Introduction

The Survey on Gender Equality at Home offers a global snapshot of life at home, from the perspectives of Facebook users around the world. It was conducted in July 2020 to capture household gender dynamics during the COVID-19 pandemic, and reached a statistically representative sample of half a million people who use Facebook, spanning seven world regions and covering 208 countries, territories, and islands in 80 languages.

Over 460,000 people opted in to answer questions that focused on four areas in particular: attitudes and beliefs about gender equality; participation in unpaid care and domestic work; resource allocation and decision-making; and COVID-19’s impact on everyday lives. The survey results were disaggregated for men and women, allowing insights into gender differences.¹

This brief shares findings from South Asia,² describing aggregate patterns in survey responses from the 7 countries highlighted on the map in Figure 1. The findings presented are based primarily on responses from 14,158 individuals, including 6,017 who identified as female and 8,141 who identified as male. This brief does not seek to describe the region as a whole. Rather, results are calibrated to the online population in the region. Note that as of 2017, only about 30 percent of the total South Asia population was using the internet.³

This population tends to be younger (88 percent between 18 and 54 years old), more urban (63 percent reside in cities), and better educated (83 percent with more than secondary education) than the general population. While this limits the generalizability of the findings, the picture that emerges provides important insights into gender differences for the region.

¹. This report focuses on individuals who reported their gender as either female or male. This decision was taken in response to the very low share of respondents who selected the option ‘other.’
². Countries allocated into regions based upon World Bank classifications.
FIGURE 1
Countries surveyed in South Asia
Key Findings

I. Gender norms

II. Unpaid care and domestic work

III. Resource allocation and decision-making

IV. Life during COVID-19
I. GENDER NORMS

The majority of respondents (89 percent) in South Asia reported that they agree\(^4\) with the statement, “Men and women should have equal opportunities (e.g. in education, jobs, household decision-making).”

Respondents were also asked how they thought their neighbors would respond to this question. Both men and women expected an average of about 6 (out of 10) of their neighbors to believe that men and women should have equal opportunities.

\(^4\) We collapsed the proportion of respondents who indicated that they “agree” or “strongly agree” with this statement. This comment applies throughout the brief.

NOTE ON STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Throughout this brief, any time we use the word “significant” or highlight comparisons between male and female respondents we intend to indicate statistically significant differences (p<0.05). That is, we can be 95 percent confident that the observed differences reflect the real situation for men and women in the online population for the region and not an error caused by randomness.
89 percent of respondents in South Asia agreed that men and women should have equal opportunities.
68 percent of survey respondents agreed that a woman's most important role is to take care of her home and children, while 42 percent agreed that household expenses are the responsibility of the man, even if his wife can help him.

Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree with the statement, “A woman's most important role is to take care of her home and children.” In South Asia, men were 10 percentage points more likely to agree with this statement: 73 percent of men said they agree, compared to 63 percent of women. Respondents were also asked how many neighbors they expect would agree with this statement. Both men and women in the region reported the expectation that an average of about 7 (out of 10) of their neighbors would agree.

Men in the region were also more likely to agree with the statement, “Household expenses are the responsibility of the man, even if his wife can help him.” 53 percent of men in the region agreed with this statement, compared to 32 percent of women.

Regarding expectations of neighbors' agreement with this statement, men expected a significantly greater number of their neighbors to agree on average than did women (6.6 vs. 6.0 out of 10).

**FIGURE 2**
Proportion of respondents who agreed with the statement, “Household expenses are the responsibility of the man, even if his wife can help him”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WOMEN</th>
<th>MEN</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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II. UNPAID CARE AND DOMESTIC WORK

Women in South Asia were significantly more likely than men to report taking care of cooking, cleaning and household management.

Gender differences exist in responsibility for household chores. Among respondents from the region, women were significantly more likely to report taking care of cleaning (61 percent of women vs. 29 percent of men), cooking (57 percent of women vs. 23 percent of men), and on household management (28 percent of women vs. 38 percent of men). Meanwhile, men were significantly more likely to report taking care of subsistence farming (5 percent of women vs. 18 percent of men), collecting water or fuel (13 of women vs. 21 percent of men) and supporting the family business (12 percent of men vs. 19 percent of women).
Men were more likely to report owning motorized vehicles and land.

The survey illustrated several notable gender differences in asset ownership. Men were more likely to report owning motorized vehicles and land. Specifically, 43 percent of men from the region reported owning motorized vehicles, compared to 30 percent of women. While 25 percent of men reported owning land, just 13 percent of women did.
Women were less likely than men to report being engaged in income-generating activities and to be the main income earner, and were more likely than men to say that they “fully depend on someone else in [their] household”.

Aligning with trends in most other regions, women from South Asia were significantly less likely to report being engaged in income-generating activities. 53 percent of men reported being recently engaged in income-generating activities, while just 33 percent of women did.

Furthermore, women were also 31 percentage points less likely to report being the main income earner. 55 percent of men from the region reported being the main income earner, compared to just 24 percent of women.

Lastly, men in the region were also significantly more likely to report fully covering their own expenses (88 percent of men vs. 77 percent of women), while women in the region were significantly more likely to report that they “fully depend” on another member of their household (23 percent of women vs. 12 percent of men).

Men were more likely to control financial decision-making and have full access to household money.

Among respondents from South Asia, men were over twice as likely as women to report making decisions about large purchases, with 39 percent of men reporting making such decisions, compared to 18 percent of women. Men were also more likely to make decisions about “critical or urgent matters”, with 44 percent of men reporting making these decisions, compared to 20 percent of women who reported doing so.

Along these same lines, men were more likely to report having full access to household money, while women were more likely to report having no access. That is, while 31 percent of men reported having full access to household money, just 22 percent of women did. Likewise, while 27 percent of men reported having no access to household money, 35 percent of women did.
Among survey respondents from South Asia, the most commonly reported impact from COVID-19 was losing access to public transport.

When asked how their lives have been affected by COVID-19, the most common response from survey participants in South Asia was losing access to public transport (29 percent). Responses regarding other consequences of the pandemic illustrated significant gender differences. Men were more likely to report losing a job as a result of COVID-19 (30 percent of men vs. 19 percent of women). Additionally, women in the region were more likely to report having school cancelled or reduced as a result of the pandemic (32 percent of women vs. 23 percent of men).

The most commonly reported concern during COVID-19 in South Asia was the future of work.

When asked about their main concerns during the pandemic, the most common response was the future of work, with 44 percent of respondents from the region reporting this concern.

Once again, there were some notable gender differences in respondents' answers to this prompt. Women were more likely to report being concerned about access to health care (30 percent of women vs. 21 percent of men) and access to accurate information (23 percent of women vs. 17 percent of men). Meanwhile, men were more likely to report being concerned about repaying outstanding loans (24 percent of men vs. 16 percent of women).

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5. Respondents were provided with a series of options including: School was cancelled or reduced; Migrated to different geographical area; Difficulty accessing medical or hygiene supplies; Longer wait times to visit doctors/seek medical care; Lost a job; Lost access to/could not use public transport; Unable to perform usual personal care/health routines; Unable to seek medical care; Isolate or follow a quarantine order; None of the above; and Other.

6. Respondents were provided with a series of options including: Having enough money to sustain my family; Having enough food and basic supplies for my family; Being stuck at home for a long time; Having access to accurate information on coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; The future of my work; Access to health care; Repaying outstanding loans; Staying home with limited things to do; My children education; I do not have any concerns at this time; and Other.
FIGURE 4:
What are respondents’ main concerns during the pandemic?

- Women
- Men

- Enough money to sustain family
- Enough food and basic supplies for family
- Stuck at home for long periods of time
- Access to accurate COVID-19 data
- Future of work
- Access to health care
- Repaying outstanding loans
- Staying home with limited things to do
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This brief was commissioned by Facebook to accelerate progress on Agenda 2030 and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The brief was authored by Dr. Tara Patricia Cookson, Dr. Ruth Carlitz, Dr. Lorena Fuentes and Alex Berryhill of Ladysmith, a feminist research collective that helps international organizations collect, analyze, and take action on gender data.

We would like to thank the World Bank, UN Women, Equal Measures 2030, and Dr. Safaa Amer of Facebook’s Demography and Survey Sciences group, for input into the development of this survey.

Visit [www.dataforgood.fb.com/docs/gendersurveyreport](http://www.dataforgood.fb.com/docs/gendersurveyreport) for more information about Facebook’s Survey on Gender Equality at Home.