with only 8 percent reporting that they had consulted a religious leader for good luck and health.

Significantly, at the aggregate level, the educational qualification of a young respondent was not found to make too much of an impact on his or her likelihood to consult a religious leader for these matters. Even though non-literate youth displayed the strongest probability (77%) of seeking a priest or religious leader's advice for fixing a marriage date, the most educated youth, i.e. graduates, too

weren't far behind as 71 percent of them reported a strong or moderate likelihood of doing so (Table 3.5). As far as consulting a religious leader for an auspicious date for purchasing property or valuables is concerned, non-literates and graduates displayed the same tendency to do so at 61 percent each. A somewhat similar pattern was noticed with respect to seeking religious counsel for an issue of personal or family distress. The highly, moderately, and less educated youth showed more or less the same degree of proclivity to consult a priest or religious guru for family distress issues.

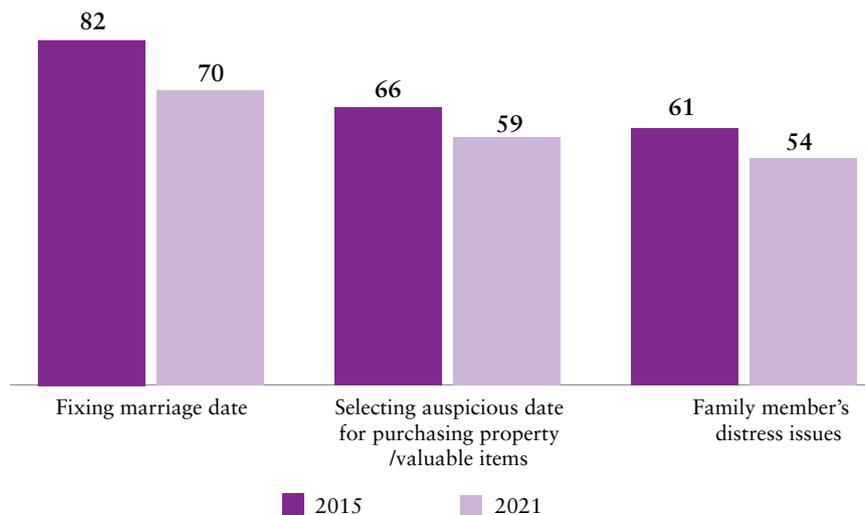
Overall, even as a large proportion of youth were found to have high or moderate chances of consulting a priest or a religious leader for fixing auspicious dates or family troubles, their tendency

Table 3.5: Education doesn't make much of a difference to the tendency to consult a priest or religious leader for auspicious dates; graduates are nearly as likely to do so as non-literates

	Youth who are very or somewhat likely to consult priest/religious leader for		
	Fixing marriage date	Selecting auspicious date for purchasing property/valuable item	Personal/family member's distress
Non-Literate	77	61	52
Up to Primary	65	55	50
Middle Pass	62	50	53
Matric Pass	68	53	54
12th Pass	69	59	54
Graduate and above	71	61	54

Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.18: High or moderate likelihood to consult a religious leader for fixing auspicious dates or for personal issues has declined among youths (18-34 year olds) in the last six years



Note: All figures in percent.
Source for 2015: Religion-related national survey by Lokniti-CSDS

to consider doing so has declined compared to six years ago. In a national survey on religious beliefs and practices conducted by Lokniti in 2015, 82 percent of 18-34 year olds had said that it was either very likely or somewhat likely that they will consult a priest or *dharma guru* for fixing a marriage date (Figure 3.18). The figure in the 2021 youth survey among the same age group has dropped to 70 percent. A drop in percentages can also be seen on the questions of consulting a religious leader for selecting an auspicious date for a purchase activity or for a family distress or personal distress matter – from 66 to 59 percent for the former and 61 to 54 percent for the latter.

Apart from focusing on the religious behaviour of young Indians, the Youth survey also attempted to gauge their attitudes and sentiments on three crucial matters related to religion that are often in news in India nowadays, namely, hurt religious sentiments with respect to comedy, deterioration of religious harmony and discrimination on the grounds of religion. The following two sections detail the survey findings related to these three problems.

Youth attitudes on censorship of comedy on religion

The right to freedom of expression is a right that has been firmly incorporated in the Indian Constitution as a fundamental right. It is also part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, this right has come under severe stress in India in recent times, especially during the last decade or so, with so-called

‘fringe’ groups and elements increasingly objecting to creative expression on the grounds of hurt religious or community sentiments and issuing violent threats to their creators. In some cases their threats have resulted in governments and authorities imposing an outright ban on the content being objected to or the creators making cuts to their piece of expression on their own or self-censoring themselves. Some recent examples include the decision of Tamil writer Perumal Murugan in 2015 to stop writing after being harassed and attacked by Hindu groups for his novel ‘*Madhurobagan*’ and the intimidation of the makers of the web series ‘*Tandav*’ into removing a scene after an FIR was registered against them following calls by some BJP leaders for a ban on their show for allegedly showing Hindu gods and goddesses in an uncharitable way.

Comedians in the country have also borne the brunt of censorship and intimidation of late. The recent incident involving stand-up comic Munawar Faruqui is a case in point. In January 2021, Faruqui and five others were arrested by the Madhya Pradesh police following a complaint by an MLA’s son that objectionable remarks about Hindu deities were passed by Faruqui during a show in Indore. The complainant claimed that he had heard Faruqui cracking the jokes during rehearsals before the show. Faruqui had to spend more than a month in jail before the Supreme Court granted him bail saying that the allegations contained in the FIR against him were vague. Recently, after getting continuous threats from right-wing groups, many of Faruqui’s

shows got cancelled following which the stand-up comedian declared that he will not perform on stage from now on.

Another recent case of a comedian being targeted is that of Kiku Sharda. In January 2016, Sharda was arrested by the Haryana Police from Mumbai for mimicking Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh on his TV show. He was arrested on the complaint of a follower of the Dera and had to spend a day in jail before being granted bail.

In the context of this growing intolerance towards comedy on religion and religious leaders, we decided to find out the opinions of young Indians on this issue, especially since many of the protests in the recent past against what is perceived as ‘objectionable’ content have featured young participants. The survey posed before them two direct questions on the banning of comic content involving religion – whether it is justified to impose a ban on comedy movies on religious leaders and stand-up comedy on any religion. The answers were quite revealing. In response to each of these questions, around half of all young respondents answered in the affirmative, that is, they favored the banning of humorous content on religion. About one in every three, which is also quite a sizeable proportion, were against banning such content and about one in every six respondents stayed silent or non-committal on the

issue. Significantly, compared to six years ago, when similar questions were also asked by Lokniti during the national survey on religious beliefs and practices, the sentiment among youngsters against a ban has risen considerably. Back then only 10-13% of 18-34 year olds had disfavored a ban.

On disaggregating the opinions by religion, we found that a majority of youth belonging to Sikh, Christian and Hindu communities (and even the few Buddhists in our sample) favored banning comedy on religion. The sentiment was strongest among Sikh youth, followed by Christian and Hindu youth. For instance, 86 percent of Sikh youth, 62 percent of Christian youth and 51 percent of Hindu youth favored a ban on stand up comedy that made fun of religion (Table 3.6). Similarly 76 percent Sikhs, 65 percent Christians and 49 percent Hindus supported the idea of banning films that made fun of religious leaders.

In contrast, the most tolerant and liberal of all youths on the issue of comedy on religion were found to be Muslim youth. Opinion among them was largely against a ban than in favour of one at the overall level. For instance, 46 percent were against a ban on comedy films that made fun of religions and only 36 percent favored it. Similarly, 39 percent opposed a ban on stand up comedy on religion and 38 percent favored it.

Table 3.6: Muslim youth emerged as the most tolerant and liberal on the issue of allowing comedy on religion; Hindu youth second most tolerant

	Should be banned	Should not be banned	No response
<i>Making comedy movies on religious leaders</i>			
Overall	48	35	17
Hindu	49	34	17
Muslim	36	46	19
Christian	65	20	15
Sikh	76	20	4
Other	58	21	21
<i>Stand-up comedy on any religion</i>			
Overall	50	32	18
Hindu	51	32	17
Muslim	38	39	23
Christian	62	19	19
Sikh	86	13	2
Other	55	25	20

Note: All figures in percent.

Even more interestingly, we find that among Muslims, it was Muslim women who were far more likely to favour a ban on comic content on religion than Muslim men. The gap between the two genders was of 10 percentage points or more on each of the ban related questions (Table 3.7). This gender gap was of course not restricted to Muslims alone but could be seen among Christian, Sikh and Hindu youth as well, however the gap was not as wide as the one seen among Muslims.

Religious harmony

Recently, in its annual report titled ‘Crime in India 2020’¹, the National Crime Records Bureau reported that 857 cases of communal or religious rioting were registered in the country in 2020. This was up from 438 cases in 2019 and 512 in 2018. While religious rioting is not a new phenomenon and such incidents have taken place in the country many times in the past, the fact is that there has been no easing of India’s communal conundrum/problem even after 75 years of Independence. If anything, the problem seems to have become worse

¹ Crime in India 2020, National Crime Records Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs; Report available at <https://ncrb.gov.in/en/Crime-in-India-2020>; accessed on October 4, 2021

Table 3.7: Across all the major religious faiths, young women more than young men favored banning comedy on religion

	Should be banned (Men)	Should be banned (Women)
<i>Making comedy movies on religious leaders</i>		
Overall	46	51
Hindu	48	51
Muslim	32	42
Christian	58	69
Sikh	73	79
Other	60	56
<i>Stand-up comedy on any religion</i>		
Overall	48	52
Hindu	50	52
Muslim	33	47
Christian	59	63
Sikh	85	86
Other	63	46

Note: All figures in percent.

as the NCRB data suggests. Moreover, apart from rioting or clashes between communities, the last few years have also witnessed several instances of hate crimes and lynchings in which frenzied mobs often led by youngsters have targeted religious minorities, especially Muslims, mainly because of their religious identity and occupation. There have also been calls by fringe groups for the economic boycott of Muslims in some parts of the country as well as a relentless campaign against inter-religious marriages that has been endorsed by several state governments through new legislations labeled as ‘anti-Love Jihad’ laws. Muslims have also been singled out for exclusion from the ambit of a new Citizenship law passed by the Central government. Meanwhile, Christians and Sikhs have also faced a fair share of harassment and intimidation. While the former have been accused of religious conversions under the garb of missionary activity, the latter have been labeled as extremists for their active involvement in an agitation by farmers.

In light of these growing and rather worrying cases of violence and prejudice against Muslims and other religious minorities, the Youth Survey attempted to ascertain the level of optimism and/or pessimism among youth on the issue of religious amity and brotherhood in the country. Young respondents were asked whether they thought religious harmony in India was going to improve or deteriorate in the next five years. The overall responses to this question indicate a guarded sentiment among youngsters on the matter. While a plurality of respondents - about one-third (34%) - expressed hope that religious harmony in the country would get better in the coming five years, an almost equal proportion (31%) thought it would remain the same as it is now and a little over one in every five (22%) expressed pessimism saying that relations between religious communities would deteriorate (Figure 3.19). It could be argued that even though a greater proportion of youth expressed optimism than pessimism about the situation, the responses were not as overwhelmingly positive as one would have imagined. Rather, a large proportion of youngsters were either less emphatic in their opinion taking a middle of the road position or downright pessimistic.

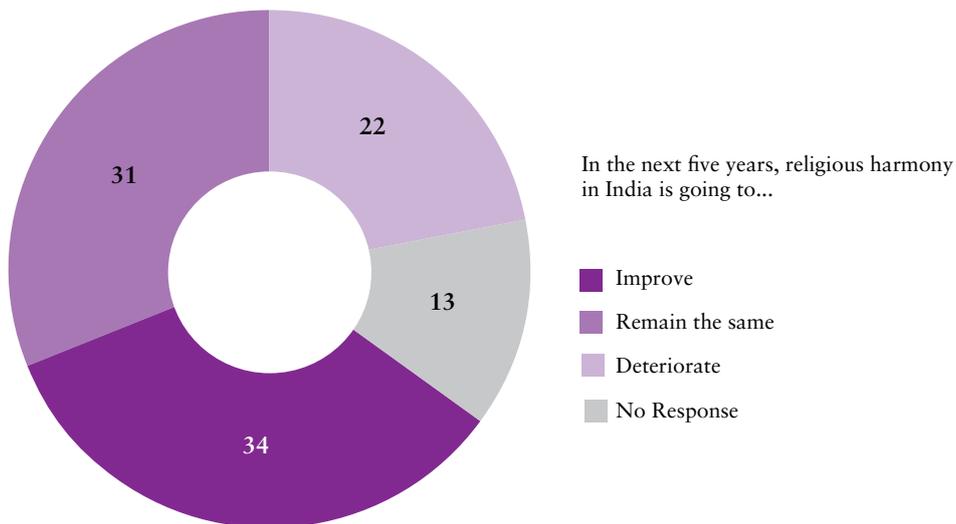
In fact, the overall numbers hide the real picture and it is only when we disaggregate them by religious affiliation that the true story emerges. We find that the optimism regarding religious harmony was only limited to youth belonging to the majority religious

community – the Hindus. While Hindu youth were more likely to be sanguine (37%) about the state of religious harmony in the country than gloomy (19%), the pattern among youth from minority communities was the opposite (Figure 3.20), except among Buddhists and Jains. A greater proportion of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh youth expressed pessimism than optimism. Moreover, even as the degree of optimism among the minorities varied with Sikh youth being least likely to be optimistic at 9 percent followed by Muslim youth at 22 percent and Christian youth at 29 percent, pessimism or the sentiment that things would deteriorate on the religious harmony front in the coming years was found to be of more or less of the same magnitude. It was 33 percent each among Sikhs and Muslims

and 31 percent among Christians. Youths from the three minority communities were also more likely than the Hindu youth to believe that there would be no change in the existing situation with Sikhs most likely to express this status quo sentiment (46%).

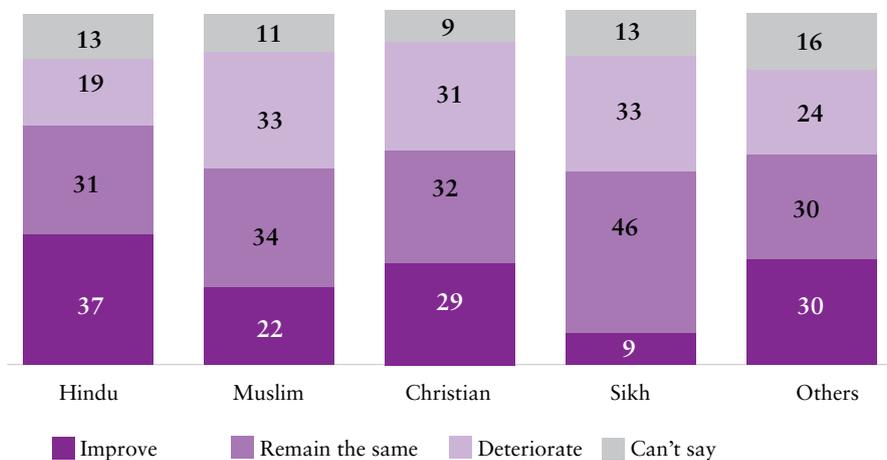
We dug a bit deeper into the opinion of Muslim youth on the matter since the community has borne the brunt of discrimination and violence in recent years. We found that among them, the feeling of pessimism or despair about religious co-existence was higher than average among the moderately educated Muslims (i.e., those only educated up to middle school or matric), Muslim men, economically better-off Muslims, 18-24 year-old Muslims and Muslims living in rural areas. This is not to say that highly educated Muslims or Muslim women

Figure 3.19: Only one in every three youth emphatically expressed optimism about the state of religious harmony in India during the next five years



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.20: Hindu and Muslim youth have opposite views on the future of religious harmony in India



Note: All figures in percent.

or worse off Muslims or urban Muslims did not express pessimism (Table 3.8). They did, but they were as or less likely to do so as compared to the average Muslim youth.

Another interesting pattern that was noticed among Muslims was with respect to their State of residence. Muslim youth living in States with Muslim population shares that are higher than national average of 14.3 percent (Assam, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Kerala taken together) were far more likely to say that religious harmony will worsen in the coming five years than Muslim youth in the rest of the country. The difference of opinion among the two categories was to the tune of 12 percentage points (Table 3.9). Put simply, Muslims in States where Muslims were quite considerable in number were far more likely to believe that relations between different religious communities would take a turn for the worse in the country in the coming years than Muslims in States where Muslims were fewer in numbers. This tendency was visible among Hindus as well in such states but not to the same extent.

On the issue of discrimination on religious grounds too, Muslim youth were nearly twice as likely as youth from other communities to say that they had experienced discrimination. On being asked about the frequency with which they had been discriminated against amongst their friends circle because of their religion, 13 percent Muslims said that it had happened often (Figure 3.21). The same figure among Hindus, Christians and Sikhs was more than two times less at 6, 4 and 3 percent, respectively. Similarly, while the proportion of Muslims saying that they had ‘sometimes’ faced discrimination amongst friends because of their faith was a high 31 percent, among Hindus, Christians and Sikhs it was once again over twice as less. In fact only about half the Muslim youth interviewed during the survey said that they had never experienced faith-based discrimination as opposed to well over two-thirds of Hindus and four-fifths of Christians and Sikhs. What is also interesting here is that unlike on the issue of religious harmony where there was some sort of unanimity of opinion among youths from different religious minorities, on the issue of discrimination Muslims were quite alone in feeling so.

Table 3.8: Pessimism about religious harmony is greatest among moderately educated Muslims, Muslim men and those relatively well off

	<i>In the next 5 years, religious harmony in India is going to deteriorate</i>
Overall Muslims	33
Middle pass or Matric pass Muslims	50
Muslim men	39
Middle Class and Rich Muslims	38
18-24 year old Muslims	36
Rural Muslims	35

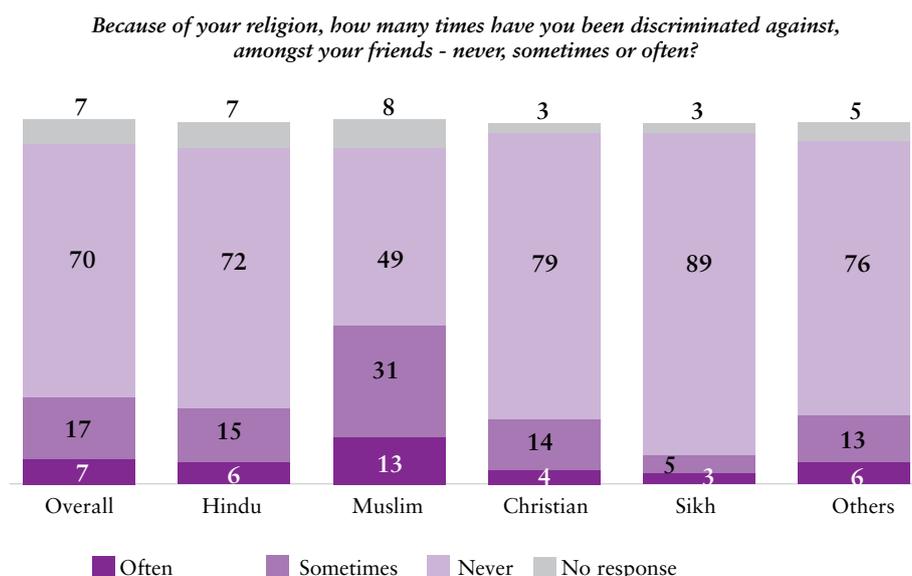
Note: All figures in percent.

Table 3.9: Muslims in States with higher than national average Muslim population are far more likely to say that religious harmony will worsen in the coming five years

	<i>In the next 5 years, religious harmony in India is going to...</i>			
	Improve	Remain the same	Deteriorate	Can't say
Muslims in...				
States with higher than average Muslim population	22	34	35	10
States with lower than average Muslim population	25	37	23	15
Hindus in...				
States with higher than average Muslim population	36	33	20	12
States with lower than average Muslim population	39	28	18	15

Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 3.21: Over two-fifths of young Muslims claim to have experienced discrimination among friends because of their religion



Note: All figures in percent.

Once again, Muslims in States where the share of Muslims in the State’s population was higher than the all India average were twice as likely to report religious discrimination with moderate or frequent regularity as Muslims in other parts of the country, 47 percent as opposed to 23 percent (Table 3.10). In fact this trend was also seen among Hindu youth. Hindu youth in high Muslim population states were also more likely to report discrimination than Hindu youth in low Muslim population states, 29 percent compared to 18 percent. In other words, the youth belonging to India’s majority community and India’s largest religious minority community are more likely to perceive or experience religious discrimination in States where there is a greater chance of interaction between the two.

Conclusion

To sum up, when seen in overall terms, most youngsters in India today exhibit a fairly high degree of dedication in their religious practices and behaviour. Not only are an overwhelmingly large majority of them engaged in typical and routine religious activities such as praying, fasting and visiting their place of worship but a sizeable proportion of them is also spending time on activities such as watching religious programmes on TV and reading religious texts, activities that are usually perceived as being performed by older age groups. Furthermore, their religiosity does not seem to have seen any significant decline during the last few years. They are nearly as likely to be engaged in certain

Table 3.10: Nearly half the Muslims in States with higher than national average Muslim population said that they have experienced discrimination among friends because of their religion

	<i>Because of your religion, how many times have you been discriminated against, among your friends – never, sometimes or often?</i>			
	Never	Sometimes	Often	No response
Muslims in...				
States with higher than average Muslim population	43	34	13	10
States with lower than average Muslim population	68	14	9	9
Hindus in...				
States with higher than average Muslim population	63	20	9	8
States with lower than average Muslim population	76	13	5	6

Note: All figures in percent.

religious activities today as they were five years ago with the dips being very minor in overall terms.

Young Muslims, however, stand somewhat apart from Hindu, Sikh and Christian youth in this regard. Even though a big majority of them continue to perform certain key religious activities, yet at the same time they seem to be the only segment/community to have recorded a fairly significant decline in religious practice and this decline is consistent across activities. The proportion of Muslims praying, fasting, visiting the mosque, watching religious shows and reading religious texts is lower compared to the proportion doing each of these activities five years ago when the last Youth survey was conducted by Lokniti-CSDS. This across the board declining pattern is exclusive to Muslim youth and is not noticed among youth of other major religions who have either recorded minor or no decreases with regard to some activities or increases (some of which are quite significant) with regard to some others.

It is quite counter-intuitive that the decline in religiosity among Muslim youth has happened precisely during the period when hate crimes against the Muslim community have increased considerably in the country. One would think that being at the receiving end of hate, discrimination and violence would have resulted in an even greater proportion of young Muslims turning towards their faith. We however find no evidence of this in our analysis of the present and past data. It is of course quite possible that the lower numbers of religious observance compared to the past among Muslims could be on account of the fact that some Muslim respondents may have felt less comfortable to reveal

full and accurate information about their religious practices in the current survey given the prevailing atmosphere in the country. That cannot be ruled out.

The survey, in fact, did capture a sense of unease among young Muslims regarding the state of religious relations in the country. It found more Muslim respondents to be pessimistic than optimistic about the future of religious harmony in the country. Also, rather worryingly, Muslim youth were highly likely to report having experienced discrimination in their friends circle on the grounds of their religion. As far as the youth from other two major minority religions of India - Sikhism and Christianity - are concerned, even though not many of them reported having experienced religious discrimination, a large number of them like Muslims did express a strong sense of despair about the future of communal amity in the country.

Finally, another rather surprising finding to have emerged from the survey was with respect to youth attitudes regarding the issue of hurt religious sentiments. Even as the survey found a greater proportion of Hindu, Christian and Sikh youth to favour rather than oppose the idea of imposing bans on comedy on religion, among Muslims it found the pattern to be the opposite at the aggregate level – more young Muslims than not at the national level were found to carry the opinion that such bans should not be imposed. There were state-wise variations in opinion, however. The survey thus, to some extent, dispels the popular myth of Muslims being staunchly religious and intolerant compared to people from other faiths.

Marriage: Attitudes, Preferences, and Practices

Section 4



A bride takes a selfie after taking her wedding vows during a mass marriage ceremony in which, according to its organisers, 111 Muslim couples took their wedding vows, at a mosque in Ahmedabad, India, January 11, 2018. REUTERS/Amit Dave

Marriage: Attitudes, Preferences, and Practices

Introduction

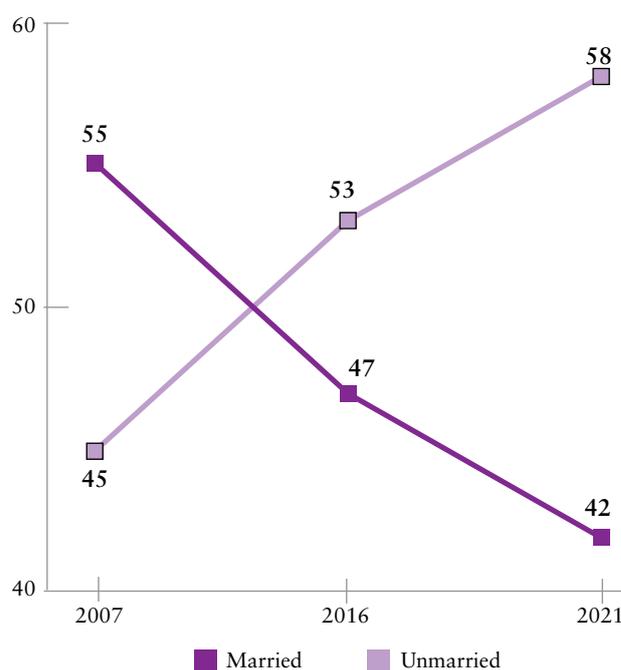
Marriage, as an institution is an integral part of any society; though it varies structurally and culturally from one society to another. With the passage of time, the institution of marriage has passed through various stages starting from early-age marriages to late-marriages. Moreover, society is also now somewhat open to the idea of not marrying at all or unmarried couples living together without marriage. In this section, we discuss the trends in the marital status of Indian youth along with the marital preferences of both married and unmarried youth. The section also unveils youth's opinion on various marriage practices such as inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. Furthermore, this section also taps into youth's opinion on divorce in case of problematic marriages and their views on same-sex relationships.

Trends in marital status of Indian youth

When we look at the current marital status of Indian youth, we find that a little over two-fifths (42%) of the Indian youth are married. This figure becomes relatively interesting when we compare the proportion of married youth with two previous rounds of youth studies conducted in 2007 and 2016 respectively. In a decade and a half, there is a decline of 13 percentage points in the proportion of married youth. In 2007, 55 percent of the Indian youth were married and after almost a decade, when another round of youth study was conducted in 2016, the figure dropped by eight percentage points which has further declined by five percentage points in another five years (Figure 4.1).

Time series data also indicates that, not only there is a decline in the proportion of married youth but marrying late is becoming the new normal. In 2007,

Figure 4.1: Decline in the proportion of the married youth



Note: All figures in percent.

Source: Figure for 2007 and 2016 are from the youth studies conducted by CSDS.

a little less than four in five (78%) youth in the age group of 25-29 years were married, which has come down to three in five (60%) in 2021 (Figure 4.2). This drop indicates that the age of getting married has moved from early-twenties to late-twenties as three-fourths of the youth in the age group of 18-24 years are unmarried. However, the trend for 30-34 years old is not very different from 2007 with a mere two percentage points decline when we look at the proportion of married youth in the age group of 30-34 years in 2021. Close to nine in ten (88%) youth in the age group of 30-34 years are married (Figure 4.2).

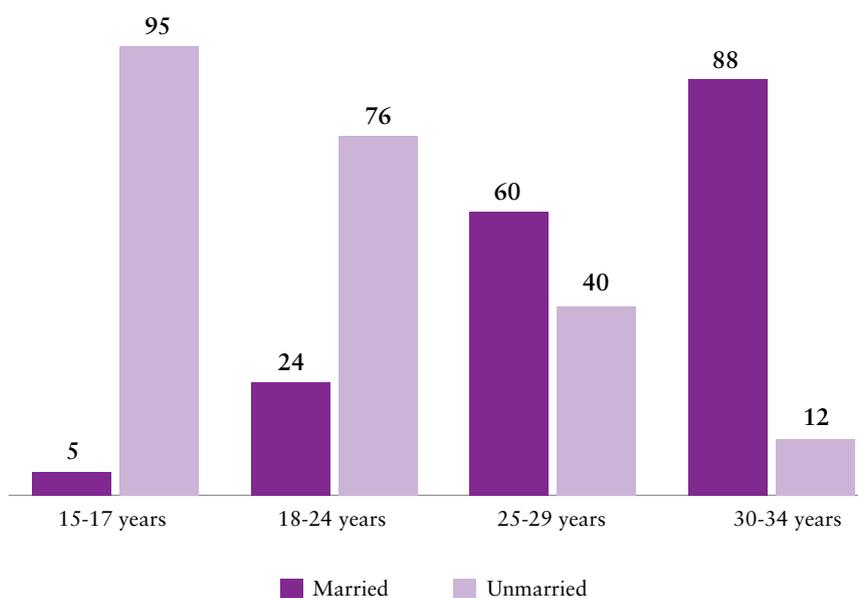
There has been a significant difference in the pattern of marital status of young men and young women. In the present study, close to half (48%) of

the women reported to be married as opposed to 37 percent of the young men. The possible explanation for this could be the structure of Indian society, where parents want their girls to be married sooner than boys. However, on a positive note, the reduction in the proportion of married youth has taken place for both young men and women. In 2007, close to two-thirds (63%) of the young women were married against half (49%) of the young men; subsequently after a decade in 2016, the figures declined by four percentage points among young women and 10 percentage points among young men. Interestingly,

the proportion of young married men in 2021 has declined by two percentage points (39% in 2016 to 37% in 2021) but among young women, it has gone down by 11 percentage points in the same span of time (Figure 4.3).

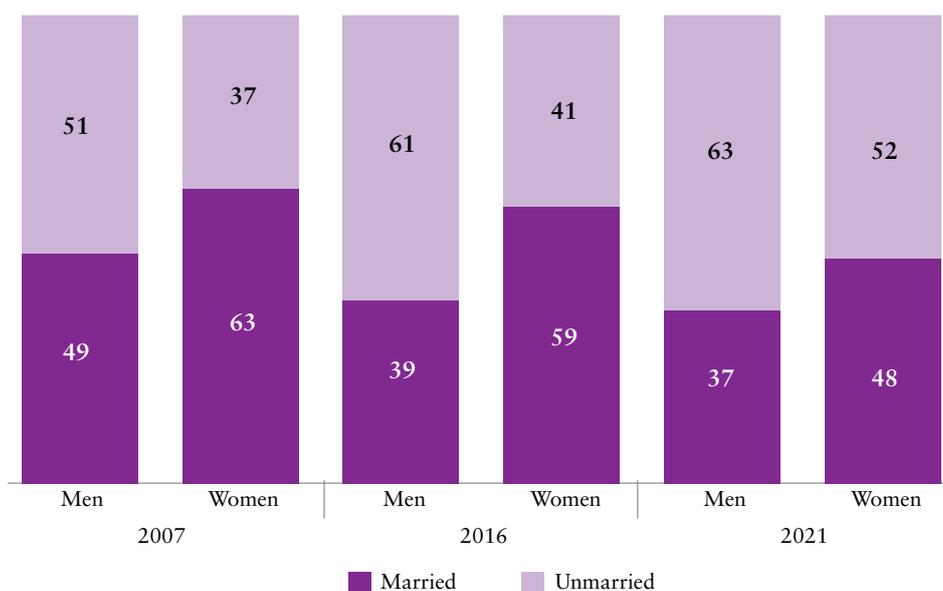
A possible reason for late-marriage could be the penetration of education among Indian youth. With increasing education among youth, the association between education and the age of marriage has changed. The data suggests that there is an increase in the proportion of youth who identified themselves as students. Hence, youth would end up delaying

Figure 4.2: Youth are marrying at a later age; a quarter of youth were unmarried in the age group of 18-24 years



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.3: Decline in proportion of married youth, more pronounced in young women



Note: All figures in percent.

Source: Figure for 2007 and 2016 are from the youth studies conducted by CSDS.

marriage while still studying. The data suggests that, with the successive level of education, the proportion of married youth decreases. Where two-fifths (39%) of college-educated youth reported being married, the corresponding figure for non-literates was four-fifths (81%) (Figure 4.4).

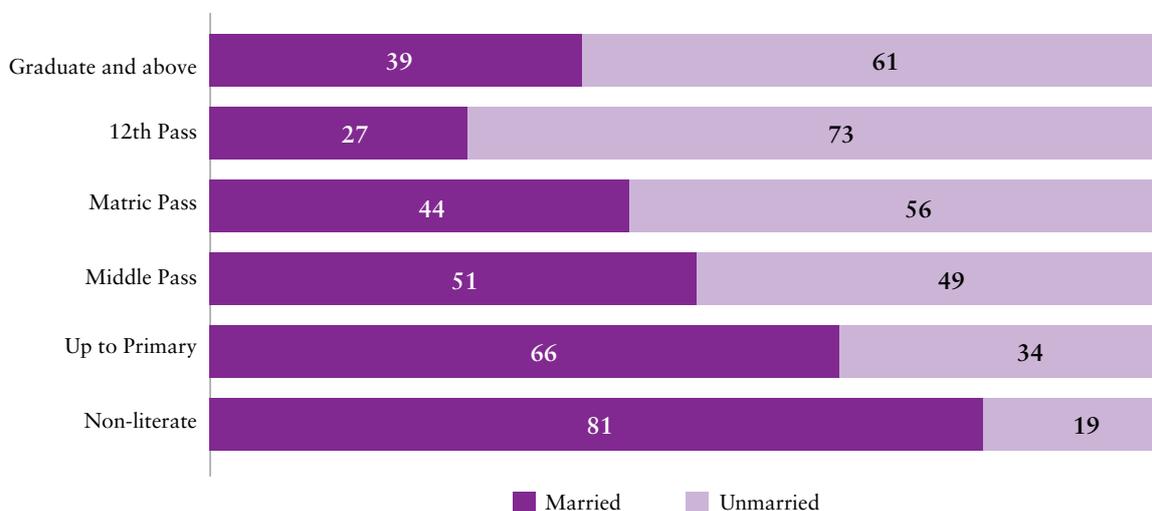
The tendency to marry late is more visible in urban areas than rural. It was found that 43 percent of the youth in villages and 46 percent of the youth in towns were married; on the contrary, 38 percent youth in small cities and 33 percent youth in big cities were married. Across localities, young men were less likely to be married than young women. But it was also observed that, as we move from villages to the

big cities, the proportion of married women declines. Even the gap between married young men and young women decreases as we move from villages to big cities (gap of 13 percentage points in villages which drops to six percentage points in big cities). This gap was eight and eleven percentage points respectively in towns and small cities (Figure 4.5).

Marriage preferences: Love or arranged?

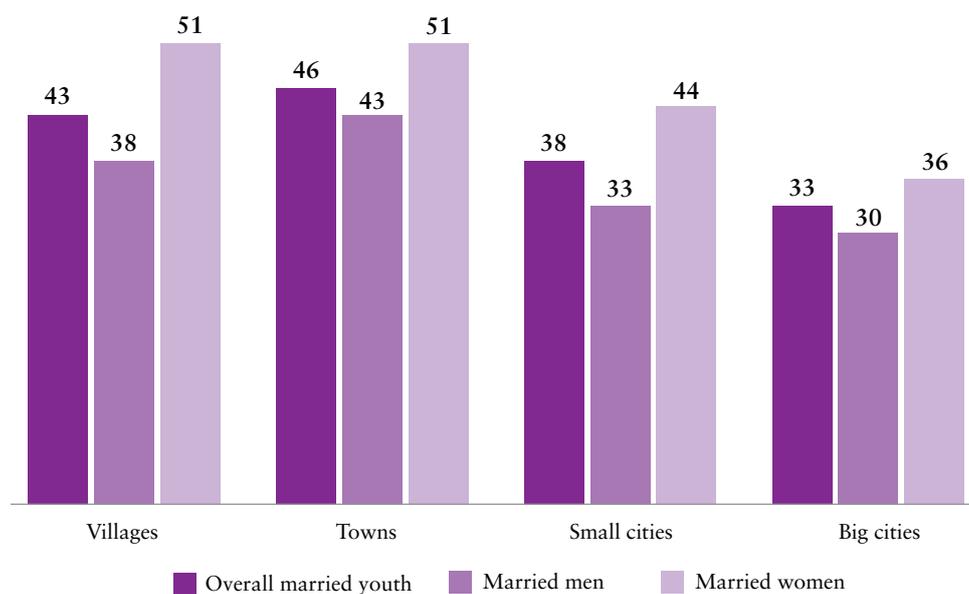
The institution of marriage has been in the process of slow but constant evolution. Traditionally, marriages were arranged by parents with minimal or no involvement of the couples. However, now there is greater realization that marriage is a deeply

Figure 4.4: Educated youth more likely to marry late



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.5: Married youth across localities



Note: All figures in percent.

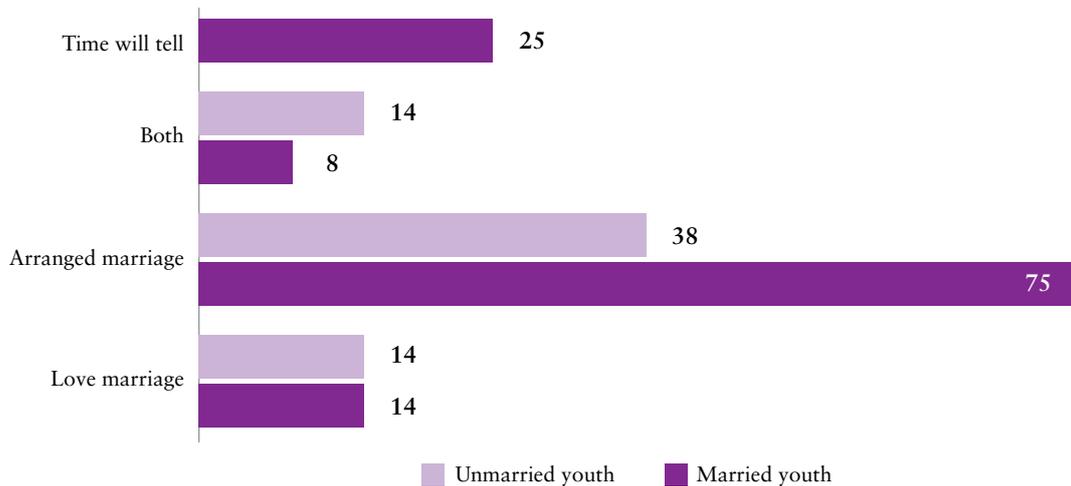
personal decision and requires the consent of the couple. It took many decades and a lot of cultural shifts for the people to opt for love marriages. When the married youth were asked about the kind of marriage they opted for, three in every four married youth said that their marriage was arranged by their parents and family. Fourteen percent of the married youth stated to have had a love marriage and eight percent of the youth said that they went in for a love-cum arranged marriage. The figure in the present study marks a significant difference when compared with the past youth study conducted in 2016, in which, overall six percent of the married youth said that they had a love marriage. When the unmarried youth in the study were asked about their marriage preferences, close to two-fifths (38%) of the youth

said that they would prefer a marriage arranged by their families; an equal proportion of unmarried youth (in reference to married youth) said that they would opt for a love marriage. At the same time, 14 percent of the unmarried youth said that they would go in for a love-cum arranged marriage. However, one-fourth of the unmarried youth were not sure and said that only time would tell which kind of marriage they would opt for (Figure 4.6).

Marriage preferences of married youth

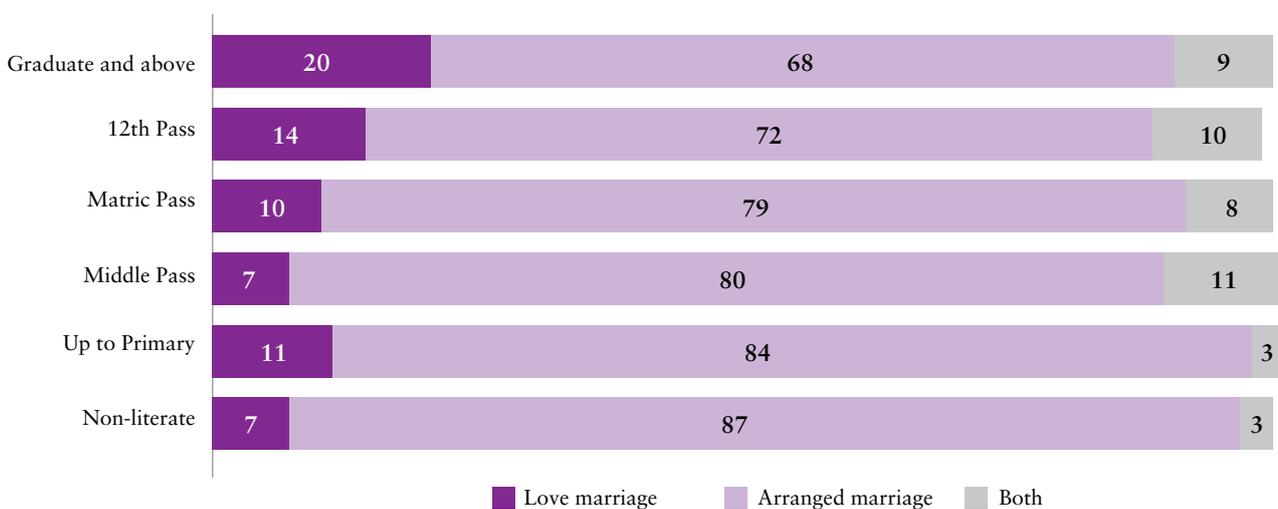
Amongst the married youth, close to four-fifths in the age bracket of 30-34 year-old had an arranged marriage and 11 percent said that their marriage was a love marriage. On the contrary, the proportion of love marriage was higher among the youth in the

Figure 4.6: Arranged marriages, a preferred choice of the youth



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.7: Love marriage more prevalent among the better educated



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

age bracket of 18-24 years where 16 percent of the youth said that their marriage was a love marriage. Additionally, 15 percent of the youth between 25-29-years also went in for a love marriage.

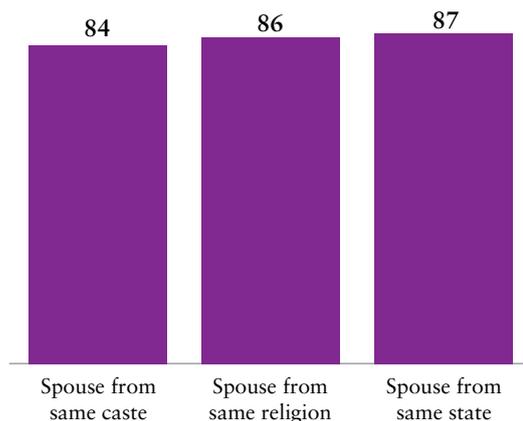
The data highlights how education allows youth to have a greater say in decision-making and greater autonomy. The findings show that one-fifth (20%) of the college educated youth had a love marriage, this proportion is a mere seven percent for the non-literates (Figure 4.7).

Locality is yet another factor to determine the type of marriage one would opt for. Married youth in the big cities were more likely to have a love marriage as compared to the youth residing in other localities. Close to one in every four (24%) married youth living in big cities had a love marriage. The corresponding figures for married youth having a love marriage in small cities, towns and villages were 18 percent, 16 percent and 11 percent respectively (Figure 4.8).

While arranging marriages, the families usually have some considerations in mind such as caste, religion, region etc. while choosing a partner for their children. The findings of the present study also point towards this trend (Figure 4.9). It is found that more than four in every five youth married within the same caste (84%), same religion (86%) and within the same state (87%).

There is a greater acceptance for inter-caste and inter-religion marriages in self-choice marriages as

Figure 4.9: More than 80% of the youth are married within same caste, religion and state



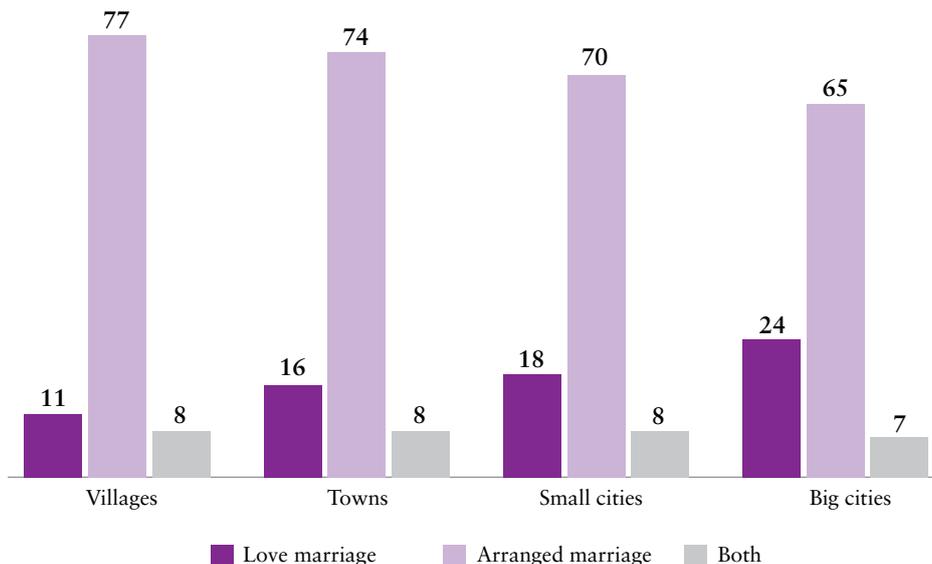
Note: All figures in percent.

opposed to arranged marriage. The findings suggest that among youth who opted for love marriage, two-thirds of them said that their spouse was from their own caste. This figure was nine out of ten among those who had an arranged marriage. This was also true for other factors such as religion and state (Figure 4.10).

Marriage preferences of unmarried youth

The youngest cohort of the unmarried youth were more inclined towards an arranged marriage as compared to the unmarried youth from other age brackets. Forty-one percent of the youth in the age group of 15-17 years (probably currently pursuing their studies) preferred an arranged marriage and

Figure 4.8: Love marriage preferred by married youth living in big cities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

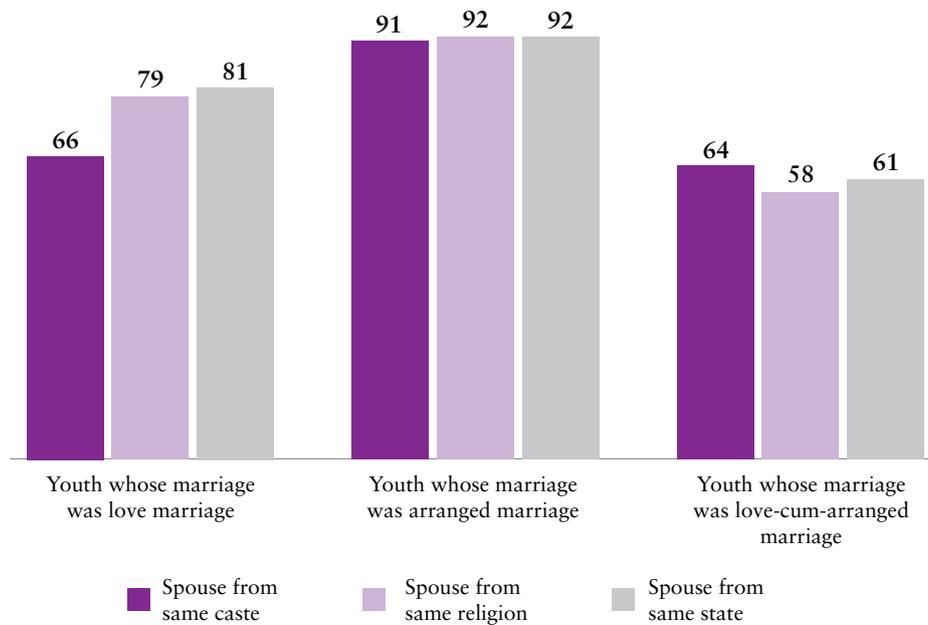
ten percent of them said that they would opt for a love marriage. Preference for marriage by choice was highest among youth in the age brackets of 18-24 and 25-29 years where one-sixth (16%) of the youth preferred love marriage. As far as preference for arranged marriage was concerned, it was the most preferred by the youngest i.e. 15-17 years (41%) as compared to 18-24 years (38%), 25-29 years (35%) and 30-34 years (36%). The oldest cohort was the most likely to opt for a love-cum arranged marriage. One-fifth (20%) of them said that they would prefer a love cum arranged marriage and 15 percent could not predict and left it for the future (Figure 4.11)

Gender-wise analysis of marriage preferences of unmarried youth suggest that young men, as

compared to young women, were more likely to prefer love marriage and the difference was almost double. Eighteen percent of the unmarried men said that they would prefer a love marriage against nine percent of unmarried women (Figure 4.12).

The impact of educational attainment on marriage choices is not similar among married and unmarried youth. It was observed that married youth having higher educational attainment opted for self-choice marriages but this was not fully true for unmarried youth. The non-literate unmarried youth were more likely (24%) to opt for love marriages but for all the other educational categories, the proportion of those preferring love marriage ranged between 12-16 percent (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.10: Importance attached to caste, religion and state declines in love marriages



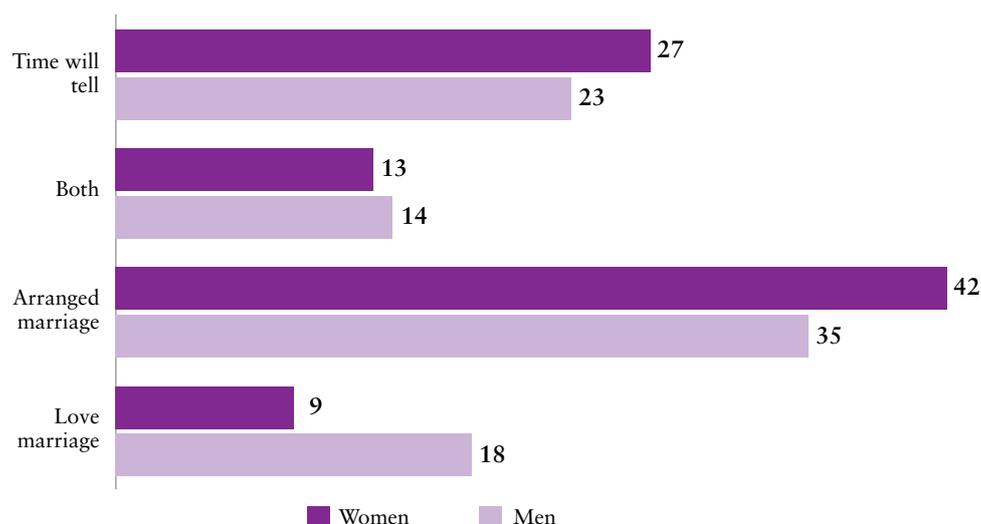
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.11: Preference for an arranged marriage greatest among the youngest



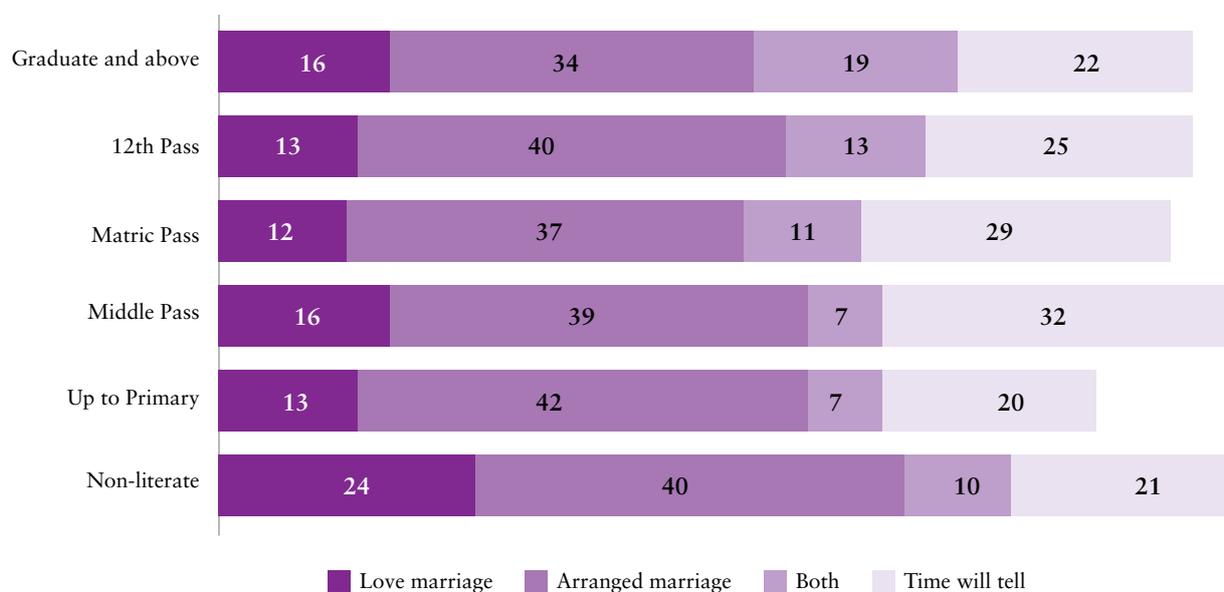
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.12: Marital preference of unmarried youth by gender



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.13: Marriage choices by educational attainment among unmarried youth



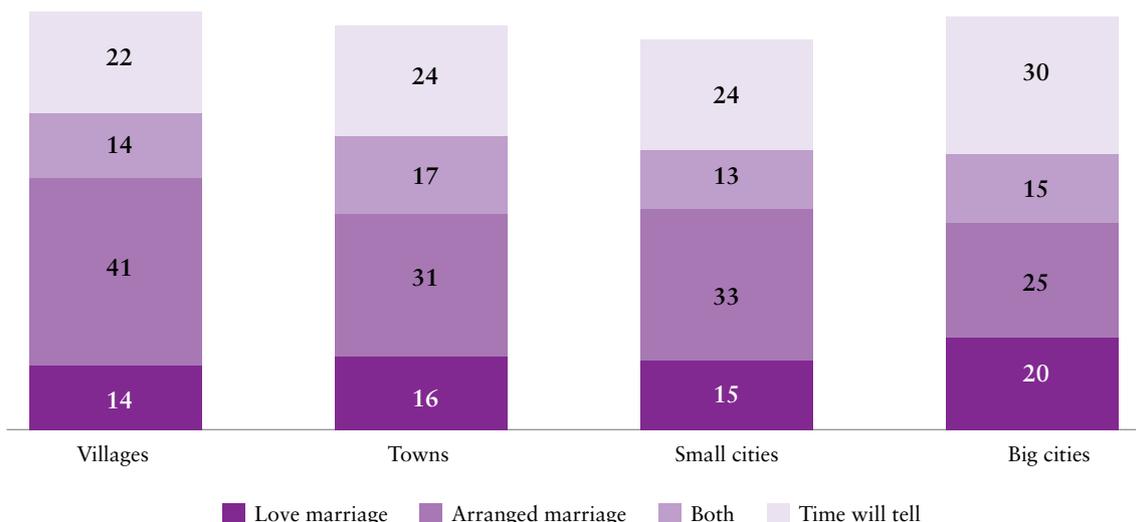
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Though the sentiment in favour of arranged marriage was visible across localities, its preference was much higher among unmarried youth living in villages. Two in four unmarried youth in villages preferred an arranged marriage and this ratio declined to one in every four among unmarried youth living in big cities. In big cities, two in every ten unmarried youth said that they would opt for a love marriage. (Figure 4.14).

An analysis of marriage preferences among different caste groups reveals that arranged

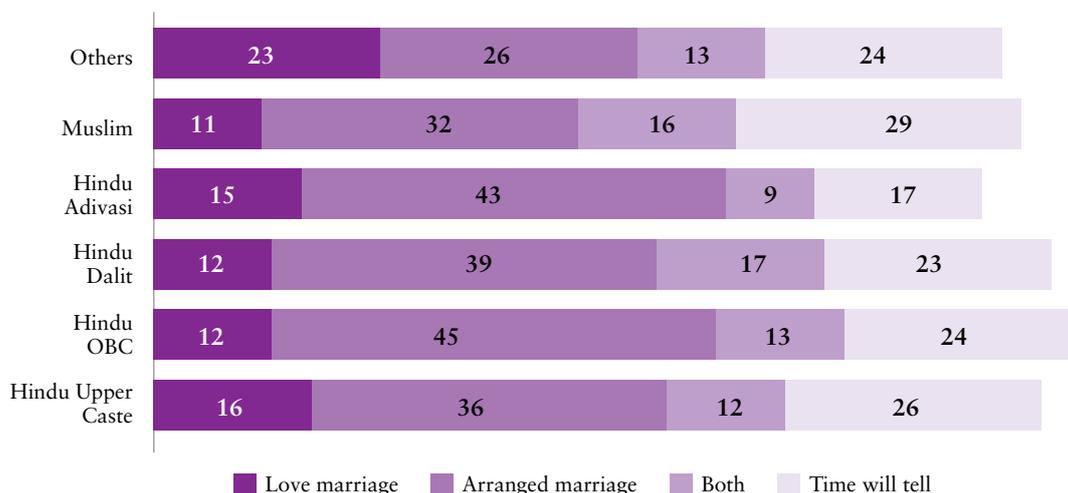
marriages were mostly preferred among youth belonging to Hindu OBC communities followed by Hindu Adivasi; 45 and 43 percent respectively. The preference for love marriage was more prominent among youth belonging to the non-Muslim religious minorities as close to one in every four (23%) of them said that they would prefer a love marriage. Another 26 percent of them said they would opt for an arranged marriage. This proportion was the least when compared to all the other caste communities. (Table 4.15).

Figure 4.14: Preference for love marriage greatest in big cities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.15: Preference for arranged marriage greatest among marginal communities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Perception of youth on marriage practices in India

Caste and religion have always been integral components of Indian society. In the past, marriages within the caste and religion have always been the norm of the Indian society. However, with modernization, democratization and development, Indian society has witnessed a lot of positive changes. The Indian youth too are being influenced by these recent trends. Compared to a decade ago, youth are now marrying later in life. This implies that to some extent, one is noticing a change as far as views on marriages are concerned. With this change, are the divisions regarding inter-caste and inter-religious marriages also changing? The study tries to delve

into what youth feels about these along with their opinion on love-affair between two boys and/or two girls and the question of divorce over an unhappy marriage.

Inter-caste & Inter faith marriages

The findings in the earlier sections show that though there is greater acceptance regarding late marriage, arranged marriages are still a preferred choice among the youth. Marriage outside the rigid boundaries of caste and religion has sometimes led to not so good consequences including ‘honour killing’ in some cases. We tried to tap into what the young Indians feel about inter-caste and inter-religious marriages along with acceptance of relationships between two boys and/or two girls. The data highlights that Indian

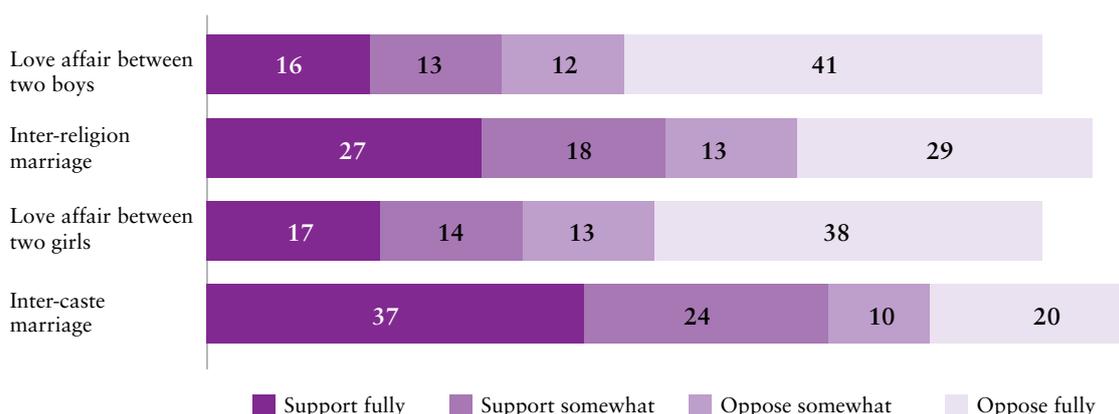
youth are quite receptive to the idea of inter-caste marriage. Six in ten youth (61%) were in support of marriage between a girl and a boy of different castes of which 37 percent were in full support and 24 percent provided somewhat support. However, in comparison, the support for inter-faith marriage is still not embraced well by youth at large with 45 percent of the youth standing in its favour. Of which, a little over a quarter (27%) fully supported it and 18 percent partially supported it (Figure 4.16).

Worldwide, there have been major changes in laws surrounding the issue of homosexuality. The present study tried to tap into youth's opinion on this and found that not many young Indians support same-sex relationships. Overall, 29 percent supported love affair between two boys (with 16 percent showing full support and 13 percent some support). More or less a similar proportion (31%) showed acceptance towards love affair between two girls (17 percent showing full support and 14 percent some support).

percent showing full support and 14 percent some support). No significant pattern was observed across youth from different gender, class, locality and even education on their views on homosexuality.

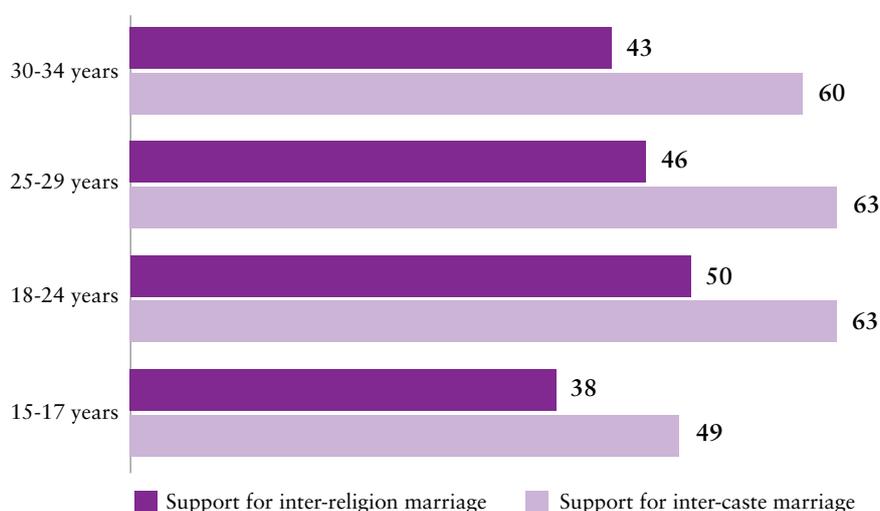
Disaggregating the acceptance for some marriage practices data by age reveals that the support for inter-caste marriage was the greatest amongst the youth in the age group of 18-29 years and least amongst the youngest cohort. Close to half (49%) the youth in the age group of 15 – 17 years supported inter-caste marriage, the corresponding figure for all other age groups was 60 percent and above. Inter-faith marriage, on the other hand, saw greater acceptability among youth in the age group of 18-24 years with five in every ten youngsters supporting it. Here too, the least support came from youth in the age groups of 15–17 years with only two in every six youngsters supporting it (Figure 4.17).

Figure 4.16: Youth's opinion on various marriage practices



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.17: Support for inter-caste and inter-religion marriage greatest among 18-24-year-old youth



Note: All figures in percent.

The data highlights that there was greater support for inter-caste marriage than inter-religious marriage across gender as well. However, women showed slightly higher support for inter-caste marriage compared to men (62% vs. 59% respectively). On the question of inter-faith marriage, an equal proportion of young men and women (46% each) approved such marriages. However, when we look at the perception of youth on inter-caste and inter-religion marriages across various caste communities, it was found that the overall support for inter-caste marriage was higher than inter-religion marriage. Close to six of ten Hindu youth (ranging from 58% among OBCs to 65% in Upper castes or Adivasi communities) supported inter-caste marriages and close to half of the Hindu youth supported inter-religious marriages. Among Muslim youth, the support for both the marriage practices was the lowest; 30 percent of the Muslim youth supported inter-religious marriages and support for inter-caste marriages was extended by 46 percent. On the contrary, youngsters from non-Muslim religious minorities were most likely to support inter-caste and inter-faith marriages. Close to three-fourths (73%) supported inter-caste marriages and close to two-thirds (65%) supported inter-religion marriages (Figure 4.18).

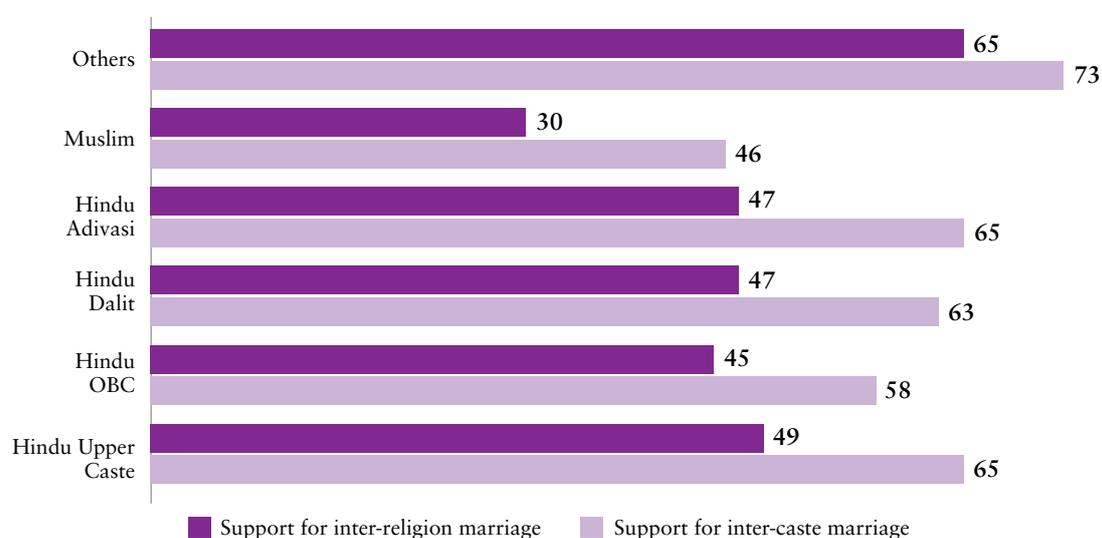
It is also observed that with higher levels of education, acceptance for both inter-caste and inter-religious marriages goes up significantly. Seven in ten youth (71%) who have completed their graduation were in support of inter-caste marriages and 56

percent were in support of inter-faith marriages. On the contrary, the figure slides down to 39 percent for inter-caste marriages and 29 percent for inter-religion marriages among the non-literate youth (Figure 4.19).

The rural society is more closely knit, compared to the urban society. In such a closely knit (rural) society, the acceptance for inter-cultural marriages was lower compared to the urban localities. The findings show that, close to three in five youth in rural areas supported inter-caste marriages and two-fifths (43%) of them supported inter-religious marriages. Whereas, in big cities, close to three-fourths of the youth supported inter-caste marriages and three-fifths supported inter-religious marriages. Youth in urban areas displayed a higher acceptance for both inter-caste and inter-religious marriages and as the level of urbanity goes up, the support for both inter-caste and inter-religion marriages also increases (Figure 4.20).

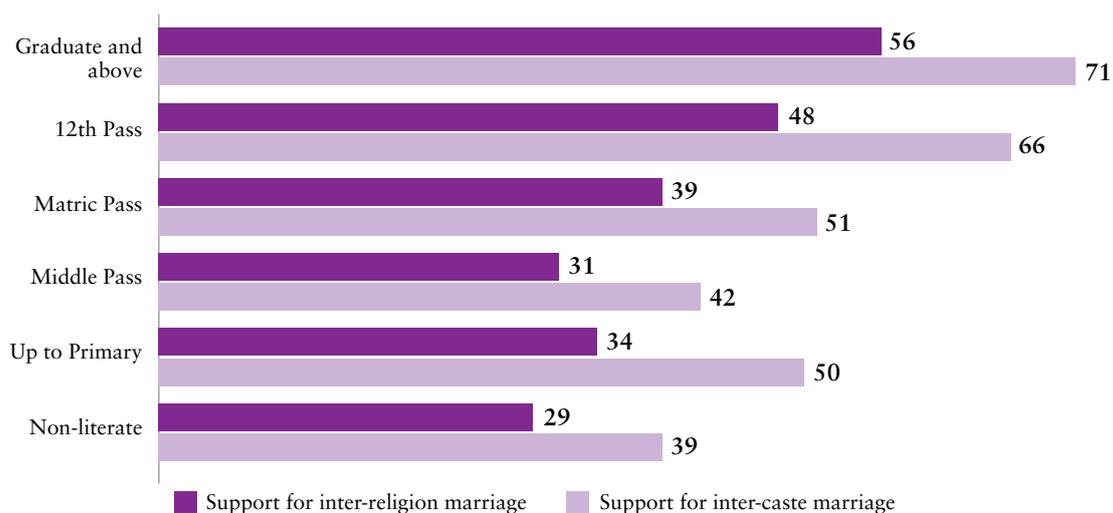
Preference for inter-caste marriage was as high as 81 percent and inter-religious marriage at 70 percent among the married youth whose marriage was a love marriage. Contrary to this, a much lower proportion of 53 and 34 percent of the youth whose marriage was an arranged marriage supported inter-caste and inter-religion marriages respectively. A similar response pattern is observed when we look at the acceptability for inter-caste and inter-religious marriages among the unmarried youth (Table 4.1).

Figure 4.18: Support for inter-caste and inter-religious marriages by caste group



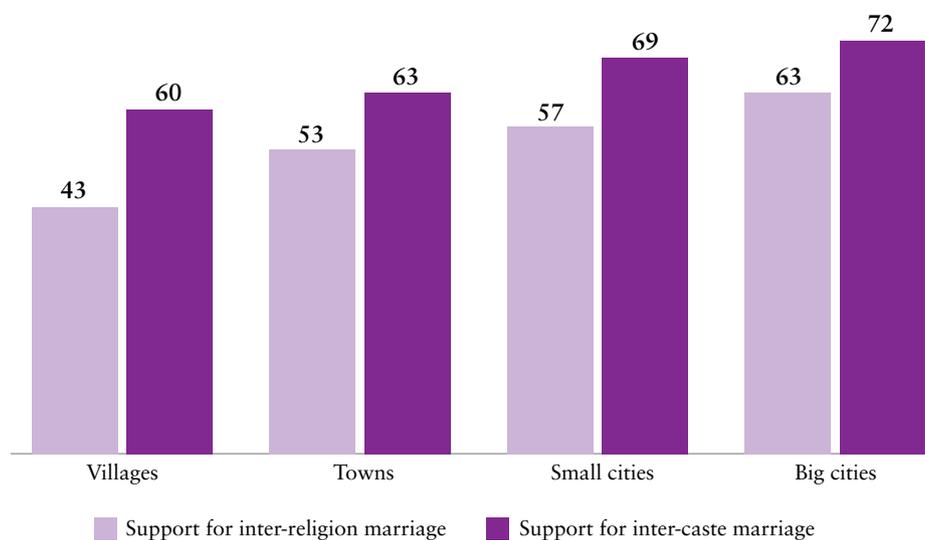
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.19: With higher educational attainment, the acceptance for inter-cultural marriages increases



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 4.20: Youth in urban areas displayed a higher support for inter-caste and inter-religion marriages



Note: All figures in percent.

Table 4.1: Youth who preferred love marriage supported inter-caste and inter-religion marriages

	Support for inter-caste marriage	Support for inter-religion marriage
Youth whose marriage was a love marriage	81	70
Youth whose marriage was an arranged marriage	53	34
Youth whose marriage was a love cum arranged marriage	66	45
Youth who preferred a love marriage	84	75
Youth who preferred an arranged marriage	56	44
Youth who preferred a love cum arranged marriage	72	64

Note: All figures in percent.

It has already been reported that the support for inter-religious marriages was comparatively lower than inter-caste marriages among Indian youth. This difference can be explained in terms of the structural barriers in India. In India, some states have passed a law to regulate inter-faith marriages popularly known as ‘love jihad law’. The present study tried to tap into the awareness about this law and their opinion on this law in general. We found that only one-third were aware about such a law and among them, only 36 percent of them supported it (Figure 4.21).

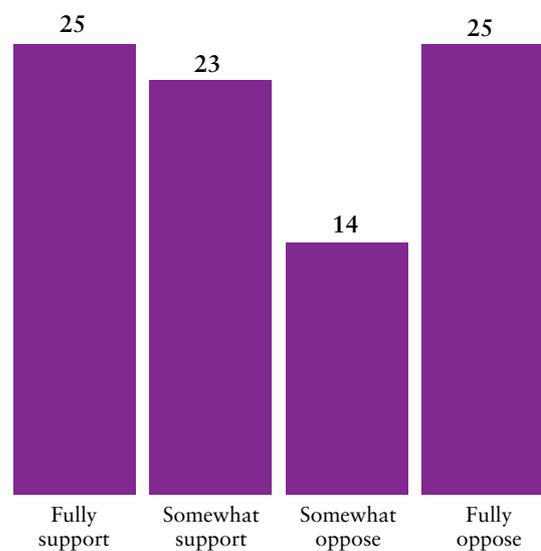
When we look at the level of awareness and support for love jihad law among youth belonging to different caste and communities, it was found that close to half of the Muslim youth have heard about the law; whereas, among other caste and communities, the awareness was lower than 26 percent except for youth belonging to Hindu upper castes. Two-fifths of the Hindu upper castes were aware about the law. However, when it comes to supporting this law, the support was much higher among youth from Hindu Adivasi communities (52%) followed by Hindu Dalit (45%) and Hindu OBCs (41%). The least support was found among youth belonging to Muslim communities (Figure 4.21).

Divorce over a troublesome or unhappy marriage

Divorce is considered as a stigma for a family in general and for women in particular. Choosing

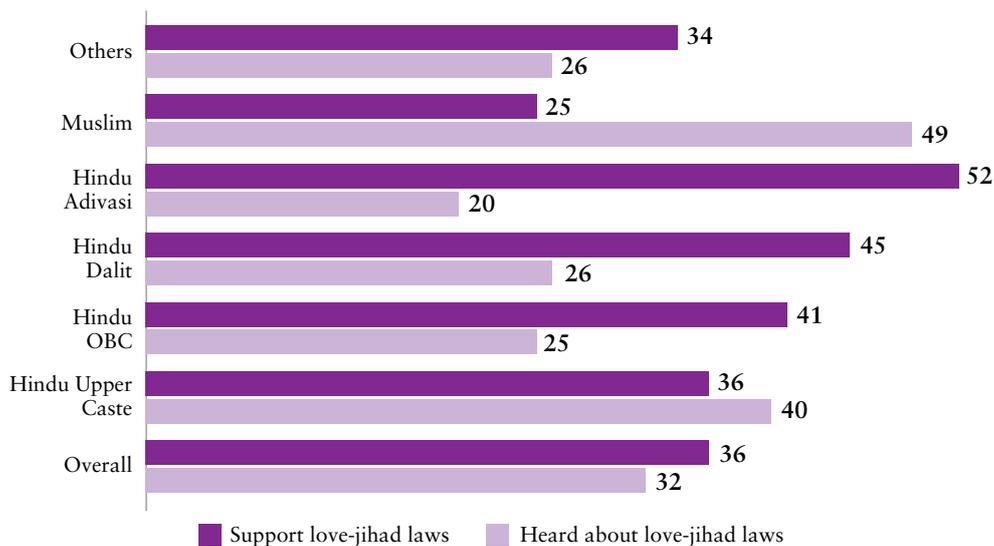
to break away from a marriage is not perceived positively, even if the marriage is an unhappy one. Though there is greater acceptance of it now, still those who decide to divorce are made to feel a sense of shame and failure, more so, if it is a woman. Divorce is still a taboo subject and we tried to tap into what young Indians feel about the same. The data shows that close to half the youth (48%) were in support of divorce over an unhappy marriage. Among them, a quarter were in full support and 23 percent gave partial support (Figure 4.22).

Figure 4.22: Support for divorce over a troublesome marriage



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.21: Awareness and support towards love-jihad law



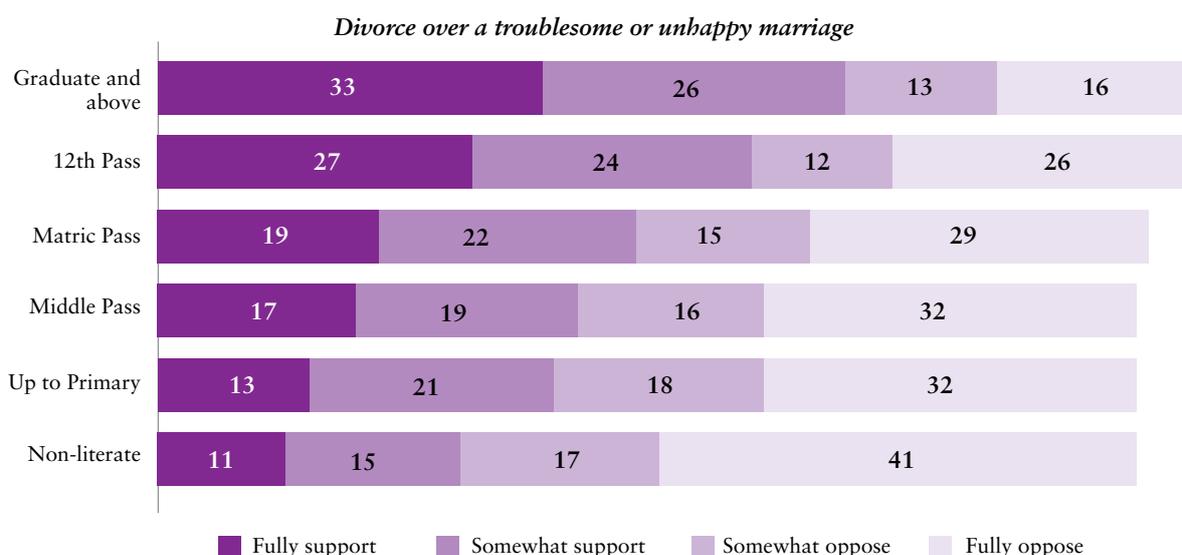
Note: All figures in percent.

A quarter of the youth completely rejected the idea of divorce even in the case of troublesome marriage. The data further suggests that the acceptance for divorce was much higher among youth who have availed higher education as compared to those who have not availed much education or had no education (Figure 4.23). Close to one in ten (11%) non-literate youth fully supported the idea of divorce over a troublesome or unhappy marriage whereas, two in five (41%) were completely unsupportive of the same. On the other hand, one in three graduate

youth fully supported divorce and 16 percent were completely opposed to it. The data suggest that, as the level of educational attainment among youth increases, the acceptance for divorce over a troublesome marriage also increases. This effect of education can be seen across gender as well.

In general, there was not much difference in the opinion of men and women on the issue of divorce; but as the level of education increases the acceptance for divorce over troublesome marriage also increases among women. Figure 4.24 indicates

Figure 4.23: The acceptance for divorce over troublesome marriage is higher among educated youth



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.24: Acceptance for divorce over troublesome marriage increases among both men and women with higher educational attainment



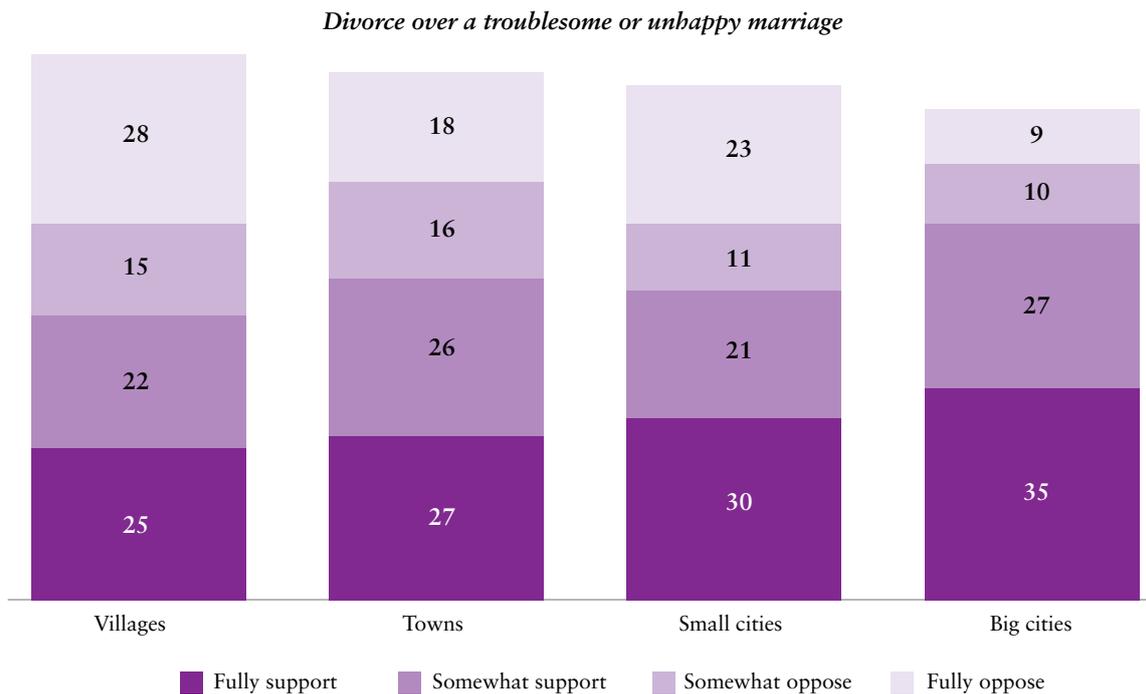
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

that a mere eight percent of the non-literate women fully supported the idea of divorce whereas, this number goes up to 35 percent among women who are graduate or educated beyond that.

As mentioned earlier, the process of urbanization has changed the perception of marriages and traditions associated with it. The data suggests that acceptance of divorce over troublesome marriage was comparatively higher among youth residing in urban localities as compared to the rural localities.

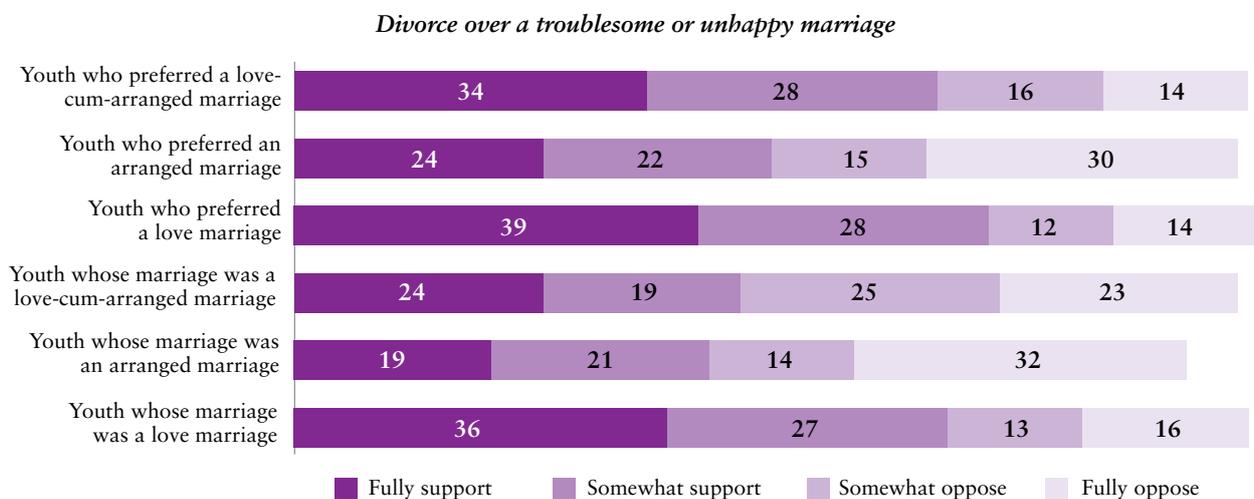
One-fourth of the youth living in rural areas fully supported divorce whereas, close to one in three fully rejected the idea of divorce in a troublesome marriage. On the other hand, the proportion of those who support divorce among urban youth was greater than those who opposed it. In big cities, 35 percent of the youth fully supported the idea of divorce over a troublesome marriage whereas, only nine percent were fully opposed to it (Figure 4.25). Marriage in itself is an expensive affair, especially in reference to the dowry system. Parents have to spend their

Figure 4.25: Support for divorce over troublesome marriage was higher among urban youth



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 4.26: Acceptance for divorce was higher among youth who preferred love marriage or married youth who had a love marriage



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

savings for marriages; therefore, it is believed that divorce would cause further financial dependency of the estranged daughter on the families. The findings of the study support this point to some extent as it was observed, that where a little over one-third (34%) of the youth belonging to the upper economic classes fully supported the idea of getting divorced over an unhappy marriage; this figure drops to one-fifth (21%) for the poor.

We also tried to tap the perception of married and unmarried youth on divorce over unhappy marriage. It was found that among youth whose marriage was a love marriage, a little over one-third (36%) of them fully supported the idea of getting a divorce in case of troublesome marriage whereas, 16 percent of them opposed it. On the other hand, a little less than one in five (19%) youth whose marriage was an arranged marriage supported divorce, close to one-third (32%) were in full disagreement. A similar trend was observed among unmarried youth, where youth who preferred love marriage were more likely to support divorce as compared to those who preferred an arranged marriage (Figure 4.26).

Conclusion

To sum up, the attitudes, preferences and practices of Indian youth, with respect to marriage have

undergone some changes. There is a decline in the overall proportion of married youth over a decade and a half. Youth are now preferring to marry late. The marriage age among the young has shifted from mid-twenties to late-twenties. The reduction in the proportion of married youth has taken place among both young men and young women.

Arranged marriages are still a preferred choice among Indian youth; but in comparison to the past, youth are now tilting towards love or love cum arranged marriages, especially youth who are better educated and residing in cities. However, while selecting partners, social identities such as caste, religion and region takes a centre stage and more than 80 percent of the married youth went in for an intra-caste and intra-faith marriage within their states. However, in love marriages, the importance of these factors went down to an extent.

Indian youth seem quite receptive to the idea of inter-caste marriage. But in comparison, the support for inter-faith marriage is still not embraced well by the youth at large. There is also acceptance to the idea of divorce over a troublesome marriage with close to half of the youth supporting it. The data shows that the education level of youth appears to be making them more flexible in their views on marriage and marital practices.

Educational Attainment and Career Choices of Indian Youth

Section 5



Students wearing protective face masks taking Gujarat Common Entrance Test (GUJCET) while maintaining social distance amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, inside a classroom in Ahmedabad, India, August 24, 2020. REUTERS/Amit Dave

Educational Attainment and Career Choices of Indian Youth

Introduction

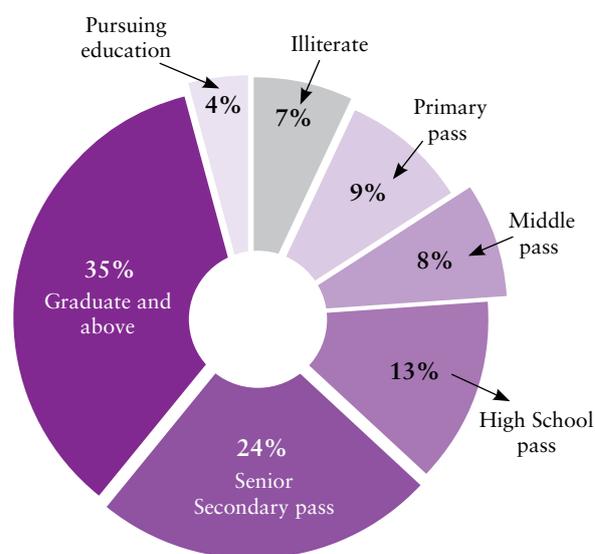
Education is the first building block for a good career. Those aspiring for higher education hope that the learnings would help them do well professionally. In recent times, while there has been a stress on the formal education process, skill development or vocational training has become an important focus of attention. From the prism of employability, these skills are increasingly seen as being important. In fact, it is today quite common to see partnerships (involving different sectors) working towards the twin objectives of expanding literacy and helping young people develop skills as a pathway for securing a better livelihood. With an increased focus on education, it is believed that for modern India, higher education is an integral requirement for enhancing one's employability. This section seeks to explore the current educational profile of Indian youth and their occupational engagement. The section also tries to tap the job aspirations of Indian youth. This section also explores the factors that make a few career choices and avenues appear more favourable than others.

Educational profile of Indian youth

Figure 5.1 reflects the educational profile of Indian youth surveyed in this study. Overall, a little over one-third (35%) had completed their graduation and another one-fourth (24%) had completed senior secondary. Two of every ten (21%) were either high school or middle school pass. Less than one of every ten (9%) were primary pass and a few were illiterate (7%) (Figure 5.1).

The various age cohorts among youth have variations in their educational attainment. For instance, amongst the youngest segment of the population (aged between 15-17 years), one-sixth

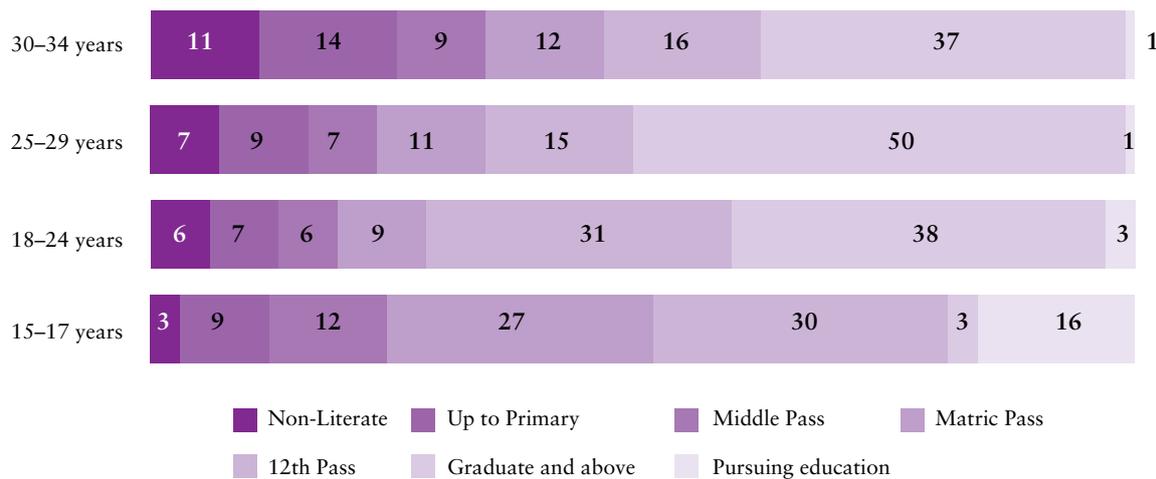
Figure 5.1: A little over one-third of Indian youth are graduate



(16%) are still pursuing their studies. However, three of every ten (30%) had completed senior secondary school and little over one-fourth – (27%) had studied up to matric. The proportion of graduates was highest among youth falling in the age bracket of 25-29 years. However, close to two-fifths of the youth in the age groups of 18-24 and 30-34 years were also graduates. The reason for the former having less proportion of the graduates as compared to the 25-29 age cohort could be that this age group is still pursuing their studies and just reported latest degree which is senior secondary - reported by three of every ten (31%) of the youth in the age group of 18-24 years (Figure 5.2).

The level of educational attainment varies across caste communities. The level of educational attainment was higher among caste or communities belonging to the upper strata of the social hierarchy. A little over two-fifths (44%) of the youth belonging to the Hindu upper-caste were graduates whereas

Figure 5.2: Younger ones are still pursuing their studies, whereas half of the youth aged between 25-29 years have completed their graduation



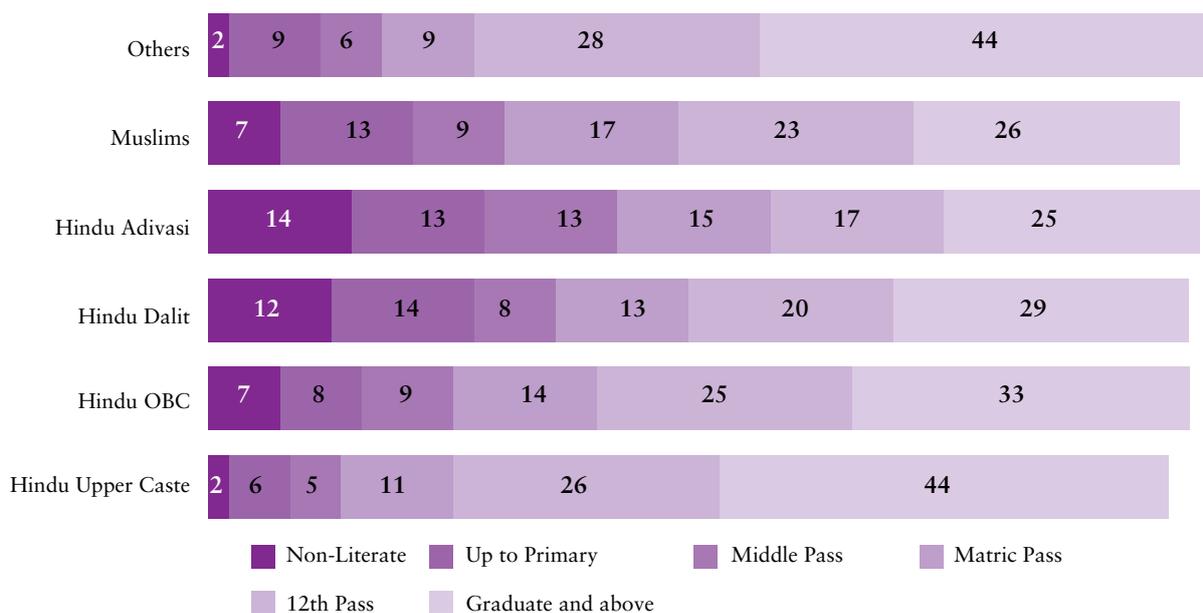
Note: All figures in percent.

the educational attainment was lower among the youth belonging to the Hindu Dalit and Hindu Adivasi communities. On the other hand, higher education attainment was lower among Muslim youth as compared to the youth from the other religious minorities. In the study, a little over one-fourth of the Muslim youth were graduates, whereas 44 percent of the youth belonging to the other religious minority communities have graduation degrees (Figure 5.3).

Along with social status, the economic status of the youth also affects their educational attainment.

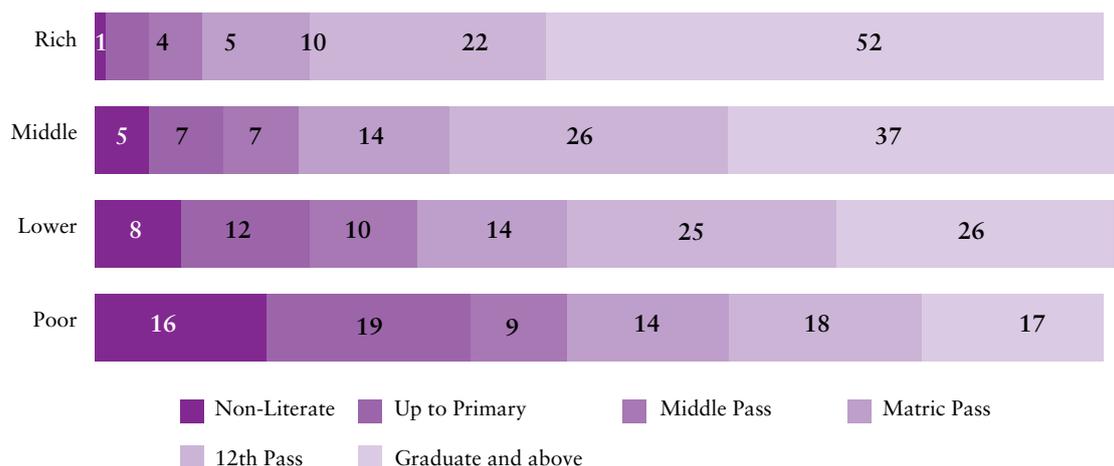
Availing higher education is not affordable for each economic segment. Even the findings from the youth study suggest the same association between economic class and educational attainment among the youth. A little over half (52%) of the youth from the upper economic class have completed graduation and a little less than two in every five (37%) of the youth from the middle class have availed higher education. Nonetheless, 17 percent of the youth from the poor economic class have completed their graduation; but at the same time, 16 percent of the poor youth were non-literate (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.3: More graduates are from Hindu upper castes, whereas only one-fourth of the Hindu Adivasi completed graduation



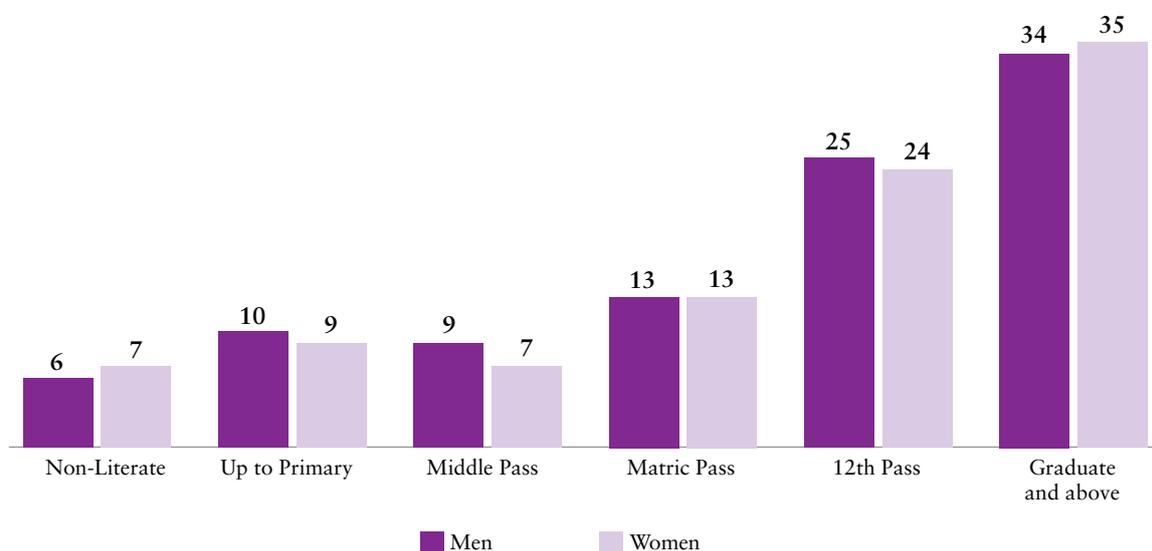
Note: All figures in percent. The rest are pursuing their education.

Figure 5.4: The economic status of the Indian youth describes their educational attainment



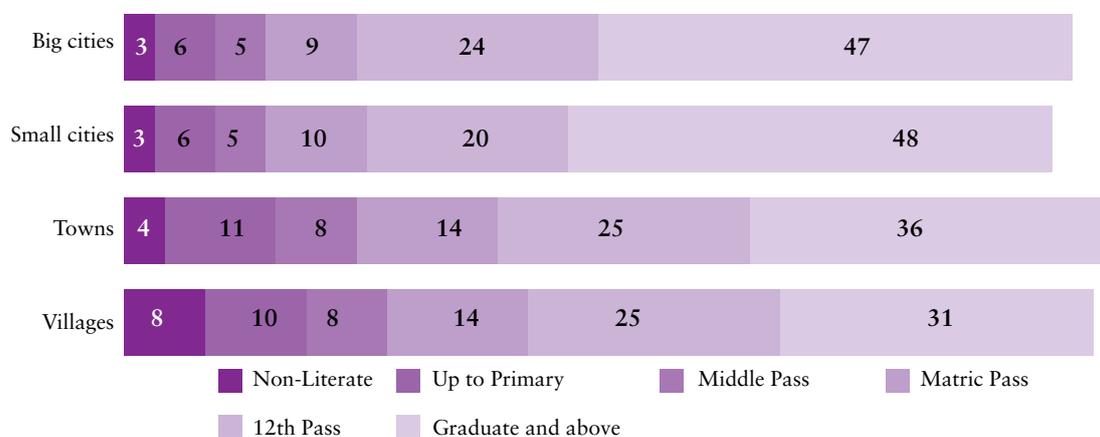
Note: All figures in percent. The rest are pursuing their education.

Figure 5.5: Both young men and women have similar levels of educational attainment



Note: All figures in percent. The rest are pursuing their education.

Figure 5.6: Level of urbanity impact the educational attainment of Indian youth



Note: All figures in percent. The rest are pursuing their education.

The gender of the youth does not have any impact on the educational attainment as it was observed that both men and women have almost similar patterns of educational attainment; though marginally more young women are graduates as compared to young men (Figure 5.5).

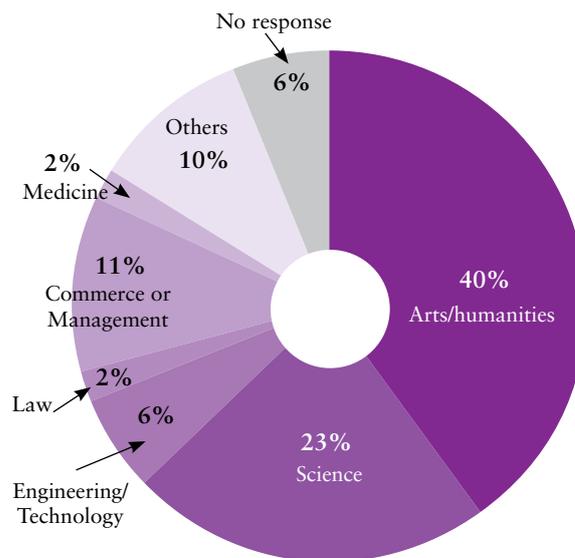
Figure 5.6 presents the level of educational attainment across various localities and the findings suggest that the level of urbanity has a relation with the higher educational attainment. Close to half of the youth living in the cities (47% in big cities and 48% in small cities) are graduates. On the other hand, 31 percent of youth in villages and 36 percent of youth in towns have completed their graduation (Figure 5.6).

Fields/streams of study Indian youth opted for

There are various fields of study which students choose after completing their high school. While making choices regarding the field to study, amongst the various considerations, career becomes the important factor. Youth in the present study preferred arts and humanities as a common field of study - two-fifths of the youth either studied it or are pursuing their education in this field. After arts and humanities, science was the second most preferred field of study - close to one in every four (23%) young persons have opted for this stream. Commerce and management was preferred by one of every ten (11%) of the youth and six percent have opted for Engineering and Technology (Figure 5.7). In post-liberalized India, there was a boom in the information and technology (IT) industry and this was the phase when many engineering and technology colleges mushroomed across India. Parents were pushing their wards to get admission in this field and youth themselves were attracted towards such courses. But in recent times, there is a decline in the preference for engineering subjects and there are several reports which indicated that many engineering colleges were on the verge of shutting down.¹

¹ Gohain, M.P. (2018, April 8). Number of engineering seats to go down by 80,000 this year. Retrieved from: AICTE: Number of engineering seats to go down by 80,000 this year - Times of India (indiatimes.com). Accessed on 22 October 2021 and Malik, Sagar. (2021, July 28). Engineering seats in India drop to lowest in a decade. Retrieved from: <https://www.newsbytesapp.com/news/india/engineering-seats-lowest-in-a-decade-in-india/story>. Accessed on 22 October 2021

Figure 5.7: Arts and humanities followed by science is the most preferred field of study among Indian youth



Note: Figures are only for those who are in/have completed the senior secondary school or above.

When we look at the age-wise preference while choosing the field of study, it was observed that arts and humanities was the most preferred field across all the age groups, though the older age group (between 30-34 years) were more likely to opt for arts and humanities (43%) as compared to the youngest cohort (35%). Science as a field of study was mostly preferred by the youngest youth (15-17 years); one-third of them are studying science and a little over one-fourth of the youth in the age group of 18-24 years also studied or currently pursuing science subjects. There was not much of a difference for science as a preference in the remaining two age groups. The preference for commerce and management was higher among older age groups as compared to the younger ones. As discussed earlier, the preference for engineering and technology has declined and only two percent of the youngest youth cohort preferred this stream whereas, it was slightly higher in proportion among the youth from the other age groups (Figure 5.8).

The variation in the field of study was also observed across various localities. For instance, the youth living in villages were more likely to study arts and humanities – 42 percent of the rural youth opted for arts and humanities. On the other hand, the probability of youth living in urban areas studying arts and humanities goes down as compared to rural youth. Close to one-third of urban youth opted for

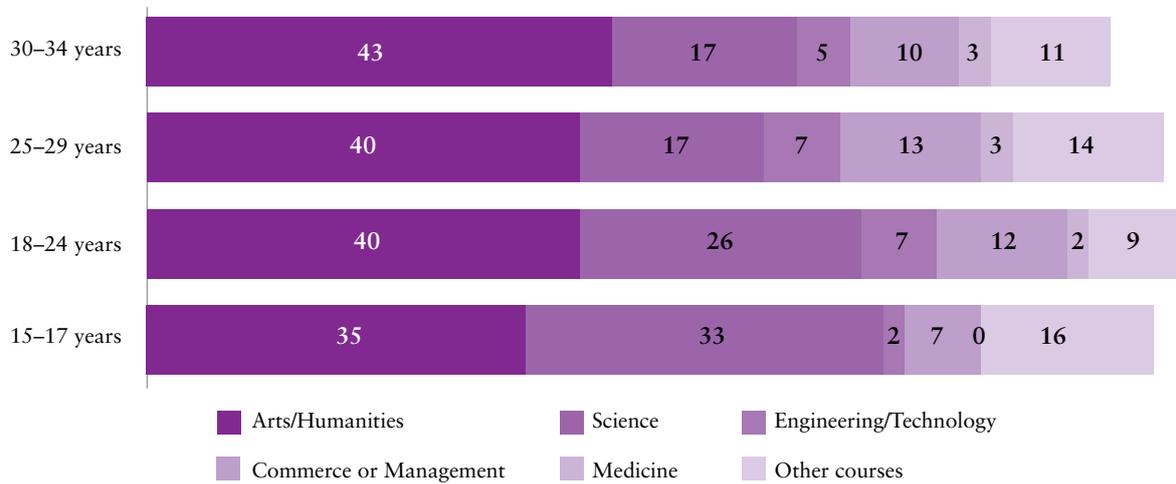
arts and humanities. Youth in urban areas were more inclined towards the subjects related to commerce and management as compared to the rural youth. The preference for science subjects was somewhat similar across all the localities. At the same time, 11 percent of the youth living in small cities also preferred engineering and technology as their field of study (Figure 5.9).

Education, especially higher education in India is considerably costly and not many people can afford the professional courses, which are even costlier. In the present study also, it was found that the youth from upper economic backgrounds were more likely to study subjects other than arts and humanities and poor youth preferred to study arts and humanities.

Close to half (49%) of the poor youth opted for arts subjects whereas, among the more well to do, a little less than one-third (32%) preferred arts and humanities. However, close to the same proportion (29%) of the youth belonging to the upper economic groups preferred science subjects and 14 percent opted for commerce and management. Getting admission in these subjects is competitive and students take coaching and do intense preparations for it and people have to invest money and time to study these subjects which the poor cannot easily do (Figure 5.10).

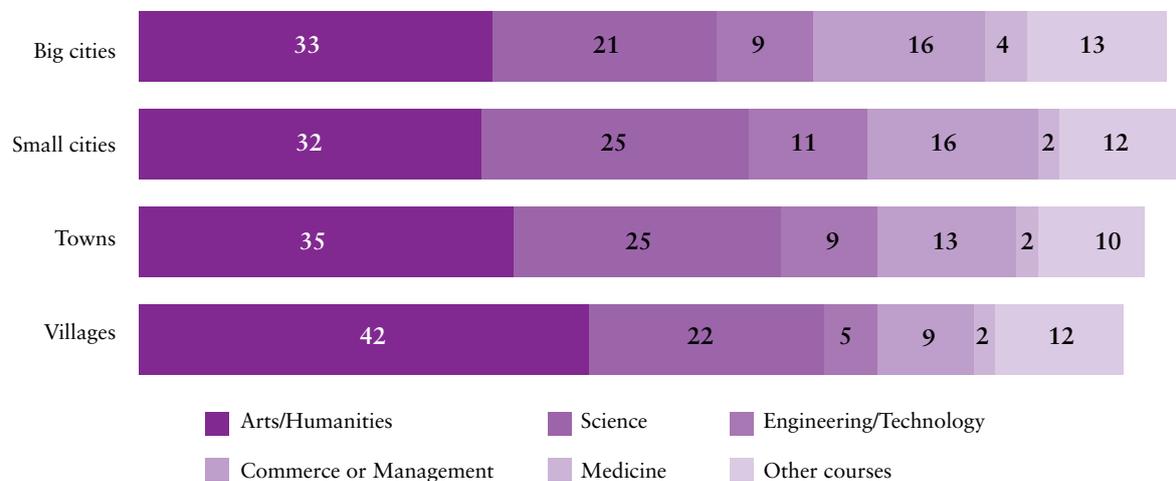
Studies have indicated that those from marginalized castes in India are less likely to pursue their higher education and especially the courses

Figure 5.8: The younger cohort (aged between 15-17 years) preferred science subjects



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 5.9: Preference for fields of study other than arts and humanities increases in urban localities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

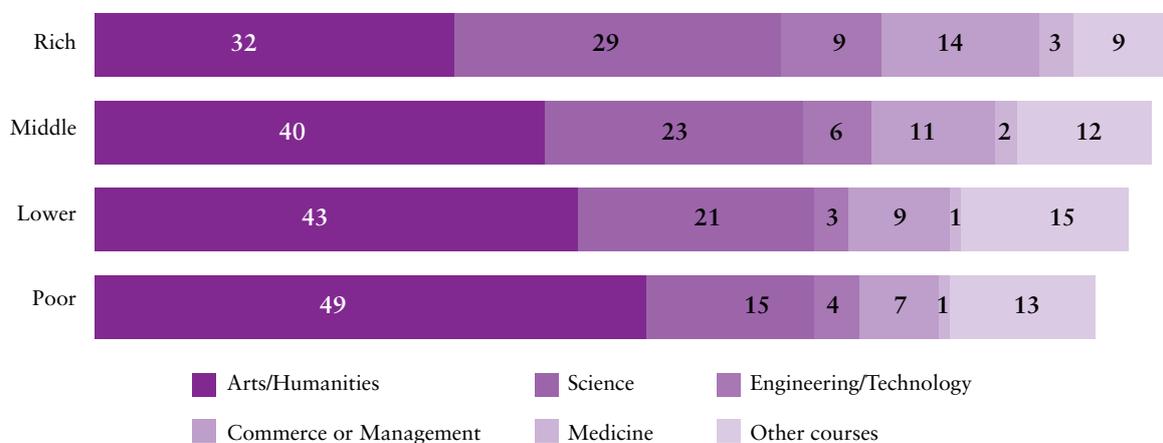
which are more job orientated.² The present study found that youth belonging to the forward Hindu castes and non-Muslim religious minorities were less likely to study arts and humanities as compared to youth belonging to other caste and communities. Youth from these caste communities (upper caste and non-Muslim minorities) are more likely to study science, commerce, management and engineering and technology. Reversely, Hindu youth belonging to Adivasi and Dalit castes were more likely to choose

subjects from arts and humanities; 51 percent and 45 percent respectively (Figure 5.11).

Similarly, young women as compared to young men were more likely to study arts and humanities – 45 percent of the young women said that they preferred arts as their field of study whereas 35 percent of young men chose arts and humanities. On the other hand, more young men preferred science, engineering & technology, commerce and management as compared to women. Interestingly, women were more likely to opt for medicine as compared to men (Figure 5.12).

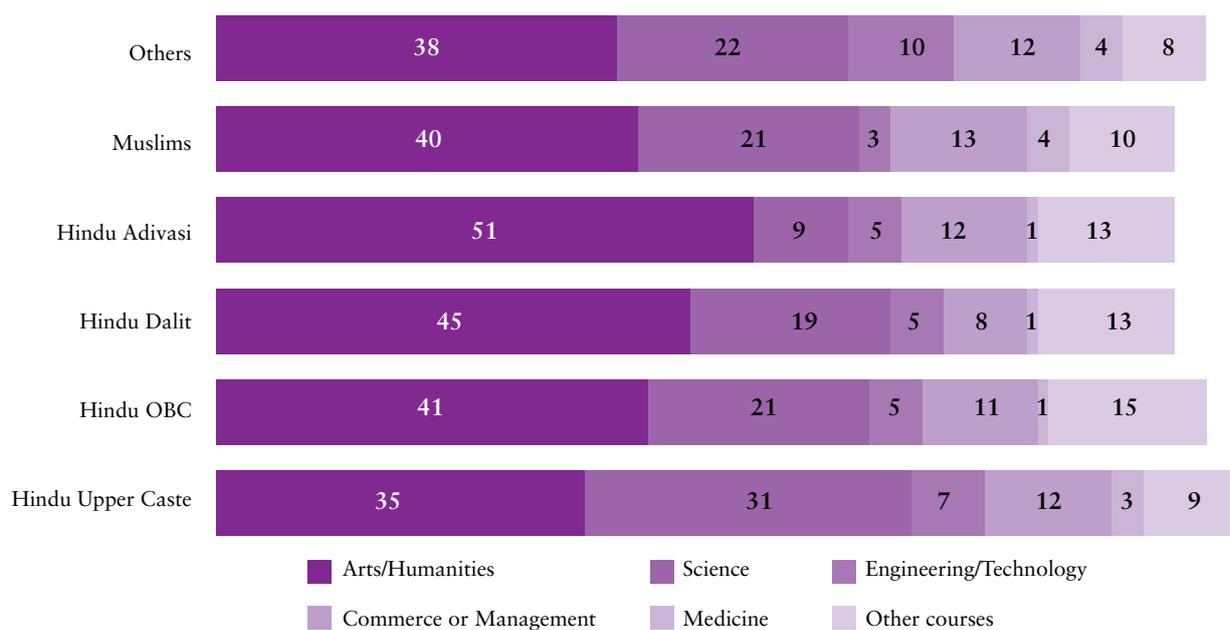
2 Rukmini S., (2019, September 10). India's unequal university system. Available at <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/still-too-few-dalits-in-indian-colleges-1568013598781.html>. Accessed on 22 October 2021

Figure 5.10: Youth belonging to upper economic classes are more likely to study professional subjects



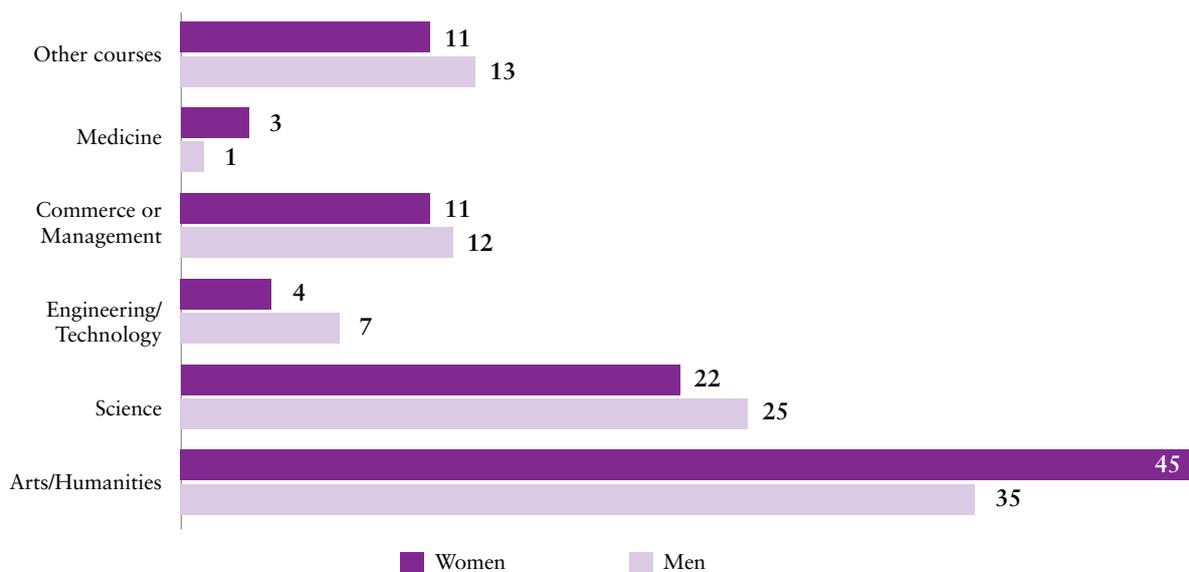
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 5.11: Forward Hindu castes and non-Muslim religious minorities were more likely to choose the professional field of study



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 5.12: Young men chose more professional courses as compared to young women



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

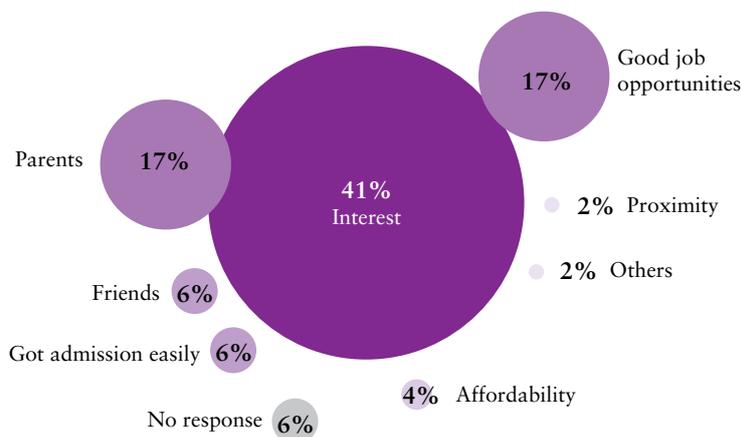
Reason for choosing the current field of study

There are several reasons which drive young people to choose a field of study they want to pursue in their higher education. In the present study, youth shared their reasons for choosing the particular subjects which they studied or students who are currently pursuing their studies in those subjects. The biggest reason which was stated by two out of every five (41%) young Indians was their own interest in the subject. People also get influenced by their family and friends for choosing the field of study. For instance, 17 percent of youth opted for the subjects because their parents and other family members urged them to opt for and six percent said that they studied those subjects because their friends were also studying the same subjects. It is

believed that good educational qualification leads to a good career option and people focus on job-oriented education. The findings suggest that a little less than one-fifth (17%) of the youth said that they choose their field of study keeping the possibility of getting good job opportunities in mind. The data also suggested that for the youth who studied commerce and management and other vocational courses, 30 percent of them said that they chose this stream because they wanted to get a good job. The other reasons were affordability, distance to educational institutions and easy admission in that stream (Figure 5.13).

The data also shows that youth across each age group responded in similar ways with somewhat marginal differences for each reason. However, the job-oriented education was of much concern for the

Figure 5.13: Students’ own interest in the subject was the driving factor for preferring their field of study

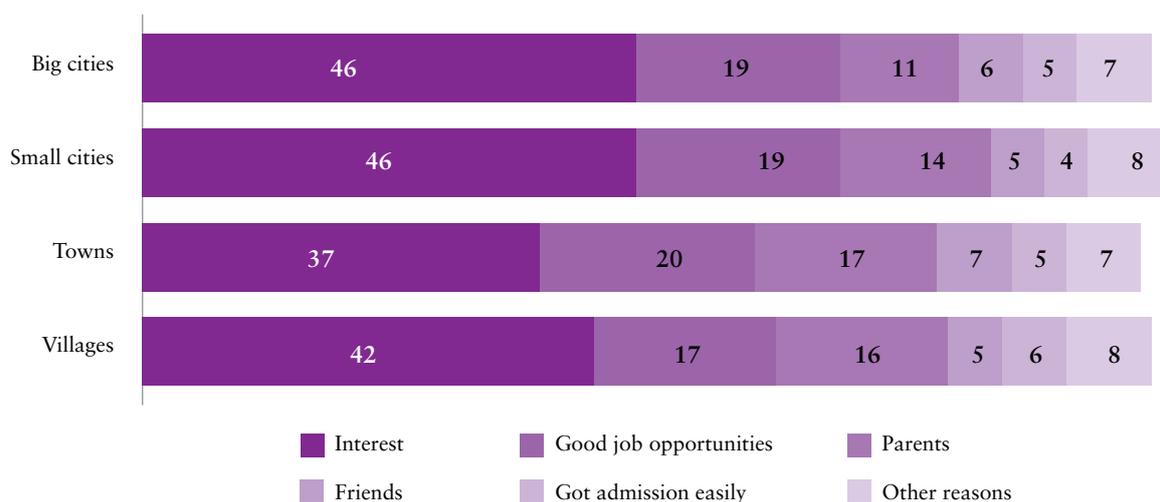


youth in the age group of 18-24 years (19% said that they chose the field because they wanted to get good employment opportunities) as compared to the youth belonging to the other age cohorts. Not much variation was observed across genders while stating the reasons for choosing their field of study; though a slight difference was observed in the response when the proximity to the institute was stated as a reason for choosing the field of study. More young women (two percentage points higher than the average response) as compared to the young men said that they chose that particular course because the institute was close to their place of residence. The mobility of women somehow drove them to choose their field of study.

Youth across localities stated different reasons for choosing their field of study. For instance, the

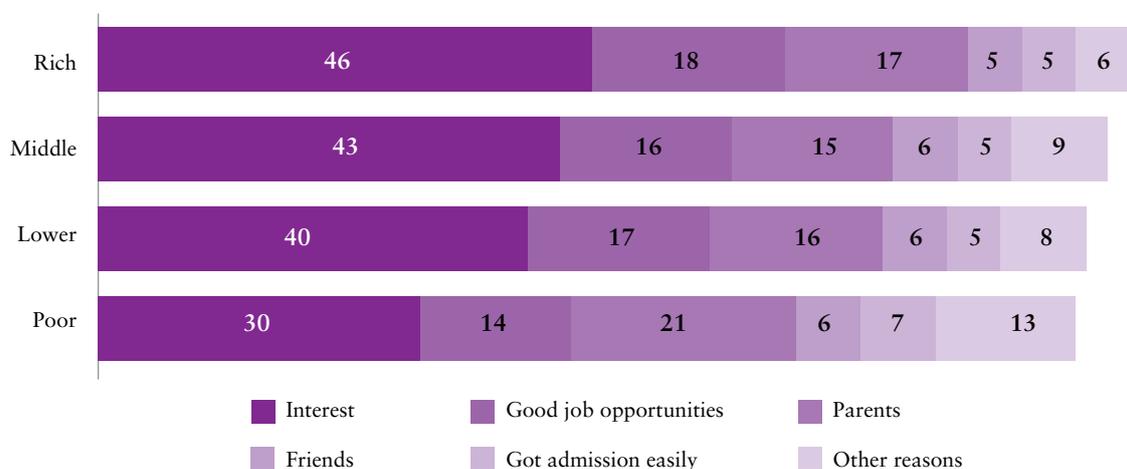
youth living in cities whether it is big or small have somewhat similar reasons for choosing their field of study. Forty-six percent of the youth said they chose those subjects because they were interested in that stream and similarly, 19 percent of youth in both the locations said that they chose it because through this field of education they can get a good employment opportunity. Nonetheless, the youth living in small cities as compared to the big cities were more likely to say that they took up the field because their parents wanted that. But more than small cities, youth living in towns and villages said that they chose the field because their parents suggested that. As compared to youth residing in other localities, the youth in town were proportionally in small numbers who said that they chose the stream due to their own interest (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Youth across localities chose the field of study due to their own interest



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 5.15: The interest in the field was an important consideration while choosing the field of study for the youth from well-off families



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Youth belonging to various economic classes have different reasons for choosing the field of study. Youth from the upper economic class and middle class chose the stream because they were interested in those subjects; 46 percent and 43 percent respectively said that they chose the field because of their interest. Nonetheless, 30 percent of the youth from the poor economic classes also stated that the selection of the field of study was based on their own interest. However, for the poor youth, their parents' suggestion or wish was another important consideration while choosing the subjects; 21 percent of the poor youth considered their parents' suggestion whereas 17 percent, 15 percent and 16 percent youth from upper, middle and lower economic classes respectively chose the field on the suggestion of their parents. For them, getting a good job while choosing the field was also an important consideration as compared to the poor youth (Figure 5.15).

Like economic status, the social status of the youth also affects their reasons for choosing the field of study. Close to half (48%) of the youth from the upper castes said that they chose the field of study because they were interested in the field and at the same time, 47 percent of the youth from non-Muslim religious minorities also stated this reason. The pattern of response was somewhat similar among youths from Hindu upper caste, Hindu OBCs and other religious minorities. On the other hand, for Hindu Adivasi youth, the major reason for choosing the field of study was their job prospects;

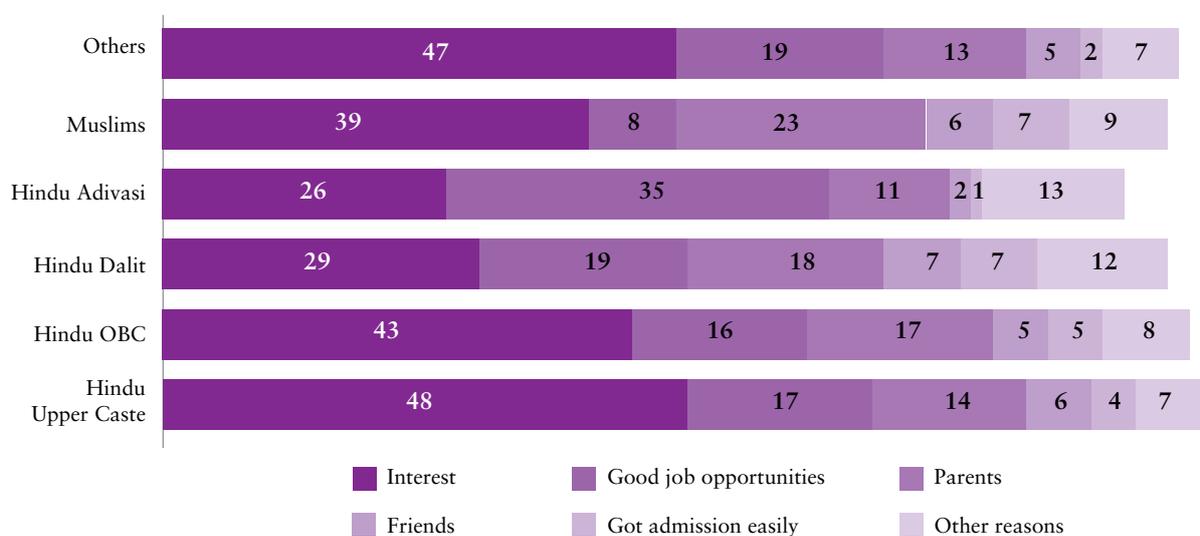
a little over one-third (35%) of them shared this reason; however, a little over one-fourth (26%) of Hindu Adivasi youth chose the field because they were interested in it. However, when we look at the reasons stated by the youth from Hindu Dalit communities, we found that 29 percent of them were interested in the subject; 19 percent opted for the field because they wanted to get a good job and 18 percent of the Dalit youth said their parents suggested them to opt for that particular field of study. Interestingly, a little less than one in every four (23%) of the Muslim youth chose the field that was suggested by their parents. Nonetheless, close to two in every five (39%) Muslim youth opted for the field of study due to their own interest (Figure 5.16).

Current occupation status

In this section, we provide the current occupational status of Indian youth. Close to two-fifths (39%) of the youth identified themselves as a student and a little over one in four (28%) were earning. There were six percent of the youth who were doing both. However, one-fifth (21%) of the youth were neither studying nor earning and six percent of the youth said that they were looking for an employment opportunity (Figure 5.17).

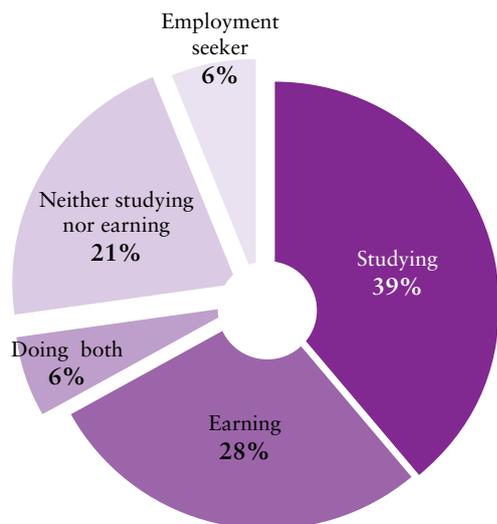
Gender-wise analysis indicates that as compared to young women, there were more working young men. Women were either studying or not involved in either studies or formal employment - four of every ten (42%) women said that they were studying and

Figure 5.16: The reason for choosing the field varies across various caste-communities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 5.17: Current occupational engagement of Indian youth



three of every ten (30%) said that they are neither studying nor earning. Only a little over one-sixth (17%) of the young women said that they are earning which is actually a little less than half (39%) of the young men who said that they were earning. A little over a third (36%) of the young men were studying and 11 percent said that they were neither studying nor earning (Figure 5.18).

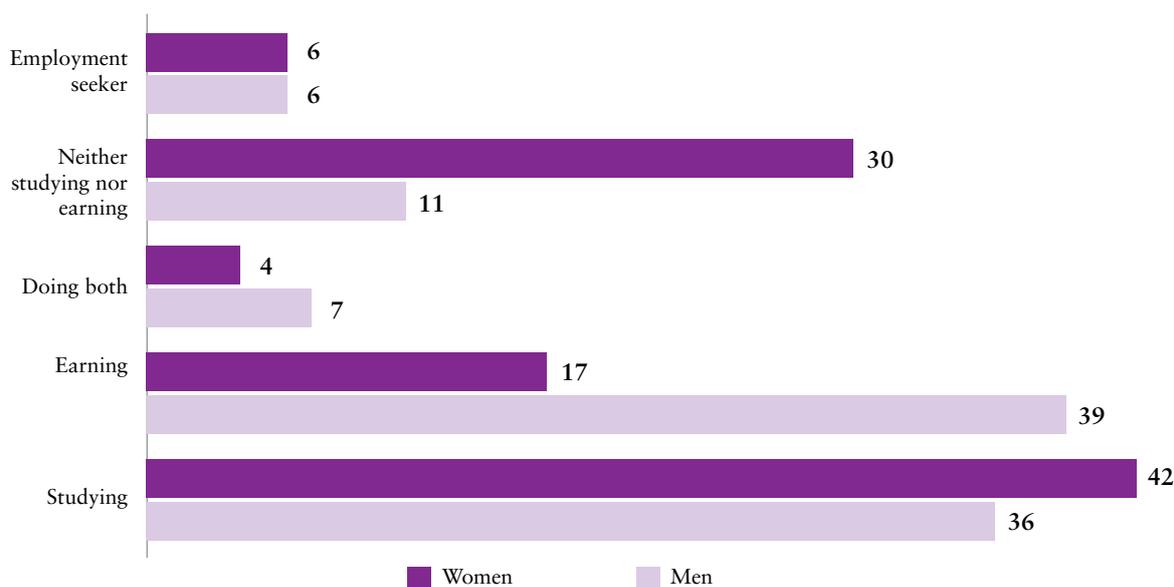
Age shows a clear relation with the youth’s current occupational engagement. The youngest cohort on the age scale of the youth was more into studies – close to four of five among them were studying and only four percent said that they were earning. As the age of the people increased, they were more likely

to say that they were earning. Young people in the age group of 15-17 years usually pursue their school education. Even close to half of the youth in the age group of 18-24 years reported to be pursuing their studies and only one in every five said that they were earning. This indicated the high enrollment rate in higher education (Figure 5.19).

When we look at the occupational status of youth across localities it was found that the youth living in cities were likely to be studying – over four of every ten (42% in big cities and 40% in small cities) of the youth in larger urban areas and a little less than four of every ten (39%) of the youth in villages reported themselves to be students. In towns, a little over one-third (35%) of the youth were students. Over one-third of the youth in urban areas (37% in towns, 36% in big cities and 34% in small cities) stated that they were earners. In villages and towns, a proportionately higher number of youth said that they were neither studying nor earning; 20 percent and 18 percent respectively (Figure 5.20).

As explained earlier, both the educational and occupational status of the youth is affected by their social and economic profile. Figure 5.21 and Figure 5.22 shows the occupational engagement of the youth across social and economic groups. For instance, due to the lack of educational opportunities among some of the youth belonging to some of the marginalized castes, they begin working at a much earlier age. The data also suggests that the youth belonging to Hindu Dalit and Muslim communities were less

Figure 5.18: More young men are employed than women



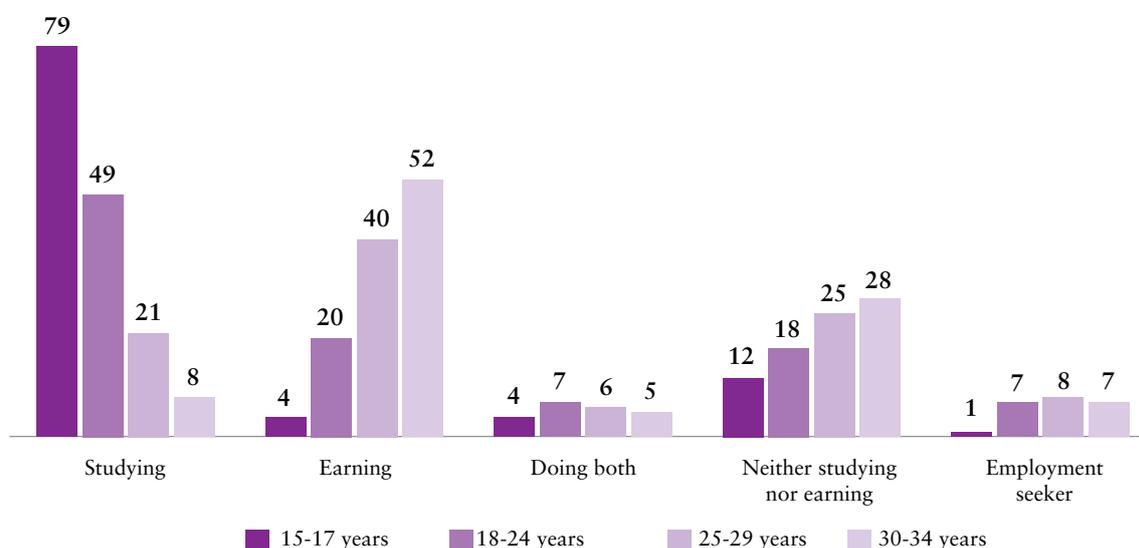
Note: All figures in percent.

likely to be studying (35% and 31% respectively). A little less than one-third (32%) of youth belonging to the Hindu Dalit communities were earning which is higher than the youth belonging to other social groups. Amongst the Muslim youth, three of every ten (29%) were earning but at the same time a similar percentage (28%) of the Muslim youth were neither studying nor earning. The segment that reported that they were neither studying nor earning is higher among Muslims as compared to the youth belonging to the other caste and religious communities. The upper caste youths were more likely to be into studies - more than four of every ten

(44%) were studying and one-fourth (25%) were earning (Figure 5.21).

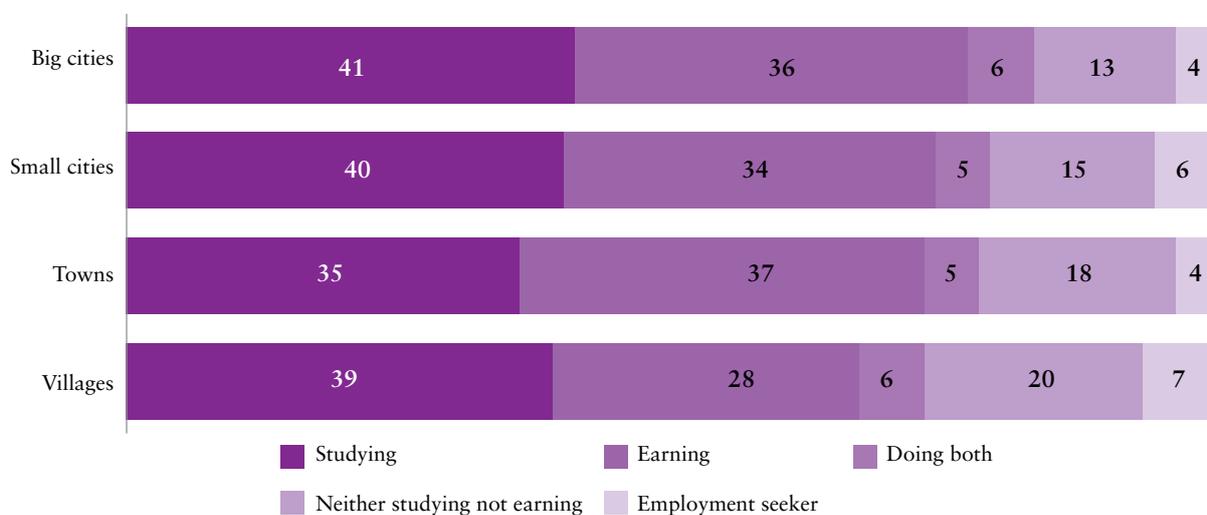
Lack of resources that prevent access to education, especially higher education, was a key obstacle for youth belonging to the poor and lower economic classes. The youth from those economic groups sought employment opportunities early but faced several challenges. In the present youth study, it was found that three of every ten (28%) youth from the poor economic class and one-third (33%) from the lower economic class were studying, whereas similar numbers (29% poor and 30% of the lower class youth) were actually earning. On the contrary, the

Figure 5.19: Close to four-fifths of the youngest youth are pursuing their studies



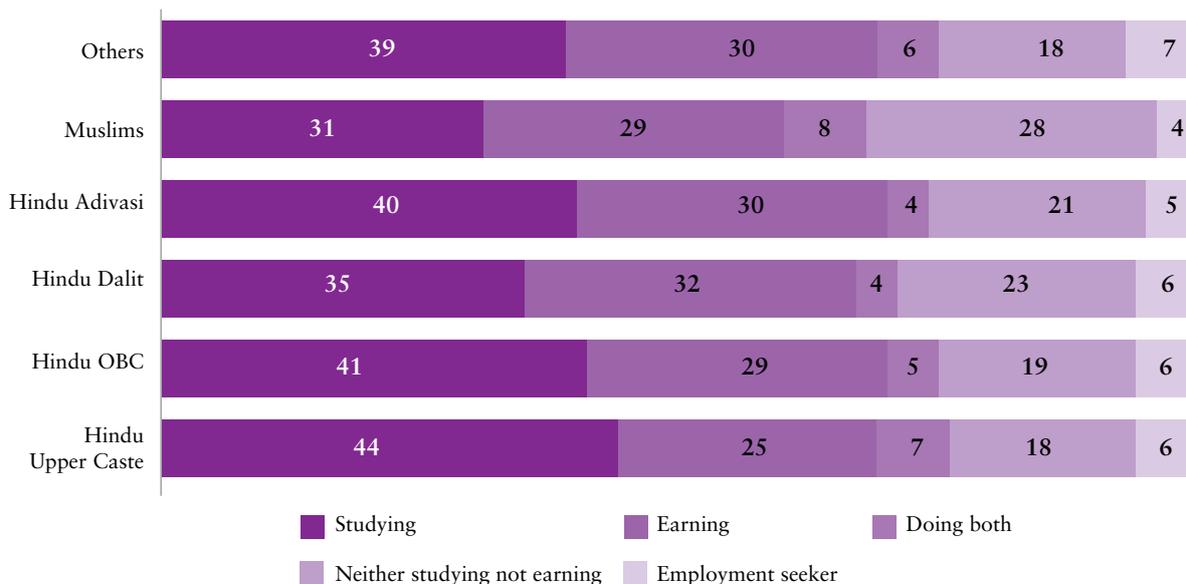
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 5.20: Youth in cities are more into studies and one-fifth of the rural youth are neither studying nor earning



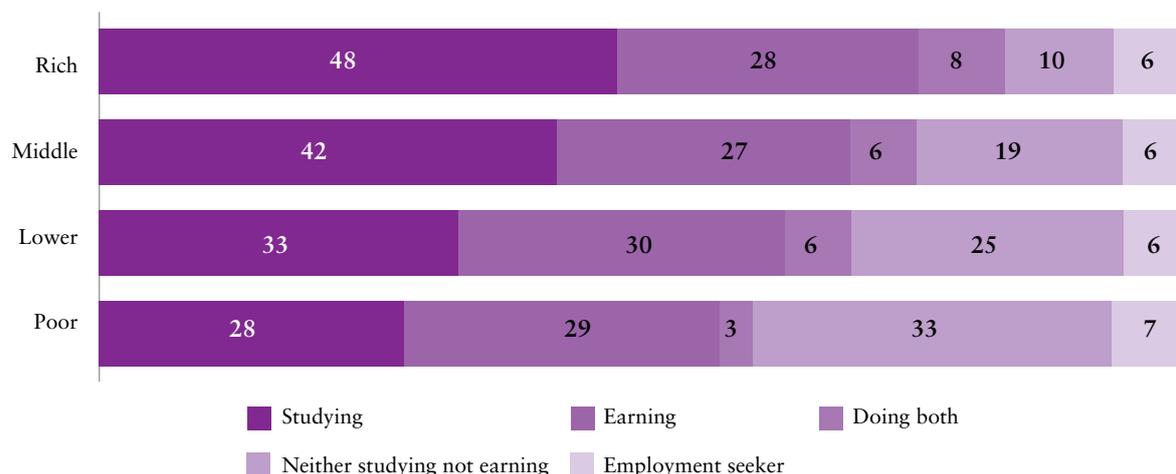
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 5.21: More youth from upper castes are pursuing their studies



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 5.22: Close to half of the youth from the upper economic class are still studying



Note: All figures in percent.

proportion of students and earners was 48 percent and 28 percent among the upper-class youth and 42 percent and 27 percent among youth belonging to the middle class. Another part of the story from this data point is that, a third of the youth belonging to the poor economic classes were neither studying nor earning and one in every four youth from the lower economic class also falls in the same category (Figure 5.22).

Youth aspired to improve their standard of living through a decent livelihood. Therefore, they were constant seekers of job opportunities whether they are employed or studying. When the youth were asked whether they were looking for job

opportunities, four of every ten (41%) said that they were looking for employment whereas, a little over half of the youth (52%) were not looking for any job. Two-fifths (41%) of students said that they were looking for a job and at the same time, a little over one-third (36%) of the youth who were already earning were also looking for better employment opportunities. Interestingly, more than half (55%) of the youth who said that they were earning while studying (part-time earner) were also looking for better employment prospects. When we look at the profile of job seekers, a higher segment was from villages as compared to urban localities - in villages, close to half the youth (46%) said that they were looking for employment while in urban areas, one-

third of the youth were looking for a job. Half of the job seekers have completed graduation. Four of every ten (42%) of the youth who have completed their senior secondary school were also looking for employment. More young men were looking for employment as compared to young women. The youth in the middle age groups (18-24 years and 25-29 years) were more likely to be looking for

employment as compared to the older (30-34 years) as well as younger ones (15-17 years). The possible reason for this could be that the younger ones were engaged in their studies and the older ones were already in jobs (Figure 5.23).

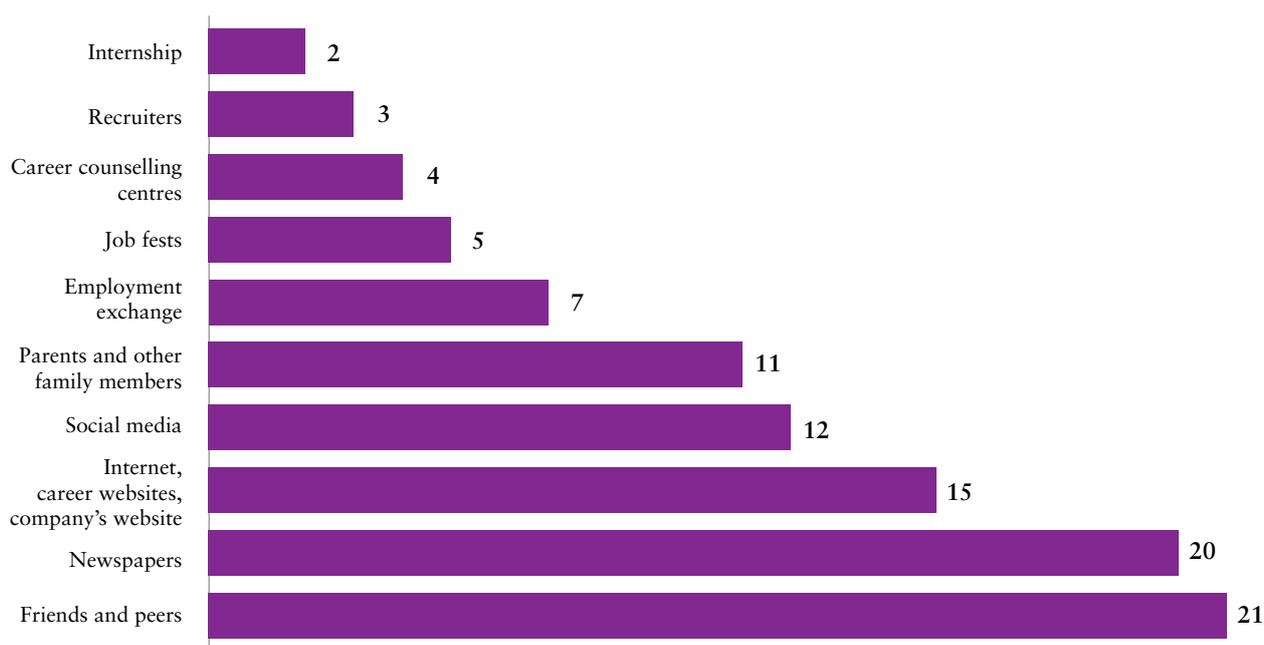
There are various sources of information from where people get updates on job opportunities.

Figure 5.23: Profile of the young employment seekers



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 5.24: Key sources to get information about job opportunities



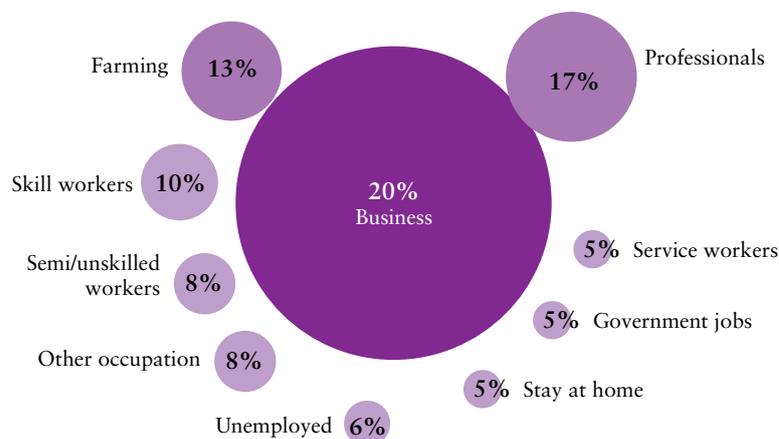
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

These include newspapers, friends and job fests among others. In the survey when youth who were seeking employment, were asked about their source of information about the job opportunities, a little over one-fifth (21%) of the youth said that they get updates on job opportunities from their peers or friends. An almost similar proportion referred to newspapers as their source of information. Employment seekers also named online websites, social media, employment exchange, job fests and recruiters as their other sources of information (Figure 5.24).

Employment profile of the Indian youth

Close to one-third of the youth in the study were earning their livelihood by doing certain kinds of jobs. When we look at the work profile of Indian youth and the kind of job they are currently doing, it was found that one-fifth (20%) of the youth were involved in their own business. At the same time, a little over one-sixth (17%) of the youth identified themselves as professionals such as doctors, engineers, lawyers to name a few. Another significant sector where youth were engaged in was agriculture – 13 percent of the youth said that they were into farming (this includes owner cultivator, tenant cultivator, agricultural labourers and other forms of farming). A significant proportion in this sector were agricultural labourers which was stated by eight percent of the youth. One in every ten was a skilled worker and a little less (8%) were semi-skilled or unskilled workers. Only five percent of the Indian youth were in government jobs, the sector which a large proportion of youth aspire to be in (Figure 5.25).

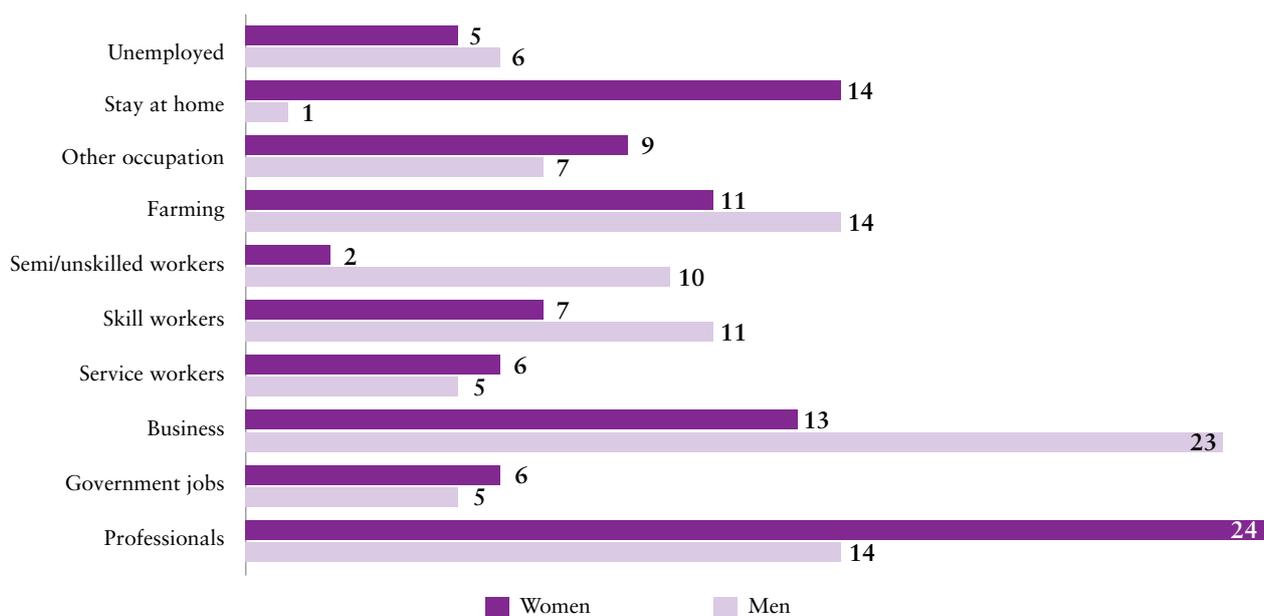
Figure 5.25: Employment profile of the Indian youth



Gender-wise analysis indicates that the women’s presence is minimal across the employment sectors. Proportionally more women said that they stay at homes – 14 percent of the total young women against only one percent of the young men said that they stay at home. When we look at the profile of working women, compared to the young men, more young women are in professional jobs. A little over one-fourth (24%) of the women identified themselves as professional as compared to 14 percent of the men. In government jobs and service sector, both men and women were in somewhat equal proportions, though women’s share is marginally higher in this sector than men. When it comes to doing business, men’s share was 10 percentage points higher than women; 23 percent of the young men said that they are doing business against 13 percent of the women who were engaged in business. More men as compared to women were engaged in skilled, unskilled and agricultural work (Figure 5.26).

The caste and the community of the young population also appears to play a role if the employment profile of young people is assessed. A little over one-fourth (27%) of the youth from Hindu upper castes are in professional jobs. The proportion was somewhat similar when one looks at the figures of the youth from non-Muslim minority community, where again, over one-fourth (28%) said that they were in professional jobs. However, in the other caste and communities, the figures of professionals were less than 15 percent and the lowest proportion (9%) of the professionals was among youth belonging to the Hindu Dalit castes. Due to the reservation for the marginal castes in government jobs, the share of youth from the

Figure 5.26: Fewer women are visible in various employment sectors



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

marginal castes in government jobs was somewhat similar to the other caste and communities. But when we look at the share of labourers (unskilled labourers or agricultural labourers), we found that youth from the Hindu Dalit and Hindu Adivasi communities were higher in such jobs – 13 percent and 19 percent respectively. The figures for the Hindu Adivasi were somewhat similar where 16 percent were unskilled labourers and 13 percent were doing agricultural work. The youth from the Muslim communities are more into skilled jobs - one sixth (16%) of the Muslim youth were working as skilled workers. Even 12 percent of the youth from the other backward classes (OBCs) were doing the jobs where they can use their skills. However, the biggest chunk of the OBC youth were doing their

own business like Hindu upper-caste youths - close to one-fourth (23%) of the youth from the OBC castes as well as close to one-fourth (22%) of the youth from Hindu upper castes were involved in their own business (Table 5.1).

Educational qualifications and degrees are required to avail certain kinds of jobs. A person having high educational attainment is likely to get into a more secure job compared to those with lower levels of educational attainment. The data analysis also tested the association between the level of educational attainment of the youth and the kind of employment they were currently engaged in. Youth who were graduates were more into professional jobs - a little less than two-fifths (37%) of the graduates are in professional jobs, two of every ten (19%)

Table 5.1: Professionals are mainly from upper castes whereas more labourers are from marginal castes

	Professionals	Government jobs	Business	Service workers	Skill workers	Semi/unskilled workers	Farming	Other occupation
Hindu Upper Caste	27	5	22	5	7	3	7	9
Hindu OBC	13	5	23	5	12	7	16	7
Hindu Dalit	9	6	15	7	8	13	19	9
Hindu Adivasi	11	5	17	5	3	16	13	9
Muslims	15	4	19	4	16	7	15	6
Others	28	6	16	6	7	9	7	7

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or either stay at home or unemployed.

Table 5.2: With a higher level of education, youth goes for professional jobs

	Professionals	Government jobs	Business	Service workers	Skill workers	Semi/unskilled workers	Farming	Other occupation
Non-Literate	4	1	9	1	9	13	34	10
Up to Primary	0	5	18	9	9	15	18	7
Middle Pass	3	1	23	4	13	14	23	9
Matric Pass	6	2	26	9	15	13	11	6
12th Pass	11	4	23	6	14	7	11	8
Graduate and above	37	9	19	5	6	1	5	7

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or either stay at home or unemployed.

were doing their own business and one of every ten (9%) were in government jobs. On the other hand, youth who have only completed secondary or senior secondary, were more into their own business or some skilled jobs – one-fourth of the matric pass youth and those who completed the senior secondary school (26% and 23% respectively) were doing their own business. At the same time, 15 percent and 14 percent respectively, were doing skilled jobs. Youth having lower educational attainment were engaged in agriculture mostly as labourers or outside farms as unskilled labourers (Table 5.2).

The level of urbanity also impacts employment trends. For instance, the proportion of professionals increases as the level of urbanity grows. In villages, one of every ten (13%) said that they were into professional jobs whereas one-third (34%) of the youth in big cities were in such jobs. The possible explanation for this could be that in urban area, availability of such jobs was higher than in rural areas. In rural localities, youth was mostly engaged in agriculture and related tasks. If people have resources in rural areas, they start their own business as one-fifth of the youth in rural areas said that they were doing their own business. In big cities too, the same proportion of the youth was doing their own

business. However, the proportion of youth doing their business increases to one-fourth in towns and small cities. While close to two of every ten (17%) of the youth in villages were working on the farms another one in every ten (10%) said they are working as labourers where specific skills were not required and another one of every ten (12%) of the youth living in villages were doing skilled jobs (Table 5.3).

There are several reasons for the youth choosing the jobs they are currently doing. The most frequent reason (three of every ten – 29%) stated by the youth was that they were interested in the jobs they are presently engaged in. The second most cited reason (17%) was that the job was the only available option. One in every ten of the working youth said that the job which they were doing was as per their educational qualification. A little less than one of every ten (8%) chose the job because the salary provided was good and a similar percentage (7%) said it was their family business. Close to one of every ten (7%) said that they opted for that job out of compulsion as they had to support their families. Easy availability, proximity to the workplace and job security were the other reasons mentioned by the youth for choosing the job they are currently pursuing (Table 5.4).

Table 5.3: In big cities, more youth are into professional jobs whereas rural youth is either engaged in agriculture or doing business

	Professionals	Government jobs	Business	Service workers	Skill workers	Semi/unskilled workers	Farming	Other occupation
Villages	13	5	20	5	12	10	17	6
Towns	18	6	24	6	6	7	10	10
Small cities	20	6	24	6	13	7	6	10
Big cities	34	5	20	11	9	5	3	7

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or either stay at home or unemployed.

Table 5.4: Reasons for choosing the current employment

	Percent
Interest in the jobs	29
Only available option	17
As per the qualification	10
Good salary	8
Family business	7
For sustaining family	5
Got easily	3
Parents/relatives/friends advised me	3
Job security	3
Proximity to workplace	2
Manageable along with studies	2
Profession is relatively modern	2
Other reasons	5
No response	6

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 5.5: Youth's aspiration for job

	Overall	Young students	Young earners
Health Sector	17	21	12
Teaching jobs	13	18	9
Science & Technology	11	15	8
Service Sector	10	6	14
Business	8	4	15
Police and Defense services	7	10	6
Government jobs	6	6	6
Law	3	4	3
Farming	3	1	4
Entertainment and creative field	3	3	2
Banking and Accounting	2	3	2
Administrative Services	2	3	1
Politics and social activist	2	1	2
Other jobs	4	3	4
Current job	2	0	6
No response	5	2	5
Don't want to work	2	2	2

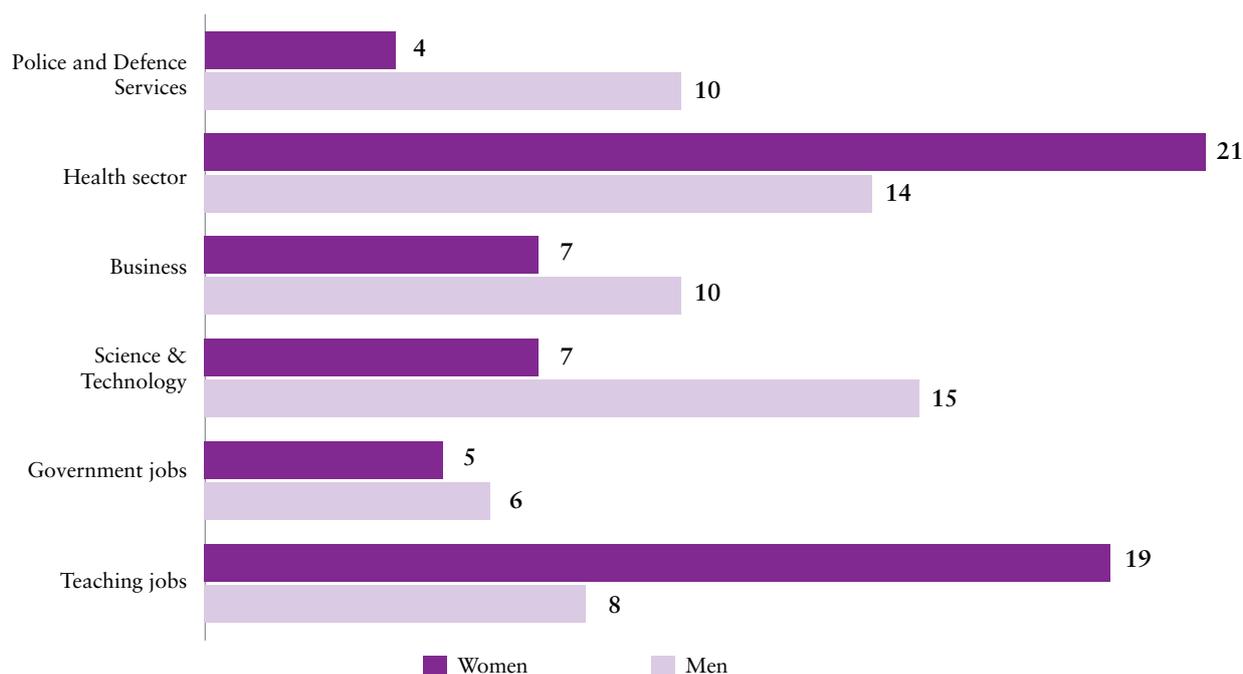
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Career aspirations

In the study, some of the youth were still pursuing their studies and some of them were earning their livelihood by engaging themselves in various occupations. When they (whether they are currently working or not) were asked about their career aspirations, a little over one-sixth (17%) said that they want to be in the health sector in different capacities like doctors, nurses and other medical staff. The aspiration to be in the health sector was higher among youth who were pursuing their studies. Close to one in every five (21%) students wanted to go into the health sector whereas, one in every ten (12%) of those currently earning also wanted to go into the health sector. When we compare the figure with the Youth study 2016, one can notice a sudden jump in the figures of those aspiring for the health sector. In the past survey, only 3 percent of the youth said that they wanted to go into the health sector. The possible explanation could be the context of the survey. The present study was conducted during the time of pandemic Covid-19 where the country has faced several challenges, mainly related to the health sector and health facilities. Perhaps assessing that context, the youth aspired to be in the health sector. The second sector that attracted the youth was the education sector as one in every ten (13%) of the youth said that they wanted to become a teacher. Of the youth who are still studying 15 percent of them also wanted to do jobs which are related to science and technology and 10 percent wanted to go into the police and defense services.

On the other hand, when the employed youth were asked about their career aspirations, only six percent of them said that they wanted to do their current jobs. This figure is quite interesting when we compare it with the past youth study conducted in 2016 in which one-fifth (21%) of the youth said that they wanted to do their current job. During the present study, there was a decline of 15 percentage points. The possible reason for this drop could be the challenges faced by the youth regarding their employment during the time of pandemic caused by Covid-19 as not many people were in stable jobs. Fifteen percent of youth who are earners said that they wanted to do their own business and 14 percent said they wanted to do jobs related to the service sector. Nonetheless, a significant number of respondents said that they want to be in the government sector such as police, defense and administrative services.

Figure 5.27: Jobs in the health sector and teaching is mostly preferred by young women; young men aspire for other kinds of jobs



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or opted for other jobs.

These preferences accounted for 15 percent of the total responses provided by the youth when they were asked about their career aspirations.

The job aspirations among youth is also affected by their gender. For instance, the most preferred job as reported by young women was in the health sector – a little over one-fifth (21%) of the young women favoured the health sector while young men’s most preferred job was related to science and technology, followed by the health sector. On the other hand, women’s second preferred job was teaching. A little less than one-fifth (19%) of the young women said that they wanted to do teaching jobs whereas, less than one of every ten (8%) young men said that they wanted to be in teaching jobs. Interestingly,

only four percent of the women said that they don’t want to work and five percent did not respond to this question (Figure 5.27).

To get a clear idea about their job preference, the youth were given a set of questions regarding various types of jobs and further asked whether they want to do such jobs in the future or not. Close to three in every five young person said that they would like to take up government jobs and the youngest cohort was mostly keen on government related employment – seven of every ten (71%) of those in the 15-17 age group showed their interest in doing government jobs. On the other hand, the youth in the age group of 25-29 were more likely to want to start up their own business as reported by six of every ten of them

Table 5.6: The youngest cohort is more keen to get a government job

	Work for the government	Start your own business	Join family business	Work for private company	Work for an NGO	Farming at ancestral land	Joining Politics
Overall	60	57	42	36	34	25	15
15-17 years	71	53	41	37	34	23	13
18-24 years	64	56	43	38	37	24	15
25-29 years	58	62	44	36	32	27	16
30-34 years	48	57	42	29	30	25	15

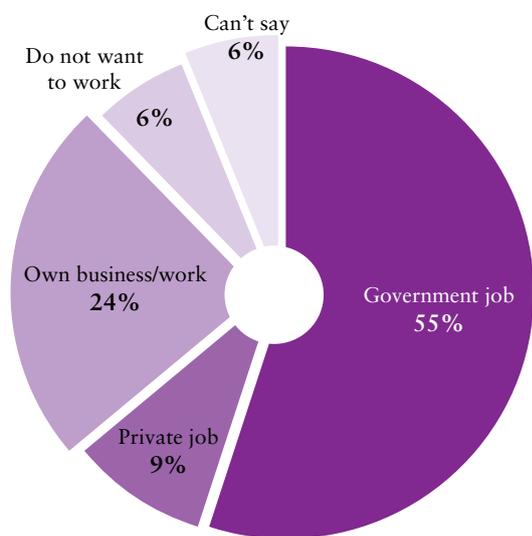
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

(62%). At the same time, four of every ten (42%) said that they would join their family business and a quarter of the youth said that they would like to do farming on their ancestral lands. A little over one-third (36%) were also ready to take up jobs in the private sector and another one-third (34%) said that they wanted to work with an NGO (Table 5.6).

When youth were asked to choose amongst the various kinds of jobs – government job, private job or own business, more than half (55%) chose government job, a quarter of the youth said that they would like to do their own business and only one of every ten (9%) said they would go for private jobs (Figure 5.28).

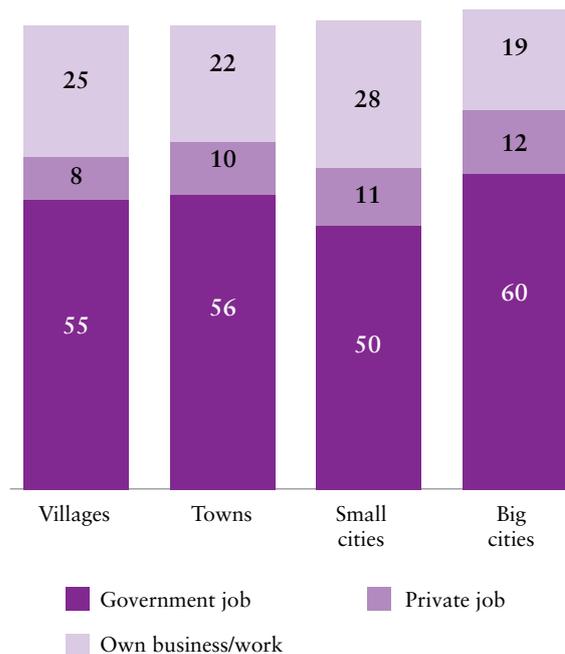
Figure 5.29 shows that youth living in the big cities were more likely to prefer government jobs (60%) as compared to the youth living in the other localities. The youth living in small cities were comparatively less likely to prefer government jobs (50%). On the other hand, the youth living in small cities were more likely to start up their own business as reported by 28% of the youth therein.

Figure 5.28: The government job is the biggest priority among Indian youth



Levels of educational attainment of the youth also shaped their job preferences. It was found that youth with higher levels of education were more likely to opt for a government job. This is mainly observed among youth with college degrees and those who had passed senior secondary – 69 percent and 66 percent respectively preferred government jobs. On the other hand, the less educated youth showed a greater inclination to set up their own business or

Figure 5.29: Youth living in big cities preferred government jobs the most

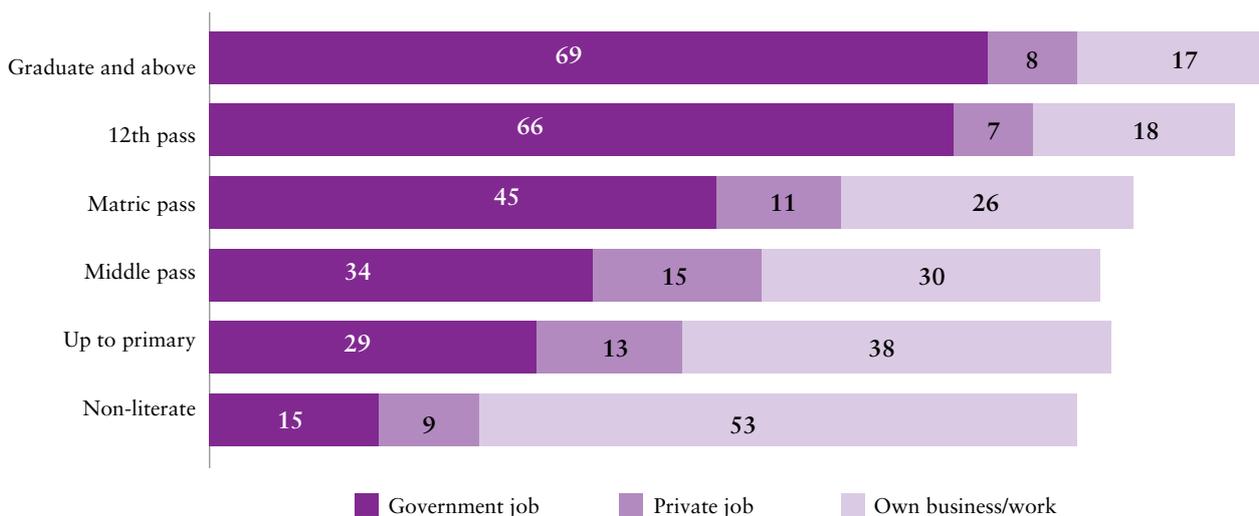


Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or did not want to work.

be self-employed (Figure 5.30). As observed earlier, the youngest cohort aged between 15-17 years was more inclined towards a government job and the older ones, particularly those in the 30-34 years age band were more likely to start up their own businesses. When we segregate the opinion gender-wise, it was found that more young women wished to take up the government jobs (57% young women against 53% young men) and young men were more likely to start up their own business as compared to women (29% young men against 11% young women).

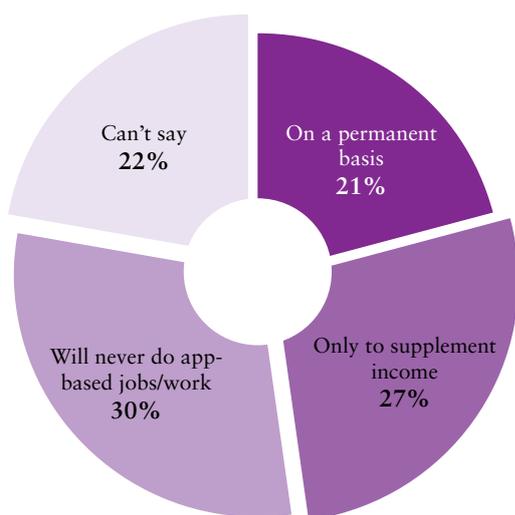
With technological development, there is the emergence of the GIG economy which mainly gets operated through Apps with the help of the internet. Examples of such agencies are Uber, Ola, Swiggy, Zomato, Urban Company and the like. These are service-providing Apps through which service seekers and service providers get connected on the same platform. In India too, the emergence of the GIG economy was visible. In one of the reports of ASSOCHAM, the GIG economy is projected to increase to \$455 billion at a 17 percent CAGR by 2024. Even the Government of India has realized the importance of GIG workers and therefore passed “Codes on Social Security” to provide various benefits to the GIG workers. The youth in the

Figure 5.30: With more education, youth is more aspired to get a government job



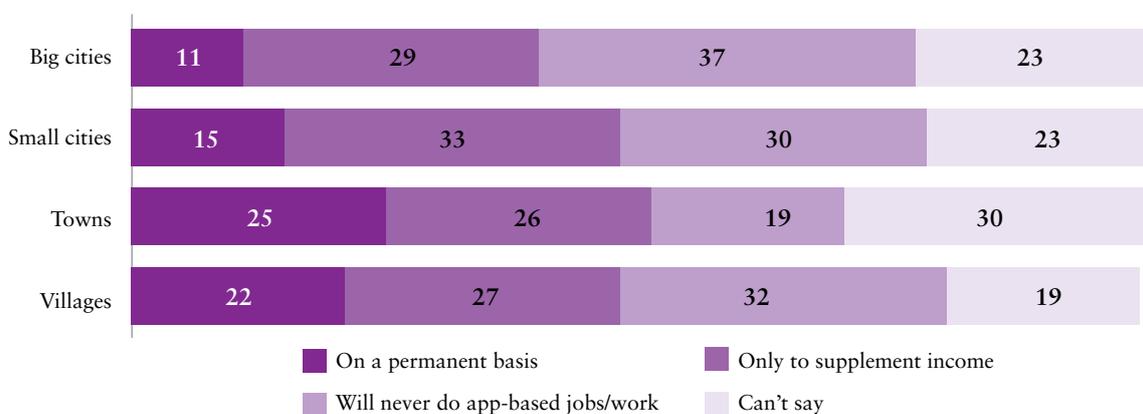
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or did not want to work.

Figure 5.31: Youth’s preference for online App-based jobs



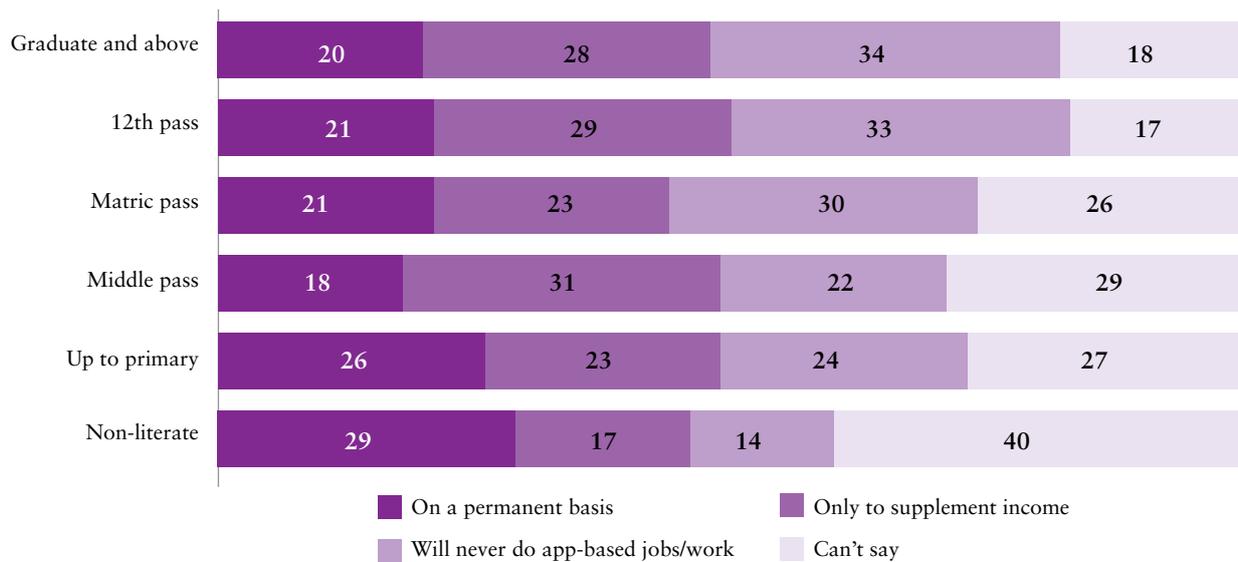
survey were asked about their opinion on whether they would like to work through the Apps. For further clarification, they were asked whether they want to do such jobs on a permanent basis or just to supplement their income along with their current jobs. It was found that a little over one-fifth (21%) of the youth said that they would like to do App-based jobs on a permanent basis and a little over a quarter (27%) said that they would like to do this with their current jobs to supplement their income. However, 30 percent of the youth said that they would never do such jobs and a significant segment could not share their view on this question. Perhaps, they were not aware of such jobs or not sure whether they would do it or not (Figure 5.31).

Figure 5.32: Rural youth is more aspired to do online App-based job



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 5.33: The App-based job was mainly preferred by the youth having low educational attainment



Note: All figures in percent.

The jobs which come under the GIG economy are more urban-centric and it is presumed that people living in the urban areas would more likely prefer such jobs. However, the data gave a different picture. It was found that a quarter of youth in towns and 22 percent of the youth living in the villages were ready to take up these App-based jobs on a permanent basis as compared to the youth living in small and big cities, where the numbers were just 15 percent and 11 percent respectively. Nonetheless, a third of the youth living in the small cities said that they could do these jobs to supplement their incomes (Figure 5.32).

The level of educational attainment among youth also impacts on their opinion on joining App-based jobs. Though a significant proportion (two-fifths) of non-literate youth did not share their opinion, a proportionately higher number of them said that they would take up such jobs on a permanent basis and 17 percent reported preference for such jobs to supplement their incomes. On the other hand, the graduates and 12th standard pass youth were more likely to say that they would never do such jobs. The possible reason for this could be that with the higher level of education they could avail better job opportunities (Figure 5.33). Interestingly, four of every ten (41%) youth who are studying and doing some work for their earnings said that they would do Apps-based jobs to supplement their incomes. As this segment of youth is already doing part-time

jobs with their studies, they tend to show interest in exploring other sources of income.

The finding suggests that youth are preferring government jobs over other kinds of jobs. What shapes their preferences? It becomes pertinent to see what their priorities are while choosing employment. We investigated their career priorities through the present study by asking a question about what matters to them the most while choosing their career. The options were – whether they want a permanent job, even if the salary is low; salary should be good, even if the job is not permanent; or work should be of their choice, whether the job is not permanent or salary is less, it does not matter much. The preliminary finding showed that for close to half the youth (46%) permanency in the jobs is the most important consideration even if the salary was low. The salary was the priority for one-sixth of the young people (16%). However, a quarter of youth believed in work satisfaction and giving priority to work of their choice over salary and permanency. It was also found that among those who preferred permanency, four-fifths were looking for government jobs. Only four of every ten of those who gave priority to salary over permanency (41%) wanted government jobs. Another one-fourth of them (24%) were ready to do a private job and another one-fourth (27%) were interested in starting up their own business. But among youth who wanted to do the work of their own choice, over four of every ten (43%) were

willing to start up their own business and close to four of every ten (38%) were willing to take up government jobs (Table 5.7).

Youth is also aspiring to migrate abroad for their education and employment. Overall, a little less than one-sixth (15%) of the youth had expressed their desire to settle down in foreign countries and three in every four (76%) had no such desire. The most mentioned reason for going abroad was the better lifestyle and better employment opportunities as reported by three of every ten (31% and 28% respectively). Of the youth belonging to poor families, only one of every ten (9%) said that they want to settle abroad whereas two of every ten (22%) of the youth from upper-class families showed an interest in settling down abroad. Not surprisingly,

a youth's educational attainment was also found to be associated with their desire to go abroad. The more educated youth were more interested in going abroad, with close to one-fifth (19%) of graduates aspiring to go to foreign countries. The youngest cohort of the youth was more interested in settling abroad as compared to youth from other age groups (Figure 5.34).

Conclusion

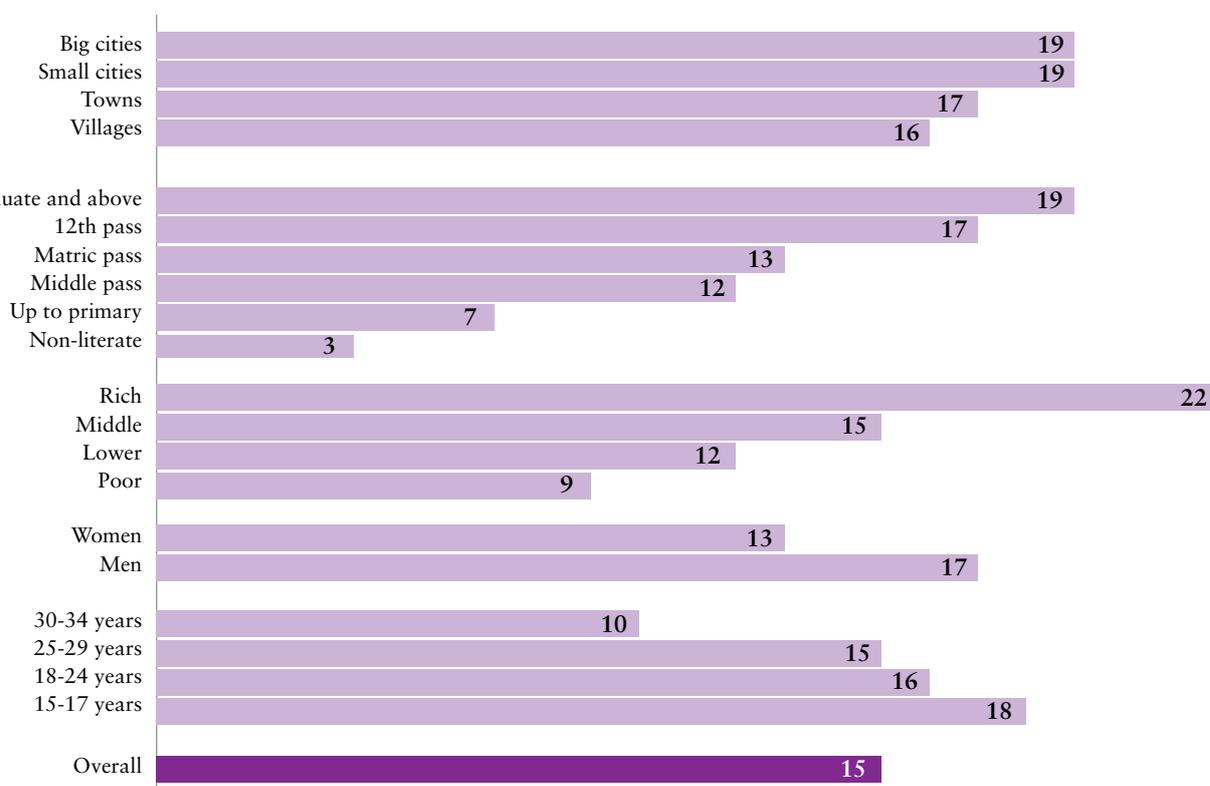
The analysis in this section shows that more youths today, are engaged in their studies as compared to before. This is seen in contrast with the reported numbers of those involved in higher studies in the present survey and in past studies. Earlier, after attaining a certain level of education, people used to

Table 5.7: Permanency in jobs motivate youth to opt for government jobs over other kinds of jobs

	Overall	Government job	Private job	Own business/work
A permanent job, even if the salary is low	46	80	6	10
Salary should be good, even if the job is not permanent	16	41	24	27
Work should be of your choice, whether the job is not permanent or salary is less, it does not matter much	25	38	10	43

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response or did not want to work.

Figure 5.34: Youth's desire to settle down abroad across various social-economic groups



Note: All figures in percent.

start the search for their livelihood, but in this survey, we found that a significant proportion of youth is still studying and some of them are earning along with their studies. While choosing the field of study for higher education, the youth consider various factors. Other than their own interest in the field, they also keep in mind the long term by opting for a field of study which can help them to get a good job. The job prospect was an important consideration, mainly for the youth belonging to lower economic class and marginal castes. The youth continue to be keen to get government jobs which are permanent and secure in nature. Though, as compared to the

past study carried out in 2016, the youth's interest in starting up their business has also gone up. This could be because of the several start-up schemes launched by the government of India and most probably, the youth are seeking to start up their business with the help of such schemes. This could be ascertained from the fact that in this study, youth from the vulnerable sections of the society (social or economic), are more likely to start up their business. The youth in India are also aspiring to settle down abroad and the reasons for this are that they want to improve their lifestyle and to avail employment opportunities in foreign countries.

Youth and Mental Health

Section 6



People exercise at a park on a smoggy morning in New Delhi, India, October 30, 2018. REUTERS/Anushree Fadnavis

Youth and Mental Health

Introduction

The world today is more dynamic and uncertain than ever before. The young in any society (15-34 years) undergo a lot of changes-physically, mentally, emotionally and socially and are also exposed to some overwhelming internal and external struggles. These changes bring about a lot of decisions that one has to make, starting from the choice of subjects, career choice, decisions at work to the decisions regarding personal relations. To top this, the environment that is provided by the family, school, college and work is also relevant for the mental well being of any person. With a mix of these multiple issues, the youth sometimes can feel very worried. Though, most youth overcome these pressures but some develop serious mental health issues. Although, there is greater acceptance of the mental health of the individuals as an important matter now than ever before, even now many of these health conditions like stress, anxieties, and worries go neglected, under-diagnosed and untreated. This section attempts to analyze these self reported worries and emotional distress among young Indians.

What worries the young Indians?

Everyone has fears leading to being anxious, angry, sad and lonely and these worries stem from multiple factors like worrying about one's career, school grades, body image, family conflict, financial security, emotional entanglement and marriage. The youth (15-34 years) were asked seven questions related to anxieties- worry regarding personal health and looks, family's financial condition and other family problems, worries about jobs and marriage. It must be noted that this study was conducted during the second wave of COVID-19 which was an unprecedented time for everyone and resulted in enormous disruptions to everyone's

lives. Anxiety and worry is a normal reaction to any kind of uncertainty. COVID-19 only made these uncertainties more acute. With the 'stay at home' orders due to the pandemic, it is natural to develop worries leading to mood swings, stress, emotional distress, insomnia, anger and in some cases depression. Through this study we will not be able to tap whether these worries are a result of the pandemic effects or the youth have always had these worries. Secondly, we are not trying to gauge any kind of anxiety disorder or other serious mental conditions, but only highlight the self reported worries of the Indian youth.

Family's financial security emerged as something that youth worried the most about, followed by their own health. Sixty one percent of the youth stated financial security of the family closely followed by 60 percent youth reporting one's health as a cause of worry (**Figure 6.1**). Worrying about one's job was reported by about six in ten youth (56%). One's physical appearance – one's looks, their body shape or weight was a cause of worry for more than five in every ten youth (54%). Family tensions related to disputes and domestic violence was a matter of concern for almost five and over four out of ten youth respectively. The least amount of worry was caused by marriage which was reported by three in every ten youth to be something that they worry about. Infact, close to six in every ten youth reported that they either are not much or not at all worried regarding their marriage (**Figure 6.2**).

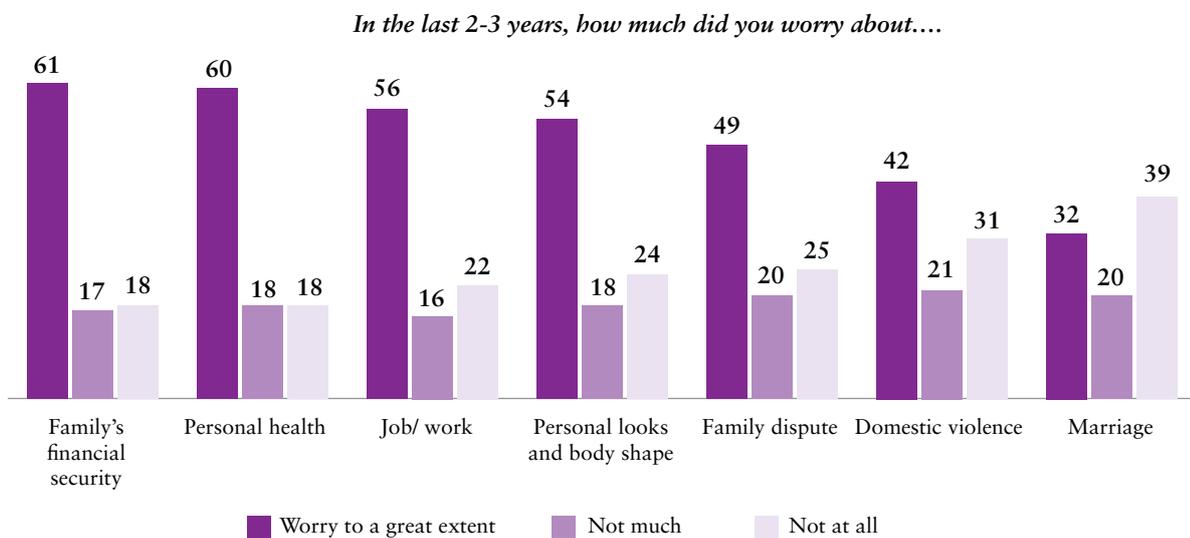
Overall, the study found that the older youth are more anxious as compared to the younger ones (**Figure 6.3**). To be more precise, it was the youth in the age group of 25 to 29 years who were the most anxious than the other age groups on six of the seven things asked in the study. The top two anxieties across all the age groups were family's financial security and that related to one's health.

Figure 6.1: Family's financial security is the biggest concern for the youth



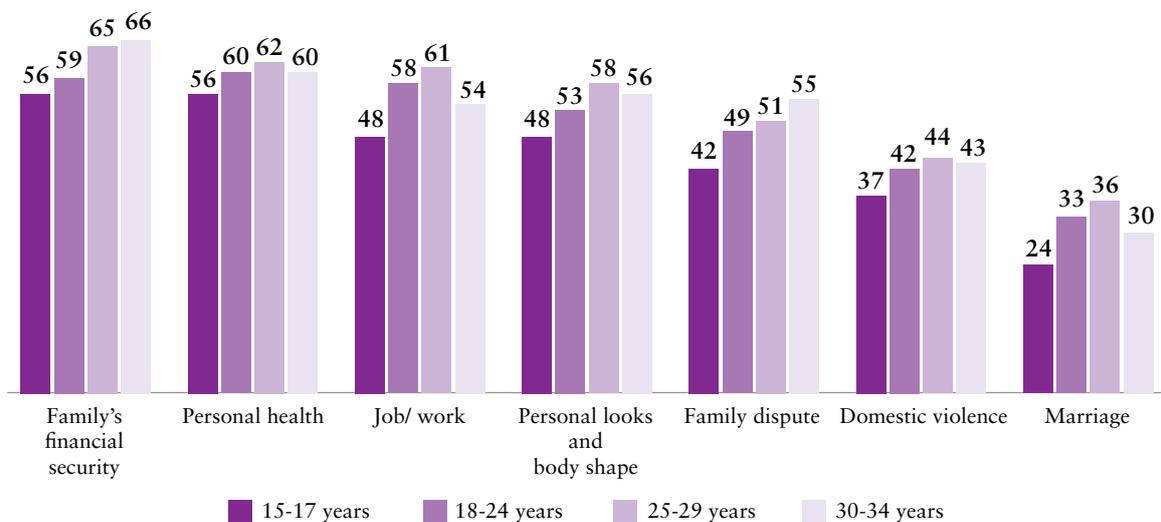
Note: All figures in percent. The figures represent only 'great extent of worry'. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

Figure 6.2: Degree of anxiety on various issues



Note: All figures in percent. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 6.3: Youngsters in the age group of 25-29 years are the most anxious



Note: All figures in percent. The figures represent only 'great extent of worry'. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

Young women were found to be more anxious compared to young men on most things except anxiety regarding jobs and that related to one's marriage where an equal proportion of young men and women were anxious (Table 6.1). Biggest gap amongst young men and women was noted on the issue of one body's shape/weight/looks and personal health with a gap of six percentage points each, showing that there is definitely immense societal pressure on women to look a certain way which possibly could result in moments of self doubt. Above all other factors, this one indicates how societal stereotypical expectations cause mental worry.

Meanwhile, marriage seems to make only a marginal difference on anxiety barring the worry that comes from one's job and family disputes (Table 6.1). While a greater proportion of unmarried than married youth (60% vs 51%) were anxious about their job, a greater proportion of married youth than their unmarried counterparts were anxious about family issues – family disputes, financial security and domestic violence. What is interesting is that, marriage was a cause of worry for not only those who were unmarried but also those who were married. Another significant finding that comes out of the data is that, while unmarried youth are more worried (in some cases marginally more worried) than married ones on the issues related to individual worries, worries related to family were more prominent amongst the married youth.

The study found that financial security of the family was the biggest worry for youth from most economic backgrounds barring those from economically rich backgrounds. This worry was the strongest for those belonging to lower class (65%),

followed by poor (63%), middle class (61%) and lastly rich (55%). For youngsters belonging to affluent classes, the biggest worry came from the concern regarding their health (63%). Worry related to how one looks was also more prominent among youth from economically well off background than the others. On all other things, one notes a marginal difference across youth of various economic backgrounds.

Education seems to have an effect on anxiety level. Where the educated were the most anxious regarding job related issues, for the others, the greatest anxiety came from their family's financial security (Table 6.2). Forty two percent of the non-literate youth were anxious of their jobs and this figure increases by a whopping 22 percentage points for the graduate and above (64%). Anxiety related to family's financial situation was the top most worry for everyone but ranked third for the graduate and above youth. Health related anxiety was the second biggest cause of concern for everyone other than those who were non-literates. For them, the top two anxieties were related to their family – family's financial condition and family disputes. Worry related to marriage was more prominent among youth with higher education (graduate and above) (35%) than those having no education (29%).

When analyzing by locality, the study found the youth in towns to be more anxious on most things compared to those residing in villages, small cities and big cities (Figure 6.4). It was only on account of anxieties related to jobs that the youth in big cities were the most anxious. The biggest anxieties for those residing in the villages came from stress related to family's financial security (63%) followed by concerns related to their health (59%). For

Table 6.1: Women show greater anxieties than men

In the last 2-3 years, how much did you worry about....	Individual worries				Worries related to one's family		
	Personal looks & body shape	Personal health	Job/work	Marriage	Family dispute	Family's financial security	Domestic violence
Men	51	57	56	31	48	60	40
Women	57	63	56	32	51	62	44
Married	53	59	51	31	52	63	44
Unmarried	55	60	60	32	47	60	40

Note: All figures in percent. The figures represent only 'great extent of worry'. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

Table 6.2: Ranking of top three anxieties of the youth by level of education

	Non-Literate	Up to Primary	Middle Pass	Matric Pass	12th Pass	Graduate and above
Rank 1.	Family's financial security (62%)	Family's financial security (56 %)	Family's financial security (63%)	Family's financial security (61%)	Family's financial security (62%)	Job/work (64%)
Rank 2.	Family dispute (60%)	Personal health (52%)	Personal health (54%)	Personal health (56%)	Personal health (61%)	Personal health (63%)
Rank 3.	Personal health (55%)	Family dispute (48%)	Family dispute (50%)	Family dispute (51%)	Job/work (61%)	Family's financial security (61%)

Note: The figures represent only 'great extent of worry'. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

youngsters in towns, it was one's health concerns (68%) followed by how they looked and family's financial security (66% each). Youngsters residing in small cities showed the least worry on most of the things. Their biggest cause of concern was related to jobs (57%) followed by family's financial security (54%). The youth from big cities were equally anxious about their health and job prospects (63% each).

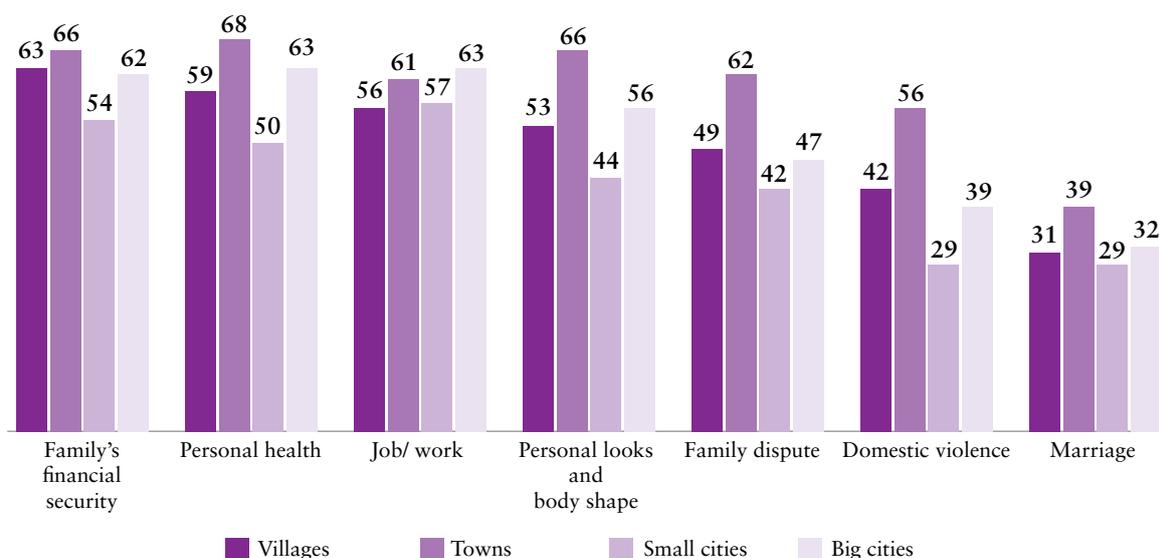
Anxiety about personal looks and body shape

As seen in the section above, anxiety about one's looks was more prominent in some youth compared to the others. It was found to be more prevalent among youth belonging to rich class than those from

less privileged backgrounds, among youth belonging to older age groups than younger, among young women than young men, and among youth living in towns and big cities compared to villages (Table 6.3).

Other than the socio demographic variation, there are other factors which showed significant impact on the worries and anxieties that youth have. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, apps like tiktok (before ban), *mauj* and *chingari* do help youth in connecting with others through photos, videos and life updates, but, they also bring along the negative aspects of bullying, comparison and pressure to present oneself in a certain way. The images that one posts on these platforms have the power to make others insecure. Users may tend to see other users' photos looking their best and

Figure 6.4: Youth in towns are the most anxious



Note: All figures in percent. The figures represent only 'great extent of worry'. 'Great extent of worry' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

Table 6.3: Anxiety about personal looks and body shape

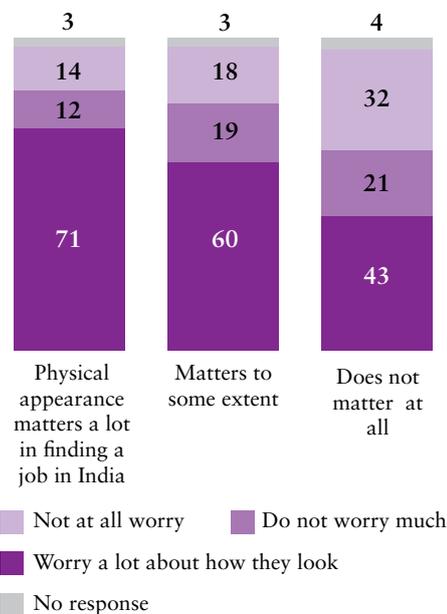
	Anxiety about personal looks and body shape
<i>Overall</i>	54
Youth residing in towns	66
Youth belonging to rich class	63
25- 29 years	58
Graduate and above	58
Young women	57
12th pass	57
30 – 34 years	56
Youth residing in big cities	56

Note: All figures in percent. Anxiety about personal looks and shape refers to those who worry about it 'quite a lot' or worry 'sometimes'. Only those categories have been reported among whom the prevalence of this anxiety was higher than the average.

have self doubts about their looks and appearance. To boost one's self esteem and confidence, youth today tend to post photos and videos with a hope to receive a positive feedback, likes and comments. This, however, results in temporary satisfaction and happiness but at the core of it, can make one feel lonely, stressed and isolated. The data suggests that regular users of Facebook, Instagram, apps like *Mauj* and *Chingari* are more likely to worry about their looks compared to the occasional users and the non users (Figure 6.5). The data also reveals that youth who regularly take selfies are more conscious

of their physical appearance (61%) than those who never take selfies (50%). In a 2016 study done by researchers at Penn State University it was found that viewing other people's selfies lowered one's self esteem because of the comparison one would make with others.

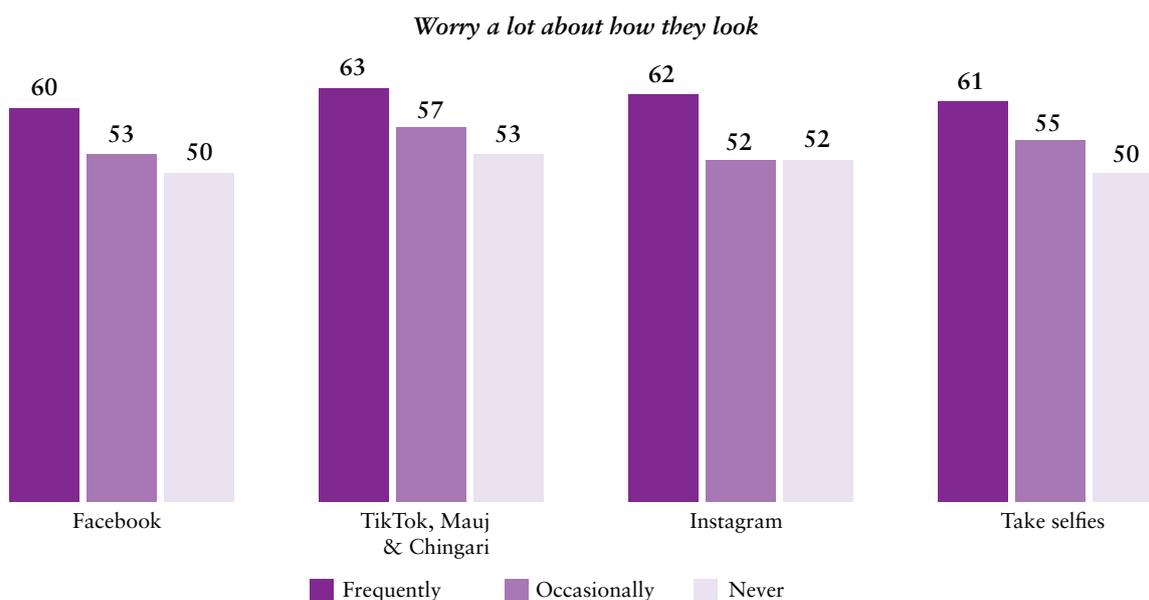
Figure 6.6: Those who feel that physical appearance is a decisive factor in finding a job worry about how they look



Note: All figures in percent. 'Worry a lot' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

On delving deeper into the data, one notes that those who feel that one's physical appearance is very

Figure 6.5: Frequent users of social media are the most anxious of their personal looks



Note: All figures in percent. 'Frequent users' are those who use it 'many times a day' or 'sometimes a day'. Never also includes those who do not have an account. 'Worry a lot' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

important in finding a job in India worry greater about their body shape compared to those who feel appearance makes no difference (Figure 6.6). Seven in ten youngsters (71%) who feel that physical appearance affects one's chances of getting a job to a great extent, worried about their looks compared to those who considered it to be useful to some extent (60%) or not at all useful (43%).

Anxieties related to family disputes, financial security and domestic violence

Family issues can be a source of stress for young people and the data highlights that financial security of the family (61%), disputes in the family (49%) and domestic violence (42%) was a cause of worry for the youth. Women compared to men, married compared to unmarried, those in towns compared to villages and cities displayed greater anxieties on this count. There is no significant difference across youth from various economic classes about anxieties related to family disputes but on issues related to domestic violence and financial security, it was those belonging to less privileged backgrounds compared to the privileged ones who are more likely to worry on these fronts.

Anxiety about personal health

Anxieties about one's personal health emerged to be the second strongest anxiety amongst Indian youth. This anxiety could have also been aggravated by the recent COVID-19 outbreak. The youngest of the youth showed the least anxiety (56%) compared to other age groups (across all other age groups the

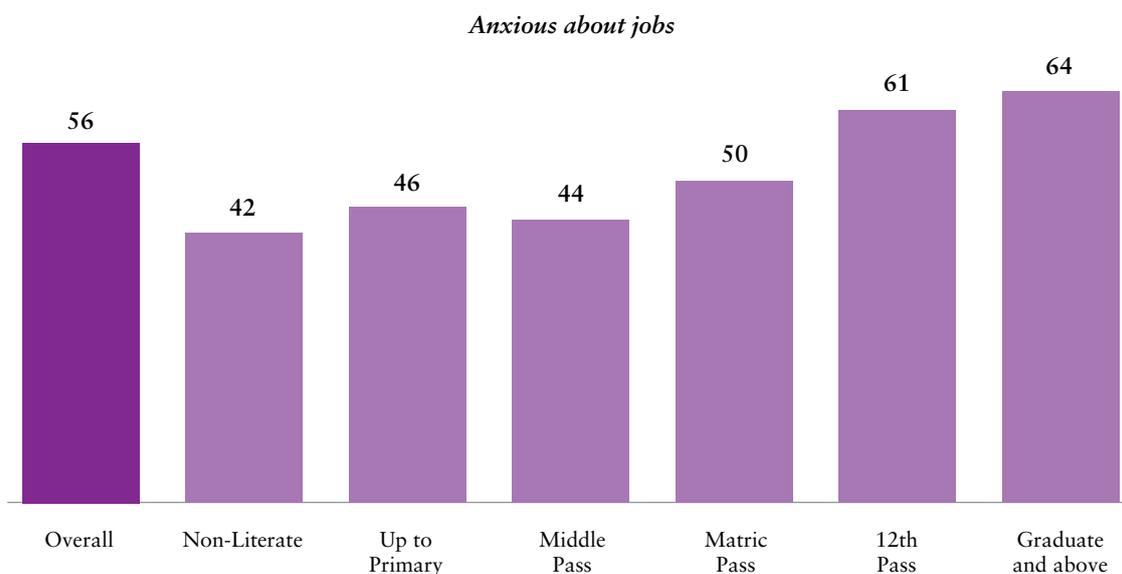
proportion was 60% and above). Health anxiety was also found to be slightly higher amongst women (63%) compared to men (57%). One's economic status and worry about personal health are correlated and youth belonging to better and more privileged economic backgrounds were found to be much more anxious about their health (63%) than those who were not so well off. The highly educated (graduate and above; 63%) showed greater anxiety about their health compared to the less educated. Youth residing in towns (68%) followed by those in big cities (63%) were found to be highly anxious about personal health compared to those in small cities and villages (50% and 59% respectively).

Anxiety about jobs

The study found that youth in the middle age group of 25 to 29 years worry the most about their jobs. Though men and women were equally worried about jobs (56% each) unmarried youth were found to be much more anxious than married youth (60% vs 51%). One's worry about job increased with an increase in level of education. The educated youth were found to be the most anxious (64%) (Figure 6.7).

Youth who said that they preferred a government job were found to worry far more about jobs (63%) than youth who preferred a private job (49%) or having their own business (53%) (Figure 6.8). Additionally, youth who said they would prefer a permanent job even if it meant drawing a lesser salary were found to be more worried (63%) about

Figure 6.7: Graduates far more likely to be anxious regarding jobs



Note: All figures in percent. 'Anxious of their jobs' here denotes those who worry 'quite a lot' or worry 'somewhat'.

jobs than youth who said they would either prefer a job with a good income or a job of their choice although the job is not permanent and has a less salary (53% and 54% respectively) (Figure 6.8).

Anxiety about marriage

The study found that, of all the things asked to the youth, marriage was something that caused the least worry. Those aged between 25–29 years were comparatively more worried about marriage than the others. Two in every five (36%) of those belonging to this age group were quite anxious about their marriage. Youth belonging to this age group were also the most worried about their jobs. Married and unmarried youth showed similar level of anxiety regarding marriage. However, amongst those who are married, the ones who had a love marriage were more anxious compared to those with an arranged marriage. Similarly, those with an inter-caste, inter-religious marriage or inter-state marriage were slightly more anxious than those who married within their caste, religion and state (Figure 6.9).

When analyzing by locality, the study found the youth residing in towns to be more anxious (39%)

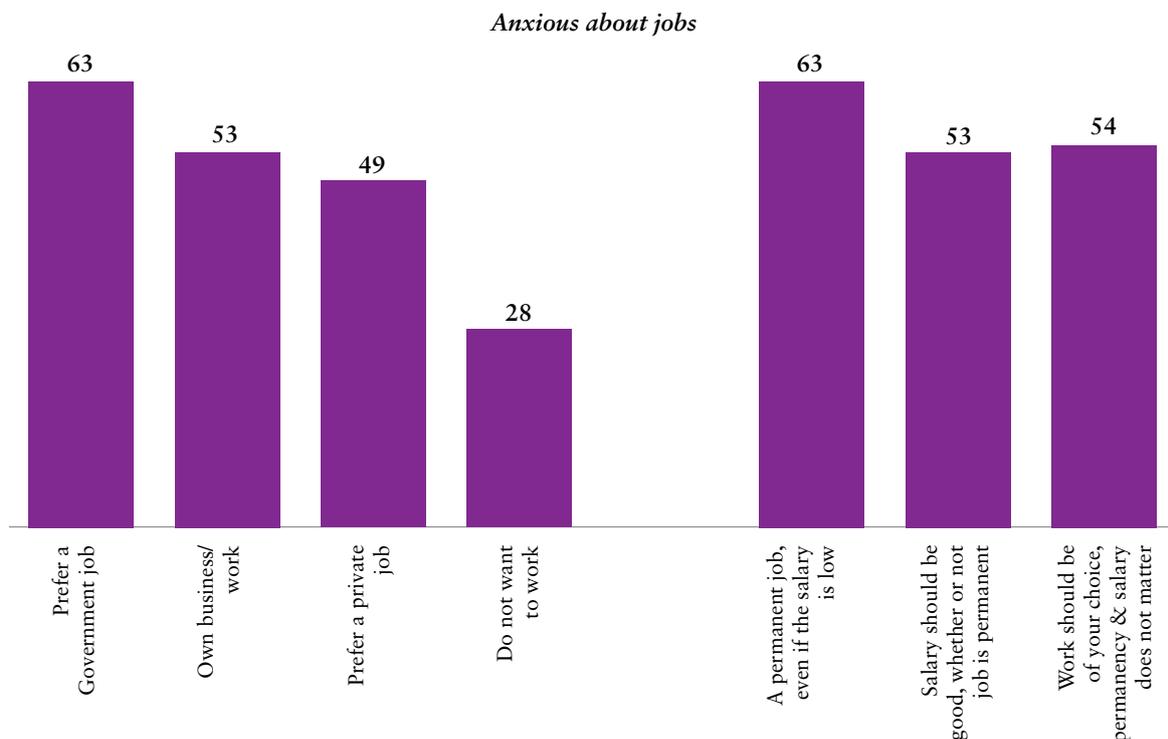
about marriage than those residing in big cities (32%), villages (31%) and small cities (29%). An interesting finding that emerges from the data is that, anxiety about one’s looks and body shape amongst the youth had adverse effect on their worry about marriage. Those who were highly worried about their looks and body shape were also found to be highly anxious about marriage.

Emotional distress and its contributing factors among young Indians

The World Health Organization defines mental health as “a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”.¹ It is normal to experience a range of moods, both high and low, in everyday life. Though most of these feelings are a part of life, but sometimes, people fall into depressing feelings that persist and start interfering with their

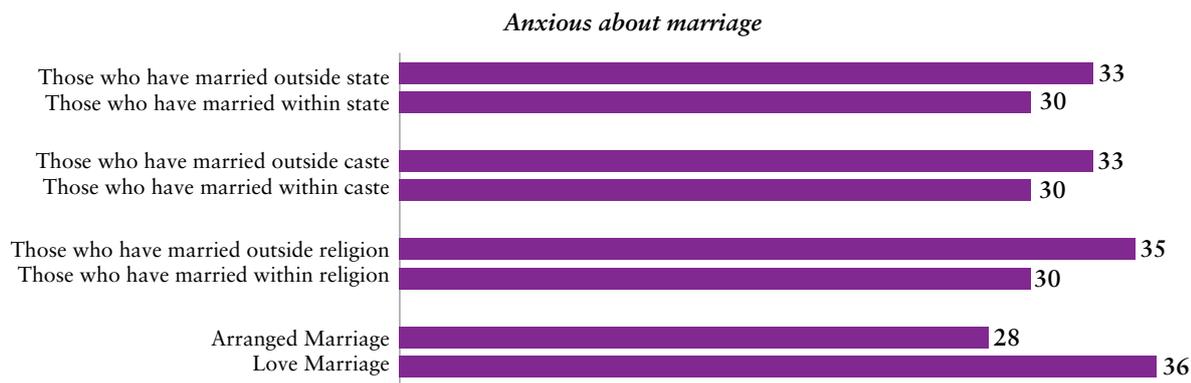
¹ World Health Organization(2005). Promoting mental health: Concepts, emerging evidence, practice. Retrieved from:https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/en/promoting_mhh.pdf. Accessed on 14th October 2021.

Figure 6.8: Youngsters preferring government job and a permanent job, the most anxious about jobs



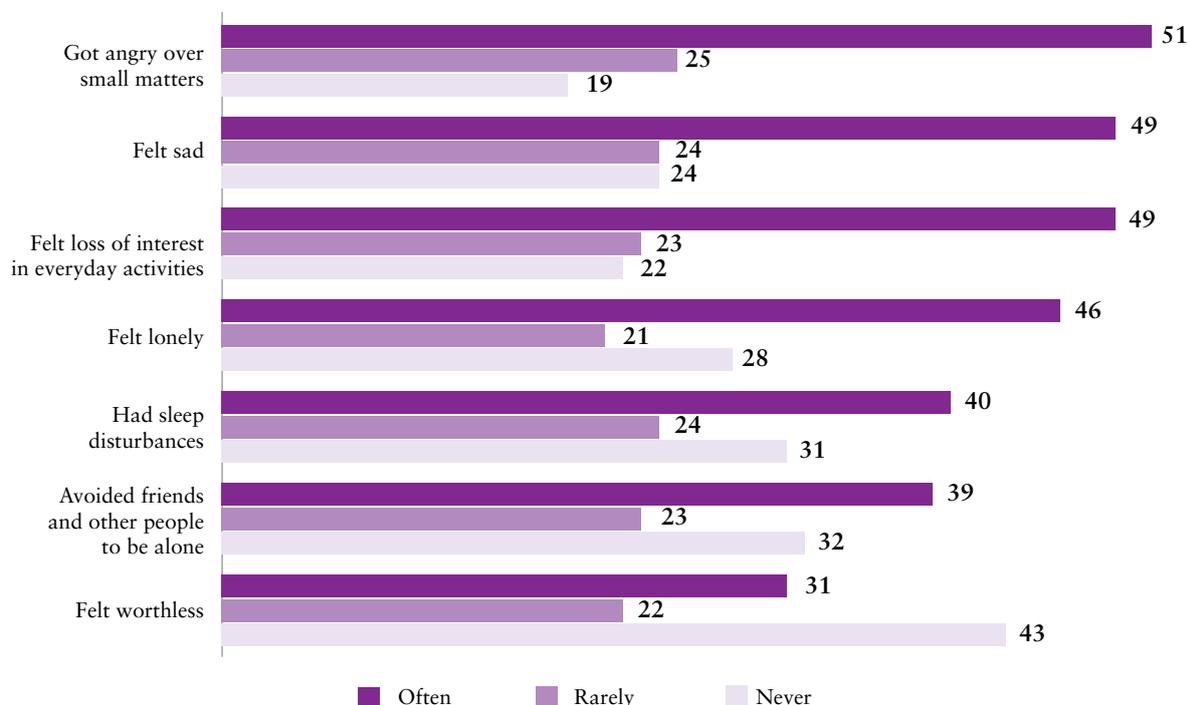
Note: All figures in percent. ‘Anxious about jobs’ here denotes those who worry ‘quite a lot’ or worry ‘somewhat’.

Figure 6.9: Those married outside religion, caste and state, the most anxious about marriage



Note: All figures in percent. Anxious about marriage here denotes those who worry “quite a lot” and “somewhat”.

Figure 6.10: Reporting of various emotional stress related behavior amongst youth



Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. The questions related to feeling lonely, sad, worthless and suicidal were asked for the last 2 to 3 years and loss of interest, anger, sleep disturbances and avoiding friends were asked for the past one year. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

ability to complete daily activities like holding on to a job, making decisions and enjoying successful interpersonal relationships. All these things can lead to emotional distress. Emotional distress is a state of emotional suffering and the term encompasses a wide range of symptoms. Anyone can experience emotional distress, even if they do not meet the criteria for any psychological disorder. Some symptoms of emotional distress include feeling

overwhelmed, helpless, hopeless, guilty without a clear cause, worrying a lot, having difficulty thinking or remembering, sleeping too much or too little, having changes in appetite, isolating from people or activities, experiencing unusual anger or irritability, fatigue to name a few.²

² Kandola, Aarun (2020). What are the causes and symptoms of emotional distress?. Medical News. Retrieved from: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/emotional-distress>. Accessed on 10th October 2021.

The study asked questions on some of these symptoms but we are certainly not trying to determine whether a person is depressed or not and this requires a clinical examination with the guidance of a mental health expert. We are only reporting whether youth perceived to be having any of these symptoms.

Over half the youth in the study reported that in the last two to three years they have often gotten angry over small matters (Figure 6.10). This was closely followed by feeling of sadness and loss of interest in daily activities which were each reported by 49 percent of the young. About two in four youngsters reported to be affected by loneliness (46%). Close to four in ten said that they often had sleep disturbances where either they would sleep too much or sleep very less and almost a similar proportion reported that they often avoided friends and other people because they wanted to be alone. The incidences of feeling worthless were reported by three in ten youth (31%).

The study found the incidence of emotional distress to be the least amongst the youth in the age groups of 15 to 17 years (Table 6.4). However, for

all the other age groups, the results are more or less uniform with only a slight variation. In terms of gender, women reported higher emotional distress than men on incidence of loss of interest, getting angry over small things, feeling lonely and sad (Table 6.5). Marriage made no significant difference and both married and unmarried youth showed more or less similar level of emotional distress.

Emotional distress was also somewhat related to the education and economic status of the young (Table 6.6). Those who were educated up to middle class showed the least level of distress on all parameters. The better educated youth reported experiencing the symptoms of emotional distress compared to the others on most parameters barring the feeling of worthlessness. Loss of interest in everyday activities was reported the least by middle class and most by those belonging to lower class. Anger issues, sleep disturbances, avoiding friends and loneliness were least prevalent amongst those belonging to economically poor section.

The study also found that where loss of interest in daily activities and getting angry over small matters were faced by youth in small cities, sleep

Table 6.4: The youngest, the least emotionally distressed

	<i>Often had these feelings</i>						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided friends and other people to be alone	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
15-17 yrs	42	47	37	36	38	42	22
18-24 yrs	51	52	41	40	48	50	32
25-29 yrs	51	51	40	37	48	50	33
30-34 yrs	48	51	41	39	45	50	32

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of 'many times' and 'sometimes' have been merged to form 'often'. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Table 6.5: Women reported higher emotional distress than men

	<i>Often had these feelings</i>						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided friends and other people to be alone	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
Male	47	48	40	38	44	46	30
Female	50	54	40	39	48	52	31
Gap between men and women on high emotional distress	-3	-6	0	-1	-4	-6	-1

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of 'many times' and 'sometimes' have been merged to form 'often'. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Table 6.6: Educated youth reported experiencing the symptoms of emotional distress compared to the others

	<i>Often had these feelings</i>						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided friends and other people	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
Non-Literate	50	54	39	36	48	50	30
Up to Primary	51	49	40	39	42	46	35
Middle Pass	39	44	35	34	39	39	29
Matric Pass	46	49	36	39	42	45	28
12th Pass	50	51	40	39	47	51	32
Graduate and above	52	54	44	41	49	52	31
Poor	50	47	37	36	44	46	32
Lower-class	53	52	45	41	46	49	32
Middle-class	46	51	36	37	46	49	29
Rich	47	52	43	41	46	50	31

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Table 6.7: Emotional distress amongst youth by locality (%)

	<i>Often had these feelings</i>						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided friends and other people	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
Villages	48	50	40	39	45	49	31
Towns	53	53	44	44	49	48	35
Small cities	54	57	41	32	45	52	25
Big cities	52	55	45	41	46	52	31

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

disturbances was reported by those in big cities (Table 6.7). Youngsters in towns were more likely to report a feeling of loneliness (49%) but at the same time they were also most likely to avoid friends and other people to be alone (44%). A feeling of worthlessness (35%) was also the most prevalent amongst this group.

Impact of anxieties on emotional distress

Stress or worry is a simple reaction to a situation which can be challenging or uncomfortable. However, stress doesn’t always have to be a bad thing. What makes stress good or bad is the way we perceive it. It can either be motivating or debilitating. Over time, the accumulation of everyday stress/worries responses in the body and mind, can erode our sense of well-being and lead to low mood and a feeling of being on edge all the time. That’s when stress becomes distress.

The data highlights that all symptoms of emotional distress were found to be in higher proportion amongst those who worried a lot on any issues (be that body shape, family disputes, personal health, domestic violence, jobs and marriage) than those who never worry (Table 6.8).

Smartphone, social media and mental health of the youth

Evidence from a variety of cross-sectional, longitudinal and empirical studies suggest that smartphone and social media use increases mental distress, self-injurious behaviour and suicides among youth. High usage of smartphone results in chronic sleep deprivation and has adverse effect on one’s performance in all spheres of life. Social media can affect the young through social comparison and negative interactions, including cyberbullying. In some cases, social media content often involves

Table: 6.8: Those highly stressed are also emotionally distressed

	Often had these feelings						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided people to be alone	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
Worry a lot about body shape	58	61	49	48	59	60	40
Do not worry at all	37	39	28	22	29	35	18
Worry a lot about Family disputes	58	64	52	51	61	63	42
Do not worry at all	39	36	27	21	26	33	15
Worry a lot about financial security of the family	57	60	48	45	55	59	38
Do not worry at all	32	29	23	19	25	27	14
Worry a lot about personal health	55	60	47	46	54	58	37
Do not worry at all	33	30	23	18	24	28	14
Worry a lot about domestic violence	60	64	53	51	61	63	42
Do not worry at all	38	40	29	23	31	35	17
Worry a lot about job/work	57	61	49	46	56	59	39
Do not worry at all	36	35	26	24	30	32	14
Worry a lot about marriage	57	62	49	52	61	63	45
Do not worry at all	45	47	35	29	36	41	21

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or gave a no response.

normalization and even promotion of self-harm and suicidality among youth.³ An observational study showed that spending more than a few hours per week using electronic media correlated negatively with self-reported happiness, life satisfaction and self-esteem, whereas time spent on nonscreen activities (in-person social interactions, sports or exercise, print media, homework, religious services, working at a paid job) correlated positively with psychological well-being among adolescents.⁴

The data from the study highlights that, having a smart phone made a huge difference to emotional distress (Figure 6.11). Those who did not own a phone or owned a basic phone were lesser emotionally distressed compared to those who owned a smart phone. Youth with smart phone were found to have greater symptoms of emotional distress compared to others.

3 Abi-Jaoude, E., Naylor, K. T., & Pignatiello, A. (2020). Smartphones, social media use and youth mental health. CMAJ. Retrieved From: <https://www.cmaj.ca/content/192/6/E136.short>. Accessed on 10th October 2021.

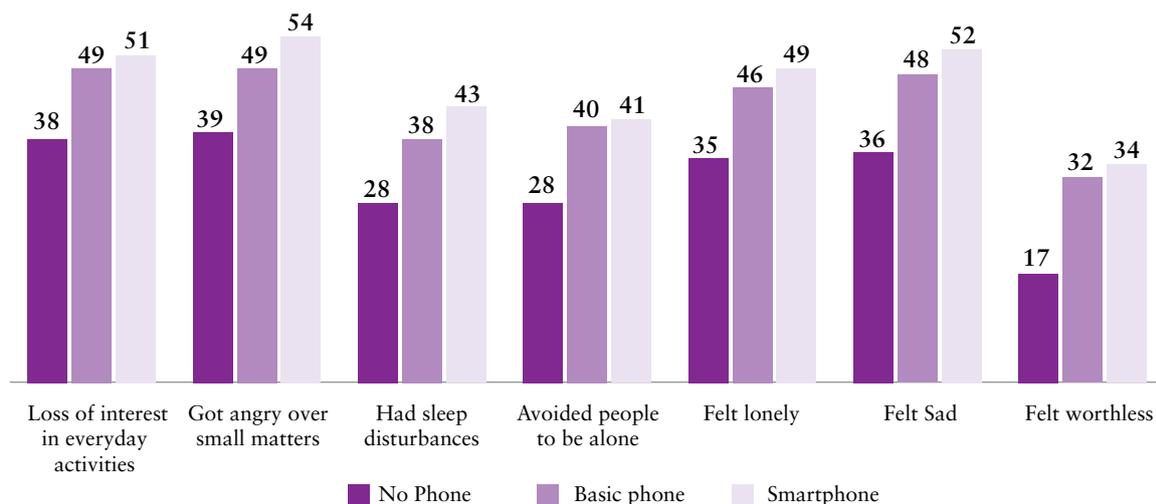
4 ibid

There also seems to be a correlation between social media usage and emotional distress (Table 6.9). Youth having high exposure to social media were found to be emotionally distressed. The highly exposed youth compared to those having no exposure showed greater loss of interest in daily activities (56% vs 42%), anger issues over small matters (59% vs 45%), sleep disturbances (49% vs 33%), avoiding people (46% vs 33%), loneliness (55% vs 40%), feeling of sadness (56% vs 42%) and feeling of worthlessness (40% vs 26%).

Suicidal thoughts among youth

Stressful events arising from various pressures (discussed earlier in this section) and the symptoms that occur due to these stresses can sometimes exceed the capacity of an individual to cope with. The study tried to measure suicidal tendencies among Indian youth and found that close to two in ten youth (21%) said that they have had suicidal thoughts either many times or sometimes in the last two to three years (Figure 6.12). Dr. Vikarm Patel, a renowned psychiatrist and researcher, from Harvard

Figure 6.11: Impact of a smartphone on a young person's life (%)



Note: All figures in percent. The figure represents only 'often'. The categories of 'many times' and 'sometimes' have been merged to form 'often'. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Table 6.9: Impact of social media usage on emotional distress

Social Media exposure	Often had these feelings						
	Loss of interest in everyday activities	Got angry over small matters	Had sleep disturbances	Avoided people to be alone	Felt lonely	Felt Sad	Felt worthless
No exposure	42	45	33	33	40	42	26
Low exposure	43	46	35	35	37	45	25
Medium exposure	51	52	41	39	49	50	31
High exposure	56	59	49	46	55	56	40

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of 'many times' and 'sometimes' have been merged to form 'often'. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or gave a no response.

Medical School's department of global health and social medicine in his interview spoke about a suicide pattern which was unique to India. He specified how in India suicide peaks in young people. Whereas in most developed countries, including upper middle income countries like China, suicide actually peaks in older age. Suicide is also the number one cause of death in young Indians, more than any infectious disease and cardiac condition. In terms of numbers, it accounts for more deaths than any other cause in the age group 15 to 35.⁵

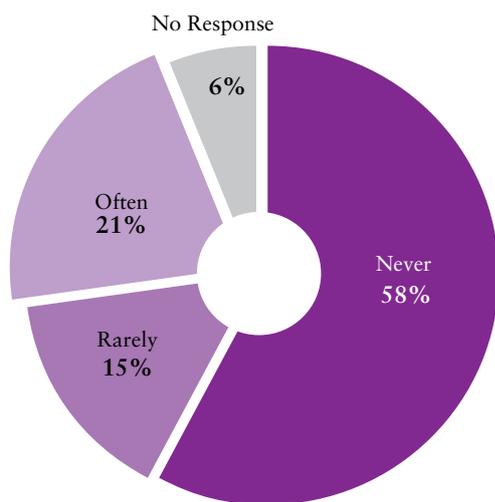
The study found that youngsters between the ages 15 and 17 years (16%) were less prone to getting suicidal thoughts than others (for all other age groups the proportions was between 21%–22%).

5 Nair Sunil (2020). In India suicide peaks in young people. Times of India .Retrieved From: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/in-india-suicide-peaks-in-young-people/articleshow/78033732.cms>. Accessed on 16th October 2021.

Gender made no difference and both young men and women were more or less equally prone to getting suicidal thoughts. Higher suicidal tendencies were reported by the non literates (26%) followed by those educated upto primary pass (24%). Suicidal tendencies was also seen to be more prevalent in youth from economically not so well off background (25%). The corresponding figure for those from rich class was 21 percent. The study also found youth residing in towns were the most suicidal (25%) followed by those in villages (22%) big cities (17%) and small cities (13%).

Additionally, those who worry were more prone to have suicidal thoughts than those who did not worry much. Higher suicidal tendencies were also found to be significantly greater than the average amongst those who worried a lot about marriage (Table 6.10). The tendency to feel suicidal was also

Figure 6.12: Suicidal tendencies among Indian youth

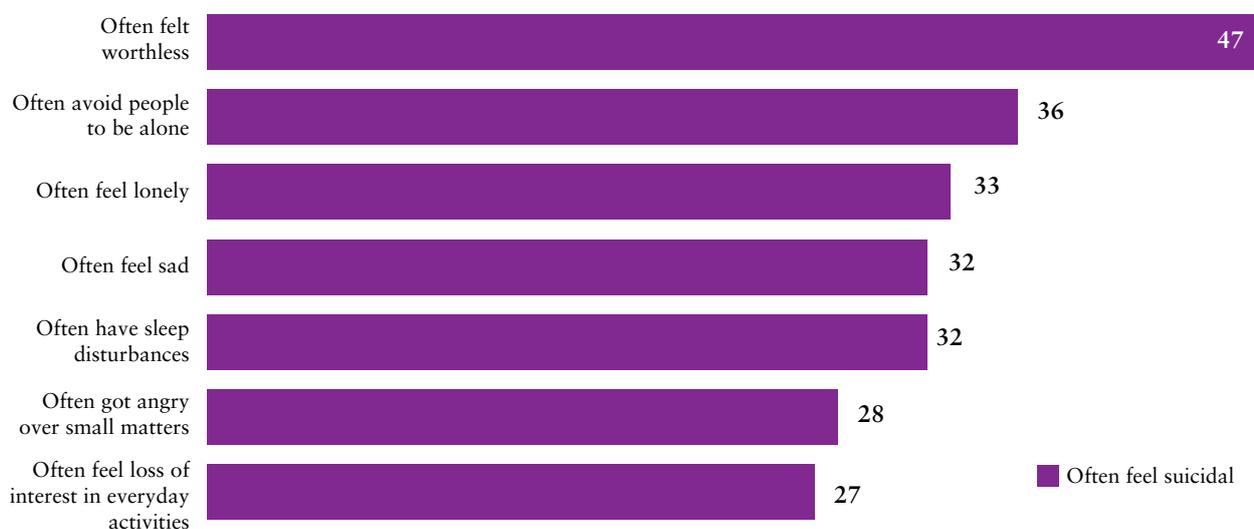


Note: The categories of ‘often’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Question asked: In the last 2 to 3 years, how often have you had thoughts of ending your life?

found to be more amongst those who had high exposure to social media (29%), than those having moderate exposure (18%), low exposure (17%) or no exposure (19%).

The tendency to get suicidal thoughts very often was found to be the greatest (47%) amongst those youngsters who felt worthless very often (Figure 6.13). Close to two in every four youth who often felt worthless had also felt suicidal often. Dissatisfaction with one’s life also leads to suicidal thoughts. Where 30 percent of those completely dissatisfied with their lives felt suicidal very often, the figure reduces to 13 percent amongst those fully satisfied with life (Figure 6.14).

Figure 6.13: Suicidal thoughts greatest amongst youth who feel worthless



Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Rests are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Table 6.10: Stress and its impact on suicidal thoughts.

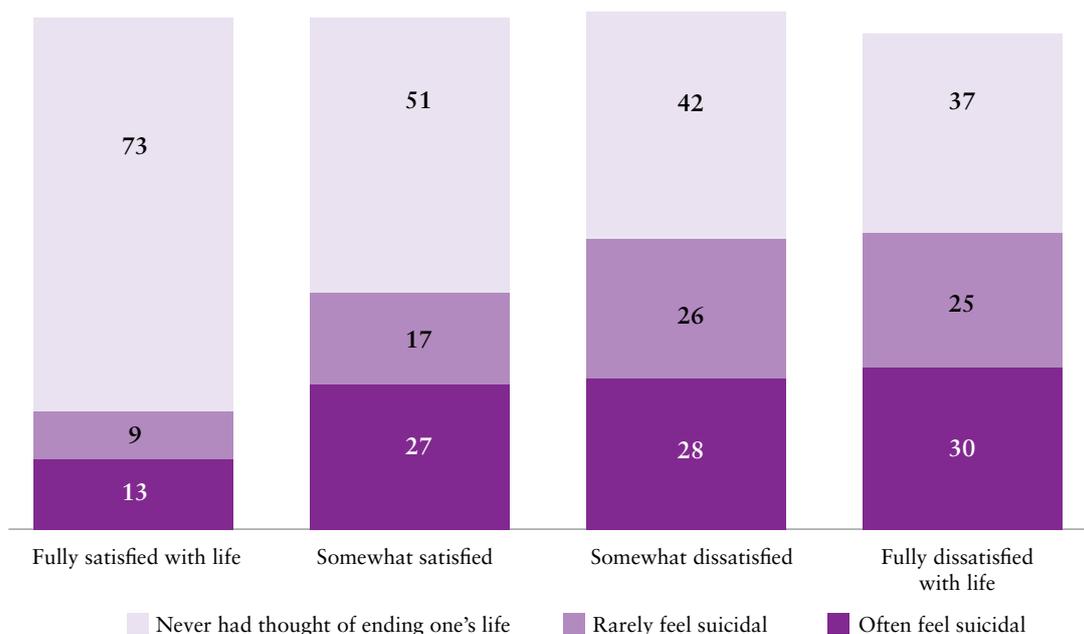
	Often feel suicidal
Overall	21
Worry a lot about marriage	36
Worry a lot about family disputes	30
Worry a lot about domestic violence	29
Worry a lot about body shape	26
Worry a lot about personal health	25
Worry a lot about job/work	24
Worry a lot about financial security of the family	23

Note: All figures in percent. The categories of ‘many times’ and ‘sometimes’ have been merged to form ‘often’. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

Seeking medical help for mental health issues

A hypothetical situation was given to the youth and they were asked who they would approach if they are in a situation where they are struggling with something emotional, like depression, anxiety or thoughts of ending one’s life. The data shows that majority of the youth (65%) said they will either approach a family member or relatives highlighting the importance of family in Indian context (Table 6.11). Friends were the preferred choice for 15 percent of the young. One percent of the youth said that they would approach a *baba* or a *tantric*. A mental health professional was reported by only three percent of the youth. What is bothering is that nine percent of the youth in the study said that

Figure 6.14: Highly dissatisfied youth have greater suicidal thoughts



Note: All figures in percent. The categories of 'many times' and 'sometimes' have been merged to form 'often'. Rest are those who either experienced it rarely or never or did not give any response.

they will not approach anyone. The study asked the youth whether they had ever consulted a doctor for therapy related to mental issues and only 10 percent said they did so, six in ten said they have never consulted a therapist and 26 percent said that they never had mental tensions.

Table 6.11: Family is the preferred choice for help related to mental health issues

Who would you approach for a mental health issue	
Family (Parents/In laws /spouse/ siblings/ relatives)	65
Friends	15
Counsellor/doctor	3
Others	4
No One	9

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

The study finds that the more emotionally distressed were more likely to have consulted a therapist. However, the figure for even them was not very high (Table 6.13). Of all the symptoms of emotionally stressed, those who had suicidal thoughts (23%) or felt worthless (16%) were the most likely to have approached a therapist. It is alarming that close to six in ten youth (59%) who often got suicidal thoughts had not sought any kind

of therapy. The reason for this could possibly be the social stigma around mental health where people with mental health issues are negatively stereotyped. This could also be a reason as to why youth said that they would approach someone in the family and friends in case of some mental health issues rather than consulting a counselor or a doctor.

Two in every ten youth (21%) said that in the past one year they had either often (4%), or sometimes (16%) taken medicine to go off to sleep. On analyzing further, the data reveals that it was the youth having suicidal thoughts (50%), followed by

Table 6.12: Youth who have sought psychiatric help

	Did not consult a therapist	Consulted a therapist
Overall	60	10
Felt suicidal	59	23
Felt worthless	66	16
Avoided people to be alone	61	15
Sleep disturbances	63	14
Felt lonely	65	13
Felt sad	66	13
Loss of interest in everyday activities	64	12
Got angry over small matters	65	12

Note: All figures in percent.

those who feel worthless (37%) relied on sleeping pills (Table 6.13). Three in every ten youth who had sleep disturbance also took sleeping pills.

Table 6.13: Those who felt suicidal were the most likely to have taken sleeping pills

	Took sleeping pills
Overall	21
Felt suicidal	50
Felt worthless	37
Avoided people to be alone	33
Sleep disturbances	31
Felt lonely	29
Felt sad	28
Loss of interest in everyday activities	26
Got angry over small matters	25

Note: All figures in percent.

Conclusion

On the whole, the data highlights that the young in India worry about a range of issues. However, family's financial condition followed by their own physical health were the top two anxieties amongst youth. Though, the study found that the older youth were more anxious compared to the younger lot but, the top two anxieties across all the age groups remained consistent: family's financial security and one's health. Young women were found to be more anxious compared to young men on most things. Education and one's economic status also affected the type of worry. The data also highlights that youth in the towns were the most anxious. Youth also showed quite a few symptoms of emotional distress, but what is worrisome is that fairly large proportions of those who suffer from these issues or have had suicidal thoughts have not sought medical help for it. This could be due to lack of awareness on mental health issues or the social stigma attached to it.

Livelihood Opportunities: The Concerns and Challenges

Section 7



A balloon seller takes a nap in front of the closed shops on the occasion of Eid-al-Fitr in the old quarters of Delhi, August 2020. REUTERS/Mansi Thapliyal

Livelihood Opportunities: The Concerns and Challenges

Introduction

It was early 2020 when the first case of Covid-19 was reported in India. For most of the Indians, including the young students, the job-seekers, the ones who were recently employed, and those who had been working for quite a while but were seeking better opportunities, it was just another day. With the cases gradually rising in the populated cities like Mumbai and Delhi, in just a few weeks, Covid-19 became a household name. The real impact, however, was felt when the entire nation was caught with a sudden announcement of an unprecedented country-wide curfew by the government – shutting down all the offices, markets, restaurants, and all the public places. What started with a two-week nationwide lockdown soon became a ‘new normal’, stretching to several weeks and months, irretrievably damaging the economy of India, where the job market was already in a bad shape even before the virus. Just when things started getting back to normal, we got hit by another wave, far more deadly than the first, and equally devastating to the barely-alive job industry. Millions of young working Indians were rendered jobless, and for millions of others, their ambitions and hopes just got snatched away. It is in this backdrop that we ask the youth about their perception of livelihood and employment opportunities in India, and the challenges they face while finding a job. Apart from this, the section also seeks to understand the potential role of the government in helping the youngsters meet their expectations.

The first part highlights how the issue of unemployment yet again emerges as the biggest concern for the Indian youth, cutting across the social, class and regional divide. Other than this, the youngsters also appear worried about the growing poverty and inflation in the country. The second

part captures young citizens’ perception of the status of employment opportunities in their own states, as well as in the rest of the country. With only a handful of youngsters having a positive impression, most of the states appear to disappoint their youth in this regard.

Are their present jobs helpful enough to provide the youth with the kind of life they desire in the future? The third part captures the perception of youngsters on this pertinent question. While largely, a positive picture emerges, but a deeper analysis of the responses throws mixed results. Further, in the subsequent part, we look at the role of the government in creating jobs, and in the process, highlight the involvement of youth in various schemes and programmes launched for their benefit. Even though the awareness about such programs, as well as the participation of youth, both appear dismal, the study does throw a few positives.

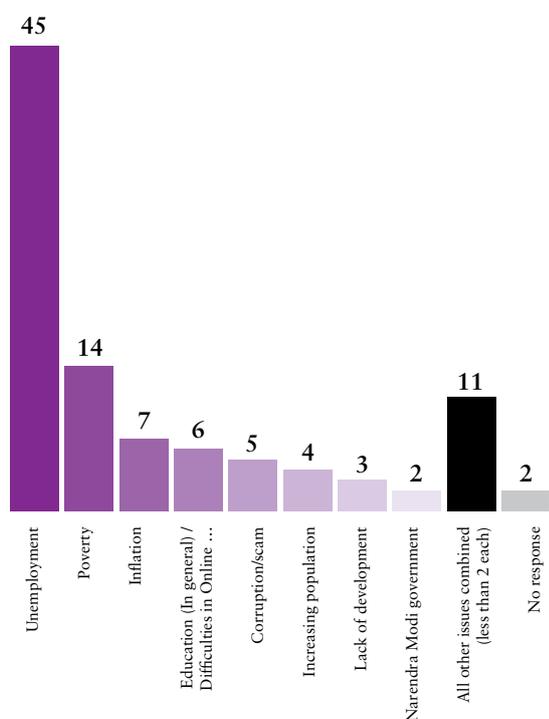
The concluding part first looks at what youngsters identify as the major obstacles in getting jobs in India and then discusses some of the important factors that could potentially impact their chances of getting jobs. While for some it could be their ability, knowledge, or work experience that can help them get a job, for others, something as basic as their gender or caste identity might affect their chances. This part takes a close look at how youth see some of these indicators.

Biggest problem for the Indian youth

The youth of the country continues to see unemployment or joblessness as a major obstacle in their growth. Unsurprisingly, on being asked about the biggest problem that young people are facing in the country today, almost half of the youngsters identify it to be ‘unemployment’. This being an open-

ended question where the options were not read out to them, the problem appears way too serious than one can imagine. ‘Poverty’ and ‘inflation’ emerge as the distant second and third, respectively, among the major problems that the youngsters face today (Figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Almost half of the Indian youth identify ‘unemployment’ as the biggest problem



Note: All figures in percent. *Education (In general): 2%; Difficulties in online education: 4%.

Such gigantic the problem seems that the youngsters from across the communities and class,

as well as from different parts of the country, join the chorus. When we disaggregate the responses with the level of urbanity, we see that both the urban youth and the rural youth mention unemployment as the biggest problem over other issues. The villages and small towns, however, are slightly more likely to have these sentiments compared to the cities (Table 7.1).

A similar pattern emerges when we look at the responses from different parts of the country. While in the west-central region, one in every two youngsters considers ‘unemployment’ as the biggest problem, in the south, two in every five share these sentiments (Table 7.2).

Gender also appears to be an important variable here. While half of the young men look at joblessness as the topmost concern, among young women, this proportion is relatively lower at two-fifth (Table 7.3).

Notably, even though the sentiments are more or less similar for rich as well as poor, and across different social groups, with almost a majority seeing unemployment as the top concern, a few important patterns emerge (Tables 7.4 and 7.5).

Firstly, relatively a bigger chunk among marginalized communities – especially Hindu Adivasis and Muslims (one-fifth each) – see ‘poverty’ as an important concern. In fact, they are twice as likely to feel so compared to the upper caste Hindus. Unsurprisingly, similar sentiments prevail among the poor, with almost a quarter of them identifying ‘poverty’ as the biggest problem.

Table 7.1: Villages more likely to name ‘unemployment’ as the major problem

	Top three problems by urbanity		
Villages	Unemployment (48)	Poverty (14)	Inflation (7)
Towns	Unemployment (46)	Poverty (16)	Inflation (7)
Small cities	Unemployment (42)	Poverty (13)	Education (8)
Big cities	Unemployment (41)	Poverty (11)	Corruption (7)

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 7.2: Half of the Indian youth in West-Central region identify ‘unemployment’ as the major problem

	Top three problems by region		
North	Unemployment (46)	Poverty (12)	Inflation (9)
South	Unemployment (41)	Poverty (15)	Education (6)
East	Unemployment (45)	Poverty (17)	Inflation (9)
West-Central	Unemployment (50)	Poverty (10)	Education (7)

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 7.3: Young men more likely to see ‘unemployment’ as the biggest problem

	Top three problems by gender		
Men	Unemployment (49)	Poverty (12)	Inflation (6)
Women	Unemployment (41)	Poverty (16)	Inflation (8)

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 7.4: Unemployment cuts across all the communities as the biggest concern

	Top three problems by social groups		
Hindu Upper Castes	Unemployment (44)	Education (9)	Poverty (9)
Hindu OBCs	Unemployment (49)	Poverty (15)	Inflation (9)
Hindu Dalits	Unemployment (43)	Poverty (16)	Inflation (11)
Hindu Adivasis	Unemployment (40)	Poverty (20)	Population (8)
Muslims	Unemployment (42)	Poverty (19)	Education (8)
Other religious minorities	Unemployment (50)	Poverty (10)	Education (9)

Note: All figures in percent.

Table 7.5: Other than ‘unemployment’, while the poor see ‘poverty’, the rich consider ‘education’ as the second biggest problem

	Top three problems by class		
Poor	Unemployment (41)	Poverty (23)	Inflation (11)
Lower-class	Unemployment (47)	Poverty (15)	Inflation (6)
Middle-class	Unemployment (46)	Poverty (14)	Inflation (7)
Rich	Unemployment (46)	Education (8)	Population (8)

Note: All figures in percent.

Secondly, perhaps due to the ongoing pandemic disrupting the schools and colleges, ‘education’ also appears among the top three issues for a few groups. This is particularly seen among the advantaged groups, such as the upper caste Hindus and rich. With about one in ten claiming so, it is the second biggest concern for them.

Perception of employment opportunities

Employment opportunities continue to shrink in the country with the Covid-19 and the consequential lockdowns making the situation worse than ever. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) put India’s unemployment rate at about 25 percent in May 2020.¹ Even though according to the CMIE, the figures have improved with the unemployment rate of the country down to 6.9 percent in September 2021, the evidence here suggests a dismal picture in most of the parts.

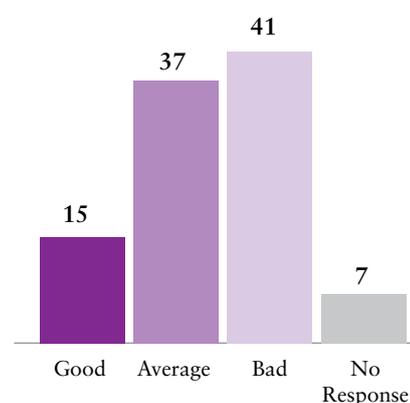
¹ CMIE, Unemployment Rate in India. Retrieved from: <https://unemploymentinindia.cmie.com/>. Accessed on October 5, 2021.

Employment opportunities in states

To begin with, as highlighted in Figure 7.2, the overall perception among the youth about the employment opportunities in their respective states appears poor. As high as two in every five rate the employment opportunities in their states as bad, while merely

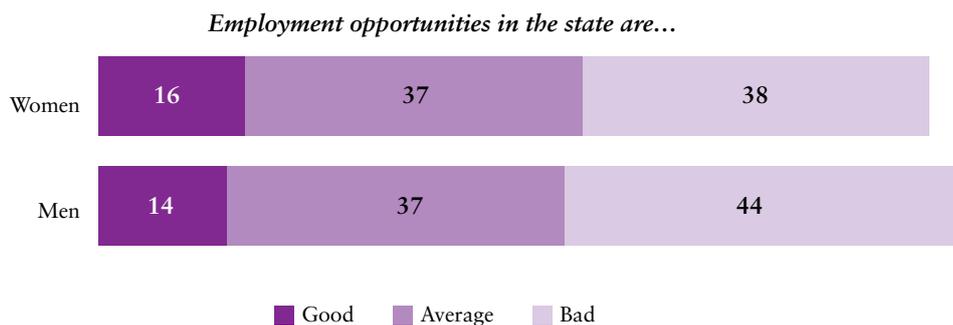
Figure 7.2: Two-thirds rate the employment opportunities in their states as ‘bad’

Employment opportunities in the state are...



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.3: Young men more likely to rate the employment opportunities in their state as ‘bad’ compared to young women



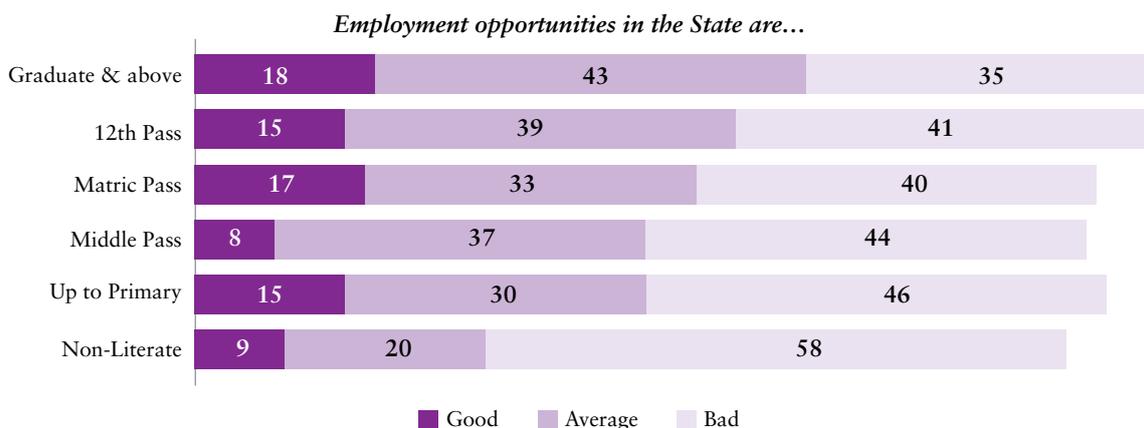
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response

one in seven gives it a good rating. Segregating the youngsters in terms of gender, with a difference of six points, we find young men to be more dissatisfied as compared to young women (Figure 7.3).

What’s more, the less educated you are, the more likely you are to rate the employment conditions as poor, pointing at the situation to be even worse

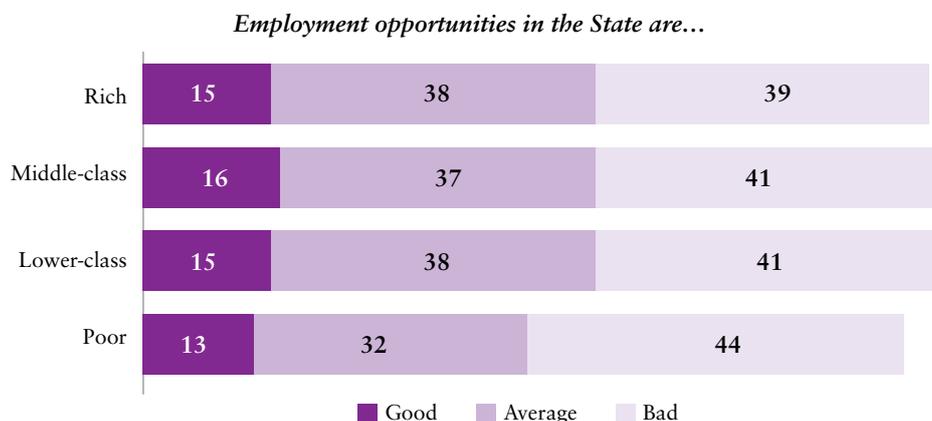
among the disadvantaged groups. In fact, among those with no formal education at all, as high as three in every five youngsters rate the opportunities poorly (Figure 7.4). Following a similar trend, the poor youngsters are more likely to feel the brunt than the rich cohort – a difference of five percentage points (Figure 7.5).

Figure 7.4: Better educated are more likely to rate employment opportunities in their states as ‘good’



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.5: Poor more likely to rate employment opportunities in their states as ‘bad’



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

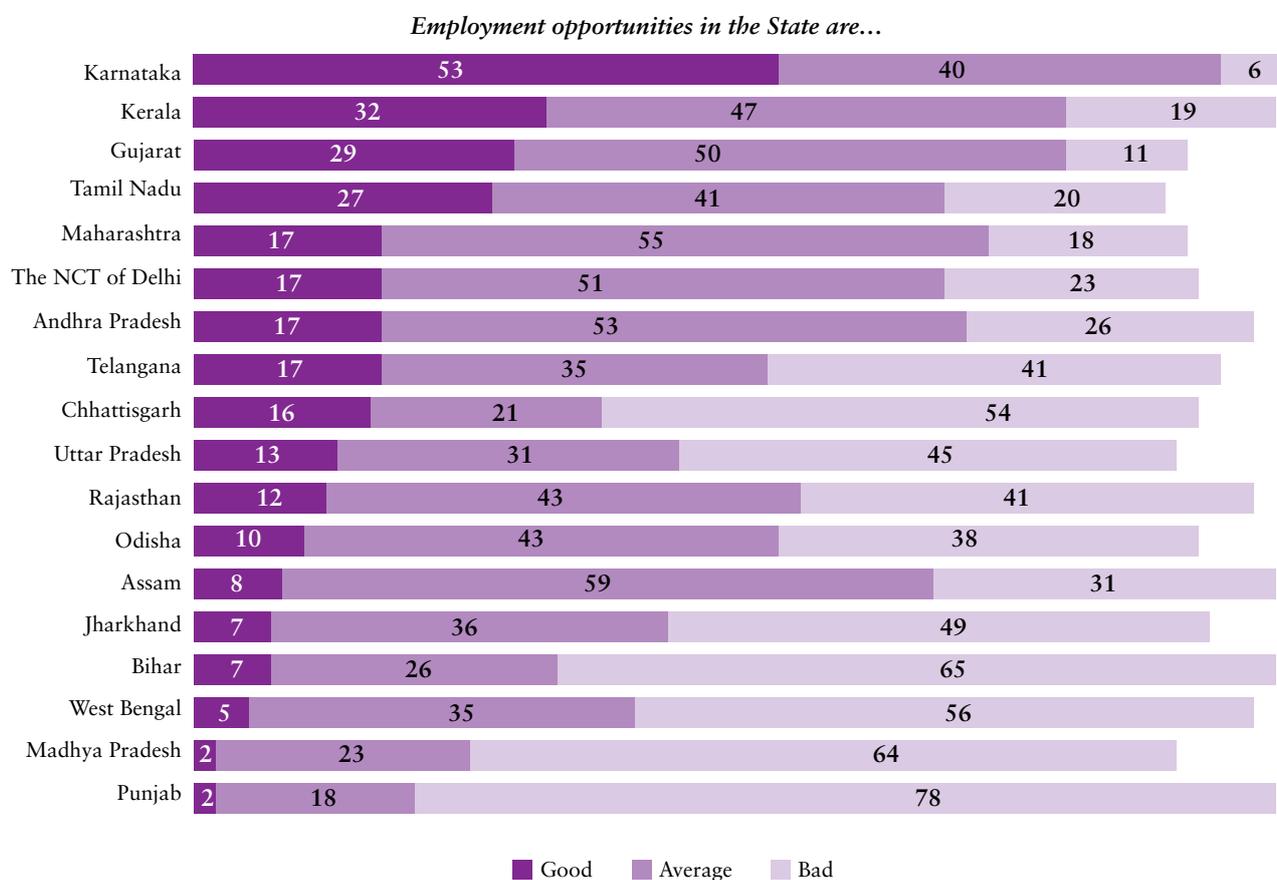
A comparison between different states sheds more light. Of the eighteen states where the study is conducted, only Karnataka has more than half of its youngsters claiming the employment opportunities to be good. At a distant second and third, we have Kerala and Gujarat, respectively, with nearly one-third youngsters sharing a positive perception in this regard. At a contrasting end of the spectrum, we find Punjab, where more than three-fourths of youngsters rate their state badly in terms of providing employment opportunities to them. Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, with about two-thirds of the youngsters rating their states poorly, and West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand, with about half of the youth echoing this sentiment, also find themselves at the grimmer end (Figure 7.6).

Looking at the macro picture, as shown in Figure 7.7, the eastern and northern parts of the country record higher discontent levels regarding employment opportunities, with about three-fifths and about half of the young population, respectively,

sharing these sentiments. Contrastingly, the southern region seems to be doing relatively much better, with one-third of the youth rating their states positively – almost twice as much as west-central states, almost three times that of the north, and more than five times that of the eastern states. Also, compared to the other regions, the youngsters across the southern states are far less likely to rate their state as ‘bad’ with regard to the employment opportunities (only one-fifth do so).

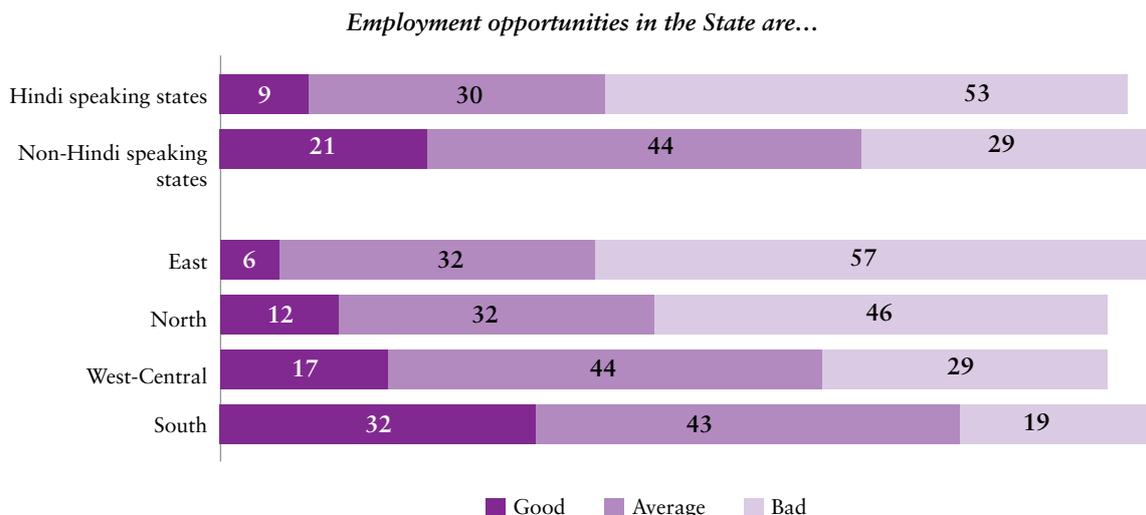
What’s more, dividing the states into primarily ‘Hindi speaking states’ and ‘non-Hindi speaking states’ also throws interesting results. With most of the non-Hindi-speaking states being in the southern part of the country, the youngsters there are twice as likely to rate their states as good compared to their northern counterparts. In fact, combining all the Hindi-speaking states, spread across the northern, central and eastern regions, shows more than half of the youngsters rating the conditions in their states as ‘bad’ (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.6: Half of the youth in Karnataka and nearly one-thirds in Kerala and Gujarat rate employment opportunities in their own states as ‘good’



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.7: Northern and Eastern states, and Hindi speaking states far more likely to rate the employment opportunities in their states as ‘bad’



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

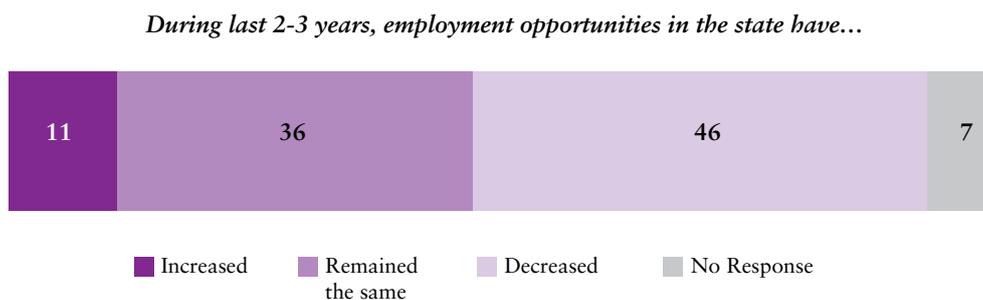
Have the employment opportunities increased or decreased during the last couple of years?

With Covid-19 putting a dent on the already shrinking job market, a little less than half of the youngsters seem to be disappointed about how the situation worsened further during the last 2-3 years – 46 percent of them feel the opportunities have diminished in their respective states. Merely one in 10 feel the situation has improved, while for a little more than one in three, things remain unchanged (Figure 7.8). This sentiment is prevalent more among the youngsters belonging to the middle-class, with more than half of them seeing the jobs to be further decreasing during the last couple of years (Figure 7.9). Young men are also more likely to feel this way, compared to young women (Figure 7.10).

Most sought-after states for employment opportunities

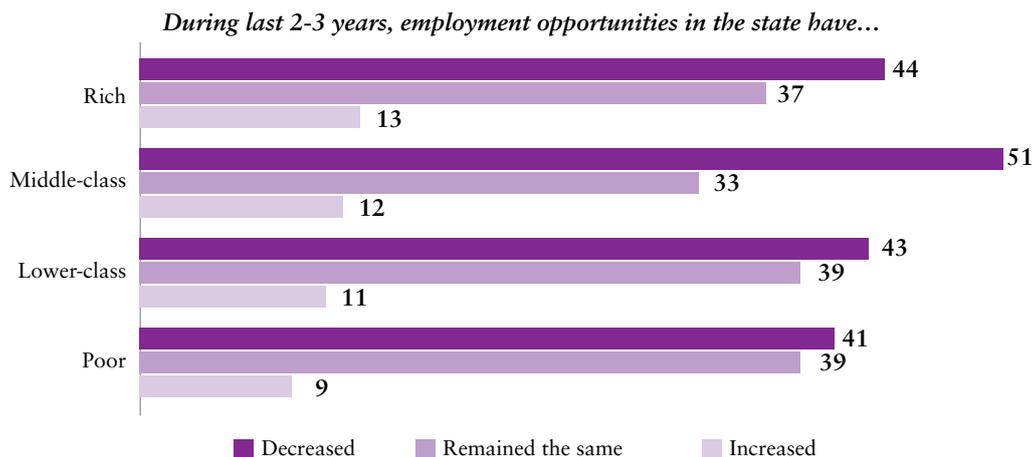
We had another interesting question in the study that can help us gauge the perception of the youngsters about the most prosperous state in India when it comes to providing employment opportunities. On being asked an open-ended question about the state they believe to have the most employment opportunities, unsurprisingly, the National Capital Territory of Delhi emerges as the most sought after, followed by the state of Maharashtra. Notably, apart from Delhi, none of the states (or UTs) scores in double-digits. Gujarat, Kerala, and Karnataka too feature among the top five (Figure 7.11).

Figure 7.8: Nearly half of the youth feel the employment opportunities in their respective state have decreased during last 2-3 years



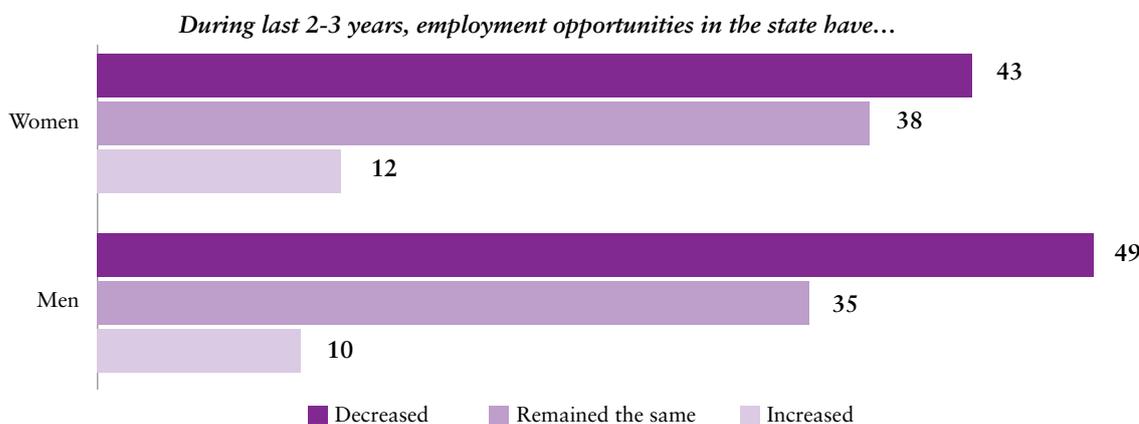
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.9: Middle class more likely to feel the employment opportunities in their respective state have decreased during last 2-3 years



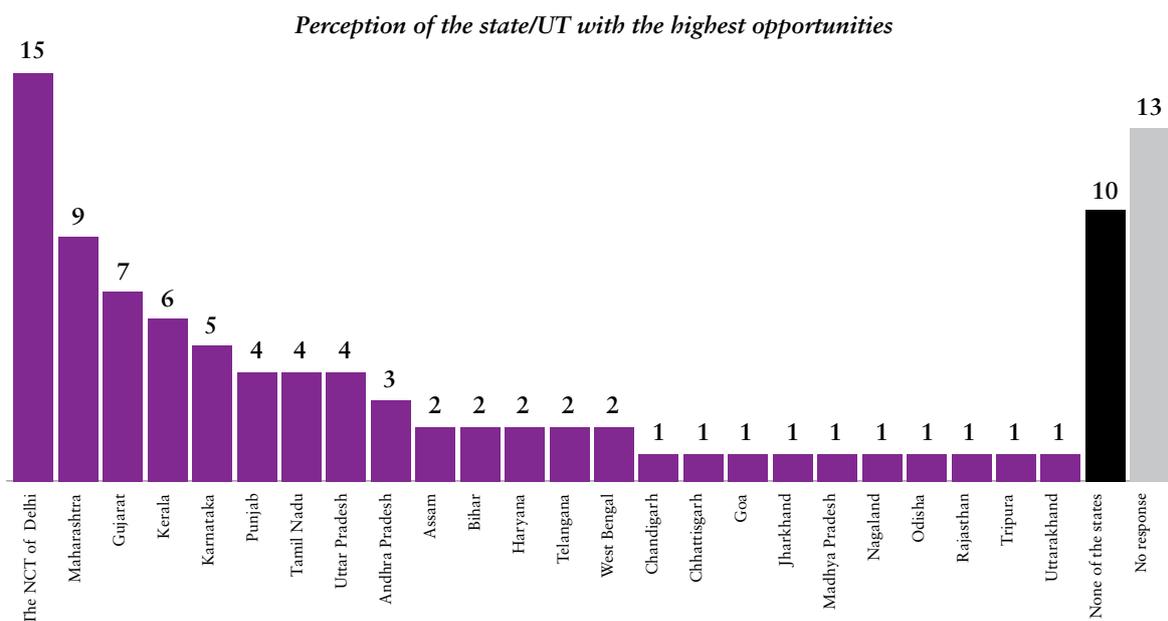
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.10: Young men more likely to rate the employment opportunities in their state as ‘bad’ compared to young women



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.11: Delhi and Maharashtra are most sought-after states for employment opportunities



Note: All figures in percent.

How hopeful are the young Indians about the future of the job market?

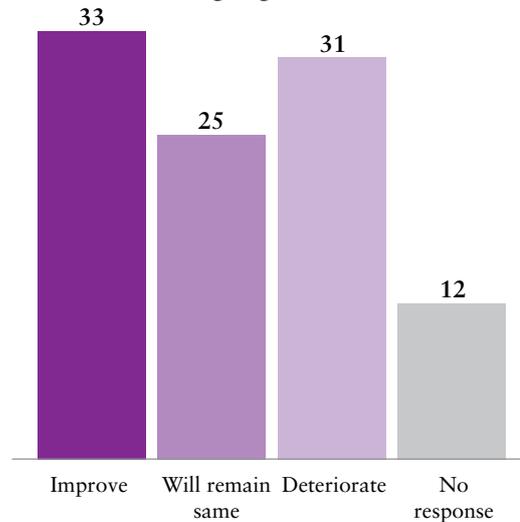
After a brief breather, the unemployment rates in the country again went up owing to the second wave of Covid-19 in April 2021. The present study captures the perception of youngsters about what India might see in terms of jobs and employment opportunities in the years ahead. On being asked if they see the job opportunities in the country improving or deteriorating in the next five years, we find the youth to be somewhat divided. While a third of the youngsters appear hopeful, about the same proportion fears even darker times ahead. A quarter of youngsters believe that there won't be any change whatsoever, with the situation likely to remain the same even after five years from now (Figure 7.12).

Looking at the rural-urban divide, one notices a clear trend – as we move towards the interiors, we find a higher proportion of youngsters feeling hopeless about the employment conditions in the country in the next five years. While a little over one-fifths of youngsters in the big cities fear the opportunities to be further shrinking in the future, more than a quarter in small cities, nearly one-third in towns and more than one-third in villages appear to be worried (Figure 7.13).

What is more, we also find the better-educated cohort – the graduates and those who have completed at least their schooling – to be more hopeful than the rest. About two-fifths of such youngsters have a positive picture of the future ahead (Figure 7.14).

Figure 7.12: Only one-third think the employment opportunities will improve in the country in next 5 years

In next 5 years, employment opportunities in India are going to...



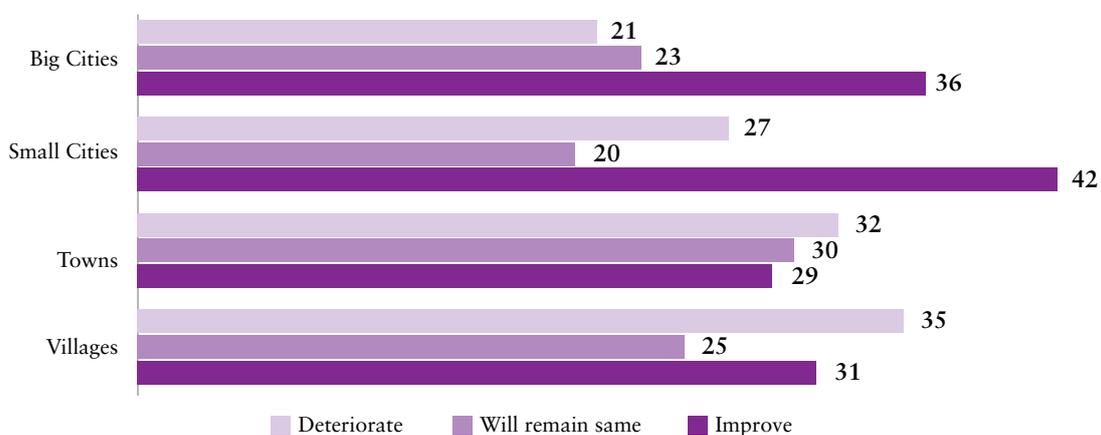
Note: All figures in percent

The present job

As highlighted earlier in the report (see Section 5), about one-third (34%) of the youngsters in the study are working, with 46 percent of young men and 22 percent of young women reporting so. On being asked how helpful their present jobs or occupation would be for the kind of life they want to live in the future, about three-fourths (73%) reply affirmatively. Dividing this chunk further, however, leaves us with less than one-third of youngsters (30%) who seem fully confident about the same,

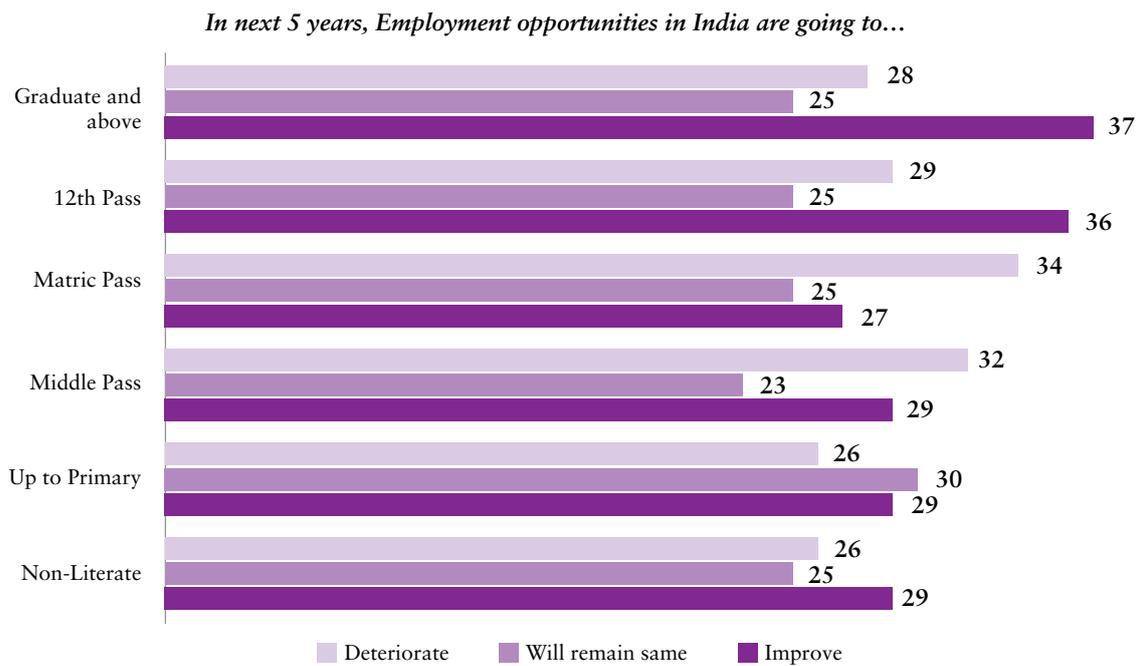
Figure 7.13: Youngsters in villages seem to be more hopeless about the employment opportunities in the country five years from now

In next 5 years, Employment opportunities in India are going to...



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.14: Graduates appear more hopeful of employment opportunities to be improving in next 5 years

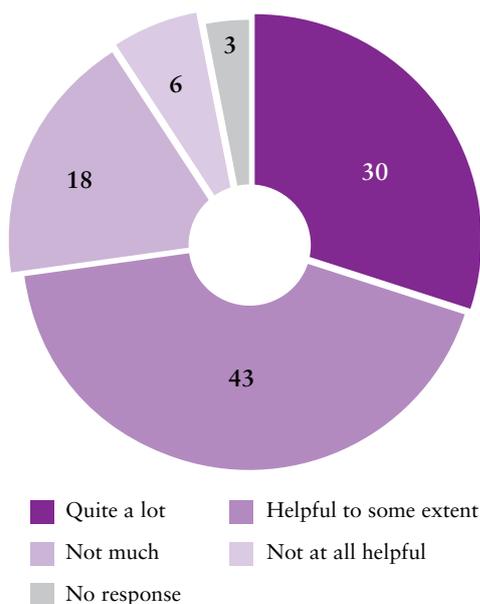


Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

while for about two-fifths (43%), their present jobs would be helpful only to some extent. Turning to the dissatisfied lot, we find a quarter of youngsters finding their jobs not to be of the kind that would give them a future they desire (Figure 7.15).

Figure 7.15: About one-third are fully confident that their current jobs would secure their future

How helpful will this job be for the kind of life you want to live in the future?



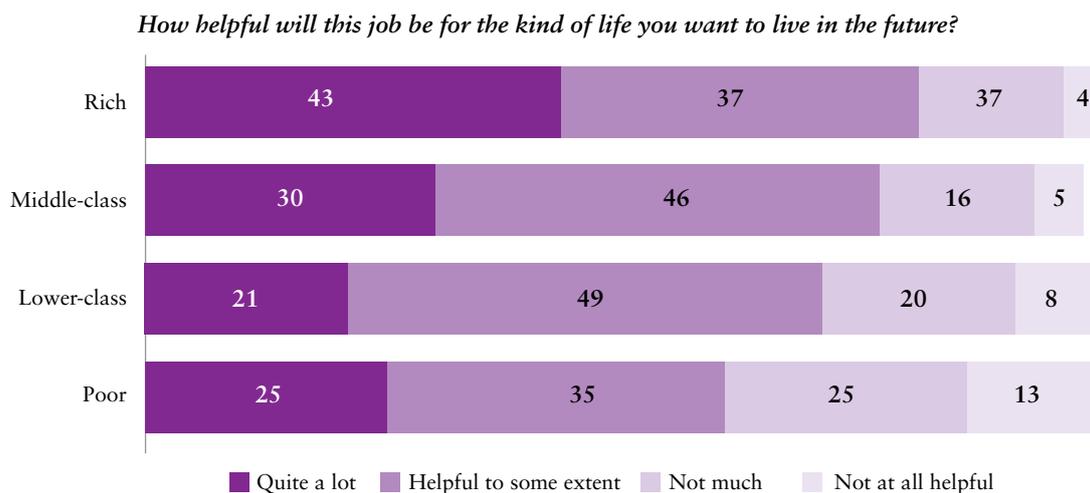
Note: The pie chart represents responses of the youngsters who are earning (34% of the total sample). All figures in percent.

On predictable lines, the youngsters belonging to prosperous households are far more likely to find their jobs helpful in securing their future, as compared to the ones belonging to the economically worse off households. Among the poorest, about two-fifths find their jobs failing to provide them a safety net (Figure 7.16).

Similarly, the better-educated youth are less likely to have this feeling. In fact, among college-educated youth, more than eight in 10 (84%) find themselves on the brighter side, with two-fifths saying their present job would help them ‘quite a lot’ in providing them what they aim for (Figure 7.17).

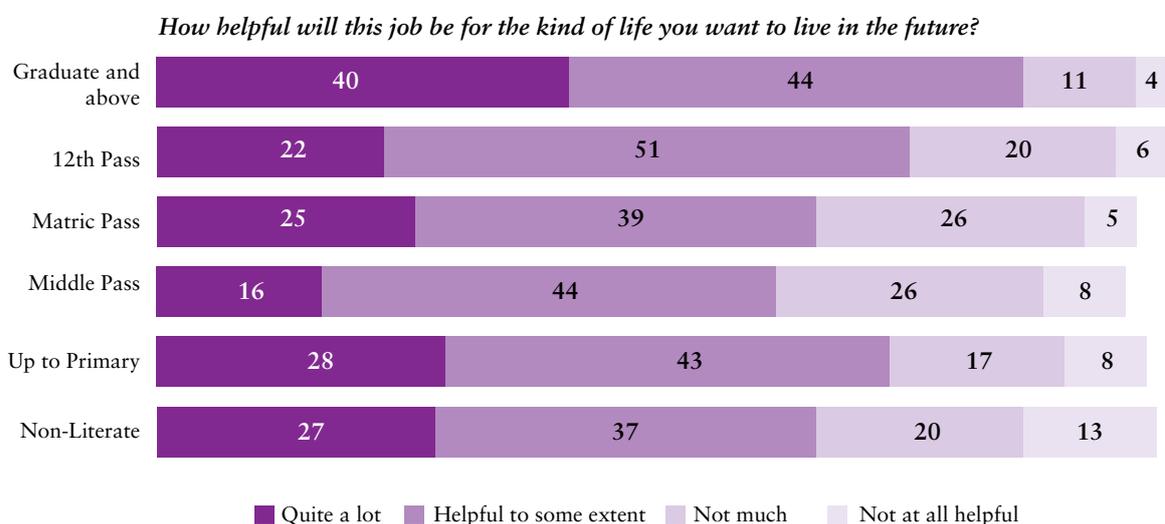
Notably, on segregating the youth with respect to the social and religious groups, we find Muslims to be most likely to feel that their present jobs fail to provide them long-term security. One-third of the Muslim youth believe so. However, compared to other social groups, the discontentment among young Muslims is just mildly higher. Furthermore, Dalit youth is least likely to be fully content with just over one-fifth believing their current jobs to be providing them the kind of future they desire. Contrarily, the Hindu Adivasis have two-fifths of the young population fully confident of a good future on the basis of their current jobs and occupations (Figure 7.18).

Figure 7.16: Youngsters from rich households far more likely to find their jobs securing their future



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.17: Graduates far more likely to find their jobs securing their future



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

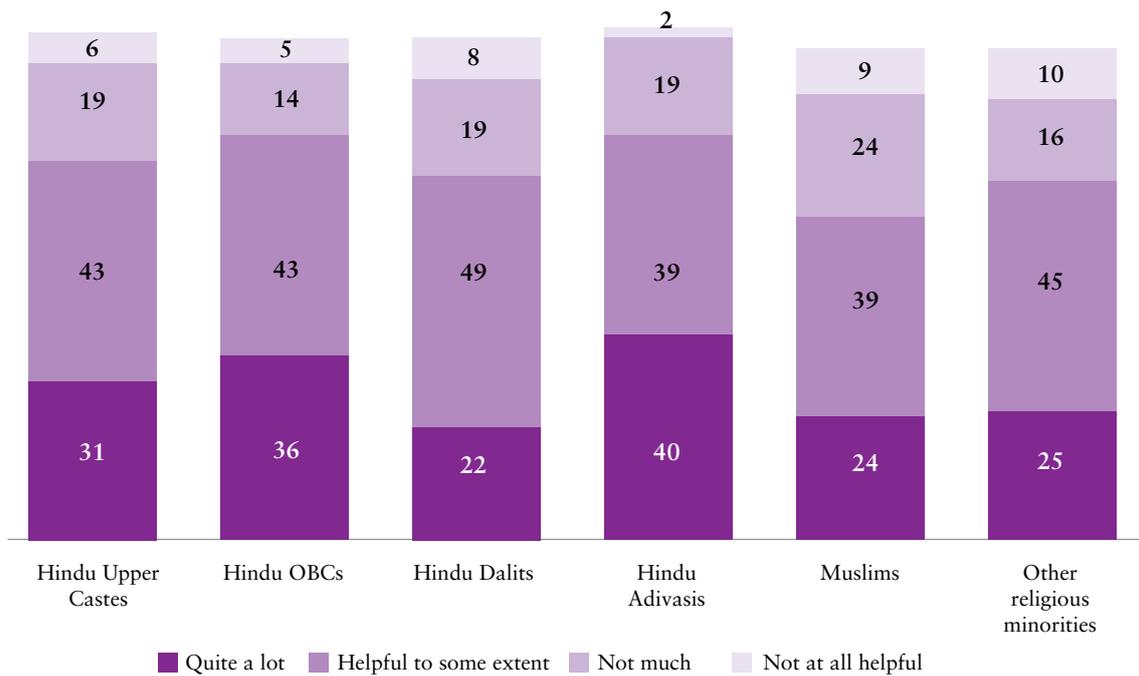
Looking at the youngsters through the prism of urbanity, we find the dissatisfaction to be slightly higher at the two extreme ends – villages and big cities. Compared to about one-fifth in small cities and towns, a quarter in villages and big cities find their jobs to be not much or not at all helpful. Notably, youth in big cities are least likely to find their jobs ‘very helpful’ (Figure 7.19).

Before we wrap up this part, it would be interesting to gauge the perceptions by segregating the youngsters on the basis of their job profiles. So, considering what youngsters do, who are the most likely to find their jobs good enough to support their future plans? And who find their jobs falling short of what they desire for their future?

Young professionals and the ones with government jobs, unsurprisingly, emerged as the most content lot, with more than two-fifths (46%) and nearly two-fifths (38%), respectively, completely sure of their jobs guaranteeing them a bright future. The semi-skilled or the unskilled workers find themselves at the other end, with just a little above one in 10 believing so. Among the ones who are more vocal about their dissatisfaction, we find mostly service workers and the farmers community, with two-thirds finding their work denying them of a promising future (Figure 7.20).

Figure 7.18: One-third of Muslim youth do not find their jobs securing their future

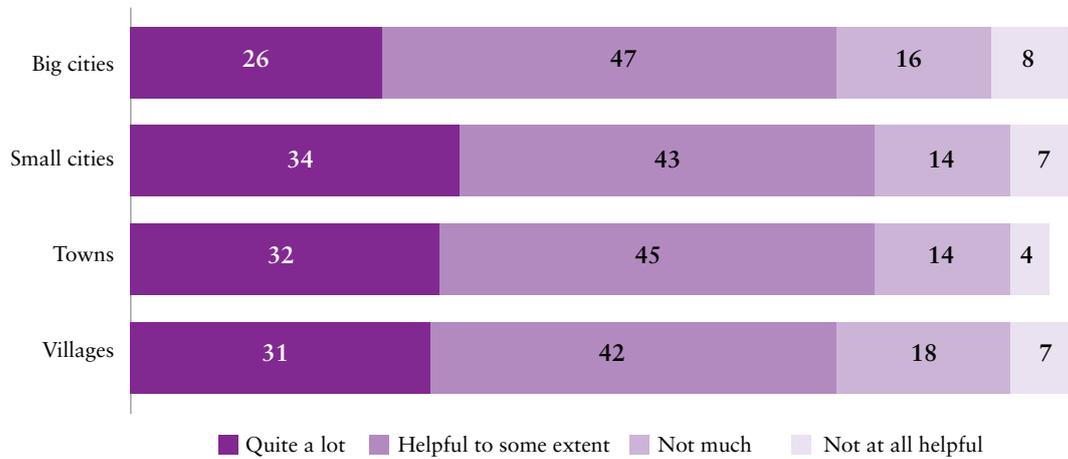
How helpful will this job be for the kind of life you want to live in the future?



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.19: Youth in villages slightly more likely to find their jobs short of what they desire for their future

How helpful will this job be for the kind of life you want to live in the future?



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

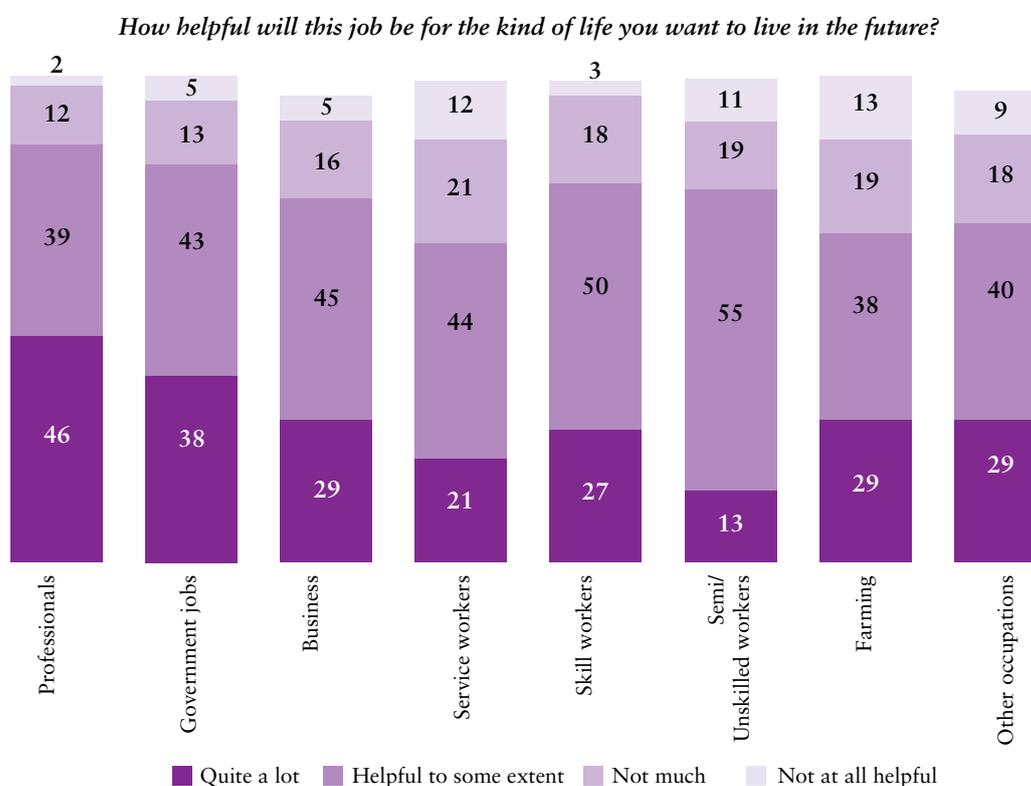
Role of the government

During the last few years, the government is encouraging the youth to be the ‘job creators’, rather than being only the ‘job seekers’. The prime minister, as well as the chief ministers of several states, have urged their young graduates to be entrepreneurs, and hence, making it possible to create more opportunities. There is no denying the fact that it is the public sector that controls some of the most essential functions – defense, homeland security, public health and safety, education, and myriad other functions – and hence, the jobs created by the government will always be crucial to the economy.

Whose responsibility is it to create jobs?

In the study, when we ask the youngsters if it is primarily the government’s responsibility to create employment opportunities for the youth, or should the youth themselves create new opportunities, the majority is found to see it as the responsibility of the government. However, we also have a significant proportion – two-fifths of youngsters – who believes that the youth should create new employment opportunities, indicating the fact that the aggressive campaign launched by the government seems to have created a significant impact among the youth on how they think about this issue (Figure 7.21).

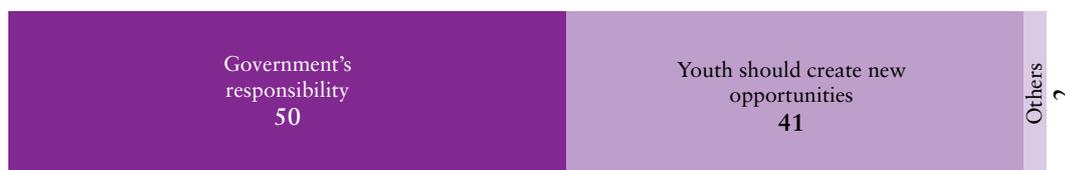
Figure 7.20: Young professionals and those in government jobs more likely believe their current jobs would give them the kind of life they want to live in the future



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.21: The majority believes it to be the government’s responsibility to create jobs

Should it be the government’s responsibility to give employment to the youth or should the youth themselves create new employment opportunities?



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

When the data are controlled for age, education level, caste identity, and the level of urbanity, the results remain remarkably consistent with the proportion varying only by a few points up or down. Gender and class, however, do have some impact. Young women, for instance, are more likely to consider this as the government's responsibility compared to young men. Also, youngsters from the wealthiest households are far more likely to believe that the youth should create new opportunities, instead of considering this a responsibility of the government. Interestingly, while over half of the richest believe it to be the youth's responsibility, among the other three classes, over half consider it the government's responsibility (Figure 7.22).

'Be a job creator, not a job seeker'

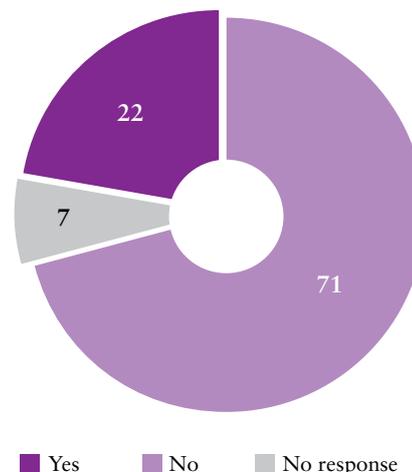
Despite an aggressive campaign by the government to encourage youth to be job creators rather than job seekers, we find only about one-fifth claiming to have heard the campaign slogan (Figure 7.23).



Source: <https://blog.mygov.in/be-a-job-creator-not-a-job-seeker/>

Figure 7.23: Only one-fifth have heard the slogan 'I will be a job creator, not a job seeker'

Heard the slogan of the government that 'I will be a job creator, not a job seeker'?



Note: All figures in percent.

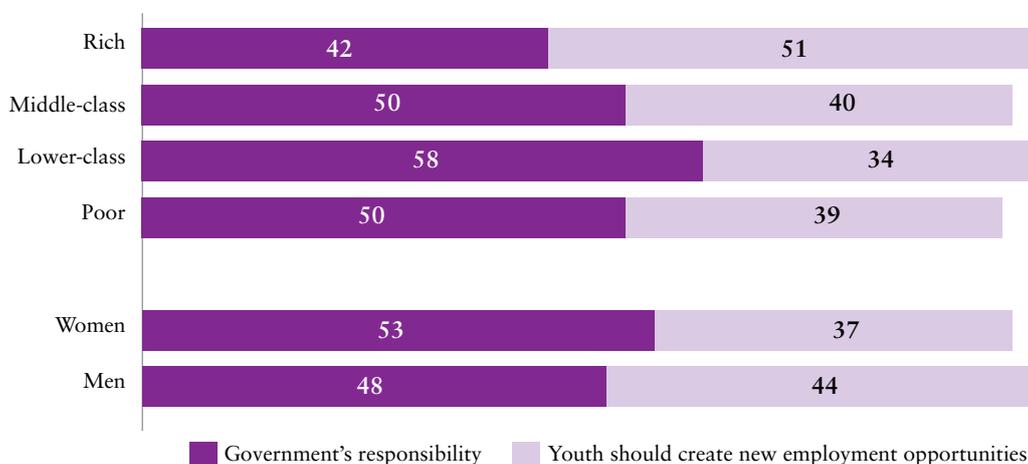
Media exposure, however, does make a difference here. The higher the exposure to the media, the more likely is the youth to have heard the slogan. In fact, across the youngsters with the maximum media exposure, nearly one-third (30%) have heard the slogan – more than twice than the ones with no media exposure at all (Figure 7.24).

Awareness about the programs and schemes of the government

The government boasts of running innumerable programs, schemes, and initiatives aiming at giving

Figure 7.22: Over half of the wealthiest think the youth, instead of government, should create new opportunities; women more likely to see this as the government's responsibility

Should it be the government's responsibility to give employment to the youth or should the youth themselves create new employment opportunities?



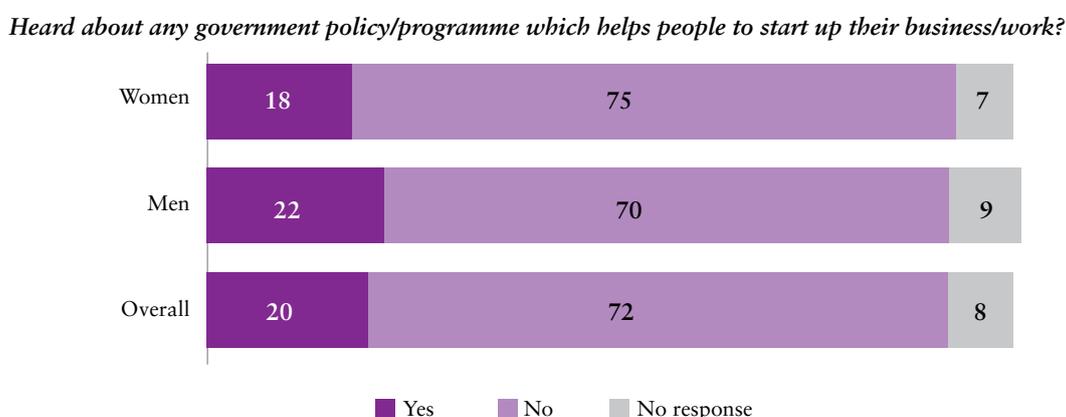
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.24: Youth with higher media exposure more likely to have heard the slogan ‘I will be a job creator, not a job seeker’



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.25: Only one-fifth of youngsters have heard about the government’s programmes helping people to start up their business or work



Note: All figures in percent.

direct employment, teaching new skills, providing financial assistance in the form of subsidies and loans for small businesses, and encouraging budding entrepreneurs to kick-start innovative start-up businesses. The beneficiaries include youngsters, women, small artisans, and people from lower economic backgrounds.

In the study, when we try to gauge the awareness about the programs that help people to start their business or work, we find only one-fifth of youth to be aware about the same, whereas, as high as eight in 10 either deny hearing about any such scheme or give no response. Among young women the awareness is even less, with only 18 percent aware of such programs – four points lower than young men (Figure 7.25).

When we look at the rural-urban divide, we find the youth in the villages to be more aware of such

programs, compared to the youth living in towns and cities (Figure 7.26). One’s economic class also seems to have an impact, with youngsters from the wealthier households more likely to be aware of such programs, as against those from poorer households (Figure 7.27).

Other than this, as highlighted in Figures 7.28 and 7.29, we find two important variables – education and media exposure. Youngsters who are better educated and the ones with better access to media are more likely to have heard about the government’s initiatives to help people with small businesses or work. For instance, among non-literates, merely one in 10 are aware of such programs, as against one in four among college-educated. Similarly, only about one in seven with no exposure to media at all know about them, while among the ones with medium or high exposure, more than one in five are found to be aware.

Figure 7.26: Youngsters from villages slightly more aware about the government's programmes helping people to start up their business or work

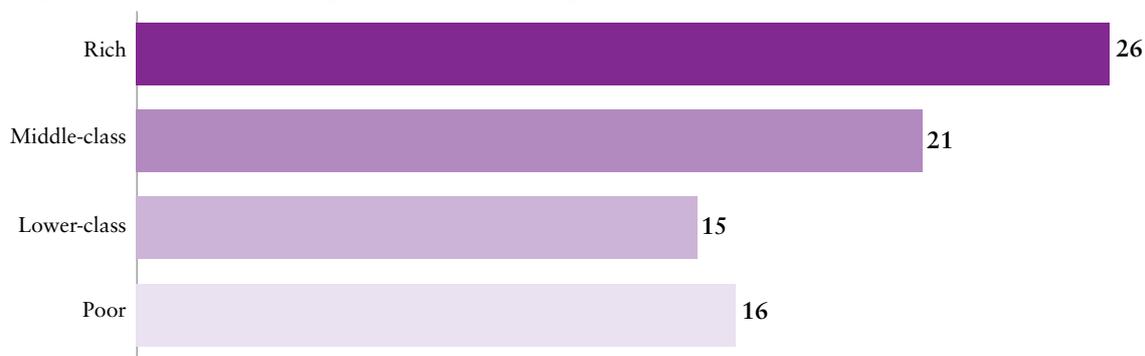
Youngsters who have heard of a government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business/work



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.27: Youngsters from wealthier background more aware about the government programmes supporting business or work

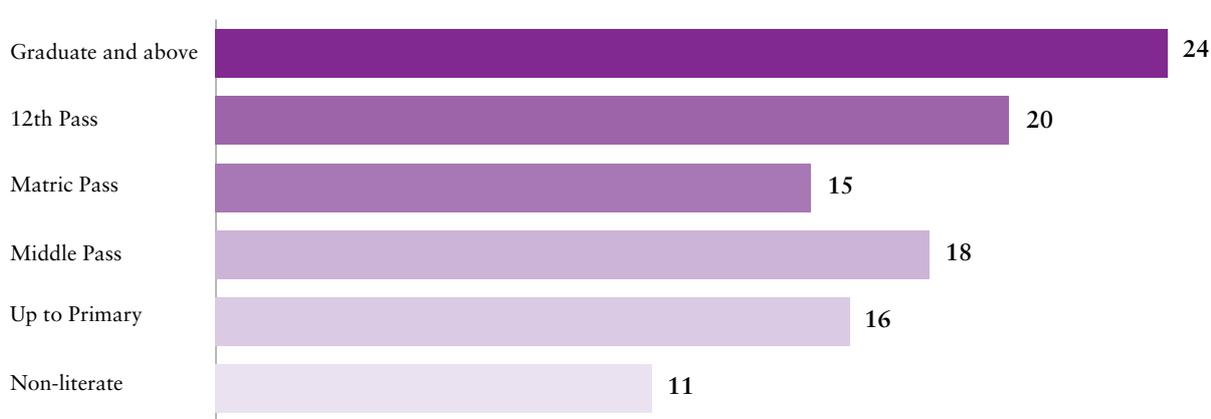
Youngsters who have heard of a government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business/work



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.28: Awareness about support programmes improves with education

Youngsters who have heard of a government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business/work



Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.29: Awareness about support programme increases with an increase in media exposure

Youngsters who have heard of a government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business/work



Note: All figures in percent.

What is even more disappointing is the fact that among 20 percent of young Indians who claim to have heard about such programmes, merely a quarter could actually state the name of the program on being asked about the same in a follow-up question. Of those who give a name, we find the *Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)* to be the most popular programme of the government, while the *Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)* under the ‘Skill India’ mission, is a distant second (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6: Among those who have heard about the government programmes, only a quarter could give a name

Which policy/programme?	
Gave name of a policy/programme	25
Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)	8
Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Skill India	3
Startup India Scheme	2
Farming/ Fishing/ Animal Husbandry Schemes	2
Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME)	1
Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA)	1
Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY)	1
Any other programme (less than 1 each)	7
Did not give any name/No response	75

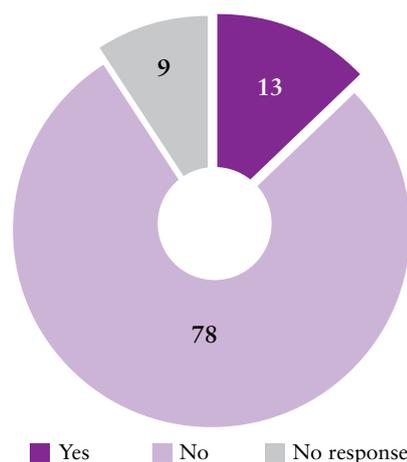
Note: The table highlights responses of only those youngsters who have heard about a government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business/work. All figures in percent.

Enrolment in a skill development scheme

Finally, when we ask the youngsters if they have ever been enrolled in a skill development program, a somewhat positive picture emerges, with 13 percent of Indian youth claiming to have actually enrolled themselves in a skill development scheme, with the participation of young women as much as the young men (Figure 7.30). This must be read with a caveat – the numbers are not the official figures of the actual enrolment but only the responses of the young Indians on being asked if they have ever been enrolled in a skill development scheme.

Figure 7.30: Thirteen percent of the Indian youth claim to have enrolled in a skill development scheme

Ever been enrolled in a skill development scheme?



Note: All figures in percent.

What’s more, the schemes seem to have done relatively better in villages and small towns, with 18 percent of youth living there claiming to have enrolled under them, as against 10 percent in the

cities, i.e. almost twice as much as cities. It is also noteworthy that we see a higher enrolment among two of the minorities – young Muslims, with 21 percent claiming so, and Christians, with 16 percent claiming so.

But again on being asked in a follow-up question to those who claim to have enrolled for a skill development scheme to give the name of the scheme, an overwhelming majority fails to provide the same. Only a little over one in three of them could state the name of the scheme (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7: Among those who claim to have enrolled in a skill development scheme, only a little over one-third could provide the name of the scheme

<i>Which scheme?</i>	
Gave name of a scheme	36
Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Skill India	9
Computer Based Skill Development Programs	6
Fashion Designing/ Tailoring Skill Development Programs	2
Electrical Skill Development Programs	1
Skill Development in Schools/ Colleges/ NCC/ NSS	4
Beautician/ Makeup Skill Development Programs	1
Kushal Yuva Program (KYP)	1
Any other programme (less than 1 each)	12
Did not give any name/No response	64

Note: The table shows responses of only those youngsters who claim to have enrolled in a skill development scheme. All figures in percent.

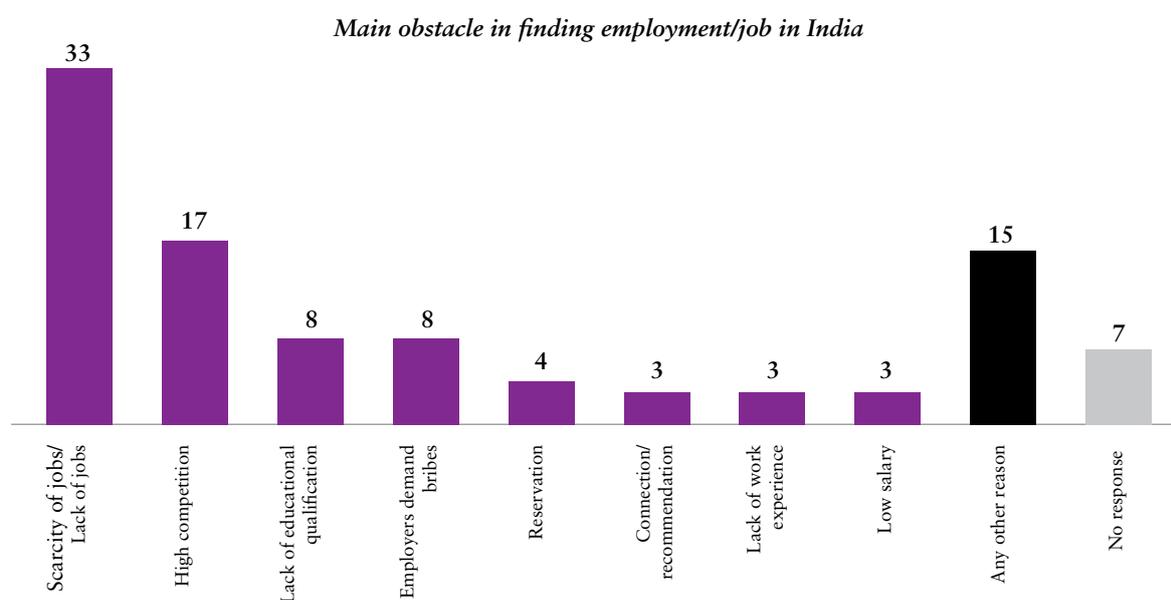
Employment opportunities in India: Major challenges

While Covid-19 is the most recent, and arguably the most fatal blow to the already shrinking job market, there are myriad other reasons acting as potential obstacles. In the study, when the youngsters are asked to identify the major obstacle in finding a job in India, one in every three points at the scarcity of jobs in the country. It must be highlighted here that this was an open-ended question, i.e. they were not suggested any answer categories. The second biggest hurdle identified by the youth is the increasing competition for the limited jobs, with one in every six having this perception (Figure 7.31). If we assume that those saying ‘high competition’ are indirectly referring to the shrinking job market, then the problem of scarcity of jobs could be even bigger.

This is indeed a sad scenario where even the ones who have the potential are held back due to lack of opportunities. This indicates the failure of the state to use its youth power to its full potential, thus creating a huge vacuum in the country that is often called one of the youngest in the world.

Moving further, we have a set of questions that may help us understand a few crucial factors that may prove to be an advantage or an obstacle in sealing a job spot. For instance, a degree you possess may give you a clear edge over your competitors, and so is your work experience or your ability to

Figure 7.31: Unavailability of jobs identified as the biggest hurdle by youth



Note: All figures in percent.

converse in English. For some, being well-connected can fetch them the kind of job they want, and for others, their identity – gender, caste, or any other – may become a point of discrimination.

As shown in Table 7.8, of the 10 factors or qualities the youngsters are asked about, we find a very intriguing pattern – the ability-related characteristics are perceived to be the most impactful while finding a job in India, closely followed by the capability of having an external ‘influence’, either through connections or by offering a bribe. However, a somewhat positive story that emerges from the data is that even though their significance cannot be totally denied, the identity-related attributes find the last spot. Simply put, youngsters are least likely to consider one’s identity to be playing a decisive role in getting a job.

Delving deeper into the numbers, we see three-fifths of the youngsters believing the educational qualifications or degrees to be the most useful, followed by the work experience of an individual, which almost half of the youth believe to increase one’s chances. Further, while around the same proportion (46%) believe it’s the way one communicates that helps one quite a lot in securing a job position, for about two-fifths (38%), it’s particularly their inability to converse in English that can cost them a decent job. About two-fifths (37%) feel that having a strong network plays a deciding factor, and thus, emphasizes the growing role of nepotism. A similar proportion (36%) thinks that if an individual can afford a decent bribe, she is assured of a job.

In contrast to other findings, perceptions are somewhat hopeful with regard to the identity-related factors – such as caste, appearance, gender, or religion. Among these, one’s caste identity and one’s physical appearance are believed to be the game-changer for about one-fifth, slightly higher than one’s gender or religious identity. At the same time, nearly two-fifths completely deny one’s caste or gender having any role at all, while an even higher proportion – nearly half – deny any preferential treatment or discrimination on the basis of religion at the time of recruitments.

Probing each of the categories further sheds more light, as we notice some concerning patterns. *First*, with regard to the role of college degrees, the youngsters living in cities, the upper caste Hindus, and the ones from the wealthiest households are more likely to see that as a valuable possession with at least two in every three believing so. Across gender, with two in every three, young women are more likely to feel so – eight points higher than young men (Figure 7.32).

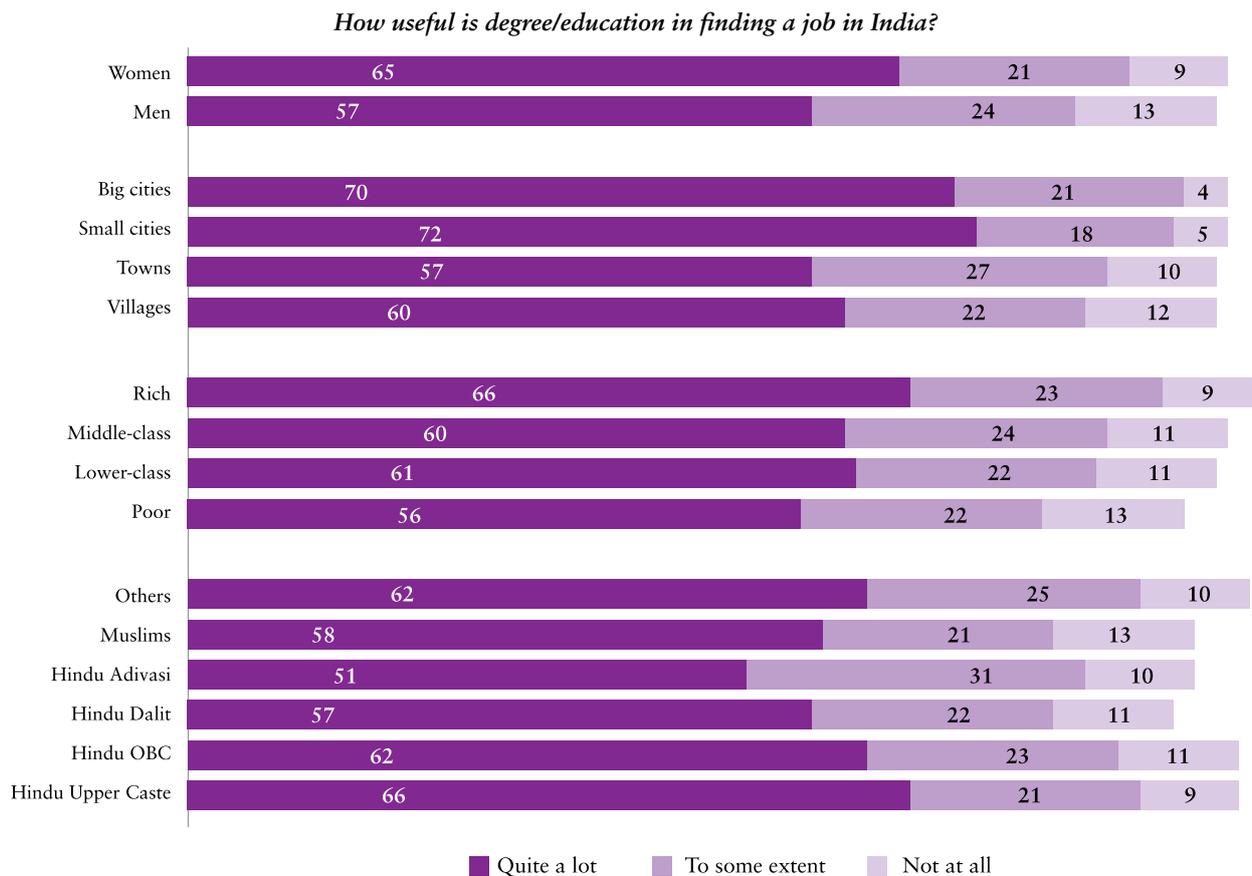
Second, work experience seems to play a crucial role when we control the data with the level of education, economic class, and the level of urbanity. As the education level improves, the proportion of those considering it extremely important also rises along. Comparing the non-literates with the graduates, we see a huge difference of 23 percentage points. Further, the wealthier and the city-youth are more likely to value the work experience in getting a job (Figure 7.33).

Table 7.8: Ability-related factors to be the most crucial in finding a job in India

		<i>How useful are the following in finding a job in India?</i>			
		Quite a lot	To some extent	Not at all	No response
Ability-related	Degree/education	61	23	11	6
	Work experience	48	30	14	8
	The way of communication	46	33	14	8
	Ability to converse in English	38	35	18	10
Influence-related	Connection	37	36	20	8
	Bribe	36	33	22	8
Identity-related	Caste	20	33	37	11
	Appearance/looks	19	36	35	10
	Gender	16	36	37	11
	Religion	14	25	47	14

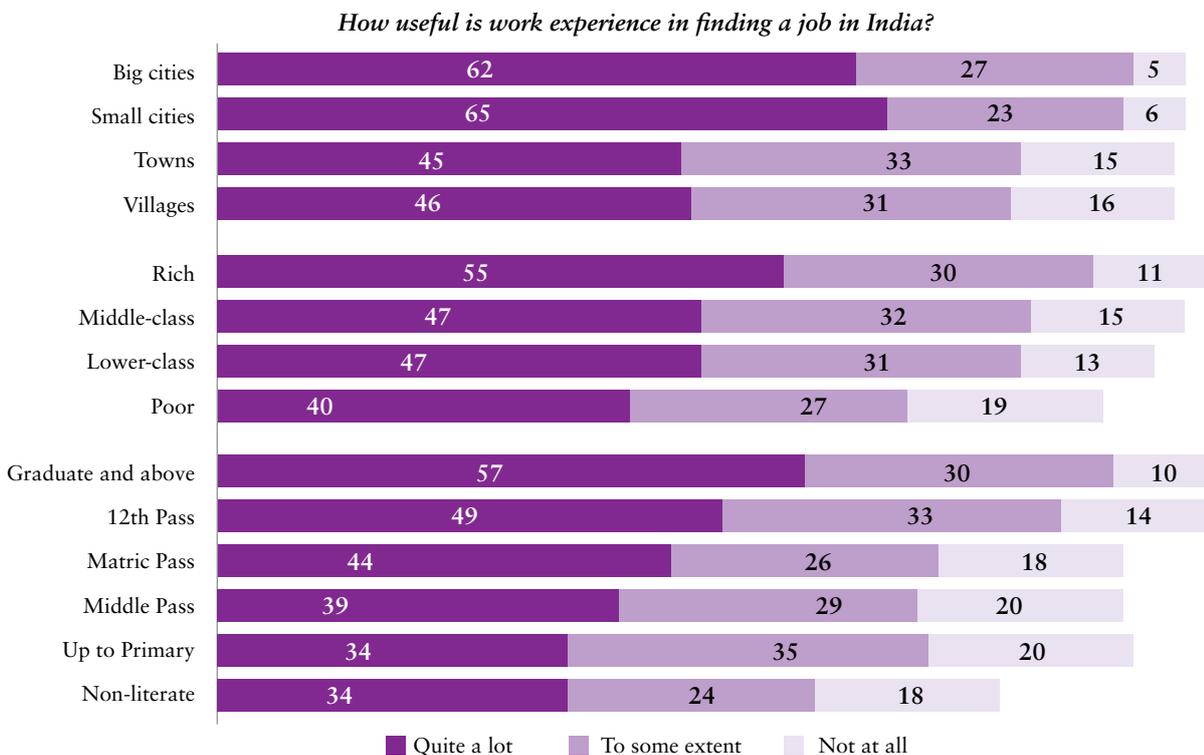
Note: All figures in percent.

Figure 7.32: Degree or education plays the most important role in getting jobs, especially for the more advantaged groups



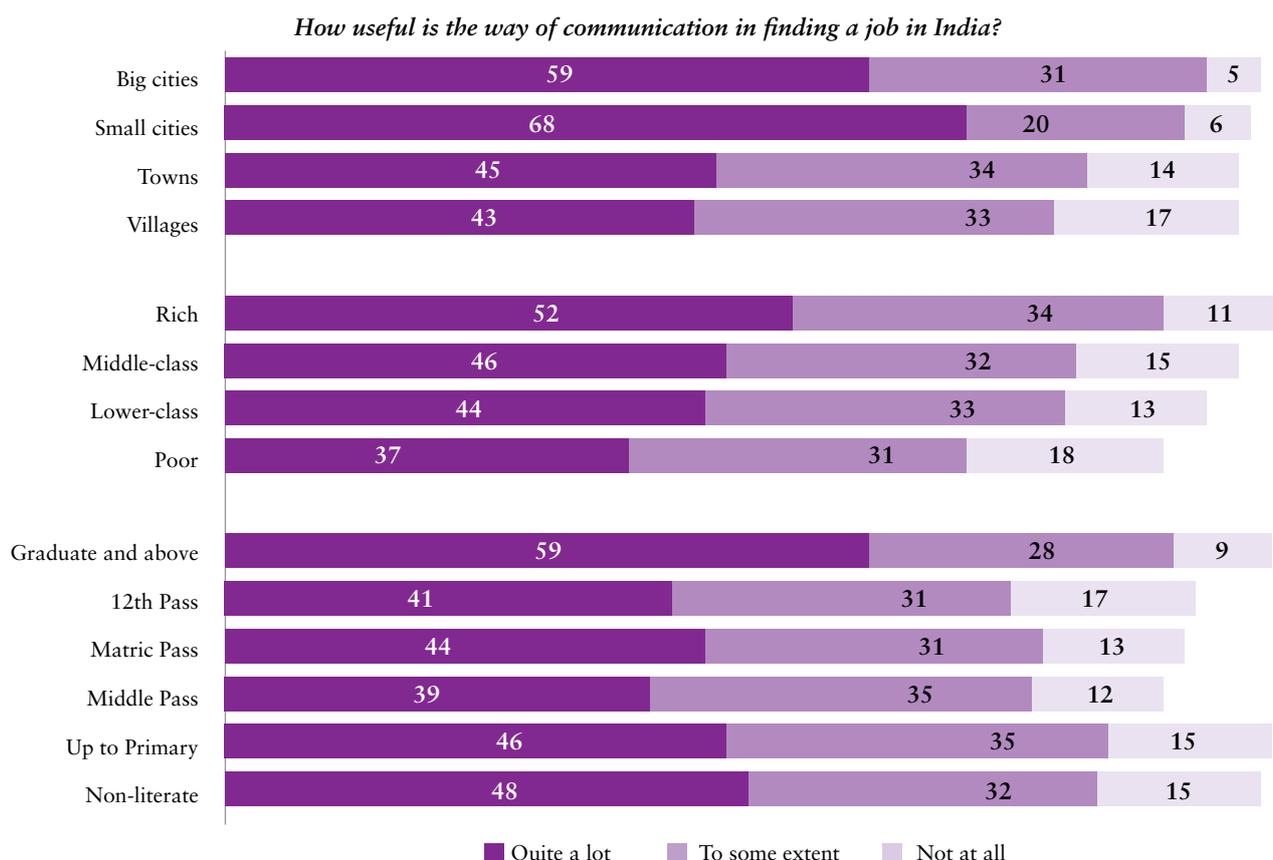
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.33: Work experience seem to have a huge impact while finding a job for graduates, wealthiest and the youngsters living in cities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.34: Advantaged groups far more likely to see the way of communication impacting their chance of getting jobs



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

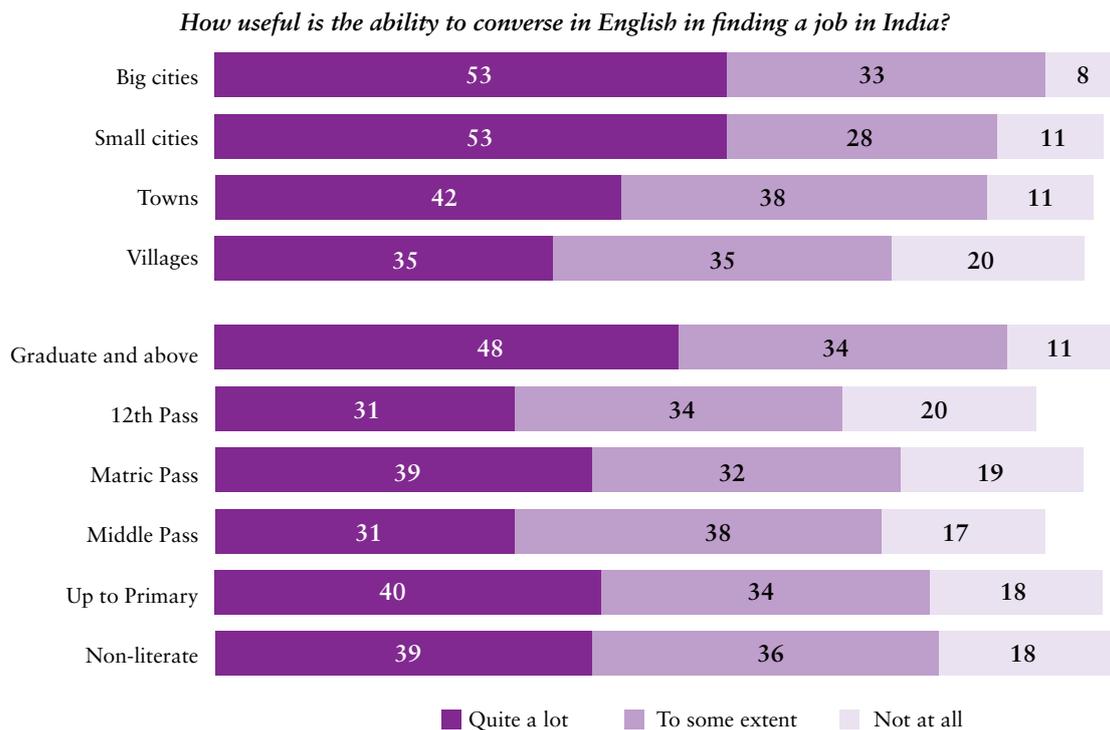
Third, mirroring the same trend, the way of communication seems most relevant to the better educated, rich, and the youngsters from cities (Figure 7.34). While more than half of the youngsters from rich households give a relatively higher weightage to it, among graduates and among those living in cities, this proportion is even higher, with three in every five having this perception. In fact, when we look at it by education levels, we find the biggest jump when we compare the ones who went to schools with those who have attended colleges. There is a difference of about 20 percentage points, making college education having a massive impact in shaping youngsters' perceptions. Among rural-youth and city-youth too there is a whopping difference of about 20 points.

Fourth, again following a similar pattern, education-levels and urbanity emerge as the most effective variables if we look at the importance the youth gives to one's ability to converse in English for securing a decent livelihood. More than half of the urbanites and nearly half of the college graduates believe it to play a huge role in getting a job (Figure 7.35).

Fifth, regarding the usefulness of having a connection in finding a job, we do not find any significant variations when we control the data for gender, age, and household wealth. However, education and urbanity do appear to change one's perception to some extent. For instance, the youngsters who have at least finished their schools are more likely to perceive one's network to be very helpful in fetching a good opportunity. About two-fifths of the better-educated report to have this opinion, compared to about one-third of all the lesser-educated cohorts). Further, in villages, the proportion of those completely denying any role of having connections is double as that in the cities (Figure 7.36).

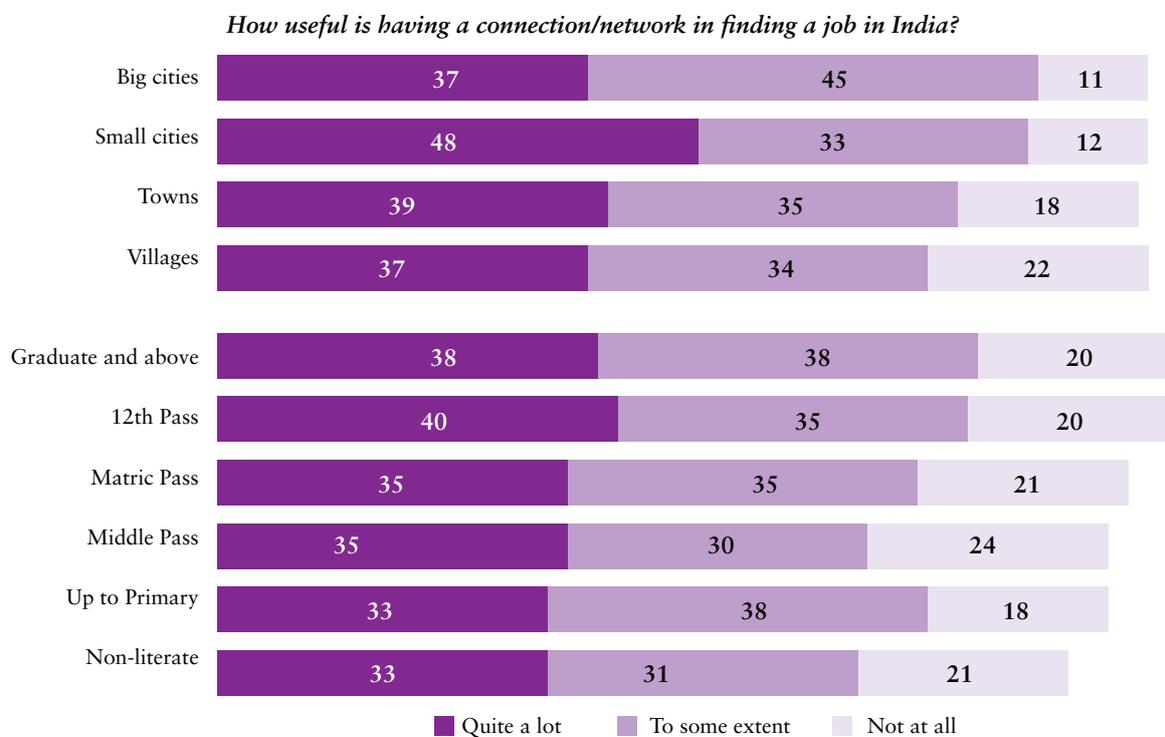
Sixth, on the increased probability of getting a job by offering a bribe, 43 percent of non-literates believe it to be impactful enough to secure a job, as against 33 percent of graduates. In villages, almost a quarter (24%) deny that it has any role at all, as against 17 percent of youth living in cities. Other variables do not change the perceptions much.

Figure 7.35: Ability to converse in English seem to have a huge role in getting a job for graduates and for the youngsters living in cities



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.36: Better educated, and those living in cities more likely to see connection/network being useful in getting jobs



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.37: Young men and women think similarly on the potential impact of gender on the chances of getting a job



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Seventh, moving to the positive picture that emerges regarding the identity-related attributes, to begin with, the influence of someone’s gender in getting a job, we do not find any major variations in perceptions. Regardless of one’s gender, age, education, or social identity, all the youngsters interviewed more or less give similar responses. As it can be seen in **Figure 7.37**, overall, young men and women, both seem to be on the same page, with the latter just marginally more likely to consider it to be a decisive factor.

However, it is perhaps worth pointing out that on segregating the numbers on the basis of locality, we find the city-youth less likely to deny gender’s role in getting jobs. As shown in **Table 7.9**, while in villages, two-fifths of the youngsters deny gender to be playing any role at all, in big cities, this proportion is only one-fourth. What’s more, on segregating the

opinions of young men and women, this gap further widens – while two-fifths of young women living in villages fail to see gender as a decisive factor, only one-fifth of women living in big cities feel that way. Simply put, the youngsters living in big cities, especially women, are more likely to acknowledge the gender discrimination in recruitments.

Eight, who are more likely to find looks or one’s physical appearance affecting one’s chances of getting a job? While we do not see much of a difference when we segregate the data with most of the variables, however, college education and urbanity do seem to change the perceptions to some extent. College-educated youth are slightly more likely to see it as an important factor, with about a quarter (23%) expressing so – a comfortable five to eight percentage points ahead of the lower educated cohorts. About a quarter of urban youth (big cities,

Table 7.9: Women living in cities more likely to see gender impacting the chances of getting a job

		<i>How much does gender matter in finding a job in India?</i>		
		Quite a lot	To some extent	Not at all
Overall	Villages	16	35	40
	Towns	19	38	35
	Small cities	20	35	34
	Big cities	22	44	25
Men	Villages	14	35	39
	Towns	21	39	33
	Small cities	18	35	34
	Big cities	21	43	27
Women	Villages	17	34	40
	Towns	16	37	38
	Small cities	22	34	33
	Big cities	22	45	21

Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response

small cities and towns combined) too see it as having a significant impact – six points higher than the youngsters living in villages. Another finding which is perhaps worth taking a note of is that among Hindu Adivasis, 30 percent of youngsters perceive physical appearance or looks to be a decisive factor while getting jobs – this is more than 10 points higher than the other social groups in the sample, namely, upper-caste Hindus, OBCs, Dalits, and Muslims. Also, it is noteworthy that Dalits, Adivasis, and Muslims are far less likely to completely discard this notion, compared to youngsters belonging to upper castes and OBCs (Figure 7.38).

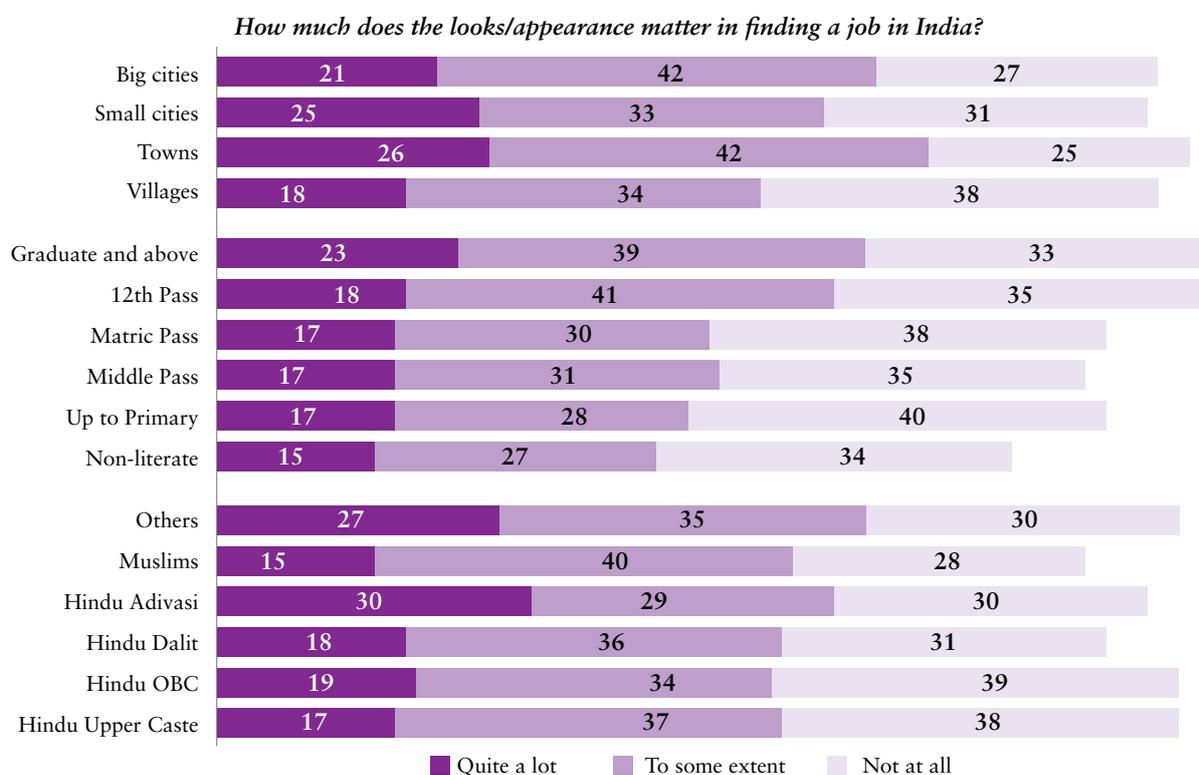
It must also be highlighted here that all of these social groups see a relatively lower response rate, with 15 percent of Dalits, 11 percent of Adivasis, and 16 percent of Muslims giving no response to this question.

Lastly, even though the social identities, that of caste and religion, find only 20 percent and 14 percent of youngsters, respectively, considering them to be an advantage (or a disadvantage) at the time of recruitments, it would be worthwhile to see how different social groups respond to the question.

On the impact of one’s caste identity, as Figure 7.39 shows, even as we do not see much of a difference among those considering it to play a crucial role, but among those in total disapproval, upper-caste Hindus are more likely to believe so – four to six points higher than the other caste-groups. Also noteworthy is the fact that among Muslims, this proportion is lowest at 30 percent. Furthermore, while about the same proportion of urban and rural youth (one-fifth) approves of it as a decisive factor, among those disapproving it completely, we find rural youth to be more likely to do so. While two-fifths of youngsters living in villages are found disagreeing, in the urban locations, the proportion is slightly lower at one-third. Further segregating the urban youth, we find the ones living in big cities least likely to consider caste a discriminatory factor. Graduate-youth too is more likely to disapprove of this notion.

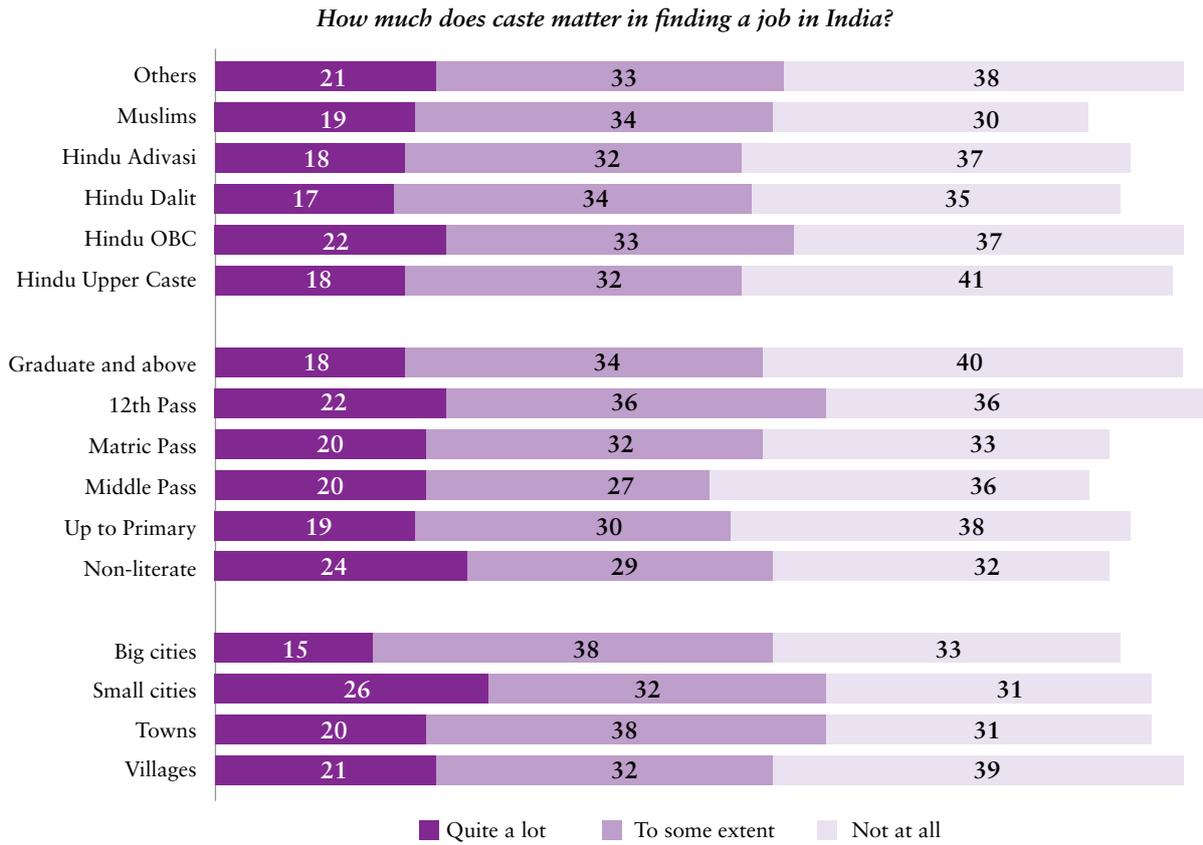
Looking at the impact of one’s religion on their chances of securing a job position, we see Muslims least likely to discard this notion. While Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs have about one in every two rejecting this idea completely, among Muslim youth, the proportion is a little over one in every

Figure 7.38: Adivasis, graduates and urban youth more likely to emphasize the role of physical appearance for getting a job opportunity



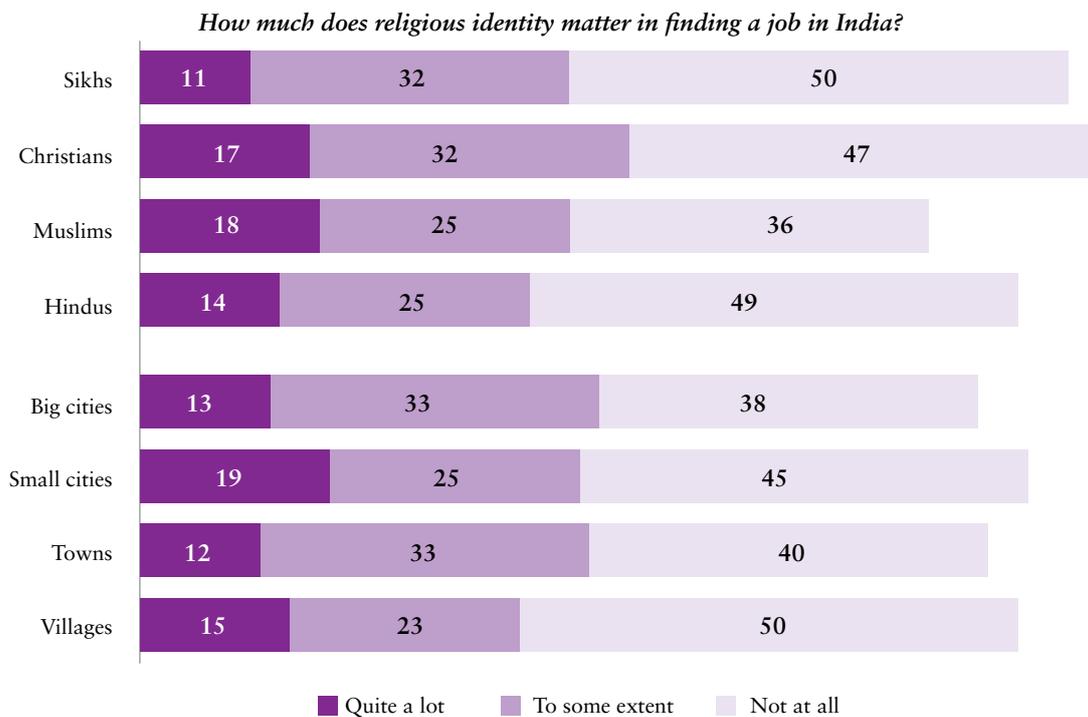
Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.39: Upper caste Hindus, graduates and the youngsters living in villages more likely to disapprove caste having any role in getting a job in India



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

Figure 7.40: Muslims least likely to discard the notion that religion impacts one's chances of getting a job in India



Note: All figures in percent. The rest of the respondents did not give any response.

three. Further, looking at the youth living in rural and urban regions, we find rural youth to be more likely to discard this discriminatory belief – about 10 points higher than the urban youth. Put simply, the sentiments that religion does make a difference in getting a job in India prevail more among the youngsters living in urban locations and among the Muslim youth (Figure 7.40).

Conclusion

It is a crucial juncture for a country like India which boasts of having the youngest population in the world, with a median age of 28.4 years as of 2020. While a young and productive workforce could provide positive economic returns, the grim side is the increasing load of expectations of this young brigade on the state—especially of providing quality education, and ample job opportunities. We discussed major concerns and challenges pertaining to the livelihood opportunities in India for the youth.

To sum up, *firstly*, almost half of the youngsters identify unemployment as the single biggest issue for them. Even though the sentiment cuts across the regional, class, and urban-rural divide, those living in villages, and particularly the youngsters from the northern and west-central parts of the country appear more worried than their counterparts. Furthermore, with Covid-19 induced lockdown making a fatal

dent in the already shrinking job market, almost half of the youth feel that the employment opportunities have further gone down in their respective states during the last 2-3 years. This said, a third of youngsters still appear hopeful, and believe that the situation would improve after five years from now, while a similar proportion senses an even worse time ahead.

Secondly, while the majority of youngsters believe it to be the government's responsibility to create employment opportunities in the country, about two-fifths are found to agree that the youth themselves are responsible for creating new avenues. The youngsters from the wealthiest households are more likely to say that youth should take the charge, while for the less advantaged groups, a majority considers it to be the responsibility of the government.

Lastly, among the myriad reasons stated by the youngsters when asked about the major obstacle in finding a job in India, 'scarcity of jobs' appears at the top. On being asked about some specific attributes, we find the ones related to ability – qualification, degree, work experience, communication – to be impacting the chances of getting jobs the most. On the other hand, quite positively, identity-related attributes, such as one's caste, religion, gender, etc., are least likely to be perceived as barriers by the youngsters.

Appendix I:

**Technical Details of Study
Design and Sample**

Appendix I: Technical Details of Study Design and Sample

The study is based on a sample survey of 6277 respondents aged between 15 and 34 years across 18 major states of India. The study was conducted by Lokniti, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi, in the months of July and August, 2021. The states which were selected for the study were the largest states of India in terms of population based on the Census, 2011.

The targeted sample for the study was 6000. The sample was divided across four localities (big cities, small cities, towns and villages) and we set a target to conduct 1500 interviews from each locality (for targeted and achieved sample see **Table A1**). Though, according to the Census, 2011, the urban population consists of roughly 30 percent of Indian population, but this study takes a higher proportion of urban population. The urban sample size is 4,500 and rural sample size is 1,500. The localities were selected in a way to have an equal representation of the big and small cities as well as towns and villages to have an inclusive study and to compare the experiences and views of youth with different levels of urbanization.

Sample Selection:

Multi-stage random sampling method was used to select the sample. The sampling was done at four stages.

Stage 1: Selection of states

For the purpose of the study, 18 states were selected based on their population as per the Census 2011. These states were the top 18 in the list of highest populated states in India. These include Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Gujarat, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand, Assam, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Delhi.

Stage 2: Selection of localities

The selection of the localities was based on the **probability proportional to size (PPS)** sampling technique that increases the probability of the selection of localities with their actual proportion in the population. The sample for the study includes interviews from both urban and rural localities. The cities were segmented into three categories -towns, small cities and big cities, depending on their population. This was done to include and compare the attitudes and opinions of the youth experiencing different levels of urbanisation. We prepared three lists of the cities on the basis of their population. The cities with the population of between 1-5 lakh are categorised as ‘towns’, cities with a population between 5-10 lakh are ‘small cities’; cities with a population of 10 lakh or above are categorised as ‘big cities’. In the compiled list, there were a total of 43 big cities, 41 small cities and 362 towns. Fifteen cities were selected from each list of big cities, small cities and towns. Thus, a total of 45 cities were selected that represent the urban population. From each city, four locations were selected by keeping geographical and economic profile of the area in mind. For this, a grid was made on the map of the sampled city and the city was divided into four geographical zones. From these four encircled zones, the State teams (with help from a local person) were asked to pick four different locations belonging to four different income groups- poor, lower, middle and upper. From each location, 25 interviews were to be conducted and altogether 100 interviews were targeted from each city which accounted for 4500 interviews from urban areas.

India is known as ‘country of villages’ as two-thirds of the Indian population live in villages. The list of villages was quite long having different population sizes. But purposively, we filtered out

the villages having population of 20,000 and above. A total of 3715 villages were listed and 60 villages were selected from that list.

Stage 3: Selection of households

The selection of the household was different for villages and cities. In the villages, to maintain uniformity, a random walk procedure was predetermined, especially in reference to the direction or pattern of walk. The pattern of settlements in each location was not similar, therefore, the FIs had to locate one place such as a school, dispensary, market place or welcoming boards (if available) as a starting point and from there, they selected the first household randomly from their right-hand side; and thereafter, for the next interview, they had to add the given random interval (the interval varied across villages as different villages had different population size) provided for the sampled villages. They were asked to walk towards the end of the village to complete 25 interviews. The FIs were provided with the name of the villages with the random interval to be followed.

In the cities, the FIs were suggested to interview every 20th household at an interval and then follow the random walk pattern, as done in the villages. For instance, after locating one place such as a school or a market as a starting point, they were to select one household from their right-hand side, randomly, and thereafter, they had to approach every 20th household until they completed their interviews.

Stage 4: Selection of respondents

In the survey, an individual in the age bracket of 15 to 34 years was considered a youth. The selection of the respondents was based on the gender and the age of the respondents. The Field Investigators (FIs) were instructed to follow a respondents' sheet with prescribed quota for gender and age-groups of the youth in mind. The quota assured that the interviews covered all the age brackets and have an equal representation of gender. FIs were asked to take, 4 interviews from the youth in the age group 15-17 years, 10 interviews in the age group 18-24 years, 6 interviews in the age group 25-29 years, and 5 interviews in the age group 30-34 years. The proportion of these age groups were calculated in accordance with their actual population in Census 2011. Equal gender ratio was to be observed in each age group while taking the interview. For instance, for a total of 25 interviews, 13 had to be young

men and 12 of young women. For keeping log of the quota, the FIs were suggested to indicate the age group and gender of the respondent through a checkmark or tick (✓) provided in the respondent sheet.

Field work

The field work of the survey took place in the months of July and August 2021. Before going to the field, the Field Investigators (FIs) were provided with training about the survey method and interviewing techniques at training workshops, conducted for each of the 18 states. Due to Covid-19, the training workshops were conducted online. Also, the survey was done on an App, so the training for it was also given to the FIs with practice interviews done by each of them before going to the field. Keeping in mind the safety of the FIs and the respondents during the times of Covid-19, the FIs were required to keep a certain distance from the respondents, and also wear a mask at all times and advise the respondents to do the same while conducting the interview. The FIs conducted face to face interviews with the respondents at their place of residence using a standardized questionnaire in the languages spoken and understood by the respondents. Most of the questions in the questionnaire were structured, i.e., close ended with a few open ended questions to find out about the views and feelings of respondents on an issue. During the survey, around 35-40 minutes were requested by the respondents to administer the survey. The analysis presented in this report has been done using a standard social science statistical package (SPSS).

Data weighting

The achieved sample is quite representative of India's 15-34-year-old population. The proportion of various demographics in the sample largely matches with the actual proportion of those groups in India's 15-34-year-old population, except in terms of locality. For locality, there was a deliberate choice to oversample urban respondents. While making generalized claims about the Indian youth, we ensured that the achieved sample was weighted in such a manner that it mirrored the actual profile of India's 15-34-year-old population as per Census 2011 data. For such generalized analysis, the sample was weighted by variable which included three indicators - one, the proportion of the 15-34-year-

old population in respective (18) states; two, the actual proportion of different age groups (15-17, 18-24, 25-29 30-34) in the larger 15-34-year-old population of the 18 States; three, the actual proportion of urban and rural youths in the larger 15-34-year-old population of the 18 States.

Table A1: Final Sample

Sr. no.	State	Big cities		Medium cities		Town		Village		Total	Achieved Sample
		Nos.	Sample	Nos.	Sample	Nos.	Sample	Nos.	Sample		
1	Andhra Pradesh	1	100	1	100	1	100	2	50	350	362
2	Assam			1	100			1	25	125	124
3	Bihar					2	200	15	375	575	577
4	Chhattisgarh			1	100	1	100			200	200
5	NCT Delhi	1	100							300*	319
6	Gujarat	2	200			1	100	3	75	375	374
7	Jharkhand	1	100					2	50	150	152
8	Karnataka	1	100	1	100	1	100	4	100	400	410
9	Kerala			1	100		0	5	125	225	227
10	Madhya Pradesh	1	100	1	100	1	100	1	25	325	325
11	Maharashtra	2	200	1	100	1	100	4	100	500	500
12	Odisha			1	100	1	100	1	25	225	225
13	Punjab	1	100		0	1	100	1	25	225	251
14	Rajasthan	1	100	1	100	1	100	1	25	325	340
15	Tamil Nadu	1	100	1	100	1	100	4	100	400	422
16	Telangana	1	100	1	100					200	205
17	Uttar Pradesh	1	100	3	300	2	200	10	250	850	765
18	West Bengal	1	100	1	100	1	100	6	150	450	449
	Total	15	1500	15	1500	15	1500	60	1500	6000	6227

Note: * Booster of 200 was added in Delhi.

Appendix II:

Interview Schedule

Appendix II: Interview Schedule

CSDS-KAS Youth Survey 2021

State Code	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	F1. State Name: _____
FI's Roll No.	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	F2. Field Investigator's Roll no.: _____
	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		F3. Field Investigator's Name: _____
	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>		F4. Area/Location: 1. Village 2. Town (1-5 Lakh population) 3. Small city (5-10 Lakh population) 4. Big city (Population above 10 Lakh)
			F4a. Name of the Village/ Town/ City: _____
Res. No.	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>	F5. Respondent Number: _____

INVESTIGATOR'S INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT

My name is _____ and I have come from (give name of your university)/ Lokniti-CSDS, a research organization located in Delhi. We are studying the opinions and attitudes of Indian youth between the age group of 15-34 years for which we will interview hundreds of young people across the country. The findings of the research will be used for writing articles and academic purposes. The survey is an independent study and is not linked with any political party or government agency. The interview will take about 35 to 40 minutes. Kindly spare some time for this interview and answer my questions as I need your active cooperation for making this study successful. Your identity will be kept strictly confidential

<input type="checkbox"/>	F6.	Can I start the interview?	1. Yes	2. No
<input type="checkbox"/>	F7.	Name of the respondent _____	8. Did not tell	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Z1.	What is your age? _____	(years) 00. Didn't tell	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Z2.	Gender:	1. Male	2. Female 3. Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	Z3.	Upto what level have you studied? (Note down the exact answer) _____	9. Did not tell	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q1.	What have you studied/ are you studying? (Note down the exact answer) _____	98. No response 99. Not applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q2.	What is/was the main reason for you to choose this field of study? (Note down the exact answer) _____	98. No response 99. Not applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q3.	In the coming time, how beneficial would be the online teaching/learning as compared to classroom teaching/learning in India- A lot, to some extent, not much or not at all? 1. A lot 2. To some extent 3. Not much 4. Not at all 8. Can't say		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q4.	What is the biggest problem that youth like you are facing today? (Note down the exact answer) _____	98. Can't say	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q5.	At present, are you studying or earning?	1. Studying	2. Earning 3. Doing both 4. Neither studying nor earning 5. Completed studies and looking for employment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q5a.	(If earning in Q5) What is your occupation? (Note down the exact answer) _____	98. Did not tell 99. Not applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q5b.	(If earning) What was the main reason for choosing this job/employment? (Note down the exact answer) _____	98. No response 99. Not applicable	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q6.	(If earning) How helpful will this job be for the kind of life you want to live in the future – quite a lot, to some extent, not much or not at all? 1. Quite a lot 2. To some extent 3. Not much 4. Not at all helpful 8. Can't say 9. Not applicable		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Q7.	Are you currently looking for a job/employment?	1. No	2. Yes 8. No response

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Q17. These days, some people are engaged in App-based employment (like Ola, Uber, Swiggy, etc.). Would you like to do App-based employment on a permanent basis, only to supplement your income along with your main job or you will never want to join an App-based employment?

1. On a permanent basis
 2. Only to supplement your income along with your main job
 3. Will never do App-based jobs/work
 8. Can't say

Q18. Have you heard about any government policy/programme which helps people to start up their business /work? 1. No 2. Yes 8. Can't say

Q18a. (If yes in Q18) Which policy/programme? (Note down the exact answer).

97. Don't remember the name 98. Can't say 99. Not applicable

Q19. Have you ever been enrolled in a Skill Development scheme?

1. No 2. Yes 8. Can't say / Don't Know about the scheme

Q20. (If yes in Q19) Which scheme? (Note down the exact answer)

97. Don't remember the name 98. Can't say 99. Not applicable

Q21. According to you, what is the main obstacle in finding employment/job in India? (Note down the exact answer) _____ 98. No response/can't say

Q22. Generally, how useful are the following things in finding a job in India – Quite a lot, to some extent, or not at all useful?

		Quite a lot	To some extent	Not at all	NR
a	a. Appearance/Looks	1	2	3	8
b	b. Gender	1	2	3	8
c	c. Work experience	1	2	3	8
d	d. Way of communication	1	2	3	8
e	e. Degree/Education	1	2	3	8
f	f. Connection	1	2	3	8
g	g. Bribe	1	2	3	8
h	h. Caste	1	2	3	8
i	i. Religion	1	2	3	8
j	j. Ability to converse in English	1	2	3	8

Q24. Who do you live with? 1. Family (with parents) 2. Family (with spouse)
 3. Family (with both parents and spouse) 4. With friend/companion
 5. In a hostel/PG 6. Alone
 7. Other(Specify) _____ 8. No response

Q23. Overall, would you say that in the last 2-3 years, your bond with your family –has strengthened from before, is same as before, weakened to some extent or weakened a lot?

1. Strengthened from before 2. Same as before 3. Weakened to some extent
 4. Weakened a lot 8. Can't say

Q24. Whenever you get some free time in a day, what do you generally do? (Note down the exact answer)

98. NR 99. Never get free time

	Q25.	In the past 2-3 years, do you think your affinity with the following places has increased or decreased?	Increased	Remained the same	Decreased	NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Your village/town/city	1	2	3	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Your country	1	2	3	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Your state (<i>Name of the state</i>)	1	2	3	8
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q26.	Overall, would you say that in the last 2-3 years, your bond with your friends – has strengthened from before, is same as before, weakened to some extent or weakened a lot?			
			1. Strengthened from before	2. Same as before	3. Weakened to some extent	
			4. Weakened a lot	8. Can't say		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q27.	While choosing friends, do you pay attention to these things or not? No Yes NR			
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Their religion		1	2	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Whether they are a boy or a girl		1	2	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Their thinking/opinion		1	2	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Their caste		1	2	8
e	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Whether they speak your language		1	2	8
f	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Their economic status		1	2	8
g	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Their ability to speak in English		1	2	8
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q28.	Because of these things, how many times have you been discriminated against, among your friends - never, sometimes or often?			
				Never	Sometimes	Often NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. You being a boy or a girl		1	2	3 8
		<i>(Ask according to the gender of the respondent)</i>				
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Your caste		1	2	3 8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Your religion		1	2	3 8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Your economics status		1	2	3 8
e	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Your inability to speak in English		1	2	3 8
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q29.	Fulfilling friendship at all costs, maintaining good relationships with family or just focusing on your career regardless of friendship and family - tell me what is the most and the least important thing in your life. Based on a ranking from 1 to 3 where 1 means the most important and 3 means the least important, please rank these three things. Rank (1 to 3)			
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Fulfilling friendship at all costs		_____		
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Maintaining good relations with family		_____		
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Focusing on your career regardless of friendship and family		_____		
	<input type="checkbox"/>			8. Can't say		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q30.	Suppose you meet successive failures, what are you most likely to do – accept it as your destiny, approach an astrologer/priest or keep trying?			
			1. Accept it as your destiny	2. Approach an astrologer/priest	3. Keep trying	
			7. Any Other _____	8. Can't Say		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Z5.	Are you married?			
			1. Married	2. Married (Gauna not performed, not started living together)		
			3. Widowed	4. Divorced	5. Separated	6. Deserted
			8. Live with partner but not married		9. No response	7. Unmarried
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q31.	<i>(If married)</i> Was your marriage a love marriage or an arranged marriage decided by the family?			
			1. Love marriage	2. Arranged marriage	3. Both	
			4. Other (<i>Specify</i>) _____	8. No response	9. NA	

	Q32. (If married) Is your husband/wife...?	Yes	No	DK	NA
a	<input type="checkbox"/> a. From your caste	1	2	8	9
b	<input type="checkbox"/> b. From your gotra	1	2	8	9
c	<input type="checkbox"/> c. From your religion	1	2	8	9
d	<input type="checkbox"/> d. From your state	1	2	8	9

Q33. (If single/unmarried) If you have the freedom to marry at your own will, will you go for a love marriage or a marriage arranged by the family?
 1. Love marriage 2. Arranged marriage 3. Both 4. Time will tell
 5. Will not get married 8. No response 9. NA

Q34. Now I am going to read out a few statements to you. For each, tell me whether you support or oppose these **(Probe further whether fully or somewhat support or oppose)?**

		Support		Oppose		NR
		Fully	Somewhat	Somewhat	Fully	
a	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Marriage between a girl and a boy belonging to different castes.	1	2	3	4	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Love affair between two girls.	1	2	3	4	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Divorce over a troublesome or unhappy marriage.	1	2	3	4	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Marriage between a girl and a boy belonging to different religions.	1	2	3	4	8
e	<input type="checkbox"/> e. Love affair between two boys.	1	2	3	4	8

Q35. In recent times, some states have made laws to regulate inter-religious marriages popularly known as *love jihad* Laws. Have you heard about such laws? 1. Not Heard 2. Heard

Q35a. (If heard) Do you support or oppose such laws popularly known as *love jihad* Laws? **(Probe further whether fully or somewhat support or oppose).**

1. Fully support 2. Somewhat support 3. Somewhat oppose
 4. Fully oppose 8. Can't Say / heard but do not understand 9. Not applicable

Q36. How much interest do you take in politics - a lot, somewhat, very little or not at all?

1. A lot 2. Somewhat 3. Very little 4. Not at all 8. Can't say

Q37. During the last 5 years, has your interest in politics increased, decreased, or remained the same?

1. Increased 2. Remained the same 3. Decreased 8. Can't say

Q38. Do you think, in the next 5 years, the following things in India are going to improve or deteriorate?

		Improve	Will remain same	Deteriorate	CS
a	<input type="checkbox"/> a. Gender equality	1	2	3	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/> b. Country's economic condition	1	2	3	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/> c. Religious harmony/brotherhood	1	2	3	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Job opportunities	1	2	3	8
e	<input type="checkbox"/> e. Caste-based discrimination	1	2	3	8

Q39. In the last 2 years, how many times have you been to a protest, procession or a movement – many times, a few times or never? 1. Many times 2. A few times 3. Never 8. NR

Q39a. (If took part) What was the protest/movement about? **(Note down the exact answer).**

a	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. _____ 97. Don't remember	98. NR	99. NA
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. _____ 97. Don't remember	98. NR	99. NA

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q40. Which political party is the best for addressing the problems of youth like you? (<i>Note down the exact answer</i>) _____	98 No response				
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q41. Thinking of the various recent decisions taken by the government, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following - (<i>probe further whether fully or somewhat agree or disagree</i>).					
			Agree		Disagree	NR	
			Fully	Somewhat	Somewhat	Fully	
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Removal of Article 370 from Kashmir.	1	2	3	4	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. CAA (Citizenship Amendment Act)	1	2	3	4	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Recently passed 3 Farmer's Bill	1	2	3	4	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Removal of Triple Talaq.	1	2	3	4	8
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q42. Now I will read out two statements to you. Please tell me which statement do you agree with the most? Statement 1: Sometimes the development of a country is hindered by democracy, therefore, some control over democracy is necessary. Statement 2: Democracy should never be controlled, whether development is slow or fast					
		1. Agree with statement 1	2. Agree with statement 2	8. No opinion			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q43. Should it be the government's responsibility to give employment to the youth or should the youth themselves create new employment opportunities?					
		1. Government's responsibility	2. Youth should create new employment opportunities		8. Can't say		
		3. Any other answer (<i>specify</i>) _____					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q44. In the past year, how many times has this happened to you - many times, sometimes, rarely or never?					
			Many times	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Felt loss of interest in everyday activities.	1	2	3	4	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. You got angry over small matters.	1	2	3	4	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Sleep disturbances like not able to sleep or sleeping too much.	1	2	3	4	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Avoiding friends and other people because you wanted to be alone.	1	2	3	4	8
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q45. In the last 2-3 years, how much did you worry about the following things – quite a lot, somewhat, not much or not at all?					
			Quite a lot	Somewhat	Not much	Not at all	NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. About your body shape/weight/looks.	1	2	3	4	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Family dispute.	1	2	3	4	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Family's financial security.	1	2	3	4	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Your health.	1	2	3	4	8
e	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Domestic violence in family.	1	2	3	4	8
f	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. About job/ work.	1	2	3	4	8
g	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. About your marriage.	1	2	3	4	8
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q46. In the last one year, how many times did you need to take medicine to go off to sleep - often, sometimes, rarely or never?					
		1. Often	2. Sometimes	3. Rarely	4. Never	8. No response	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q47. In the last 2 to 3 years, how often have you felt the following..... often, sometimes, rarely or never?					
			Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Felt lonely	1	2	3	4	8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Felt sad	1	2	3	4	8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Felt worthless	1	2	3	4	8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Had thoughts of ending your life	1	2	3	4	8

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q48. Suppose you come across a situation in your life where you are struggling with something emotional, like depression, anxiety or thoughts of ending your life, who are you most likely to approach for help? (Note down the exact answer) _____ 98. No response
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q49. Have you ever consulted a doctor/counsellor to lessen your mental tension? 1. No 2. Yes 3. Never had mental tension 8. NR
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q50. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole? Would you say you are fully satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or fully dissatisfied? 1. Fully satisfied 2. Somewhat satisfied 3. Somewhat dissatisfied 4. Fully dissatisfied 8. Can't say
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q51. If you see a man harassing a woman in a public transport such as a bus or train, what will you do? (Note down the exact answer) _____ 8. Can't say
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q52. Now I will read out two statements. Please tell me, which of the one statement you agree with the most? Statement 1: In life, money matters more than happiness and peace. Statement 2: Money is important, but not at the cost of one's happiness and peace. 1. Agree with statement 1 2. Agree with statement 2 8. No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q53. If you come to know about an incidence of domestic violence in your neighbourhood, what will you do? (Note down the exact answer) _____ 8. Can't say
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q54. Which statement do you agree with the most? Statement 1: People's worthiness should be seen with money, not by their moral values. Statement 2: People's worthiness should be seen by their moral values, not by their money. 1. Agree with statement 1 2. Agree with statement 2 8. No opinion
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q55. What kind of phone do you have - simple phone or smartphone? 1. Simple phone 2. Smartphone 3. Don't have your own phone but use someone else's phone at home 4. Nobody has a phone at home 8. No Rresponse
		Q56. How often do you do the following things – many times a day, sometimes during the day, occasionally or never?
		Many-times a day Sometimes during the day Occasionally Never Do not have an account NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Use Facebook 1 2 3 4 5 8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Use Twitter 1 2 3 4 5 8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Use WhatsApp 1 2 3 4 5 8
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Use Apps such as TikTok (before ban) or apps like Moj, Mitron and Chingari 1 2 3 4 5 8
e	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Watch videos on YouTube 1 2 3 4 5 8
f	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Take selfies on your phone 1 2 3 4 5 8
g	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Play video games 1 2 3 4 5 8
h	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. Use Instagram 1 2 3 4 5 8
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q56aa. In the last six months have you posted your thoughts on political issues on any of the social media platforms? 1. No 2. Yes 8. NR 9. NA/No account
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Q57. If you see an injured person in a road accident, what will you do? (Note down the exact answer) _____ 98. Can't say
		Q58. How frequently do you use the following things to get updates on political news? – daily, sometimes in a week or never?
		Daily Sometimes in a week Never NR
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Watch news on TV 1 2 3 8
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Read newspaper 1 2 3 8
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Read news on internet 1 2 3 8

Q59. Suppose you don't have internet access for 5-6 hours continuously, would you feel restless or feel at peace? 1. Restless 2. Feel at peace 3. It does not matter 8. No answer

Q60. Do you watch shows or movies using OTT platforms like Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hotstar, SonyLiv, Voot etc? 1. No 2. Yes 8. NR

Q60a. (If yes) What do you usually see the most on these OTT platforms?
 _____ 8. No response 9. Not applicable

Q61. What is your primary source of news?
 01. Television news programs 02. Newspaper 03. Radio
 04. Social networking sites 05. Online news sites 06. Friends/ family
 07. Mobile phones 97. Any Other (please write) _____
 98. No response 99. No interest in News

Z6. Which religion do you belong to?
 1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3. Christian 4. Sikh 5. Buddhist/Neo-Buddhist
 6. Jain 7. No religion 8. Other (specify) _____ 9. Did not answer

Q62. How often do you do the following activities – regularly, sometimes, only on festivals or never? (Ask according to the religion)

	Regularly	Sometimes	Only on festivals	Never	NR
a <input type="checkbox"/> a. Doing puja/namaz/prayer/path	1	2	3	4	8
b <input type="checkbox"/> b. Doing bhajan/kirtan/satsang	1	2	3	4	8
c <input type="checkbox"/> c. Keeping vrats/upwaas/rozas/fasts	1	2	3	4	8
d <input type="checkbox"/> d. Going to temple/mosque/church/gurudwara	1	2	3	4	8
e <input type="checkbox"/> e. Watching religious shows on TV	1	2	3	4	8
f <input type="checkbox"/> f. Reading a religious book	1	2	3	4	8

Q63. Compared to the last 2-3 years, would you say that your participation in religious activities has increased or decreased? 1. Increased 2. Remained the same 3. Decreased 8. Can't say

Q64. How likely will you or your family consult a priest/dharm-guru/ baba for the following? Are you very likely to consult, somewhat likely or not at all likely?

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not at all likely	CS
a <input type="checkbox"/> a. For fixing a marriage date.	1	2	3	8
b <input type="checkbox"/> b. For consultation for an auspicious date when purchasing car/house.	1	2	3	8
c <input type="checkbox"/> c. When you or someone in the family is in distress	1	2	3	8

Q65. Have you ever consulted any priest/dharm-guru/ baba for the purpose of good luck and health?
 1. No 2. Yes 8. Can't Say

Q66. Please tell me whether these should be banned or not?

	Banned	Not banned	CS
a <input type="checkbox"/> a. Objectionable paintings of Hindu gods and goddesses.	1	2	8
b <input type="checkbox"/> b. Drawing cartoons/caricatures of Prophet Mohammad.	1	2	8
c <input type="checkbox"/> c. Making comedy movies on religious leaders.	1	2	8
d <input type="checkbox"/> d. Stand-up comedy on any religion.	1	2	8

BACKGROUND DATA

Personal Information

- Z3a. Upto what level has your father studied? *(Note down the exact answer)*
_____ 98. No response
- Z3b. Upto what level has your mother studied? *(Note down the exact answer)*
_____ 98. No response
- Z7a. What is the main occupation of your father? *(Note down the exact answer)*
_____ 98. Did not tell 99. Not applicable
- Z7b. What is the main occupation of your mother? *(Note down the exact answer)*
_____ 98. Did not tell 99. Not applicable
- Z8. What is your caste group?
1. Scheduled Caste (SC) 2. Scheduled Tribe (ST)
3. Other Backward Classes (OBC) 4. Other/General caste
8. Did not tell
- Z8a. What is your Caste/Jati-biradari/Tribe name? *(Note down the exact answer)* _____

Household Information

- Z9a. *(If Town/ small city/ big city)* Type of house where the respondent lives? *(Try to decide for yourself, if possible don't ask)*
1. House/Flat/Bungalow 2. House/Flat with 5 or more rooms
3. House/Flat with 4 rooms 4. Houses/Flat with 3 rooms
5. Houses/Flat with 2 rooms 6. House with 1 room
7. Mainly Kutcha house 8. Slum/Jhuggi Jhopri
9. NA. 0. In a PG
- Z9b. *(If lives in village)* Type of house where the respondent lives *(Try to decide for yourself, if possible don't ask)*
1. Pucca (both wall and roof made of pucca material)
2. Pucca-Kutcha (Either wall or roof is made of pucca material and other of kutcha material)
3. Kutcha/Mud houses (both wall and roof are made of kutcha material)
4. Hut (both wall and roof made of grass, leaves, un-burnt brick or bamboo) 9. NA.
- Z10. What is the total number of family members living in your house? *(If more than 9, Code 9)*
a a. Above 18 years: ____
b b. Below 18 years: ____
- Z11. Total agricultural land including orchards and plantations owned by your household *(as on date of survey)*: _____ *(Ask in local units, but record in standard acres. If more than 95, Code 95. If no land or no answer then code 00, if someone doesn't know code 98)*

Z12.		Do you or any member of your household have the following?	Yes	No	
a	<input type="checkbox"/>	a. Car/Jeep/Van	2	1	
b	<input type="checkbox"/>	b. Scooter/Motorcycle/Moped	2	1	
c	<input type="checkbox"/>	c. Airconditioner	2	1	
d	<input type="checkbox"/>	d. Washing machine	2	1	
e	<input type="checkbox"/>	e. Microwave	2	1	
f	<input type="checkbox"/>	f. Fridge	2	1	
g	<input type="checkbox"/>	g. Fan/Cooler	2	1	
h	<input type="checkbox"/>	h. TV	2	1	
i	<input type="checkbox"/>	i. LPG gas	2	1	
j	<input type="checkbox"/>	j. Invertor/Generator for power back up	2	1	
k	<input type="checkbox"/>	k. Toilet in the house	2	1	
l	<input type="checkbox"/>	l. Pumping Set (<i>Ask only in village</i>)	2	1	9. NA
m	<input type="checkbox"/>	m. Tractor (<i>Ask only in village</i>)	2	1	9. NA
n	<input type="checkbox"/>	n. Computer/Laptop	2	1	

Z13. What's your monthly household income after putting together the income of all members?
(Record exact amount in Rupees. If respondent does not give any amount then record 000000) _____ 98. No answer

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Z14. Mobile/Telephone number of the respondent _____
(If respondents refuses to give his/her number then code 0000000000)

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The **Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)** is a political foundation. With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom and justice through political education. KAS cooperates with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. Together with their partners, they make a significant contribution to the creation of a global order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible manner. The India Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation takes great pride in its cooperation with Indian partner institutions who implement jointly curated projects and programmes.

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