Religions and Development, India

Working Paper Series, Volume 02, Number 01

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Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, and Religions and Development Research Programme

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Working Paper Series Indian Institute of Dalit Studies New Delhi 2011

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1. Introduction

The objective of this paper is to look at various religious groups across India and observe the level of development that each group has reached. The intention is to compare and contrast the differences in the level and nature of development, across different religious groups. Subsequently, an attempt is made to explain why these differences exist and what are the possible factors that might be influencing group-specific levels of well-being. An attempt is also made to look at how religion might be instrumental, if at all, in deciding the well-being of people or, as economists would like to say, the standard of living. To measure the wellbeing, a set of few economic, social and health variables have been chosen as indicators and the corresponding data has been compared across religions.

The paper begins with an observation and comparison of group demographics and composition, such as aggregate population, male-female ratio, rural-urban break-up, literacy level, etc., and follows by examining the economic characteristic of groups, such as poverty level, employment rate, workforce participation rate and land ownership patterns amongst others. Finally, the health status of women and children across religious groups based on a wide range of health indicators is presented.

2. Demographic and Group Characteristics

2.1. Population

According to rural-urban and male-female population break-ups across religious communities in India, based on the 2001 census data, the Hindus are clearly the

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dominant community, constituting over 80 per cent of rural and 75 per cent of urban population and, therefore, making up 80.46 per cent of overall population of India. The Muslims are the next dominant group at 13 per cent, 11 per cent in rural and 17 per cent in urban India. The incidence of Hindus in urban areas is lower than that in the rural areas, while that of the Muslims is higher in the urban areas. The Sikhs at 1.87 per cent and the Christians at 2.3 per cent are equally placed in both rural and urban areas. The Buddhists at 0.77 per cent are slightly more prevalent in urban than in rural areas. Same is the case with the Jains.

Table: 1.: Population across Religious Groups,Rural-Urban, Male-Female

| Religious Communities | Residence | Person % | Male % | Female % |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|
| Hindus | Total | 80.46 | 80.55 | 80.35 |
| Muslims | Total | 13.43 | 13.41 | 13.46 |
| Christians | Total | 2.34 | 2.25 | 2.44 |
| Sikhs | Total | 1.87 | 1.91 | 1.83 |
| Buddhists | Total | 0.77 | 0.77 | 0.78 |
| Jains | Total | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 |
| Others | Total | 0.65 | 0.63 | 0.67 |
| Religion not stated | Total | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |
| Religious communities | Residence | Person % | Male % | Female % |
| Hindus | Rural | 82.33 | 82.40 | 82.25 |
| Muslims | Rural | 11.96 | 11.92 | 12.00 |
| Christians | Rural | 2.14 | 2.08 | 2.20 |
| Sikhs | Rural | 1.90 | 1.95 | 1.85 |
| Buddhists | Rural | 0.66 | 0.65 | 0.66 |
| Jains | Rural | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 |
| Others | Rural | 0.81 | 0.79 | 0.83 |
| Religion not stated | Rural | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |
| Religious communities | Residence | Person % | Male % | Female % |
| Hindus | Urban | 75.60 | 75.88 | 75.30 |
| Muslims | Urban | 17.26 | 17.20 | 17.33 |
| Christians | Urban | 2.86 | 2.68 | 3.06 |
| Sikhs | Urban | 1.79 | 1.80 | 1.77 |
| Buddhists | Urban | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.10 |
| Jains | Urban | 1.12 | 1.10 | 1.15 |
| Others | Urban | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.23 |
| Religion not stated | Urban | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |

Across the top five religious groups, the distribution of the male and female population corresponds more or less to the overall population distribution, across both rural and urban areas. Table 1 shows the absolute number of males and females falling within each religious group. This shows that even the religious minority groups are large enough and are sizable in their own right.

| Religious | ligious Rural | | Urb | an | Total | | |
|------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| ties | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| Hindus | 314767333.00 | 298807825.00 | 101487198.00 | 91403149.00 | 416254531.00 | 390210974.00 | |
| Muslims | 42213658.00 | 41242227.00 | 21238197.00 | 19532451.00 | 63451855.00 | 60774678.00 | |
| Christians | 7155423.00 | 7438422.00 | 2860791.00 | 3076122.00 | 10016214.00 | 10514544.00 | |
| Sikhs | 7469927.00 | 6782792.00 | 2203618.00 | 1969663.00 | 9673545.00 | 8752455.00 | |
| Jains | 332416.00 | 334458.00 | 1092354.00 | 998139.00 | 1424770.00 | 1332597.00 | |
| Buddhists | 2086166.00 | 1862437.00 | 1144056.00 | 1157972.00 | 3230222.00 | 3020409.00 | |
| Others | 1212530.00 | 1271548.00 | 104146.00 | 122140.00 | 1316676.00 | 1393688.00 | |
| Total | 375267114.00 | 357768803.00 | 130192945.00 | 118332021.00 | 505460059.00 | 476100824.00 | |

Table: 2: Populations Count across Religious Groups by Sex, 2004/05

2.2. Literacy

Table 3 looks at the literacy rates among the various religious communities in India and shows the rural-urban and male-female break-up in terms of overall literacy. A discussion of the trends in literacy as revealed by this data follows below.

| kurai-Urban and Male-Female: | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|--|--|--|--|
| Religious (Total) Communities | Person | Male | Female | | | | |
| Hindus | 54.92 | 64.22 | 44.92 | | | | |
| Muslims | 48.05 | 54.99 | 40.63 | | | | |
| Christians | 69.45 | 72.76 | 66.17 | | | | |
| Sikhs | 60.56 | 65.03 | 55.56 | | | | |
| Buddhists | 62.16 | 71.05 | 52.83 | | | | |
| Jains | 84.09 | 86.67 | 81.35 | | | | |
| Others | 38.57 | 49.78 | 27.27 | | | | |
| Religion not stated | 52.09 | 60.58 | 42.66 | | | | |
| All Religions | 54.51 | 63.24 | 45.15 | | | | |

Table 3: Literacy Rates among Religious Communities in India: Rural-Urban and Male-Female:

| Rural | Person | Male | Female |
|---------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| Hindus | 49.17 | 59.58 | 38.15 |
| Muslims | 42.08 | 49.75 | 34.03 |
| Christians | 63.66 | 67.66 | 59.67 |
| Sikhs | 55.62 | 60.63 | 50.02 |
| Buddhists | 56.73 | 66.72 | 46.30 |
| Jains | 77.41 | 82.99 | 71.45 |
| Others | 35.78 | 47.37 | 24.14 |
| Religion not stated | 47.65 | 57.18 | 37.23 |
| All Religions | 48.74 | 58.58 | 38.33 |
| Urban | Person | Male | Female |
| Hindus | 71.15 | 76.97 | 64.63 |
| Muslims | 58.77 | 64.18 | 52.81 |
| Christians | 80.70 | 82.80 | 78.65 |
| Sikhs | 74.20 | 77.10 | 70.92 |
| Buddhists | 70.84 | 77.92 | 63.34 |
| Jains | 86.19 | 87.83 | 84.45 |
| Others | 64.83 | 72.16 | 57.24 |
| Religion not stated | 63.74 | 69.28 | 57.33 |
| All Religions | 69.49 | 75.04 | 63.32 |

Source: Census of India, 2001

Table.4: Literacy for 7 Years and < 2004/05.

| Religious Communities | Literate | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-------|--|--|
| | Rural | Urban | | |
| Hindus | 61.60 | 84.04 | | |
| Muslims | 60.51 | 73.18 | | |
| Christians | 80.14 | 93.13 | | |
| Sikhs | 67.29 | 87.24 | | |
| Jains | 83.26 | 97.83 | | |
| Buddhists | 74.77 | 85.45 | | |
| Zoroastrians | 57.52 | 94.45 | | |
| Others | 58.79 | 88.52 | | |

Source: NSS, Consumption Expenditure, 61st

Literacy rates based on the Census of India, 2001, for all India, indicate highest literacy levels among the Jains at 84 per cent, who are a very small and extremely

prosperous business community in India. They are followed by the Christians at nearly 70 per cent, who have benefited immensely from Western style missionary schools and colleges and other educational institutions. Next are the Sikhs and the Buddhists at 60 per cent and 62 per cent respectively. The Sikhs generally are a prosperous community, who can provide education to their children if so desired; however, being involved in farming and dairy in rural areas and businesses in urban areas, many of them may choose to simply concentrate on their traditional work. The Buddhists (except for the tribal convert in the northeast), on the other hand, have traditionally been excluded from education and economic ownership of assets of any form. Thus in the post-independent India, education has been their only real source of emancipation and progress. The majority of the Hindus follow next at 54 per cent while the Muslims have the lowest rates at 48 per cent. This could be also because a majority of them are educated at the Madarsas than formal schools.

A similar pattern is observed across the rural landscape. In fact, nearly 75 per cent of the country's population being rural, this obviously affects the overall average which resembles it more closely. The urban story is somewhat different. The Jains again show highest literacy rates and are followed by the Christians. However, it's the prosperous Sikhs in urban areas who marginally outscore the traditionally deprived Buddhists. Even the Hindus outscore them by 1percentage point margin. If we look at the latest estimates of literacy based on the NSSO's Consumption Expenditure Survey (61st round, 2004/2005), though these two data sets are not comparable strictly, we find that the pattern of literacy rates is the same across both data sets, that is the relative ranking of religious groups is the same. Also rates have changed over the intervening five years. Comparing the NSS data for 2004/5 with Census data for 2001, we find literacy rates have risen for the Buddhist and the Muslims by 12 per cent, and the Christians by around 10 per cent. For the Hindus, there is a rise of 7 per cent, with the Jains remaining nearly at the same high. Again one needs to remember here that the rates are not

strictly comparable as the census is a house-to-house survey while the NSS is a sample based one.

2.3. Household Size

A look at the average household size of families across religious communities indicates that there is not much difference in average household size across rural and urban regions. The exception here is the rural Zoroastrians, who being a tiny minority have historically married within their own community as well as families and probably live in large joint families, thus showing a large average of eight members per family. Additionally very few such families would be found in the rural areas, as most are well educated and prefer urban settings, thus increasing the likelihood of a few large families in rural areas. Of the remaining religious groups in rural areas, the Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Buddhists and the others share an average household size of five members. While the Christians and the Jains, who have the highest literacy levels, show the lowest averages.

Table 5: Average Household Size of Different Religious Communitiesas They Vary in Rural and Urban Areas

| Religious Communities | Rural Household Size | Urban Household Size |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Buddhists | 5 | 5 |
| Christians | 4 | 4 |
| Hindus | 5 | 4 |
| Jains | 4 | 5 |
| Muslims | 5 | 5 |
| Others | 5 | 4 |
| Sikhs | 5 | 5 |
| Zoroastrians | 8 | 3 |

Source: NSSO, 61st Consumption Expenditure Round

In urban regions, unlike the rural, the Zoroastrians have the lowest average family size of three members. Next, the Christians with an average of three are joined here by the Hindus and the others. The rest show an average size of five members.

3.. Education - School Attendance (NSS, 61st Round, 2004/2005)

This section deals with the education standards and rate of school enrolment across religious groups. First, we observe school attendance (largely public schools) of boys and girls in the 6-14 age group,, across the religious communities, at all India level. In this group for males as well as females, the Jains register the highest rate of enrolment at nearly 55 per cent and 57 per cent respectively. They are followed by the Christians and the Buddhists. It is interesting to see how minor religious communities are performing better than the religious majors in terms of school attendance. This is most definitely an indication of a progressive mind set and reflects a perception that education is a sure means to prosperity, in the context of their minority status and low bargaining power. Next come the Sikhs and the Hindus. The lowest enrolment rates are seen for the Muslims and the Zoroastrians. Low enrolment rate for the Zoroastrians is surprising as this community is known for being highly educated. However, being a closed community, this could indicate that majority of them obtained education probably at home through private education. Again the Muslims could be choosing Madarsa education[†] that is primarily language (Persian, Urdu, etc.,) and religious studies (the Koran). Female enrolment rates are seen to follow the same religious pattern as that for the male counterparts but are lower across all the groups, except for the Jains, where they enjoy a 3 per cent

[†] Madrasa is an institution of learning, where Islamic sciences including literary and philosophical ones are taught" (Encyclopaedia of Islam - Leiden E.J.Brill). Avowed aim of madrasa education is to inculcate the belief and practice of Islam among its followers and guide them to follow Kuran and traditions of the Prophet. The foundation of Madrasa education is therefore, basically standing on two pillars of Quran (Collection of God's revelations to Prophet Mohammad) and Sunna (Tradition of Prophet Mohammad).

higher enrolment rate. This could be as males are expected to join the family business quite early, while females could go on receiving higher levels of education. For the rest, the difference in enrolment rate between the males and the females range from 3 per cent to 7 per cent.

| between the reals of rule oss furious reals communities | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Religious | Males (6-1 | l4 years) | Females (6 | Females (6-14 years) | | | | |
| Communities | | | | | | | | |
| | Not attending | Attending | Not attending | Attending | | | | |
| Jains | 45.32 | 54.68 | 42.80 | 57.20 | | | | |
| Christians | 47.78 | 52.22 | 52.86 | 47.14 | | | | |
| Buddhists | 50.18 | 49.82 | 53.57 | 46.43 | | | | |
| Sikhs | 52.17 | 47.83 | 55.66 | 44.34 | | | | |
| Hindus | 53.24 | 46.76 | 60.26 | 39.74 | | | | |
| Others | 56.90 | 43.10 | 60.70 | 39.30 | | | | |
| Muslims | 57.73 | 42.27 | 62.48 | 37.52 | | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 58.45 | 41.55 | 65.69 | 34.31 | | | | |

 Table 6: Percentage of School Attendance of Males and Females

 between the Years 6-14 across Various Religious Communities

Source: NSSO, 61st Employment/Unemployment Round

3.1. Percentage of Boys and Girls Enrolled in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education

Moving on to attendance across schooling levels, we find that religious groups which registered low and very low overall enrolment rates above, show the highest rates at the primary level. The enrolment pattern at primary level is exactly the opposite of the enrolment pattern we observed in the table above. The rates vary over a range of 15 per cent, from the lowest to the highest, for the primary level, for the males across groups.

| Religious Communities | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|
| Buddhists | 50.18 | 13.94 | 3.81 |
| Christians | 47.78 | 13.76 | 3.57 |
| Hindus | 53.24 | 9.96 | 2.73 |
| Jains | 45.32 | 12.18 | 8.37 |
| Muslims | 57.73 | 6.81 | 1.64 |
| Others | 56.9 | 6.53 | 2.26 |
| Sikhs | 52.17 | 10.14 | 2.21 |
| Zoroastrians | 58.45 | 19.86 | N.A |

Table 7: Currently Attending School for All Below 30Years, 2004/05 (Males)

Source: NSSO, 61st Employment/Unemployment Round

However, as we move towards the secondary[‡] and tertiary[§] levels, we find that the enrolment rates fall sharply for the Muslims, Hindus and others, which show high primary-level enrolments.. The exception here is the Zoroastrians, who continue to show the highest rates. The rates fall for the remaining groups as well but not as sharply and remain the highest at the secondary level for the Zoroastrians, Buddhist, Christians and the Jains. The Sikhs maintain their relative position. At the tertiary level, the same pattern is observed except that the enrolment rates for the Sikhs and the Muslims move down while those for the Hindus and the others move up. Since the table shows the break-up of the group population across education levels, we can draw the conclusion that attendance falls with a rise in education level for the groups in blue relative to those in yellow, same for the Sikhs.

^{*} Secondary – Secondary, higher secondary, diploma/certificate below graduation

[§] Tertiary – Graduate and above, diploma/certificate above graduation.

| , | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Religious Communities | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary | | | | | | |
| Buddhists | 15.81 | 11.59 | 3.56 | | | | | | |
| Christians | 17.01 | 11.81 | 4.13 | | | | | | |
| Hindus | 19.62 | 7.05 | 1.98 | | | | | | |
| Jains | 21.03 | 16.72 | 4.04 | | | | | | |
| Muslims | 19.88 | 5.46 | 1.09 | | | | | | |
| Others | 18.14 | 6.06 | 1.28 | | | | | | |
| Sikhs | 19.06 | 9.09 | 3.10 | | | | | | |
| Zoroastrians | N.A | 8.27 | 10.24 | | | | | | |

Table 8: Currently Attending School for All Below 30Years. 2004/05 (Females)

Source: NSSO, 61st Employment/Unemployment Round

Unlike the figures for the males, the difference in the primary-level enrolment rates for the female across the groups ranges over just 6 per cent. Enrolment rates of female are quite similar for most groups, namely the Jains, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs and others. At the primary level, the enrolment rate of female is similar to that of males except that the Jain women show high enrolment rates even at the primary level. At secondary level, we see exactly the same pattern as for the males except that the Jain women have displaced their Buddhist counterparts to register highest rates and the Zoroastrians have fallen below the Sikhs. At the tertiary level, we observe the same pattern except the Zoroastrians who show the highest rates again and the Christians replace the Jains. On the whole we observe the same pattern, the minority religious groups are valuing and participating in higher education.

| Religious Communities | Primary | Middle | Secondary & Higher Secondary | Graduate & Above | Diploma/Cert ificate (below graduate) | Diploma/C ertificate (above graduate) |
|--------------------------|---------|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------|--|--|
| Buddhists | 0.02 | 2.11 | 15.00 | 6.63 | 1.20 | 1.37 |
| Christians | 0.21 | 1.22 | 13.47 | 7.24 | 4.28 | 1.05 |
| Hindus | 0.20 | 1.37 | 12.06 | 5.84 | 1.44 | 0.93 |
| Jains | NA | NA | 10.66 | 16.81 | 2.98 | 1.27 |
| Muslims | 0.37 | 1.60 | 9.80 | 3.82 | 0.77 | 0.65 |
| Others | 0.35 | 1.71 | 11.22 | 5.79 | 1.36 | 0.03 |
| Sikhs | 0.25 | 1.33 | 13.15 | 4.34 | 1.65 | 0.85 |
| Zoroastrians | NA | NA | 7.63 | NA | NA | NA |

 Table 9: Percentage of Adults Enrolled in Primary, Secondary, Higher

 Secondary, Graduation and Diploma Education (Males)

Adult education (18 years and above) for the males, shows that nearly 70 per cent (Jains) and as high as 92 per cent (Zoroastrians) are not enrolled for any form of learning and can be assumed to be engaged in income generating activities. Looking at the major religious groups, we find that the Hindus have low levels of primary education. As the levels rise, they show an improvement of one position up and maintain that steadily across all the levels. The Muslims do well in the beginning, by registering the highest enrolment rate at the primary level and the third highest at the middle. However, they then slip to the near bottom, middle level onwards and remain there throughout. Thus formal mainstream education seems to be a big drawback amongst the Muslims. The Buddhists have more of their adults enrolled in secondary and higher secondary than any other group. They constitute the second highest population in graduation and above, after the Jains, who have more adults enrolled for graduation and above than any other group. For the diplomas below graduation, the Christians have the highest incidence than any other group followed by the Jains. In case of diplomas above graduation level, the Buddhists, Jains and the Christians have the highest rates respectively.

| All/India/ Females | Primary | Middle | Secondary & Higher Secondary | Graduati on & Above | Diploma/Certif icate (below graduation) |
|-----------------------|---------|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Buddhists | 0.24 | 0.69 | 9.62 | 6.42 | 2.12 |
| Christian | 0.28 | 1.20 | 12.42 | 7.17 | 1.76 |
| Hindus | 0.24 | 0.92 | 7.14 | 4.08 | 0.66 |
| Jains | NA | 0.64 | 15.26 | 9.66 | 0.12 |
| Muslims | 0.37 | 1.14 | 6.22 | 2.70 | 0.16 |
| Others | 0.28 | 2.28 | 8.39 | 2.98 | 0.04 |
| Sikhs | 0.74 | 1.35 | 9.22 | 5.62 | 1.12 |
| Zoroastrians | NA | NA | 10.71 | 13.26 | NA |

 Table 10: Percentage of Adults Enrolled in Primary, Secondary,

 Higher Secondary, Graduation and Diploma Education (Females)

For the adult Hindu females, the incidences of education are also quite low across most of the categories. They tend to get better from the graduation and above level till the diploma categories The Muslim women tend to do better than the Hindu women at the primary and secondary levels, but thereafter do worse than their Hindu counterparts. At the secondary and higher secondary levels, it's the Jains, Buddhists and the Christians who perform better than the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Also they do better at the graduation and above levels along with the Zoroastrians. The Sikh women also do well in the beginning but later on, after the middle level, they fall below but above the Hindus, Muslims and others.

3.2 Level of Education across Religious groups

This section looks at the level of education across religious groups for the population falling in the 7 years and above age bracket. We start by looking at the level of education amongst the males in rural areas and see their break-up across different levels. Comparing the share of population from each group falling in a particular educational class, we observe that illiteracy rates are the highest for

others (31%) and the Muslims (30%) followed closely by the Sikhs (27%) and the Hindus (26%). In the middle range, we have the Zoroastrians, Christians and the Buddhists within a range of 15% to 17%. The lowest illiteracy rates are seen among the Jains (11%). As we move up the education levels, we notice that the highest share of population across all groups, is concentrated in the literate without formal category with a minimum of 25 per cent to a maximum of 43 per cent. At the primary level, the highest shares are seen yet again for the Zoroastrians (27%) and the Jains (24%), while the lowest for the Muslims and others (both 6%). However, when we look at the share of the population with graduate-level education and above, we find that the highest share is seen for the Zoroastrians (27%), which is nearly three times the nearest share for the Jains (9%). Thereafter we observe the Hindus and the Christians (both 3%), the Sikhs and the Buddhists (both 2%) following, with the Muslims having the lowest share (1.5%). Looking at the share of illiterates, the first very striking and obvious observation is that the share of the women are much higher than those seen for the men above across all religious groups.

| Religious Communities | Illitera te | Literate without | Literate but | Prim ary | Middl e | Seconda ry | Gradua te | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------|------------|---------------|--------------|--|--|--|
| | | formal schooling | below primary | | | & above | & above | | | |
| Hindus | 26.66 | 36.75 | 18.91 | 9.23 | 4.81 | 0.52 | 3.12 | | | |
| Muslims | 30.12 | 43.19 | 16.34 | 6.13 | 2.49 | 0.24 | 1.49 | | | |
| Christians | 15.26 | 36.26 | 25.08 | 11.85 | 5.72 | 2.28 | 3.54 | | | |
| Sikhs | 27.10 | 35.43 | 14.48 | 13.54 | 6.19 | 0.74 | 2.51 | | | |
| Jains | 11.63 | 25.72 | 20.58 | 24.07 | 8.53 | 0.34 | 9.13 | | | |
| Buddhists | 16.60 | 38.07 | 24.19 | 11.73 | 6.33 | 0.25 | 2.82 | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 17.28 | 27.57 | 0.00 | 27.57 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 27.57 | | | |
| Others | 31.96 | 36.00 | 20.52 | 6.01 | 3.95 | 0.18 | 1.38 | | | |

Table 11: Education Levels across Religions, Males of 7 Years Age and
Above, Rural, 2004/05

| Religious | Illitera | Literate | Literate | Prima | Midd | Seconda | Gradua |
|--------------|----------|-----------|----------|-------|------|---------|---------|
| Communities | te | without | but | ry | le | ry | te |
| | | formal | below | | | & above | & above |
| | | schooling | primary | | | | |
| Hindus | 50.67 | 29.18 | 11.89 | 4.84 | 2.24 | 0.13 | 1.04 |
| Muslims | 48.92 | 35.90 | 10.38 | 3.31 | 1.05 | 0.06 | 0.38 |
| Christians | 24.29 | 34.25 | 20.52 | 10.90 | 4.83 | 1.82 | 3.39 |
| Sikhs | 38.79 | 33.53 | 9.80 | 11.20 | 4.70 | 0.27 | 1.71 |
| Jains | 22.12 | 28.14 | 16.64 | 16.27 | 8.06 | 0.00 | 8.77 |
| Buddhists | 35.05 | 33.24 | 21.47 | 5.05 | 4.67 | 0.00 | 0.53 |
| Zoroastrians | 59.08 | 40.92 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Others | 50.29 | 31.00 | 12.35 | 4.11 | 1.25 | 0.07 | 0.94 |

Table 12: Education Levels across Religions, Females of 7 Years Ageand Above, Rural, 2004/05

3.3. Ratio of Girls to Boys (6-18 yrs) Enrolled in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education.

Here we look at the number of girls per boy (girls/boys), enrolled across primary, secondary and tertiary education. The Hindus have a favourable ratio than the Muslims only at the primary level and are only behind the Jains and the Buddhists. However, they do worse than the Muslims for the remaining two levels. The Muslims do better than the Hindus not only for the last two levels but also for the tertiary, they show the second highest ratios of all, after the Buddhists. Except the Christians and the Sikhs, who show some consistency in the ratios across the three education classes, all other groups display no steady pattern.

| Religious Communities | Primary | Secondary & Higher Secondary | Tertiary |
|------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|----------|
| Buddhists | 0.91 | 0.85 | 1.83 |
| Christians | 0.84 | 0.88 | 0.86 |
| Hindus | 0.85 | 0.68 | 0.98 |
| Jains | 1.27 | 1.39 | 0.47 |
| Muslims | 0.82 | 0.78 | 1.35 |
| Others | 0.70 | 1.10 | 0.35 |
| Sikhs | 0.84 | 0.88 | 0.86 |
| Zoroastrians | NA | 0.46 | NA |

Table 13: Ratio of Girls To Boys (6-18 yrs) Enrolled in Primary,Secondary and Tertiary Education.

4. Poverty Incidence across Religious Communities.

Next we examine the incidence of impoverishment across religious communities. Here we look at rural and urban poverty separately, as these are based on two different poverty lines as per the calculations of the Planning Commission of India, for the year 2004/05, generated for each region. Looking at the rural poverty first, we observe that incidences are high for some of the minority groups, while being low for others. The highest incidences are seen for the Buddhists, followed by the others, Zoroastrians and Muslims. The lowest levels are for the Christians, Sikhs and Jains. The major groups, such as the Hindus and Muslims show mid-level incidences. The urban picture shows a different pattern from the rural one. Here the Muslims show the highest incidences followed by the Buddhists. Interestingly, the Hindus show higher urban poverty incidence and are placed third, unlike their fifth position in the rural areas. Urban Zoroastrians seem to show lower incidences than their rural counterparts and show the third lowest poverty levels. Lowest incidences are again shown by the Jains, Sikhs and Christians. On the whole, across both the regions, we find that Jains and Sikhs, both of which are primarily into individual enterprise (even rural Sikh farms undertake additional income earning activities, such as rearing milch cattle, etc.,) show lowest incidences along with the Christians who can be safely assumed to be well.

Table 14: Poverty Incidence across Religious Communities

| Religious Communities | Rural | Urban |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Buddhists | 40.59 | 28.62 |
| Christians | 16.21 | 12.47 |
| Hindus | 28.90 | 23.35 |
| Jains | 2.59 | 2.57 |
| Muslims | 29.26 | 41.38 |
| Others | 36.02 | 22.91 |
| Sikhs | 5.00 | 6.08 |
| Zoroastrians | 35.42 | 10.74 |
| Total | 28.29 | 25.62 |

Sources: NSSO, Consumption Expenditure, 2004/05

| | Tab | ole 15 | : S | hare | of | Re | lig | ious | Poo | or ir | ı All | Ind | ia l | Poor | (Rural | /Ur | ban |) |
|--|-----|--------|-----|------|----|----|-----|------|-----|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----|-----|---|
|--|-----|--------|-----|------|----|----|-----|------|-----|-------|-------|-----|------|------|--------|-----|-----|---|

| Religious Communities | Share of Relig All Indi | ious Groups in a, Rural | Share of Religious Groups in All India, Urban | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--|-------|--|--|
| | Population | Population Poor | | Poor | | |
| Buddhists | 0.77 | 0.89 | 0.66 | 1.07 | | |
| Christians | 1.14 | 2.81 | 2.14 | 2.86 | | |
| Hindus | 85.52 | 79.99 | 82.33 | 75.6 | | |
| Jains | 0.01 | 1.10 | 0.14 | 1.12 | | |
| Muslims | 11.78 | 12.93 | 11.96 | 17.26 | | |
| Others | 0.43 | 0.09 | 0.81 | 0.22 | | |
| Sikhs | 0.34 | 2.12 | 1.9 | 1.79 | | |
| Zoroastrians | 0.01 | 0.07 | NA | NA | | |

Sources: NSSO, Consumption Expenditure, 2004/05

We can also see the break-up of the poor in the country, to see which groups contributes how much to the poor population and in what proportion. The table above gives the break-up of the all India poor population across religious groups. We find that in the rural regions, the Hindus, Muslims and the Christians are the top contributors and follow their overall proportional representation in the country's population. Next we see the Buddhist making up 0.77 per cent of the poor while being only 0.66 per cent of the population, clearly indicating more than proportional contribution to the poor population. Similarly for the other community. The Sikhs with low level of poverty have the third lowest share, despite being the fourth largest group overall. Lastly, the Zoroastrians and the Jains make the lowest contributions. Across the urban region we find the percentage of various groups among the poor, being exactly proportional to their population shares.

4.1. Odds of Being Poor

Here we assign odds to people who are poor based on which religion do they belong to. A logistic regression exercise is undertaken to ascertain the odds. We created our dependent variable as a dummy variable called 'poverty', which took a value '1' if the person was poor and a value '2' if the person was found to be not poor. The independent variables were religious background of the person, namely Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain or Zoroastrian.

| | В | S.E. | Wald | Df | Sig. | Exp(B) |
|-----------------------------|--------|-------|-------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Religious Minorities | | | 4346060.624 | 7.000 | 0.000 | |
| Hindus | -0.326 | 0.001 | 60420.765 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.722 |
| Muslims | -0.308 | 0.001 | 52675.444 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.735 |
| Christians | -1.068 | 0.002 | 506731.653 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.344 |
| Sikhs | -2.369 | 0.002 | 1741041.862 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.094 |
| Jains | -3.027 | 0.008 | 153334.938 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.048 |
| Buddhists | 0.194 | 0.002 | 13387.304 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 1.214 |
| Zoroastrians | -0.026 | 0.009 | 8.904 | 1.000 | 0.003 | 0.974 |
| Constant | -0.575 | 0.001 | 188998.511 | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.563 |

Table 16: Rural Odds Variables in the Equation

Source: NSSO, Consumption Expenditure, 2004/05

Duddhiat

The table above is an indicative logistic regression analysis, with the dummy 'poverty' as the dependent variable and the religious groups as the independent variables. Here the odds of being poor are calculated considering a general reference based on the independent variables. The odds are given as follows

| Duuuilist | |
|---------------|---------|
| Zoroastrians, | - 0.974 |
| Muslim | - 0.735 |
| Hindu | - 0.722 |

| Christians | - 0.344 |
|------------|---------|
| Sikhs | - 0.094 |
| Jains | - 0.048 |

We find the Buddhists have the highest odds followed by the Zoroastrians and the Muslims. The Hindus come next. The lowest odds are for the Sikhs and the Jains.

Religious Communities В S.E. Wald df Sig. Exp(B) 7086040.840 7.000 0.000 Hindus 0.025 0.005 24.319 1.000 0.000 1.025 Muslims 0.865 0.005 29790.419 1.000 0.000 2.375 Christians -0.735 0.005 20316.778 1.000 0.000 0.480 Sikhs -1.523 0.005 79363.151 1.000 0.000 0.218 Jains -2.398 0.007 131573.616 0.000 0.091 1.000 Buddhist 0.300 0.005 3311.414 1.000 0.000 1.350 Zoroastrians -0.904 0.010 7993.339 1.000 0.000 0.405 -1.214 0.005 58853.797 Constant 1.000 0.000 0.297

 Table 17: Urban Odds, Indicative - Based on Overall General

 Reference Variables in the Equation

Notes: Variable(s) entered on step 1: RELIGION.

Source: The urban regression indicates that the odds are as follows

| Muslim | - 2.375 |
|--------------|---------|
| Buddhist | - 1.350 |
| Hindu | - 1.025 |
| Christians | - 0.480 |
| Zoroastrians | - 0.405 |
| Sikhs | - 0.218 |
| Jains | - 0.091 |

The highest odds are for the Muslims, followed by the Buddhists and then the Hindus. The lowest odds are for the Jains and the Sikhs. The Christians and Zoroastrians have low but medium-level odds. Thus across both rural and urban regions, the Buddhists and the Muslims show the highest odds of being poor, while the Sikhs and the Jains the lowest.

4.2. Mean Percapita Consumption Expenditure

Mean per-capita expenditure across religious groups for both rural and urban regions is given below. The rural expenditures indicate that only three groups, namely the Jains, Sikhs and the Christians have above all India average expenditure. For the Jains, their preoccupation with self-employed economic enterprise and for the Sikhs, their relative success in farming and off farm diversification can be largely assumed to have contributed to their position. The bottom three groups are the Zoroastrians, others and the Buddhists. The Zoroastrians' unlikely poor performance could be due to a very small proportion of them inhibiting the rural regions and probably unsuccessfully.

| Religion Communities | Mean MPCE/Rural | Mean MPCE/Urban | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Buddhists | 506.26 | 880.59 | |
| Christians | 806.27 | 1352.63 | |
| Hindus | 547.70 | 1083.17 | |
| Jains | 978.36 | 1901.36 | |
| Muslims | 545.81 | 776.50 | |
| Others | 504.09 | 1179.45 | |
| Sikhs | 864.72 | 1498.81 | |
| Zoroastrians | 474.07 | 2883.57 | |
| All India. Avg | 558.81 | 1052.34 | |

Table 18: Mean Per-capita Consumption Expenditure (Rural/Urban)

Unlike the rural picture, the urban situation shows the Zoroastrians doing the best amongst all, as is usually expected of them due to high level of education and private economic enterprise. Also all the groups show above average expenditures except the Buddhists and the Muslims. After the Zoroastrians it's the Jains, Sikhs, Christian and others who show above average expenditures.

5. Unemployment Rates (All Ages)

Unemployment rates across all religious groups, as can be seen, are very low for both rural and urban regions. The rates are at their highest at 3.9 per cent for the urban Christians and 3.1 per cent for the urban Buddhists. The lowest are seen for the rural Jains and the Zoroastrians. On the whole, urban unemployment rates are slightly higher for all except for the Sikhs and the Jains. These rates are based on the 'usual principle status' of individuals, which defines a person as working, if he or she had been gainfully employed for a major part of the year (usually more than 180 days) preceding the survey (time criteria).

| Kengions (All Ages) | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|--|--|--|--|
| Religious Communities | Rural Unemployment Rate | Urban Unemployment Rate | Total | | | | |
| Hindus | 0.90(0.7) | 1.94 | 1.15 | | | | |
| Muslims | 1.04(0.8) | 1.58 | 1.22 | | | | |
| Christians | 2.72(2.1) | 3.92 | 3.07 | | | | |
| Sikhs | 2.23 (1.6) | 1.91 | 2.17 | | | | |
| Jains | 0.00 | 1.20 | 1.00 | | | | |
| Buddhist | 1.07 | 3.17 | 1.77 | | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 0.00 | 2.19 | 2.14 | | | | |
| Others | 0.29 | 4.64 | 1.06 | | | | |
| Total | 0.98 | 1.94 | 1.23 | | | | |

Table 19: Rural, Urban Unemployment Rates across Religions (All Ages)

Sources: Employment/Unemployment survey, 61st Round, 2004/2005 (All Ages)

These rates would go down further, if we used the 'usual status' criteria, which in addition to the 'usual principle status' of a person, also includes his or her 'usual subsidiary activity status'. Persons designated as unemployed for the major part of the year based on the 'usual principle status' criteria, also do some form of work for a shorter duration (but more than 30 days) or on a part-time basis along with their principal activity (in this case, usually less than 180 days). Such persons are taken as working or employed under the usual status criteria, thus further reducing the incidence of unemployment.

| Religious Communities | Unemployed (Aged 15-24 years | | | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------|-------|--|--|--|
| | Rural | Urban | Total | | | |
| Hindus | 1.58 | 3.06 | 1.97 | | | |
| Muslims | 1.68 | 2.56 | 2.00 | | | |
| Christians | 4.30 | 3.71 | 4.12 | | | |
| Sikhs | 4.49 | 2.43 | 4.02 | | | |
| Jains | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | | | |
| Buddhist | 1.42 | 5.72 | 2.91 | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | | | |
| Others | 0.27 | 15.13 | 3.23 | | | |
| Total | 1.70 | 3.01 | 2.07 | | | |

Table 20.: Rural, Urban Unemployment Rates across Religions(15-24 yrs)

Source: Employment/Unemployment Survey, 61st Round, 20004/2005 (Ages 15-24)

Amongst the young population across the religious groups, the unemployment rates are seen to be higher than that for the total population as seen in the table above. The only exceptions are the rural 'others' and the urban Jains and Zoroastrians and the Zoroastrians over all. The highest rates are again seen for the rural Sikhs and the Christians. In the urban areas, the highest rates are seen for the 'others' at 15 per cent followed by the Buddhist at 5 per cent. Christians and Hindus follow next with 3.7 per cent and 3 per cent respectively.

5.1.. Workforce Participation Rate – All Ages

The table below gives us the percentage of population from various religions participating in the national workforce, for all ages. At all India level, the WRP rate indicates that the Zoroastrians have nearly 45 per cent of their community as part of the labour force. They are followed by the Christians. The Hindus, Buddhist, Sikhs, Jains and others show similar rates ranging from 34 per cent to 37 per cent. The lowest rate is shown by the Muslims at 32 per cent. Between the lowest and the highest rates, the difference is to the tune of around 12 per cent. This overall pattern is seen to be exactly replicated across the urban region. However, in the rural areas the pattern changes considerably. The Buddhists show, the highest rates here, pushing the Zoroastrians down one position. The Hindus, the Sikhs and the Christians experience a fall in their rates, whereas the others and the Jains have improved their positions and moved up. The rural rates are higher than the urban rates as is understandable due to the nature of the rural occupations and the remunerations expected to be earned, forcing more people to work in one form or the other. Muslims show the lowest WRP rate across all three categories.

| Workforce Participation Rate (All ages) | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Religious Communities | Rural | Urban | Total | | | | | | |
| Buddhists | 51.29 | 37.33 | 37.33 | | | | | | |
| Christians | 43.66 | 39.62 | 39.62 | | | | | | |
| Hindus | 41.24 | 37.34 | 37.34 | | | | | | |
| Jains | 45.37 | 34.38 | 34.38 | | | | | | |
| Muslims | 31.23 | 32.72 | 32.72 | | | | | | |
| Others | 47.72 | 34.24 | 34.24 | | | | | | |
| Sikhs | 33.43 | 35.16 | 35.16 | | | | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 50.00 | 44.42 | 44.42 | | | | | | |
| Total | 40.07 | 36.57 | 36.57 | | | | | | |

Table 21. Workforce Participation Rate – All Ages

Sources: Employment/Unemployment Survey, 61st Round, 20004/2005

5.2. Workforce Participation Rate – From 15 to 24 Years.

Observing the workforce participation rates for the youth (15-24 years), we find that at the all India level, the rates raise quite significantly for all the groups except for the Sikh, Jains and the Muslims. However, youth participation pattern is somewhat different from the overall pattern we observed above. At the all India level, the Zoroastrians maintain their top position, but then on the Christians who came next are replaced by the Buddhists and the Hindus by the others. On the whole, amongst the youth, except the Buddhist, others and the Muslims, all the other groups loose the standing they had at the overall level. The lowest rates are now seen for the Muslims and also surprisingly for the Jain youth.

| Workforce Participation Rate (15-24 yrs) | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Religious Communities | Rural | Urban | Total | | | | | | |
| Buddhists | 61.22 | 43.01 | 54.89 | | | | | | |
| Christians | 52.29 | 39.85 | 48.40 | | | | | | |
| Hindus | 48.40 | 41.53 | 46.58 | | | | | | |
| Jains | 52.45 | 32.33 | 37.25 | | | | | | |
| Muslims | 37.74 | 38.13 | 37.88 | | | | | | |
| Others | 56.60 | 40.51 | 53.39 | | | | | | |
| Sikhs | 38.97 | 36.22 | 38.34 | | | | | | |
| Zoroastrians | 000 | 77.03 | 71.79 | | | | | | |
| Total | 47.10 | 40.74 | 45.32 | | | | | | |

Table 22.: Workforce Participation Rate – From 15 to 24 years.

The urban pattern is similar to the overall situation, except for changes in the relative positions but not in the overall standings. The top two, namely the Zoroastrians and the Buddhists show the same highest WRP rates. The middle groups see a reshuffle in their positions as can be seen in the segment in blue, with the others and Christians moving one place up and the Hindus moving two places down. At the bottom, the Sikhs and the Muslims have swapped positions and the Jains maintain their bottom rug. Unlike the urban relative reshuffle, the rural standings change dramatically, with the Zoroastrians moving from the top to the bottom. This could be due to a very small sample of rural inhabitance and probably with no sample of persons falling in this age group. The Jains, who at the overall and urban levels have been at the bottom, now display the third highest rates. The Hindus are at the same position as at the overall level, indicating the former affecting the later on an average. Sikhs maintain their overall relative position with the Muslims again with the lowest rates.

| Religious Communities | Ru | ral | Urban | | |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--|
| - | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| Hindus | 68.66 | 40.30 | 54.92 | 20.43 | |
| Muslims | 70.51 | 22.11 | 68.86 | 16.09 | |
| Christians | 61.73 | 41.63 | 39.05 | 29.73 | |
| Sikhs | 70.54 | 40.72 | 52.97 | 16.65 | |
| Jains | 53.95 | 12.93 | 51.99 | 7.55 | |
| Buddhists | 69.73 | 48.41 | 50.23 | 12.63 | |
| Zoroastrians | 0.00 | 100.00 | 0.00 | 52.96 | |
| Others | 79.37 | 55.45 | 61.51 | 25.88 | |

Table 23: Workforce Participation Rate – 15-24 Years (Male/Female)

A break-up across gender in work participation rate reveals that across all religious groups, the rate is higher for the males as compared to the females. Secondly, the workforce participation rate is higher for the rural males and females than their urban counterparts. Highest rates are seen for others, Muslims, Sikhs and the Buddhists amongst the rural male and amongst others, Buddhist, Sikhs and the Hindus for the rural female.

In urban areas, the patterns are somewhat different. It is the Muslim, other, Hindu, Sikh men and the Zoroastrian, Christian, other and Hindu women who show highest workforce participation.

6. Household-Type Break-Up across Religious Groups (Rural)

Next we look at the household type break up within religious groups in rural areas. The household type categories are self-employed in non-agriculture, agricultural labour, other labour, self-employed in agriculture and others. In rural areas, the preoccupation of the most is either self-employed in agriculture or owner cultivation or being employed as wage labour on the farms of others. The category 'Agriculture' (Agri) gives us the total population (SEA + AL) employed directly in/by agriculture. We find that more than 75 per cent of the Buddhists and other population are engaged in agriculture.

| Religious Communities | SENA | AL | OL | SEA | ОТН | Agri | Manual labor |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|
| Others | 9.09 | 19.78 | 8.22 | 56.55 | 6.35 | 76.34 | 28.01 |
| Buddhists | 7.13 | 56.51 | 8.54 | 19.02 | 8.80 | 75.53 | 65.05 |
| Hindus | 15.00 | 25.67 | 10.17 | 40.93 | 8.23 | 66.59 | 35.84 |
| Zoroastrians | NA | NA | 35.42 | 64.58 | NA | 64.58 | NA |
| Sikhs | 15.70 | 22.05 | 13.92 | 37.51 | 10.81 | 59.56 | 35.98 |
| Christians | 12.19 | 19.16 | 16.77 | 38.49 | 13.39 | 57.65 | 35.93 |
| Muslims | 29.23 | 19.37 | 10.86 | 29.69 | 10.85 | 49.06 | 30.23 |
| Jains | 43.66 | 17.61 | 5.79 | 26.92 | 6.02 | 44.53 | 23.39 |
| Total | 16.54 | 24.89 | 10.44 | 39.46 | 8.68 | 64.35 | 35.33 |

Table 24: Household-Type Break-Up across Religious Groups (Rural)

Source: Generated using NSSO, Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004/05.

Amongst these two, we notice that the 'other', despite being a small group, have 56 per cent of them are owner cultivators, while of the Buddhists only 19 per cent are owner cultivators and 56 per cent are agricultural labourers. This indicates that the latter's ownership of land is the lowest amongst all the groups. The next batch of group includes the Hindus, Zoroastrians, Sikhs and the Christians who fall in 60 per cent to 65 per cent range. These four also have the highest incidence of owner cultivation indicating land ownership. Amongst these the Hindus and the Sikhs together show the second highest incidences of agricultural labour after the Buddhists. The Jains and Muslims have the lowest levels of involvement in agriculture but the highest in self-employed in non-agricultural occupations followed by the Sikhs and the Hindus.

6.1. Household-Type Break-up across Religious Groups (Urban)

The urban household types are the self-employed, the regular wage/salary earners, casual labourers and others. Amongst these, the RW/SE can be safely assumed to be the most secure in terms of job security and regular pay. After them are the self-employed, who may earn more than the RW/SE, but facing higher market risk. The casual labourers would easily be the most vulnerable on account of both low wages and insecure job. We find amongst the Buddhists,

nearly half of the urban population falls in the R/SE category. This is primarily due to the policy of job reservations for the scheduled castes of India, most of whom are Buddhists by religion.

Next come the Christians, who again have high level of education, followed by the Hindus, the higher castes amongst whom are traditionally educated, and finally the Zoroastrians who also have high education levels. The lowest incidences are for the others, the Sikhs, Muslims and the Jains. These last four groups are rather synonymous with being self-employed and engaged in private enterprise. Thus we see under the SE category, the Jains, Sikhs, Muslims and the other showing the highest incidences respectively. They are then followed by the Hindus, Christians and Buddhists at the lowest. The highest incidence of casual labor is seen among the Buddhists, at nearly a quarter of their urban population being involved in this.

| Religious Communities | SE | RW/SE | CL | ОТН | |
|------------------------------|---------|-------------|------------|-------|--------|
| Hindus | 40.12 | 42.64 | 11.48 | 5.75 | 100.00 |
| Muslims | 56.94 | 24.31 | 13.14 | 5.62 | 100.00 |
| Christians | 27.20 | 49.41 | 13.63 | 9.76 | 100.00 |
| Sikhs | 57.62 | 31.33 | 4.94 | 6.11 | 100.00 |
| Jain | 77.90 | 17.35 | 0.39 | 4.37 | 100.00 |
| Buddhists | 18.57 | 51.99 | 24.90 | 4.54 | 100.00 |
| Zoroastrians | 26.07 | 40.36 | 0.83 | 32.73 | 100.00 |
| Others | 55.67 | 35.64 | 2.79 | 5.90 | 100.00 |
| Total | 42.99 | 39.47 | 11.71 | 5.82 | 100.00 |
| Courses Concepted using NCCO | Comanum | ation Frman | litera Com | | 1/05 |

Table 25: Household-Type Break-up across Religious Groups (Urban)

Source: Generated using NSSO, Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004/05.

Thus we see that overall the Buddhist fair the worst in both urban and rural areas in terms of casualization of occupational status. The Christians and the Muslims follow next.

7. Participation across Industry of Occupation -Rural

Next we examine the industrial classification of population across religious groups. This is similar to the household-type classification only across different industrial classification based of the National Industrial Code (NIC). As is expected, around 67 per cent of the total rural population is employed in the agricultural industry. The remaining population is largely employed across the manufacturing, wholesale/repair and retail, construction, transportation, storage, and communication industry. We can see again that amongst the major religious groups, the Buddhists employ the second highest, (after the others at 80%) around 77 per cent of them in the agricultural industry. They are followed by the Hindus, Zoroastrians, Sikhs and the Christians. Moving on to manufacturing, we find the Muslims taking the lead with 10.7 per cent, followed by the Hindus and Christians at 7 per cent and 6 per cent respectively. The wholesale/retail and repair industry seem to be nearly dominated by the Jains and as much as 43 per cent of them are engaged there. The Muslims come next only at 13 per cent. The construction industry finds equal participation from the Sikhs, Christians and the Jains at around 8 per cent but dominantly engages the Zoroastrians at 35 per cent. Trade and transport see the Sikhs lead the way followed by the Muslims and the Christians.

| Occupation | Hinds | Musli ms | Christi ans | Sikhs | Jain | Budd hists | Zoroas trians | Othe rs | Total |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------------|----------------|-------|-------|---------------|------------------|------------|-------|
| Agri, Hunting & Forestry | 68.97 | 52.85 | 61.69 | 63.07 | 45.23 | 77.61 | 64.58 | 80.63 | 67.00 |
| Manufacturing | 7.25 | 10.73 | 6.69 | 6.11 | 1.16 | 4.84 | NA | 2.56 | 7.56 |
| WS/R & Repair | 5.86 | 13.90 | 5.70 | 6.90 | 43.99 | 3.83 | NA | 2.26 | 6.77 |
| Construction | 6.49 | 8.12 | 8.59 | 8.09 | 2.62 | 4.54 | 35.42 | 4.87 | 6.73 |
| Trans, store &Com | 3.20 | 6.42 | 4.29 | 7.25 | 0.64 | 2.89 | NA | 1.66 | 3.64 |
| Education | 1.88 | 1.58 | 3.97 | 1.63 | 1.73 | 2.79 | NA | 0.74 | 1.88 |
| Pub Ad, Def & Soc.Serv | 1.47 | 1.37 | 2.34 | 2.72 | | 1.60 | NA | 2.79 | 1.50 |
| Community | 1.51 | 1.44 | 0.88 | 1.25 | 1.88 | 0.45 | NA | 0.22 | 1.48 |

Table 26: -Occupation Employment by Industry-Rural

| Service | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------|--------|
| Hotel & Restaurants | 0.79 | 1.18 | 0.66 | 0.51 | | 0.12 | NA | 0.84 | 0.82 |
| Mining & Quarrying | 0.75 | 0.52 | 1.01 | 0.17 | | 0.02 | NA | 2.95 | 0.72 |
| Health & Social Work | 0.45 | 0.38 | 0.84 | 0.33 | 1.61 | 0.21 | NA | 0.19 | 0.45 |
| Fishing | 0.39 | 0.57 | 1.25 | | | | NA | 0.15 | 0.41 |
| Real Estate, Renting & Buss | 0.29 | 0.42 | 0.89 | 0.22 | | 0.20 | NA | 0.04 | 0.32 |
| Financial Intermediation | 0.29 | 0.08 | 0.63 | 0.53 | 1.13 | 0.54 | NA | | 0.28 |
| Electricity, Gas & Water | 0.26 | 0.09 | 0.34 | 1.03 | | 0.20 | NA | 0.06 | 0.26 |
| Household with employees | 0.14 | 0.37 | 0.24 | 0.19 | | 0.17 | NA | 0.07 | 0.17 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.0 0 | 100.00 |

Source: Generated using NSSO, Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004/05.

7.1 – Occupation Employment by Industry-Urban

For the urban landscape, the various religious groups are distributed far more evenly across different industries of occupation. The top three industries which command double digit shares of population at all India level are the wholesale, retail and repair, manufacturing, transportation, storage and communication industries. Amongst the Jains, 63 per cent of their population is employed in the WS/R & R industry. Next in line are the Muslims at 30 per cent, Sikhs at 29 per cent and the Hindus at 21 per cent. In manufacturing industry a substantial number of Muslims are employed followed by the Hindus, Christians and the Jains. Transportation seems to be popular with quite a few and the Zoroastrians, others, Sikhs and the Christians show roughly equal participation. However, it's the Buddhists who have the largest share of their population in this industry at 21 per cent. Again construction industry employs substantial percentage (17%) of the Buddhists (mostly wage labourers) followed by the Christians, Muslims and 33 per cent of population belonging to other the Hindus. It is found that categories choose defence sector as their occupation followed by the Christians,

Buddhists and the Hindus. Education seems to be the choice of the minor groups lead by the Christians followed by the Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and the Jains.

| Occupations | Hindu s | Musli ms | Christi ans | Sikhs | Jain | Budd hists | Zoroa strian s | Other | Total |
|---------------------------------|------------|-------------|----------------|--------|--------|---------------|----------------------|--------|--------|
| WS/R & Repair | 21.85 | 30.52 | 11.76 | 29.58 | 63.66 | 11.61 | 1.27 | 14.33 | 23.41 |
| Manufacturing | 20.62 | 26.01 | 16.08 | 14.55 | 15.76 | 12.61 | 14.96 | 5.72 | 21.17 |
| Trans, store &Com | 11.04 | 13.40 | 13.57 | 13.30 | 2.99 | 21.59 | 15.78 | 13.55 | 11.56 |
| Construction | 8.86 | 9.61 | 11.28 | 6.21 | 1.18 | 17.97 | NA | 3.96 | 9.01 |
| Pub Ad, Def & Soc.Serv | 8.86 | 3.37 | 11.22 | 7.05 | 1.17 | 8.65 | 2.78 | 33.57 | 7.93 |
| Agri, Hunting & Forestry | 6.78 | 4.84 | 6.80 | 10.14 | 0.40 | 2.42 | NA | 21.53 | 6.43 |
| Education | 4.24 | 1.72 | 8.84 | 3.92 | 3.31 | 3.61 | 2.65 | 1.02 | 3.91 |
| Hotel & Restaurants | 3.23 | 2.77 | 2.63 | 1.01 | 0.46 | 0.44 | 19.08 | 1.55 | 3.06 |
| Real Estate, Renting & Buss. | 3.24 | 1.52 | 3.33 | 4.42 | 3.48 | 4.14 | 41.68 | 0.08 | 3.00 |
| Community Work | 2.57 | 2.20 | 3.19 | 2.70 | 0.22 | 7.81 | 1.81 | 1.88 | 2.56 |
| Financial Intermediation | 2.65 | 0.62 | 2.03 | 1.36 | 6.38 | 1.93 | NA | 1.95 | 2.30 |
| Health & Social Work | 1.86 | 1.12 | 3.29 | 2.16 | 0.30 | 3.13 | NA | 0.41 | 1.77 |
| Mining & Quarrying | 1.50 | 0.52 | 1.03 | 1.44 | 0.10 | 0.72 | NA | 0.14 | 1.31 |
| Pvt Houses with Employees | 1.22 | 1.16 | 1.25 | 0.23 | 0.03 | 2.14 | NA | 0.20 | 1.19 |
| Electricity, Water & Gas | 1.18 | 0.44 | 1.63 | 1.93 | 0.56 | 1.23 | NA | NA | 1.07 |
| Fishing | 0.30 | 0.18 | 2.08 | NA | NA | NA | NA | 0.12 | 0.31 |
| Extra Territorial Orgs | 0.00 | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | 0.00 |
| Total | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

 Table 27: Occupation Employment by Industry-Urban

Source: Generated using NSSO, Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004/05.

8.. Average Land Ownership across Religious Groups (Rural)

Here we look at the basic asset base of the rural population across religious groups. Beginning with the incidence of landlessness, we find that landlessness is the highest among the Buddhists at 40 per cent. The Buddhists being dominantly ex-untouchables and of low caste status did not have the right to own land under the Hindu fold, and this historical fact could be reason for their high landlessness. Next in line are the Zoroastrians, Sikhs and the Jains. The Jains and the Zoroastrians are known to be traditionally involved in business and private enterprise. The figures below suggest that the Zoroastrians are either landless or large land owners. The rural Sikhs also undertake farming but nonetheless substantiate their incomes by diversifying into off-farm activities as well. Landlessness among the Muslims is seen to be higher than that that of the Hindus and is lowest amongthe Christians.

| Religious | Landl | Margi | Small | Mediu | Large | V. | Total |
|-----------------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Communities | ess | nal | | m | | Large | |
| Hindus | 16.55 | 32.83 | 20.79 | 14.76 | 9.79 | 5.28 | 100.00 |
| Muslims | 19.32 | 46.62 | 19.17 | 9.00 | 4.41 | 1.48 | 100.00 |
| Christians | 8.76 | 46.28 | 19.42 | 13.42 | 9.70 | 2.42 | 100.00 |
| Sikhs | 23.93 | 33.83 | 7.86 | 9.91 | 13.99 | 10.48 | 100.00 |
| Jains | 23.68 | 16.73 | 6.57 | 23.05 | 10.68 | 19.29 | 100.00 |
| Buddhists | 40.97 | 22.69 | 13.45 | 15.52 | 3.13 | 4.23 | 100.00 |
| Zoroastrians | 35.42 | - | - | - | - | 64.58 | 100.00 |
| Others | 4.63 | 17.82 | 37.35 | 24.06 | 11.59 | 4.54 | 100.00 |
| Total | 16.96 | 34.57 | 20.32 | 14.02 | 9.23 | 4.90 | 100.00 |
| Source: Generat | ed using | NSSO, C | onsumpt | ion Expe | nditure S | Survey, 2 | 004/05. |

Table 28: Land Holding Pattern across Religious Groups (Rural)

Marginal and small holdings make up for the largest two categories across India. This is clearly reflected across the populous groups of the Hindus, Muslims and the Christians. In addition to the Zoroastrians, as mentioned above, among the Sikhs the land holding pattern in decreasing order includes marginal, large, very large, the medium and finally the small holders. . Among the Jains, largest landed category is the medium, followed by the vary large and then the marginal, subsequently followed by the large and then the small.

8.1.. Share of Different Religious Groups across Land Classes.

Here we look at the religious break-up of the population falling in each of the land categories. The Hindus and the Muslims can be seen to be the top two contributors to the first three categories of the landless, marginal and the small land holders. The Christians and the Sikhs, who are the next to populous groups, follow the Hindus and the Muslims for the first two land classes, albeit not in that order necessarily. The Sikhs make up a small portion of the small category and are replaced by others. Thereafter, the Christian have exchanged places with the Muslims across the medium and the large categories followed by the Sikhs. Interestingly for the very large category, the share of the Sikhs jumps to the second just below the Hindus followed by the Christians and then the Muslims. Mirroring their share in the overall population here the Buddhists, others, Jains and Zoroastrians contribute negligibly to all categories.

| Religious Communities | Landless | Marginal | Small | Medium | Large | V.Large |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Buddhists | 1.36 | 0.91 | 1.28 | 1.47 | 0.72 | 0.74 |
| Christians | 2.05 | 5.64 | 8.71 | 9.63 | 11.12 | 5.62 |
| Hindus | 79.88 | 73.58 | 74.33 | 75.24 | 74.87 | 80.95 |
| Jains | 0.20 | 0.05 | 0.03 | 0.06 | 0.13 | 0.21 |
| Muslims | 11.68 | 16.36 | 12.98 | 9.05 | 6.51 | 4.29 |
| Others | 0.30 | 0.71 | 1.47 | 2.26 | 2.17 | 2.44 |
| Sikhs | 4.51 | 2.75 | 1.20 | 2.29 | 4.48 | 5.73 |
| Zoroastrians | 0.01 | | | | | 0.03 |
| All | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |

Table 29: Share of Religious Groups across LandHolding Classes (Rural)

Source: Generated using NSSO, Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004/05.

9.Health and Nutritional Status of Children and Women across Religious Groups

Here, we focus attention on the health and nutritional status of the most vulnerable, namely the women and the children across religious communities in India. We begin by looking at the health of pregnant women in terms of their immunization, place of delivery, assistance during delivery, etc. Next, we look at health of children in terms of their mortality, morbidity, immunization and treatment. Finally, we examine the nutritional level or the lack of it across religious groups.

9.1. . Health of Pregnant Women – Immunization (Tetanus)

Protection against tetanus is quite important for women, as it can directly affect the health of children born to them. The table below gives an indication of such care received before and during pregnancy as well as overall incidence of immunization. If we look at the percentage of women who received two or more injections across religious groups, we find that the Jain and the Sikh women lead with 92 per cent and 85 per cent immunization respectively. Next to follow are the Hindu, Buddhist, Christians and Muslim women, for whom the percentage of immunization ranges from 73 per cent to 76 per cent. The lowest incidence is seen for the others at 50 per cent.

| Religious Communities | Received two or more TT injections | Received one TT injection during the pregnancy and at least one in the three years prior to the pregnancy |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Hindus | 76.9 | 1.4 |
| Muslims | 73.4 | 1.8 |
| Christians | 74.4 | 1.9 |
| Sikhs | 85.5 | 0.7 |
| Buddhist/Neo-Buddhists | 75.6 | 5.8 |
| Jains | 92.2 | 0.6 |
| Others | 50.2 | 1.6 |

Table 30: Components of Antenatal Care

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey – III, 2005-06 Note: Among women with a live birth in the five years preceding the survey, percentage who received two or more tetanus toxoid (TT) injections during the pregnancy, received one TT injection during pregnancy and at least one in the three years preceding the survey.

9.1.1.. Place of Most Recent Delivery

The place of delivery of a child could also indicate the level of care and hygiene that was present at the time of delivery. The best place for a delivery would be a

public/private health facility followed by a NGO/Trust and then one's own home or parent's home followed by other home or others. Looking at the percentage of deliveries at a heath facility we find that the Jains again lead with 93 per cent such deliveries and only 6 per cent at homes. After the Jains, the Buddhist and Sikhs follow next with 58 per cent such deliveries. But a major difference between the two is that the Sikhs prefer private health facilities, while the Buddhists seem to go for the public ones. The reason seems the obvious difference in the economic well-being and standing of the two communities. Next are the Christians with 53 per cent heath facility deliveries. An interesting observation here is that, almost all the remaining deliveries occur at home. Two of the lowest rates are seen for the Hindus at 39 per cent and the Muslims at 33 per cent. Half of the Hindu and 56 per cent of Muslim deliveries occur at home. Accordingly, usage of both private and public health facilities by the Hindus is higher than that of the Muslims.

| Religious Communities | Public sector | NGO/ trust | Privat e sector | Own hom e | Paren ts' home | Other home | Oth ers | Tota l | Percenta ge delivere d in a health facility |
|----------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|--|
| Hindus | 18.4 | 0.5 | 20.3 | 50.9 | 9.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 100 | 39.1 |
| Muslims | 15.4 | 0.3 | 17.3 | 56.7 | 9.6 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 100 | 33 |
| Christians | 23.6 | 0.9 | 28.9 | 42 | 3.8 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 100 | 53.4 |
| Sikhs | 15.1 | 1.2 | 42 | 32.3 | 9.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 100 | 58.3 |
| Buddhist/Neo- Buddhists | 37.2 | 0.2 | 21.3 | 23.4 | 17.2 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 100 | 58.8 |
| Jains | 30.9 | 2.6 | 59.6 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 93.1 |
| Others | 7.9 | 0.4 | 2.1 | 79.2 | 7.8 | 2 | 0.6 | 100 | 10.4 |

Table 31: Place of Delivery

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

Note: Percent distribution of live births in the five years preceding the survey by place of delivery, and percentage delivered in a health facility, according to background characteristics, India, 2005-06.

9.1.2.. Assistance during Delivery

Another indication of awareness about birth-related heath practices is the nature of assistance sought during child delivery. Referring to the table below, we find that in case of deliveries conducted by skilled providers, i.e. doctors, ANM/nurse/midwife/LHV, other health personnel, again the Jains and the Sikhs lead with 94 per cent and 75 per cent such deliveries. Next in line are the Buddhists and the Christians at around 60 per cent. The Hindus and the Muslims have the lowest number of skilled deliveries at 47 per cent and 38 per cent respectively. Thus on the whole, it's the minority religious groups who seem to show awareness and insistence on health practices (higher enrolment and education levels are also found). Consequently, we find that amongst the Hindus, Muslims and Others, the incidence of deliveries by Dai (TBA) is the highest. The others lead with as high as 67 per cent of such deliveries, followed by the Muslims at 47 per cent and finally the Hindus at 34 per cent.

| Religious Communitie s | Docto r | ANM/ nurse / mid wife/ LHV | Other health person nel | Dai (TBA) | Frien ds/ relati ves | Othe r | No one | Don' t kno w/ miss ing | Tota l | Percentag e delivered by a skilled provider | Percent age delivere d by caesare an section |
|------------------------------|------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| Hindus | 35.6 | 10.7 | 1.1 | 34.9 | 16.9 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 100 | 47.5 | 8.6 |
| Muslims | 30.2 | 7.3 | 1.2 | 47 | 13.8 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 100 | 38.8 | 6.4 |
| Christians | 48.1 | 11.5 | 0.5 | 21.6 | 16.7 | 0 | 1.3 | 0.1 | 100 | 60.2 | 16.5 |
| Sikhs | 50.2 | 23.6 | 1.6 | 24.1 | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 75.4 | 17 |
| Buddhists | 52.4 | 12.4 | 0.1 | 16.2 | 18.8 | 0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 100 | 64.9 | 5.7 |
| Jains | 89.8 | 4.5 | 0 | 5.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 100 | 94.3 | 38.9 |
| Others | 8.3 | 6.2 | 0.1 | 67.3 | 15.4 | 0 | 2.2 | 0.5 | 100 | 14.6 | 1.8 |

Table 32: Assistance during Delivery

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey -3, 2005-06

Note: Percent distribution of live births in the five years preceding the survey by person providing assistance during delivery, and percentage delivered by caesarean section, according to background characteristics, India, 2005-06.

9.1.3. Child Mortality

Looking next at mortality of infants (below 1 year) and children (up to 5 years), we find the Jains reporting no such deaths for both the categories. For infants under one year of age, the highest mortality rates are seen among others with a very high incidence of 84 per cent. The Hindus have the next highest rates at nearly 60 per cent. The Muslims and the Buddhist show identical rates at 52 per cent, followed by the Sikhs at 45 per cent. The lowest rates are for the Christians at 41 per cent. On the whole, the rates of infant mortality are very high starting at around 40 per cent and then climbing thereon across all the religious groups.

Looking next at child mortality, the first thing to notice is that these rates are higher than the infant mortality rates. This implies that more deaths occur after the first year of child birth. Again the others show the highest rates at 130 per cent, according to the NFHS report; however, this is not possible and likely to be a calculation or typological error. Like the infant mortality rates, here too the Hindus show the second highest rates at 76 per cent. They are again followed by the Muslims and the Buddhist at nearly 70 per cent. Lastly, the Sikhs and the Christians show the lowest rates at 52 per cent each. Thus on the whole, the same religious relative patterns are shown across both the mortality categories.

| Religious Communities | Infant mortality (1q0) | Under-five mortality (5q0) |
|------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Hindus | 58.5 | 76 |
| Muslims | 52.4 | 70 |
| Christians | 41.7 | 52.8 |
| Sikhs | 45.6 | 52.1 |
| Buddhists | 52.8 | 69 |
| Others | 84.6 | 130.7 |

Table 33 Child Mortality across Religions.

Note: All estimates are for the five years preceding the survey (approximately 1988-1992 for NFHS-1, 1994-1998 for NFHS-2, and 2001-2005 for NFHS-3). Totals include Jains, cases with missing information on education, religion, and caste/tribe, and cases in which the respondent does not know the caste/tribe, which are not shown separately.

Based on 250-499 underweight children surviving to the beginning of the age interval.

 * Rate not shown; based on fewer than 250 underweight children surviving to the beginning of the age interval.q

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

9.1.4.. Child Morbidity and access to Health Care – Acute Respiratory Illness (ARI)

Looking at the incidence of ARI and its treatment across religious groups, we find that surprisingly the Jains show the highest rate for symptoms of ARI along with the Muslims at exactly 8.6 per cent for both. Next the Sikhs show the highest rates at 6.7 per cent followed by the Hindus at 5.2 per cent. The lowest rates are shown by the Christians, Buddhists and others. In terms of treatment sought and obtained, we find no such record for the Jains. For the Muslims, who also show high incidences, 70 per cent of the affected sought treatment from a health facility, which is an encouraging trend. However, the highest incidence of treatment is sought by the Sikhs, who show the second highest ARI incidence, at 94 per cent, indicating high awareness and accessibility. The Hindus and the Buddhist follow next with nearly identical rates of 68 per cent. (The Buddhist rates, however, are based on a smaller unweighted sample). The Christians and the others, who show the lowest ARI symptoms, also show the lowest rates for treatment sought at around 48 per cent.

| Religious Communities | Children under 5 years | Children under 5 years with symptoms of ARI | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| | Percentage with symptoms of ARI | Percentage for whom treatment was sought from a health facility or provider | Percentage who received antibiotics | | | | |
| Hindus | 5.2 | 68.3 | 13.9 | | | | |
| Muslims | 8.6 | 70.6 | 9 | | | | |
| Christians | 3.4 | 48.8 | 12.6 | | | | |
| Sikhs | 6.7 | 94.5 | 9.8 | | | | |
| Buddhists | 3.1 | (67.4) | (2.9) | | | | |
| Jains | 8.6 | * | * | | | | |
| Others | 3.1 | (49.6) | (23.1) | | | | |

Table 34: Prevalence and Treatment of Symptoms of ARI

Note: Among children under age five, percentage who had symptoms of acute respiratory infection (ARI) in the two weeks preceding the survey and percentage with symptoms of ARI who received specific treatments, according to background characteristics, India, 2005-06. Total includes children with missing information on mother's education, religion, caste/tribe, mother's current tobacco use, and cooking fuel and children living in households using 'other' cooking fuel, who are not shown separately. () Based on 25-49 underweight cases.

* Percentage not shown; based on fewer than 25 underweight cases.

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

If we look at the Muslims who show the highest ARI infection and with high percentage of treatment, surprisingly we find that the percentage of those who received antibiotics is only 9 per cent as compared to the Hindus at 13.9 per cent and the Christians at 12 per cent (who display one of the lowest ARI rates). However, it's the Buddhists and others who show the lowest incidence of receiving antibiotics.

9.1.5.. Child Morbidity and Access to Health Care - Diarrhoea

Next we look at the occurrence of Diarrhoea amongst children under five years of age. We find that the incidences are highest for the others (16%) followed by the Buddhist (13%) the Sikhs (10%) and the Hindus (10%). The lowest rates are seen for the Muslims and the Christians at around 8 per cent. With regards to the treatment, we find that others, with the highest incidence have the lowest rates for taking the children to a health care provider. The Buddhists with the second highest rates for diarrhea, show a healthy rate of seeking health care at 70 per cent. The highest such rates are seen for the Sikhs at 75 p[er cent followed by the Hindus and Muslims at around 60 per cent and the Christians with the lowest at 50 per cent.

| Religious | Any | Percentage Oral Increased | | Other treatments | | |
|-------------|-----------|---|--|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Communities | Diarrhoea | of children with diarrhoea taken to a health provider | rehydration therapy (ORT) Either ORS or Gruel | fluids | Antibiotic drugs | Home remedy/ herbal/ other |
| Christians | 8.1 | 50 | 54.1 | 13.9 | 20.1 | 11.7 |
| Muslims | 8.2 | 61.8 | 37.6 | 12.8 | 13.9 | 8.7 |
| Hindus | 10 | 59.3 | 38.3 | 9.6 | 15.7 | 6.8 |
| Sikhs | 10.4 | 75.2 | 39.7 | 2.9 | 17.2 | 19.6 |
| Buddhists | 13.6 | 70.9 | 28.2 | 13.8 | 14.3 | 18.8 |
| Others | 16.2 | 45 | 46.9 | 4.7 | 7.7 | 10.8 |

Table 34: Prevalence and Treatment of Diarrhoea

Note: Among children under age five who had Diarrhoea in the two weeks preceding the survey, percentage who received advice or treatment from a health provider, percentage

who received oral rehydration therapy (ORT), and percentage who were given other treatments, by background characteristics, India, 2005-06

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

9.1.6.. Child Morbidity and Access to Health Care - Fever

With respect to fever, we find that the highest rates are seen among the Muslims at 20 per cent. The Jains, Sikhs and others display mid-level incidences that range from 14 per cent to 16 per cent. The Hindus and the Christians have identical incidences of 13 per cent, while the Buddhists have the lowest at 9 per cent. When it comes to seeking health care for fever, we again find the Sikhs leading at 84 per cent followed closely by the Buddhist at 83 per cent. The Muslims and the Hindus follow next at around 70 per cent. The lowest rates are seen for the others. In terms of taking antimalarial drugs, the Buddhist lead with 19 per cent, followed by Sikhs and Hindus at 9 per cent and Christians at 8 per cent. Thus on the whole, the Sikhs and the Buddhist seem to be more aware and conscious of seeking professional help.

| Religious Communitie s | Percentage with fever | Percentage for whom treatment was sought from a health facility or provider | Percentage who took antimalarial drugs |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Muslims | 20 | 71.7 | 4.9 |
| Jains | 16.3 | * | * |
| Sikhs | 15.1 | 84.3 | 9.3 |
| Others | 14.6 | 41.2 | 7.2 |
| Hindus | 13.8 | 70.4 | 9.2 |
| Christians | 13.8 | 67.5 | 8 |
| Buddhists | 9.6 | 83.5 | 19.8 |

 Table 35: Prevalence and Treatment of Fever

Note: Among children under age five, percentage who had a fever in the two weeks preceding the survey and percentage of children with fever for whom advice or treatment was sought from a health facility or provider, who took antimalarial drugs, by background characteristics, India, 2005-06.

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

| Religious Communit ies | BCG | DPT | | | Polio1 | | | Mea sles | All basic vaccina tions | No vaccin ations | Percentage with a vaccination card seen | |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|--------|------|------|-------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|--|------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | | |
| Hindus | 79.6 | 77.5 | 67.9 | 56.4 | 48.6 | 93.9 | 89.9 | 78.7 | 60 | 44.4 | 4.4 | 37.4 |
| Muslims | 69.7 | 66.9 | 58.3 | 47.8 | 45 | 90.3 | 84.5 | 76.6 | 49.6 | 36.3 | 7.3 | 36.4 |
| Christians | 82.1 | 81.6 | 76.3 | 65.1 | 52.9 | 90 | 87.3 | 77.6 | 68 | 56.3 | 9.4 | 44 |
| Sikhs | 90.4 | 88.6 | 86.2 | 76.9 | 65.5 | 91 | 89.1 | 81.1 | 80.2 | 67.3 | 6.6 | 46 |
| Buddhists | 98.5 | 94.1 | 75.6 | 58 | 81.3 | 95.2 | 87.3 | 74.1 | 96 | 50.9 | 0.7 | 39.1 |
| Others | 69.3 | 75.3 | 53.8 | 42.3 | 20.7 | 91.9 | 84.3 | 79.5 | 41.4 | 27.2 | 7.9 | 25.8 |

Table 36: Child immunization across Religions

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

9.1.7. Child Immunization

Child immunization is a primary health precaution, promoted and provided by the state. Awareness and access to this basic health care services could potentially shed a lot of light on the inter-community differences in awareness and access levels and hence in the level of group development. Across the religious groups, we find BCG immunization percentage at the lowest, around 70 per cent, beginning with the others and reaching as high as 98 per cent for the Buddhists. The Sikhs too boast of a 90 per cent . The Christians and Hindus come at around the 80 per cent with the Muslims at the lowest with around 70 per cent. For DPT and polio, let's look at the incidence of complete vaccination, i.e. providing the child with all the required dosages. With DPT we find that the Sikhs and the Christians leading the fray with 76 per cent and 65 per cent respectively. The Buddhists and the Hindus follow next at 58 per cent and 56 per cent respectively. The lowest rates are again seen for the Muslims and the other. The performance for polio vaccination is much better across all the groups. The lowest rates are seen for the Buddhists and the Muslims at 74 per cent and 76 per cent respectively. The highest rates are displayed by the Sikhs and the others of 81 per cent and 80 per cent respectively. Measles inoculation is highest amongst the Buddhists and the Sikhs, followed by the Christians, the Hindus, the Muslims and others. Overall basic vaccination trend reveals the Sikhs doing the best at 67 per cent. Next we find the Buddhists and the Christians at around 50 per cent and 56 per cent. The Hindus and Muslims follow next with the other with the lowest inoculation rates.

9.1.8.. Vitamin Supplements

Next we look at the vitamin A supplements given to children aged 12-35 and 6-59 months in the last six months. For children aged 12-35 months, we find others are doing much better at 34 per cent, followed by the Christians at 30 per cent. Next in place are the Buddhists, the Hindus and the Muslims. Surprisingly the Sikhs do the least in this category. In the second category, for children aged 6-59 months, the Christians do the best, followed by others, the Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and the Sikhs. Interestingly, the Sikhs have done the worst in both of these categories.

| Religious | Children aged 12-35 moths | Children aged 6-59 months |
|-------------|---|---|
| Communities | % given Vitamin A supplements in the last 6 months. | % given Vitamin A supplements in the last 6 months. |
| Others | 34.6 | 21.5 |
| Christians | 30.2 | 22.2 |
| Buddhists | 27.7 | 16.9 |
| Hindus | 25.3 | 18.4 |
| Muslims | 24.2 | 17.6 |
| Sikhs | 18.0 | 13.7 |

Table 37: Access to Vitamin Supplements

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey -3, 2005-06

10. Nutrition

In order to ascertain whether a child is nutritionally deficient, two indices of nutritional deficiency are used. The first is height for age. Here the height and weight of children are recorded and the nutritional status indicator is calculated as standard deviation units (Z scores) from the median value for the reference population. The height-for-age index is an indicator of linear growth retardation and cumulative growth deficits. Children whose height-for-age Z score is below minus two standard deviations (-2 SD) from the median of the reference

population are considered short for their age (stunted) and are chronically malnourished. Children below minus three standard deviations (-3 SD) from the median of the reference population are considered to be severely stunted. Stunting reflects failure to receive adequate nutrition over a long period of time and is also affected by recurrent and chronic illness. Height-for-age, therefore, represents the long-term effects of malnutrition in a population and does not vary according to recent dietary intake.

Weight-for-age index is a composite indicator of height-for-age and weight-forheight records. It takes into account both acute and chronic malnutrition. Children whose weight-for-age status is below minus two standard deviations from the median of the reference population are classified as underweight. Children whose weight-for-age status is below minus three standard deviations (-3 SD) from the median of the reference population are considered to be severely underweight.

| Religious | Heig | ht-for-age Sta | tus | Weight-for-age Status | | | | |
|-------------|--|---|--|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Communities | Percenta ge -3 SD Chronica lly malnouri shed | Percentag e Below -2 SD1 Severely malnouris hed | MeanPercentageZ-belowscore-3 SD(SD)Chronically malnourished | | Percentage below -2 SD1 Severely malnouris hed | Percenta ge Above +2 SD | Mean Z- score (SD) | |
| Hindus | 23.4 | 48 | -1.9 | 16.1 | 43.2 | 0.3 | -1.8 | |
| Muslims | 26.2 | 50.3 | -2 | 15.6 | 41.8 | 0.4 | -1.8 | |
| Christians | 17.9 | 39 | -1.5 | 8.7 | 29.7 | 0.9 | -1.4 | |
| Sikhs | 13.4 | 29.8 | -1.3 | 7.8 | 22 | 0.7 | -1.1 | |
| Buddhists | 23.2 | 56.1 | -1.9 | 14.7 | 39.2 | 0.8 | -1.7 | |
| Jains | 5.9 | 31.2 | -1.2 | 6.6 | 24 | 0 | -1.3 | |
| Others | 34 | 58.5 | -2.2 | 35.4 | 62.7 | 0.1 | -2.4 | |

Table 38: Nutrition Levels across Religions

Note: Percentage of children under age five years classified as malnourished according to two anthropometric indices of nutritional status: height-for-age and weight-for-age, by background characteristics, India, 2005-06

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

Now looking at the height-for-age indicator across religious groups and the chronically malnourished, we find the incidence to be the highest amongst others at 34 per cent. Amongst the major groups, it is highest amongst the Muslims (26%) followed by the Hindus and the Buddhists (23%). Lower rates are seen for the Christians, Sikhs and the lowest for the Jains at 6 per cent. Moving to sever malnutrition, we see other category still doing the worst and the Hindus, Buddhists and the Muslims continuing to perform as earlier, except for Buddhists, who show higher rates than the Hindus. Again the Christians, Sikhs and the lowest rates.

Nutritional deficiency in terms of the weight for age index indicates that, just as for the earlier index, the incidence of chronic malnourishment is the highest for the others and amongst the major groups, is again higher for the Hindus, Muslims and the Buddhist. Christians, Sikhs and Jains follow with the lower rates just as earlier. We find the same relative pattern of positioning repeating itself for the severely malnourished category.

On the whole therefore the Hindus, Muslims and the Buddhists perform the worst in terms of child nutrition while the Jains, Sikhs and the Christians do the best.

10.1.. Prevalence of Anemia among Children

Another indicator of child health is the prevalence and level of anemia among children of various religious communities. Anemia is defined as low level of hemoglobin in the blood. As hemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to the entire body, lack of it in children can lead to impaired cognitive performance, behavioural and motor development, coordination, language development scholastic achievement as well as increased morbidity from infectious diseases. The table below gives the level of anemia detected, after taking blood samples from children across religious groups.

| Religious | Anemia status by Hemoglobin level | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Communities | Mild (10.0-10.9 g/dl) | Moderate (7.0-9.9 g/dl) | Severe (<7.0 g/dl) | Any anemia (<11.0 g/dl) | | | | | |
| Muslims | 28.4 | 38.5 | 2.8 | 69.7 | | | | | |
| Others | 26.4 | 48.7 | 3.9 | 78.9 | | | | | |
| Hindus | 26.1 | 40.7 | 3 | 69.7 | | | | | |
| Christians | 25.6 | 32.5 | 1.9 | 60 | | | | | |
| Sikhs | 22.3 | 35.9 | 5.7 | 63.8 | | | | | |
| Jains | 20.1 | 36.1 | 0 | 56.2 | | | | | |
| Buddhists | 15.9 | 49.9 | 0.2 | 66 | | | | | |

 Table 39: Percentage of Children of 6-59 Months Classified as Having

 Aanemia, by Background Characteristics, India, 2005-06

Note: Table is based on children who stayed in the household the night before the interview. Prevalence of anemia, based on hemoglobin levels, is adjusted for altitude using formula in CDC (1998). Hemoglobin in g/dl = grams per deciliter. Table excludes Nagaland.

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

If we look across the three categories, no clear patterns emerge in terms of consistent trends. If we concentrate on mild and severe levels of anemia, we find that others, the Hindus and the Muslims show the same levels. Across all the groups, we find that a majority of the children suffer from moderate anemia followed by mild and lastly severe levels. Highest incidence of severe anemia population is seen surprisingly for the Sikhs (5.7%) then others (3.9%) and the Muslims (2.8%). Amongst the moderate levels, the Buddhists show the highest percentage, followed by others, the Hindus and the Muslims. Therefore, on the whole, it's others, the Hindus and the Muslims who have large shares corresponding to high levels of anemia.

10.2.. Iodization of Children and Women.

Iodine is an essential micronutrient and the lack of it in the diet can lead to the Iodine Deficiency Disorder (IDD). The IDD can cause miscarriages, still births, brain disorders and retarded psychomotor development, speech and hearing impairments and lower levels of energy among children. Studies suggest that around 200 million Indians face the risk of iodine deficiency (Vir 2002,) while an additional 71 million suffer from goiter and other iodine deficiency disorders (MOHFW 2005). The table below shows the break-up of population across various religious groups, in terms of the salt content in their food intake. Starting with the share of population with adequate consumption, we find that at the lowest 52 per cent for others and at the highest 84 per cent for the Jains. After the Jains, it is the Sikhs and the Christians who do well with sizable population shares of safe iodine consumption. The Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists show shares in 50 per cent range.

| Religious | Io | dine content of | Number of | None + | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|------------|--|
| Communities | None (0 ppm) | Inadequate (<15 ppm) | Adequate (15+ ppm) Total | households | inadequate | |
| Hindus | 25.4 | 25.1 | 49.4 | 100 | 50.5 | |
| Muslims | 18.1 | 27.1 | 54.8 | 100 | 45.2 | |
| Christians | 17.5 | 19.8 | 62.7 | 100 | 37.3 | |
| Sikhs | 13.6 | 12.7 | 73.8 | 100 | 26.3 | |
| Buddhists | 24.1 | 17.1 | 58.9 | 100 | 41.2 | |
| Jains | 8 | 8 | 84 | 100 | 16 | |
| Others | 5.6 | 41.9 | 52.5 | 100 | 47.5 | |

Table 40: Presence of Iodized Salt in Household

Note: Percent distribution of households with salt tested for iodine content, by level of iodine in salt (parts per million), according to background characteristics, India, 2005-06. Only 1 percent of households did not have any salt in the household.

ppm = parts per million.

Source: Published figures from National Family Health Survey - III, 2005-06

Moving on to the inadequate category we find the others with the highest shares at around 40 per cent. Thereafter, around a quarter of the Hindus (25%) and Muslims (27%) show inadequate consumption. The same is true for the Christians, Buddhists and the Sikhs at 19 per cent, 17 per cent and 12 per cent population shares. The Jains show the lowest shares at 8 per cent.

Next, looking at the shares of population with no iodine intake, we find that a quarter of the Hindus and Buddhists are exposed to a high risk of the IDD. 18 per

cent, 17 per cent and 13 per cent belonging to the Muslims, the Christians and the Sikhs respectively do not consume iodine at all. The lowest shares are seen for the Jains and others. Thus, on the whole, we find the Hindus, others and the Muslims showing large shares of their population with either no or inadequate iodine consumption. The Jains and the Sikhs show the lowest consumption of iodine.

The detailed analysis done above considering economic, health and social indicators of well-being of religious communities shows substantial variations across these groups in their level and nature of development. While many of the differences in their well-being can be explained by cultural differences and beliefs, many arise due to the differences in group strength in terms of numbers, level of education, group cohesiveness, economic endowment and their political awareness and clout. The Jains are a case in point. Despite being one of the smallest groups they are the most well educated, prosperous and also quite politically influential in India. The Muslims, on the other hand, despite being the second largest religious community in India lack significant education levels as well as general socio-economic standing. If we choose eight different measures of economic well-being and observe which groups perform the worst and which least, we find that those falling in the others, Zoroastrians and the Muslim categories show up across most of the eight chosen indicators. They are followed by the Buddhist, Hindus and Sikhs. The Christians and the Jains show up the least number of times. These relative positions of groups get further entrenched by inter-group competition arising from differences in religious beliefs and animosity. Thus groups who are performing well continue to do so and those lagging behind find it difficult to change or improve their lot over time, while jostling for religious, economic and political space. The importance of religious beliefs on individual's well-being, therefore, cannot be over emphasized, especially in developing countries like India, where the old socio-cultural norms and community-based living is constantly at loggerheads with the new liberal melting pot of global capitalism. The way forward will be a tricky one trying to

balance people's faith and exposing them to modern, liberal rationalism. A modern common education curriculum across the country would lay the foundations for developing a strong sense of identity, rooted in citizenship based on equality of access, rights and opportunity. This approach would definitely be necessary if the majority of the nation's population, namely the youth are looking to forge newer identities based on education and professional skills in the fast growing global market/economic environment.

Appendixes:

Data Sources and Variables

The various data sets from which the socio-economic variables are chosen are given as follows:

I. Data Set 1: Census of India, 2001: Coverage – All India, Rural Urban, Male, Female.

Variables

- Population size: The share of each religious group across rural and urban regions and across male and female population in the country.
- Gender-wise distribution across religious groups, at all India level. The share of male and female population, from each religious group, in the total gender distribution, determined at all India level..
- Rural-urban distribution across religious groups.
- Adult literacy rates will be ascertained across religious groups and by rural, urban and male, female population at all India levels.
- Average household size across religious groups and within these groups across rural-urban divide. This will indicate fertility levels which have implications for household poverty.

Data Set 2: National Sample Surveys Consumption Expenditure Survey, 2004-2005.

Coverage - All India, Rural, Urban Regions

Variables:

Education

- Enrollment rates (6-14 years) for boys and girls across religious groups and across the rural-urban divide at all India level. (In India, enrollment in Grade 1 is possible only after age of 6 years.)
 - Percentage of boys and girls enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary education.
 - Ratio of girls to boys, enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary education.
- Percentage of boys and girls across religious groups who have never ever attended school and also those who attended but dropped out before finishing primary level education. Percentage of adults who have at least primary, middle, secondary, higher secondary, graduation, technical graduation, diploma education.

Poverty

- Poverty incidence across religious groups. The Planning Commission sets the annual poverty line (poverty line for 2004/5; rural = Rs 211.30 or \$5.28, urban = Rs 454.11 or \$11.35). Though it is calculated at the household level, it is also applicable to individuals. These vary across states as well. The dollar-a-day poverty line would translate into Rs 1,200 monthly for both rural and urban areas.
- Share of the poor in religious group in the all India poor.
- Probability of being poor given religious background.
- Mean per-capita consumption.
- o Ginni coefficient.

• Employment (Age 15-64 years)

 Rate of unemployment. Emphasizing the young people, between 15 and 24 years of age.

- Work participation rate. Also for the age group 15-24 Years.
- Share of self-employed in agriculture, agricultural labour, and other labour, self-employed in non-agriculture in total rural population of religious groups.
- Share of self-employed house hold enterprise, regular salaried/wage earners and casual workers in the total urban population of religious groups.
- Participation percentages across industry type, such as agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, construction, mining, quarrying, etc., in all 17 industries based on National Industrial Classification (1998).

• Land Ownership

- o Average land owned across religious groups at household level
- o Share of different religious groups across land ownership classes

Data Set 3: National Family Health Survey, 2005-2006 (Disaggregated analysis at religious level)

This was supposed to look at the 1992/3 and 1998/9 surveys as well, to identify trends – is there a reason this was not done, at least for a few of the most important variables e.g. infant mortality?

Variables:

Health of Pregnant Mother

- Immunization Tetanus
- Place of most recent delivery.
- Assistance during delivery)
- Maternal mortality index
- Child
 - Mortality of infants (<1 yrs) and children (<5 yrs)
 - o Morbidity
 - Incidence of ARI (Acute Respiratory Illness)

- > Fever, diarrhea
- > Cough, fever
- > Asthma, tuberculosis, jaundice
- Malaria
- o Child immunization, includes BCG,DPT, Polio and Measles
- Vitamin A supplement
- Access to treatment in case of fever, diarrhea, ARI.

• Nutrition and Prevalence of Anemia

- Percentage of children under 5 years that are underweight (the indicators are weight for age and height for age)
- Anemia in children and women
- Iodization of children and women.
- o Maternal and reproductive health

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