

Data from the National Family Health Survey 2015-16 (NFHS-4) on a wide range of topics such as school attendance, reproductive and child health, water and sanitation, nutrition, lifestyle and employment, published recently by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, provide a snapshot of the state of the country's health and the state of social progress.

Statistics pertaining to demographic distribution according to prosperity show that the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes continue to be largely impoverished, with 26.6 per cent of the former and a whopping 45.9 per cent of the latter in the lowest wealth quintile, and only 10.9 per cent of the former and 5.5 per cent of the latter in the highest quintile. Other Backward Classes are evenly distributed among the quintiles, while some 57 per cent of all members of Other Classes are in the top two quintiles.

A survey of household possessions showed that 96.1 per cent of urban and 87.3 per cent of rural households had at least one mobile phone, testimony to the near-universal penetration of the cell phone. However, barely 20 per cent of urban and less than 6 per cent of rural households had Internet access. Also, less than 30 per cent of all households had at least one member covered by some kind of health insurance.

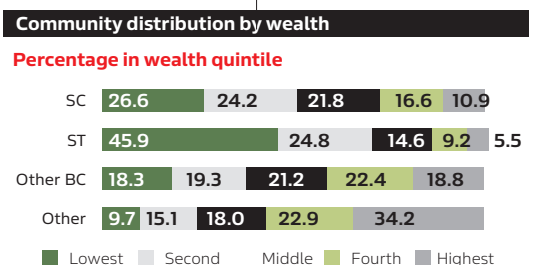
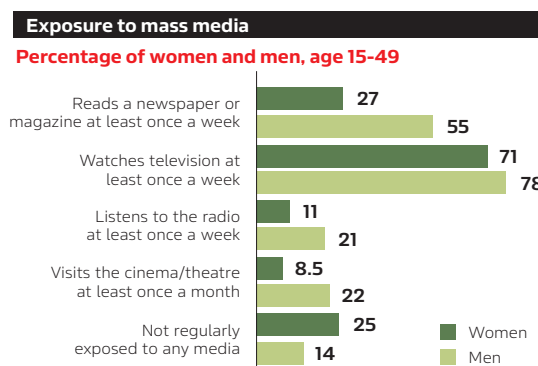
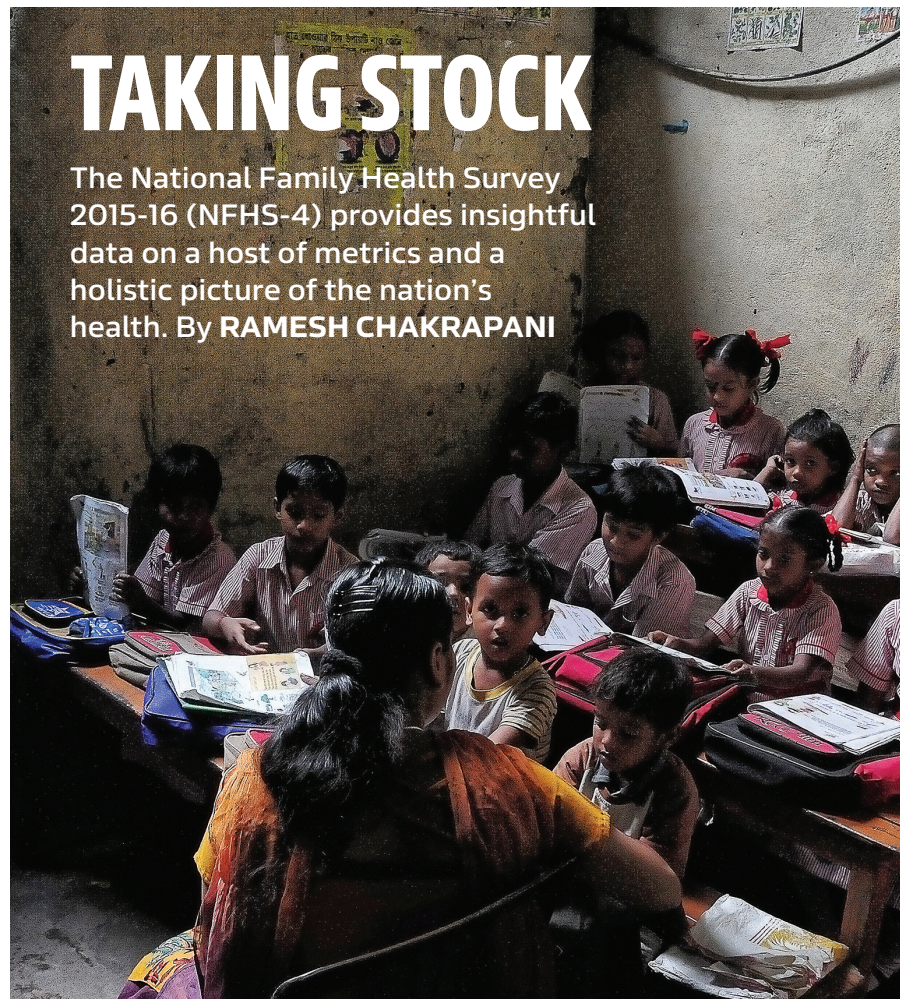
The report also contains insightful data on school attendance ratios and the reasons why children are dropping out in urban and rural areas.

More than 60 per cent of the urban and rural male dropouts were due to either high cost or a lack of interest in studies; among urban and rural girls, lack of interest was much lower but reasons such as being needed for domestic work or getting married were significant.

PART 1 OF A SERIES

TAKING STOCK

The National Family Health Survey 2015-16 (NFHS-4) provides insightful data on a host of metrics and a holistic picture of the nation's health. By RAMESH CHAKRAPANI

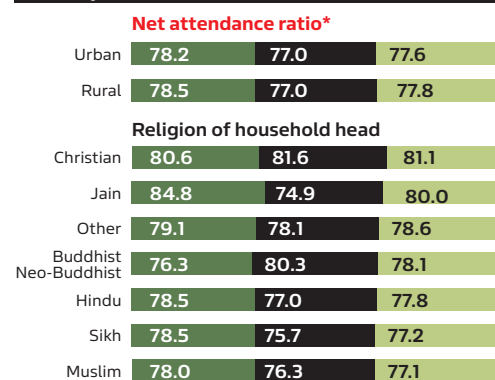


Household composition

Percentage of population

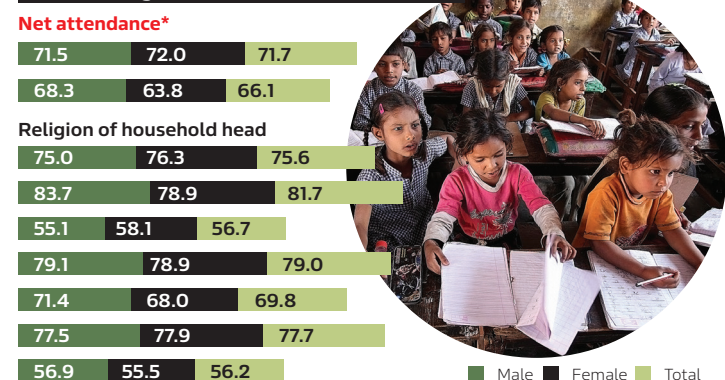
Headship	Urban	Rural	All-India
Male	85.9	85.1	85.4
Female	14.1	14.9	14.6
Number of usual members	Urban	Rural	All-India
1	4.4	3.9	4.1
2	12.1	11.2	11.5
3	18.0	14.6	15.8
4	26.1	21.9	23.3
5	17.4	18.7	18.3
6	10.4	13.0	12.1
7	4.9	7.3	6.4
8	2.7	3.9	3.5
9+	4.0	5.4	4.9
Mean household size	4.3	4.7	4.6
Household structure	Urban	Rural	All-India
Nuclear	61.0	56.2	57.9
Non-nuclear	39.0	43.8	42.1

Primary school attendance ratios



*Percentage of children aged 6-10 that is attending primary school

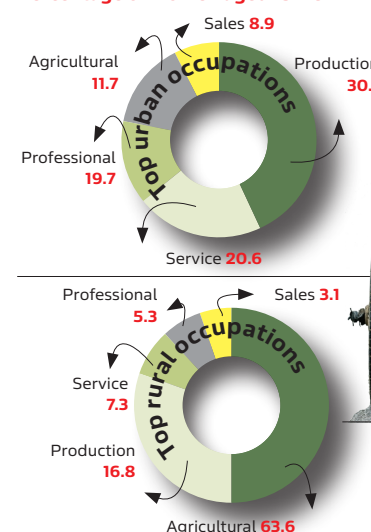
Middle to higher sec. school attendance ratios



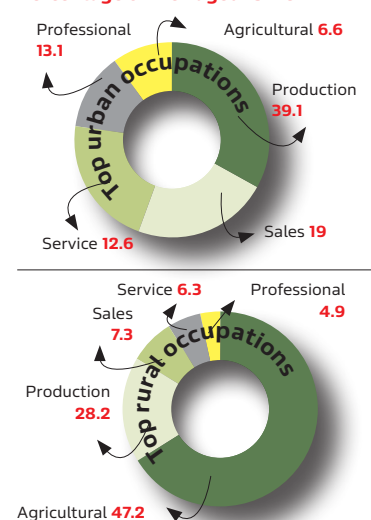
*Percentage of children aged 11-17 that is attending middle to higher sec. school

Employment distribution (top occupations)

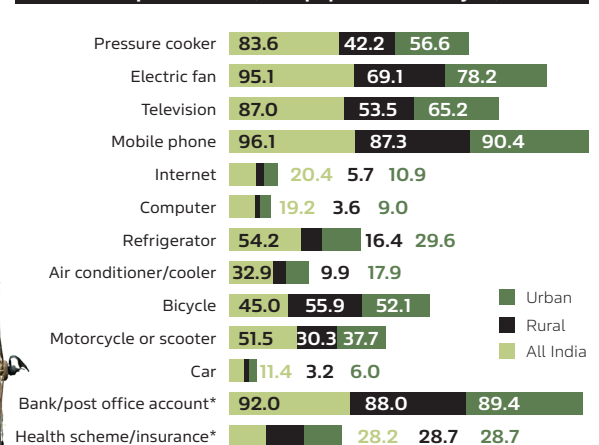
Percentage of women aged 15-49



Percentage of men aged 15-49

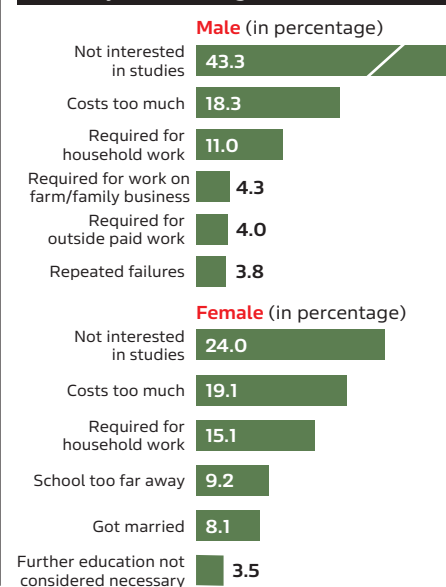


Household possessions (% of population surveyed)



* Held by any member of family

Top reasons for rural children currently not attending school



Top reasons for urban children currently not attending school

