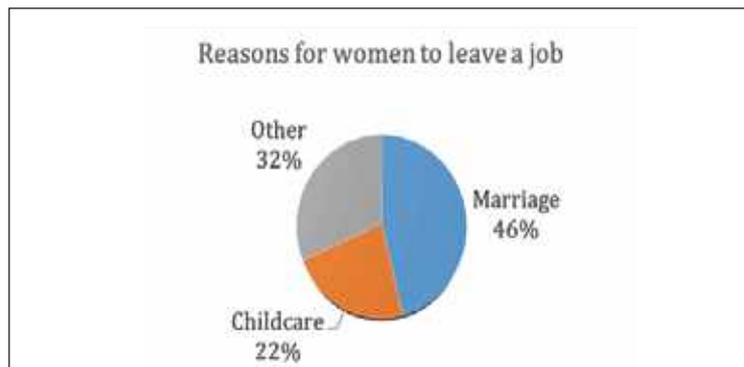




The Worrying State of Gendered Data in India



Source: PAC SV Study

In line with the world trends of limited gender related data, India too fares poorly when it comes to data on women and girls. While it can be argued that India does produce some gender related data, most of this data focuses on aspects of sexual and reproductive health, reinforcing the age-old stereotype that women are caregivers. Work undertaken at PAC across multiple projects reveals this fact. Through the **Public Affairs Index** it can be observed that while gender considerations form an important aspect of governance, there are only 5-10 indicators on gender related parameters and lesser so when indicators surrounding the reproductive health of women is not considered. Sources which provide gender related data include the **National Family Health Survey** and the **National Crimes Record Bureau** to some extent but these only focus on women's health and crimes respectively. Another issue is the lack of timely data on gender related aspects making policy related research and decisions difficult. This is a worrying sign because India has been seeing a rapidly declining female labour force participation for a couple of years and the main drivers for this decline as observed in **PAC's study** (commissioned by Southern Voice) include family responsibilities of marriage, motherhood and related care work. For India to be able to make a difference is closing the gap on gender inequality, there is an urgent to invest in collecting and producing data on gender related indicators that go beyond the realm of sexual and reproductive health. ange makers for sustainable development.

Karnataka is Seeing a Growing Crisis in the Garment Sector

Workers in Karnataka's garment sector are at the receiving end of the impact of the pandemic with the threat of job losses and stability. What is interesting to note is that the garment sector employs a majority of women, predominantly as contract workers in the informal sector. While women workers in the garment sector have been facing issues of poor working conditions, meagre pay and



Source: Citizen Matters

lack of social security benefits even before the pandemic, COVID-19 has revealed the ugly truth of the conditions these women face. Women workers have been asked to leave with little or no notice and no pay as factories shut down. The rampant culture of sub-contracting and informal working conditions means that the big fast fashion brands assume no responsibility of the security of these workers, leaving them to fend for themselves.



Gender Disaggregated Data is the Need of the Hour

Table 1: Sex-disaggregated data on the COVID-19 pandemic

Countries with sex-disaggregated data from Global Health 50/50 (11 June 2020)	Number of countries with data	Cases	Male cases (%)	Female cases (%)	Deaths	Male deaths (%)	Female deaths (%)	Countries with data as share of world population (%)
Countries with complete data	47	2,188,290	50	50	172,682	58	42	42
Countries with cases only	34	266,521	65	35				11
Countries with deaths only	10				114,216	55	45	27
Total	91	2,454,811	51	49	286,898	57	43	80

Source: Open Data Watch calculations from data reported by Global Health 50/50 (GH5050)

Source: Data2X

As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the most commonly emerging challenges has been the glaring lack of gender-disaggregated statistics across the world. Only a handful of countries, including China, Iran, South Korea, Italy and Spain have provided data on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from a gender perspective. While data in itself is integral in developing solutions and policies to deal with a pandemic of such nature, the need for data that acknowledges gender serves a greater purpose. From a purely epidemiological perspective, it has been observed that the virus affects men and women differently, calling for gender reflective data to develop vaccines that account for this difference. If women are not

included in testing cohorts and data on the rate of spread and treatment access is not being recorded, a potential goldmine of data is being left untouched. From a socio-economic perspective as well, women have been bearing the burden of widespread gender inequalities. The pandemic has affected not only the current health-care scenario but has also impacted women's access to sexual and reproductive health, limited employment opportunities, increasing care responsibilities and greater exposure to domestic violence. With an already poor system of data on these gender inequalities there is a risk in underestimating the effects of the pandemic which threatens the limited progress made in achieving the SDGs in full spirit- by leaving no one behind.

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