CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSEHOLDS

This chapter presents a profile of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of NFHS-2 households and describes facilities and services that are available in villages in Tamil Nadu. The chapter also includes some comparisons of NFHS-2 results with results from NFHS-1, the Census of India, and the Sample Registration System (SRS).

2.1 Age-Sex Distribution of the Household Population

The NFHS-2 household population can be tabulated in two ways: *de facto* (the place each person stayed the night before the survey interview) or *de jure* (the place of usual residence). The *de facto* and *de jure* populations in Tamil Nadu may differ because of temporary population movements. Table 2.1 shows the *de facto* population in the NFHS-2 household sample for Tamil Nadu, classified by age, residence, and sex. The total *de facto* sample population is 22,086. The sample is 35 percent urban and 65 percent rural.

The age distribution of the population in Tamil Nadu is typical of a population that has been experiencing fertility decline (Figure 2.1). Twenty-nine percent of the population are below 15 years of age, and only 6 percent are age 65 or older. The proportion below age 15 is slightly higher in rural areas (30 percent) than in urban areas (28 percent).

The single-year age distributions by sex in the *de facto* population (see Appendix Table B.1) indicate that there is substantial misreporting of ages, including considerable preference for ages ending in particular digits, especially 0 and 5. One of the most commonly used measures of digit preference in age reporting is Myers' Index (United Nations, 1955). This index provides an overall summary of preferences for, or avoidance of, each of the 10 digits, from 0 to 9. The index is often used as one indicator of the quality of age reporting on a survey. Values of Myers' Index computed for the age range 10–69 in the household sample population in Tamil Nadu are 10.5 for males and 5.3 for females. The lower estimate for females is probably due to the emphasis during the interviewer training on obtaining accurate age information for women to correctly determine the eligibility of women for the individual interview. The values of Myers' index from NFHS-2 are much lower than the values from NFHS-1 (revised from the published NFHS-1 estimates). This indicates that age reporting on the Household Questionnaire in Tamil Nadu is better in NFHS-2 than in NFHS-1.

Table 2.2 compares the age distributions by sex from the NFHS-2 *de jure* sample with the age distributions by sex from the Sample Registration System for 1997. The SRS baseline survey, which is *de jure*, counts all usual residents in a sample area (Office of the Registrar General, 1999a). The NFHS-2 and SRS age distributions do not differ much for broad age groups.

Tables 2.1 and 2.2 also present sex ratios (females per 1,000 males) in Tamil Nadu from NFHS-2. The sex ratio of the *de facto* population is 1,034 (Table 2.1). The sex ratio of the *de facto* population (1,014) in Table 2.2 is slightly lower than the sex ratio of the *de facto* population (1,034). Table 2.1 shows that the sex ratio of the *de facto* population is 1,005 in urban areas and

Table 2.1 Household population by age and sex

Percent distribution of the household population by age, according to residence and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

				-						
		Urban			Rural			Total		
Age	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
< 1	1.9	1.7	1.8	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.0	2.1	
1-4	8.5	7.7	8.1	8.2	7.6	7.9	8.3	7.6	8.0	
5–9	9.1	9.2	9.1	10.3	9.7	10.0	9.8	9.5	9.7	
10–14	10.1	8.5	9.3	10.1	9.4	9.8	10.1	9.1	9.6	
15–19	8.9	8.7	8.8	9.5	9.8	9.7	9.3	9.4	9.4	
20–24	8.8	11.1	10.0	7.8	9.9	8.9	8.2	10.4	9.3	
25–29	10.4	10.4	10.4	8.7	9.0	8.8	9.3	9.4	9.4	
30–34	8.0	8.2	8.1	7.3	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.6	
35–39	7.9	7.0	7.5	7.4	6.5	6.9	7.6	6.6	7.1	
40–44	6.1	5.6	5.8	5.1	5.6	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.5	
45–49	5.7	4.8	5.2	5.5	4.8	5.2	5.6	4.8	5.2	
50–54	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.4	
55–59	2.8	5.0	3.9	3.7	5.1	4.4	3.4	5.1	4.3	
60–64	3.0	3.3	3.2	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.5	3.4	
65–69	2.2	2.5	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.5	2.7	2.6	
70–74	1.5	1.6	1.6	2.2	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.7	1.8	
75–79	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	
80+	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Number of persons	3,852	3,871	7,723	7,009	7,354	14,363	10,860	11,225	22,086	
Sex ratio ¹	NA	NA	1,005	NA	NA	1,049	NA	NA	1,034	

Note: Table is based on the de facto population, i.e., persons who stayed in the household the night before the interview (including both usual residents and visitors).

NA: Not applicable ¹Females per 1,000 males



	585	5 (1997)		NFHS-2 (1999)				
Age	Male	Female	Male	Female	Sex ratio ¹			
< 5	9.3	8.8	10.0	9.3	948			
5–14	20.1	19.4	19.8	18.6	955			
15–29	27.8	29.1	27.1	28.9	1,083			
30–49	27.2	26.7	26.5	25.0	959			
50–64	11.3	11.5	10.5	12.2	1,176			
65+	4.3	4.4	6.2	5.9	970			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1,014			
Median age	U	U	26.2	26.2	NA			

1,049 in rural areas, suggesting that rural-urban migration has been dominated by males in Tamil Nadu. According to the 2001 Census of India provisional estimates, the de jure sex ratio for Tamil Nadu is even lower at 986, approximately two year after NFHS-2.

2.2 Marital Status

NFHS-2 includes information on the marital status of all household members age six and above. Table 2.3 shows the percent distribution by marital status of the *de facto* household population, classified by age, residence, and sex. Among females age six and above, 53 percent are currently married and 32 percent have never been married. The proportion never married is higher for males (44 percent) than for females (32 percent) and is only slightly higher in urban areas (46 percent for males and 33 percent for females) than in rural areas (44 percent for males and 32 percent for females). The proportions divorced, separated, or deserted are small, and widowhood is quite limited until the older ages. Almost half of women age 50 or older are widowed, compared to only 12 percent of males in that age group.

Also of interest is the proportion of persons who marry young. At age 15–19, less than 1 percent of men have ever married, compared with 24 percent of women, with no significant difference between urban and rural males, but with a lower proportion ever married among urban than rural females (19 and 26 percent, respectively). By age 25–29, 92 percent of women have ever been married, compared to only 62 percent of men. Overall, the table shows that women in Tamil Nadu marry at much younger ages than men, and that both men and women marry at younger ages in rural areas than in urban areas.

Table 2.4 shows estimates of the singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM), which can be calculated from age-specific proportions single in a census or household survey. SMAM is calculated from the *de jure* population in NFHS-2 in order to arrive at estimates that are more comparable to those derived from the censuses, which are modified *de jure* counts. According to the SMAM measure, men in Tamil Nadu tend to marry women who are six years younger than themselves. The census and NFHS-2 data indicate that the age at marriage has been rising for

Table 2.3 Marital status of the household population

Percent distribution of the household population age 6 and above by marital status, according to age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

				Marital status	3			
Age	Never married	Currently married	Married, <i>gauna</i> not performed	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Deserted	Total percent
				URBAN				
				Male				
6–12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	100.0 100.0 99.8 83.4 43.7 6.3 1.0	0.0 0.2 15.9 55.9 92.0 89.3	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.1 0.1 0.6 9.1	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.3	0.0 0.0 0.7 0.4 0.8 0.3	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	45.7	52.0	0.0	1.7	0.1	0.1	0.4	100.0
				Female				
6–12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	99.9 100.0 80.9 40.8 11.6 2.5 1.5	0.1 0.0 19.1 57.9 85.5 86.6 47.1	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.1 1.2 7.7 50.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.5 0.2	0.0 0.0 0.3 0.0 0.6 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.9 1.7 2.2 1.3	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	33.0	53.4	0.0	12.1	0.2	0.2	1.2	100.0
				RURAL				
				Male				
6–12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	99.9 100.0 99.1 79.0 34.2 4.2 0.7	0.1 0.0 20.7 63.8 93.5 85.7	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 1.0 1.0 13.3	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.2	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.4 0.3 0.1	0.0 0.0 0.2 0.6 0.8 0.1	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	43.6	52.7	0.0	3.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	100.0
				Female				
6–12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	99.6 99.6 74.2 27.3 6.2 1.8 0.3	0.4 0.4 25.5 71.3 87.7 83.3 49.4	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.1 0.1	0.0 0.0 0.7 2.9 10.7 48.2	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.4 0.5 0.2	0.0 0.0 0.2 0.6 0.9 0.3	0.0 0.0 0.5 2.0 2.6 1.5	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	32.0	52.9	0.1	13.2	0.2	0.4	1.3	100.0

both men and women, but faster for women than for men. There has been, however, only a small change in the age at marriage in the seven years between NFHS-1 and NFHS-2. Marriage ages in NFHS-2 are higher in urban areas than in rural areas, with urban women and men marrying about one year later than their rural counterparts. As estimated from NFHS-2, the SMAM for females in Tamil Nadu is 20.9 (21.7 in urban areas and 20.4 in rural areas).

Table 2.3 Marital status of the household population (contd.)

Percent distribution of the household population age 6 and above by marital status, according to age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

				Marital status	;			
Age	Never married	Currently married	Married, <i>gauna</i> not performed	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Deserted	Total percent
				TOTAL				
				Male				
6–12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	99.9 100.0 99.3 80.7 38.0 5.0 0.8	0.1 0.0 0.7 18.9 60.7 92.9 86.8	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.6 0.9 12.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.1	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.3 0.1	0.0 0.0 0.4 0.5 0.8 0.2	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	44.4	52.5	0.0	2.6	0.1	0.1	0.4	100.0
				Female				
6 –12 13–14 15–19 20–24 25–29 30–49 50+	99.7 99.7 76.3 32.3 8.2 2.1 0.7	0.3 0.3 23.5 66.4 86.9 84.5 48.6	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.1 0.1	0.0 0.0 0.5 2.3 9.6 48.8	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.5 0.2	0.0 0.0 0.2 0.3 0.8 0.2	0.0 0.2 0.6 1.9 2.5 1.4	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0
Total	32.3	53.1	0.0	12.8	0.2	0.3	1.3	100.0

Note: Table is based on the *de facto* population, i.e., persons who stayed in the household the night before the interview (including both usual residents and visitors). The marital status distribution for females by age cannot be directly compared with the published distribution for NFHS-1 because the ages in the current table are based entirely on the reports of the household respondents, whereas in NFHS-1 the ages of ever-married women age 13–49 were taken from the Woman's Questionnaire.

Table 2.4 Singulate mean age at marriage										
Singulate mean age at marriage by sex from selected sources, Tamil Nadu, 1961–1999										
Singulate mean age at marriage (SMAM)										
Source	Male	Female	Difference							
1961 Census 1971 Census 1981 Census 1991 Census	25.3 26.1 26.1 26.4	18.4 19.6 20.3 20.9	6.9 6.5 5.8 5.5							
1992 NFHS-1 Urban Rural Total	27.3 25.9 26.4	21.3 20.0 20.5	6.0 5.9 5.9							
1999 NFHS-2Urban27.121.75.3Rural26.420.45.9Total26.620.95.8										
Note: Table is based on the <i>de jure</i> population. The male SMAM minus the female										

SMAM may not correspond exactly to the difference in SMAM due to rounding.

2.3 Household Composition

Table 2.5 shows the percent distribution of households by various characteristics of the household head (sex, age, religion, and caste/tribe), as well as by household type and the number of usual household members, for urban and rural areas as well as for Chennai. The table is based on the *de jure* population because household type and the number of usual household members pertain to the usual-resident population. The table shows that 83–86 percent of household heads are male, regardless of area of residence (rural, urban or Chennai).

The median age of household heads is 45 years in rural areas and in the state as a whole. The median age is slightly lower (44 years) in urban areas and in Chennai. Over two-thirds (68 percent) of household heads are age 30–59 and only 11 percent are less than age 30. Eighty-nine percent of household heads are Hindu, 5 percent are Muslim, and 5 percent are Christian (almost identical to the distribution in NFHS-1). Muslims constitute 10 percent of urban households, but less than 3 percent of rural households. The proportion of Christian household heads is twice as high in urban areas as in rural areas (8 percent vs. 4 percent, respectively).

Twenty-four percent of household heads belong to scheduled castes, 1 percent to scheduled tribes, and 73 percent to other backward classes (OBC¹). The proportion of household heads belonging to any of these disadvantaged groups is 94 percent in urban areas (89 percent in Chennai) and over 99 percent in rural areas. More than two-thirds of all households (68 percent) are nuclear family households (consisting of an unmarried adult living alone or a married person or couple and their unmarried children, if any). Nuclear households are equally common in urban and rural areas. The average household size is 4.2 persons (4.3 in urban areas and in Chennai, and 4.2 in rural areas).

2.4 Educational Level

The level of education of household members may affect reproductive behaviour, contraceptive use, the health of children, and proper hygienic practices. Table 2.6 shows the percent distribution of the *de facto* household population by literacy and educational level, according to age, residence, and sex. (This table and all subsequent tables and figures in this report are based on the *de facto* sample, unless otherwise specified.)

In Tamil Nadu, 42 percent of females and 20 percent of males age six and above are illiterate. Comparable figures from NFHS-1 are 44 percent of females and 23 percent of males, indicating a slight increase in literacy in seven years. Much more rapid increases in literacy over time are implied from examining differences by age. For example, the proportion of males who are illiterate declines from 41 percent of those age 50 and above to only 5 percent at age 10–14. For females, the proportion illiterate falls from 76 percent at age 50 and above to 8 percent at age 10–14. Moreover, the proportion who have completed each level of education is higher among younger than older males and females.

¹Other backward classes are castes and communities that have been designated by the Government of India as socially and educationally backward and in need of special protection from social injustice.

Table 2.5 Household characteristics

Percent distribution of households by selected characteristics of the household head, household type, and household size, according to residence, Tamil Nadu, 1999

Characteristic	Urban	Rural	Total	Chennai
Sex of household head				
Male	85.6	83.0	83.9	85.9
Female	14.4	17.0	16.1	14.1
Age of household head				
< 30	12.0	11.1	11.4	13.0
30–44	40.0	38.1	38.7	38.2
45–59	29.7	29.2	29.4	30.3
60+	18.3	21.6	20.5	18.6
Median age	44.2	45.2	44.9	44.3
Religion of household head				
Hindu	80.9	93.3	89.1	84.9
Muslim	10.2	2.8	5.3	7.8
Christian	8.3	3.7	5.3	5.7
Sikh	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.3
Jain	0.2	0.0	0.1	1.0
Zoroastrian/Parsi	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2
Missing	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Caste/tribe of household head				
Scheduled caste	17.5	26.6	23.5	21.5
Scheduled tribe	0.3	1.2	0.9	0.8
Other backward class	76.6	71.7	73.4	67.1
Other	5.6	0.4	2.2	10.3
Don't know/missing	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4
Household type				
Nuclear household	68.1	68.0	68.1	67.9
Non-nuclear household	31.9	32.0	31.9	31.9
Household with no usual members	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Number of usual members				
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
1	4.4	6.8	6.0	5.1
2	10.9	13.3	12.5	11.5
3	18.0	17.0	17.3	16.3
4	27.0	22.9	24.3	26.8
5	19.4	19.4	19.4	20.8
6	9.5	10.7	10.3	9.5
7	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.0
8	2.6	2.2	2.3	1.8
9+	2.8	2.4	2.5	3.0
Mean household size	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.3
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	1,797	3,484	5,281	347
Note: Table is based on the <i>de jure</i> popul	lation.			

Table 2.6 Educational level of the household population

Percent distribution of the household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

	Educational level ¹									
Age	Illiterate	Literate, < primary school complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Higher secondary complete and above	Missing	Total percent	Number of persons	Median number of years of schooling
					URBAN					
					Male					
6–9 10–14 15–19	7.4 3.8 6.1	89.8 17.9 2.5	2.7 57.2 17.5	0.0 20.9 32.1	0.0 0.3 25.1	0.0 0.0 16.7	0.1 0.0 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0	283 389 344	2.6 6.3 9.5
20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	9.7 12.2 12.3 20.5	3.1 3.7 4.9 9.4	19.8 17.7 18.4 23.6	18.5 17.8 16.3 12.8	18.4 21.7 24.4 22.3	30.3 27.0 23.7 11.3	0.0 0.0 0.1 0.2	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	743 613 454 559	9.9 9.8 9.7 7.0
Total	11.0	13.4	22.5	17.3	17.5	18.3	0.1	100.0	3,385	8.3
					Female					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	11.6 3.0 9.6 20.4 25.3 34.6 55.6	85.8 16.8 4.0 3.0 4.4 7.0 7.3	2.5 57.7 18.2 17.8 20.5 22.5 17.3	0.0 22.0 25.7 18.8 17.5 14.0	0.0 0.4 28.8 11.5 15.0 15.0 7 7	0.0 0.0 13.6 28.6 17.0 6.9 2.6	0.1 0.0 0.0 0.2 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	271 329 337 833 587 402 662	2.7 6.5 9.4 8.9 7.9 5.7 2.0
Total	26.3	12.5	21.4	15.7	11.5	12.5	0.2	100.0	3,421	6.3
					Total					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	9.5 3.4 7.8 15.3 18.6 22.8 39.5	87.9 17.4 3.2 3.0 4.1 5.9 8.2	2.6 57.4 17.8 18.7 19.1 20.3 20.2	0.0 21.4 29.0 18.7 17.6 15.2 10.9	0.0 0.4 26.9 14.8 18.4 20.0 14.4	0.0 0.0 15.2 29.4 22.1 15.8 6.6	0.1 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.0 0.2	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	553 718 681 1,576 1,201 856 1,221	2.7 6.4 9.5 9.3 8.8 8.1 5.2
Total	18.7	12.9	21.9	16.5	14.5	15.4	0.1	100.0	6,806	7.4

Table 2.6 Educational level of the household population (contd.)

Percent distribution of the household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

	Educational level ¹									
Age	Illiterate	Literate, < primary school complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Higher secondary complete and above	Missing	Total percent	Number of persons	Median number of years of schooling
					RURAL					
					Male					
6–9 10–14 15–19	14.6 5.6 5.8	82.7 17.6 5.2	2.5 60.8 20.6	0.0 15.3 37.4	0.0 0.7 23.0	0.0 0.0 8.0	0.2 0.0 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0	577 710 666	2.6 6.1 9.0
20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	18.2 30.3 33.5 50.3	5.1 6.9 9.5 12.7	20.9 23.4 24.6 23.4	23.3 17.3 12.1 6.5	15.8 12.3 13.0 5.2	16.7 9.7 7.2 1.9	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	1,158 1,028 748 1,236	8.5 6.0 5.6 3.1
Total	25.4	16.2	25.1	15.9	10.3	6.9	0.0	100.0	6,123	5.7
					Female					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49	15.4 10.1 21.8 42.7 60.8 71.9	81.9 15.1 4.5 5.2 5.9 3.6	2.7 57.1 19.6 18.5 18.2 14.5	0.0 17.5 31.3 15.6 7.9 5.2	0.0 0.2 15.8 8.6 4.5 4.4	0.0 0.0 7.0 9.5 2.7 0.5	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	577 694 724 1,389 1,024 769	2.6 6.1 8.2 5.4 2.2 0.0
Total	49.8	4.3	18.3	10.9	5.0	3.3	0.2	100.0	6,507	3.1
					Total					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	15.0 7.8 14.1 31.5 45.6 53.0 69.2	82.3 16.4 4.9 5.1 6.4 6.5 8.3	2.6 59.0 20.1 19.6 20.8 19.5 14.4	0.0 16.4 34.2 19.1 12.6 8.6 4.1	0.0 0.4 19.2 11.9 8.4 8.6 2.9	0.0 0.0 7.4 12.8 6.2 3.8 1.0	0.1 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	1,153 1,404 1,390 2,548 2,052 1,517 2,564	2.6 6.1 8.6 6.9 5.0 3.1 0.0
Total	38.0	14.4	21.6	13.3	7.5	5.1	0.0	100.0	12,630	4.8

Table 2.6 Educational level of the household population (contd.)

Percent distribution of the household population age 6 and above by literacy and level of education, and median number of completed years of schooling, according to age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

			Ed	ucational lev	el ¹					
Age	Illiterate	Literate, < primary school complete	Primary school complete	Middle school complete	High school complete	Higher secondary complete and above	Missing	Total percent	Number of persons	Median number of years of schooling
					TOTAL					
					Male					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39	12.3 4.9 5.9 14.9 23.6	85.0 17.7 4.3 4.3 5.7	2.6 59.5 19.6 20.5 21.3	0.0 17.3 35.6 21.4 17.5	0.0 0.5 23.7 16.8 15.8	0.0 0.0 10.9 22.1 16.2	0.2 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	859 1,100 1,010 1,902 1.642	2.6 6.2 9.2 8.9 7.9
40–49 50+	25.5 41.0	7.8 11.6	22.3 23.4	13.7 8.5	17.3 10.5	13.5 4.9	0.0 0.1	100.0 100.0	1,202 1,795	6.8 4.7
Total	20.3	15.2	24.2	16.4	12.8	11.0	0.0	100.0	9,509	6.4
					Female					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	14.2 7.8 17.9 34.3 47.9 59.1 76.3	83.1 15.7 4.3 4.4 5.4 4.8 5.3	2.6 57.3 19.2 18.2 19.1 17.3 9.8	0.0 19.0 29.5 16.8 11.4 8.2 4.3	0.0 0.3 20.0 9.7 8.3 8.0 3.1	0.0 0.0 9.1 16.7 7.9 2.7 1.0	0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1 0.0 0.2	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	847 1,023 1,061 2,223 1,611 1,171 1,990	2.6 6.2 8.5 6.7 4.8 1.1 0.0
Total	41.7	12.6	19.4	12.5	7.2	6.5	0.1	100.0	9,928	4.5
					Total					
6–9 10–14 15–19 20–29 30–39 40–49 50+	13.2 6.3 12.1 25.4 35.6 42.1 59.6 31.2	84.1 16.7 4.3 4.3 5.5 6.3 8.3	2.6 58.5 19.4 19.2 20.2 19.8 16.3	0.0 18.1 32.5 18.9 14.5 11.0 6.3	0.0 0.4 21.8 13.0 12.1 12.7 6.6	0.0 0.0 10.0 19.2 12.1 8.1 2.8 8 7	0.1 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.0 0.1	100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0 100.0	1,707 2,122 2,071 4,124 3,252 2,373 3,785	2.6 6.2 8.8 8.1 5.9 5.2 0.0

Note: This table and all subsequent tables (unless otherwise indicated) are based on the *de facto* population. Illiterate persons may have been to school, but they cannot read and write. Total includes 2 rural females with missing information on age, who are not shown separately.

¹In this report, 'primary school complete' means 5–7 completed years of education, 'middle school complete' means 8–9 completed years of education, 'high school complete' means 10–11 completed years of education, and 'higher secondary complete and above' means 12 or more completed years of education.

A higher percentage of males than of females have completed each level of schooling. The median number of years of schooling is 6.4 for males and 4.5 for females; however, the education gap between males and females has narrowed considerably over time. For example, the median years of schooling for those age 50 and above is 4.7 for males and zero for women (meaning that the majority have never been to school), while for those age 10–14, the median is 6.2 years for both males and females.

Education levels are much higher in urban areas than in rural areas. The proportion illiterate is about twice as high for rural females (50 percent) and males (25 percent) as for urban females (26 percent) and males (11 percent).

Table 2.7 and Figure 2.2 show school attendance rates for the school-age household population by age, sex, and residence. In Tamil Nadu as a whole, 90 percent of children age 6–14 are attending school, up from 82 percent in NFHS-1. The attendance rate drops off sharply (to 48 percent) at age 15–17. For the age group 6–17, the attendance rate is 83 percent for males, 77 percent for females, and 80 percent for the state as a whole. Overall, attendance rates for males are only slightly higher in urban than in rural areas, whereas attendance rates for females are much higher in urban areas than in rural areas. In urban areas, attendance rates are very similar for both sexes. In rural areas, however, attendance rates are higher for males than females at all ages, and the gap is particularly pronounced at age 15–17. At age 15–17, attendance rates are higher in Chennai than in urban areas as a whole, particularly for males.

Table 2.7 School attendance										
Percentage of the household population age 6–17 years attending school by age, residence, and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999										
Age	Urban	Rural	Total	Chennai						
	MALE									
6–10	96.4	95.5	95.8	96.9						
11–14	87.6	83.3	84.8	85.9						
15–17	55.6	52.8	53.7	67.0						
6–14	92.4	90.2	90.9	91.8						
6–17	84.4	81.6	82.6	85.6						
		FEMALI	E							
6–10	98.0	94.5	95.6	96.0						
11–14	87.1	76.3	79.6	87.0						
15–17	57.9	35.5	42.4	61.0						
6–14	93.4	86.3	88.5	92.0						
6–17	84.7	73.3	76.9	84.4						
		TOTAL								
6–10	97.1	95.0	95.7	96.5						
11–14	87.4	79.8	82.3	86.5						
15–17	56.8	43.6	47.8	64.0						
6–14	92.8	88.2	89.8	91.9						
6–17	84.5	77.4	79.7	85.0						



Table 2.8 shows reasons for children never attending school or not currently attending school (for those who have dropped out of school), as reported by the respondent to the Household Questionnaire. For boys, by far the main reason for never attending school is a lack of interest in studies, while for girls, the main reasons for never attending school are that they are required for household work, that they are not interested in studying, that they are required to care for siblings, or that education is not considered necessary. For both boys and girls who used to attend school, but have dropped out, the main reason for not currently attending school is that the child is not interested in studies. Other important reasons are that the child is required for outside work or for work on a farm or family business (both of which are cited more often for boys than for girls) and that the child is needed for household work (cited more often for girls than for boys). The high cost of schooling is the third most important reason for dropping out of school for both boys and girls. In Tamil Nadu, the need for children to remain out of school in order to work on a family farm or business, to work outside for payment in cash or kind, or to do household work is mentioned frequently as the main reason for not currently attending school for both boys or girls; more than one-fourth of boys and girls are not currently attending school because of these work-related reasons. Some girls are not in school because they got married, but this is cited as the main reason for not currently attending school for only 7 percent of girls who have dropped out of school. Another reason mentioned more often for girls than for boysespecially as a reason for never attending school—is that education is not considered necessary.

Table 2.8 Reasons for children not attending school

Percent distribution of children age 6–17 years who never attended school by the main reason for never attending school and percent distribution of children age 6–17 years who have dropped out of school by the main reason for not currently attending school, according to residence and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

	Urban Rural		ural	T	otal	
Reason	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Main reason for never attending school ¹						
School too far away	*	*	(3.0)	1.2	2.2	1.6
Transport not available	*	*	(3.0)	0.0	2.8	0.0
Education not considered necessary	*	*	(9.1)	16.6	7.3	14.8
Required for household work	*	*	(Ò.O)	27.4	6.3	25.5
Required for work on farm/family business	*	*	(0.0)	1.2	0.0	1.1
Required for outside work for payment in			· · · ·			
cash or kind	*	*	(0.0)	2.4	0.0	2.1
Costs too much	*	*	(12.1)	4.7	9.5	6.8
Required for care of siblings	*	*	(3.1)	16.7	2.3	14.9
Not interested in studies	*	*	(42.4)	19.0	44.9	19.2
Other	*	*	(27.3)	10.8	24.8	13.4
Don't know/missing	*	*	(0.0)	0.0	0.0	0.5
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of children	14	12	40	101	54	113
Main reason for not currently attending school ²						
School too far away	0.0	0.0	0.5	1 1	0.3	0.8
Transport not available	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
Further education not considered necessary	0.0	2.9	0.5	1.1	0.3	1.5
Required for household work	3.4	12.0	3.5	18.9	3.5	17.3
Required for work on farm/family business	1.6	21	9.0	4.0	6.7	3.6
Required for outside work for payment in			0.0		•	0.0
cash or kind	16.5	53	19.0	62	18.2	6.0
Costs too much	11.9	21.6	7.0	11.3	8.5	13.6
No proper school facilities for girls	0.0	4.6	0.0	2.9	0.0	3.3
Required for care of siblings	0.0	23	0.5	1.5	0.3	17
Not interested in studies	44.4	25.9	46.0	32.0	45.5	30.6
Repeated failures	7.5	7.9	6.0	4 4	6.5	52
Got married	0.3	4 1	0.0	73	0.1	6.6
Other	2.4	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.1	3.6
Don't know/missing	12.1	7.6	4.5	4.7	6.9	5.4
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of children	110	98	241	331	351	429
¹ For children who never attended school ² For children who have dropped out of school						

() Based on 25-49 unweighted cases

*Percentage not shown; based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases

2.5 **Housing Characteristics**

Table 2.9 provides information on housing characteristics by residence and region. Seventy-nine percent of households in Tamil Nadu have electricity (up from 64 percent in NFHS-1). The proportion of households with electricity is 91 percent in urban areas and 73 percent in rural areas. Ninety percent of households in Chennai have electricity.

Table 2.9 Housing characteristics									
Percent distribution of households by housing c	haracteristics, a	according to re	sidence, Tam	il Nadu, 1999					
Housing characteristic	Urban	Rural	Total	Chennai					
Electricity									
Yes	91.1	72.5	78.8	89.6					
No Total paragent	8.9	27.5	21.2	10.4					
rotal percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Source of drinking water	73 1	64.8	67.6	63.3					
Hand pump	15.5	18.4	17.4	30.6					
Well water	6.9	13.3	11.2	3.5					
Surface water	2.1	3.3	2.9	0.0					
Other	2.4	0.2	1.0	2.5					
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Time to get drinking water									
Percentage < 15 minutes	76.7	64.5	68.7	81.6					
Median time (minutes)	4.3	9.4	9.2	0.0					
Method of drinking water purification ¹									
Strains water by cloth	13.4	6.9	9.1	14.7					
Uses alum	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.2					
Dies water filter	11.9	1.0	5.1 15 1	15.1					
Llses electronic purifier	20.5	0.2	0.3	3.0					
Uses other method	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.5					
Does not purify water	54.4	84.5	74.3	42.8					
Sanitation facility									
Flush toilet	71 0	12.6	32.8	89.1					
Pit toilet/latrine	28	0.3	12	1.6					
Other	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0					
No facility	25.3	86.9	65.9	9.3					
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Main type of fuel used for cooking									
Wood	28.1	84.2	65.1	5.7					
Crop residues	0.2	2.1	1.4	0.0					
Dung cakes	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1					
Coal/coke/lignite/charcoal	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.2					
Kerosene	37.5	6.9	17.3	54.0					
Liquid petroleum das	0.1	0.0	0.0 15 3	0.3					
Biogas	0.4	0.2	0.4	1.3					
Other	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.9					
Missing	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.0					
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Type of house									
Kachha	16.7	42.8	33.9	9.3					
Semi- <i>pucca</i>	38.6	38.3	38.4	32.8					
Pucca	44.6	18.8	27.6	57.5					
Missing Total paraant	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.5					
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Persons per room	70.0	74 4	70.0	60.0					
	10.0 16 5	/1.4	13.2	09.9					
5-6	57	20.0 6 Q	6.5	8.8					
7+	1.0	17	14	1.1					
Don't/missing	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4					
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0					
Mean number of persons per room	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.3					
Number of households	1,797	3,484	5,281	347					
¹ Totals add to more than 100.0 because housel	holds may use i	more than one	method of pu	rification.					

Water sources and sanitation facilities may have an important influence on the health of household members, especially children. NFHS-1 and NFHS-2 included questions on sources of drinking water and types of sanitation facilities. NFHS-2 found that 68 percent of households use piped drinking water (up sharply from 51 percent in NFHS-1), while 17 percent drink water from hand pumps, and 11 percent drink water from wells. As in the case of electricity, there are urban-rural differences in sources of drinking water. The proportion of households with piped drinking water is 73 percent in urban areas and 65 percent in rural areas. Piped water is somewhat less common for households in Chennai than for urban households either have a source of drinking water in their residence/yard or take less than 15 minutes to get drinking water, including the time to go to the source, get water, and come back. About one-quarter of households purify their drinking water (46 percent in urban areas and 16 percent in rural areas). About 3 in 5 households in Chennai use some method for purifying their drinking water. The most popular methods of water purification are boiling water and straining water through a cloth.

Regarding sanitation facilities, only one-third of households have a flush toilet (using either piped water or water from a bucket for flushing), up from 26 percent in NFHS-1; only 1 percent have a pit toilet or latrine; and 66 percent have no facility. Again there are large urbanrural differences: 72 percent of urban households have a flush toilet, compared to only 13 percent of rural households. Eighty-nine percent of households in Chennai have flush toilets. The prevalence of pit toilets and other types of toilets is very limited, so that almost all households that do not have flush toilets have no toilet facilities at all.

Several types of fuel are used for cooking in Tamil Nadu, with wood as the most common type. In the state as a whole, 65 percent of households rely mainly on wood, 17 percent on kerosene, and 15 percent on liquid petroleum gas. Again there are large urban-rural differences. Urban households are more likely to use kerosene (38 percent) or liquid petroleum gas (33 percent) than wood (28 percent), while rural households rely much more heavily on wood (84 percent). Households in Chennai are more likely than urban households as a whole to use kerosene and liquid petroleum gas.

Regarding type of house construction, 34 percent of households live in houses that are *kachha* (made with mud, thatch, or other low-quality materials—down from 37 percent in NFHS-1), 38 percent live in semi-*pucca* houses (using partly low-quality and partly high-quality materials), and 28 percent live in *pucca* houses (made with high-quality materials throughout, including the roof, walls, and floor). Forty-five percent of urban households and 58 percent in Chennai live in *pucca* houses, compared with 19 percent of rural households.

Crowded housing conditions may affect health as well as the quality of life. Twentyseven percent of households in Tamil Nadu live in houses with three or more persons per room. The mean number of persons per room is 2.2 (down from 2.5 in NFHS-1). The mean number of persons per room does not vary much by residence.

Table 2.10 shows a number of measures related to the socioeconomic status of the household (ownership of land, house, and livestock). Overall, 70 percent of households do not own any agricultural land, almost the same percentage as in NFHS-1. As expected, ownership of agricultural land is lower among urban than rural households; 90 percent of urban households do not own any agricultural land, compared with 60 percent of rural households. In rural areas,

|--|

Percent distribution of households owning agricultural land and percentage owning a house and livestock by residence, Tamil Nadu, 1999

Asset	Urban	Rural	Total	Chennai
No agricultural land	00.3	50.0	70.3	07 7
No agriculturar land	90.5	59.9	70.5	57.7
Irrigated land only				
< 1 acre	0.8	5.0	3.6	0.0
1–5 acres	4.6	18.3	13.7	0.6
6+ acres	1.0	2.3	1.9	0.4
Nonirrigated land only				
< 1 acre	0.7	2.4	1.8	0.0
1–5 acres	1.8	6.7	5.0	0.4
6+ acres	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
Both irrigated and				
nonirrigated land				
< 1 acre	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0
1–5 acres	0.1	2.9	2.0	0.1
6+ acres	0.3	1.6	1.2	0.2
Missing	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percentage owning a house	62.1	91.8	81.7	55.7
Percentage owning livestock	6.3	35.9	25.9	1.1
Number of households	1,797	3,484	5,281	347

among those who own agricultural land, most (76 percent) have at least some irrigated land. The proportion of households owning a house is 82 percent overall, 62 percent in urban areas, 92 percent in rural areas, and 56 percent in Chennai. Just over one in four households (26 percent) own livestock. The proportion of households owning livestock is 6 percent in urban areas, 36 percent in rural areas, and only 1 percent in Chennai.

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 or important information about health and family welfare; a refrigerator prolongs the wholesomeness of food; and a means of transportation allows greater access to many services outside the local area. Table 2.11 shows that the majority of households in Tamil Nadu have a clock or watch (79 percent), an electric fan (55 percent), and a cot or bed (52 percent). Other durable goods often found in households are radios/transistors (50 percent), chairs (50 percent), bicycles (48 percent), tables (32 percent), black and white televisions (26 percent), pressure cookers (23 percent), and mattresses (21 percent), with smaller proportions owning mopeds, scooters, or motocycles (14 percent), colour televisions (12 percent), sewing machines (10 percent), telephones or refrigerators (7 percent each), water pumps (6 percent), bullock carts (2 percent), and cars or tractors (1 percent each). Urban households are much more likely than rural households to own most of these durable goods. However, a higher proportion of households in rural areas than in urban areas own a bullock cart, a thresher, or a tractor, all of which are used mainly for cultivation. Fifty-nine percent of households use mainly aluminium kitchenware and almost all of the rest use stainless

Table 2.11 Household ownership of durable goods and standard of living

Percentage of households owning selected durable goods and percent distribution of households by type of kitchenware and the standard of living index, according to residence, Tamil Nadu, 1999

Asset	Urban	Rural	Total	Chennai
Durable goods				
Mattress	36.5	13.5	21.3	42.9
Pressure cooker	45.2	11.2	22.7	49.4
Chair	69.5	39.6	49.8	73.7
Cot/bed	63.9	45.6	51.8	65.8
Table	52.6	20.6	31.5	61.6
Clock/watch	91.9	71.6	78.5	90.9
Electric fan	80.4	42.5	55.4	83.6
Bicycle	51.6	46.6	48.3	47.0
Radio/transistor	60.7	40.0	49.9	57.8
Sewing machine	17.3	5.6	9.6	15.3
Telephone	14.5	33	7 1	10.0
Refrigerator	14.0	2.4	6.7	23.4
Television (black and white)	30.2	18.6	25.6	20.4 /1 /
Television (colour)	25.4	5.4	12.0	32.6
Moned/scooter/motorcycle	20.4	0.4	13.7	23.2
Car	21.3	0.5	1 1	5.2
Water nump	11.0	3.7	6.2	10.8
Rullock cart	0.5	2.5	1.2	10.0
Threader	0.5	2.5	1.0	0.0
Tractor	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Nana of the above	0.1	1.0	0.7 10 F	0.0
	3.0	14.0	10.5	4.5
Main type of kitchenware used				
Clay	0.3	0.9	0.7	0.5
Aluminium	44.2	66.3	58.8	27.7
Cast iron	0.4	0.0	0.2	0.0
Brass/copper	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3
Stainless steel	54.8	32.6	40.2	71.5
Don't know/missing	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Ũ				
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Standard of living index				
Low	23.1	51.0	41.5	18.4
Medium	51.1	40.3	44.0	51.5
High	24.6	7.7	13.5	28.4
Missing	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.7
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	1,797	3,484	5,281	347

steel kitchenware. Aluminium kitchenware is more popular in rural areas (66 percent) than in urban areas (44 percent), whereas stainless steel kitchenware is more popular in urban areas (55 percent) than in rural areas (33 percent). Stainless steel kitchenware is used by the vast majority of households in Chennai (72 percent).

Table 2.11 shows a summary household measure called the standard of living index (SLI), which is calculated by adding the following scores:

House type: 4 for pucca, 2 for semi-pucca, 0 for kachha;

Toilet facility: 4 for own flush toilet, 2 for public or shared flush toilet or own pit toilet, 1 for shared or public pit toilet, 0 for no facility;

Source of lighting: 2 for electricity, 1 for kerosene, gas, or oil, 0 for other source of lighting;

Main fuel for cooking: 2 for electricity, liquid petroleum gas, or biogas, 1 for coal, charcoal, or kerosene, 0 for other fuel;

Source of drinking water: 2 for pipe, hand pump, or well in residence/yard/plot, 1 for public tap, hand pump, or well, 0 for other water source;

Separate room for cooking: 1 for yes, 0 for no;

Ownership of house: 2 for yes, 0 for no;

Ownership of agricultural land: 4 for 5 acres or more, 3 for 2.0–4.9 acres, 2 for less than 2 acres or acreage not known, 0 for no agricultural land;

Ownership of irrigated land: 2 if owns at least some irrigated land, 0 for no irrigated land;

Ownership of livestock: 2 if owns livestock, 0 if does not own livestock;

Ownership of durable goods: 4 each for a car or tractor, 3 each for a moped/scooter/motorcycle, telephone, refrigerator, or colour television, 2 each for a bicycle, electric fan, radio/transistor, sewing machine, black and white television, water pump, bullock cart, or thresher, 1 each for a mattress, pressure cooker, chair, cot/bed, table, or clock/watch.

Index scores range from 0–14 for a low SLI to 15–24 for a medium SLI to 25–67 for a high SLI. By this measure, 42 percent of households in Tamil Nadu have a low standard of living, 44 percent have a medium standard of living, and 14 percent have a high standard of living. The proportion with a low standard of living is much lower in urban areas (23 percent) than in rural areas (51 percent), and the proportion with a high standard of living is much higher in urban areas (25 percent) than in rural areas (8 percent). The proportion of households with a high standard of living is slightly higher in Chennai (28 percent) than in urban areas of the state as a whole (25 percent).

2.6 Lifestyle Indicators

The NFHS-2 Household Questionnaire asked about certain aspects of the lifestyle of household members. Table 2.12 shows the percentages of men and women age 15 and above who chew *paan masala* or tobacco, drink alcohol, or smoke. These lifestyle indicators are of considerable interest because the use of *paan masala*, tobacco, and alcohol all have detrimental effects on health.

The respondent to the Household Questionnaire reported on these lifestyle indicators for all persons in the household and, therefore, the results should be interpreted with caution because the household respondent may not be aware of use that takes place outside the household environs. In addition, to the extent that social stigma may be attached to the use of some of the substances, underreporting is likely.

Table 2.12 Lifestyle indicators

Percentage of usual household members age 15 and above who chew *paan masala* or tobacco, drink alcohol, currently smoke, or have ever smoked by selected background characteristics and sex, Tamil Nadu, 1999

Background characteristic	Chew paan masala or tobacco	Drink alcohol	Currently smoke	Ever smoked ¹	Number of household members	
Age						
15–19	2.1	0.5	3.2	3.5	1,053	
20–24	6.9	8.2	11.8	12.3	906	
25–29	8.6	19.8	26.6	29.0	1,028	
30–39	10.9	26.6	35.3	38.4	1,693	
40-49 50-59	14.0	30.3	40.0 37.8	43.4	1,231	
60+	27.9	21.6	27.0	31.2	1,063	
Residence						
Urban	6.4	16.4	24.7	27.6	2,743	
Rural	16.5	22.7	28.3	31.0	5,009	
Chennai	8.7	19.3	25.2	27.2	560	
Education	04.7	24 5	20.0	40.7	4.045	
liliterate	24.7	34.5	38.9	42.7	1,815	
Middle school complete	7.3	15.5	20.3	20.2 22.1	2,202	
High school complete and above	4.3	9.4	14.8	16.3	2,312	
Standard of living index	00 F	00.4	00.0		0.044	
LOW	20.5	29.1	30.8	39.5	2,614	
High	4.5	7.1	13.5	15.7	1,307	
Total	13.0	20.5	27.0	29.8	7 752	
10141			21.0	20.0	1,152	
FEMALE						
Age 15 10	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.060	
20–24	17	0.0	0.0	0.0	1,000	
25–29	3.6	0.1	0.0	0.0	1,041	
30–39	7.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	1,615	
40-49	18.1	0.6	0.9	0.9	1,189	
50–59	21.0	1.1	0.9	1.1	968	
60+	20.8	1.3	0.5	0.5	1,057	
Residence					0.045	
Urban	4.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	2,815	
Rurai	14.5	0.0	0.4	0.4	5,249	
Chennai	3.7	0.5	0.4	0.4	528	
Education						
Illiterate	20.2	0.9	0.6	0.6	3,972	
Literate, < middle school complete	4.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	1,680	
High school complete and above	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2	1,353	
Standard of living index						
Low	17.5	0.9	0.4	0.4	3,017	
Medium	8.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	3,650	
High	3.6	0.2	0.1	0.1	1,319	
Total	11.0	0.5	0.4	0.4	8,064	
Total male and female	11.9	10.3	13.4	14.8	15,816	

Note: Total includes 2 males and 6 females with missing information on education and 92 males and 78 females with missing information on the standard of living index, who are not shown separately. ¹Includes household members who currently smoke

Twelve percent of persons age 15 and above are reported to chew *paan masala* or tobacco. This proportion rises steadily with age from 2 percent of men and less than 1 percent for women at age 15–19 to 28 percent of men and 27 percent of women at age 60 and above. Chewing of *paan masala* or tobacco is more common in rural areas than in urban areas. It is inversely related to both education and the standard of living.

Twenty-one percent of men age 15 and above drink alcohol, compared with only a negligible proportion of women (less than 1 percent). The proportion of men who drink alcohol rises with age up to age 50–59, where it reaches a high of 33 percent, then falls to 22 percent among those age 60 and above. The proportion of men who drink is higher in rural areas (23 percent) than in urban areas (16 percent). Alcohol consumption is higher among illiterate men than among literate men. Men in households with a low standard of living are four times as likely to drink alcohol as men in households with a high standard of living.

Among men age 15 and above, 27 percent currently smoke. This proportion rises from 3 percent at age 15–19 to 41 percent at age 40–49 and then falls to 27 percent at age 60 and above. Smoking among men is slightly more common in rural areas (28 percent) than urban areas (25 percent). Smoking is more than twice as high among illiterate men as among men who have completed at least high school, and is almost three times higher among men with a low standard of living than among men with a high standard of living. Ninety-one percent of men who ever smoked were still smokers at the time of the survey. The pattern of differentials for ever-smokers closely resembles the pattern for current smokers. Less than 1 percent of women are reported to have ever smoked.

2.7 Availability of Facilities and Services to the Rural Population

The NFHS-2 Village Questionnaire collected information from the *sarpanch* (village head), other village officials, or other knowledgeable persons in the village on facilities and services in the village. One important set of questions was on the distance of the village from various types of health facilities, including Primary Health Centres (PHCs), sub-centres, hospitals, and dispensaries or clinics. Table 2.13 summarizes findings on distance from a health facility. The unit of analysis is ever-married women age 15–49 who reside in rural areas.

Only 15 percent of rural women live in a village with a Primary Health Centre, 42 percent live in a village with a sub-centre, and 49 percent live in a village with either a PHC or a sub-centre. The proportions who live in a village with other health facilities are 12 percent for hospitals and 22 percent for dispensaries or clinics. Fifty-six percent of women live in a village that has some kind of health facility. Median distances from particular health facilities are 5.7 km from a Primary Health Centre, 3.4 km from a hospital, and 3.5 km from a dispensary or a clinic. Five percent of rural women need to travel at least 5 kilometres to reach the nearest health facility.

Table 2.14 shows the proportion of residents of rural areas of Tamil Nadu who live in villages that have various facilities and services. Sixty-seven percent of rural residents live in villages that have a primary school, 38 percent live in villages with a middle school, 29 percent live in villages that have a secondary school, and 21 percent live in villages with a higher

Table 2.13 Distance from the nearest health facility

Percent distribution of ever-married rural women age 15–49 by distance from the nearest health facility, Tamil Nadu, 1999

	Health facility					
Distance	Primary Health Centre	Sub- centre	Either PHC or sub-centre	Hospital ¹	Dispensary/ clinic	Any health facility
Within village	14 5	41.6	40.2	11.0	22.2	FC 4
within vinage	14.5	41.0	49.2	11.9	22.3	50.4
< 5 km	28.1	44.2	42.2	46.3	39.5	38.5
5–9 km	33.7	8.8	6.7	23.4	21.8	5.1
10+ km	21.5	0.0	1.9	18.4	16.4	0.0
Don't know/missing	2.1	5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Median distance	5.7	0.0	0.0	3.4	3.5	0.0
	F 1					a second and

Note: The category '< 5 km' excludes cases where the facility is within the village. When median distance is calculated, 'within village' cases and cases with a facility less than 1 km from the village are assigned a distance of zero.

PHC: Primary Health Centre

¹Includes community health centre, rural hospital, government hospital, and private hospital

secondary school. Sixty-four percent of rural residents live in villages that have an *anganwadi*² (a nursery school for children age 3–6) and 17 percent live in villages with an adult education centre. More than one-quarter of rural residents live in villages that have a private doctor, 17 percent live in villages with a visiting doctor, and 30 percent live in villages with a mobile health unit. Almost 100 percent live in villages that are at least partly electrified.

Although only 16 percent live in villages with an STD booth (for long distance telephoning within India), 77 percent live in villages that have at least one household with a private telephone. Seventy-three percent of rural residents live in villages that have cable television service (compared with 28 percent nationwide) and 87 percent live in villages that have a community television set, providing further evidence of the wide exposure to electronic mass media in rural Tamil Nadu. Forty-nine percent of rural residents live in villages with a *mahila mandal*, a women's community group. Other facilities that are available in villages where more than half of rural residents live are fair price shops, *paan* shops, and youth clubs. The most widely available rural development programmes as reported by the respondents to the Village Questionnaire are the Integrated Rural Development Programme, the Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment programme, and the Indira Awas Yojana.

 $^{^{2}}Anganwadi$ workers provide integrated child development services and may also engage in the promotion of family planning.

Table 2.14 Availability of facilities and services

Percentage of rural residents living in villages that have selected facilities and services, Tamil Nadu, 1999

Facility/service	Percentage of residents	Facility/service	Percentage of residents		
Primary school	67.3	At least one village household has a telephone	77.0		
Middle school	38.3	Mill/small-scale industry	28.4		
Secondary school	28.9	Credit cooperative society	14.0		
Higher secondary school	21.3	Agricultural cooperative society	34.0		
College	0.0	Fishermen's cooperative society	2.4		
		Milk cooperative society	32.0		
Anganwadi	63.6	Kirana/general market shop	31.0		
Adult education centre	16.6	Weekly market	14.7		
		Fair price shop	78.0		
Primary Health Centre	13.7	Paan shop	94.4		
Sub-centre	42.0	Pharmacy/medical shop	24.9		
Hospital ¹	11.7	Mahila mandal	49.3		
Dispensary/clinic	21.3	Youth club	55.9		
		Community centre	38.9		
Private doctor	26.6	Community television set	87.1		
Visiting doctor	16.5	Cable connection	72.6		
Village health guide	1.1				
Traditional birth attendant	65.0	Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP)	87.5		
Mobile health unit	30.0	National Rural Employment Programme (NREP)	3.9		
		Training Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM)	33.2		
Electricity	98.6	Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS)	3.2		
Bank	27.8	Development of Women and Children of Rural Areas (DWACRA)	11.5		
Post office	54.3	Indira Awas Yojana (IAY)	30.6		
Telegraph office	19.8	Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana (SGNY)	1.3		
STD (Subscriber Trunk					
Dialling) phone booth	16.2	Total population	14,527		
Note: Table is based on the <i>de jure</i> population. ¹ Includes community health centre, rural hospital, government hospital, and private hospital					