

The **India** Gender Gap Review 2009



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The India Gender Gap Review 2009

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AT THE CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY (CII)

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The terms *country* and *nation* as used in this report do not in all cases refer to a territorial entity that is a state as understood by international law and practice. The term covers well-defined, geographically self-contained economic areas that may not be states but for which statistical data are maintained on a separate and independent basis.

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Preface

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Over the last year, the world has seen the biggest recession in almost a century. It is clear that recovery will require, among other things, the best of talent, ideas and innovation. It is therefore more important now than ever before for countries and companies to pay heed to one of the fundamental cornerstones of economic growth available to them—the skills and talent of their female human resource pool. Girls and women make up one-half of the world’s population—without their engagement, empowerment and contribution, we cannot hope to effectively tackle any global challenges nor can we achieve rapid economic recovery.

Measuring the size of the problem is a prerequisite for identifying the best solutions. Through the *Global Gender Gap Reports*, for the past four years, the World Economic Forum has been quantifying the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time. In this special edition of *The India Gender Gap Review 2009*, we aim to provide a more in-depth analysis of how equitably India is dividing its resources between women and men and integrating women into its growth. We find that there are still persistent gaps in health and survival, a fact that contributes to India’s “missing” women. Girls are still missing out on primary and secondary education in far greater numbers than boys, thus divesting India of the proven and positive multiplier effects generated by girls’ education. Among those women who do receive the benefits of health and education, many are then unable to contribute fully and productively to the economy because of barriers to their entry into the workforce or barriers to accessing positions of leadership. A comprehensive new survey conducted in partnership with the Confederation of India Industry reveals that lack of work-life balance policies compounds the challenges in this area. Finally, although India is a leader in South Asia as well as among emerging markets in this field, women still remain under-represented in political leadership and decision-making. Complementing this quantitative gap analysis, the World Economic Forum places a strong emphasis on a multi-stakeholder approach in order to design the most effective measures for tackling global challenges. At the India Economic Summit 2009, we will hold two major sessions to engage leaders on investing in girls to invest in development and to ensure that women are economically integrated.

From a values and social justice perspective, empowering women and providing them with equal rights and opportunities for fulfilling their potential is long overdue. From a business, economic and competitiveness viewpoint, targeting gender parity is a necessary condition for progress. The aim is thus to achieve parity of participation and opportunity while facilitating diversity of thoughts, opinions and approaches. It is our hope that this *Review* will serve to highlight the progress that has already been made in India to close the distance to parity and will act as an urgent call for action towards the work that still needs to be done fully harness the skills and talents of one-half of its population.

Benchmarking India's Gender Gap

The Global Gender Gap Index,¹ introduced by the World Economic Forum in 2006, is a framework for capturing the magnitude and scope of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress. The Index benchmarks national gender gaps on economic, political, education- and health-based criteria, and provides country rankings that allow for effective comparisons across regions and income groups, and over time. The rankings are designed to create greater awareness among a global audience of the challenges posed by gender gaps and the opportunities created by reducing them. The straightforward methodology and quantitative analysis behind the rankings are intended to serve as a base for designing effective measures for reducing gender gaps.

Introduction

The India Gender Gap Review 2009 is an effort to consolidate the latest available data on India's gender gap and to provide analysis of India's position relative to other economies. We also present, for the first time, the results of a survey of business leaders that takes an in-depth look at the practices currently underway in the largest companies in India. The most important determinant of a country's competitiveness is its human talent—the skills, education and productivity of its workforce—and women account for one-half of the potential talent base throughout the world. Over time, therefore, a nation's competitiveness depends significantly on whether and how it educates and utilizes its female talent. By providing objective measures of India's gender gap, this study aims to provide a framework for quantifying how equitably resources and opportunities are being divided between India's male and female talent pools.

The first section of this study reviews the underlying concepts employed in creating the Global Gender Gap Index. The second section provides an analysis of India's performance in 2009, including comparisons with other emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia and China as well as other South Asian economies. The third section focuses on the trends revealed by the Index between 2006 and 2009. The fourth section introduces the results of a unique new survey of some of the largest employers in India and their practices relating to gender equality. Finally, the last part of the study presents a detailed country profile of India that provides a snapshot of the country's position on the 14 variables included in the Global Gender Gap Index

as well as a number of other relevant legal and social factors that affect gender parity.

Index methodology: Measuring the global gender gap

Outlined below are the fundamental underlying concepts of the Global Gender Gap Index methodology and a detailed description of the four subindexes. For a complete explanation of Index construction, please refer to *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*.

Three underlying concepts

There are three basic concepts underlying the Global Gender Gap Index. First, it focuses on measuring gaps rather than levels. Second, it captures gaps in outcome variables rather than gaps in means or input variables. Third, it ranks countries according to gender equality rather than women's empowerment. These three concepts are briefly outlined below. For a description of how these concepts are captured by the construction techniques used in the creation of the Index, please see the section on the *Construction of the Index* in *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*.

Gaps vs. levels

The Index is designed to measure gender-based gaps in access to resources and opportunities in individual countries rather than the actual levels of the available resources and opportunities in those countries. We do this in order to make the Global Gender Gap Index independent of the level of development. In other words, the Index is constructed to rank countries on their gender gaps not on their development level. Rich countries have more education and health opportunities for all members of society and measures of levels thus mainly reflect this well-known fact, although it is quite independent of the gender-related issues faced by each country at their own level of income. The Global Gender Gap Index, however, rewards countries for smaller gaps in access to these resources, regardless of the overall level of resources. For example, the Index penalizes or rewards countries based on the size of the gap between male and female enrolment rates, but not for the overall levels of education in the country.

Outcomes vs. means

The second basic concept underlying the Global Gender Gap Index is that it evaluates countries based on outcome variables rather than input measures. Our aim is to provide a snapshot of where men and women stand with regard to some fundamental outcome variables related to basic rights such as health, education, economic participation and political empowerment. Variables related to country-specific policies, culture or customs—factors that we consider to be “input” or “means” variables—are not included in the Index, but they are displayed in the Country Profiles found in *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*. For example, the Index includes a variable comparing the gap between men and women in high-skilled jobs such as legislators, senior officials and managers (an outcome variable) but does not include data on length of maternity leave (a policy variable).

Gender equality vs. women’s empowerment

The third distinguishing feature of the Global Gender Gap Index is that it ranks countries according to their proximity to gender equality rather than to women’s empowerment. Our aim is to focus on whether the gap between women and men in the chosen variables has declined, rather than whether women are “winning” the “battle of the sexes”. Hence, the Index rewards countries that reach the point where outcomes for women equal those for men, but it neither rewards nor penalizes cases in which women are outperforming men in particular variables.

The four pillars

The Global Gender Gap Index examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories: *economic participation and opportunity*, *educational attainment*, *political empowerment* and *health and survival*. Table 1 displays all four of these subindexes and the 14 different indicators that form part of them.

Economic participation and opportunity

This area is captured through three concepts: the participation gap, the remuneration gap and the advancement gap. The participation gap is captured through the difference in labour force participation rates. The remuneration gap is captured through a hard data indicator (ratio of estimated female-to-male earned income) and a qualitative variable calculated through the World Economic Forum’s Executive Opinion Survey (wage equality for similar work). Finally, the gap between the advancement of women and men is captured through two hard data statistics (the ratio of women to men among legislators, senior officials and managers, and the ratio of women to men among technical and professional workers).

Educational attainment

In this category, the gap between women and men’s current access to education is captured through ratios of women to men in primary-, secondary- and tertiary-level education. A longer-term view of the country’s ability to educate women and men in equal numbers is captured through the ratio of the female literacy rate to the male literacy rate.

Political empowerment

This category includes mainly measures of the gap between men and women in political decision-making at the highest levels. This concept is captured through the ratio of women to men in minister-level positions and the ratio of women to men in parliamentary positions. In addition, we include the ratio of women to men in terms of years in executive office (prime minister or president) in the last 50 years. A clear drawback in this category is the absence of any variables capturing differences between the participation of women and men at local levels of government. Should such data become available at a global level in future years, they will be considered for inclusion in the Global Gender Gap Index.

Health and survival

This category attempts to provide an overview of the differences between women’s and men’s health. To do this, we use two variables. First, we use the gap between women’s and men’s healthy life expectancy, calculated by the World Health Organization. This measure provides an estimate of the number of years that women and men can expect to live in good health, by taking into account the years lost to violence, disease, malnutrition or other relevant factors. The second variable included in this subindex is the sex ratio at birth. This variable aims specifically to capture the phenomenon of “missing women” prevalent in many countries with strong son preference.

For a full description of Index construction, including weights assigned to the indicators, please refer to *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*.

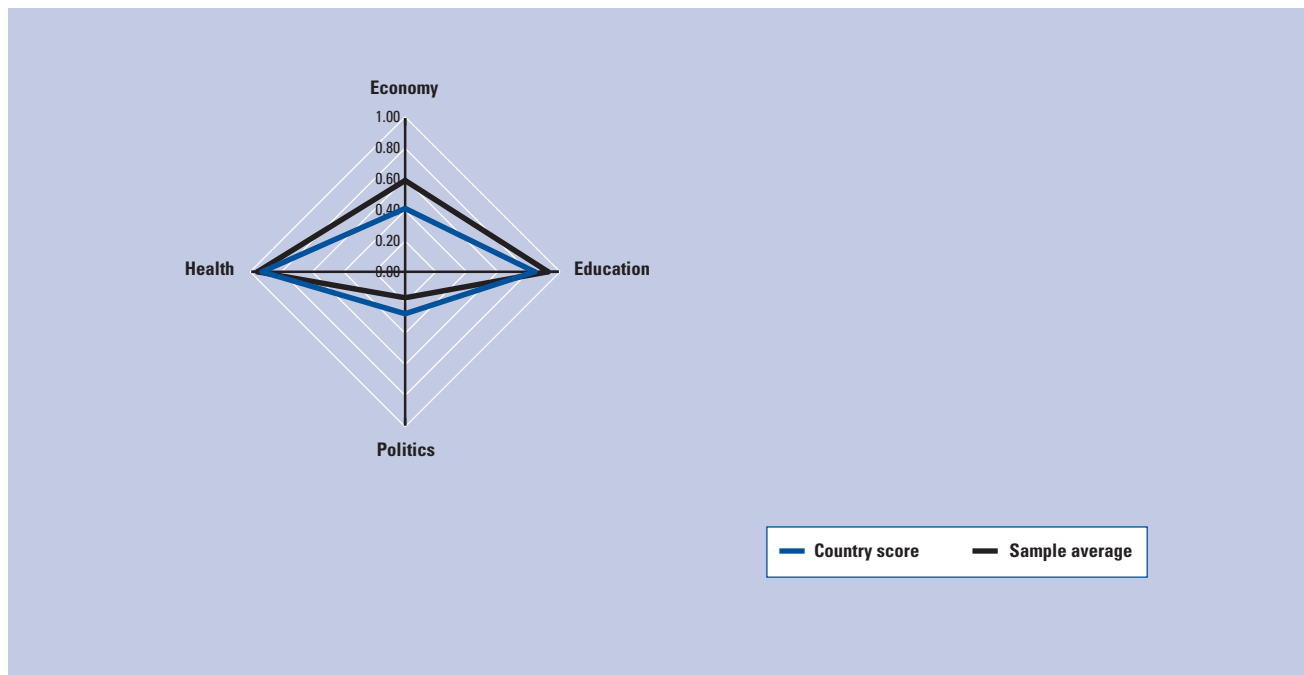
India’s performance in the global rankings 2009

Although there are striking and persistent inequalities between social strata and between regions,² the Global Gender Gap Index provides us with an overview of how opportunities and resources are being divided between women and men in India as a whole. India places in the bottom half of the global rankings, holding the 114th position out of the 134 economies covered in the Global Gender Gap Index 2009.

Table 1: Structure of the Global Gender Gap Index

Subindex	Variable	Source
Economic Participation and Opportunity	Ratio: Female labour force participation over male value	International Labour Organization, <i>Key Indicators of the Labour Market</i> , 2007
	Wage equality between women and men for similar work (converted to female-over-male ratio)	World Economic Forum, Executive Opinion Survey 2009
	Ratio: Estimated female earned income over male value	United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index 2008 Update and <i>Human Development Report 2007/2008</i> , 2005 or latest data available
	Ratio: Female legislators, senior officials and managers over male value	International Labour Organization, <i>LABORSTA Internet</i> , online database, 2007 or latest data available; United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index 2008 Update, <i>Human Development Report 2007/2008</i> , 2005 or latest data available
	Ratio: Female professional and technical workers over male value	International Labour Organization, <i>LABORSTA Internet</i> , online database, 2007 or latest data available; United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index 2008 Update and <i>Human Development Report 2007/2008</i> , 2005 or latest data available
Educational Attainment	Ratio: Female literacy rate over male value	United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index 2008 Update and <i>Human Development Report 2007/2008</i> , 2005 or latest data available; UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <i>Education Indicators</i> , 2007 or latest data available; World Bank's <i>World Development Indicators</i> , Online Database, 2007 or latest available data
	Ratio: Female net primary level enrolment over male value	UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <i>Education Indicators</i> , 2008 or latest data available; World Bank's <i>World Development Indicators</i> , Online Database, 2008 or latest available data
	Ratio: Female net secondary level enrolment over male value	UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <i>Education Indicators</i> , 2008 or latest data available; World Bank's <i>World Development Indicators</i> , Online Database, 2008 or latest available data
	Ratio: Female gross tertiary level enrolment over male value	UNESCO Institute for Statistics, <i>Education Indicators</i> , 2008 or latest data available; World Bank's <i>World Development Indicators</i> , Online Database, 2008 or latest available data
Health and Survival	Ratio: Female healthy life expectancy over male value	World Health Organization, Online Database (WHOSIS), data from 2003
	Sex ratio at birth (converted to female-over-male ratio)	Central Intelligence Agency, <i>The CIA World Factbook</i> , 2008 Edition
Political Empowerment	Ratio: Women with seats in parliament over male value	Inter-Parliamentary Union – <i>National Women in Parliaments</i> , July 2009 update or latest data available; United Nations Development Programme, Human Development Index 2008 Update or latest data available
	Ratio: Women at ministerial level over male value	Inter-Parliamentary Union, <i>E-Parliament Report</i> , 2008
	Ratio: Number of years with a female head of state or government (last 50 years) over male value	Own calculations, as of June 2009

Figure 1: India's performance by subindex



India's performance by subindex

India holds the last position (134th) in the *health and survival subindex* (Figure 1). Women live only one year longer than men (54 years for women vs. 53 years for men). By comparison, the standards used by the UN's Gender-Related Development Index reflect an "optimal" gap of five years. This places India in 119th position among the 134 countries on this variable. One contributor to this statistic continues to be poor maternal health, with only 42% of births in the country supervised by health professionals.³ Close to 300 Indian women die every day during childbirth or of pregnancy-related causes.⁴

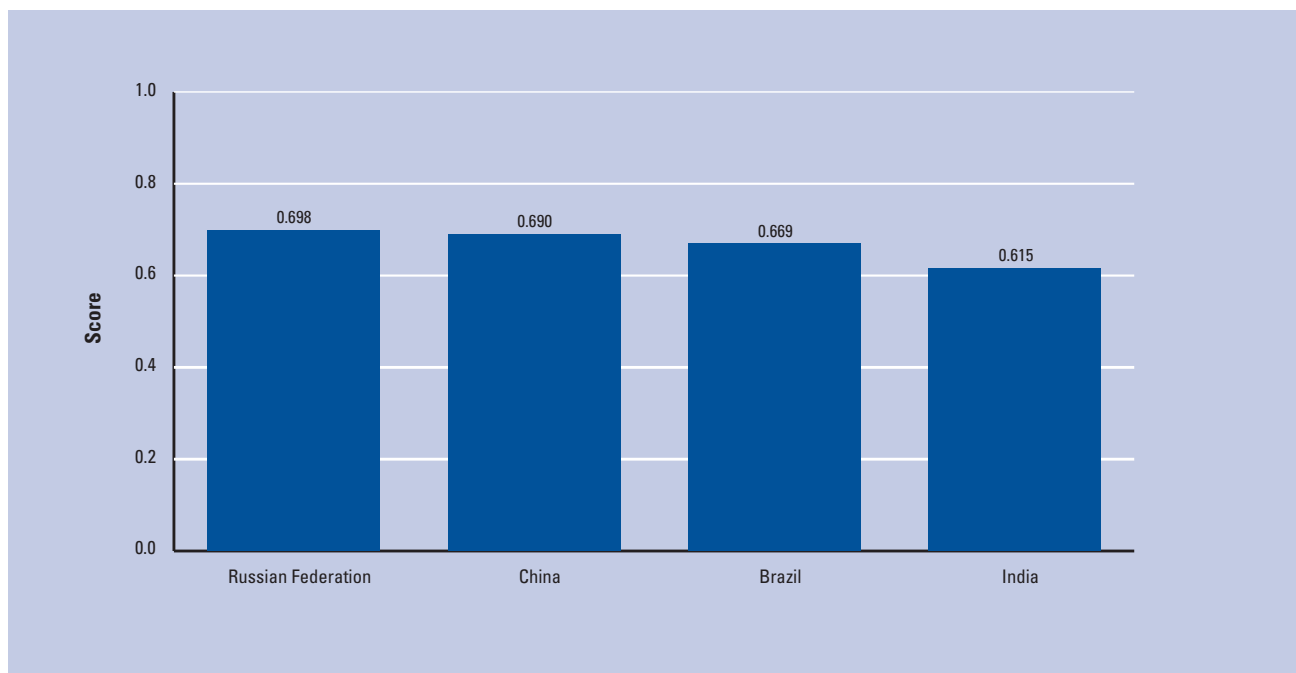
India also has among the worst sex ratios at birth in the world, ranking 131st on this variable. While the "normal" sex ratio at birth is considered to be 1.06 boys for every girl that is born, in India this average is 1.12 boys for every girl, a ratio that is significantly worse in some regions. The strong preference for sons and the disproportionate sex ratio at birth make India one of the few countries where males significantly outnumber females;⁵ that imbalance has increased over time.⁶ According to Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, India's population distribution accounts for some 25 million "missing women".⁷ In addition to female foeticide and infanticide, poorer nutrition and lower levels of medical treatment during illness leave girls far more susceptible than boys to disease and infections, leading to poor health and a shorter lifespan. The

infant mortality rate for boys and girls is 56 and 61, respectively, out of 1,000 live births.⁸

The benefits of girls' education have long been proven to impact a wide range of factors from improving incomes to improving maternal health, reducing fertility rates and reducing infant mortality. However, India's performance on girls' education variables remains weak. In the *educational attainment subindex*, India ranks 121st, having closed approximately 84% of its gender gap in this category.⁹ The literacy rate for women (53%) is still only two-thirds that of men (76%). Close to 245 million Indian women lack the basic capability to read and write.¹⁰ Current gaps on primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment rates place India in 113th, 123rd and 103rd positions, respectively. Almost twice as many girls as boys are pulled out of school or never sent to school.¹¹

In the *economic participation and opportunity subindex*, India holds 127th position, having closed a little over 41% of the gender gap in this category. Women's labour force participation, at 36%, is less than half of the labour force participation rate of men (85%). Women's estimated earned annual income (US\$ 1,185) is less than a third of men's income (US\$ 3,698). However, the perceived gap in wages for similar work is a little narrower, with women's incomes perceived to be roughly two-thirds of men's incomes.¹² Finally, women make up only 3% of legislator, senior official and managerial positions.

Figure 2: Global Gender Gap Index scores, BRIC



India's performance in the *political empowerment subindex* is strong relative to the rest of the world, ranking at 24th position, although only 27% of the gender gap has been closed in this category. Women hold 11% of the positions in parliament and 10% of ministerial-level positions, placing India in 100th and 93rd positions, respectively, on these indicators. However, India holds the 4th position in the world on the indicator relating to the number of years that a female leader has held the head of government position in the last 50 years. In the case of India, 16 of the last 50 years were occupied by a female in the executive office.

Although the Global Gender Gap Index does not include indicators on women's participation at local levels of government because of the lack of global data, it is notable that the representation of women leaders at the grassroots level is distinctive in India. The 73rd amendment to India's constitution, passed in 1993, mandates local elections every five years and reserves one-third of all seats for women at local levels of government. This amendment has brought over one million women into the political system.¹³ In 2009, the Government of India's Cabinet approved a proposal to move a bill to amend the Constitution of India that would enhance the reservation of seats in *panchayats* (local councils) for women from one-third to 50% across the country.¹⁴

For a complete overview of India's performance on individual indicators, please refer to the India Country Profile at the back of this *Review*.

India within the BRIC economies

Women make up one-half of the human resources available to an economy, and gender equality thus impacts long-term competitiveness. In the emerging markets group composed of Brazil, Russia, India and China (the BRICs), in the overall Global Gender Gap Index, Russia (51) leads the way, followed by China (60), Brazil (81) and India (114). Figure 2 displays these countries' overall scores while Figures 3–6 provide comparisons by subindex. Brazil is one of the 39 countries covered that have fully closed the gap on the health and survival subindex and is the only country among the BRICs to have done so. India is the lowest-ranking country on this variable, placing below China on sex ratio at birth as well as healthy life expectancy gaps. Although maternal mortality is not a variable included in the Index, it is captured in a broader sense by the healthy life expectancy variable. The differences among the BRIC countries regarding the maternal mortality rate are striking—India's maternal mortality ratio is 16 times that of Russia, 10 times that of China and 4 times higher than in Brazil. In the educational attainment subindex, Brazil leads the way having closed over 99% of the gap, followed by Russia, China and India. India is the only economy out of the four BRIC countries that has not yet fully closed the gender gap on enrolment in primary education.

In the economic participation and opportunity subindex, Russia has closed over 74% of its gender gap and thus leads the way, followed by China (70%), Brazil

Figure 3: Health and Survival subindex scores, BRIC

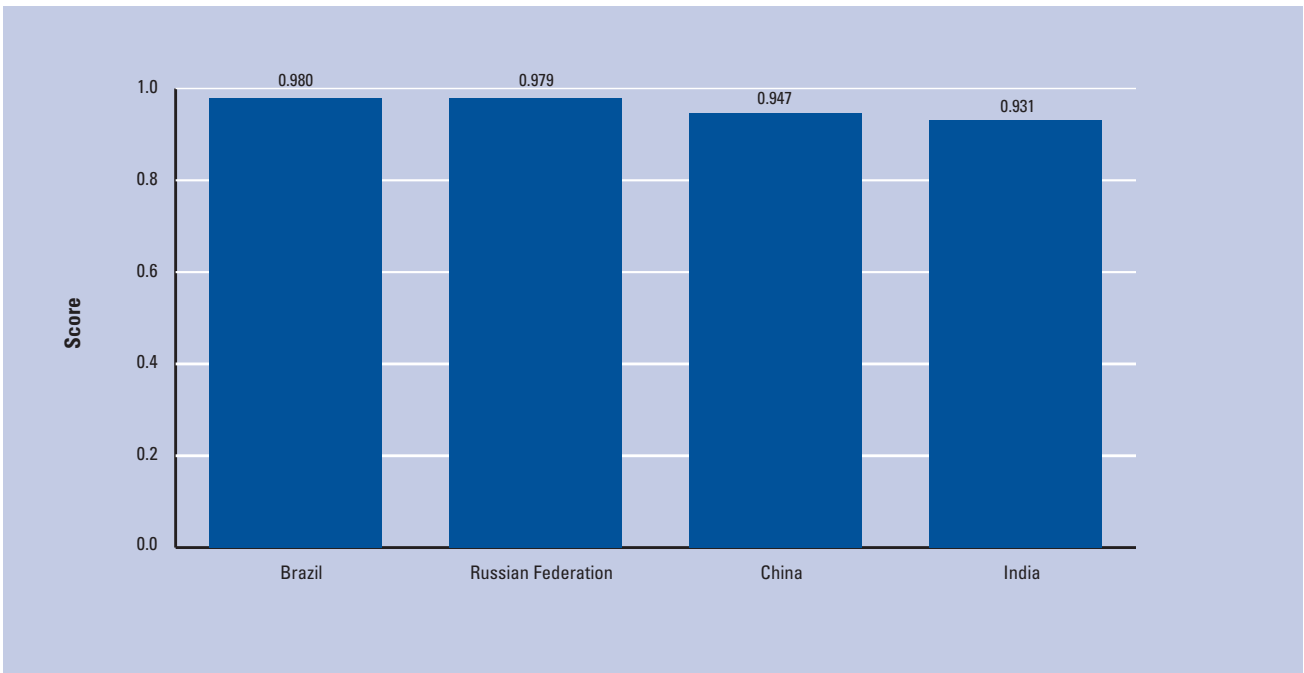


Figure 4: Educational Attainment subindex scores, BRIC

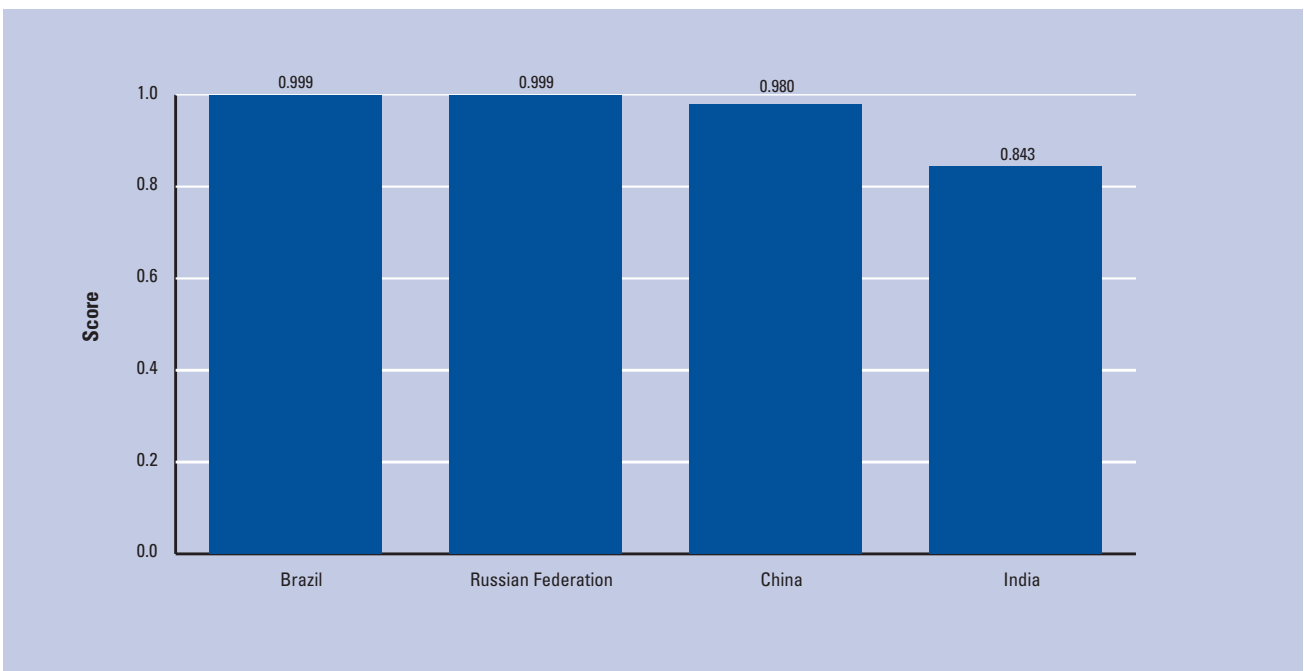


Figure 5: Economic Participation and Opportunity subindex scores, BRIC

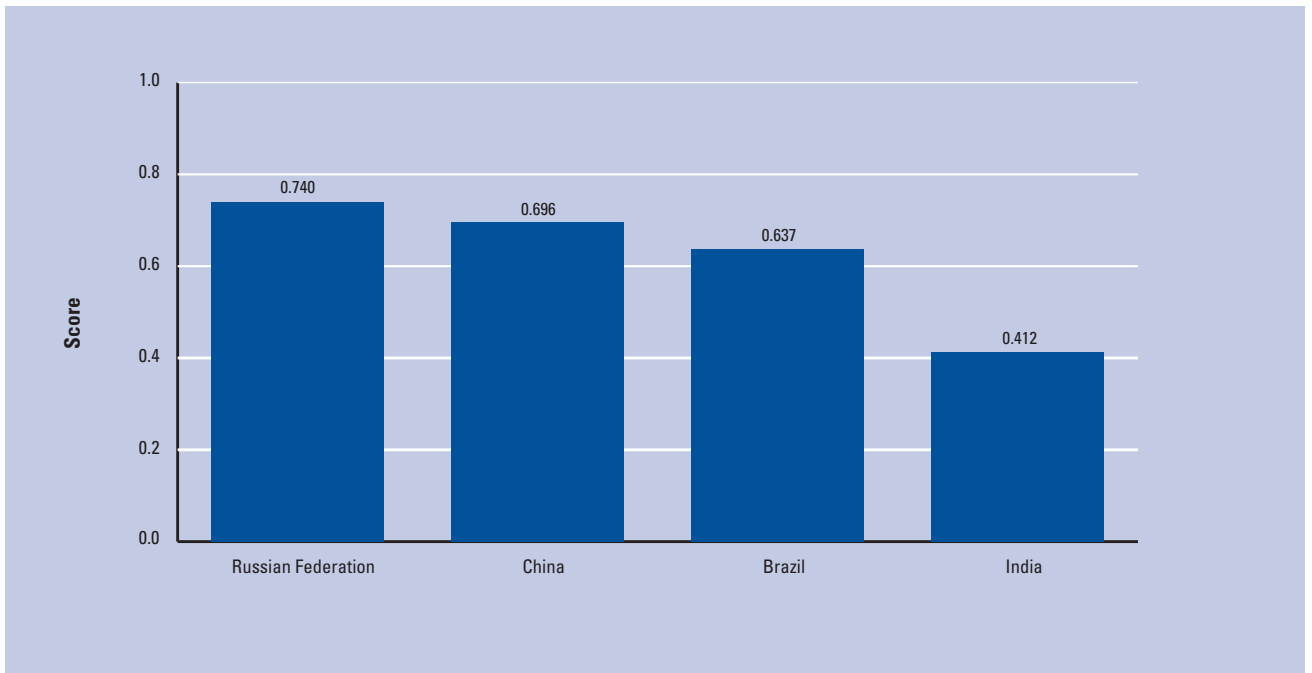


Figure 6: Political Empowerment subindex scores, BRIC

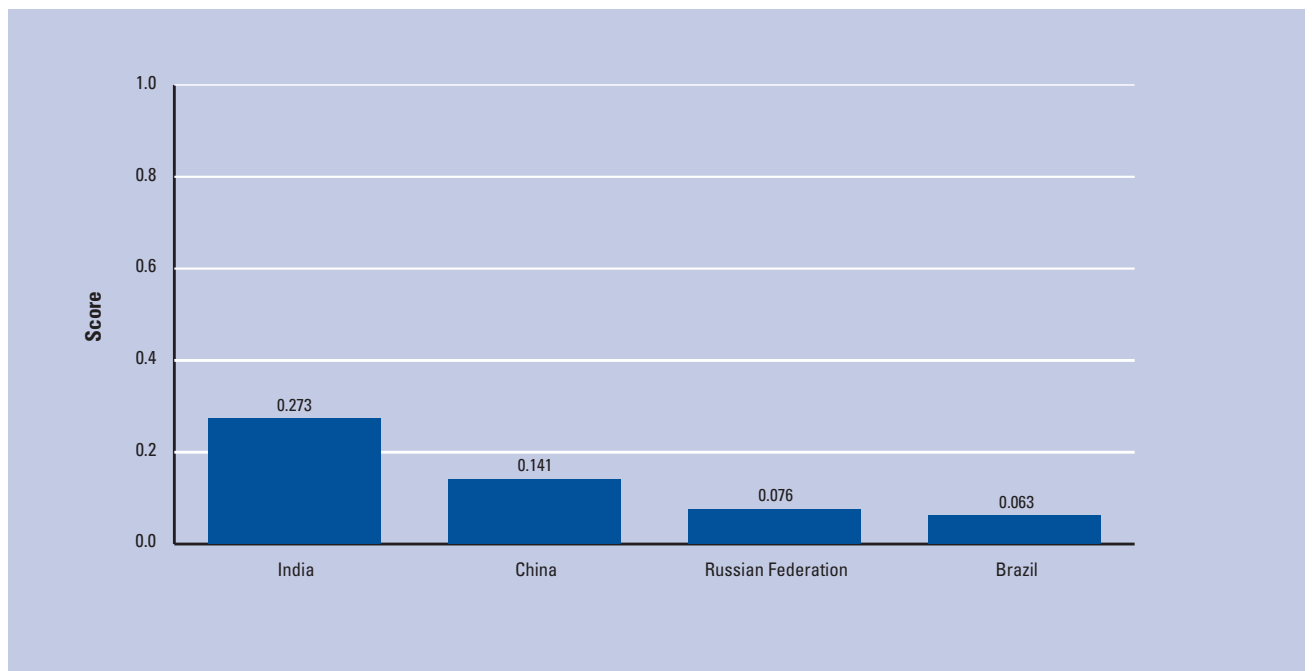
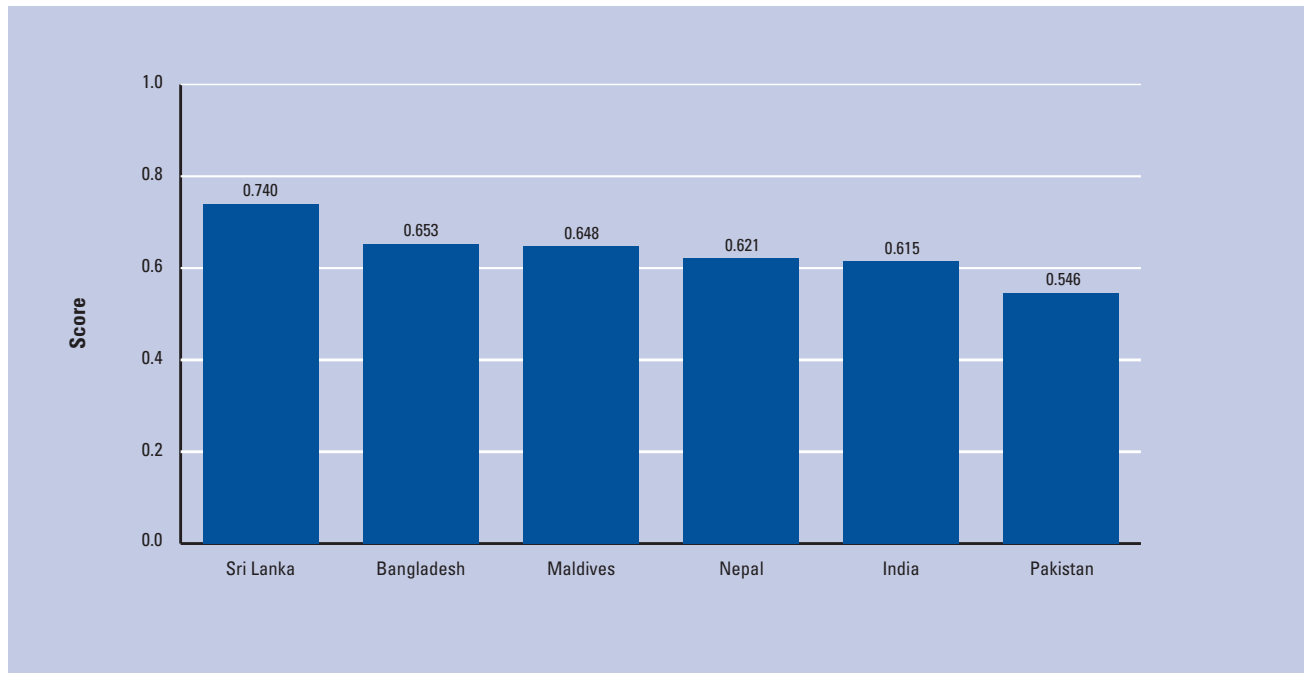


Figure 7: Global Gender Gap Index scores, South Asia



(64%) and India (41%). Russia's female-to-male ratio for the labour force participation is more than twice that of India. While the perceived wage gap for similar work is better than the average of the BRIC countries, the female-to-male ratio of the estimated earned income (0.32) is far below the average (0.54). The low proportion of women among legislator, senior official and managerial positions also indicates the need for removing barriers that prevent women's access to high-skilled jobs. On the political empowerment subindex, India holds the first spot, followed by China, Russia and Brazil. India's tradition of women in significant political leadership roles contributes to its consistently strong ranking on this subindex.

India compared with South Asian countries

The Global Gender Gap Index rankings reveal the following order of performance within South Asia: Sri Lanka (16), Bangladesh (93), Maldives (100), Nepal (110), India (114) and Pakistan (132). Figure 7 displays individual country scores on the overall index, while Figures 8–11 display individual country scores on the subindexes. On the health and survival subindex, Sri Lanka is among the 39 countries in the world that has closed the gender gap on this category, but the rest of the region—Nepal (123), Maldives (126), Bangladesh (127), Pakistan (128) and India (134)—performs poorly. On the educational attainment subindex, Maldives is one of the 25 countries in the world to have closed this gender gap and the only country from

the region to have done so. Sri Lanka (68) falls towards the middle of the rankings while the rest of the region's economies are clustered towards the bottom of the global rankings: Bangladesh (105), India (121), Nepal (125) and Pakistan (128).

On the economic participation and opportunity subindex, the regional as a whole is well below the world average, with Maldives and Sri Lanka as the best performers in 97th and 99th place, followed by Nepal (116), Bangladesh (121), India (127) and Pakistan (132). On the political empowerment subindex, most of the region performs well. Sri Lanka holds the 6th position in the global rankings, followed by Bangladesh (17), India (24), Nepal (35), Pakistan (55) and Maldives (112).

India's performance over time: 2006–2009

Figure 12 provides a comprehensive picture of the trends in India's performance since the first Global Gender Gap Index was released in 2006. On average, India's performance relative to its scores in 2006 has improved over the last four years, increasing from 0.601 to 0.615 (on a scale of 0 to 1). Examining the four subindexes, we find that between 2006 and 2009, Indian women and girls have narrowed the gap with men and boys on education, economic participation and political participation; relative to men, however, they are slipping further on health.

Figure 8: Health and Survival subindex scores, South Asia

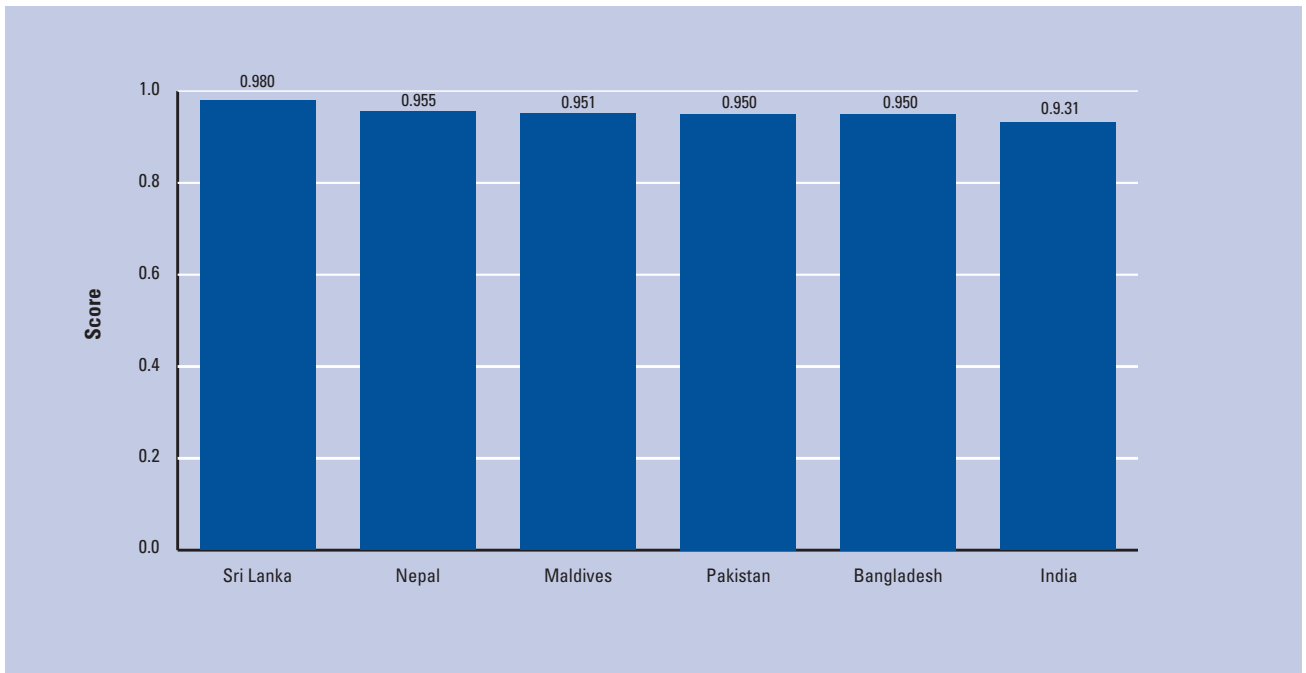


Figure 9: Educational Attainment subindex scores, South Asia

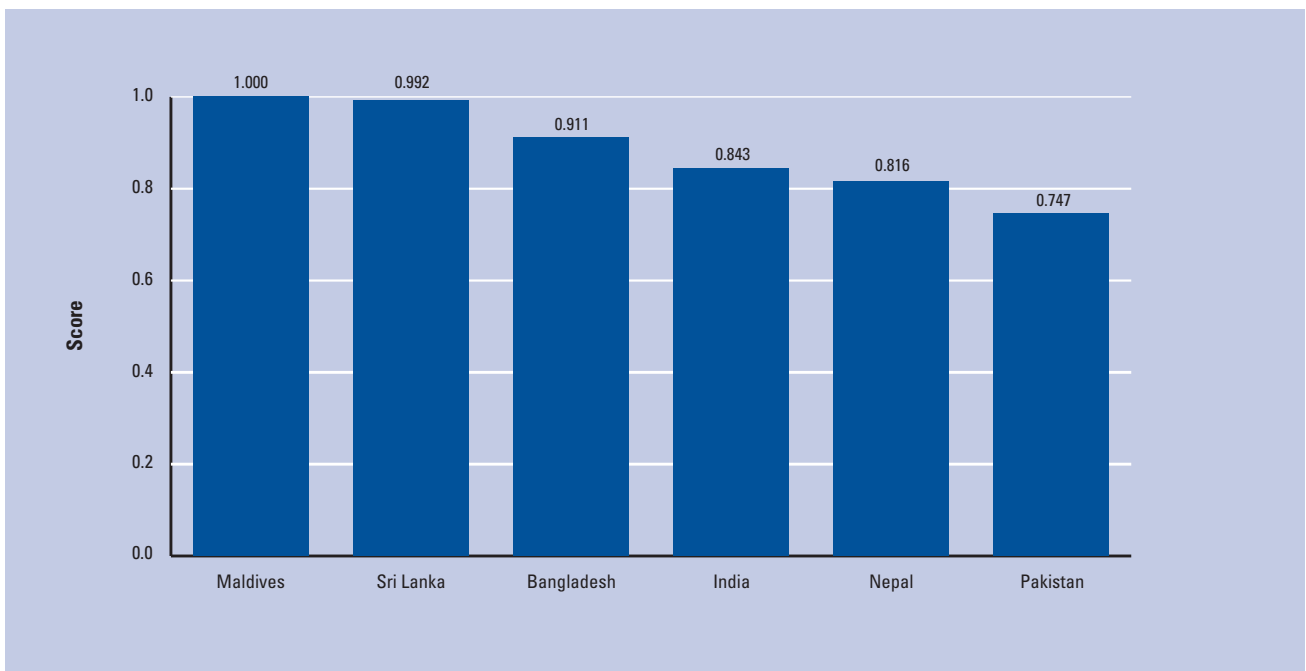


Figure 10: Economic Participation and Opportunity subindex scores, South Asia

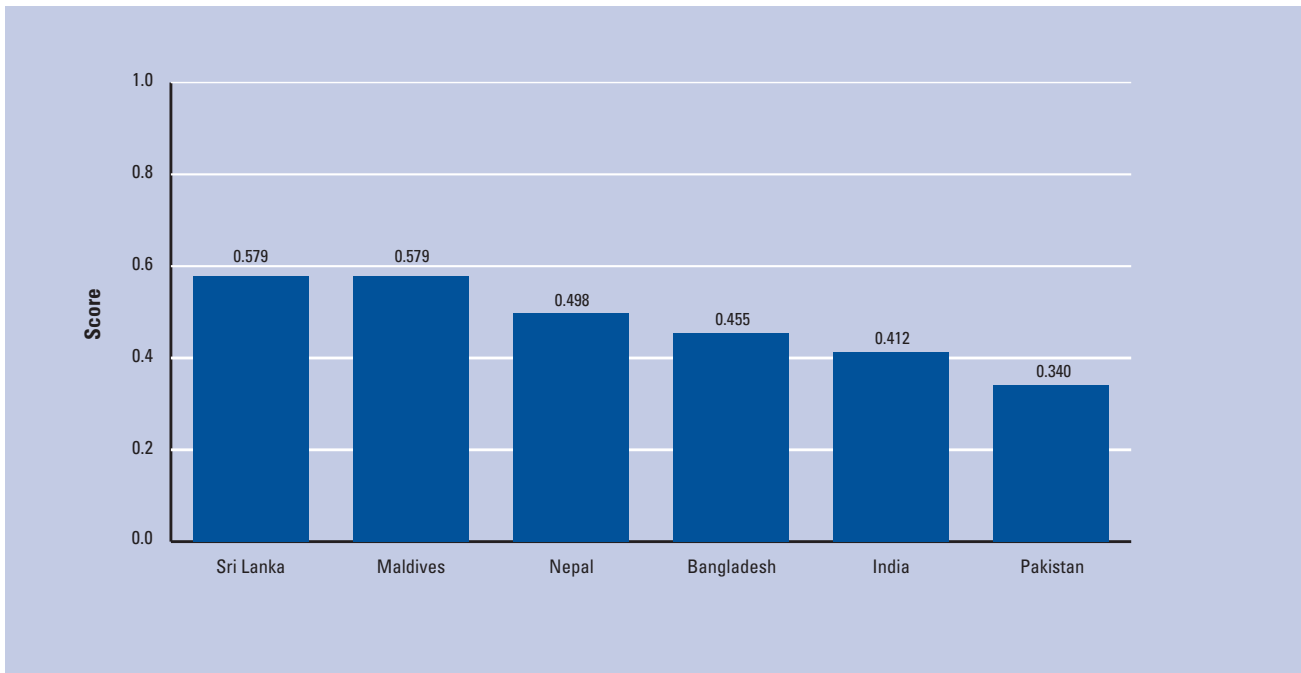


Figure 11: Political Empowerment subindex scores, South Asia

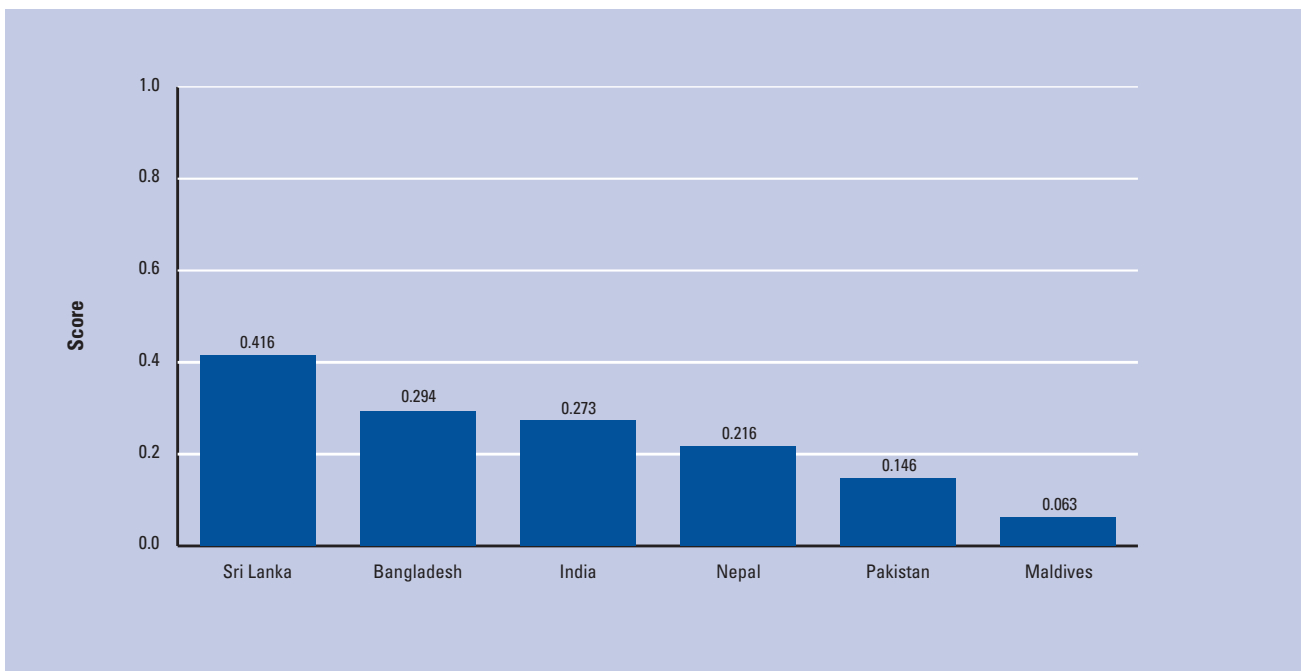
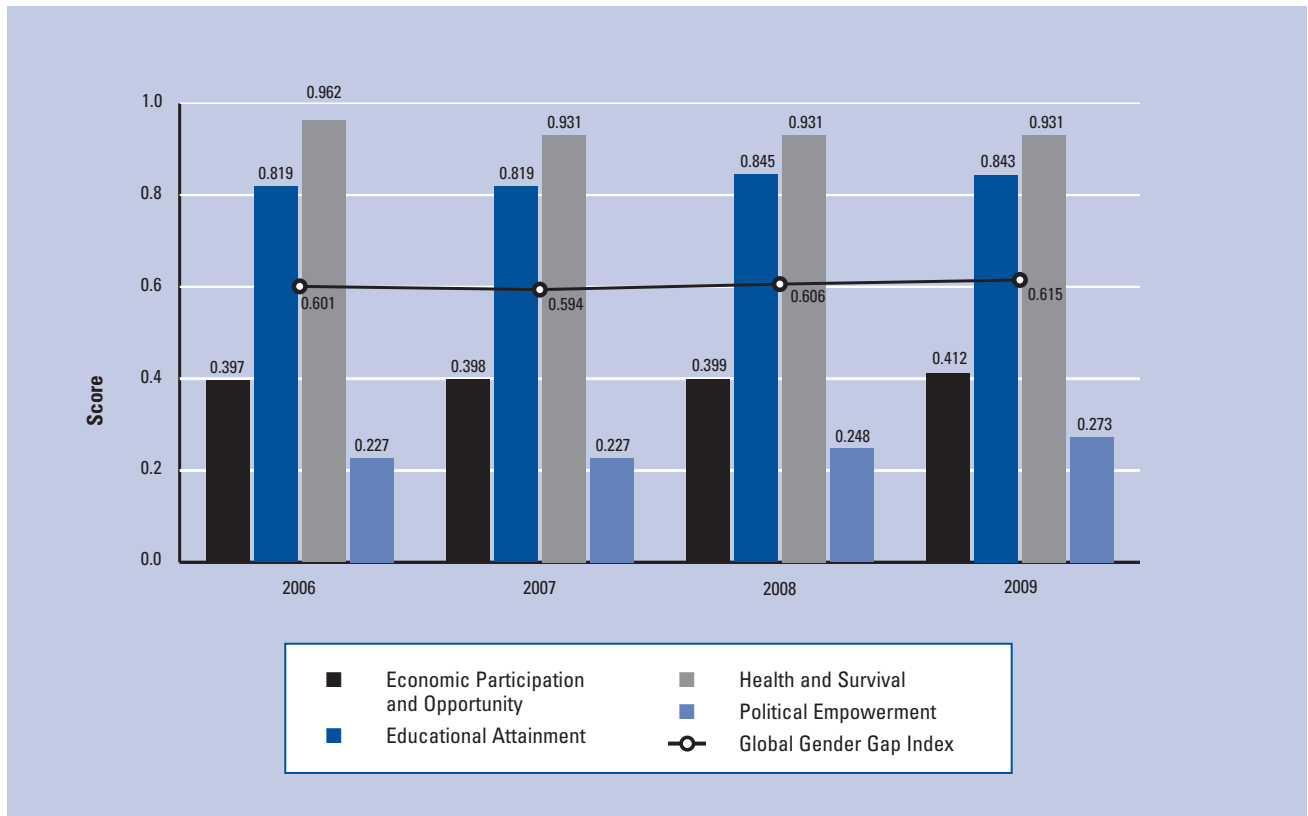


Figure 12: India's performance on the Global Gender Gap Index, 2006–2009



Competitiveness and the gender gap

The most important determinant of a country's competitiveness is its human talent—the skills, education and productivity of its workforce. And women account for one-half of the potential talent base throughout the world. Over time, therefore, a nation's competitiveness depends significantly on whether and how it educates and utilizes its female talent. To maximize its competitiveness and development potential, each country should strive for gender equality—that is, to give women the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities as men. Figure 13 shows a plot of the Global Gender Gap Index 2009 scores against the Global Competitiveness Index 2009–2010 scores. The graph confirms the correlation between gender equality and the level of competitiveness of countries. The correlation is evident despite the fact that, as opposed to other gender indexes, the Global Gender Gap Index explicitly eliminates any direct impact of the absolute levels of any of the variables (e.g., life expectancy, educational attainment, labour force participation) on the Index. While correlation does not prove causality, it is consistent with the theory and mounting evidence that empowering women means a more efficient use of a nation's human talent.

Numerous studies during the last decade have confirmed that reducing gender inequality enhances

productivity and economic growth. Research demonstrates that investment in girls' education reduces female fertility rates, lowers infant and child mortality rates, lowers maternal mortality rates, increases women's labour force participation rates and earnings and fosters educational investment in children. However, even with gains in women's health and education, it is not possible for countries to fully reap the rewards of these investments until women are adequately integrated into the economy and leadership structures.

An important element of success in this area is how well a country's corporate sector is engaging the female half of the talent pool. Innovation requires new, unique ideas—and the best ideas flourish in a diverse environment. This implies that companies benefit by successfully integrating the female half of the available talent pool across their internal leadership structures. There has also been new research on how the growing "power of the purse" will be among the drivers of growth in the post-crisis economy. The combined impact of growing gender equality, the emerging middle class and women's spending priorities will lead to rising household savings rates and shifting spending patterns that are likely to benefit sectors such as food, healthcare, education, childcare, apparel, consumer durables and financial services, particularly in emerging markets.¹⁵ The study predicts that over the next

Figure 13: Relationship between the Global Competitiveness Index 2009–2010 and the Global Gender Gap Index 2009 scores



Source: Global Gender Gap Index 2009 and Global Competitiveness Index 2009–2010.

five years, the effects of the growing power of the purse will be seen most clearly in China and Russia, and to a lesser extent in Vietnam, Mexico, Brazil and Indonesia. In the subsequent decade (2015–25), these dynamics are likely to remain strong in Mexico and Russia, and to continue to strengthen in China, Indonesia, Vietnam, India and the Philippines. India’s middle class will see rapid growth of a very low base, but the shifts in spending that we outline are likely to remain constrained for the next 10 to 15 years. Therefore, in addition to integrating the female talent pool as employees, Indian companies will need to increasingly take into account the female consumer base.

A special section by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) builds the case for women’s economic integration in India (Box 1). Next, we provide the results of a unique new survey on gender equality practices in the Indian corporate world, conducted in partnership with CII.

India’s corporate gender gap

In 2009, the Corporate Best Practices for Gender Equality Survey was conducted by the World Economic Forum in conjunction with national partner institutes in most OECD economies as well as Brazil, Russia, India and China. The survey targets the heads of human resource (HR) departments of the 100 biggest employers in each

of the countries covered. While the complete study will be released in 2010, in this section we provide a preliminary overview of the most salient elements from the results of the Indian survey.

Respondents’ profile

Fifty-nine of the 100 biggest employers in India responded to the survey. Of these responses, 60% were completed by the heads of HR or diversity, while the rest were completed by other staff in these departments. Of the respondents, 70% were male and 30% were female.

Participation and leadership gaps

Of the respondents, 20% had more than 25,000 employees, while the rest ranged between 10,000 and 25,000. Only 10% of the companies had 50% or more female employees; and 50% of the companies had between 20% and 40% female employees. Almost 40% of the respondents had only 10% female employees. While none of the companies surveyed had female CEOs, Figures 14–17 display the percentages of entry-level, middle-management, senior-level and board-level positions occupied by women. Despite persistent gaps at the senior level, only 38% of companies set targets or quotas regarding women’s participation at this level (Figure 18).

Box 1: Empowering women: The key to prosperity

By THE CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY

“Women hold up half the sky”, and they do it over ground that remains very rocky indeed. Despite concerted efforts by governments and other organizations committed to ensuring a more equal world, we are all aware that very large gender gaps remain in every part of the world, and more so in the developing countries.

In some parts of the world, female infanticide is still rampant, and male-female ratios are so skewed that they are likely to result in grave social imbalance in the future. Young girls are still less likely to be sent to school or to be allowed to complete their education. In many parts of the world, boys are given better medical care than girls. Indeed, girls are more likely to be malnourished than boys as they are discriminated against even with regard to the quantity and quality of food they are offered in the home.

If a woman overcomes all odds and enters the workplace, she still has to deal with challenges that her male counterpart does not have to face. Some careers are still closed to women, and in many other careers that are technically open to women, there is resistance to hiring women. Women are often paid less than their male counterparts, and the “glass ceiling” is the term used to describe the invisible, intangible barrier to women being able to attain top jobs or positions of real power within an organization.

Women are also constrained by a host of factors, both major and minor, that are impediments on the road to equality. At the workplace, women’s new roles do not free them from traditional responsibilities. They still have to shoulder a disproportionate share of the responsibility for housework, and for childcare and elderly care. For most organizations, this makes women less desirable employees than their male counterparts. It also puts women under pressure that is likely to cause them drop out of the workforce when they attempt to balance the demands of motherhood with the requirements of a career.

The World Economic Forum has undertaken considerable work to measure global gender gaps through benchmarking tools, and it tracks gender inequalities on a range of indices that encompass economics, politics, education and health. We at the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) are deeply interested in such initiatives and were very pleased to partner with the World Economic Forum on this special edition of *The India Gender Gap Review 2009*.

CII is concerned that, while the Constitution of India promises equality to both men and women, stating that “Women shall not only have equal rights and privileges with men but also that the state shall make provisions—both general and specific—for the welfare of women”, so far the situation on the ground falls very far short of this noble objective. India is ranked 114 out of 134 countries covered by *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*. Clearly, government, business and civil society need to work in a concerted way to improve the situation for women in India so that they are can fulfill their true potential and enrich this country.

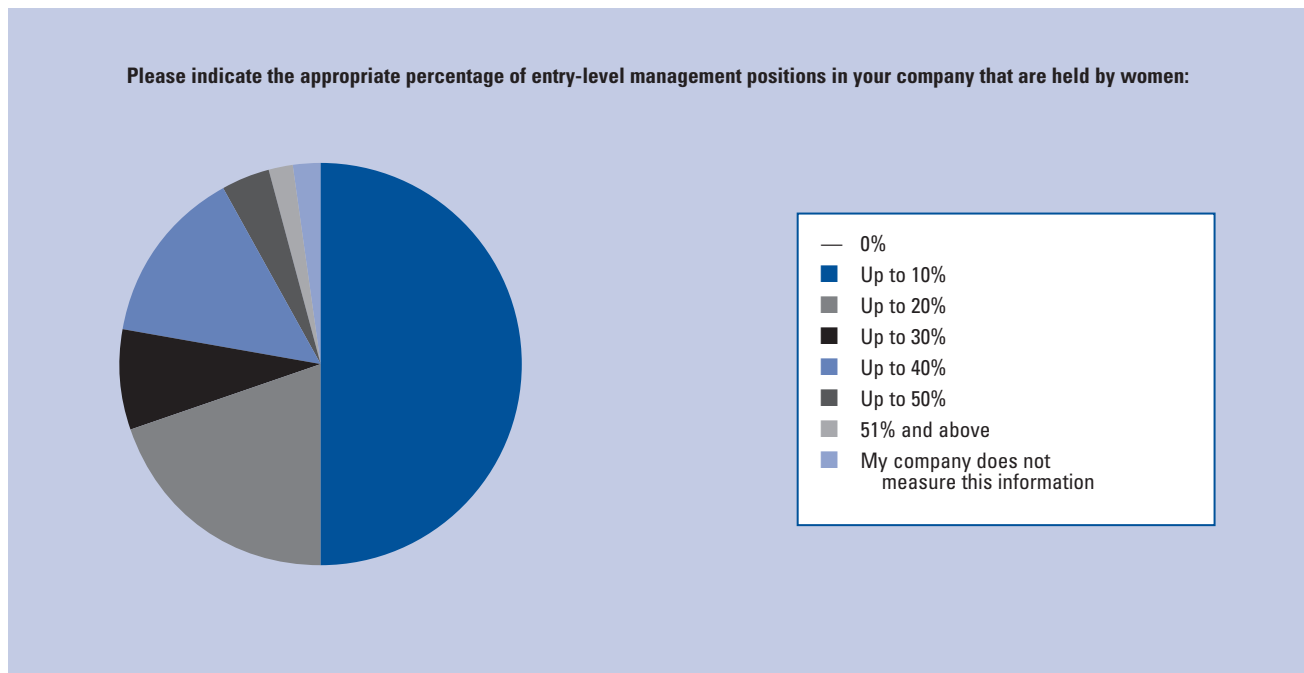
CII is fully cognizant of the need for increasing women’s participation in the workplace. CII founded the Social

Development Council in 1995 and, under this body, it set up a national committee on Women’s Empowerment in 2002. This committee set for itself very challenging objectives that ranged from sensitizing industry on gender inequalities to bringing about changes in attitude at the business and community levels. From research that identified core issues to sharing best practices and undertaking advocacy to bring about policy change, CII has been steadfast in its role as a catalyst for change in the critical area of gender equity across a wide range of indices.

In November 2005, CII commissioned a study on “Understanding the levels of women’s empowerment in the workplace”, and in 2006, CII undertook a project on the “Prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace” with the support of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). This initiative led to the development of a complete toolkit, “Enabling Environment: A Manual for Effective and Engendered Workplaces”. CII has also established a CII Woman Exemplar Award, which seeks to recognize those at the community level who have, against all odds, excelled and contributed significantly to the development process in India. CII endeavours to bring about changes in attitude that would facilitate and encourage women to achieve their full potential at the workplace, and to identify and eliminate obstacles that impede a woman’s career advancement. We offer our services to member companies for conducting gender equity workshops in the workplace.

If we look at recent history, it is clear that the countries that have really forged ahead are those that have invested most heavily in their human capital. More than raw materials or other tangibles such as fertile land, which may once have determined wealth, it is human talent that is likely to take a country forward and lead to prosperity. Women constitute half of a country’s population. No country that does not fully respect or utilize this resource can expect to be a leader in the future. We need to include women in our growth story, not just to have a kinder, gentler world, but also to usher in a new era of prosperity.

Figure 14: Women in entry-level positions



Salary gaps

The Global Gender Gap Index data show that women's estimated earned annual income (US\$ 1,185) is less than a third of men's income (US\$ 3,698), although the salary gap is narrower for women and men in similar jobs. The Corporate Best Practices for Gender Equality Survey reveals that only 4% of the companies attempt to monitor salary gaps, 84% of companies do not attempt to track salary gaps as they generally believe that there are no wage gaps between women and men and 12% do not track wage gaps at all (Figure 19).

Maternity leave, career breaks and work-life balance practices

The government-mandated maternity leave in India is 12 weeks. Of the companies surveyed, 66% provide this basic benefit, 17% provide more and another 17% provide less (Figure 20). Almost all companies pay 100% of the salary during this time (Figure 21). Only 55% of the companies surveyed offer the opportunity to take parental leave—leave that can be shared between the mother and the father (Figure 22).

Over half of the companies surveyed do not offer longer-term leave programmes, nor do they allow career breaks for parents or caregivers. However, out of those that do offer longer-term leave programmes, only 33% have

programmes in place that allow the employees to stay connected while away in order to facilitate re-entry at the end of the leave (Figures 23–24).

Over 60% of the companies surveyed offer flex-time, over 40% offer the option of remote or distance working and 39% offer the option of part-time work. Almost 44% of companies offer some form of childcare support facilities (Figure 25 and Table 2).

Figure 15: Women in middle management positions

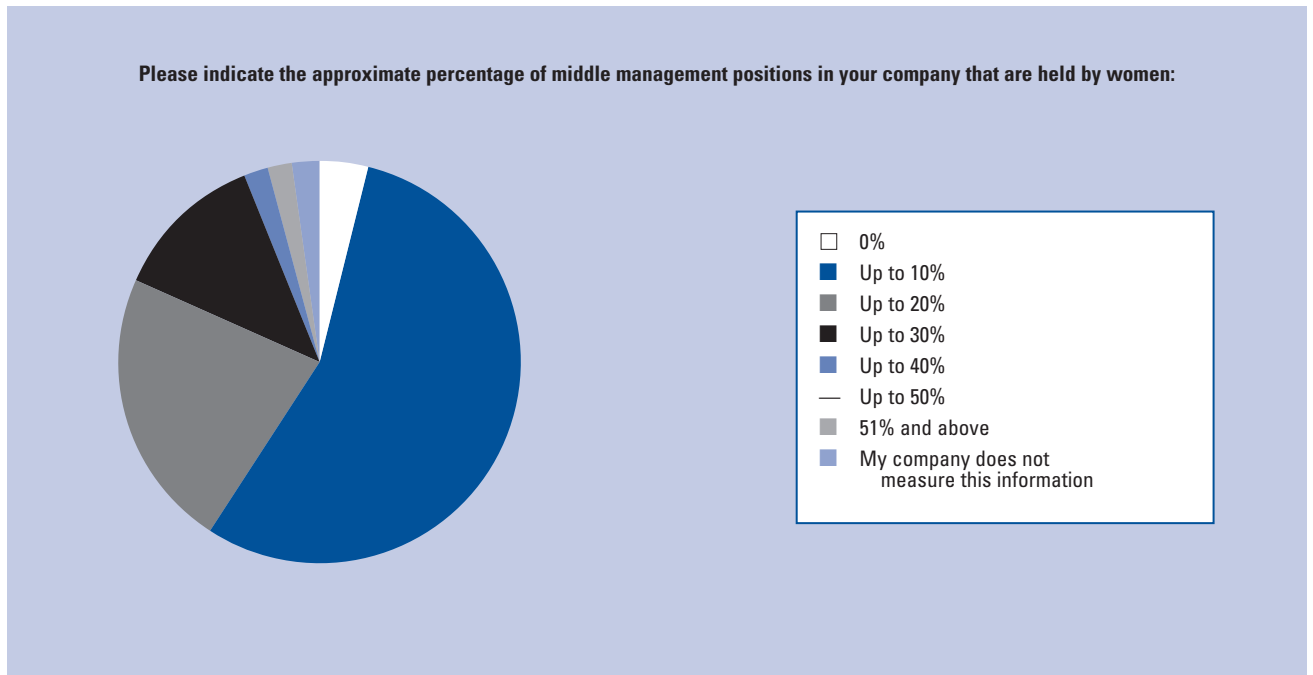


Figure 16: Women in senior management positions

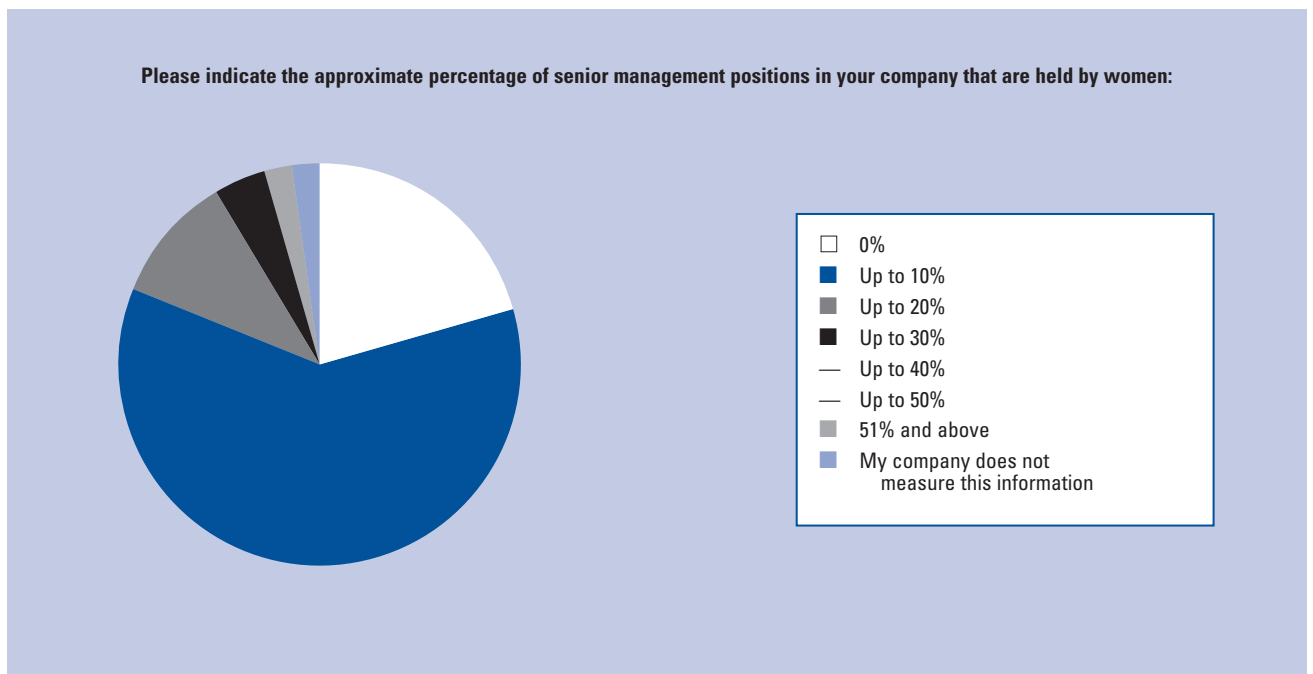


Figure 17: Women on boards of directors

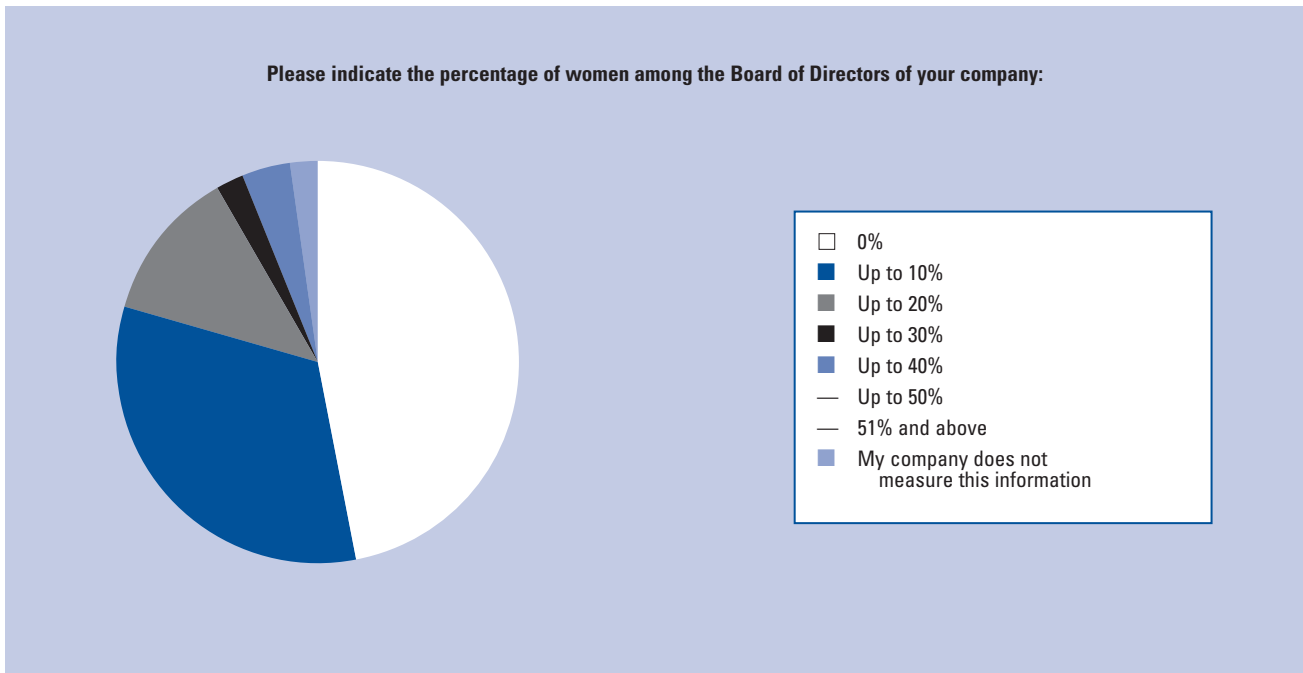


Figure 18: Target-setting

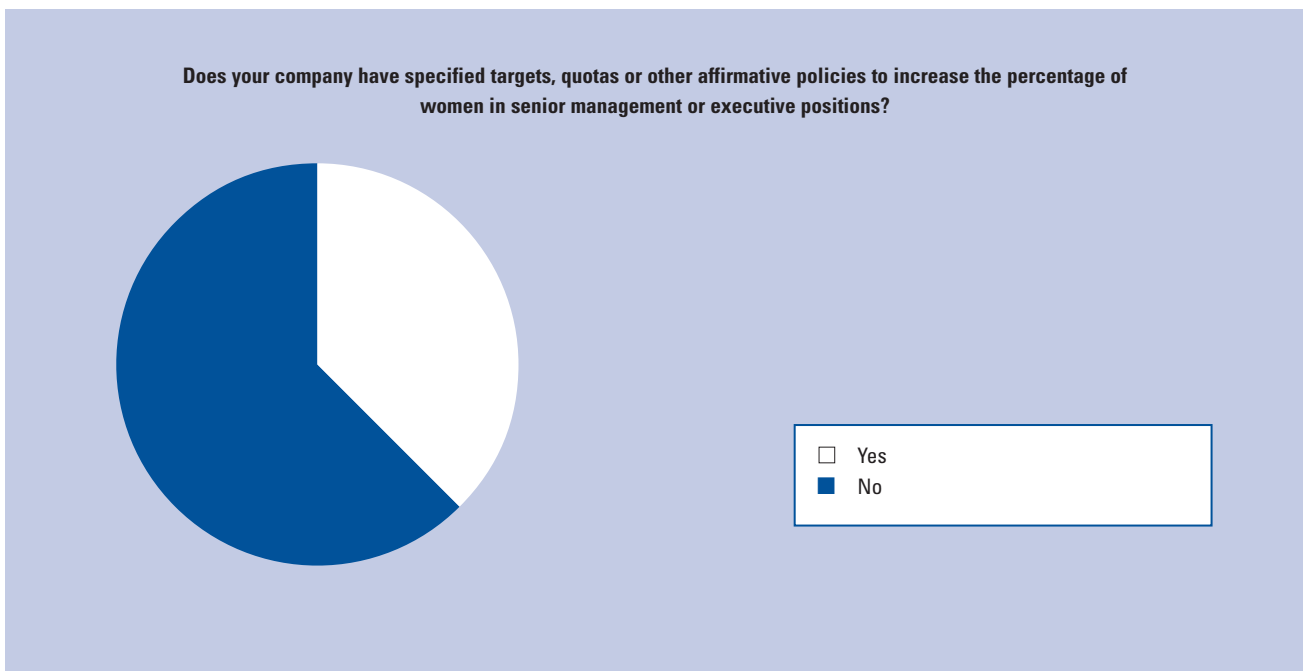


Figure 19: Salary differences

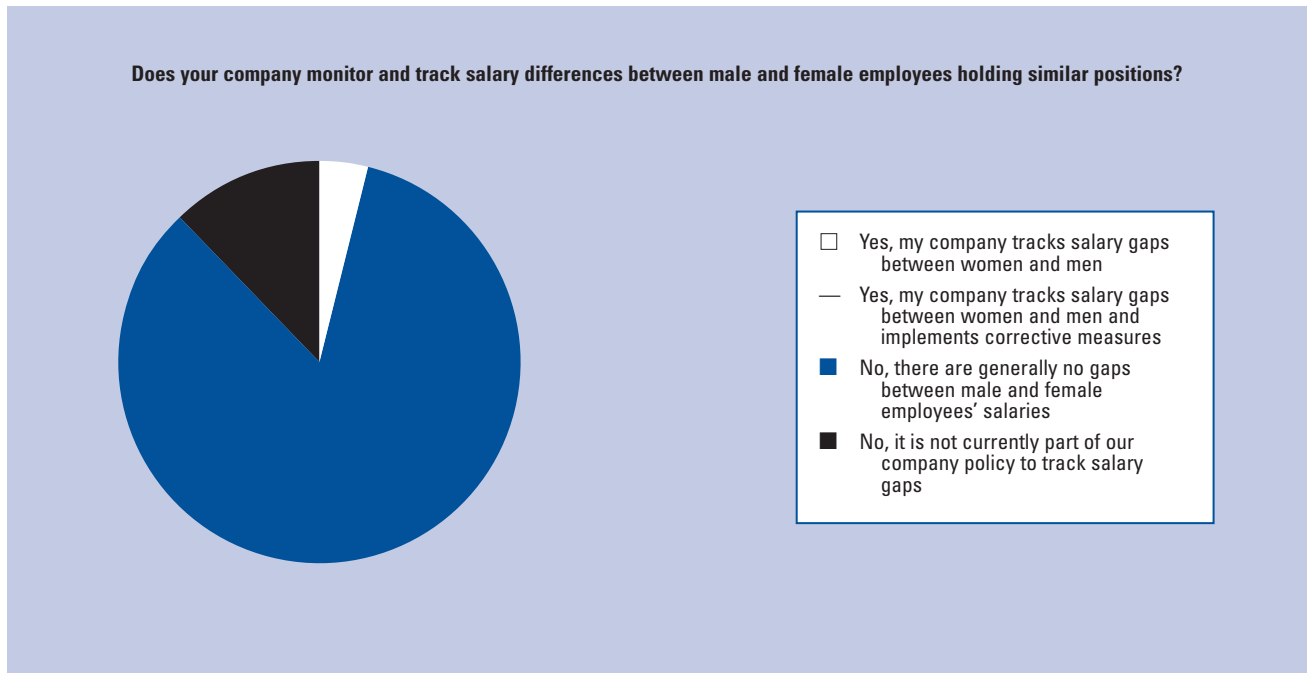


Figure 20: Maternity leave option

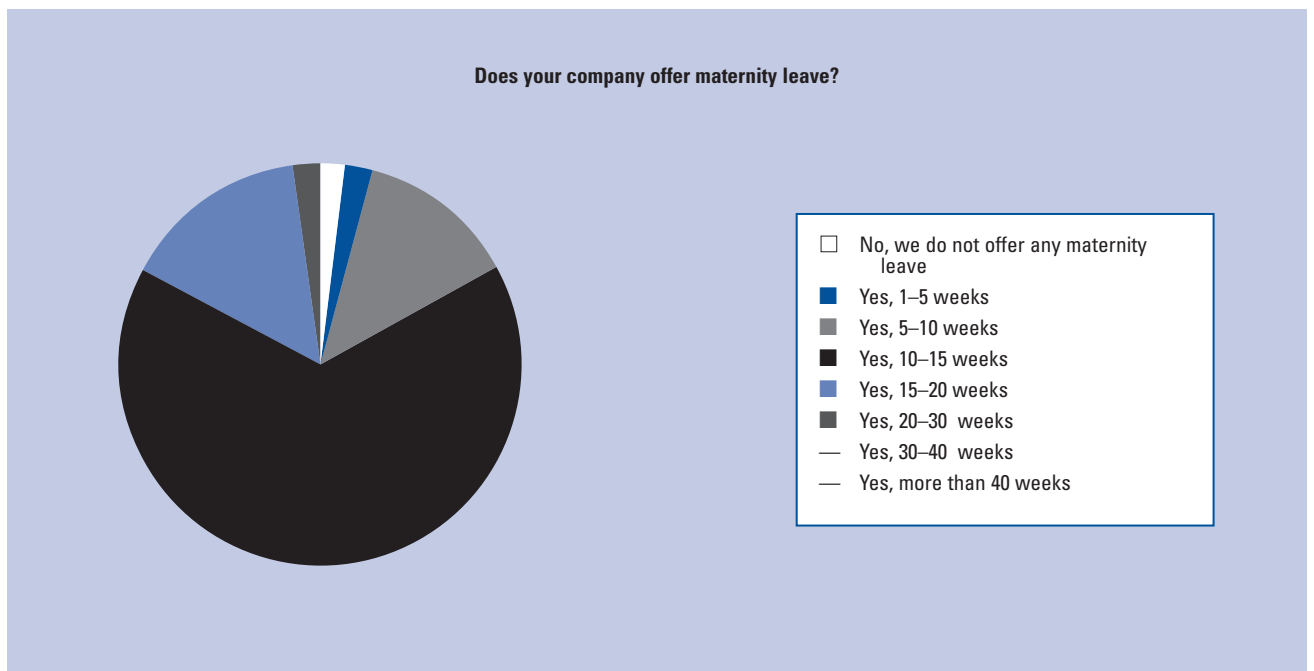


Figure 21: Maternity leave salary

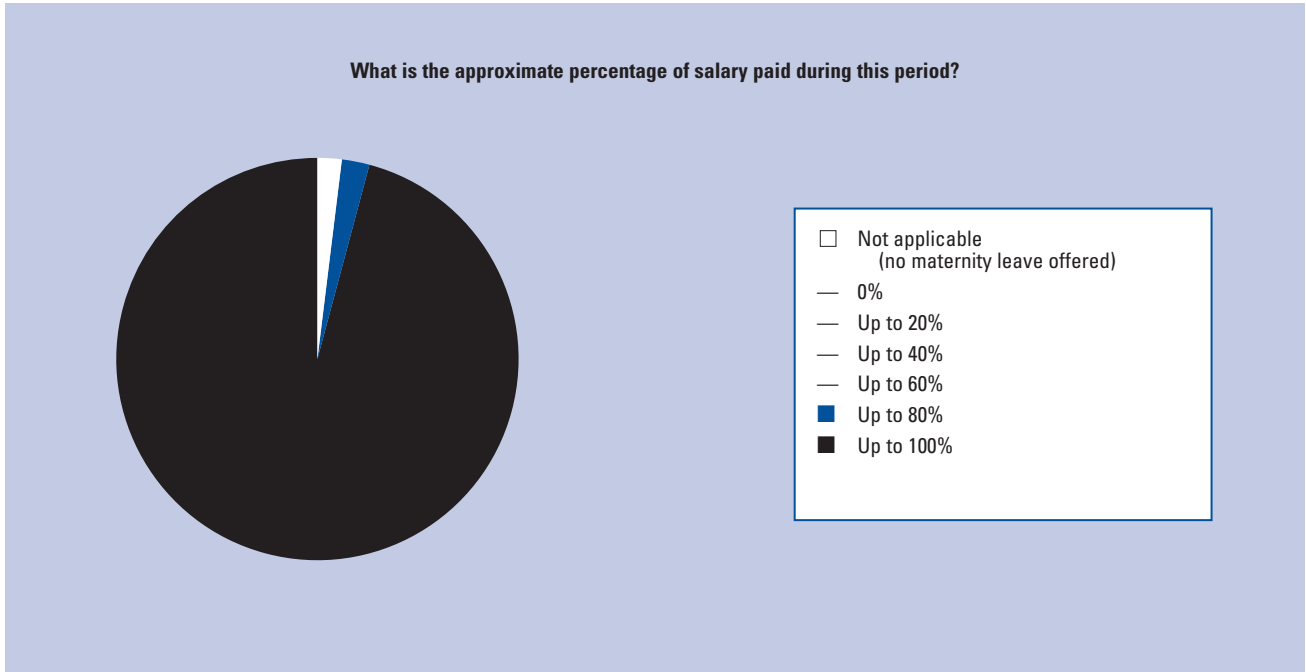


Figure 22: Parental leave option

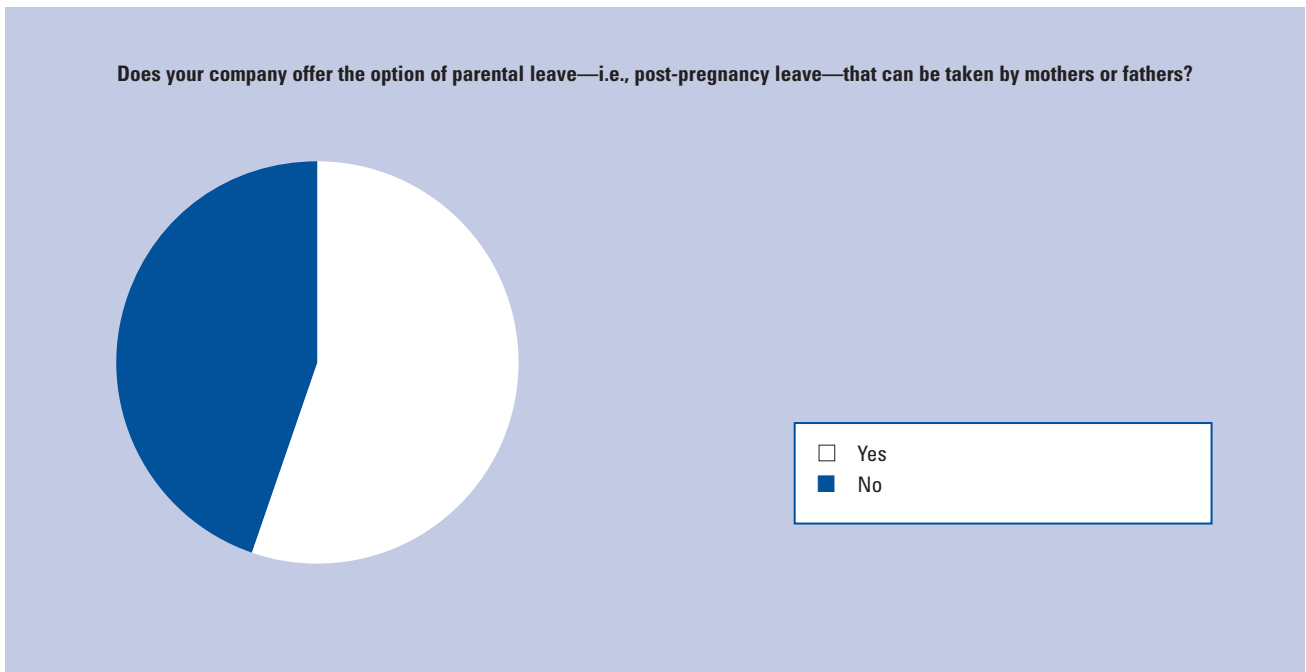


Figure 23: Longer-term leave option

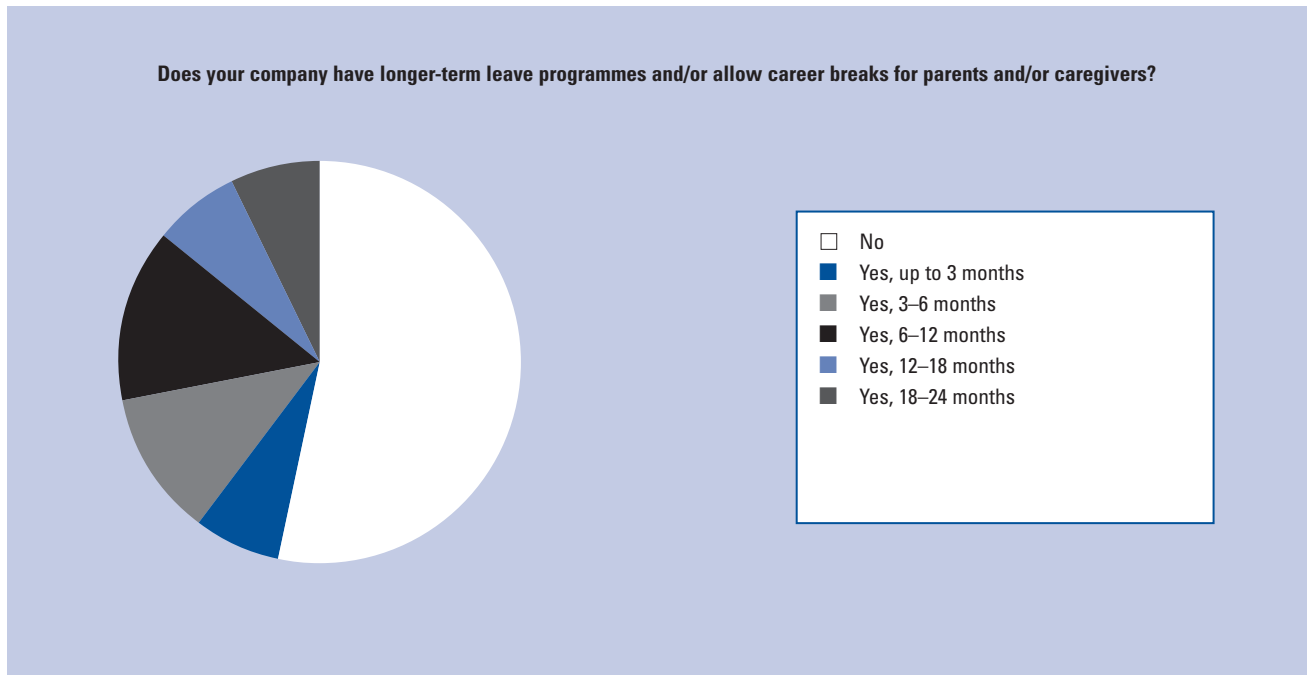


Figure 24: Re-entry programme option

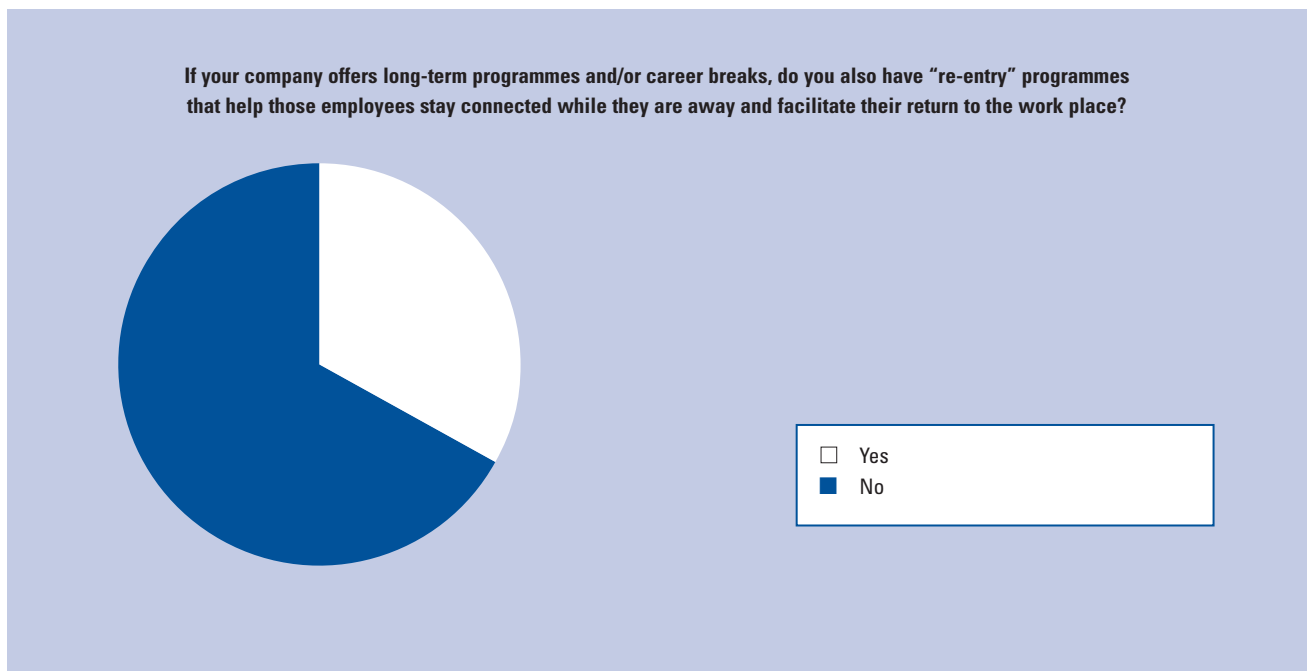


Figure 25: Childcare facilities

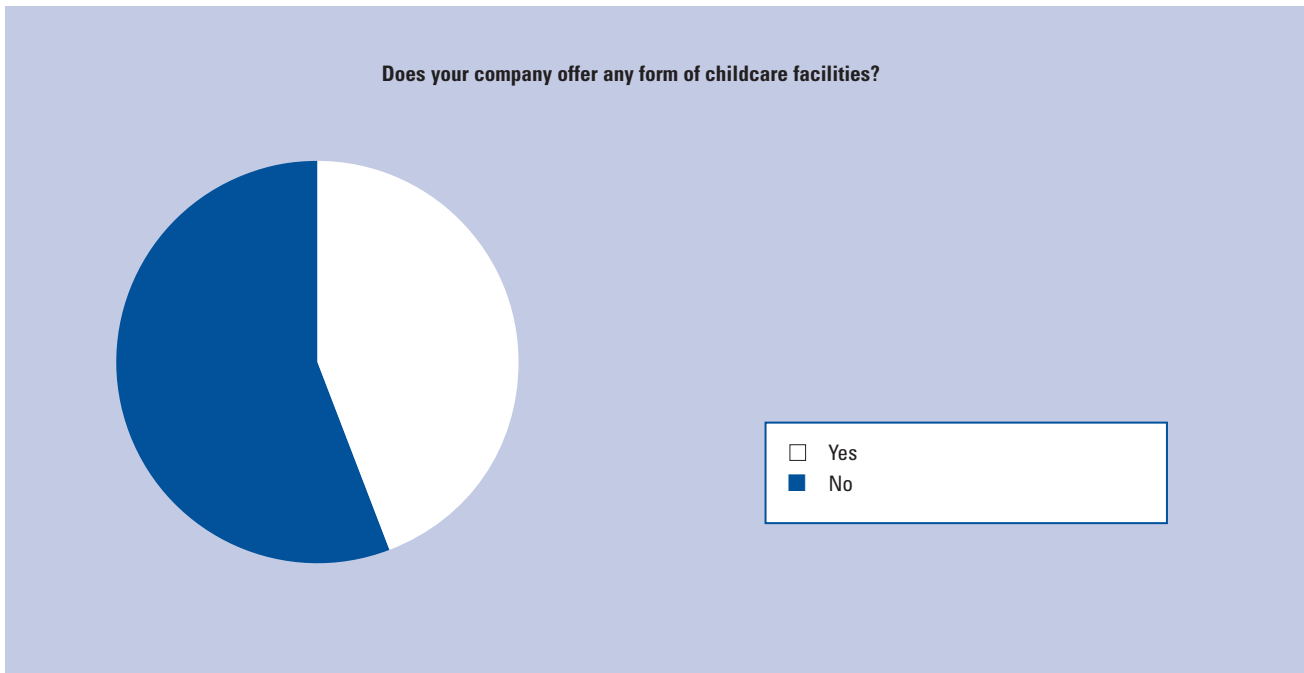
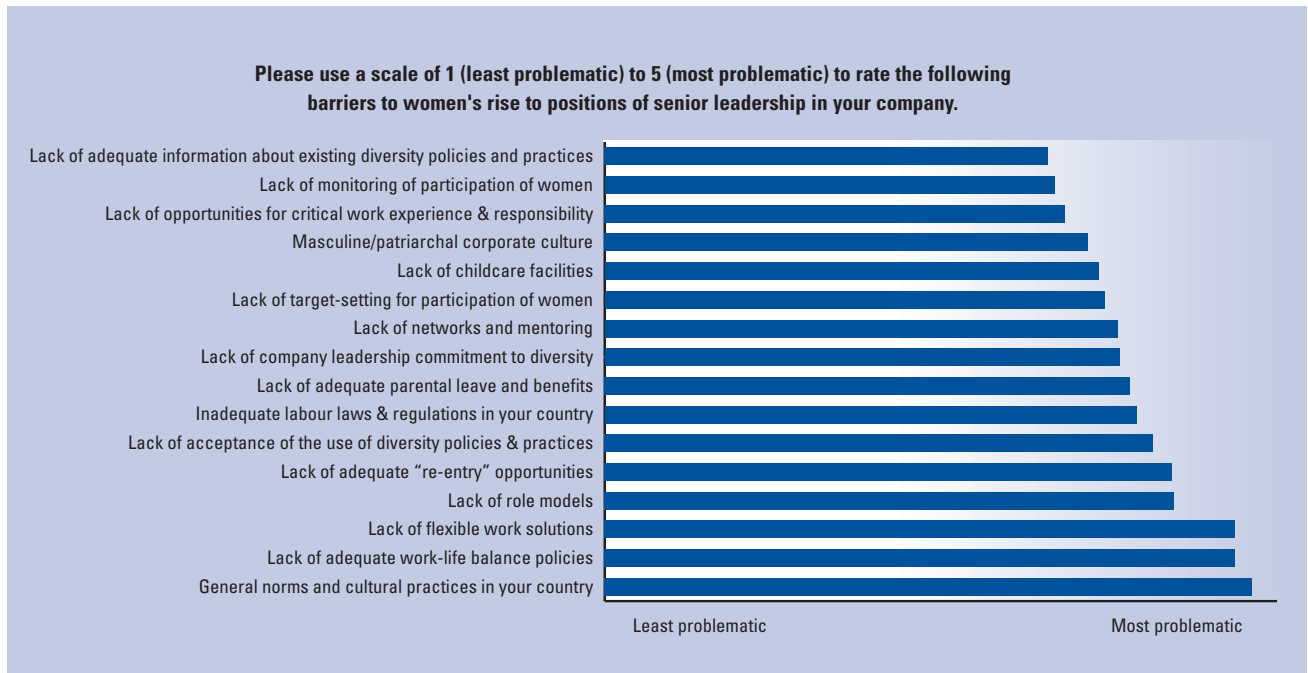


Table 2: Work-life balance practices

Does your company actively support employees in their effort to balance work and personal responsibilities through the following policies?

Answer options	Yes (%)	No (%)
Flextime/flexible working hours	68	32
Remote/distance working	41	59
Part-time work	39	61

Figure 26: Barriers to women’s senior leadership in business



Barriers

The survey asks the heads of HR to select the most problematic barriers to women’s rise to positions of senior leadership in their companies. General norms and cultural practices, the lack of work-life balance policies and the lack of flexible work solutions are identified as the most problematic barriers (Figure 26).

organizations across India. In addition to these specific efforts, best practice exchange, partnerships and collective problem-solving among these groups will be crucial. We are hopeful that this *Review*, by providing a transparent and comprehensible framework for assessing and tracking India’s gender gaps, will serve as a catalyst for greater awareness, future research and targeted action.

Conclusion

This special edition of *The India Gender Gap Review 2009* calls attention to four essential facts. First, India ranks 114th out of 134 countries covered by the Global Gender Gap Index, having closed 93% of the health gender gap, 84% of the education gap, 41% of the economic participation gap and 27% of the political empowerment gender gap. Second, India holds last place among the BRIC countries on the Index and second to last place in South Asia, ahead only of Pakistan. Third, women, as half of the human capital of India, will need to be more efficiently integrated into the economy in order to boost India’s long-term competitive potential. Finally, in order to achieve this integration, Indian companies will need to set targets, improve policies to close salary gaps and promote work-life balance.

Addressing both the challenges and opportunities associated with the gender gaps will require concerted efforts by government, businesses and civil society

Notes

- 1 See Greig et al., “The Gender Gap Index 2006: A New Framework for Measuring Equality”, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2006*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.
- 2 UNICEF, “MDGs: India Overview”. Available at http://www.unicef.org/india/overview_3696.htm.
- 3 United Nations, *Women in India: How Free? How Equal?* 2001, 35. Available at <http://www.un.org.in/wii.htm>.
- 4 United Nations, *Women in India: How Free? How Equal?* 2001, 33. Available at <http://www.un.org.in/wii.htm>.
- 5 World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*, 2009, 112.
- 6 World Economic Forum, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*, 2009, 112.
- 7 United Nations, *Women in India: How Free? How Equal?* 2001, 11. Available at <http://www.un.org.in/wii.htm>.
- 8 UNICEF, “MDGs: India Overview: Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality”. Available at http://www.unicef.org/india/overview_3705.htm.
- 9 The Index scores can be roughly interpreted as percentages. For a fuller description of the Index methodology and construction, please refer to *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*.

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- 10 United Nations, *Women in India: How Free? How Equal?* 2001, 43. Available at <http://www.un.org.in/wii.htm>.
 - 11 UNICEF, "India Overview: Contrasts and Challenges". Available at http://www.unicef.org/india/overview_212.htm.
 - 12 Please refer to *The Global Competitiveness Report 2009–2010* for a detailed description of the World Economic Forum's Executive Opinion Survey.
 - 13 The Hunger Project, *Strengthening Elected Women Leaders in India*. Available at http://www.thp.org/what_we_do/key_initiatives/strengthening_elected_women/overview.
 - 14 The Hunger Project, *Increasing Women's Participation in Local Government in India*. Available at http://www.thp.org/learn_more/news/latest_news/increasing_womens_participation_in_local_government_in_india.
 - 15 Goldman Sachs Global Markets Institute. "The Power of the Purse: Gender Equality and Middle-Class Spending". 5 August 2009. Available at <http://www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/demographic-change/power-of-purse-doc.pdf>.

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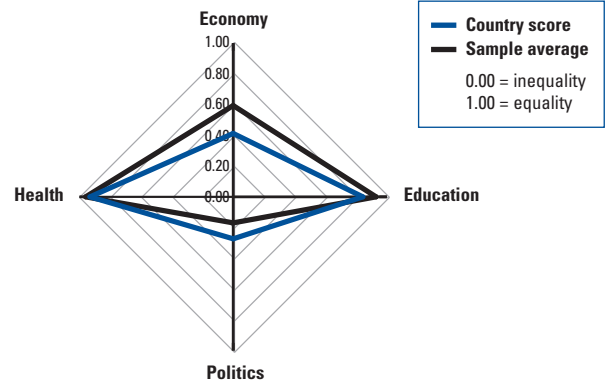
India

Rank Score (0.000 = inequality, 1.000 = equality)

Gender Gap Index 2009 (out of 134 countries)	114	0.615
Gender Gap Index 2008 (out of 130 countries)	113	0.606
Gender Gap Index 2007 (out of 128 countries)	114	0.594
Gender Gap Index 2006 (out of 115 countries)	98	0.601

Key Indicators

Total population (millions)	1,124.79
Population growth (%)	1.34
GDP (US\$ billions)	771.09
GDP (PPP) per capita	2,600
Mean age of marriage for women (years)	20
Fertility rate (births per woman)	2.80
Year women received right to vote	1935, 1950
Overall population sex ratio (male/female)	1.06



Gender Gap Subindexes

	Rank	Score	Sample average	Female	Male	Female-to-male ratio	
Economic Participation and Opportunity							
Labour force participation	122	0.42	0.69	36	85	0.42	
Wage equality for similar work (survey)	72	0.66	0.66	—	—	0.66	
Estimated earned income (PPP US\$)	121	0.32	0.52	1,185	3,698	0.32	
Legislators, senior officials, and managers	123	0.03	0.30	3	97	0.03	
Professional and technical workers	—	—	0.84	—	—	—	
Educational Attainment							
Literacy rate	121	0.70	0.87	53	76	0.70	
Enrolment in primary education	113	0.96	0.97	87	90	0.96	
Enrolment in secondary education	123	0.79	0.92	—	—	0.79	
Enrolment in tertiary education	103	0.72	0.87	10	14	0.72	
Health and Survival							
Sex ratio at birth (female/male)	131	0.89	0.93	—	—	0.89	
Healthy life expectancy	119	1.02	1.04	54	53	1.02	
Political Empowerment							
Women in parliament	100	0.12	0.22	11	89	0.12	
Women in ministerial positions	93	0.11	0.17	10	90	0.11	
Years with female head of state (last 50)	4	0.47	0.14	16	34	0.47	

Additional Data

Maternity and Childbearing

Births attended by skilled health staff (%)	47
Contraceptive prevalence, married women (%)	56
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	57
Length of paid maternity leave	12 weeks
Maternity leave benefits (% of wages paid)	100
Provider of maternity coverage	Social security or employer (for non-covered women)
Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births	450
Adolescent fertility rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15–19)	45

Education and Training

Female teachers, primary education (%)	44
Female teachers, secondary education (%)	34
Female teachers, tertiary education (%)	40

Employment and Earnings

Female adult unemployment rate (%)	5.28
Male adult unemployment rate (%)	4.92
Women in non-agricultural paid labour (% of total labour force)	18
Ability of women to rise to enterprise leadership*	4.84

Basic Rights and Social Institutions**

Paternal versus maternal authority	1.00
Female genital mutilation	0.00
Polygamy	0.20
Existence of legislation punishing acts of violence against women	0.33

*Survey data, responses on a 1-to-7 scale (1 = worst score, 7 = best score)

**Data on a 0-to-1 scale (1 = worst score, 0 = best score)

About the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)



Confederation of Indian Industry

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the growth of industry in India, partnering industry and government alike through advisory and consultative processes.

CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry led and industry managed organisation, playing a proactive role in India's development process. Founded over 114 years ago, it is India's premier business association, with a direct membership of over 7800 organisations from the private as well as public sectors, including SMEs and MNCs, and an indirect membership of over 90,000 companies from around 385 national and regional sectoral associations.

CII catalyses change by working closely with government on policy issues, enhancing efficiency, competitiveness and expanding business opportunities for industry through a range of specialised services and global linkages. It also provides a platform for sectoral consensus building and networking. Major emphasis is laid on projecting a positive image of business, assisting industry to identify and execute corporate citizenship programmes. Partnerships with over 120 NGOs across the country carry forward our initiatives in integrated and inclusive development, which include health, education, livelihood, diversity management, skill development and water, to name a few.

Complementing this vision, CII's theme for 2009-10 is 'India@75: Economy, Infrastructure and Governance.' Within the overarching agenda to facilitate India's transformation into an economically vital, technologically innovative, socially and ethically vibrant global leader by year 2022, CII's focus this year is on revival of the Economy, fast tracking Infrastructure and improved Governance.

With 64 offices in India, 9 overseas in Australia, Austria, China, France, Germany, Japan, Singapore, UK, and USA, and institutional partnerships with 221 counterpart organisations in 90 countries, CII serves as a reference point for Indian industry and the international business community.

www.cii.in

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