



## DATA FOR DEVELOPMENT

### India Human Development Survey Forum | May 2026

A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the IHDS research community

### The Trinity of Support: Negotiating Space and Care for Older Adults in a Transitioning Society

*Debasis Barik, Neerad Deshmukh, Sharan Sharma, Sonalde Desai*



Drawing on nationally representative data from two waves of the India Human Development Survey Round II (2011-12) and Round III (2022-24), the paper examines how family structures, functional health, work participation, and state support interact to shape the well-being of Indians aged 60 and above. The authors document a gradual decline in intergenerational co-residence, alongside rising proportions of older adults living alone or only with a spouse.

While family remains the primary source of care and income support, the role of the state has significantly expanded through pensions and health insurance schemes. With an increase in daughter-only families over the past two decades, the study finds a rise in expectations among the mothers to receive old age support from daughters. The authors argue that the emerging landscape of ageing in India rests on a shifting “trinity” of support—family, self, and the state—each of which must adapt to demographic and gender transformations to ensure secure and dignified ageing.

**Table 1:** Residential arrangements (in %) of men and women aged 60 years and above in India

Family Type	Men		Women	
	2011-12	2022-24	2011-12	2022-24
Single	2.0	1.9	5.8	6.5
Couple	17.0	19.4	10.2	11.4
With Unmarried Children	14.9	16.1	6.8	8.4
With Married Children/Others	66.1	62.6	77.3	73.8

**Source:** Author's calculations based on IHDS II (2011-12) and IHDS III (2022-24).



## About the Authors



**Debasis Barik** is Senior Fellow at the NCAER National Data Innovation Centre. A demographer by training, his research spans public health, migration, gender, human development, ageing, and environmental adaptation of Indian households. His work is published in leading journals, and he has served on India's National Health Accounts expert group.



**Neerad Deshmukh** is a doctoral candidate in Sociology at the University of Maryland and Research Assistant with the India Human Development Survey. His research examines how social stratification influences health, ageing, poverty transitions, and climate-related vulnerability in India amid rapid demographic and economic change. He has extensive experience designing and implementing large-scale surveys in both academic and private-sector research settings.



**Sharan Sharma** is Associate Research Professor in Sociology and the Joint Program in Survey Methodology at the University of Maryland. His research focuses on cross-cultural methodology, interviewer effects, survey quality, paradata, and modeling complex survey data. He also has nearly two decades of private-sector experience, including leadership roles at TAM India.



**Sonalde Desai** is Professor and Centre Director at NCAER-National Data Innovation Centre and Distinguished University Professor Emerita at University of Maryland. Her research examines India's social and economic transformation, focusing on education, employment, gender, and health. She leads the India Human Development Survey and is a former president of the Population Association of America.

# Pipe Water, Employment and Health: A Gendered Analysis in India

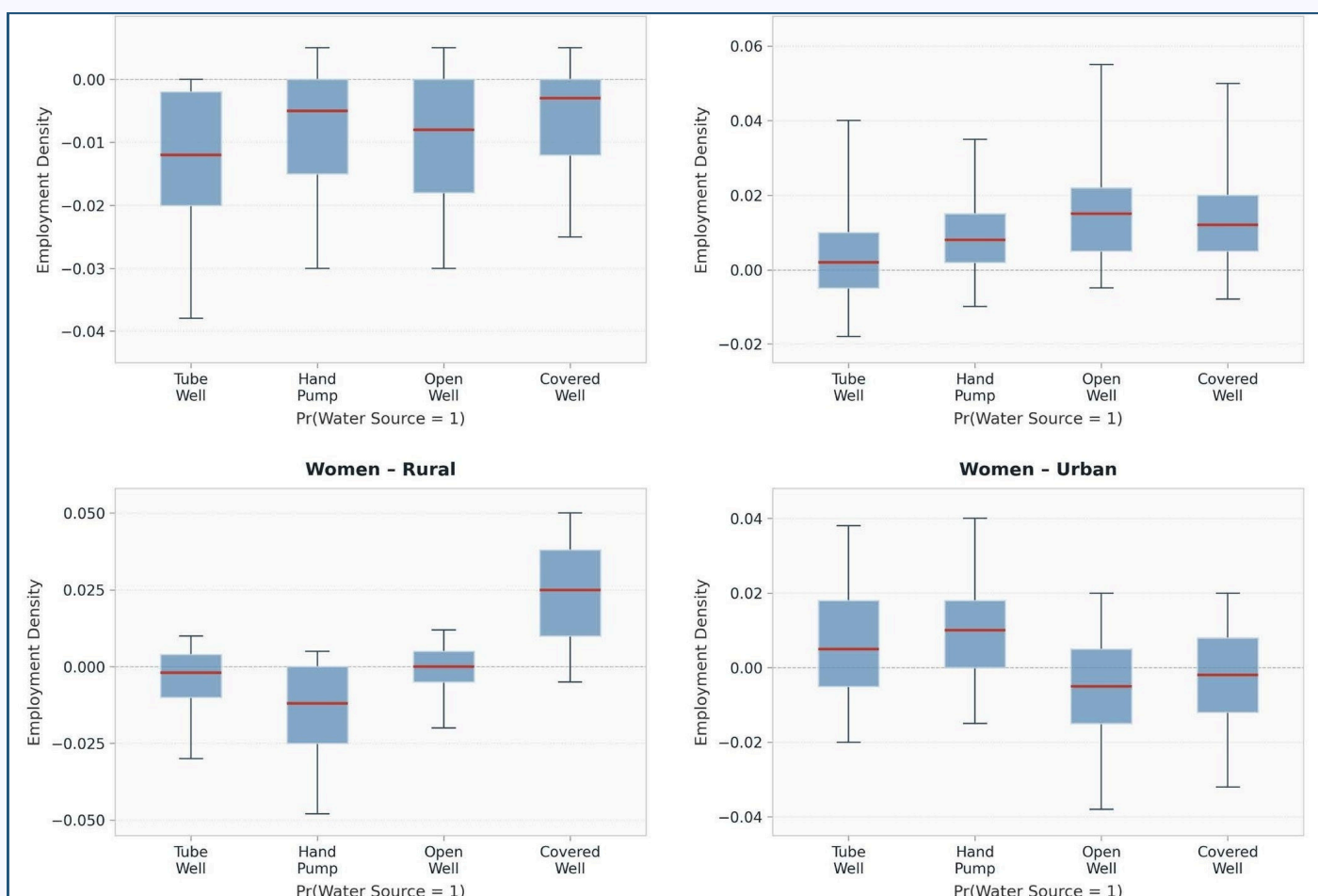
Ashish K. Sedai

The paper examines the impact of indoor piped drinking water (IPDW) on gender disparities in employment and health in India using panel data from the India Human Development Survey (2005–2012). Employing a differences-in-differences (DID) model with heterogeneous treatment effects, the analysis finds that access to IPDW increases rural women’s wage/salary employment by 2.9 percentage points and their annual earnings by 23.5 percentage points. In contrast, no significant effect is observed for urban women. The study also documents health improvements, particularly among rural poor women, while reductions in morbidity are more pronounced among urban non-poor individuals.



The findings highlight the critical role of IPDW in reducing the disproportionate burden borne by women in rural areas and in enhancing their economic opportunities and health outcomes. The study advocates prioritizing IPDW in public policy as a key strategy for reducing gender inequalities and improving household welfare in developing economies.

**Figure 1:** TWFE estimates of sources of water on general employment for men and women in rural and urban areas



**Source:** Authors' calculations based on IHDS, 2005–2012

**Note:** Control variables: time trend and the month of interview



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## About the Author



**Ashish Sedai** is an Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Texas at Arlington. His research focuses on applied microeconomics, particularly financial inclusion and the impact of public policy on gender-related outcomes. He has previously held a Visiting Scholar position at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research (SIEPR).

## Recent Publications Using IHDS Data

Diwakar, V. (2026). Poverty dynamics amidst the climate–conflict nexus. In *Poverty in Polycrisis* (1st ed.) Routledge.

Ghosh, S. (2026). Political connections and financial inclusion. *Applied Economics Letters*, 1-10.

Mishra, K. (2026). Private school choice in India: Disparities in enrollment and experience. *Journal of School Choice*, 1-19.

Natal, A. (2026). The invisible household debt in the Global South: Evidence from India. <hal-05617256>.

Reddy, P. S., Reddy, M. R., Archana, G., & Radhika, C. V. (2026). Bridging the gap: An empirical analysis of education, economic outcomes, and social inclusion among minority communities in India. *Journal of Marketing & Social Research*, 3(4), 34-48.

Deshpande, A. & Ramachandran, R. (2026, May 12). How caste but also North-South divide affect child malnutrition in India. [Scroll.in](https://www.scroll.in).

## About IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) began as a nationally representative, multi-topic survey of 41,554 households in 1,503 villages and 971 urban neighbourhoods across India. The first round of interviews were completed in 2004-05; the Data is publicly available via ICPSR. The second round re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N = 42,152), and data for the same are available via ICPSR. Fieldwork for IHDS-III was undertaken in 2022-24, and data is currently being cleaned and processed.

The IHDS-III has been jointly conducted by researchers from the University of Maryland, the National Council of Applied Economic Research, Indiana University and the University of Michigan.

## IHDS Principal Investigators

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