

## CHAPTER 3

### HOUSEHOLD AND RESPONDENT BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter presents a profile of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of households and individual respondents in the NFHS for all India as well as for the 25 states covered in the survey. After examining the age-sex distribution, marital status, literacy and educational attainment of the household population, the household composition and housing characteristics, the chapter discusses the characteristics of the primary respondents in the survey (ever-married women age 13-49). Information on the household population, household composition, and housing characteristics was collected in the NFHS Household Questionnaire, and information on eligible women was collected in the NFHS Woman's Questionnaire. The chapter also includes some comparisons of the NFHS results with the results of the 1991 Census and the Sample Registration System (SRS).

All usual residents of each sample household, plus all visitors who slept in that household the night before the interview, were listed in the Household Questionnaire. Some basic information was collected on each person listed including age, sex, marital status, and education. In addition, information was collected for each person on whether the person is a usual resident of the household or a visitor, and whether the person slept in the household the night prior to the survey interview. Based on this information, the NFHS household population can be defined in two ways: *de facto* or *de jure*. The *de facto* population refers to all usual residents and visitors who slept in the sample household the night prior to the survey interview, and the *de jure* population refers to all usual residents of the sample household including those who did not sleep in the household the night prior to the survey interview. The *de facto* and *de jure* populations may differ because of temporary population movements. Tables in this and the following chapters are based on the *de facto* sample, unless otherwise specified. It is expected that the *de facto* sample is more representative of women in the country as a whole because it includes all women wherever they were staying the night before the survey. A *de jure* sample, on the other hand, would miss usual residents who were temporarily staying elsewhere at the time of the survey.

Table 3.1 presents the percentage distributions of the *de facto* and *de jure* populations, according to their residence status in the household. The information is provided separately for males and females by age and place of residence. In the sample households, fewer males are visitors (3 percent) than usual residents temporarily absent (5 percent). Some of this difference may reflect the prevalence of temporary labour migration outside of India, as well as the tendency of men to stay temporarily in group living quarters within India (such as military barracks, hostels and hotels, which are not included in the survey). Almost the same proportion (6 percent) of females are visitors or usual residents temporarily absent. Visiting (in both the *de facto* and *de jure* populations) is more common among women in the prime childbearing ages (15-29) and among young children. This pattern is likely to result from the common practice of women returning to their parents' house to give birth (particularly for the first delivery), where they typically remain throughout the postpartum period. Thus, the survey estimates would be biased if they were based on only the usual residents of the sample households who were present at the time of the survey, because they would not fully represent the underlying population. Fertility would be particularly affected because visiting is more common among

**Table 3.1 Usual residents and visitors**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* and *de jure* household populations by resident status in the household according to age, residence and sex, India, 1992-93

Characteristic	<i>De facto</i> household population				<i>De jure</i> household population			
	Usual resident	Visitor	Total percent	Number	Usual resident present	Usual resident absent	Total percent	Number
<b>MALE</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
< 1	87.8	12.2	100.0	6645	90.2	9.8	100.0	6467
1 - 4	92.7	7.3	100.0	25021	92.9	7.1	100.0	24966
5 -14	97.3	2.7	100.0	65780	96.6	3.4	100.0	66222
15-19	97.6	2.4	100.0	24954	95.5	4.5	100.0	25515
20-24	96.7	3.3	100.0	21414	93.1	6.9	100.0	22234
25-29	96.2	3.8	100.0	19838	93.3	6.7	100.0	20439
30-34	96.8	3.2	100.0	16204	94.0	6.0	100.0	16680
35-39	97.4	2.6	100.0	15542	94.8	5.2	100.0	15969
40-44	97.8	2.2	100.0	11910	95.1	4.9	100.0	12248
45-49	98.1	1.9	100.0	10206	95.3	4.7	100.0	10509
50+	98.5	1.5	100.0	35313	96.1	3.9	100.0	36188
<b>Residence</b>								
Urban	96.7	3.3	100.0	67822	95.6	4.4	100.0	68595
Rural	96.7	3.3	100.0	185005	94.7	5.3	100.0	188842
<b>Total</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>252827</b>	<b>94.9</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>257437</b>
<b>FEMALE</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
< 1	87.3	12.7	100.0	6541	90.8	9.2	100.0	6285
1 - 4	92.0	8.0	100.0	23497	92.2	7.8	100.0	23453
5 -14	96.6	3.4	100.0	60726	96.0	4.0	100.0	61035
15-19	90.0	10.0	100.0	25891	91.9	8.1	100.0	24316
20-24	87.8	12.2	100.0	23780	88.7	11.3	100.0	23182
25-29	91.8	8.2	100.0	19724	91.1	8.9	100.0	20500
30-34	95.7	4.3	100.0	15930	93.8	6.2	100.0	16214
35-39	97.2	2.8	100.0	13467	95.5	4.5	100.0	14144
40-44	97.6	2.4	100.0	10575	95.4	4.6	100.0	10718
45-49	97.9	2.1	100.0	8735	94.8	5.2	100.0	9554
50+	97.0	3.0	100.0	33105	95.4	4.6	100.0	33654
<b>Residence</b>								
Urban	94.4	5.6	100.0	63225	94.0	6.0	100.0	63456
Rural	94.0	6.0	100.0	178745	93.5	6.5	100.0	179599
<b>Total</b>	<b>94.1</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>241970</b>	<b>93.6</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>243055</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
< 1	87.6	12.4	100.0	13186	90.5	9.5	100.0	12752
1 - 4	92.4	7.6	100.0	48518	92.5	7.5	100.0	48419
5 -14	97.0	3.0	100.0	126506	96.3	3.7	100.0	127257
15-19	93.8	6.2	100.0	50845	93.7	6.3	100.0	49830
20-24	92.0	8.0	100.0	45194	90.8	9.2	100.0	45415
25-29	94.0	6.0	100.0	39562	92.2	7.8	100.0	40939
30-34	96.3	3.7	100.0	32135	93.9	6.1	100.0	32894
35-39	97.3	2.7	100.0	29008	95.1	4.9	100.0	30113
40-44	97.7	2.3	100.0	22485	95.2	4.8	100.0	22966
45-49	98.0	2.0	100.0	18941	95.0	5.0	100.0	20063
50+	97.8	2.2	100.0	68418	95.8	4.2	100.0	69843
<b>Residence</b>								
Urban	95.6	4.4	100.0	131047	94.9	5.1	100.0	132051
Rural	95.3	4.7	100.0	363750	94.1	5.9	100.0	368441
<b>Total</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>494797</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>500492</b>

Note: Table excludes persons with missing information on sex.

children and women in the prime reproductive ages.

### 3.1 Age-Sex Distribution of the Household Population

Table 3.2 shows the *de facto* population in the NFHS household sample, classified by age, sex and residence. The total *de facto* sample population is 494,939 and the sample is 26 percent urban. The proportion urban in the NFHS sample is the same as that observed for all India in the 1991 Census (see Table 1.1).

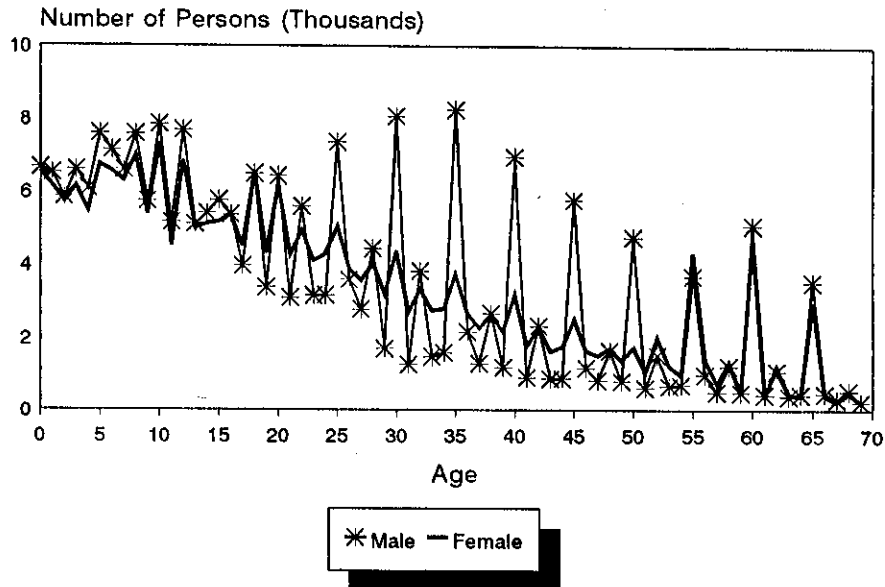
The age distribution is typical of populations with moderately high fertility, with a high proportion of the population in the younger age groups. Thirty-eight percent of the population is below 15 years of age and 8 percent is age 60 or more. The NFHS child population (below age 15) is proportionately larger in rural areas (39 percent) than in urban areas (35 percent), which is consistent with the higher levels of fertility in rural areas.

Age reporting in developing countries is typically prone to errors due to age misstatements and preferences for ages ending in particular digits. An examination of the single-age distributions from the NFHS (see Appendix Table D.1 and Figure 3.1) indicates distortions of the data due to misreporting of age and preference for particular digits. One of

Age	Urban			Rural			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
< 1	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.7
1 - 4	8.4	8.5	8.5	10.4	10.1	10.3	9.9	9.7	9.8
5 - 9	12.1	11.7	11.9	14.3	13.7	14.0	13.7	13.2	13.4
10-14	11.9	11.8	11.8	12.5	11.9	12.2	12.3	11.9	12.1
15-19	10.1	10.9	10.5	9.8	10.6	10.2	9.9	10.7	10.3
20-24	9.6	10.4	10.0	8.1	9.6	8.8	8.5	9.8	9.1
25-29	8.6	8.7	8.6	7.6	8.0	7.8	7.8	8.1	8.0
30-34	7.3	7.3	7.3	6.1	6.3	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.5
35-39	6.8	6.3	6.6	5.9	5.3	5.6	6.1	5.6	5.9
40-44	5.5	5.0	5.2	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.4	4.5
45-49	4.6	3.7	4.2	3.8	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.8
50-54	3.6	3.0	3.3	3.1	2.8	3.0	3.3	2.9	3.1
55-59	2.8	3.2	3.0	2.7	3.5	3.1	2.7	3.4	3.1
60-64	2.4	2.8	2.6	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.9	3.0	2.9
65-69	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.1	1.8	2.0	2.0	1.8	1.9
70-74	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.7	1.4	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.5
75-79	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
80+	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	67833	63251	131083	185052	178804	363856	252885	242055	494939
Sex ratio <sup>1</sup>	NA	NA	932	NA	NA	966	NA	NA	957

NA: Not applicable  
<sup>1</sup>Sex ratio is the number of females per 1,000 males.

Figure 3.1  
Number of Persons Reported at Each Age  
by Sex



NFHS, India, 1992-93

the most commonly used measures of digit preference in age reporting is the Myers' Index (United Nations, 1955). This index provides an overall summary measure of preferences for, or avoidance of, each of the ten digits, from 0 to 9. Myers' Indices computed from the survey population are 48.4 and 20.2 for males and females, respectively. The corresponding indices for males and females from the 1981 Census are 64.5 and 68.0, respectively (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 1984c). Although the method of collecting information on the age of household members was almost the same in the Census and the NFHS, age reporting in the NFHS seems to be considerably better, particularly for females. In the NFHS, as in the Census, the interviewer collected information on the age of household members from the head of the household or any responsible adult household member. Myers' Indices for males and females in the NFHS indicate that age reporting is much better for females than for males. Figure 3.1 also indicates that the age distribution is smoother for women in the age group 13-49 than for other females.

The better age reporting for females in the age group 13-49 in the NFHS is mainly due to the difference in the method of collecting age information for males and females in the reproductive ages. In the Household Questionnaire, the ages of all males and females are reported by the head of the household or another household respondent. No extensive probing techniques were adopted for obtaining age information in the household listing. For eligible women, who were interviewed using the Woman's Questionnaire, the age reported by the woman herself replaces the age reported in the Household Questionnaire if there is a discrepancy. Her age in the Woman's Questionnaire is based on month and year of her birth,

if known, or on her reported age otherwise. A variety of probing techniques were used to elicit accurate age information from the respondent to the Woman's Questionnaire.

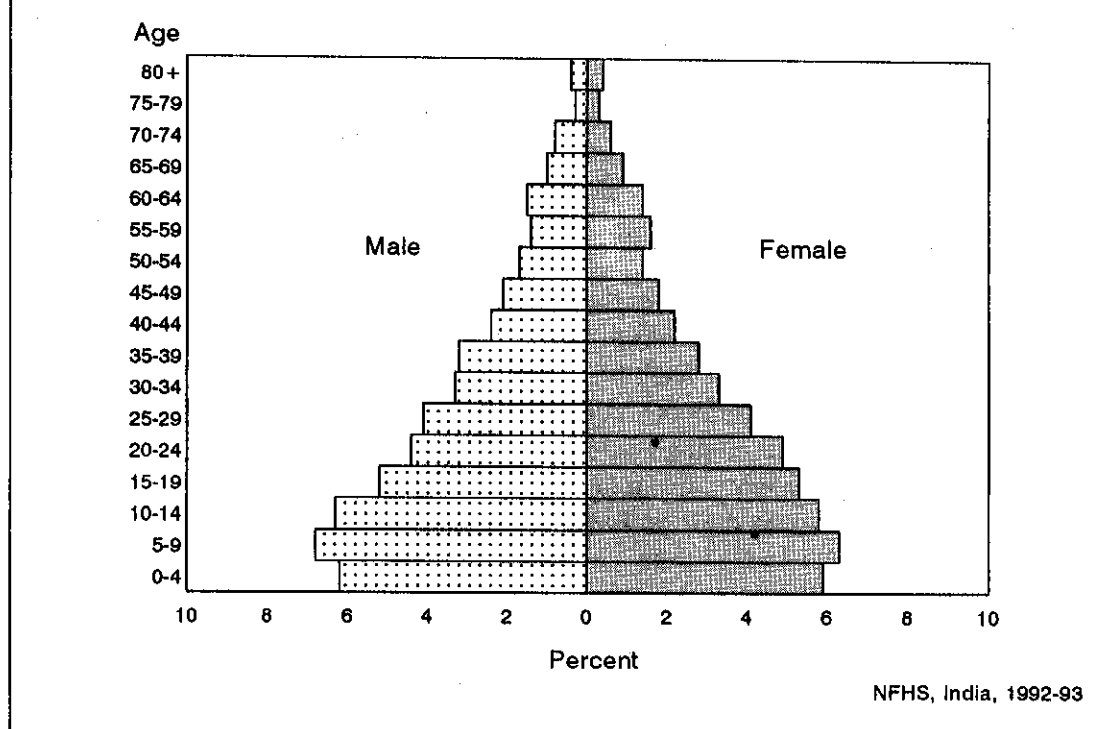
The age of the woman is one of the most important items of information collected in any demographic survey, because many demographic statistics, and especially fertility estimates, depend on accurate reporting of women's ages. Recognizing the difficulties of obtaining accurate age data in India, the NFHS made special efforts to minimize age reporting errors. The training of interviewers placed great emphasis on procedures for obtaining as accurate information as possible on women's ages. For women who did not know their age or date of birth (74 percent of ever-married women age 13-49 in the NFHS sample did not know either the month or the year of their birth, see Table D.3 in Appendix D), several procedures for probing age were used. One method was based on the age of the woman at different significant events in her life, such as the birth of her first child, her age at marriage, her age at menarche, and on the time gap between these events. Reference calendars were also used to try to locate the woman's birth in relation to the dates of major national or local events. Although age errors cannot be totally eliminated, the comparisons with the Census suggest that probing and other elaborate measures used for arriving at the age of the eligible women have helped in reducing the biases in age reporting due to digit preference.

The distribution by five-year age groups is shown in the population pyramid in Figure 3.2. The irregular dip in the proportion of women at age 50-54 is indicative of a possible shifting of women's ages from the 50-54 age group to the 45-49 and 55-59 age groups. This is unusual, because in Demographic and Health Surveys there is usually a slight tendency to increase the age of women from age group 45-49 to 50-54, presumably to move women out of the eligible age range and reduce the workload of the interviewer (Rutstein and Bicego, 1990). Perhaps interviewers in the NFHS were overcompensating because of warnings that questionnaires would be carefully scrutinized for this kind of bias. However, the impact of the apparent shifting on the quality of data on fertility and contraception is minimal because of the small number of older women involved.

Table 3.3 compares the age distributions by sex and residence from the NFHS *de jure* sample with the 1992 Sample Registration System. By and large, the age distributions by sex are quite similar for the 1992 SRS and the NFHS. Only 5 percent of males and 4 percent of females would have to be placed in a different age group for the two age distributions to be identical. Table 3.3 also provides information on sex ratios by age for the NFHS. No sex ratios by age can be computed from the SRS published results because only percent age distributions for the sample registration areas are given and information is not available on absolute numbers of population.

The sex ratio (number of females per 1,000 males) is an important measure that indicates the balance of the sexes in the population. The *de facto* population sex ratio, as shown in Table 3.2, is 932 in urban areas, 966 in rural areas and 957 for the country as a whole. Roughly comparable figures from the 1991 Census are 894 for urban areas, 939 for rural areas and 927 for the country as a whole (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 1992). The sex ratios are consistently higher in the NFHS. The discrepancy between the two sources is 4 percentage points (38 per 1,000) in urban areas and 3 percentage points (27 per 1,000) in rural areas. The population sex ratio is 944 in the NFHS *de jure* sample, 925 in urban areas

Figure 3.2  
Population Pyramid of India



and 951 in rural areas (Table 3.3). The NFHS *de jure* sex ratio is higher than the Census value by 2 percentage points (17 per 1,000) and the NFHS *de facto* sex ratio is higher than the Census value by 3 percentage points (30 per 1,000). Since the 1991 Census and the NFHS were conducted only about a year apart, the sex ratios from the two sources should be about the same. Possible reasons for the differences observed are discussed below.

Table 3.4 compares the sex ratios of the *de jure* population computed from the NFHS and the 1991 Census population for India as well as the states covered in the survey. The states vary considerably with regard to the sex ratio. Tamil Nadu has a balanced sex ratio of 1,000, and the sex ratio is more favourable to females only in Himachal Pradesh (1,070), Kerala (1,068) and Goa (1,019). The sex ratio is lowest in Delhi (824), followed by Rajasthan (880) and Haryana (888).

The overall sex ratio from the NFHS is the same as the 1991 Census value for Meghalaya, 1-3 percentage points lower than the 1991 Census value for Orissa, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, and higher than the Census value for the remaining states (by less than one percentage point in Andhra Pradesh to more than 11 percentage points in Arunachal Pradesh). It should be noted that in both the NFHS and the 1991 Census, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh have the highest sex ratio and Delhi has the lowest sex ratio. These extreme values are probably due to the selective out-migration of males from Kerala and Himachal Pradesh and the selective in-migration of males to Delhi. Sampling error in the NFHS does not account for the observed difference in sex ratios between the two sources, because the NFHS sample is fairly large. In

**Table 3.3 Population by age and sex from the NFHS and SRS**

Percent distribution of the *de jure* population by age and sex from NFHS and Sample Registration System (SRS), India, 1992-93

Age	NFHS (1992-93)			SRS (1992)	
	Male	Female	Sex ratio	Male	Female
<b>URBAN</b>					
0 - 4	10.4	10.7	952	11.1	11.3
5 - 9	11.9	11.8	914	11.2	11.2
10-14	11.8	11.7	917	10.6	10.6
15-19	10.1	10.5	960	10.3	10.2
20-24	9.6	10.1	975	9.9	10.7
25-29	8.5	8.9	967	9.1	9.2
30-34	7.3	7.3	931	8.2	7.9
35-39	6.9	6.6	886	6.9	6.5
40-44	5.6	4.9	815	5.7	5.4
45-49	4.7	4.0	802	4.7	4.4
50-54	3.6	3.1	793	3.9	3.5
55-59	2.9	3.2	1040	2.9	2.9
60-64	2.4	2.8	1058	2.1	2.2
65-69	1.7	1.7	937	1.4	1.7
70+	2.5	2.5	914	1.8	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	925	100.0	100.0
Median age	22.7	22.3	NA	U	U
<b>RURAL</b>					
0 - 4	12.9	12.8	944	13.8	13.5
5 - 9	14.0	13.7	930	12.1	11.9
10-14	12.4	12.0	917	11.4	11.1
15-19	9.8	9.8	950	11.0	10.2
20-24	8.3	9.3	1071	9.6	9.7
25-29	7.7	8.3	1017	7.7	7.8
30-34	6.2	6.4	990	6.7	6.8
35-39	6.0	5.5	886	5.8	5.9
40-44	4.5	4.2	902	4.9	5.0
45-49	3.9	3.9	956	4.3	4.5
50-54	3.2	2.9	864	3.6	3.7
55-59	2.7	3.5	1253	3.2	3.2
60-64	3.1	3.0	922	2.3	2.4
65-69	2.1	1.8	826	1.8	2.0
70+	3.3	2.7	791	2.0	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	951	100.0	100.0
Median age	20.3	20.6	NA	U	U
<b>TOTAL</b>					
0 - 4	12.2	12.2	946	13.2	13.0
5 - 9	13.5	13.2	926	11.9	11.8
10-14	12.2	11.9	917	11.2	11.0
15-19	9.9	10.0	953	10.9	10.2
20-24	8.6	9.5	1043	9.7	9.9
25-29	7.9	8.4	1003	8.1	8.1
30-34	6.5	6.7	972	7.0	7.1
35-39	6.2	5.8	886	6.0	6.1
40-44	4.8	4.4	875	5.0	5.0
45-49	4.1	3.9	909	4.4	4.5
50-54	3.3	2.9	844	3.7	3.7
55-59	2.7	3.5	1193	3.1	3.1
60-64	2.9	3.0	952	2.2	2.3
65-69	2.0	1.8	851	1.7	1.9
70+	3.1	2.7	818	1.9	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	944	100.0	100.0
Median age	20.8	20.9	NA	U	U

NA: Not applicable

U: Not available

Source for SRS: Office of the Registrar General (1994)

**Table 3.4 Sex ratio**Sex ratio of the *de jure* NFHS household population and the 1991 Census population, by residence and state, India, 1991-93

State	NFHS (1992-93)			Census (1991)		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>India</b>	925	951	944	894	939	927
<b>North</b>						
Delhi	828	763	824	830	807	808
Haryana	895	886	888	868	864	865
Himachal Pradesh	945	1084	1070	831	990	976
Jammu Region of J & K	965	983	980	U	U	U
Punjab	927	906	912	868	888	882
Rajasthan	885	879	880	879	919	910
<b>Central</b>						
Madhya Pradesh	923	901	906	893	943	931
Uttar Pradesh	903	921	917	860	884	879
<b>East</b>						
Bihar	893	968	956	844	921	911
Orissa	907	974	963	866	988	971
West Bengal	876	969	940	858	940	917
<b>Northeast</b>						
Arunachal Pradesh	920	980	973	728	880	859
Assam	899	953	947	838	934	923
Manipur	999	981	987	975	951	958
Meghalaya	976	949	955	910	966	955
Mizoram	983	989	986	932	912	921
Nagaland	1007	987	991	749	917	886
Tripura	997	988	989	958	942	945
<b>West</b>						
Goa	1000	1035	1019	930	993	967
Gujarat	912	962	944	907	949	934
Maharashtra	937	988	966	875	972	934
<b>South</b>						
Andhra Pradesh	969	983	979	959	977	972
Karnataka	968	971	970	930	973	960
Kerala	1070	1067	1068	1034	1037	1036
Tamil Nadu	996	1001	1000	960	981	974

Note: Sex ratio is the number of females per 1,000 males.

U: Not available

Source for Census: Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner (1992)

fact, the sampling error for the *de facto* sex ratio from the NFHS is only 3.1, yielding a confidence interval of 951-963 (see Table C.2 in Appendix C). Even the lowest value in this range is considerably higher than the Census values. Moreover, both urban and rural sex ratios are higher in the NFHS than in the 1991 Census, suggesting a systematic rather than a random pattern of differences.

The observed differences in the sex ratios between the census and the NFHS in most states can be partly attributed to differences in the two data sources. One difference between the two sources of data is the population coverage. The census includes institutional and homeless persons, who are overwhelmingly male, whereas the NFHS excludes such persons. Aside from the difference in the coverage, the discrepancies in population sex ratios between the



NFHS and the 1991 Census could have occurred if the NFHS missed males more than females, or if the census missed females more than males, or if both occurred. It seems highly unlikely that the NFHS missed more males than females because the underenumeration of females is typically more common in India. Moreover, training and supervision of interviewers was much more thorough in the NFHS than in the census. Therefore, the most likely source of the discrepancy in the estimated sex ratio is relative underenumeration of females in the 1991 Census, a possibility that has been mentioned by Premi (1991), among others. According to post-enumeration checks, Indian censuses have consistently underenumerated females more than males, although the gap has been closing with each successive census. Because of the possible relative underenumeration of females in the 1991 Census, the difference in sex ratio estimates should not be taken as evidence that the NFHS is unrepresentative of the underlying population, especially since other comparisons generally indicate reasonable agreement between the 1992-93 NFHS and other sources of data.

### 3.2 Marital Status

The NFHS gathered information on the marital status of all household members age 6 years and over. Table 3.5 shows the marital status distribution of the *de facto* household population by age and sex according to residence. Among females age 6 or more years, 54 percent are currently married and 37 percent have never been married. The percentage never married is higher for males (48 percent) than for females. The percentage of females never married is lower in rural areas (35 percent) than in urban areas (39 percent). Percentages currently divorced and separated are small, regardless of age, sex, or type of place of residence. The percentage widowed is also quite small except in the older ages. Forty-seven percent of women age 60-64, one-half of women age 65-69, and three-quarters of women age 70 or over are widows. The corresponding percentages among males are 12, 13 and 25, respectively. The higher percentage of older women than men who are widowed reflects sex differentials in age at marriage, longevity, and remarriage rates.

Of interest from the point of view of fertility trends is the proportion of persons (especially females) who marry young. Marriage is rare for either males or females under age 15. At age 15-19, 7 percent of males and 39 percent of females have married. By age 25-29, marriage is nearly universal for females and the proportion of males ever married reaches 76 percent. Overall, women marry at much younger ages than men, and both men and women marry at much younger ages in rural areas than in urban areas. Nearly one-quarter of women in their childbearing years (age 15-49) are not currently married. This is one of the major factors that has depressed the level of fertility in India. A more detailed discussion of marriage patterns is contained in the next chapter, which is devoted entirely to the topic of nuptiality.

### 3.3 Household Composition

Table 3.6 shows the percent distribution of households by various characteristics of the household head (sex, age, marital status, religion and caste/tribe), as well as the number of usual household members. Ninety-one percent of household heads are male, and proportionately slightly more female headed households are found in urban than in rural areas. The median age of household heads is one year younger in urban areas (44 years) than in rural areas (45 years). There is a greater concentration of household heads in the age group 30-49 in urban areas (54

**Table 3.5 Marital status of the household population**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by marital status, according to age, sex and residence, India, 1992-93

Age	Marital status						Total percent
	Never married	Currently married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	DK/missing	
<b>URBAN</b>							
<b>Male</b>							
6 - 9	99.1	0.3	0.2	--	0.1	0.3	100.0
10-12	99.5	0.2	0.1	--	0.1	0.1	100.0
13-14	99.6	0.2	0.1	--	0.1	--	100.0
15-19	97.3	2.5	0.1	--	0.1	--	100.0
20-24	75.1	24.1	0.3	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
25-29	35.0	63.9	0.4	0.2	0.5	--	100.0
30-34	10.4	88.2	0.6	0.2	0.5	--	100.0
35-39	4.5	94.3	0.8	0.1	0.4	--	100.0
40-44	2.5	96.0	0.9	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
45-49	1.8	96.1	1.6	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
50-54	1.2	93.5	4.8	0.1	0.3	--	100.0
55-59	1.2	92.3	6.3	0.1	0.1	--	100.0
60-64	1.8	87.9	9.3	0.3	0.7	--	100.0
65-69	1.8	85.9	11.4	0.1	0.8	--	100.0
70+	2.6	73.6	23.1	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
6+	49.3	48.3	1.9	0.1	0.3	--	100.0
15-49	40.7	58.3	0.6	0.1	0.4	--	100.0
<b>Female</b>							
6 - 9	99.1	0.4	0.1	--	0.1	0.3	100.0
10-12	99.4	0.3	0.1	--	--	0.1	100.0
13-14	97.9	2.1	--	--	--	--	100.0
15-19	78.3	21.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	--	100.0
20-24	31.8	66.3	0.5	0.2	1.2	--	100.0
25-29	9.1	87.9	1.4	0.4	1.3	--	100.0
30-34	3.2	91.7	2.8	0.6	1.7	--	100.0
35-39	1.8	92.4	4.7	0.2	1.0	--	100.0
40-44	1.9	88.4	8.2	0.3	1.3	--	100.0
45-49	1.4	83.6	13.7	0.3	1.1	--	100.0
50-54	0.9	75.1	22.7	0.3	1.0	--	100.0
55-59	0.7	65.8	32.0	0.4	1.1	--	100.0
60-64	0.9	47.6	50.1	0.3	1.0	0.1	100.0
65-69	1.3	43.8	54.3	0.3	0.3	--	100.0
70+	1.3	19.7	77.6	0.5	0.7	0.1	100.0
6+	39.4	50.8	8.8	0.2	0.8	0.1	100.0
15-49	25.1	70.5	3.1	0.3	1.1	--	100.0
<b>RURAL</b>							
<b>Male</b>							
6 - 9	99.1	0.3	0.1	--	0.1	0.4	100.0
10-12	99.2	0.5	0.1	--	0.1	0.1	100.0
13-14	98.7	1.1	--	--	0.1	--	100.0
15-19	91.8	7.8	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100.0
20-24	56.2	42.6	0.5	0.2	0.5	--	100.0
25-29	19.7	78.8	0.7	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
30-34	6.1	92.0	1.0	0.2	0.6	0.1	100.0
35-39	2.6	94.8	1.7	0.2	0.6	--	100.0
40-44	1.9	95.0	2.4	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
45-49	1.4	94.5	3.4	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
50-54	1.5	91.7	6.1	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
55-59	1.7	89.4	8.2	0.2	0.5	--	100.0
60-64	1.8	85.3	12.2	0.1	0.5	0.1	100.0
65-69	1.8	83.4	14.0	0.2	0.6	--	100.0
70+	1.6	71.9	25.9	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
6+	47.0	49.5	2.9	0.1	0.4	0.1	100.0
15-49	34.3	63.9	1.1	0.1	0.5	--	100.0

**Table 3.5 Marital status of the household population (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by marital status, according to age, sex and residence, India, 1992-93

Age	Marital status						Total percent
	Never married	Currently married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	DK/missing	
<b>RURAL</b>							
<b>Female</b>							
6 - 9	98.8	0.4	0.3	--	0.1	0.3	100.0
10-12	98.8	0.9	0.1	--	0.1	0.1	100.0
13-14	93.8	6.1	--	--	0.1	--	100.0
15-19	54.6	44.4	0.2	0.1	0.7	--	100.0
20-24	13.2	84.5	0.8	0.2	1.2	--	100.0
25-29	2.9	93.5	1.6	0.3	1.6	--	100.0
30-34	1.3	93.5	3.2	0.5	1.6	--	100.0
35-39	0.7	92.2	5.3	0.3	1.6	--	100.0
40-44	0.6	88.9	8.6	0.2	1.7	--	100.0
45-49	0.5	86.4	11.6	0.3	1.2	--	100.0
50-54	0.5	76.8	21.4	0.2	1.0	0.1	100.0
55-59	0.3	72.1	26.4	0.2	1.0	0.1	100.0
60-64	0.6	52.5	45.9	0.2	0.5	0.2	100.0
65-69	0.6	47.6	50.8	0.2	0.6	0.2	100.0
70+	0.6	22.6	75.9	0.4	0.5	--	100.0
6+	35.4	54.6	8.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	100.0
15-49	15.7	79.6	3.1	0.3	1.3	--	100.0
<b>TOTAL</b>							
<b>Male</b>							
6 - 9	99.1	0.3	0.1	--	0.1	0.3	100.0
10-12	99.3	0.4	0.1	--	0.1	0.1	100.0
13-14	99.0	0.8	--	--	0.1	--	100.0
15-19	93.3	6.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100.0
20-24	61.9	37.0	0.4	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
25-29	24.2	74.4	0.6	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
30-34	7.4	90.9	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.1	100.0
35-39	3.1	94.6	1.4	0.2	0.6	--	100.0
40-44	2.0	95.3	1.9	0.1	0.5	--	100.0
45-49	1.5	95.0	2.9	0.1	0.5	--	100.0
50-54	1.4	92.2	5.7	0.1	0.5	--	100.0
55-59	1.6	90.2	7.7	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
60-64	1.8	85.9	11.6	0.2	0.5	0.1	100.0
65-69	1.8	84.0	13.4	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
70+	1.8	72.3	25.3	0.2	0.4	--	100.0
6+	47.6	49.2	2.7	0.1	0.4	0.1	100.0
15-49	36.2	62.2	0.9	0.1	0.4	--	100.0
<b>Female</b>							
6 - 9	98.9	0.4	0.2	--	0.1	0.3	100.0
10-12	99.0	0.7	0.1	--	--	0.1	100.0
13-14	94.9	5.0	--	--	--	--	100.0
15-19	60.9	38.2	0.2	0.1	0.6	--	100.0
20-24	18.3	79.5	0.7	0.2	1.2	--	100.0
25-29	4.6	91.9	1.6	0.3	1.5	--	100.0
30-34	1.8	93.0	3.1	0.5	1.6	--	100.0
35-39	1.0	92.2	5.1	0.3	1.4	--	100.0
40-44	0.9	88.8	8.5	0.2	1.6	--	100.0
45-49	0.8	85.6	12.2	0.3	1.2	--	100.0
50-54	0.6	76.3	21.8	0.3	1.0	--	100.0
55-59	0.4	70.5	27.8	0.3	1.0	0.1	100.0
60-64	0.7	51.3	46.9	0.2	0.6	0.2	100.0
65-69	0.8	46.6	51.7	0.2	0.5	0.2	100.0
70+	0.7	21.9	76.3	0.4	0.6	0.1	100.0
6+	36.5	53.6	8.8	0.2	0.9	0.1	100.0
15-49	18.3	77.1	3.1	0.3	1.2	--	100.0

DK: Don't know

-- Less than 0.05 percent

**Table 3.6 Household composition**

Percent distribution of households by selected characteristics of household head and household size, according to residence, India, 1992-93

Characteristic	Residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>Sex of household head</b>			
Male	90.4	90.9	90.8
Female	9.6	9.1	9.2
<b>Age of household head</b>			
< 20	0.3	0.7	0.6
20-24	2.6	3.1	2.9
25-29	7.5	8.5	8.3
30-34	11.8	11.2	11.4
35-39	14.9	13.9	14.2
40-44	14.1	12.0	12.5
45-49	12.7	11.1	11.6
50-54	10.4	9.3	9.6
55-59	8.4	7.9	8.0
60+	17.2	22.3	20.9
Median age	44.2	45.1	45.0
<b>Marital status of household head</b>			
Never married	2.6	2.1	2.3
Currently married	86.9	86.5	86.6
Widowed	9.6	10.4	10.1
Divorced	0.2	0.2	0.2
Separated	0.7	0.8	0.8
<b>Religion of household head</b>			
Hindu	76.7	84.5	82.3
Muslim	15.4	9.9	11.4
Christian	3.2	2.5	2.7
Sikh	1.8	1.9	1.8
Jain	1.3	0.2	0.5
Buddhist	1.3	0.7	0.8
Other	0.3	0.5	0.4
<b>Caste/tribe of household head</b>			
Scheduled caste	9.1	13.9	12.6
Scheduled tribe	3.3	11.3	9.1
Other	87.6	74.8	78.3
<b>Number of usual members</b>			
1	3.3	2.6	2.8
2	7.1	7.3	7.2
3	11.3	10.3	10.5
4	18.6	15.1	16.1
5	18.7	17.9	18.2
6	14.7	15.5	15.3
7	9.8	11.1	10.7
8	6.1	7.0	6.8
9+	10.4	13.2	12.4
Mean size	5.4	5.7	5.7
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	24424	64138	88562

percent) than in rural areas (48 percent). On the other hand, the proportion of household heads age 60 and above is higher in rural areas (22 percent) than in urban areas (17 percent). This pattern may reflect underlying differences in household composition, for example, whether the oldest generation is present in the household. As shown earlier, rural areas have a slightly higher proportion of old age population than urban areas, especially for males (Table 3.2). Eighty-seven percent of household heads are currently married, regardless of place of residence. Only 2 percent of the household heads have never been married and 11 percent of the household heads are widowed, divorced or separated.

Table 3.6 also shows that 82 percent of household heads are Hindus, 11 percent are Muslims, and another 3 percent are Christians. Sikhs constitute 2 percent of household heads and Jains, Buddhists and others constitute less than 1 percent each. The religious composition of the household heads in the NFHS is similar to that of the population observed in the 1991 Census (see Table 1.1). The percentage Muslim is higher in urban areas (15 percent of household heads) than in rural areas (10 percent). Households with Christian, Jain and Buddhist heads are also more concentrated in urban areas. Thirteen percent of household heads are classified as belonging to scheduled castes and 9 percent are members of scheduled tribes. Both groups (especially the scheduled tribes) are disproportionately concentrated in rural areas. According to the 1991 Census, the percentages of the population belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in India are 17 and 8 percent, respectively (see Table 1.1). The mean NFHS household size is 5.7 persons per household. The average household size is slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

States differ greatly in terms of the religion and caste/tribe of household heads (Table 3.7). A large majority of household heads are Hindus in 20 of the 25 states. More than one-fourth of the household heads in Assam and 21 percent in West Bengal are Muslims. The percentage of Muslim household heads is 19 percent in Kerala, 17 percent in Jammu, 16 percent each in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and 11 percent each in Maharashtra and Karnataka. No other state has more than 10 percent of Muslim households. Christians head more than 93 percent of households in Mizoram and Nagaland, 76 percent in Meghalaya, 31 percent in Goa, 29 percent in Manipur, 22 percent in Kerala and 15 percent in Arunachal Pradesh. In the other states, the proportion of Christian household heads is 6 percent or less. Sikhs are concentrated primarily in Punjab, where they constitute 58 percent of household heads. Interestingly, 38 percent of the household heads in Arunachal Pradesh and 12 percent in Meghalaya profess "other" religions. The 1991 Census also found a high proportion of the population in the "other" religious group in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya - 36 and 17 percent, respectively (Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner, 1995).

Between 21 and 30 percent of the households in Jammu, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan belong to scheduled castes. Scheduled castes are also concentrated in Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka where they constitute 12-20 percent of household heads. No scheduled caste households were identified in Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland. Similarly, Haryana and Punjab do not have scheduled tribes. Scheduled tribes are more concentrated in the northeastern states, particularly in Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh (where more than three-fourths of household heads belong to scheduled tribes). Scheduled tribes constitute 29 percent of the households in Manipur, 28 percent in Madhya Pradesh and 24 percent in Orissa.

**Table 3.7 Religion and caste/tribe of household head**

Percent distribution of households by religion and caste/tribe of the household head, according to state, India, 1992-93

State	Religion of household head							Caste/tribe of household head				
	Hindu	Muslim	Christian	Sikh	Jain	Buddhist	Other	Total percent	Scheduled caste	Scheduled tribe	Other	Total percent
<b>India</b>	82.3	11.4	2.7	1.8	0.5	0.8	0.4	100.0	12.6	9.1	78.3	100.0
<b>North</b>												
Delhi	82.4	9.7	1.0	5.3	1.3	0.1	0.1	100.0	5.0	0.9	94.1	100.0
Haryana	88.4	4.3	0.1	6.9	0.3	0.1	0.1	100.0	28.3	--	71.6	100.0
Himachal Pradesh	96.8	1.3	0.1	0.8	--	0.2	0.8	100.0	23.4	5.7	70.8	100.0
Jammu Region of J & K	77.2	17.0	0.2	5.7	--	--	--	100.0	30.2	0.9	68.9	100.0
Punjab	39.7	1.2	1.5	57.5	0.1	--	0.1	100.0	28.0	--	72.0	100.0
Rajasthan	92.3	5.5	0.3	1.0	0.7	--	0.2	100.0	20.7	17.3	62.0	100.0
<b>Central</b>												
Madhya Pradesh	93.0	4.9	0.7	0.2	0.7	0.2	0.2	100.0	7.2	27.5	65.3	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	82.9	15.8	0.1	0.6	0.3	0.1	0.2	100.0	18.0	1.1	80.9	100.0
<b>East</b>												
Bihar	82.1	15.7	0.9	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.8	100.0	9.8	8.6	81.6	100.0
Orissa	96.7	1.5	1.5	0.1	--	--	0.2	100.0	9.5	23.9	66.6	100.0
West Bengal	77.2	20.7	0.6	--	0.1	0.5	0.9	100.0	8.7	4.8	86.5	100.0
<b>Northeast</b>												
Arunachal Pradesh	36.7	0.8	15.0	0.3	--	9.3	37.9	100.0	--	76.1	23.9	100.0
Assam	69.3	26.1	4.2	0.3	0.1	--	--	100.0	4.1	16.0	79.9	100.0
Manipur	60.2	5.4	28.5	0.1	0.1	--	5.6	100.0	--	28.7	71.3	100.0
Meghalaya	9.4	2.4	76.0	--	--	0.3	11.9	100.0	0.2	88.9	10.9	100.0
Mizoram	2.3	0.7	95.5	--	0.1	1.4	--	100.0	--	97.1	2.9	100.0
Nagaland	4.8	0.8	93.2	--	0.4	--	0.8	100.0	--	95.8	4.2	100.0
Tripura	86.4	8.4	2.7	--	0.1	2.4	--	100.0	0.6	16.5	82.9	100.0
<b>West</b>												
Goa	64.0	4.7	30.9	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100.0	2.2	1.8	96.0	100.0
Gujarat	89.5	8.5	0.5	0.1	1.2	0.2	0.1	100.0	5.8	14.9	79.3	100.0
Maharashtra	77.3	11.1	1.0	0.2	1.8	7.7	1.0	100.0	6.6	10.0	83.4	100.0
<b>South</b>												
Andhra Pradesh	87.7	8.4	3.7	0.1	--	--	--	100.0	14.9	6.0	79.1	100.0
Karnataka	86.3	10.6	2.2	--	0.7	--	0.2	100.0	11.9	5.7	82.4	100.0
Kerala	58.3	19.1	22.3	0.1	--	--	0.2	100.0	3.6	3.6	92.8	100.0
Tamil Nadu	88.1	5.4	6.3	--	0.1	--	0.1	100.0	19.8	0.3	79.9	100.0

-- Less than 0.05 percent

### 3.4 Educational Attainment

The educational level of household members is an important characteristic because educational attainment can affect reproductive behaviour, the use of contraceptives, the health of children, proper hygienic practices and the status of women. Table 3.8 shows the extent of literacy and the level of educational attainment among the male and female household population age 6 and above by age and residence. Fifty-seven percent of females age 6 and above and 31

Table 3.8 Educational level of the household population										
Percent distribution of the <i>de facto</i> household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, sex and residence, India, 1992-93										
Age	Educational level							Total percent	Number	Median number of years of schooling
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school	Missing			
<b>URBAN</b>										
<b>Male</b>										
6 - 9	22.5	75.4	1.8	--	--	--	0.3	100.0	6455	1.8
10-14	9.5	29.2	45.2	15.3	0.7	--	0.1	100.0	8049	5.7
15-19	10.3	5.4	15.4	30.0	34.5	4.4	--	100.0	6876	9.4
20-24	11.9	5.9	12.9	17.6	30.1	21.5	0.1	100.0	6497	10.1
25-29	13.6	6.3	14.2	15.5	26.4	23.9	0.1	100.0	5832	10.0
30-34	14.0	6.9	13.4	14.7	27.1	23.8	0.2	100.0	4947	10.1
35-39	16.2	7.4	13.6	12.9	25.6	24.3	0.1	100.0	4632	10.0
40-44	15.9	8.4	12.4	12.7	25.7	24.8	0.1	100.0	3718	10.0
45-49	18.3	9.3	14.2	11.7	25.2	21.0	0.2	100.0	3100	9.4
50+	25.9	13.4	15.4	9.5	21.9	13.5	0.3	100.0	8788	7.0
Total	15.9	18.3	17.0	14.2	20.6	13.9	0.1	100.0	58894	7.7
<b>Female</b>										
6 - 9	25.1	72.5	2.1	--	--	--	0.3	100.0	5911	1.8
10-14	15.7	26.0	42.2	14.9	1.0	--	0.1	100.0	7433	5.5
15-19	19.2	5.3	15.5	23.3	32.0	4.7	--	100.0	6904	9.1
20-24	26.3	5.5	13.7	13.6	23.1	17.7	--	100.0	6581	8.6
25-29	31.2	5.5	13.4	12.8	20.0	17.1	--	100.0	5492	7.8
30-34	33.9	7.1	13.9	11.3	18.7	15.0	--	100.0	4627	7.1
35-39	34.4	8.6	15.3	10.0	20.1	11.6	--	100.0	3988	5.9
40-44	40.8	9.0	15.1	10.1	15.8	9.2	--	100.0	3141	5.1
45-49	43.9	10.7	17.1	8.5	13.2	6.7	--	100.0	2361	4.2
50+	61.6	11.7	12.3	5.7	5.9	2.4	0.4	100.0	8383	0.0
Total	32.5	17.2	16.7	11.4	14.4	7.7	0.1	100.0	54821	5.0
<b>Total</b>										
6 - 9	23.8	74.0	1.9	--	--	--	0.2	100.0	12366	1.8
10-14	12.5	27.7	43.8	15.1	0.9	--	0.1	100.0	15481	5.6
15-19	14.8	5.3	15.5	26.6	33.2	4.6	--	100.0	13780	9.2
20-24	19.2	5.7	13.3	15.6	26.6	19.6	--	100.0	13079	9.5
25-29	22.1	5.9	13.8	14.2	23.3	20.6	0.1	100.0	11324	9.1
30-34	23.6	7.0	13.6	13.0	23.0	19.6	0.1	100.0	9574	8.8
35-39	24.6	8.0	14.4	11.6	23.0	18.4	--	100.0	8619	8.4
40-44	27.3	8.7	13.7	11.5	21.1	17.7	--	100.0	6859	8.0
45-49	29.4	9.9	15.4	10.3	20.0	14.8	0.1	100.0	5461	7.0
50+	43.4	12.6	13.9	7.7	14.1	8.1	0.3	100.0	17171	3.9
Total	23.9	17.8	16.9	12.8	17.6	10.9	0.1	100.0	113715	6.3

**Table 3.8 Educational level of the household population (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, sex and residence, India, 1992-93

Age	Educational Level							Total percent	Number	Median number of years of schooling
	Illit- erate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school	Miss- ing			
<b>RURAL</b>										
<b>Male</b>										
6 - 9	40.2	58.1	1.2	--	--	--	0.5	100.0	20569	1.2
10-14	20.9	35.2	35.0	8.5	0.4	--	0.1	100.0	23123	4.5
15-19	23.0	8.6	19.9	27.3	19.8	1.4	0.1	100.0	18078	7.8
20-24	27.1	7.8	15.2	17.3	25.0	7.5	0.1	100.0	14916	7.9
25-29	35.2	9.0	15.7	14.1	18.4	7.6	--	100.0	14006	5.9
30-34	39.5	10.4	16.0	12.6	15.3	6.0	0.1	100.0	11257	5.0
35-39	40.7	11.3	15.8	12.0	14.4	5.8	--	100.0	10910	4.6
40-44	43.0	11.9	16.2	10.7	13.1	5.0	0.1	100.0	8192	4.1
45-49	44.5	13.6	16.4	9.2	12.7	3.4	0.2	100.0	7106	3.4
50+	58.5	15.2	13.3	5.2	6.2	1.4	0.2	100.0	26525	0.0
Total	37.1	21.0	16.8	11.0	10.9	3.1	0.2	100.0	154683	3.6
<b>Female</b>										
6 - 9	52.9	45.9	0.8	--	--	--	0.4	100.0	19296	0.0
10-14	42.9	26.4	24.6	5.6	0.3	--	0.1	100.0	21350	2.7
15-19	52.8	6.7	15.0	14.5	10.4	0.6	--	100.0	18986	0.0
20-24	62.2	6.2	11.8	8.6	8.8	2.4	--	100.0	17199	0.0
25-29	69.3	6.5	10.5	6.0	6.0	1.7	--	100.0	14232	0.0
30-34	71.7	6.9	10.4	5.2	4.6	1.2	--	100.0	11304	0.0
35-39	74.1	7.1	10.4	4.6	3.2	0.6	--	100.0	9479	0.0
40-44	78.0	7.2	8.3	3.3	2.6	0.5	--	100.0	7434	0.0
45-49	82.2	7.5	6.7	1.9	1.4	0.3	--	100.0	6374	0.0
50+	90.5	5.0	3.0	0.6	0.4	0.1	0.3	100.0	24722	0.0
Total	65.5	14.3	10.5	5.2	3.7	0.7	0.1	100.0	150376	0.0
<b>Total</b>										
6 - 9	46.3	52.2	1.0	--	--	--	0.4	100.0	39866	1.0
10-14	31.5	31.0	30.0	7.1	0.3	--	0.1	100.0	44472	3.9
15-19	38.2	7.6	17.4	20.7	15.0	1.0	0.1	100.0	37064	5.7
20-24	45.9	6.9	13.3	12.7	16.3	4.8	0.1	100.0	32116	4.2
25-29	52.4	7.7	13.1	10.0	12.2	4.6	--	100.0	28238	0.0
30-34	55.7	8.7	13.2	8.9	9.9	3.6	0.1	100.0	22561	0.0
35-39	56.2	9.3	13.3	8.6	9.2	3.4	--	100.0	20389	0.0
40-44	59.7	9.7	12.4	7.2	8.1	2.9	--	100.0	15626	0.0
45-49	62.4	10.7	11.8	5.8	7.4	1.9	0.1	100.0	13480	0.0
50+	73.9	10.3	8.3	3.0	3.4	0.8	0.2	100.0	51247	0.0
Total	51.1	17.7	13.7	8.2	7.4	1.9	0.1	100.0	305059	0.0

percent of males are illiterate. The 1992-93 levels of illiteracy in the NFHS for the population age 6 and above are somewhat lower than the 1991 Census figures of 61 percent for females and 36 percent for males for the population age 7 and above (see Table 1.1). In the NFHS, a higher percentage of males than females have completed each level of schooling. While only 9 percent of females have at least a high school education, 20 percent of males have completed at least high school. The median number of years of schooling is 4.8 for males and 0.0 for females, the latter indicating that the majority of females have never been to school.



**Table 3.8 Educational level of the household population (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, sex and residence, India, 1992-93

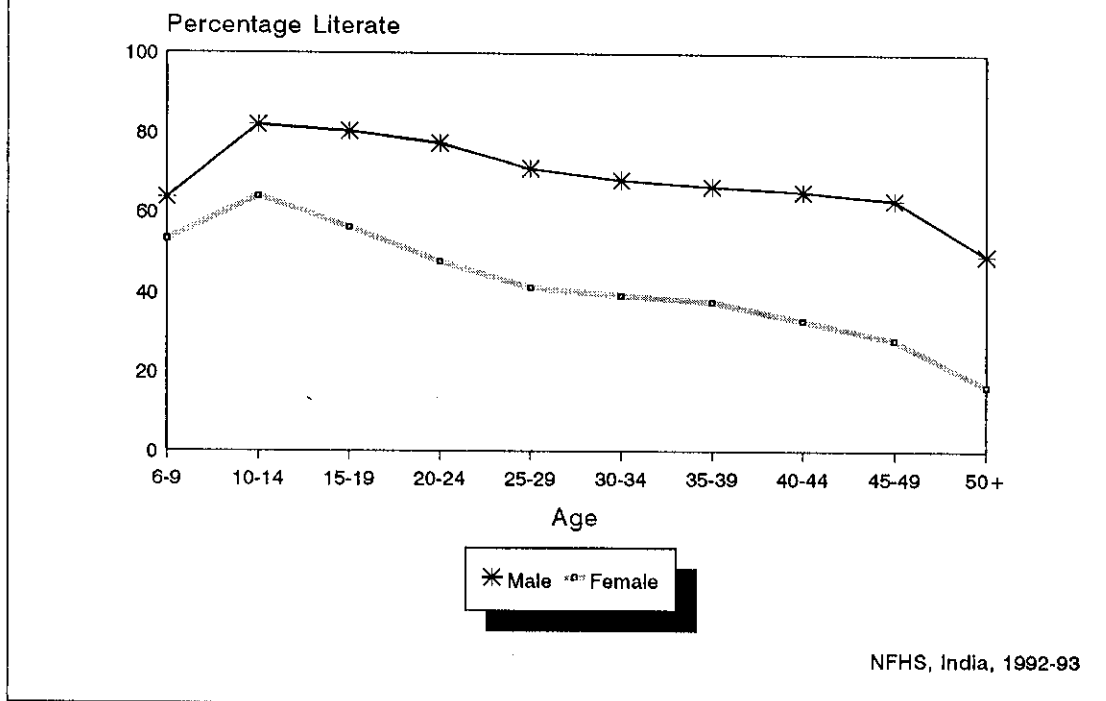
Age	Educational level							Total percent	Number	Median number of years of schooling
	Illit- erate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school	Miss- ing			
<b>TOTAL</b>										
<b>Male</b>										
6 - 9	36.0	62.2	1.3	--	--	--	0.4	100.0	27024	1.4
10-14	17.9	33.6	37.6	10.2	0.5	--	0.1	100.0	31171	4.9
15-19	19.5	7.7	18.7	28.0	23.8	2.3	0.1	100.0	24954	8.3
20-24	22.5	7.2	14.5	17.4	26.6	11.7	0.1	100.0	21414	8.7
25-29	28.8	8.2	15.2	14.5	20.8	12.4	0.1	100.0	19838	7.6
30-34	31.7	9.4	15.2	13.3	18.9	11.4	0.1	100.0	16204	6.6
35-39	33.4	10.1	15.2	12.3	17.7	11.3	--	100.0	15542	5.9
40-44	34.6	10.8	15.0	11.3	17.0	11.2	0.1	100.0	11910	5.6
45-49	36.6	12.3	15.7	10.0	16.5	8.8	0.2	100.0	10206	5.1
50+	50.4	14.8	13.8	6.3	10.1	4.4	0.2	100.0	35313	0.0
Total	31.2	20.2	16.8	11.9	13.6	6.1	0.1	100.0	213577	4.8
<b>Female</b>										
6 - 9	46.4	52.1	1.1	--	--	--	0.4	100.0	25208	1.0
10-14	35.9	26.3	29.2	8.0	0.5	--	0.1	100.0	28782	3.8
15-19	43.8	6.3	15.1	16.8	16.2	1.7	--	100.0	25891	5.0
20-24	52.3	6.0	12.3	10.0	12.8	6.6	--	100.0	23780	0.0
25-29	58.7	6.2	11.3	7.9	9.9	6.0	--	100.0	19724	0.0
30-34	60.7	7.0	11.4	6.9	8.7	5.2	--	100.0	15930	0.0
35-39	62.3	7.5	11.8	6.2	8.2	3.9	--	100.0	13467	0.0
40-44	67.0	7.8	10.3	5.3	6.5	3.1	--	100.0	10575	0.0
45-49	71.9	8.4	9.5	3.7	4.6	2.0	--	100.0	8735	0.0
50+	83.2	6.7	5.4	1.9	1.8	0.7	0.3	100.0	33105	0.0
Total	56.7	15.1	12.1	6.9	6.6	2.6	0.1	100.0	205197	0.0
<b>Total</b>										
6 - 9	41.0	57.3	1.2	--	--	--	0.4	100.0	52232	1.2
10-14	26.6	30.1	33.6	9.2	0.5	--	0.1	100.0	59953	4.5
15-19	31.9	7.0	16.9	22.3	19.9	2.0	--	100.0	50845	7.1
20-24	38.2	6.6	13.3	13.5	19.3	9.1	0.1	100.0	45194	5.9
25-29	43.7	7.2	13.3	11.2	15.4	9.2	0.1	100.0	39562	4.8
30-34	46.1	8.2	13.3	10.1	13.8	8.3	0.1	100.0	32135	3.8
35-39	46.8	8.9	13.6	9.5	13.3	7.8	--	100.0	29008	3.5
40-44	49.8	9.4	12.8	8.5	12.1	7.4	--	100.0	22485	1.2
45-49	52.8	10.5	12.9	7.1	11.0	5.6	0.1	100.0	18941	0.0
50+	66.2	10.9	9.7	4.2	6.1	2.6	0.3	100.0	68418	0.0
Total	43.7	17.7	14.5	9.4	10.1	4.4	0.1	100.0	418773	2.5

Note: This table and all subsequent tables are based on the *de facto* population unless otherwise indicated. Table excludes cases with missing information on sex.

-- Less than 0.05 percent

Despite the low overall level of literacy, cohort differences in literacy suggest that there has been progress over time (Table 3.8 and Figure 3.3). For example, while only 17 percent of women age 50 and over are literate, the literacy rate for females almost doubles to 33 percent for those age 40-44, and steadily increases to 48 percent for those age 20-24, and 64 percent for those age 10-14. The literacy gap between males and females has narrowed over time, but even

Figure 3.3  
Percentage Literate by Age and Sex



at age 10-14, a much higher percentage of males than females is literate (82 versus 64 percent).

Urban areas have a wide lead over rural areas in both literacy and the level of education attained. The percentage of females who are illiterate is twice as high in rural areas (66 percent) as in urban areas (33 percent). The corresponding percentages for males are 37 and 16. Differences between urban and rural areas in the proportion of the population that has attended or completed primary school are, however, minimal, with 31-35 percent of both the urban and rural groups attending or completing this level of school. Among those who are literate, however, 77 percent in urban areas and 64 percent in rural areas completed at least primary school. Attending high school or above is also more common in the urban than the rural sample, both for those who are literate and for the whole population. The literacy gap between males and females is greater in rural than in urban areas. Whereas the percentage of rural females who are illiterate (66 percent) exceeds the percentage of rural males who are illiterate (37 percent) by 29 percentage points, the difference is only 17 percentage points in urban areas (33 percent versus 16 percent).

There are large interstate variations in the level of female and male literacy and education (Table 3.9). More than 80 percent of females age 6 and above are literate in Mizoram (89 percent) and Kerala (82 percent). Between 71 and 73 percent of women in Delhi, Nagaland and Goa are literate. At the other extreme, nearly three-fourths of females age 6 and over are illiterate in Rajasthan (75 percent) and Bihar (72 percent). The percentage of females who have at least a high school education is highest in Delhi (29 percent), followed by Goa (23 percent),

**Table 3.9 Educational level of the household population by state**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education and median number of completed years of schooling, according to sex and state, India, 1992-93

State	Educational level							Total percent	Median number of years of schooling
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school	Missing		
<b>MALE</b>									
<b>India</b>	31.2	20.2	16.8	11.9	13.6	6.1	0.1	100.0	4.8
<b>North</b>									
Delhi	14.3	16.1	15.9	14.4	23.3	15.7	0.3	100.0	8.4
Haryana	27.7	18.4	18.6	12.0	17.6	5.7	0.1	100.0	5.5
Himachal Pradesh	20.7	22.0	21.7	13.7	16.9	4.9	0.1	100.0	5.8
Jammu Region of J & K	25.8	17.1	16.7	18.7	15.8	5.9	--	100.0	6.0
Punjab	34.1	14.1	17.5	12.1	18.0	4.2	--	100.0	5.2
Rajasthan	39.7	18.9	15.5	11.4	10.2	4.0	0.3	100.0	2.9
<b>Central</b>									
Madhya Pradesh	36.2	19.0	18.4	10.3	11.0	5.0	0.2	100.0	4.2
Uttar Pradesh	36.4	16.8	15.2	12.5	13.8	5.3	0.1	100.0	4.2
<b>East</b>									
Bihar	39.5	17.4	13.5	8.9	13.9	6.7	0.1	100.0	3.0
Orissa	31.2	26.3	18.3	8.9	10.2	5.0	0.1	100.0	3.9
West Bengal	24.6	28.3	15.8	12.8	10.7	7.6	0.2	100.0	4.6
<b>Northeast</b>									
Arunachal Pradesh	38.1	25.2	14.3	9.2	9.0	4.1	--	100.0	2.8
Assam	30.1	28.6	14.1	13.3	9.4	4.4	0.1	100.0	4.0
Manipur	14.9	25.9	14.8	16.6	17.8	10.1	--	100.0	6.7
Meghalaya	33.2	29.3	14.5	11.2	9.1	2.6	--	100.0	3.1
Mizoram	6.6	32.7	25.2	16.5	14.6	4.4	--	100.0	6.2
Nagaland	20.1	26.5	18.9	14.2	16.5	3.8	--	100.0	5.7
Tripura	18.7	32.0	18.1	17.3	8.7	5.1	--	100.0	4.9
<b>West</b>									
Goa	11.7	23.6	17.7	14.9	22.1	9.9	0.1	100.0	7.6
Gujarat	24.6	22.0	20.2	10.9	15.5	6.7	0.1	100.0	5.5
Maharashtra	20.5	24.3	18.9	13.2	15.5	7.4	0.2	100.0	5.9
<b>South</b>									
Andhra Pradesh	39.7	15.4	12.3	12.0	13.8	6.4	0.4	100.0	3.8
Karnataka	31.9	21.3	17.6	8.0	14.6	6.6	0.1	100.0	4.6
Kerala	10.0	24.1	24.2	20.9	15.1	5.3	0.2	100.0	7.0
Tamil Nadu	23.0	18.3	23.3	14.3	14.8	6.2	0.1	100.0	5.8

Kerala (19 percent), Manipur (18 percent), and Punjab and Nagaland (15 percent each). Less than 10 percent of females have at least a high school education in nearly half of the states. In every state, the percentage literate is higher for males than for females and (with a couple of minor exceptions) a higher percentage of males have completed each level of schooling than females. The literacy gap between males and females is particularly large in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, where the male literacy rate is more than twice as high as the female literacy rate. The male-female ratio in literacy is also very high in Madhya Pradesh (1.86), Orissa (1.66), Haryana (1.58) and Andhra Pradesh (1.57). The male-female gap in literacy is very small in Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Kerala.

**Table 3.9 Educational level of the household population by state (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education and median number of completed years of schooling, according to sex and state, India, 1992-93

State	Educational level						Missing	Total percent	Median number of years schooling
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school			
<b>FEMALE</b>									
<b>India</b>	56.7	15.1	12.1	6.9	6.6	2.6	0.1	100.0	0.0
<b>North</b>									
Delhi	29.2	15.8	15.1	11.1	16.0	12.5	0.2	100.0	5.6
Haryana	54.1	15.1	14.5	6.2	7.6	2.5	--	100.0	0.0
Himachal Pradesh	42.6	17.8	20.3	8.8	8.6	1.9	--	100.0	2.4
Jammu Region of J & K	48.2	13.3	14.4	11.2	9.3	3.6	--	100.0	1.7
Punjab	48.0	11.1	16.9	8.8	12.2	3.0	--	100.0	2.0
Rajasthan	74.6	9.8	7.3	3.5	3.1	1.4	0.4	100.0	0.0
<b>Central</b>									
Madhya Pradesh	65.7	13.2	10.6	4.5	3.8	2.0	0.2	100.0	0.0
Uttar Pradesh	68.5	10.2	8.9	5.2	5.0	2.2	0.1	100.0	0.0
<b>East</b>									
Bihar	71.4	11.0	7.3	3.6	4.8	1.8	0.1	100.0	0.0
Orissa	58.6	18.2	12.4	4.8	4.4	1.6	--	100.0	0.0
West Bengal	44.8	25.9	12.5	8.9	4.9	2.8	--	100.0	1.0
<b>Northeast</b>									
Arunachal Pradesh	57.9	19.2	10.9	6.5	4.7	0.8	--	100.0	0.0
Assam	49.3	22.2	11.3	10.3	5.1	1.8	--	100.0	1.0
Manipur	37.0	21.8	11.9	10.9	11.4	7.0	--	100.0	2.9
Meghalaya	39.8	27.9	14.9	9.0	6.7	1.6	--	100.0	2.0
Mizoram	11.1	35.6	23.1	17.0	11.6	1.5	--	100.0	5.4
Nagaland	28.2	24.5	19.2	12.9	13.7	1.5	--	100.0	4.6
Tripura	35.6	28.6	16.4	12.4	4.4	2.6	--	100.0	2.8
<b>West</b>									
Goa	26.9	21.8	16.3	12.4	16.1	6.4	0.1	100.0	5.2
Gujarat	48.7	17.2	15.0	6.6	9.1	3.2	0.1	100.0	1.7
Maharashtra	44.1	19.7	16.2	7.7	8.4	3.7	0.2	100.0	2.6
<b>South</b>									
Andhra Pradesh	61.5	11.8	9.2	7.9	6.8	2.4	0.3	100.0	0.0
Karnataka	53.5	15.9	14.1	5.7	8.2	2.5	0.1	100.0	0.0
Kerala	17.6	21.7	23.0	19.1	14.1	4.4	0.1	100.0	6.4
Tamil Nadu	43.9	14.9	18.9	10.1	9.4	2.7	--	100.0	3.6

Among males who are literate, more than one-quarter (29 percent) have at least a high school education. There are interesting statewise variations in the tendency of literate men to continue with their education through the high school level. Although Kerala has the second highest male literacy rate in the country, a lower proportion of literate males finish at least high school in Kerala (23 percent) than in any other major state except Orissa and Assam. On the other hand, in the low literacy states of Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, more than one-third of literate men have completed at least high school. In Delhi, which is predominantly urban, almost half of literate males (46 percent) have completed at least high school.

**Table 3.9 Educational level of the household population by state (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of the *de facto* household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education and median number of completed years of schooling, according to sex and state, India, 1992-93

State	Educational level						Missing	Total percent	Median number of years of schooling
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school			
<b>TOTAL</b>									
<b>India</b>	43.7	17.7	14.5	9.4	10.1	4.4	0.1	100.0	2.5
<b>North</b>									
Delhi	21.0	15.9	15.5	12.9	20.0	14.3	0.3	100.0	7.3
Haryana	40.1	16.9	16.7	9.3	12.9	4.2	--	100.0	3.4
Himachal Pradesh	32.1	19.8	21.0	11.2	12.6	3.3	0.1	100.0	4.6
Jammu Region of J & K	36.9	15.2	15.6	15.0	12.6	4.8	--	100.0	4.5
Punjab	40.8	12.7	17.2	10.5	15.2	3.7	--	100.0	4.1
Rajasthan	56.1	14.6	11.6	7.6	6.9	2.8	0.3	100.0	0.0
<b>Central</b>									
Madhya Pradesh	50.2	16.3	14.7	7.5	7.6	3.6	0.2	100.0	0.0
Uttar Pradesh	52.0	13.5	12.1	8.9	9.5	3.8	0.1	100.0	0.0
<b>East</b>									
Bihar	55.4	14.2	10.4	6.3	9.3	4.3	0.1	100.0	0.0
Orissa	44.8	22.3	15.4	6.9	7.4	3.3	--	100.0	1.8
West Bengal	34.4	27.1	14.2	11.0	7.9	5.3	0.1	100.0	3.3
<b>Northeast</b>									
Arunachal Pradesh	47.9	22.3	12.7	7.8	6.9	2.4	--	100.0	1.2
Assam	39.5	25.5	12.8	11.8	7.3	3.1	--	100.0	2.6
Manipur	26.0	23.8	13.4	13.7	14.6	8.5	--	100.0	5.1
Meghalaya	36.4	28.6	14.7	10.2	7.9	2.1	--	100.0	2.5
Mizoram	8.9	34.2	24.1	16.7	13.1	3.0	--	100.0	5.9
Nagaland	24.2	25.5	19.0	13.6	15.1	2.7	--	100.0	5.1
Tripura	27.2	30.3	17.3	14.8	6.5	3.8	--	100.0	3.9
<b>West</b>									
Goa	19.4	22.7	17.0	13.6	19.0	8.2	0.1	100.0	6.5
Gujarat	36.3	19.7	17.7	8.8	12.4	5.0	0.1	100.0	4.1
Maharashtra	32.1	22.0	17.6	10.5	12.0	5.6	0.2	100.0	4.5
<b>South</b>									
Andhra Pradesh	50.6	13.6	10.8	9.9	10.3	4.4	0.4	100.0	0.0
Karnataka	42.6	18.6	15.8	6.9	11.4	4.6	0.1	100.0	2.9
Kerala	14.0	22.9	23.6	20.0	14.6	4.8	0.2	100.0	6.7
Tamil Nadu	33.6	16.6	21.1	12.1	12.1	4.4	0.1	100.0	5.0

-- Less than 0.05 percent

In the case of females, Delhi again has the highest proportion of high school graduates among the literate population (40 percent), but Kerala also slightly exceeds the national average. For India as a whole, literate males are more likely to have completed at least high school (29 percent) than literate females (21 percent). The earlier age at marriage for females may be one important factor that prevents them from acquiring higher education.

Table 3.10 shows school attendance rates for the school-age population, by sex, residence, and state. The results are presented for children age 6-14, because the Indian Constitution established a goal of providing free and compulsory education for children below age 15. In the country as a whole, only 68 percent of children age 6-14 are attending school.

**Table 3.10 School attendance**

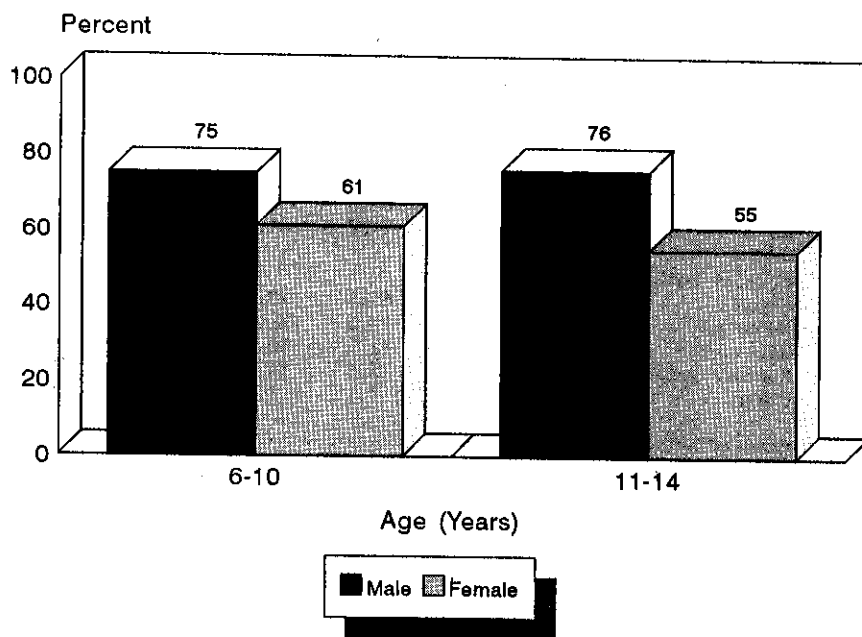
Percentage of the *de facto* household population age 6-14 years attending school by sex, residence and state, India, 1992-93

State	Male			Female			Total		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>India</b>									
Age 6 -14 years	85.3	72.2	75.5	79.2	52.2	58.9	82.4	62.6	67.5
6 -10 years	86.2	71.4	75.0	81.8	55.0	61.3	84.1	63.5	68.4
11-14 years	84.2	73.4	76.3	75.7	47.9	55.3	80.1	61.2	66.2
<b>North</b>									
Delhi	87.3	89.9	87.5	86.6	82.8	86.3	87.0	86.9	86.9
Haryana	90.8	85.9	87.2	88.8	69.5	74.7	89.8	78.2	81.3
Himachal Pradesh	96.4	93.6	93.8	93.8	87.1	87.6	95.1	90.4	90.8
Jammu Region of J & K	95.2	90.7	91.3	96.3	77.0	79.6	95.7	84.1	85.7
Punjab	88.9	81.1	83.4	89.0	73.1	77.8	88.9	77.4	80.8
Rajasthan	84.2	72.0	74.2	71.9	33.5	40.6	78.6	54.4	58.8
<b>Central</b>									
Madhya Pradesh	84.7	64.3	69.0	81.6	46.3	54.8	83.2	55.9	62.3
Uttar Pradesh	77.1	71.7	72.8	69.5	42.6	48.2	73.5	58.1	61.3
<b>East</b>									
Bihar	84.3	59.8	63.6	67.8	33.6	38.3	76.7	46.9	51.3
Orissa	88.2	74.7	76.8	78.6	58.9	62.0	83.5	67.0	69.6
West Bengal	83.3	68.6	72.5	71.8	60.1	62.9	77.9	64.2	67.7
<b>Northeast</b>									
Arunachal Pradesh	82.4	76.1	76.8	71.1	64.6	65.3	76.7	70.3	71.0
Assam	79.4	73.4	74.0	72.6	65.2	66.0	76.1	69.5	70.1
Manipur	96.2	92.1	93.4	93.5	83.9	86.8	94.9	88.1	90.2
Meghalaya	93.8	69.9	74.3	92.5	71.6	75.7	93.1	70.6	75.0
Mizoram	96.5	89.5	92.8	93.0	84.2	88.5	94.7	86.9	90.7
Nagaland	96.7	88.0	90.1	97.3	86.8	89.0	97.0	87.4	89.6
Tripura	86.2	81.0	81.9	89.9	74.0	76.7	88.0	77.6	79.4
<b>West</b>									
Goa	95.0	94.3	94.7	91.8	93.0	92.5	93.4	93.7	93.5
Gujarat	89.2	78.8	82.4	81.8	61.7	68.4	85.7	70.5	75.7
Maharashtra	90.7	83.3	86.2	87.8	69.2	76.6	89.3	76.4	81.5
<b>South</b>									
Andhra Pradesh	85.0	66.8	71.8	76.3	46.6	54.8	80.6	56.8	63.3
Karnataka	84.6	72.8	76.4	80.1	57.3	64.4	82.4	65.3	70.5
Kerala	94.5	94.8	94.7	96.3	94.3	94.8	95.4	94.6	94.8
Tamil Nadu	87.3	85.3	86.0	86.4	74.8	78.7	86.8	80.1	82.4

As expected, the proportion attending is higher for males than for females: 76 percent for males compared with 59 percent for females (Figure 3.4). Urban attendance is also higher than rural attendance (82 percent compared with 63 percent). The gap between girls and boys in school attendance is more pronounced in rural than in urban areas, especially at age 11-14, where only 48 percent of rural girls as opposed to 73 percent of rural boys are in school. In spite of the substantial educational advances that have been made over time, 41 percent of school-age girls in India are still not attending school.

An interesting feature of Table 3.10 is that attendance rates for males do not differ much by age group (6-10 and 11-14), that is, as male children get older they tend to stay in school.

**Figure 3.4**  
**School Attendance by Age and Sex**



NFHS, India, 1992-93

In comparison, the attendance rates for females decline from age 6-10 to age 11-14 years. Urban females experience a 7 percent decline in attendance and rural females, whose level of education is much lower to begin with, experience a 13 percent decline in attendance from age 6-10 to age 11-14. These differences in attendance rates by age reflect the drop out of children from school at higher ages as well as the improvement in school attendance in recent years.

School attendance is almost universal in Kerala, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Manipur, where more than 90 percent of school-age children are in school. In every state except Kerala and Meghalaya, proportionately more boys than girls age 6-14 attend school. The attendance rate for both boys and girls is higher in urban than in rural areas in every state except Goa. More than 50 percent of school-age girls in Bihar (62 percent), Rajasthan (59 percent), and Uttar Pradesh (52 percent) are not attending school. The gap between male and female attendance rates is also substantial in these states. The attendance rates for school-age boys in these states are 64 percent in Bihar, 74 percent in Rajasthan, and 73 percent in Uttar Pradesh.

### 3.5 Housing Characteristics

The NFHS gathered information on the following housing characteristics: electricity, source of bathing/washing water and drinking water, sanitation facility, type of cooking fuel, place where livestock is kept, number of rooms in the house and the housing materials used for construction of the walls, roof and floor. The data on housing are summarized by residence in Table 3.11. Overall, only 51 percent of households have electricity. A large majority of

**Table 3.11 Housing characteristics**

Percent distribution of households by housing characteristics, according to residence, India, 1992-93

Housing characteristic	Residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>Electricity</b>			
Yes	82.8	38.7	50.9
No	17.2	61.3	49.1
<b>Source of bathing/washing water</b>			
Piped	65.3	18.3	31.3
Handpump	17.6	35.6	30.6
Well water	12.3	30.2	25.3
Surface water	3.6	14.3	11.4
Other	1.1	1.5	1.4
<b>Source of drinking water</b>			
Piped	69.5	19.3	33.1
Handpump	18.1	41.6	35.1
Well water	9.2	32.1	25.8
Surface water	1.0	5.1	3.9
Other	2.2	2.0	2.0
<b>Sanitation facility</b>			
Flush toilet	60.1	6.9	21.6
Pit toilet/latrine	15.5	5.9	8.6
Other	0.3	0.1	0.1
No facility	24.1	87.1	69.7
<b>Type of fuel for cooking</b>			
Wood	29.6	77.0	63.9
Cow dung cakes	3.0	12.2	9.7
Coal/coke/lignite/charcoal	8.6	2.3	4.1
Kerosene	22.5	1.9	7.6
Electricity	1.0	0.1	0.4
Liquid petroleum gas	33.4	1.9	10.6
Other	1.9	4.5	3.8
<b>Type of house</b>			
<i>Kachcha</i>	17.2	60.4	48.5
<i>Semi-pucca</i>	26.2	28.4	27.8
<i>Pucca</i>	56.6	11.2	23.7
<b>Place where livestock is kept</b>			
Inside the house	4.8	19.5	15.4
Outside the house	9.5	47.5	37.0
No livestock	85.7	33.0	47.6
<b>Persons per room</b>			
< 3.0	63.4	58.6	59.9
3.0-4.9	21.8	25.4	24.4
5.0-6.9	9.9	10.9	10.6
7.0+	4.7	5.0	5.0
Don't know/missing	--	0.1	0.1
Mean	2.7	2.8	2.8
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	24424	64138	88562
-- Less than 0.05 percent			



households in urban areas have electricity (83 percent), whereas only 39 percent of the households in rural areas have electricity.

The source of water and availability of sanitary facilities are important determinants of the health status of household members, particularly of children. Thirty-three percent of households get piped water for drinking, another 35 percent get water from a handpump, and 26 percent from wells. There are large urban-rural differences in the source of drinking water. More than two-thirds of households in urban areas get piped water, whereas only about one-fifth of rural households use piped water for drinking. The sources of water used for bathing/washing and drinking are similar in urban and rural areas, except that surface water is less likely to be used for drinking.

The lack of availability of sanitary facilities poses a serious health problem. Only 22 percent of the households have a flush toilet (using either piped water or bucket water for flushing), 9 percent have a pit toilet or latrine and a substantial majority (70 percent) have no facility at all. There are large urban-rural differences as well; three-fifths of households in urban areas but only 7 percent in rural areas have a flush toilet, whereas 24 percent of households in urban areas and an overwhelming majority (87 percent) in rural areas have no toilet facility.

Several types of fuel are used for cooking, but wood is the most common fuel. Overall, 64 percent of households rely on wood, 11 percent use liquid petroleum gas, 10 percent use cow dung cakes, 8 percent use kerosene, 4 percent use coal/coke/charcoal and the rest (4 percent) depend on other fuels. Again there are large urban-rural differences. Almost 6 in 10 urban households use liquid petroleum gas or kerosene and only 3 in 10 urban households use wood, whereas a substantial majority of rural households (77 percent) rely on wood for cooking.

Based on the materials used for the construction of the walls, roof and floor, houses in the NFHS are classified as either *kachcha* (made from mud, thatch or other low-quality materials), *pucca* (made from high-quality materials throughout, including the roof, walls and floor), or semi-*pucca* (made from partly low-quality and partly high-quality materials). Almost one-half (49 percent) of houses are *kachcha*, 28 percent are semi-*pucca* and slightly less than one-quarter (24 percent) are *pucca*. Sixty percent of the houses in rural areas can be classified as *kachcha*. The quality of housing is better in urban areas: 57 percent of houses in urban areas are *pucca*, and another 26 percent of houses are semi-*pucca*.

The NFHS also collected information on whether households own any livestock. A follow-up question was asked on where the livestock are usually kept at night, because keeping them inside the house may adversely affect the health of the residents. Overall, 52 percent of households own livestock, 67 percent in rural areas and 14 percent in urban areas. Only 15 percent of all households and 20 percent of rural households have livestock that are kept inside the house at night.

Crowded conditions may affect health as well as the quality of life. The number of persons per room in the household is used as a simple measure of crowding. On average, there are 2.8 persons per room in India. A majority of households (60 percent) have fewer than three persons per room. However, 16 percent of households have five or more persons per room, and

5 percent of households are very crowded, with seven or more persons per room.

An interstate comparison of housing conditions is presented in Table 3.12. The percentage of households with electricity is lowest in Bihar (17 percent), closely followed by Assam (20 percent), Orissa (28 percent), and Uttar Pradesh (32 percent). Apart from Delhi, which is mostly urban, more than 70 percent of households have electricity in Punjab and Goa (92 percent each), Himachal Pradesh (90 percent), Jammu (87 percent), Haryana (85 percent), Gujarat and Nagaland (77 percent each), Mizoram (76 percent), and Maharashtra (74 percent). Piped water or water from a handpump is used for drinking in a majority of households in all states except Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura (40-48 percent), and Kerala (21 percent). In Kerala, more than 60 percent of households obtain their drinking water from wells, which in many cases are within the house. Toilet facilities are inadequate in almost all states.

**Table 3.12 Housing characteristics by state**

Housing characteristics of households, according to state, India, 1992-93

State	Percent with electricity	Percent with drinking water from pump/pipe	Percent with any toilet/latrine facility	Percent using wood as fuel for cooking	Percent with pucca house construction	Mean number of persons per room
<b>India</b>	50.9	68.2	30.3	63.9	23.7	2.8
<b>North</b>						
Delhi	95.5	99.5	84.1	4.4	81.0	2.6
Haryana	85.0	73.0	26.9	55.6	39.6	2.9
Himachal Pradesh	90.2	57.6	12.6	84.8	22.7	2.1
Jammu Region of J & K	86.7	57.3	19.1	64.9	32.5	2.8
Punjab	92.0	98.6	36.7	44.9	52.6	2.7
Rajasthan	51.9	57.3	19.8	81.0	38.1	3.0
<b>Central</b>						
Madhya Pradesh	62.4	55.8	21.3	68.2	13.8	2.8
Uttar Pradesh	31.9	74.3	22.9	68.3	20.1	3.0
<b>East</b>						
Bihar	16.6	63.6	16.5	51.1	15.5	2.8
Orissa	27.8	50.9	12.2	68.7	9.5	2.4
West Bengal	32.9	84.9	40.4	31.6	22.5	2.8
<b>Northeast</b>						
Arunachal Pradesh	63.1	75.8	73.6	87.7	2.2	2.9
Assam	20.4	43.2	49.6	87.8	2.2	2.4
Manipur	62.1	47.0	83.1	80.5	4.9	2.1
Meghalaya	42.6	47.6	54.3	82.0	3.9	2.0
Mizoram	76.0	40.1	98.3	66.2	6.0	2.4
Nagaland	76.9	72.1	79.3	97.4	8.4	1.9
Tripura	45.1	44.1	79.4	91.1	3.1	2.4
<b>West</b>						
Goa	91.7	56.5	48.0	51.3	54.0	1.8
Gujarat	76.6	75.1	35.8	55.9	33.2	3.3
Maharashtra	73.6	78.5	40.8	55.2	30.6	3.2
<b>South</b>						
Andhra Pradesh	62.2	63.4	24.4	77.0	31.3	2.8
Karnataka	64.0	75.6	31.2	75.4	16.5	2.7
Kerala	60.3	21.0	70.9	87.4	19.9	1.4
Tamil Nadu	63.8	74.6	29.4	77.7	22.7	2.5

Delhi (which is mostly urban), Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Kerala are the only states where more than 70 percent of the households have some form of toilet facility. Again with the exception of Delhi, as well as Punjab and West Bengal, the majority of households in every state use wood as cooking fuel. Less than 10 percent of households in the northeastern states and in Orissa are classified as *pucca*. Delhi (81 percent), Goa (54 percent) and Punjab (53 percent) are the only states where a majority of households live in *pucca* houses. Households in Kerala are least crowded (with an average of only 1.4 persons per room) and households in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are most crowded (with an average of 3.0 persons per room or more).

Table 3.13 contains a number of measures related to the socioeconomic status of the household (household ownership of agricultural land, various kinds of livestock, and durable goods). Overall, 48 percent of households are landless; not surprisingly, urban households are more than twice as likely to be landless as rural households. In rural areas, among those who have land, 37 percent irrigate all of their land and 21 percent irrigate some of their land. More than half (52 percent) of all households have livestock, and rural households are five times as likely to own livestock as urban households. Twenty-nine percent of rural households have one or more bullocks, 35 percent have cows, 28 percent have buffaloes and 17 percent have goats.

The possession of durable goods is another indicator of a household's socioeconomic level, although these goods may also have other benefits. For example, having access to a radio or television may expose household members to innovative ideas; a refrigerator prolongs the wholesomeness of food; and a means of transportation allows greater access to many services outside the local area. Fifty-three percent of households in India own a clock or a watch, 42 percent own a bicycle, 39 percent own a radio, 21 percent own a television, and 18 percent own a sewing machine. Other durable goods found in Indian households include: motorcycles or scooters (8 percent) and refrigerators (7 percent). Urban households are much more likely to have each of these durable goods.

### 3.6 Background Characteristics of Respondents

Whereas the previous tables considered characteristics of households, based on results from the NFHS Household Questionnaire, this section examines selected background characteristics of primary respondents (ever-married women age 13-49), based on the NFHS Woman's Questionnaire.

Table 3.14 shows several important background characteristics of respondents: age, marital status, education, religion, caste/tribe, work status, and husband's education. The data shown in the first three columns and in all subsequent tables, are based on the weighted sample of women. The weighted number of cases may not add up to the total of 89,777 women due to rounding.

Up to age 20-24, the percentage in each age group increases reflecting the increase in the proportion married in successive age groups. The decline after age 20-24, by which time most women have already married, reflects the normal pyramidal shape of the age distribution. The age pattern of eligible women differs slightly between the urban and rural areas with a modal age of 25-29 in the urban sample and of 20-24 in the rural sample (Figure 3.5). Moreover, the

**Table 3.13 Household ownership of land, livestock and durable goods**

Percentage of households owning agricultural land, livestock and various consumer durable goods according to residence, India, 1992-93

Item owned	Residence		
	Urban	Rural	Total
<b>Agricultural land</b>			
No land	81.0	36.0	48.4
<b>Irrigated land only</b>			
< 1 Acre	1.7	7.6	6.0
1-5 Acres	3.5	12.1	9.7
6+ Acres	1.5	3.8	3.2
<b>Non-irrigated land only</b>			
< 1 Acre	2.1	6.3	5.1
1-5 Acres	4.8	15.6	12.6
6+ Acres	2.1	5.1	4.3
<b>Irrigated and non-irrigated land</b>			
< 1 Acre	0.5	2.4	1.9
1-5 Acres	1.3	6.4	5.0
6+ Acres	1.5	4.8	3.9
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>Livestock</b>			
Bullock	3.0	29.1	21.9
Cow	6.7	34.8	27.1
Buffalo	4.4	27.8	21.4
Goat	4.3	17.2	13.7
Sheep	0.2	1.9	1.4
Camel	0.1	0.5	0.3
Other	0.8	2.8	2.3
No livestock	85.7	33.0	47.6
<b>Consumer durable goods</b>			
Sewing machine	35.5	11.3	18.0
Clock/watch	78.7	43.1	52.9
Radio	59.4	31.6	39.3
Television	51.7	8.9	20.7
Refrigerator	20.1	1.7	6.8
Bicycle	47.5	39.7	41.8
Motorcycle/scooter	19.2	3.8	8.1
Car	3.2	0.3	1.1
Number of households	24424	64138	88562

Note: Information on the ownership of bullock carts, threshers, tractors and water pumps is not included under consumer durable goods because information on these items was not collected for all states.

percentages in the younger age groups are smaller in urban areas, reflecting the somewhat later age at marriage in urban areas (see the earlier discussion of Table 3.5.).

Overall, 94 percent of respondents (ever-married women) are currently married, and the proportion currently married is nearly the same in urban and rural areas. Among the remainder, most are widowed (4 percent), less than 1 percent are divorced and 2 percent are separated.

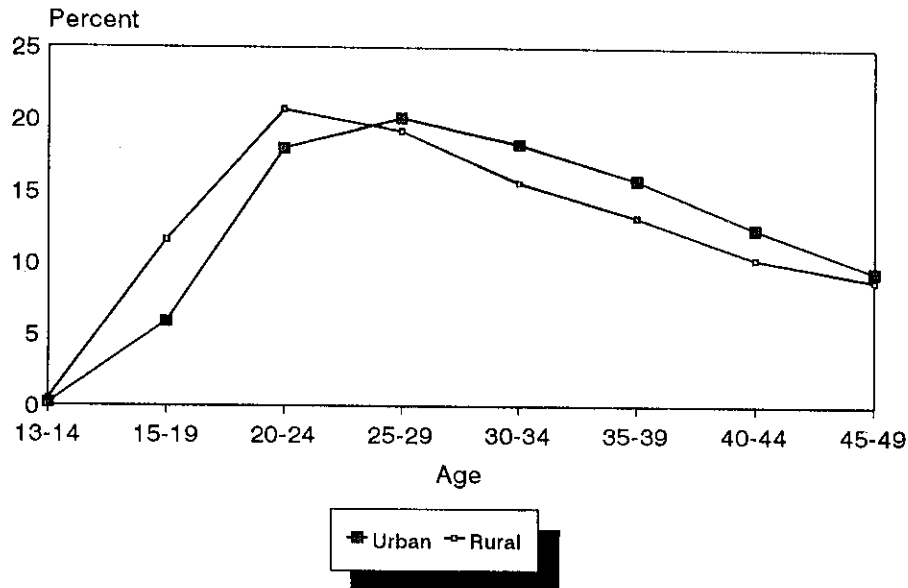
**Table 3.14 Background characteristics of respondents**

Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49, by selected background characteristics, according to residence, India, 1992-93

Background characteristic	Residence			Number of women	
	Urban	Rural	Total	Weighted	Unweighted
<b>Age</b>					
13-14	0.2	0.5	0.4	352	272
15-19	5.9	11.6	10.1	9095	7816
20-24	18.0	20.7	20.0	17983	17233
25-29	20.1	19.2	19.4	17442	17734
30-34	18.3	15.6	16.3	14660	15161
35-39	15.8	13.2	13.9	12461	12875
40-44	12.4	10.3	10.9	9748	10195
45-49	9.4	8.8	9.0	8036	8491
<b>Marital status</b>					
Currently married	94.1	94.4	94.3	84678	84558
Widowed	4.0	3.7	3.8	3421	3526
Divorced	0.4	0.3	0.3	274	367
Separated	1.5	1.6	1.6	1404	1326
<b>Education</b>					
Illiterate	36.8	72.4	63.1	56656	52142
Literate, < primary complete	7.4	6.4	6.7	5997	6473
Primary school complete	15.4	10.3	11.7	10478	11169
Middle school complete	12.0	5.6	7.2	6508	7463
High school complete	17.9	4.4	7.9	7128	8675
Above high school	10.6	0.8	3.4	3011	3855
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	75.6	84.3	82.0	73648	70129
Muslim	16.6	10.4	12.0	10806	9494
Christian	2.9	2.2	2.4	2142	5923
Sikh	1.8	1.9	1.9	1673	2616
Jain	1.3	0.2	0.5	428	376
Buddhist	1.5	0.6	0.8	734	514
Other	0.3	0.4	0.4	345	725
<b>Caste/tribe</b>					
Scheduled caste	9.1	13.3	12.2	10970	10571
Scheduled tribe	3.2	10.8	8.8	7934	10780
Other	87.6	75.9	78.9	70872	68426
<b>Work status</b>					
Not working	79.5	64.6	68.5	61462	61870
Working in family farm/business	3.6	15.3	12.2	10987	11356
Employed by someone else	12.8	17.4	16.2	14575	13144
Self-employed	4.1	2.7	3.1	2752	3407
<b>Husband's education</b>					
Illiterate	17.0	41.0	34.7	31142	28539
Literate, < primary complete	8.2	10.8	10.1	9073	9028
Primary school complete	14.9	16.1	15.8	14148	13987
Middle school complete	13.1	11.6	12.0	10735	11451
High school complete	25.9	15.7	18.3	16461	17713
Above high school	20.7	4.8	8.9	8025	8881
Don't know/missing	0.2	0.2	0.2	193	178
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	NA	NA
<b>Number of women</b>					
Weighted	23455	66322	89777	89777	NA
Unweighted	27534	62243	89777	NA	89777

NA: Not applicable

Figure 3.5  
Age Distribution of Ever-Married  
Women by Residence



NFHS, India, 1992-93

The literacy level of ever-married women age 13-49 in India is quite low. Sixty-three percent of respondents are illiterate and the percentage illiterate is even higher in rural areas (72 percent). Only 11 percent have completed at least high school. Ever-married women in urban areas are substantially better educated than their rural counterparts. For example, 41 percent of urban respondents, compared with 11 percent of rural respondents, have completed at least middle school. The distribution of ever-married women by educational level is similar to that of all females in the *de facto* household population age 6 and above, but as a group, the primary respondents are less literate than the female household population in the childbearing ages (Table 3.7). This difference reflects a tendency for illiterate women to marry at younger ages than literate women.

The pattern of distribution of respondents by religion and caste/tribe is similar to the pattern of distribution of household heads by the same characteristics, as discussed in Section 3.3. Table 3.14 also shows the distribution of respondents by the respondent's work status and her husband's education. In the NFHS, work is defined as any kind of job for which the woman is paid in cash or in kind as well as unpaid work on a family farm or business. Overall, 69 percent of respondents report that they are not working (80 percent in urban areas and 65 percent in rural areas). The proportion working on a family farm or in some other family business is 12 percent overall and 15 percent in rural areas. Sixteen percent of respondents report that they are employed by someone other than a family member. The percentage self-employed is almost the same in urban and rural areas (3-4 percent).

Thirty-five percent of husbands are illiterate (17 percent in urban areas and 41 percent in rural areas). The percentage of husbands with at least a high school education is more than twice as high in urban areas (47 percent) as in rural areas (21 percent).

The states vary substantially with respect to literacy and the educational level of ever-married women (Table 3.15). The literacy rate among ever-married women is highest in Mizoram (92 percent), closely followed by Kerala (84 percent). More than 70 percent of ever-married women are illiterate in Rajasthan (82 percent), Bihar (78 percent), Uttar Pradesh (76 percent) and Madhya Pradesh (74 percent). The percentage of interviewed women who have completed at least high school ranges from only 5 percent in Rajasthan to 37 percent in Delhi.

Table 3.16 shows interstate variations in the work status of interviewed women. Approximately half of women report that they are working in Manipur, Andhra Pradesh,

**Table 3.15 Education of respondents**  
Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49 by education and state, India, 1992-93

State	Education						Total percent
	Illit- erate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school	
<b>India</b>	63.1	6.7	11.7	7.2	7.9	3.4	100.0
<b>North</b>							
Delhi	37.4	3.5	11.6	10.6	19.8	17.1	100.0
Haryana	63.8	3.1	12.8	6.0	11.0	3.4	100.0
Himachal Pradesh	49.7	7.2	21.0	8.7	10.6	2.8	100.0
Jammu Region of J & K	56.7	1.5	11.8	11.2	13.2	5.6	100.0
Punjab	52.6	2.3	17.8	9.0	14.1	4.2	100.0
Rajasthan	82.2	2.2	6.7	3.5	3.6	1.8	100.0
<b>Central</b>							
Madhya Pradesh	74.4	4.3	9.2	4.7	4.7	2.6	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	75.7	2.0	7.9	5.6	5.6	3.2	100.0
<b>East</b>							
Bihar	78.3	2.9	7.6	3.1	5.6	2.5	100.0
Orissa	67.4	9.1	14.0	3.4	4.6	1.4	100.0
West Bengal	50.6	17.2	12.4	10.3	5.9	3.7	100.0
<b>Northeast</b>							
Arunachal Pradesh	69.5	5.7	9.5	7.9	6.2	1.1	100.0
Assam	59.3	13.8	10.1	9.8	5.0	2.1	100.0
Manipur	47.6	10.3	8.9	10.6	14.5	8.1	100.0
Meghalaya	51.4	15.7	13.7	8.8	8.2	2.2	100.0
Mizoram	8.4	32.1	25.6	19.2	12.8	1.8	100.0
Nagaland	43.0	11.7	16.3	13.3	14.1	1.7	100.0
Tripura	41.3	15.4	19.4	15.5	5.4	3.2	100.0
<b>West</b>							
Goa	33.7	16.3	12.6	10.2	19.8	7.4	100.0
Gujarat	55.3	8.7	13.0	6.9	11.9	4.2	100.0
Maharashtra	50.2	10.5	16.6	8.0	10.4	4.4	100.0
<b>South</b>							
Andhra Pradesh	68.7	4.7	8.7	7.6	7.6	2.8	100.0
Karnataka	61.6	6.5	12.8	5.5	10.5	3.1	100.0
Kerala	16.0	14.5	23.2	25.0	15.5	5.8	100.0
Tamil Nadu	50.1	6.9	17.6	10.3	12.1	3.1	100.0

**Table 3.16 Work status of respondents**

Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49 by work status, according to state, India, 1992-93

State	Work status				Total percent
	Not working	Working in family farm/business	Working for someone else	Self-employed	
<b>India</b>	68.5	12.2	16.2	3.1	100.0
<b>North</b>					
Delhi	80.7	1.8	10.9	6.7	100.0
Haryana	71.1	18.6	8.6	1.8	100.0
Himachal Pradesh	52.3	40.9	5.9	0.9	100.0
Jammu Region of J & K	72.5	20.8	5.3	1.5	100.0
Punjab	92.3	1.8	4.7	1.3	100.0
Rajasthan	68.6	23.0	6.1	2.3	100.0
<b>Central</b>					
Madhya Pradesh	67.6	20.8	9.2	2.3	100.0
Uttar Pradesh	86.6	7.9	3.2	2.3	100.0
<b>East</b>					
Bihar	75.1	6.8	15.5	2.5	100.0
Orissa	75.1	2.5	18.3	4.1	100.0
West Bengal	77.0	6.3	13.1	3.6	100.0
<b>Northeast</b>					
Arunachal Pradesh	55.1	18.6	7.7	18.6	100.0
Assam	81.6	1.0	15.4	2.1	100.0
Manipur	46.5	17.7	11.6	24.1	100.0
Meghalaya	58.2	16.6	18.2	6.9	100.0
Mizoram	66.8	15.3	11.7	6.2	100.0
Nagaland	56.3	15.1	5.1	23.5	100.0
Tripura	74.3	10.3	12.9	2.5	100.0
<b>West</b>					
Goa	70.3	4.9	18.0	6.8	100.0
Gujarat	56.8	18.4	22.1	2.7	100.0
Maharashtra	51.0	20.0	25.6	3.4	100.0
<b>South</b>					
Andhra Pradesh	46.6	18.4	29.4	5.6	100.0
Karnataka	53.0	17.0	27.3	2.7	100.0
Kerala	75.3	1.2	19.6	3.9	100.0
Tamil Nadu	53.3	9.2	35.3	2.2	100.0

Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Women are least likely to work in Punjab (8 percent) and Uttar Pradesh (13 percent). Delhi follows the national pattern of low levels of urban employment of married women. In most states, the majority of working women work for someone outside the family. The particularly high proportion of females in Tamil Nadu working for someone outside the family (35 percent) is consistent with various government programmes to promote female employment in the state. However, in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, the majority of working women work on the family farm or in the family business. The percentage of women who are self-employed is highest in Nagaland and Manipur.

Among ever-married women age 13-49, the proportion illiterate generally increases with age, reflecting improvements in levels of education over time (Table 3.17). A notably high



**Table 3.17 Respondent's level of education by background characteristics**

Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49 by highest level of education attained, according to selected background characteristics and residence, India, 1992-93

Background characteristic	Respondent's level of education						Total percent	Number
	Illiterate	Literate, < primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school		
<b>URBAN</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
13-14	(60.8)	(18.9)	(15.7)	(4.6)	(--)	(--)	100.0	42
15-19	44.1	6.6	19.1	14.8	14.8	0.7	100.0	1376
20-24	35.1	5.9	16.5	14.9	19.5	8.1	100.0	4229
25-29	33.2	5.5	14.0	13.4	19.4	14.5	100.0	4705
30-34	34.2	7.5	14.1	11.3	18.5	14.4	100.0	4291
35-39	35.2	8.3	15.8	10.0	19.4	11.3	100.0	3715
40-44	41.6	9.0	15.1	10.1	15.2	9.1	100.0	2899
45-49	44.2	10.9	16.5	8.6	13.3	6.4	100.0	2197
<b>Religion</b>								
Hindu	34.7	6.7	15.3	12.6	18.9	11.7	100.0	17730
Muslim	52.1	11.1	16.4	8.5	9.2	2.7	100.0	3902
Christian	17.6	7.3	13.1	15.0	30.2	16.8	100.0	692
Sikh	25.3	1.7	16.8	11.8	28.0	16.6	100.0	419
Jain	7.8	5.1	13.1	9.3	34.2	30.5	100.0	311
Buddhist	50.8	9.8	14.9	12.4	9.1	3.0	100.0	342
Other	37.0	10.9	10.2	11.0	20.2	10.6	100.0	59
<b>Caste/tribe</b>								
Scheduled caste	64.2	5.9	12.1	7.7	7.7	2.2	100.0	2140
Scheduled tribe	53.6	7.3	12.6	9.0	12.3	5.3	100.0	762
Other	33.3	7.6	15.9	12.5	19.1	11.6	100.0	20553
<b>Husband's education</b>								
Illiterate	83.5	6.0	6.9	2.5	1.1	--	100.0	3983
Lit., < primary complete	58.7	18.0	15.4	6.3	1.2	0.3	100.0	1926
Primary school complete	51.4	10.9	22.5	9.4	5.3	0.5	100.0	3501
Middle school complete	32.3	9.5	23.8	22.1	11.3	1.0	100.0	3073
High school complete	18.0	6.0	19.6	18.4	31.3	6.7	100.0	6067
Above high school	5.3	2.3	6.8	9.4	34.7	41.5	100.0	4848
Missing	55.4	5.4	3.4	6.5	15.3	14.0	100.0	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>17.9</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>23455</b>

proportion of women in the age groups 13-14 and 15-19 (73 and 67 percent, respectively) are illiterate because women who marry young tend to be drawn selectively from among the less educated.

Almost two-thirds of Hindu and Muslim women are illiterate, as are one-third of Christians and one-half of Sikhs. The percentage of women who have completed at least a high school education is lowest among Muslims (6 percent), followed by Buddhists (7 percent), Hindus (11 percent), Sikhs (19 percent), and Christians (27 percent). Jains are the most highly educated group. Fifty-seven percent of Jain women have completed at least high school and only 10 percent are illiterate. Between 81 and 84 percent of women belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes are illiterate compared with 58 percent of other women. A similar disadvantage of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is also found at each level of schooling. With respect to the husband's education, 93 percent of women with illiterate husbands are illiterate themselves. Among husbands who have completed high school (but have not gone on

**Table 3.17 Respondent's level of education by background characteristics (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49 by highest level of education attained, according to selected background characteristics and residence, India, 1992-93

Background characteristic	Respondent's level of education						Total percent	Number
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school		
<b>RURAL</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
13-14	74.3	7.9	15.8	2.0	--	--	100.0	311
15-19	71.2	5.4	11.9	7.5	3.9	0.1	100.0	7719
20-24	67.4	5.8	11.7	7.8	6.4	1.0	100.0	13755
25-29	70.3	6.4	10.4	5.9	5.7	1.3	100.0	12735
30-34	71.8	6.7	10.4	5.2	4.7	1.2	100.0	10369
35-39	73.7	7.2	10.6	4.6	3.3	0.6	100.0	8746
40-44	78.6	6.8	8.2	3.5	2.4	0.5	100.0	6850
45-49	82.4	7.3	6.8	1.9	1.4	0.2	100.0	5838
<b>Religion</b>								
Hindu	73.5	5.9	10.0	5.4	4.4	0.8	100.0	55919
Muslim	74.0	9.4	9.9	4.5	1.8	0.4	100.0	6905
Christian	40.5	12.0	15.9	14.4	13.8	3.4	100.0	1450
Sikh	59.0	3.6	19.8	7.0	9.2	1.5	100.0	1254
Jain	16.8	13.0	14.4	18.5	31.4	6.0	100.0	117
Buddhist	67.0	12.7	10.7	6.5	3.1	--	100.0	392
Other	79.0	7.7	8.6	3.4	1.0	0.4	100.0	286
<b>Caste/tribe</b>								
Scheduled caste	85.4	3.8	5.8	3.1	1.8	0.1	100.0	8830
Scheduled tribe	87.6	4.4	3.9	2.5	1.4	0.2	100.0	7172
Other	68.0	7.2	12.1	6.5	5.3	1.0	100.0	50319
<b>Husband's education</b>								
Illiterate	93.8	2.8	2.7	0.6	0.1	--	100.0	27159
Lit., < primary complete	74.4	14.1	8.4	2.6	0.5	--	100.0	7147
Primary school complete	68.4	9.9	15.4	4.7	1.6	--	100.0	10647
Middle school complete	56.8	9.1	18.0	12.1	3.8	0.1	100.0	7662
High school complete	45.7	5.8	19.0	14.0	14.3	1.1	100.0	10395
Above high school	23.4	4.5	16.0	14.9	28.6	12.5	100.0	3177
Missing	71.8	3.8	14.9	4.6	4.8	--	100.0	136
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.4</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66322</b>

to a higher level of education), three-fourths have married women with lower levels of education. As expected, urban respondents have lower levels of illiteracy and higher levels of education for all the background characteristics considered.

Tables 3.18 and 3.19 provide information on exposure of respondents to mass media. This type of information can be used as one measure of modernity and it can also help health and family welfare planners design appropriate information, education and communication (IEC) programmes. Almost half (47 percent) of NFHS respondents are not regularly exposed to any kind of mass media (television, radio or cinema). Only 44 percent of women normally listen to the radio at least once a week; 32 percent watch television at least once a week; and 15 percent go to a cinema hall or theatre to see a movie at least once a month. It was noted earlier (Table 3.13) that 39 percent of households own a radio and only 21 percent own a television. These facts point out the difficulty of diffusing information on family planning, health and other topics through the mass media.

**Table 3.17 Respondent's level of education by background characteristics (Contd.)**

Percent distribution of ever-married women age 13-49 by highest level of education attained, according to selected background characteristics and residence, India, 1992-93

Background characteristic	Respondent's level of education						Total percent	Number
	Illiterate	Literate, <primary complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Above high school		
<b>TOTAL</b>								
<b>Age</b>								
13-14	72.7	9.2	15.8	2.3	--	--	100.0	352
15-19	67.1	5.6	13.0	8.6	5.6	0.2	100.0	9095
20-24	59.8	5.8	12.8	9.5	9.5	2.6	100.0	17983
25-29	60.3	6.1	11.3	7.9	9.4	4.9	100.0	17442
30-34	60.8	6.9	11.5	7.0	8.8	5.0	100.0	14660
35-39	62.2	7.5	12.1	6.2	8.1	3.8	100.0	12461
40-44	67.6	7.4	10.2	5.5	6.2	3.1	100.0	9748
45-49	72.0	8.3	9.5	3.7	4.7	1.9	100.0	8036
<b>Religion</b>								
Hindu	64.1	6.1	11.3	7.2	7.9	3.4	100.0	73648
Muslim	66.1	10.0	12.2	5.9	4.5	1.2	100.0	10806
Christian	33.1	10.5	15.0	14.6	19.1	7.8	100.0	2142
Sikh	50.5	3.1	19.0	8.2	13.9	5.3	100.0	1673
Jain	10.3	7.2	13.5	11.8	33.4	23.8	100.0	428
Buddhist	59.4	11.3	12.7	9.3	5.9	1.4	100.0	734
Other	71.7	8.3	8.8	4.7	4.3	2.2	100.0	345
<b>Caste/tribe</b>								
Scheduled caste	81.3	4.2	7.0	4.0	3.0	0.5	100.0	10970
Scheduled tribe	84.3	4.7	4.7	3.1	2.4	0.7	100.0	7934
Other	57.9	7.3	13.2	8.2	9.3	4.1	100.0	70872
<b>Husband's education</b>								
Illiterate	92.5	3.2	3.2	0.8	0.3	--	100.0	31142
Lit., < primary complete	71.1	14.9	9.9	3.4	0.7	0.1	100.0	9073
Primary school complete	64.2	10.1	17.2	5.9	2.5	0.1	100.0	14148
Middle school complete	49.8	9.2	19.7	15.0	5.9	0.4	100.0	10735
High school complete	35.5	5.9	19.3	15.6	20.6	3.1	100.0	16461
Above high school	12.5	3.2	10.4	11.6	32.3	30.0	100.0	8025
Missing	67.0	4.3	11.5	5.2	7.9	4.1	100.0	193
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>89777</b>

( ) Based on 25-49 unweighted cases  
 -- Less than 0.05 percent

Exposure to mass media varies sharply according to women's place of residence, education, religion, and caste/tribe, but not as much according to their age. The proportion who watch television at least once a week ranges from 31 to 35 percent across the different age groups, except among women under age 20 who are less likely to watch television. This lower percentage no doubt occurs because women who marry young are selectively drawn from among the less educated and lower socioeconomic groups, as mentioned earlier. The proportion who listen to the radio at least once a week ranges from 34 to 45 percent, increasing up to age 20-24, after which it decreases slightly. The number who go to the cinema/theatre at least once a month ranges from 9 to 20 percent, with younger women more likely to attend than older women.

Media exposure is much greater in urban than in rural areas, regardless of the type of media. Eighty-one percent of urban women are regularly exposed to any media compared with

**Table 3.18 Exposure to mass media**

Percent of ever-married women age 13-49 who usually watch television or listen to the radio at least once a week or visit a cinema at least once a month or who are not regularly exposed to any of these media, by selected background characteristics, India, 1992-93

Background characteristic	Exposure to mass media				Number of women
	Watches television at least once a week	Listens to the radio at least once a week	Visits a cinema/theatre at least once a month	Not regularly exposed to any media	
<b>Age</b>					
13-14	17.3	34.1	19.6	54.6	352
15-19	22.6	41.0	18.2	50.5	9095
20-24	30.7	44.6	18.0	46.5	17983
25-29	33.0	44.5	17.1	46.1	17442
30-34	34.3	43.7	14.4	46.8	14660
35-39	35.3	43.6	13.3	46.0	12461
40-44	32.8	43.7	10.9	47.6	9748
45-49	31.2	40.8	9.2	50.8	8036
<b>Residence</b>					
Urban	68.2	63.5	27.6	19.1	23455
Rural	18.9	36.4	10.6	57.3	66322
<b>Education</b>					
Illiterate	15.1	28.9	9.2	64.2	56654
Lit., < middle complete	45.0	59.7	20.1	27.7	16475
Middle school complete	63.5	70.9	26.8	14.5	6508
High school and above	83.0	80.7	31.9	6.4	10138
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	31.2	43.3	15.7	47.7	73648
Muslim	27.6	40.4	11.0	51.4	10806
Christian	41.3	57.4	18.9	32.4	2142
Sikh	54.7	41.9	3.1	37.1	1673
Jain	85.0	78.0	28.4	8.6	428
Buddhist	46.6	50.4	15.6	36.4	734
Other	19.0	29.7	11.0	63.1	345
<b>Caste/tribe</b>					
Scheduled caste	22.7	34.8	13.8	56.0	10970
Scheduled tribe	12.0	25.3	6.3	70.2	7934
Other	35.4	46.8	16.2	43.4	70872
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.8</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>15.0</b>	<b>47.3</b>	<b>89777</b>

only 43 percent of rural women. Differences in media exposure by education are even more pronounced, with greater exposure for the more educated. Only 36 percent of illiterate women are regularly exposed to any media compared with 94 percent of women with at least a high school education. Hindus are slightly more exposed to mass media than Muslims (52 percent compared with 49 percent). Between 63 and 68 percent of Christian, Sikh and Buddhist women are regularly exposed to mass media, as are 91 percent of Jain women. Women from scheduled tribes are least exposed to all kinds of media. Scheduled caste women are also less likely to be exposed to mass media than non-SC/ST women. These differences may partly reflect underlying differences in place of residence or education.

Interstate variations in media exposure are presented in Table 3.19. More than three-fourths of women are regularly exposed to television, radio or the cinema in Delhi, Goa, Kerala,

**Table 3.19 Exposure to mass media by state**

Percent of ever-married women age 13-49 who usually watch television or listen to the radio at least once a week or visit a cinema at least once a month or who are not regularly exposed to any of these media, by state, India, 1992-93

State	Exposure to mass media			
	Watches television at least once a week	Listens to the radio at least once a week	Visits a cinema/theatre at least once a month	Not regularly exposed to any media
<b>India</b>	31.8	43.5	15.0	47.3
<b>North</b>				
Delhi	82.8	63.6	5.7	13.3
Haryana	49.0	42.2	2.0	39.9
Himachal Pradesh	47.1	54.6	2.9	33.2
Jammu Region of J & K	50.1	64.2	2.5	27.8
Punjab	57.3	42.0	2.3	34.5
Rajasthan	17.9	27.2	5.2	69.9
<b>Central</b>				
Madhya Pradesh	26.7	32.7	10.0	59.0
Uttar Pradesh	19.0	29.7	4.1	64.5
<b>East</b>				
Bihar	12.7	25.9	5.2	70.5
Orissa	16.1	34.9	7.4	60.5
West Bengal	33.3	48.3	16.1	38.7
<b>Northeast</b>				
Arunachal Pradesh	28.7	40.7	14.4	53.4
Assam	18.0	32.8	4.2	60.9
Manipur	38.2	63.1	16.5	32.2
Meghalaya	23.8	37.6	5.4	53.6
Mizoram	25.3	55.1	0.6	38.7
Nagaland	22.5	42.4	1.5	55.4
Tripura	34.3	56.7	6.7	34.5
<b>West</b>				
Goa	70.6	69.3	3.9	14.8
Gujarat	39.4	47.0	9.5	44.6
Maharashtra	46.4	52.3	14.9	37.2
<b>South</b>				
Andhra Pradesh	39.1	62.4	48.8	24.8
Karnataka	39.5	62.9	30.3	29.9
Kerala	42.2	71.3	18.3	20.8
Tamil Nadu	50.4	59.7	42.6	22.0

Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. Less than 40 percent of women are regularly exposed to mass media in Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and Orissa. The states differ most in the exposure of women to television. Only 13-19 percent of women watch television at least once a week in Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. On the other hand, more than 70 percent of women regularly watch television in Delhi and Goa. The penetration of television is also relatively high in Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Jammu, where more than half of women are regularly exposed to television. The southern states have the highest percentage of women who visit a cinema/theatre at least once in month. Among the remaining states, cinema watching is more common in Manipur, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.