



CHILDREN IN MALDIVES

Analysis of Children of the Maldives from
Census 2014



National Bureau of Statistics
Ministry of Finance & Treasury



for every child

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FOREWORD

Children remain at the center of the development priorities set out by the government. These include the provision of high-quality education for all Maldivian children, with the aim that no child will be left behind. These policies focus on ensuring the provision of education and skills beginning from primary education. More recently pre-school education has been included as the foundation stage of the new national curriculum. Given that today's children will become tomorrow's workforce, government policies are geared towards developing capable, professional youth with the necessary skills to foster economically productive and actively engaged citizens in the future.

While detailed disaggregated data on socio-economic aspects of children are needed in order to support evidence based decision making and ensure the well-being of our children, there is a lack of data specifically on children in Maldives. In the absence of such data, census data has been valuable in the formulation and successful implementation of various development policies related to children, including the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It was highlighted in the last MDG report that Maldives has achieved five out of eight MDG goals. Although most of the MDG indicators require concerted effort from a number of stakeholders, census data has contributed significantly to the achievement of MDGs, through better monitoring and evaluation and in the development of suitable policies and interventions. Likewise, I hope this report will be a useful contributor for developing representative data for the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals relevant for the children.

At present, the 2014 population Census of Maldives remain the most comprehensive source of information available at the most disaggregated level. Census provide data on socio-economic and demographic characteristics of our population. As such, this analysis on children of Maldives is developed using 2014 census results to understand the situation of children in the country.

This analysis focuses on the key areas such as demography, living arrangement, education, labour force, nuptiality and fertility of the child population below the age of 18 years. It is intended to support planners make better-informed decisions in formulating national policies, where action is urgently required.

The demography of the Maldives has undergone tremendous changes over the past two decades. The number of children in the population has decreased by 20,000 children during the period 2000 and 2014. While the child population below the age of 18 has decreased over the most recent censuses 2006 and 2014, the number of children under the age of 1 as well as children below 5 years of age has increased slightly.

The share of population made up of children fell from 50 percent in 1995 to 33 percent in 2014. As per the current population projections based on the 2014 census, the share of children in the population is expected to decrease further, to reach 25 percent by the year 2030 and further to 18 percent by the year 2050.

This changing age structure has important implications on the child population and

many of its socio-economic characteristics.

Need to bring population issues within overall development strategies; strengthen the institutional setting to address population issues; expand population and development research; and enhance advocacy on population and development issues have also been highlighted by previous analysis done recently on population dynamics using the census 2014 data.

It is the intention of the Government to continue investing in the collection of regular data on the socio-economic aspects of children in the Maldives on a regular basis through censuses, surveys and through strengthening of existing government administrative systems and through alternative data sources.

The production of this report is an outcome resulting from a lot of hard work, and valuable inputs from numerous people over a period of time technically and financially.

I am very grateful to UNICEF for technical and financial support provided for publication of this report and Ryan Pvt. Ltd for undertaking this analysis. My acknowledgement and appreciation also go to the officials from National Bureau of Statistics who had done additional work on validating and improving the content and analysis provided in the report.

I hope that this report will contribute in designing and implementing future projects to improve the situation of children in the Maldives.



Ahmed Munawar
Minister

This analysis gives a special focus on the areas where information on children is available from census 2014. Focus areas include the age and sex composition of children and changes since the previous censuses of 1990s, living arrangement of children and household composition, educational attainment, employment and marital status of children.

Child focused development and investments are necessary to ensure that today's children become successful workers, contribute to the economy as adults, and support the dependent population. A child born today will already be a teenager by the year 2030, the final year agreed on globally, to achieve the agreed targets on Sustainable Development Goals.

The concept of leaving no one behind as adhered to in the implementation of the SDGs requires disaggregated data on population of all ages, by sex, geography and other socio-economic aspects. In this regard, this analysis on children is likely to serve as a useful baseline study to monitor the status of child-related SDGs in the Maldives.

Summarized here are the key findings and issues from this analysis.

Background

The demography of the country has undergone tremendous changes over the years. The age-sex structure of the population has changed substantially over the past two decades. This changing age structure has important implications on the child population and many of its socio-economic characteristics.

Maldives has almost completed its demographic transition with a shift from high to low crude birth and death rates. The fertility rate stands close to replacement levels of 2.5 children per woman in 2014, down from 6.4 in 1990. Dependency ratios were high at 98 dependents per every 100 persons of the working age in 1990 and decreased to 48 by the year 2014.

At present, more people are in the labor force with fewer people to support (one person is dependent on every two persons of working ages 15-64 years) providing a window of opportunity for rapid economic growth. Hence, the right social and economic investments and policies to capture this demographic dividend is critical, while more people remain in the working ages and before the population gets old and the country reaches the end of its demographic transition.

Child Population and Demographics

In 1995, the bulge of the population was children. Since then children under 18 in the population has decreased, from 128,653 in 1995 to reach an all-time low of 111,107 in 2014. In other words, there are 17,546 less children in 2014 than that of 1995. Similarly, the share of children under 18 years to the total population is down from 53 percent in 1995 to 33 percent by 2014.

However, it is important to note that, the number of children under 1 year and children under 5 years has in fact increased during the period 2006 and 2014. This is due to the changes in the population age structure with more females entering the reproductive ages.

Over the years, the children depending on the working age population has gradually decreased from a high level of 93 children under 15 years in the population to every 100 persons of working ages in 1990 down to a child dependency ratio of 41 by 2014.

An issue, which needs further analysis, was a possible sex ratio imbalance at birth in the demographic trend with the census 2014 recording the highest sex ratio at birth at 108 boys to 100 girls being born.

Living arrangements and household composition

Looking at the living arrangements of children under 18 years shows that 90 percent of children under 18 years have their parents alive. However, at the national level, 73 percent of children live with both their biological parents, 20 percent with mother only. Only one percent of children lives with father only, which is not much different in Male' or the Atolls.

Overall, 95 percent of children in Atolls live with either with both or one of the biological parents while this share is slightly lower at 90 percent in case of children in Male'. However, a higher proportion of children in Male' live with both the biological parents (77% in Male' and 71% in Atolls) while a higher proportion of children in Atolls are living with only their mother (24% in Male' compared to 13 % in Male'). Children in Male' are more vulnerable in the sense that a much higher share (5%) of children live with relatives other than their parents, which is 2% in the Atolls. Children living with non-relatives remain low at one percent or less (0.8% national, 1.2% Male' and 0.5% Atolls).

A sharp increase in child migrants aged 16 to 17 years olds in Male' is observed. Atoll level disaggregation of the data shows variations. Gnaviyani (Gn) Atoll among all atolls is seen as an exception; where as low as 51 percent of children live with two

parents, a little less than half (46.7 percent) live with one parent. Majority of those with one parent (45.8 percent) live with only their mother.

In the Atolls with higher shares of children lived without their parents, higher numbers of child migrants were also there. The reason for migration of children in such Atolls were for education purposes followed by migrated to live with family due to migration of their families.

Due to the limited variables that can be included in a population census, the need for a more in-depth study to get detailed information on living arrangements of children and socio-economic issues surrounding them were highlighted.

Literacy, school attendance and educational attainment

Primary and lower secondary school aged children in the population (6-17 years) decreased between 2006 to 2014, due to the demographic shift in the country's population.

Literacy rates for children is high with 98 percent of children aged 10 to 17 being able to read and write with understanding in the local language Dhivehi. Literacy rate in English for the children of this age group was also high at 96 percent.

School attendance of children remain high at 94 percent overall. However, from 16 years of age, the percentage of children studying starts to decline sharply. Children of higher secondary school age has much lower rates of 88 percent for 16-year olds and 71 percent for 17-year olds. A much steeper decline is observed in the Atolls than that in Male'.

Quite a handpick of children are out of school. Among the child population 5-17 years 4 percent or 3,103 children were not studying or attending school at the time of the Census. Among these children out of school, there were more boys (1,741 or 4.5 percent) than girls (1,362 or 3.7 percent). Majority of these children are among older ages of 16 and 17 years, that is the higher secondary school age (78 percent).

With comparatively less opportunities for higher education in the country, especially in Atolls, more children of higher secondary school ages remain out of school. Nearly a third (29 % of boys and 27% of girls) of 17-year-olds were not studying. This is higher in the Atolls (33% for boys and 35% for girls). In case of Male' higher share of boys was not studying at this age, while in the Atolls share of girls not attending education were higher.

As per the current education system in Maldives, children get their major educational certificate once they complete grade 10 and complete the London G.C.E Ordinary

level exams at the age of 16 and sometimes at 17 years. Hence, as expected majority of 17-year-old children (88 percent had attained O' level certificate as their highest educational certificate) and 21 percent of 16-year-olds had O' level certificate as well.

Labor force participation

Child population included in the labour force data in this analysis comprises children aged 15 to 17 years.

Children aged 15-17 years account for two percent of the total labour force (2,224 children) and 13 percent of the child population in this age category at the time of the census. Two third (68%) of these were 17 year olds. Children in the labour force increased with age; from 3 percent of 15-year old's to 9 percent of 16 year old's and 24 percent among the 17 year olds represented in the labour force.

In other words, 1 in 8 children aged 15-17 years were in the labour force either working or looking and available for work.

Share of children in the labour force is higher in Male' compared to the Atolls (14.8% vs 11.5%). Employed children (1,878) account for 11 percent of the 15-17-year-olds and unemployed children (366) were 2 percent. Amongst the employed children, 975 were males (52%) and 903 were Females (48%). Of these employed children, 41 percent worked while they studied. Among those children employed and studying 20 percent worked for less than 2 hours per day on average and 28 percent worked beyond the 7-hour threshold.

Less than a hundred children among the 15-17 year olds (95 children or 5 percent of the employed children of these ages, worked in resorts and industrial islands, categorized as non-administrative islands.

Out of the 15-17-year old's who were employed, 41 percent combined work and studies. Majority (72%) of the employed 15-year old's were attending school or studying, which decrease with age to 49 percent for 16-year old's and 34 percent for 17-year old's.

One third (30%) of the employed children 15-17 years, worked eight hours per day on average, majority of them were among 17 year olds.

Most of the employed children were working in retail trade and in education. Nearly a third (30 percent) of the employed children were in the industry of wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles followed by 16 percent in education. This is likely to be due to the common practice in the community, whereby children often help in family shops and engage in giving tuition, after their school hours and during weekends.

Top occupations for female children, 30 percent of all employed female children (267 children out of 903) were shop sales persons, followed by teaching personnel-level not stated, (156 children or 17%). Top occupations for male children, 20 percent of all employed male children (198 children out of 975) were shop sales persons, followed by fishery workers (129 children) or 13 percent.

An issue of concern is the higher numbers of 16 and 17 year-old children, of higher secondary school age, not being engaged in studies. This indicated the need to create more opportunities and engage 16 to 17 year-old children in studies.

Marriage and fertility

Marriage and fertility related data collected in the Census were for those aged 15 years and above and hence children 15 to 17 years are included in this analysis.

The census data shows that 95 percent of the children have never been married. However, child marriages take place in the country, although the numbers are few, with only 0.60 percent of the children (106 children aged 15-17) being married at the time of the Census. This accounts to 106 children of 15-17 as being married at the time of the census. Though it is less in number, the fact that marriages are taking place is a concern, which needs to be address.

The indicator “proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before the age 15 and before age 18” showed that the child marriage among 20-24-year-old population is slightly less than those among the current child population (15-17 years). The proportion of women 20-24 years who were married before the age of 18 was at 0.35 percent.

The analysis also showed that more child marriages occur among girls than among boys of this age. The result has also shown that girls tend to get married earlier than that of boys.

Furthermore, most of the children are in their first married and with their first husband/ wife. Few children are in their second marriage and this pattern increases with the increase in age.

The number of the children born by girls in the age group 15-17 years was low with less than 1 percent of them having given birth and increases with age with the numbers having given birth higher among the 17 year olds. Fertility pattern among children is less with slight difference between Male' and Atolls.

Child population over time by locality

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Total Population						
Republic	175,854	213,215	244,814	270,101	298,968	338,434
Male	45,874	55,130	62,519	74,069	103,693	129,381
Atolls (Administrative Islands)	129,980	158,085	182,295	196,032	195,275	195,539
Population Under 18 (Numbers)						
Republic	-	113,138	128,653	130,987	117,362	111,107
Male	-	25,839	27,421	29,417	33,661	37,257
Atolls (Administrative Islands)	-	87,299	101,232	101,570	83,701	73,850
Population Under 18 (%)						
Republic	-	53.1	52.6	48.5	39.3	32.8
Male	-	46.9	43.9	39.7	32.5	28.8
Atolls (Administrative Islands)	-	55.2	55.5	51.8	42.9	37.8

Child population by key age groups: Changes over time

		Census Years					
		1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Total Population		175,854	213,215	244,814	270,101	298,968	338,434
Population Under 1							
	Numbers	7,952	8,159	7,044	5,515	5,462	6,936
	Percent	4.5	3.8	2.9	2.0	1.8	2.0
Population Under 5							
	Numbers	32,915	39,430	36,972	30,912	26,171	35,706
	Percent	18.7	18.5	15.1	11.4	8.8	10.6
Population Under 10							
	Numbers	58,964	73,964	77,731	68,839	41,156	67,381
	Percent	33.5	34.7	31.8	25.5	13.8	19.9
Population Under 15							
	Numbers	81,162	99,968	113,601	109,928	68,073	93,478
	Percent	46.2	46.9	46.4	40.7	22.8	27.6

Population by Broad Age groups (%)

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Age 0-14	46.2	46.9	46.0	41.0	32.0	28.0
Age 15-64	51.3	50.1	50.0	55.0	64.0	68.0
Age 65+	2.5	2.7	3.0	4.0	5.0	5.0

Sex Ratio at Birth (males per 100 females)

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Republic	103	105	104	102	103	108
Male	130	120	106	99	108	107
Atolls (Administrative Islands)	95	100	104	102	102	109

Sex Ratio under 5 (males per 100 female)

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Republic	101	104	107	103	104	110
Male	98	102	109	104	104	108
Atolls (Administrative Islands)	102	104	107	103	104	111

Dependency ratio

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Child dependency ratio (0-14 years)	83.4	93.0	92.0	73.0	48.0	40.8
Elderly dependency ratio	5.0	5.0	6.0	7.0	7.0	7.0

Living Arrangements of Children under 18 by Locality (%) (As classified in chapter 3 and the categories given in census)

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Republic		
Two Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	
Both Parents	82.2	72.9
Mother and Step Father	2.3	1.9
Father and Step Mother	0.7	0.5
Male'		
Two Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	80
Both Parents	73.2	77.4
Mother and Step Father	2.1	1.8
Father and Step Mother	0.8	0.6
Atolls (Admin and Non-administrative Islands)		
Two Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	73
Both Parents	85.3	70.7
Mother and Step Father	2.3	2
Father and Step Mother	0.7	0.5

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Republic		
One Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	21
Mother Only	7.1	20.2
Father Only	0.8	0.9
Male'		
One Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	14
Mother Only	8.8	13.1
Father Only	0.9	1
Atolls (Admin and Non-administrative Islands)		
One Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	24
Mother Only	6.6	23.6
Father Only	0.7	0.8
Republic		
No Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	4
Other Relatives	4.9	2.9
Non-relatives	2	0.8
Male'		
No Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	6
Other Relatives	10.7	4.9
Non-relatives	3.5	1.2
Atolls (Admin and Non-administrative Islands)		
No Parents (% as given in chapter)	-	3
Other Relatives	2.9	1.9
Non-relatives	1.5	0.5

Parents Alive (%)

	Census Year
	2014
Male'	
Both Parents Alive	90.0
One Parent Alive	2.0
Not Stated	8.0
Atolls	
Both Parents Alive	93.0
One Parent Alive	2.0
Not Stated	5.0

Resident Maldivian Population by Literacy, Locality

		Census Years					
		1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Republic							
Literate (Dhivehi)	Number	121,847	149,947	157,358	-	250,804	42,847
	Percent	86.5	90.5	94.2	-	93.8	98.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	96.0
Male'							
Literate (English %)	Number	36,005	44,625	47,794	-	85,745	14,272
	Percent	94.6	96.0	97.2	-	90.3	98.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	98.0
Atolls							
Literate (English %)	Number	36,005	105,322	109,564	-	165,059	28,451
	Percent	83.5	88.4	92.9	-	95.8	98.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	95.0
Republic							
Illiterate (Dhivehi)	Number	16,508	12,905	6,002	-	4,579	302
	Percent	11.7	7.8	3.59	-	1.71	1.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	2.0
Male'							
Literate (English %)	Number	1,512	1,100	845	-	741	77
	Percent	4.0	2.4	1.7	-	0.8	1.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	2.0
Atolls							
Literate (English %)	Number	14,996	11,805	5,157	-	3,838	225
	Percent	14.6	9.9	4.4	-	2.2	1.0
Literate (English %)		-	-	-	-	-	2.0

Resident Maldivian Population Currently Studying and Not Studying, Republic

		Census Years					
		1985*	1990*	1995*	2000*	2006*	2014**
Total Population 5-17 Years							
Both Sexes		54,507	65,617	83,056	92,961	85,677	75,395
Male		27,978	33,391	42,242	47,193	43,913	38,589
Female		26,529	32,226	40,814	45,768	41,764	36,806
Children Studying (Numbers)							
Both Sexes		-	-	69,474	83,980	78,518	70,786
Male		-	-	35,242	42,403	40,064	36,038
Female		-	-	34,232	41,577	38,454	34,748
Children Studying (%)							
Both Sexes		-	-	83.6	90.3	91.6	93.9
Male		-	-	83.4	89.9	91.2	93.4
Female		-	-	83.9	90.8	92.1	94.4
Not Studying (Numbers)							
Both Sexes		-	-	13,582	7,046	7,135	3,103
Male		-	-	7,000	3,816	3,836	1,741
Female		-	-	6,582	3,230	3,299	1,362
Not Studying (%)							
Both Sexes		-	-	16.4	7.6	8.3	4.1
Male		-	-	16.6	8.1	8.7	4.5
Female		-	-	16.1	7.1	7.9	3.7

* School going population taken from 6 years and above, ** school going population taken from 5 years and above

Highest Grade Completed Among Children 6-17 years of age by locality (%)

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Male'		
Primary (Gr 1-7)	24.3	30.8
Secondary (Gr 8-10)	41.3	36.8
Higher Secondary (Gr11-12)	76.1	63.3
Atolls		
Primary (Gr 1-7)	75.7	69.2
Secondary (Gr 8-10)	58.7	63.2
Higher Secondary (Gr11-12)	23.9	36.7

Highest Certificate Attained among Children 6-17 years of age

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Male'		
O' Level	49.7	48.7
A' Level	71.0	71.0
Diploma (<6 months)	49.3	47.4
Diploma (>6 months)	80.0	76.1
No Certificate	-	29.6
Atolls		
O' Level	50	51.3
A' Level	29	29.0
Diploma (<6 months)	51	52.6
Diploma (>6 months)	20	23.9
No Certificate	-	70.4

Activity status of children (15-17 year)

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Republic		
In labour Force		
Number	5,411	2,244
Percent	22.2	12.7
Outside Labour Force		
Number	17,400	15,180
Percent	71.5	86.1
Male'		
In labour Force		
Number	1,750	976
Percent	20.1	14.8
Outside Labour Force		
Number	6,344	5,556
Percent	72.9	84.0
Atolls		
In labour Force		
Number	3,661	1,268
Percent	23.4	11.5
Outside Labour Force		
Number	11,056	9,624
Percent	70.7	87.3

Number of employed children by age

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
15 years	406	162
16 years	1,342	447
17 years	1,913	1,269
15-17 years	3,661	1,878

Employed Children by Status in employment (%)

		Census Years	
		2006	2014
Employee	Male	49.7	59.2
	Female	33.2	54.3
Employer/ Owner	Male	0.7	0.5
	Female	0.3	0.7
Own Account Worker	Male	12.2	9.7
	Female	25.9	22.4
Contributing family Worker	Male	20.3	13.6
	Female	32.4	17.2
Group Worker	Male	11.6	12.0
	Female	0.7	1.1
Not Stated	Male	5.6	4.9
	Female	7.4	4.4

Percent of Employed Children (15-17) by Status in employment Male' and Atolls

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
Male'		
Employee	65.2	71.6
Employer/ Owner	0.4	0.4
Own Account Worker	15.2	9.9
Contributing family Worker	10.6	9.3
Group Worker	2.0	1.3
Not Stated	6.6	7.5
Atolls		
Employee	42.5	43.0
Employer/ Owner	0.5	0.7
Own Account Worker	18.2	21.6
Contributing family Worker	25.6	21.2
Group Worker	6.8	11.1
Not Stated	6.4	2.3

Percentage of employed children (15-17) by major occupations & industry (%)

	Census Years					
	2006	2014				
	Republic	Republic	Male'	Administrative Islands	Industrial and other Islands	Resorts
Major Occupations						
Managers	0.6	0.7	1.0	-	-	-
Professionals	6.5	16.1	15.0	18.0	-	6.0
Tecnicians and associate professionals	18.7	3.7	5.0	3.0	8.0	5.0
Clerical support workers	10.3	9.5	17.0	4.0	8.0	11.0
Service and sales workers	17.7	37.6	42.0	35.0	17.0	34.0
Skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers	8.3	8.4	1.0	15.0	8.0	2.0
Craft and related trades workers	21.9	12.6	8.0	16.0	25.0	8.0
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	6.1	2.6	2.0	2.0	-	13.0
Elementary occupations	9.8	5.3	3.0	6.0	25.0	14.0
not stated	-	3.4	6.0	1.0	8.0	6.0
Major Industry						
Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	-	9.2	1.0	16.0	8.0	-
Manufacturing	-	10.0	8.0	12.0	8.0	-
Construction	-	2.7	1.0	3.0	67.0	2.0
Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	-	30.7	40.0	26.0	-	-
Accomodation and food services activities	-	11.9	6.0	10.0	-	93.0
Education	-	15.9	14.0	19.0	-	-

Number of Children (15-17) marriages by age and sex, by Locality

	Census Years	
	2006	2014
	Republic	
Both Sexes	57	106
Male	11	44
Female	46	62
Male'		
Both Sexes	25	60
Male	5	23
Female	20	37
Atolls		
Both Sexes	32	46
Male	6	21
Female	26	25

Total Feriltity Rate (TFR) by locality (%)

	Census Years					
	1985	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014
Republic	-	6.40	-	2.84	2.20	2.46
Male'	-	3.88	-	1.58	1.55	2.04
Atolls	-	7.40	-	3.37	2.64	2.78

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITION

Terms	Definitions
Total Enumerated Population	This is the total population enumerated in the census. It includes Usual Resident Population and Non Resident Maldivian Population
Total Resident Population	Population who have lived or intends to reside in Maldives for 1 year or more. This includes Resident Maldivian Population and Resident Foreign Population.
Resident Maldivian Population	Population who have lived or intends to reside in Maldives for 1 year or more. This includes Resident Maldivian Population and Resident Foreign Population.
Resident Maldivian Population	Maldivian who have lived or intends to reside in Maldives for 1 year or more
Resident Foreign Population	Foreigners who have lived or intends to reside in Maldives for 1 year or more
Child population	Children below 18 years of age
Annual Growth Rate	The annual growth rate of the population between two censuses
Population pyramid	A population pyramid is graphical display of a population's age and sex composition. Horizontal bars present the numbers or proportions of males and females in each age group. It shows single years of age.
Demographic transition / Demographic shift	The transition from high birth and death rates to lower birth and death rates as a country develops.
Total Fertility Rate	The average number of children that would be born to a women by the time she ended childbearing if she were to pass through all her childbearing years confirming to the age-specific fertility rates of a given year
Replacement Level Fertility	The level of fertility at which women in same cohort have exactly enough daughters (on average) to "replace" themselves in the population.
Dependency ratio	The number of dependents, age 0 to 14 and over the age of 65 to the total working age population.
Working Age Population	Total number of potential workers within an economy. All persons who are 15 to 64 years of age.
Administrative Islands	The administrative islands in the 20 administrative atolls. Male' is an administrative island.

Terms	Definitions
Non-Administrative Islands	Non-administrative islands include tourist resorts, industrial islands and islands used for other purposes
Household	A household refers to a unit where people live within same arrangement, usually sharing the same living space, live and eat together. Those whose sleeping arrangements are different from where they take their meals, are counted in the household where the sleeping arrangements are made.
Sex Ratio	Number of Males per 100 Female in the population (Males divided by Females x 100)
Sex Ratio at Birth	The sex ratio at birth refers to the number of boys born alive per 100 girls born alive.
Two Parents	Those children living with both biological parents and stepparents
One Parents	Those children living with mother or the father, this also includes those parents living away from family for various reasons
No Parents	Those children living with relative or non-relative at the time of census. Even though there parents are alive these children for various reason live with relative or non-relative
Household Type	Children living in household type i.e house/flat/apartment, boast and other mobile units, establishment and worksite
Literacy Rate	The percentage of people who are able to read and write. Literacy of Dhivehi and English was determined by the person's ability to read and write, with understanding
Currently Studying Population	Children currently engaged in studying (through any mode i.e home schooling, studying online etc.)
Currently Not Studying Population	Children currently not attending any schools, other training institution, or not studying through any other modes of education
Educational Attainment	The highest grade completed and highest level in the advance educational system of the Maldives
Employed Child population	The employed comprises of all children (15 - 17 years of age) who, during the reference week, were at work or with a job but not at work in paid employment or self-employment
Unemployed Child population	Those who (a) were not in employment; (b) carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period; and (c) were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity

Terms	Definitions
Unemployment rate	Unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons expresses as a percent of the labour force
Labour force	Labour force is the sum of employed and unemployed children (15 to 17 years of age) population
Labour force participation rate	Labour force as a percent of the population 15 - 17 years of age. This represents the overall extent of participation of the population in economic activity
Outside labour force	Out of labour force comprises all Children (15 - 17 years age) who, during the reference week, were not employed or unemployed but were either (a) seeking employment but not currently available or (b) currently available for employment but did not seek employment and (c) currently not available for employment and did not seek employment
Industry	Industry refers to the activity of the establishment in which an employed person worked during the reference week. For purpose of international comparisons 'The International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC) 'is recommended. The most recent revision of ISIC (Rev. 4) was used for coding and tabulating the 2014 census data.
Occupation	Occupation refers to the type of work done during the reference week by the employed person at the primary job or type of work in which the person worked most of the time during the reference week. For purpose of international comparisons 'The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) 'is recommended. The most recent revision (ISCO-2008) was used for coding and tabulating the 2014 census data.
Nuptiality	Refers to marriage as a population phenomenon, including the rate at which it occurs, the characteristics of children (below 18 years of age) united in marriage and dissolution of such unions (through divorce, widowhood and annulment)
Fertility	Refers to the number of live births women have

CHAPTER ONE

Background of the Study



1.1 Introduction and Background

The Government of Maldives always has a distinct focus on improving the lives of the children of the country. As such, the Maldives is one of the earliest signatories of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ratifying the convention on 11 February 1991. The year 1991 was also declared the Year of the Maldivian Child. In July that year, the National Conference on the Maldivian Child was held, indicating the importance the Maldives gives to child development, even that early in its modern history. In this conference, a National Programme of Action was formulated, followed not long after, in the same year, by the passing of the Law on the Protection of the Rights of the Child (9/91).

In 1992, the establishment of the National Council for the Rights of the Child signified the beginning of institutional backing for the development of children, with a Unit for the Rights of the Child (URC) established, to support the work of the council. Since then, The Maldives has not looked back. The country's commitment to child development was also reflected in the National Development Plans, in which several policies and strategies for the improvement of the child were articulated. While the earlier development plans integrated

“States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.”

Article 2: Convention on the Rights of the Child

child related matters in sections such as health and education, the Fifth National Development Plan (1997 – 2000) had, for the first time, a separate section on Children and Development.

In 2000, a report was published on the situation of children and women in the Maldives, which stated that one of the major reasons for the violation of the rights of the child in the Maldives was ‘strains on the Family Unit’ and even though efforts had been made to ‘increase awareness of children's rights, a lot more needs to be done to sensitize the communities, the Government's decision-makers, as well as women and children themselves about emerging concerns that restrict their advancements and well-being, their legal rights, as well as protective legislation and mechanisms that can be used’¹.

The 7th Plan (2006 – 2010) emphasized policies to strengthen institutional framework to enhance child protection and family services. The Strategic Action Plan (2009 -2013) that came into implementation in 2009, also had policies long the same lines, with added emphasis on alternative care systems of the vulnerable groups such as children and establishing a juvenile justice system. The current administration's manifesto also contains similar policies and strategies.

¹ P.159, 7th National Development Plan

However, the question remains if the development has been equitable. Thus, this analysis of the Census 2014 data is undertaken to assess the situation of child equity and to enable information for evidence based policy making. This situation assessment on child equity will allow evaluation of the success of past policies and provide a foundation for future policy making.

1.2 Objectives and Scope of the Study

The objective of the study is to produce thematic review on ‘child equity analysis: social deprivation in the Maldives’, in order to provide relevant information for policy makers and technical experts in terms of situation of children in the Maldives. The information then, it is anticipated, will help to evaluate past policies and review present policies in terms of their instrumentality in contributing to child equity. It is also expected that pertinent information can be gained from this study to be used to formulate more appropriate policies for future.

The study will analyse Census-2014 data and information from other studies conducted in the area of child equity/ situation of children, will be used where it adds value to the present study.

At the minimum, the study intends to provide a comprehensive profile of children on the following key areas:

1. Child population and demographics
2. Living arrangements and household composition
3. Literacy, school attendance and educational attainment
4. Child workers and the sectors of employment
5. Nuptiality and fertility of child population

CHAPTER TWO

Child Population and Demographics

This chapter provides an overview of the demographic changes that has taken place in the population of Maldives. In particular, the child population will be analyzed looking at the specific age-groups.



2.1 Introduction

According to the last census conducted in 2014, Maldives had a total population of 407,660 persons. This includes 338,434 resident Maldivians (84 percent) and 63,637 foreigners (16 percent).

The population continues to grow steadily with an annual growth rate of 1.67 percent. The population is distributed across 187 inhabited islands, 109 resorts and 128 industrial and other islands. Of the total population, 38 percent of the population lives in the capital Male’.

“For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

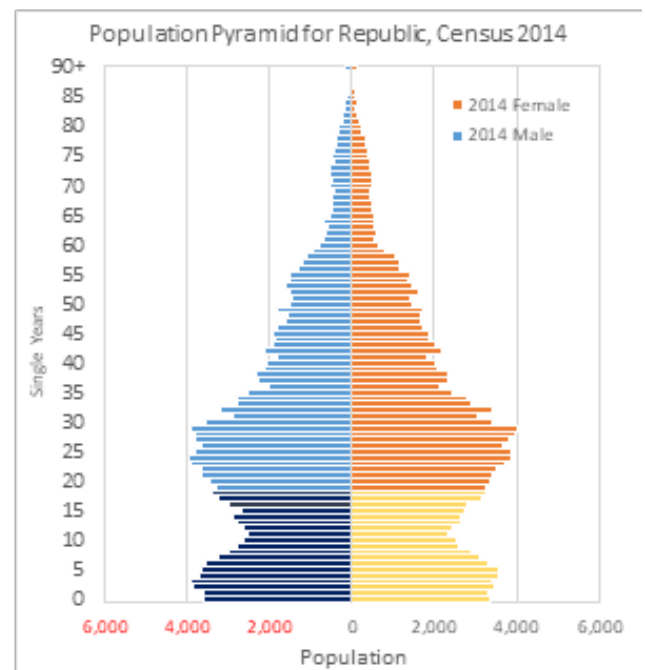
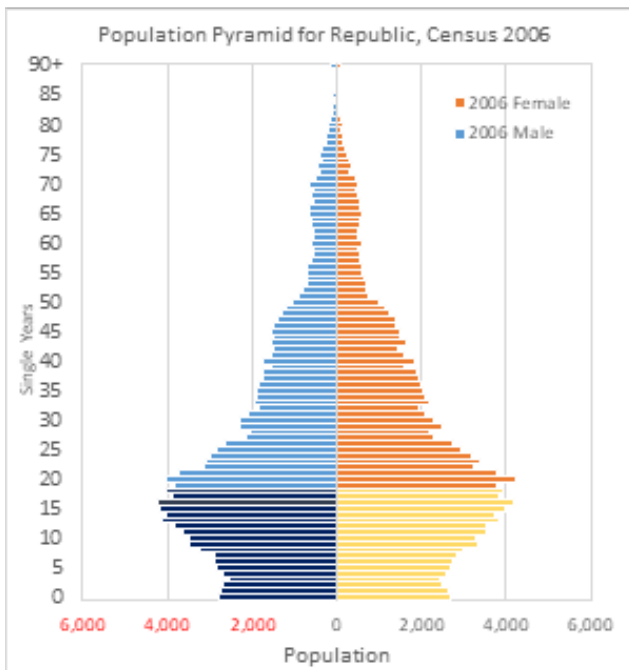
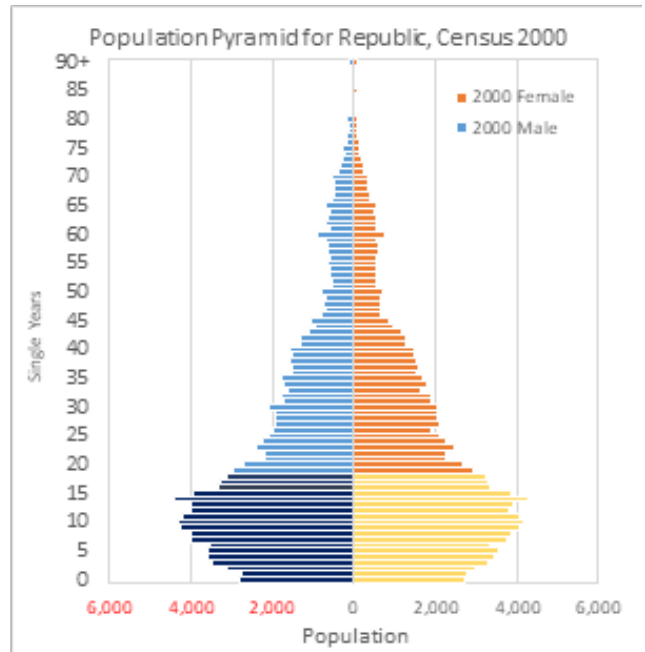
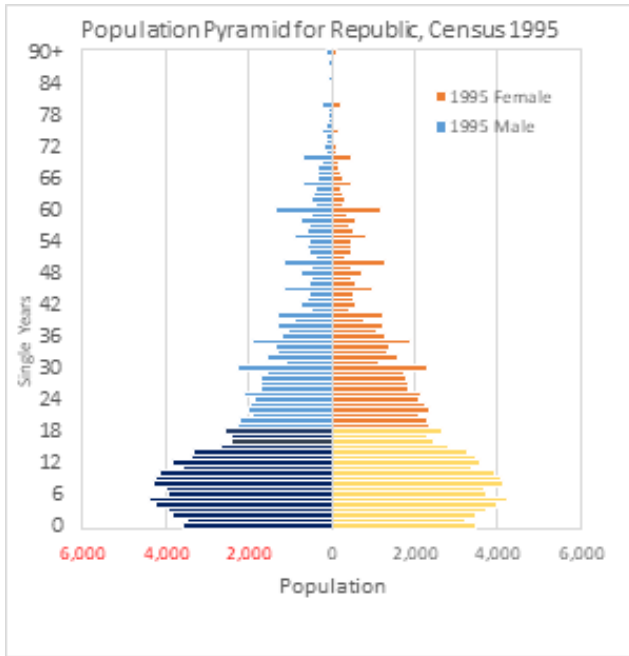
Article 1: Convention on the Rights of the Child

2.2 Population structure: Changes in age-sex composition over time

The age-sex composition of the population of Maldives over the years 1995-2014 is portrayed through the following population pyramids.

The pyramid shows how the population has changed over time. In 1995, the bulge of the population was children and lies below 18 years. This is due to the high fertility rates between the period 1990 and 1995 (TFR was 6.4 in 1990 and 5.4 in 1995). By 2000, the fertility rate has gone down drastically and the effect is seen in the pyramid of 2000 where births are less and the child population gradually starts to decrease. This decrease in age group is seen as a gain into the next age cohort in the rungs of the pyramid. By 2006, the fertility rate went down to almost replacement level with few births taking place in the population. This is also the time where the transition from children to adult/ reproductive age took place and this can be seen in the pyramid of 2006. As more people have entered the reproductive age group this is expected to result in high births. The result is seen in 2014 pyramid where the child population has started to increase. As Maldives has almost completed its demographic transition, (the population being young and more in the working age group), the fertility rate is expected to remain at the same level in the coming years.

Figure 2.1: Population Pyramid of Maldives, Censuses 1995-2014



2.3 Child Population: Changes over time

Table 2.1 shows how the child population has changed over the years 1995 to 2014. The number of children (population under 18) in the population is at an all-time low in 2014, when compared to previous censuses and the share of children to the total population is also at its lowest.

1995 census showed that the share of child population (children under 18 years) was at its highest at more than half of the population, while in 2014 children under 18 years consists of one third of the population.

Table 2.1: Child population over time by locality, Censuses 1995-2014

Year	Total Population			Population Under 18 (Numbers)			Population Under 18 (Percent)		
	Republic	Male'	Atolls	Republic	Male'	Atolls	Republic	Male'	Atolls
1995	244,814	62,519	182,295	128,653	27,421	101,232	53	44	56
2000	270,101	74,069	196,032	130,987	29,417	101,570	48	40	52
2006	298,968	103,693	195,275	117,362	33,661	83,701	39	32	43
2014	338,434	129,381	195,539	111,107	37,257	73,850	33	29	38

** Population in Non- Administrative Islands are excluded from the Atolls total*

In Male' the share of child population was also at its highest in 1995 at 44 percent. This went down to 29 percent in 2014, indicating that the population consists more of working age population (as seen from Figure 2.1). This demographic shift in broad age group is also observed in the Atolls. In 1995, more than half of the Atoll population was children. Over the years, the child population has decreased to reach a little over one third of the Atoll population by 2014.

2.4 Child population by key age groups: Changes over time

Table 2.2 shows how the composition of the child population under 1 and under 5 years of age has changed over the period 1995 to 2014. It is interesting to note that, while the number of children under 1 year and under 5 years increased during this period, the total number of children under 18 years has decreased.

Table 2.2: Child population over time by different child age groups for Republic, Censuses 1995-2014

Year	Total Population	Population Under 1		Population Under 5		Population Under 18	
		Numbers	Percent	Numbers	Percent	Numbers	Percent
1995	244,814	7,044	3	36,972	15	128,653	53
2000	270,101	5,515	2	30,912	11	130,987	48
2006	298,968	5,462	2	26,171	9	117,362	39
2014	338,434	6,936	2	35,706	11	111,107	33

These different age groups of the children in the population in 2014 can be summarized as:

Children under 18 years: 1995 census showed that the child population (children under 18 years) was at its highest which accounted for more than half of the population while today children under 18 years consists of one third of the population.

Children under 5 years: Children under 5 years was at its highest in 1995 which accounted for 15 percent of the population. This percentage went down to its lowest in 2006. Between 2006 and 2014, the number of children under 5 years has increased and reached close to that of child population (under 5 years) of 1995 but the share out the total population stands at 11 percent.

Children under 1 year: Children under 1 year constitute less than 5 percent of the population and remains at a constant share of 2 percent over the years.

2.5 Composition of Children at Atoll Level

Table 2.3 presents the distribution of children (out of the total child population) across the country clearly showing an uneven distribution at Atoll level. The concentration of the child population is highest at around 6 percent in South Thiladhunmathi (HDh) Atoll and Addu (S) City. This is expected as the distribution of the population is highest in these Atolls. Out of the total child population, the concentration of children is less in central area (Male' region) as the population mainly consists of working age population.

Table 2.3: Child population by locality, Census 2014

Locality	Child population (Under 18 years)	
	Numbers	percent
Republic	111,107	100.0
Male'	37,257	33.5
Atolls (Includes Administrative and Non-Administrative Islands)	73,850	66.5
Administrative Islands	73,710	66.3
North Thiladhunmathi (HA)	5,059	4.6
South Thiladhunmathi (HDh)	7,237	6.5
North Miladhunmadulu (Sh)	4,865	4.4
South Miladhunmadulu (N)	4,032	3.6
North Maalhosmadulu (R)	5,926	5.3
South Maalhosmadulu (B)	3,344	3.0
Faadhippolhu (Lh)	2,853	2.6
Male' Atoll (K)	3,972	3.6
North Ari Atoll (AA)	2,352	2.1
South Ari Atoll (ADh)	2,949	2.7
Felidhu Atoll (V)	508	0.5
Mulakatholhu (M)	1,600	1.4
North Nilandhe Atoll (F)	1,732	1.6
South Nilandhe Atoll (Dh)	2,000	1.8
Kolhumadulu (Th)	3,323	3.0
Hadhdhunmathi (L)	4,395	4.0
North Huvadhu Atoll (GA)	3,167	2.9
South Huvadhu Atoll (GDh)	4,350	3.9
Gnaviyani (Gn)	3,360	3.0
Addu (S)	6,686	6.0

The breakdown of child population by key age groups for the 20 Atoll presents a better distribution of the child population across the country.

Table 2.4: Child Population Overtime by Locality, Censuses 2000 to 2014

Atoll	2014			2006			2000		
	(Population in Percent)			(Population in Percent)			(Population in Percent)		
	under 1	under 5	under 18	under 1	under 5	under 18	under 1	under 5	under 18
North Thiladhunmathi (HA)	2.50	12.26	39.10	1.91	9.98	46.97	2.40	13.32	54.73
South Thiladhunmathi (HDh)	2.44	13.45	39.09	1.99	9.91	46.51	2.53	13.82	55.03
North Miladhunmadulu (Sh)	2.48	12.92	40.24	2.09	10.54	47.02	2.76	14.60	57.39
South Miladhunmadulu (N)	2.46	12.60	38.46	2.14	10.30	46.85	2.28	13.22	55.99
North Maalhosmadulu (R)	2.31	12.52	39.87	2.28	11.00	48.48	2.11	10.95	43.56
South Maalhosmadulu (B)	2.07	11.37	37.67	1.98	9.96	45.49	2.25	12.19	53.40
Faadhippolhu (Lh)	2.52	11.35	36.09	2.01	8.87	43.82	2.35	12.10	52.76
Male' Atoll (K)	2.19	11.38	32.65	2.12	9.63	37.55	2.07	12.08	46.29
North Ari Atoll (AA)	2.29	13.68	39.83	2.49	12.21	44.02	2.89	15.21	51.26
South Ari Atoll (ADh)	2.81	13.68	36.21	2.28	10.22	44.76	2.40	13.64	54.46
Felidhu Atoll (V)	1.81	10.93	31.73	1.80	8.59	37.88	2.18	11.22	47.18
Mulakatholhu (M)	2.17	11.03	34.01	1.74	7.97	39.13	2.13	11.29	48.05
North Nilandhe Atoll (F)	2.99	13.50	42.05	2.13	11.39	50.44	2.65	14.69	57.26
South Nilandhe Atoll (Dh)	2.15	11.82	37.70	2.25	10.06	43.77	2.29	12.71	49.20
Kolhumadulu (Th)	2.06	12.59	37.33	1.82	9.36	43.01	1.96	12.41	52.84
Hadhdhunmathi (L)	2.21	11.34	37.26	2.12	10.17	45.59	2.45	13.38	54.52
North Huvadhu Atoll (GA)	1.85	10.55	38.00	2.35	11.03	47.73	3.15	16.02	55.22
South Huvadhu Atoll (GDh)	2.20	11.12	37.54	2.47	11.39	45.73	2.64	14.09	55.67
Gnaviyani (Gn)	2.29	12.27	42.08	1.94	11.33	47.47	2.62	13.02	56.68
Addu (S)	1.90	10.04	34.61	1.95	9.59	43.18	2.05	12.17	52.59

Similar to the pattern observed at Republic level, the child population has decreased over the years 2000 to 2014 across the 20 Atolls.

Census 2000 showed that nearly half of the population consisted of children and it has decreased over time across the Atolls. North Maalhosmadulu (R) remains an exception where the child population of the Atoll was less than 45 percent of the population in 2000. In 2014 the share of children remains above 40 percent in the two Atolls North Nilandhe Atoll (F) and Gnaviyani (Gn) Atoll only.

2.6 Sex Ratio

One of the key demographic indicator to look into population dynamics is the sex ratio of the population. The sex ratio indicates the ratio of men to women in a given population. A normal sex ratio is 103-105 where more or less 50 percent of the population are men

The sex ratio of the total population from Census 2014 is 103 men per 100 women and falls within the range of a normal sex ratio. This indicates there are more men than women in the population.

Similarly, the sex ratio at birth is also used to look more specifically at the gender imbalance among children.

2.6.1 Sex ratio at birth (SRB)

The sex ratio at birth also indicates the ratio of boys to girls in a given population. The sex ratio at birth is often considered to be around 105. This means that at birth on average, there are 105 males for every 100 females. If the sex ratio at birth goes beyond 105, in most cases it would mean that the societies have a preference for sex-selective abortion or infanticide. In certain countries, this is associated with birth registration, where under registration of female births might result in this.

In Maldives, the sex ratio at birth in Census 2014 is 108 boys to 100 girls (refer to Table 2.5). This is the highest sex ratio at birth recorded for Maldives. Up to 2014, the trend in sex ratio at birth was normal, and for the sudden increase in 2014 requires further analysis before a conclusion can be derived for its causes.

In Male' the highest sex ratio was observed in 2006, showing a sharp increase in the boys compared to 2000. Census 2000 recorded more girls than boys for the first time in Male'.

In the Atolls, the highest sex ratio was also seen in 2014. Over the past years, the sex ratio was within normal range and such an increase in SRB should be taken up for further analysis.

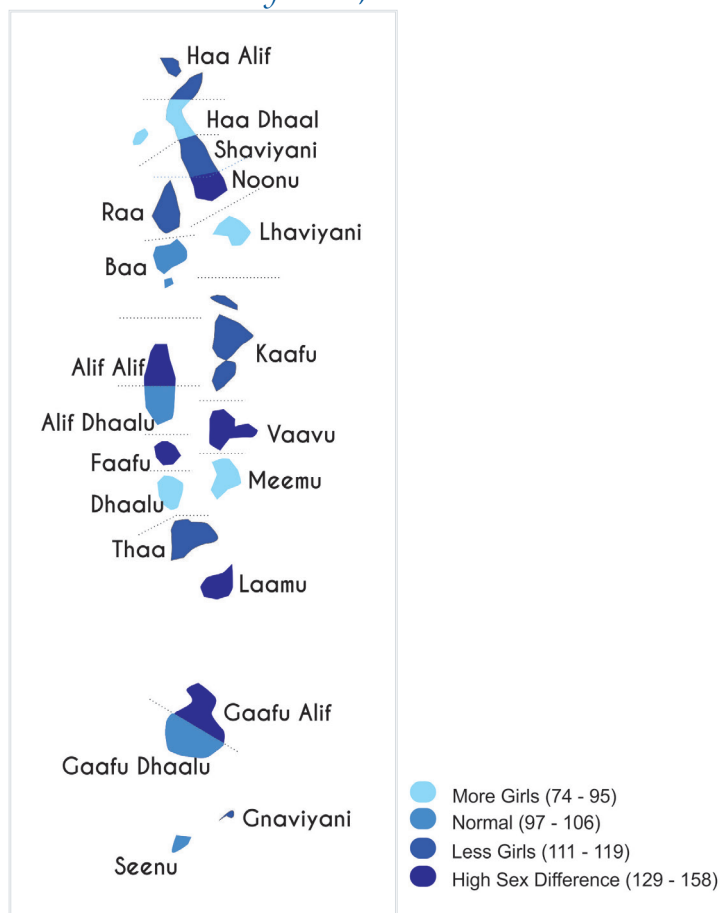
Table 2.5: Sex ratio at birth by locality, Censuses 1995-2014

Year	Sex Ratio at Birth (males per 100 females)		
	Republic	Male'	Atolls (Administrative Islands)
1995	104	106	104
2000	102	99	102
2006	103	108	102
2014	108	107	109

The sex ratio should be treated with cautious as small numbers in the population can exaggerate the result showing a high sex ratio at birth. This is the case in doing sex ratio at island level and hence this analysis focus more on the sex ratio at Atoll level.

Figure 2.2 shows the sex ratio at birth across the country. The highest sex ratio at birth was observed in 5 Atolls (L, GA, AA, F and V Atoll) which ranged from 111 to 119.

Figure 2.2: Sex ratio at birth by Atoll, Census 2014



2.6.2 Sex ratio under 5 years

Because of the low number of births, it is best to analyze the SR<5, a kind of weighted average. The analysis of the distribution of the SR<5 has to be done cautiously (because of the small numbers) but the numbers show that SR<5 is higher in the Atolls (111) than in Male' (108). The sex ratio of children under 5 years is higher than sex ratio at birth. It is observed that more boys are found in the Atolls than in Male'.

Table 2.6: Sex ratio of under 5 years by locality, Censuses 1995-2014

Year	Sex Ratio under 5 (males per 100 female)		
	Republic	Male'	Atolls (Administrative Islands)
1995	107	109	107
2000	103	104	103
2006	104	104	104
2014	110	108	111

Similar pattern can be observed with regard to sex ratio of under 5 years, showing the highest ever ratio recorded. The sudden increase in the sex ratio of under 5 years compared to census 2006 again requires further analysis before a conclusion can be derived for its causes.

2.7 Population by broad age-groups: Changes over time

It is noteworthy to look at the changes that took place for the key broad age groups in the total population over the two decades 1995 to 2014. For this purpose, the population has been categorized by the broad age groups to allow for international comparisons.

- Children (0-14 years)
- Working age population (15-64 years)
- Elderly Population (65+ population)

Figure 2.3: Composition of the Population by Broad Age groups, Censuses 1995- 2014

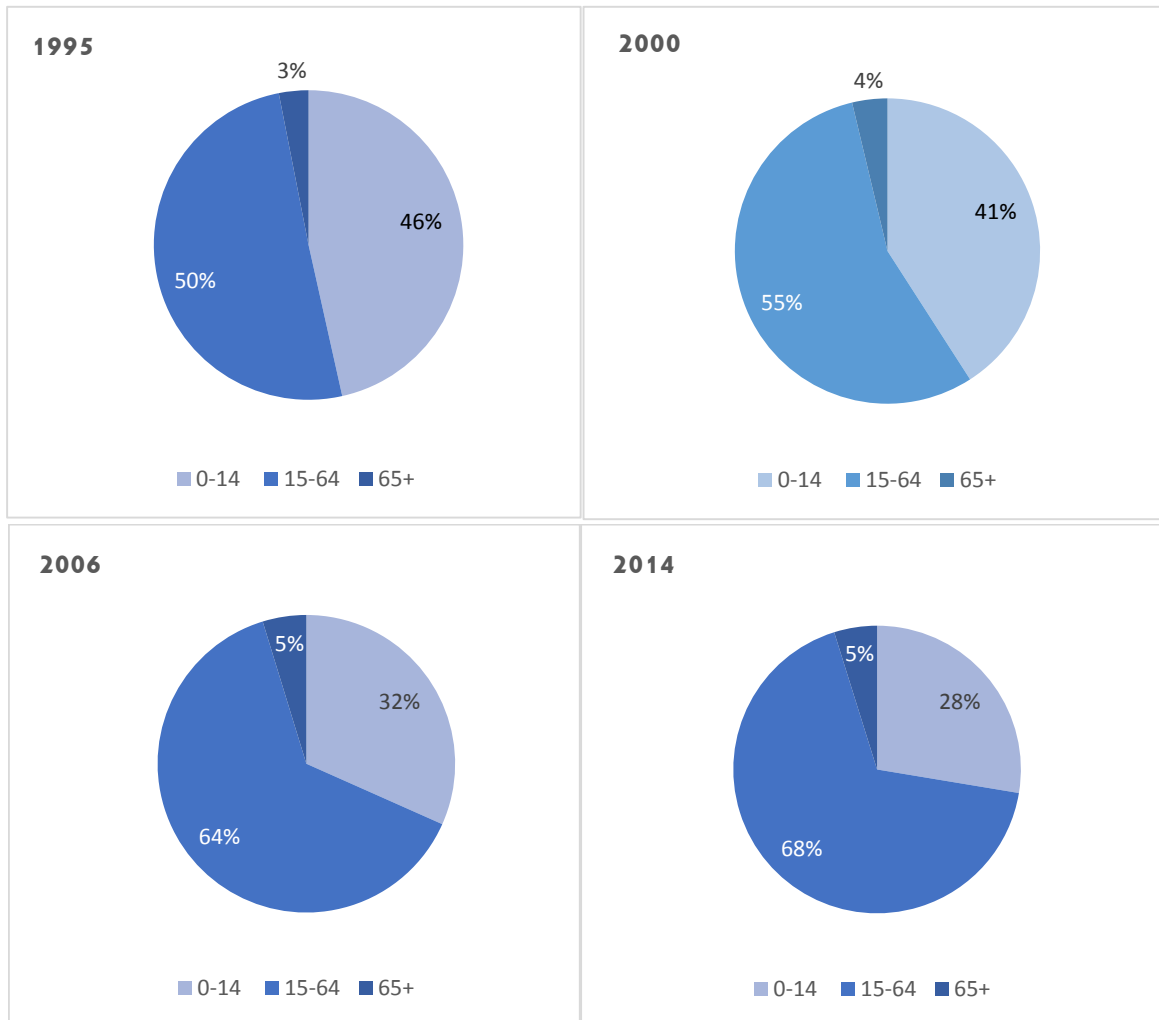
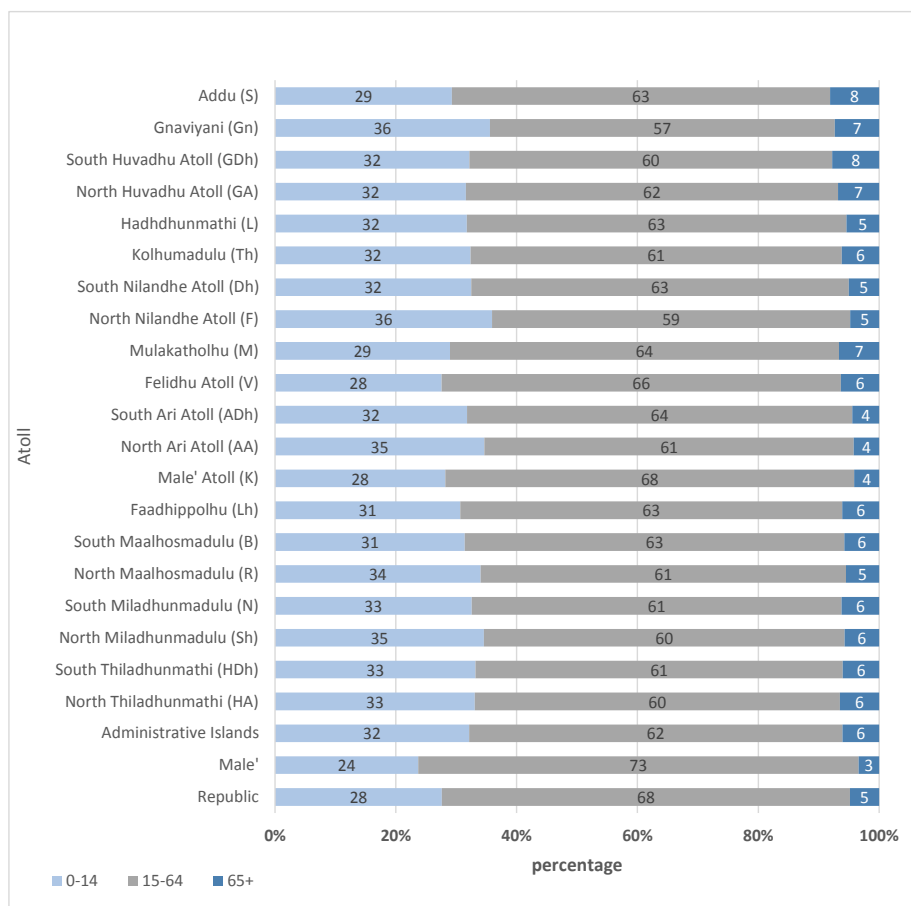


Figure 2.3 summarizes the changes that have taken place in the population for these broad age groups. In Census 1995, half the population was of working age and close to half were child population. This indicates a high dependency ratio for this year. After 1995, the child population gradually starts to decline and reached its lowest in 2014. This decrease in the child population is due to the difference between the birth and the cohort that has graduated from children to young population.

2.8 Population by broad age groups at Atoll level

As seen by Figure 2.4, bigger proportion of the Atoll population consist of working age population. In almost all Atolls, 30 percent of their population is composed of child population.

Figure 2.4: Composition of the population by broad age groups for Atolls, Census 2014



The demographic changes that has taken place in the country over the years with the reduction of child population has important effects on certain demographic indicators. To start off, it is important to look at the dependency ratio for past, present and future.

2.9 Dependency Ratio: Changes over time

The dependency ratio shows the number of dependents, age 0 to 14 and over the age of 65 to the total working age population. The dependency ratio indicates the pressure the dependents exert on the working age population.

The highest overall dependency ratio was registered for 1990 and 1995 over the last two decades. By 2014 the overall dependency ratio has gone down to 48. The overall dependency ratio has shown improvement over the years showing that in 1995 there were 2 dependents for 2 people of working age while in 2014 there was only one dependent for a working age person. With this decrease in the child population (0-14 years), the dependency ratio has decreased placing less burden on the economically active population (refer to Table 2.7)

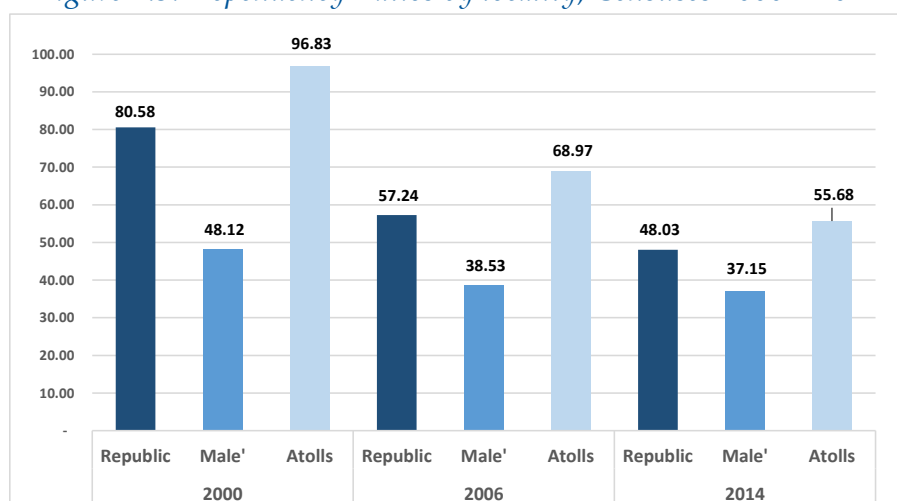
Table 2.7: Overall Dependency Ratios, 1995-2045

Year	1990	1995	2000	2006	2014	2020*	2025*	2030*	2035*	2040*	2045*
Dependency ratio	98	98	80	56	48	45	47	45	44	44	47

*projected figure from year 2020 onwards

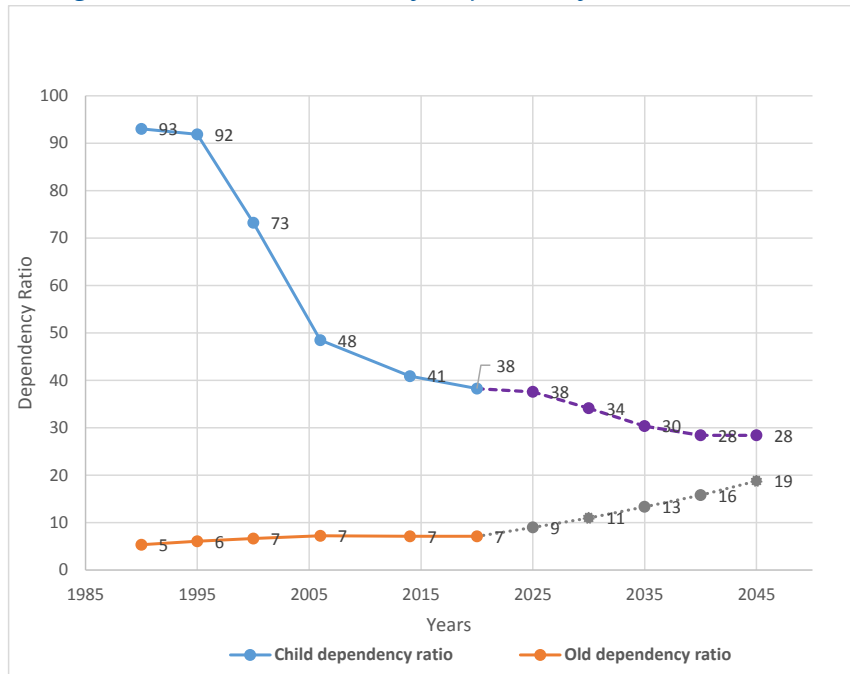
It is also important to look at the changes that has come in the dependency ratio between Male' and Atolls. Atolls showed a remarkable change in the overall dependency ratio between 2000 and 2006. While in 2000, 96 persons were dependent on 100 people of the working age, this drastically went down to 69 persons as dependents for 100 people of the working age.

Figure 2.5: Dependency Ratios by locality, Censuses 2000 – 2014



Since improvements has been made in the overall dependency ratio at the Republic level, it is important to look at who contributes more as dependents to the overall dependency ratio; children or elderly. This is measured by the child dependency ratio and old age dependency ratio.

Figure 2.6: Child and Elderly Dependency Ratio, 1995-2045



**Projected Child and Old dependency ratio based on the projection prepared on Census 2006*

From census 1995 it is evident that the high dependency ratio was due to the bulk of the children in the population whereby the child dependency stood at 93 dependents for every 100 working age group people. Figure 2.6 shows the shift in the dependency ratio between the child population and the elderly population. Over the years, the children depending on the working age population has gradually decreased while old dependents continued to increase at a slow pace. Today the overall dependency ratio has gone down showing how the demography of Maldives has changed rapidly. This change shows that Maldives is experiencing its first demographic dividend, as the active population is much larger than the child and old dependents combined.

The graph also shows the projected trend in child and old age dependency ratio. By 2040, the child dependency ratio is expected to go down to 28 dependents per 100 working age population. This decrease in child dependency ratio increases the old dependency ratio, indicating the onset of an ageing population. The decrease in the child dependency ratio also shows the decline in fertility, where the number of births taking place every year will get reduced.

2.10 Conclusion

The demography of the country has undergone tremendous changes over the years. Today, nearly 50 percent of its population are still less than 26 years. The children in the population has decreased from being half of the population to being 33 percent of the total population.

This changing age structure has important implications on the child population and many of its socio-economic characteristics. The census 2014 recorded the highest sex ratio at birth at 108 boys to 100 girls being born. This possible sex ratio imbalance at birth is an issue in the demographic trend of Maldives which needs to be analyzed further.

CHAPTER THREE

Living Arrangement and Household Composition

This chapter provides information on the children population under 18 years of age. Specific emphasis was given to understand their living arrangements by age and geographical areas and housing composition.



3.1 Introduction

Children depend largely on their families for their day to day needs. Parents are the center of their everyday life. The living arrangements of children are important in shaping the ways in which the children integrate into social and economic well-being. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the situation of children's living arrangement, and hence the census 2014 for the very first time included some questions in this regard.

For easy interpretation, the type of living arrangements of children are grouped into 3 categories in this analysis. The first category is two parents, this includes those children living with both parents or biological parent and stepparent. Next is one parent, this category includes those children living with mother or the father. The third is no parent, and it includes those children living with a relative or non-relatives.

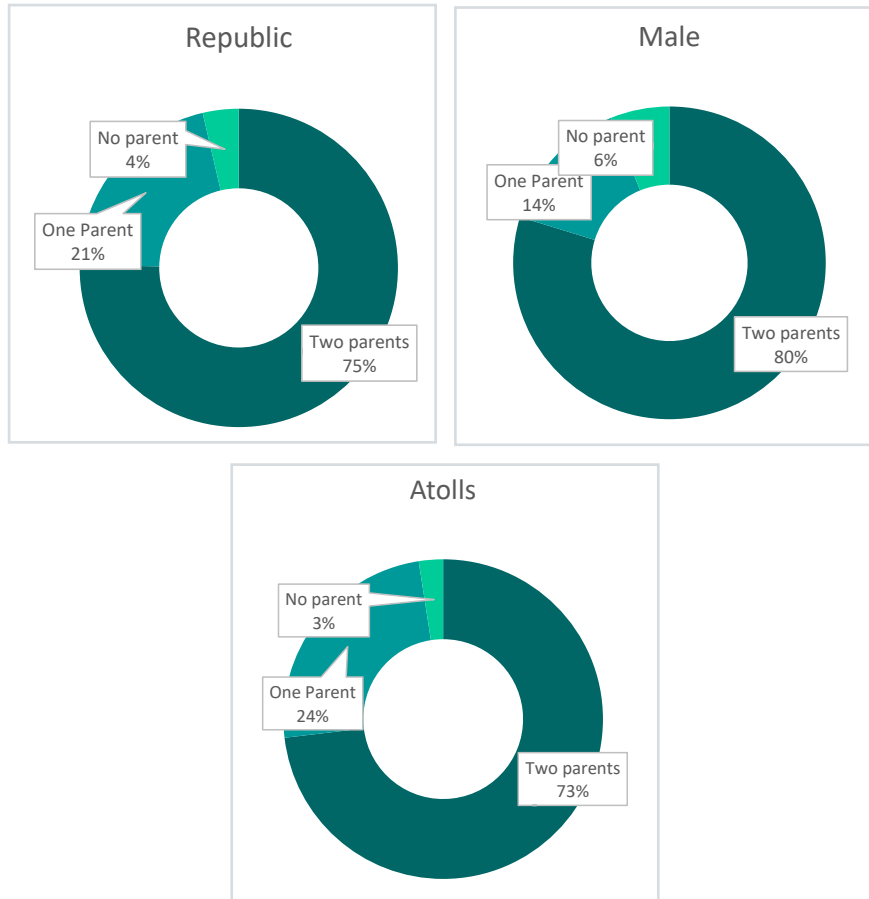
"States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence."

Article 9, Para 1: Convention on the Rights of the Child

3.2 Children living with One, Two or No parents

Not all children live with both parents. Some children may live with only one or even no parents because of divorce, separation or the death of one or both parents and various other reasons such as parent working in another island. Out of 111,107 children (as given in figure 3.1), majority (75 percent) of them live with two parents.

Figure 3.1: Living Arrangement of Children under 18 years, Census 2014



Note: calculations has been done excluding the 'not stated'

Figure 3.1, shows the composition of living arrangement of children below 18 years between Male' and Atolls. About 80 percent and 73 percent of children live with two parents in Male' and Atolls respectively. On the contrary, those children who live with one parent are higher in Atolls than Male'. Well over 20 percent of children live with mother only. This is likely to be due to more of the fathers live in other islands and resorts engaged in paid work. This could also mean parents being divorced, often times leaving the child live with the mother.

Table 3.1: Children's Living Arrangements by Locality, 2014

Locality	Two parents (percent)			One parent (percent)		No parent (percent)	
	Both parents	Mother and Stepfather	Father and Stepmother	Mother only	Father only	Other relatives	Non-relatives
Republic	72.9	1.9	0.5	20.2	0.9	2.9	0.8
Male'	77.4	1.8	0.6	13.1	1.0	4.9	1.2
Atolls	70.7	2.0	0.5	23.6	0.8	1.9	0.5

Note: Calculations has been done excluding the 'not stated' and Atolls includes Administrative and Non-Administrative Islands

Furthermore, among the children's whose parent work out of the home (in another island) are reported as either living with mother or father only, despite that both parents are married. Table 3.1, shows breakdown of each subcategories as given in census. As seen from table, about 5 percent of children in Male' lives with their relatives. Presumably, this is due to expansion of higher education in Male' whereby children from different parts of the country moves to Male' for higher studies. Similarly, children of latter ages move to Male' city in search of jobs.

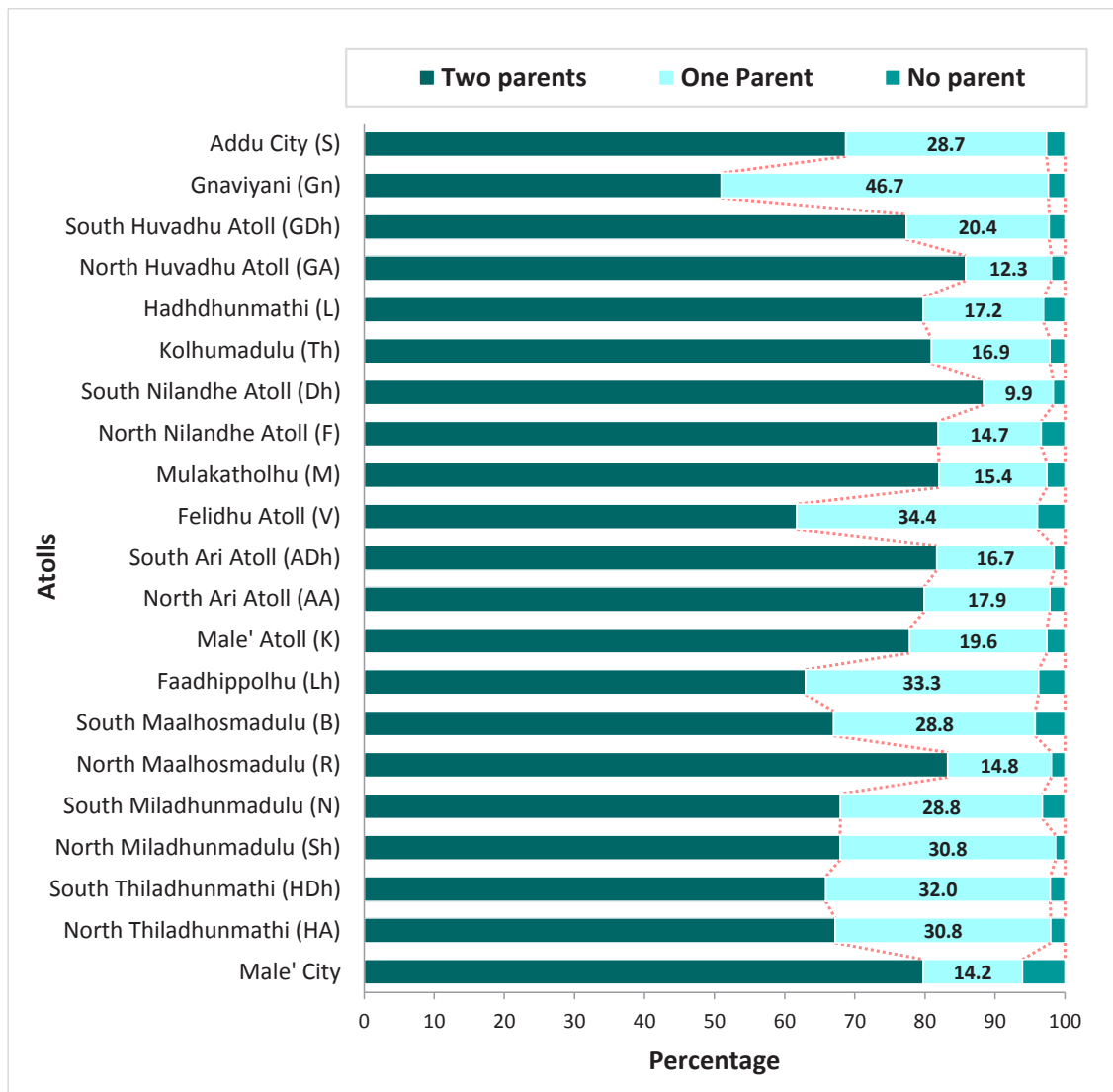
3.2.1 Children living in Atolls: One Parent

The proportion of children living with one parent is almost twice in Atolls than Male'. As seen in Figure 3.2, there are variation in proportion of children living with one parent across the country, where the proportions of children with one parents show remarkably high at certain areas.

These Atolls starting from the highest to least are: Gnaviyani (Gn), Felidhu Atoll (V), Faadhipolhu (Lh), South Thiladhunmadulu (HDh), and North Thiladhunmathi (HA), South Maalhosmadulu (B), South Miladhunmadulu (N), North Miladhunmadulu (Sh), and Addu City (S).

Yet, Gnaviyani (Gn) among all atolls is an exception, where only 51 percent of children live with two parents. A little less than half of the child population (46.7 percent) lives with one parent, of which a large majority of children (45.8 percent) live with their mother only.

Figure 3.2: Living arrangement of children by Atolls, Census 2014

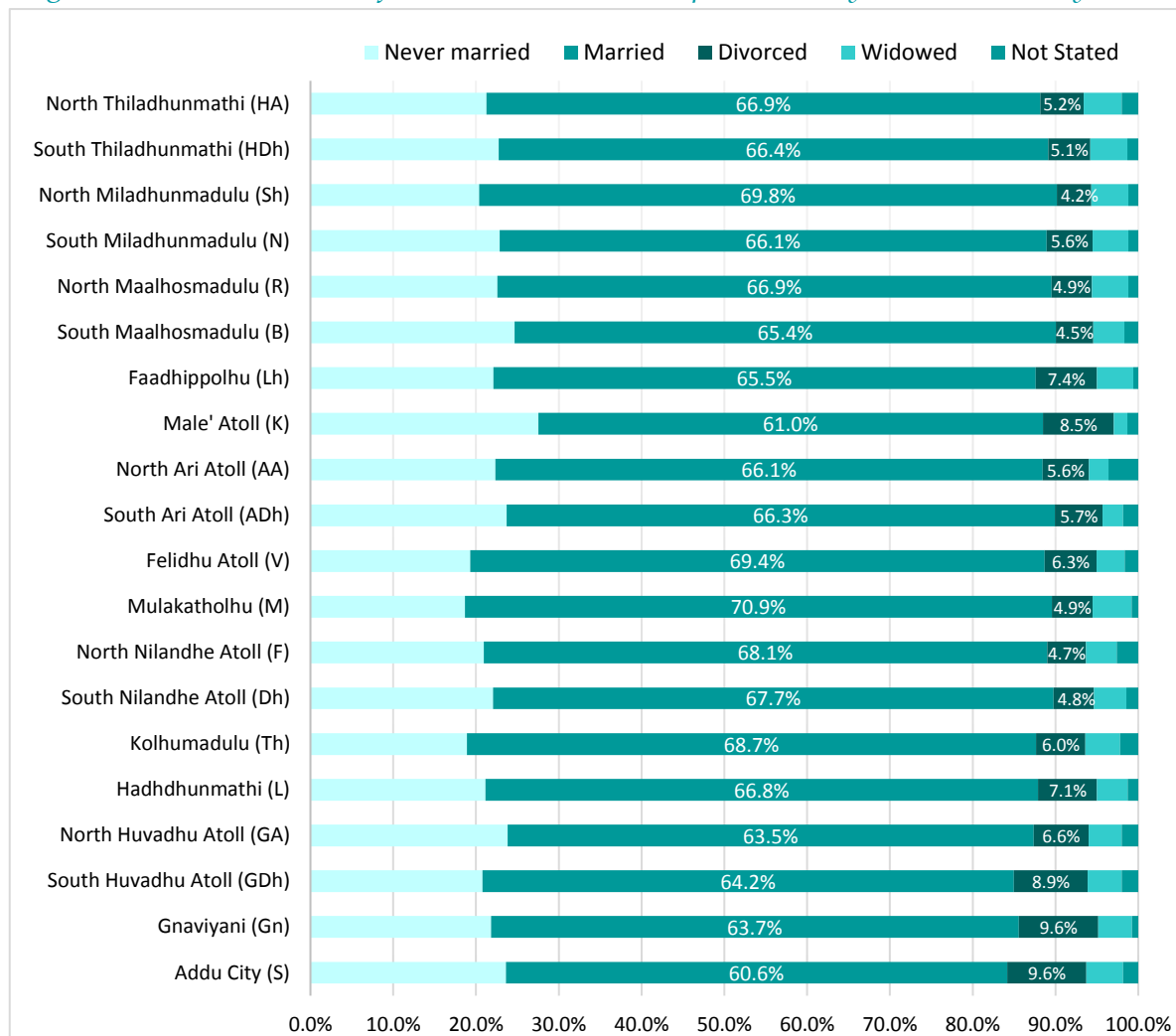


Note: Calculations has been done excluding the 'not stated'

3.2.1.1 Marital Status of Population in the Atolls

The increase in children living with one parent at certain areas of the country is then further analyzed using census data on the marital status of the population. As seen in Figure 3.3, Gnaviyani (Gn) Atoll, and Seenu (S) Atoll has the highest proportion of divorced population (9.6 percent) followed by South Huvadhu (GDh) Atoll, Faadhipolhu (Lh) Atoll and Hadhdhunmathi (L) Atoll, 8.9 percent, 7.4 percent and 7.1 percent respectively.

Figure 3.3: Marital Status of Resident Maldivian Population 15 years and above by Atolls



It is interesting to note that Gnaviyani (Gn) Atoll with the highest percentage of divorced persons also had the highest share of children living with one parent. However, no conclusions should be drawn by observing just one determinant. Furthermore, this also includes those without children or children below 18 years.

3.2.1.2 Living Arrangement of Spouse

To shed more light on the higher shares of children living with one parent, living arrangements of married couples is then analyzed. The intent is to comprehend whether children live with one parent not just because parents are divorced but because of other reasons such as one parent living in another islands. Figure 3.4, shows the living arrangement of spouse for selected Atolls where the highest proportion of children were living with one parent (refer Figure 3.2). Data on the living arrangement of spouses are taken for those couples who were married.

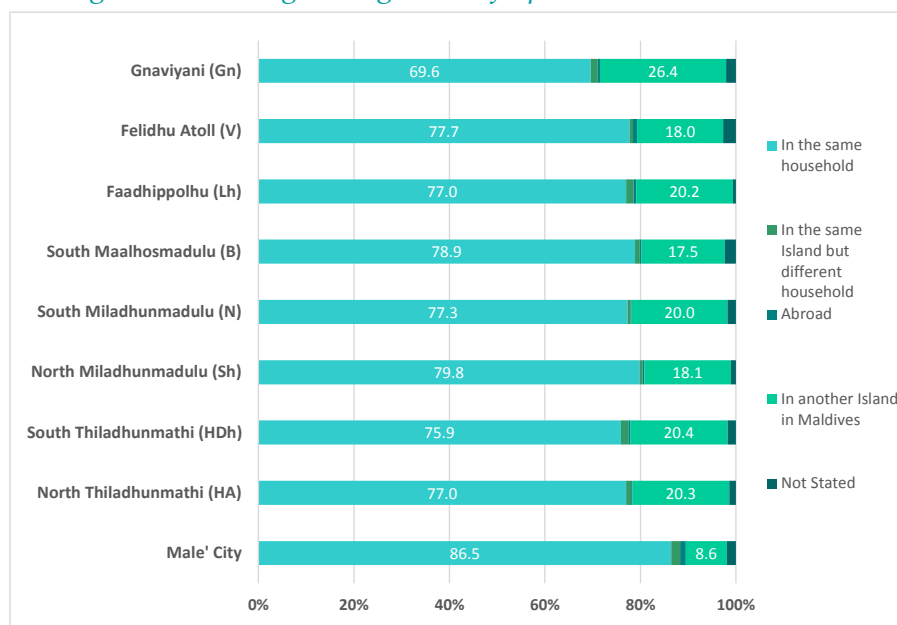
Table 3.2: Living Arrangements of spouses by Locality

Locality	In the same household	In the same Island but different household	Abroad	In another Island in Maldives	Not Stated
Republic	79.6	1.4	0.8	16.1	2.0
Male' City	86.5	1.8	1.2	8.6	1.9
Atolls	75.5	1.1	0.6	20.7	2.1

Note: Atolls includes Administrative and Non- Administrative Islands

As seen in Table 3.2, among the married couple about 80 percent said they are living in the same household, while 16 percent of married couples had their spouse living separately in another island. It also shows that a much higher proportion of married couples were living away from their spouses in case of Atolls (21 percent) compared to Male' (9 percent).

Figure 3.4: Living arrangement of Spouses in selected Atolls



The Atolls (refer Figure 3.2), that has highest proportion of children living with one parent are presented in Figure 3.4, to see whether higher proportion of spouses of married couples live separately in another island. For instance, in Gnaviyani (Gn) Atoll, 26 percent of parents live in another island away from their family and children.

However, in census this question on living arrangement is asked for all the married persons. Meaning, it too includes parents without children below 18 years of age. Therefore, we cannot conclude this simply by stating that the children who are living with one parents are because their parents work in another island.

3.2.2 Children living without their Parents

Similar variation in proportion exist among the children living with no parent. Some of the highest proportion of children living with no parents are reported in South Maalhosmadulu (B), Felidhu Atoll (V), Faadhippolhu (Lh) Atoll and Male' (Table 3.3). It is good to note that majority of these children live with their relatives rather than non-relatives.

Table 3.3: Children Living without their parents, by selected Atolls and Male'

Locality	No parent (percent)	
	Other relatives	Non-relatives
Male'	4.9	1.2
South Maalhosmadulu (B)	2.6	1.6
Faadhippolhu (Lh)	3.1	0.6
Felidhu Atoll (V)	3.7	0.2

3.2.2.1 Reason for migration and age and sex distribution of child migrants

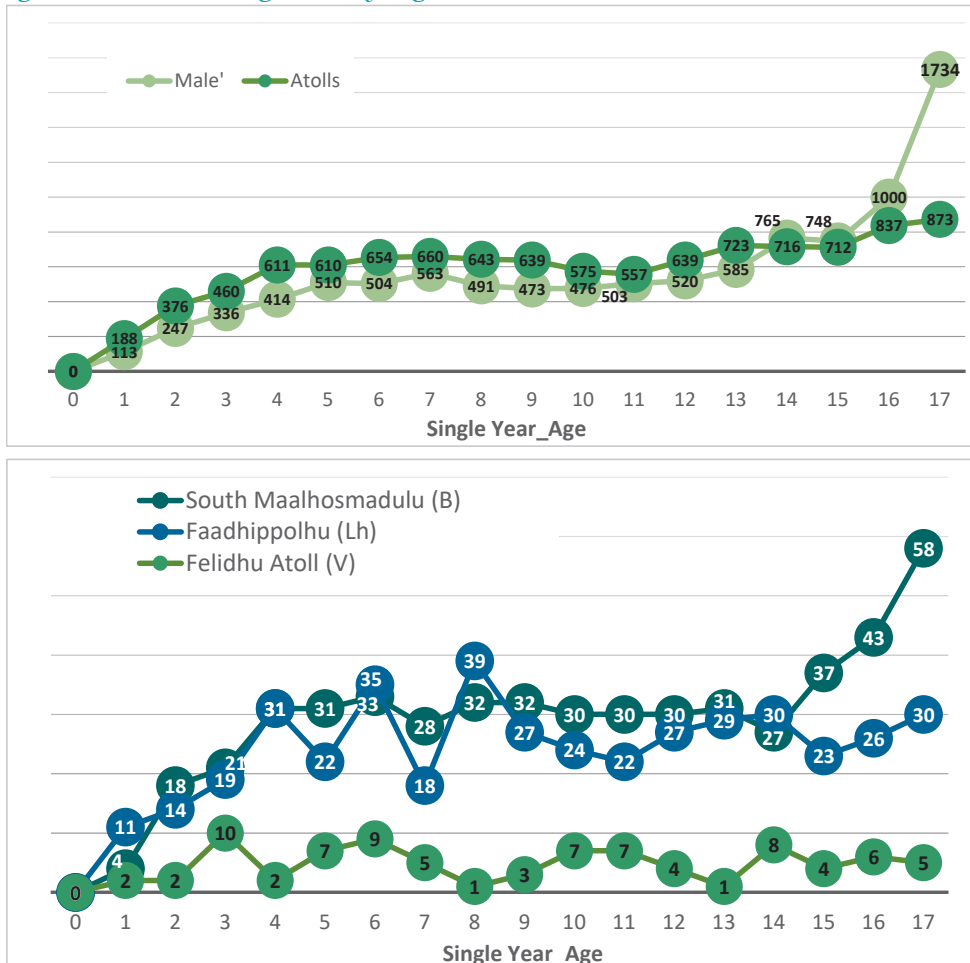
Migration of children in the Atolls where higher shares of children live without their parents (refer Table 3.3) shows high number of child migrants. The reason for migration of children in these Atolls are mainly for education purposes followed by to live with family due to migration of the family.

Table 3.4: Child Migration in selected Atolls and Male'

Locality	Child Population	Child Migrants
Male'	37,257	9,982
South Maalhosmadulu (B)	3,344	516
Faadhippolhu (Lh)	2,853	427
Felidhu Atoll (V)	508	83

Among these South Maalhosmadulu (B) Atoll has the highest child migrants of 516 followed by Faadhippolhu (Lh) Atoll with 427 child migrants (Table 3.4). And most of them reside with their relatives.

Figure 3.5: Child Migrants by Age Distribution in selected Atoll and in Male'

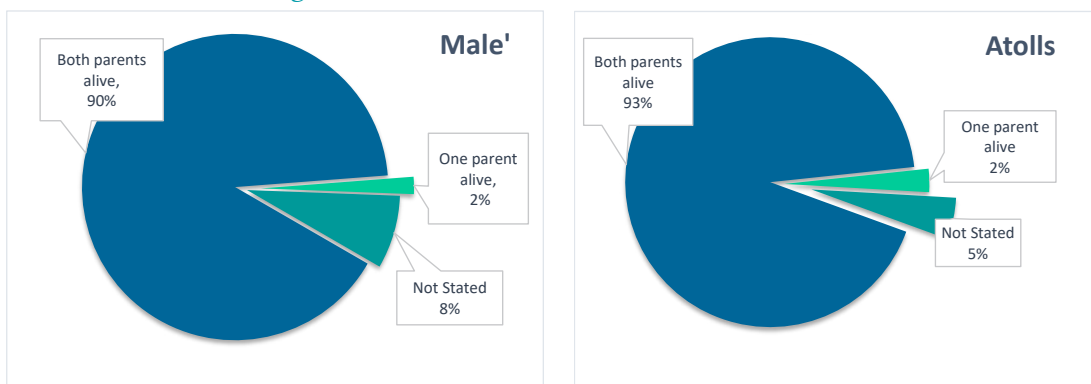


As expected, child migration to Male' increases steeply as the age of the child increase. Conversely, migration across the Atoll fluctuates with the age groups. And also the child migration increases even among the Atoll as the child age increases (Figure 3.5). The sharp increase in child migrants between ages 16 to 17 year olds in Male' is an indication that higher shares of children migrate to Male' to continue higher secondary schooling and for similar higher education opportunities, not available in the Atolls or is considered as to be of better quality.

3.3 Parents Alive

Among those children living in the Atolls, 93 percent of them have their parent's alive, and for those living in Male' 90 percent of children have their parents alive (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6: Parents Alive in Male' and Atolls



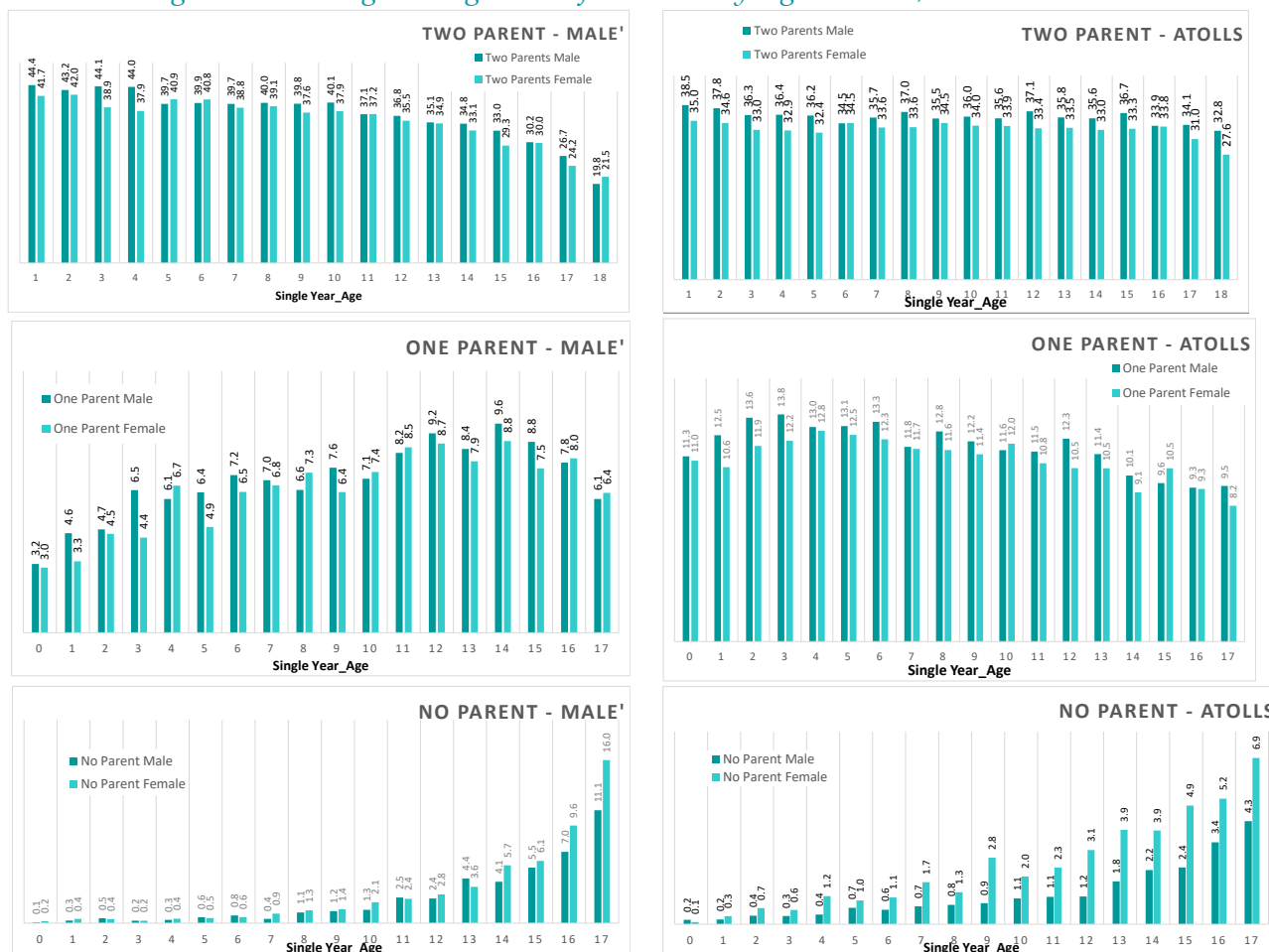
This shows that although a much lower share of children (77 percent in Male' and 71 percent in Atolls) are living with both parents (refer table 3.1), with high percent of children living with one parent and no parent is not because their parents were not alive, rather due to other reasons and circumstances.

3.4 Children Living with Two Parent, One Parent and No Parent, Age and Sex Distribution

Figure 3.7 shows in Male', the proportion of all children under age 18 who were living with two parents decreased steadily, as their age increases, and dropped steeply at the age of 15 to 17. The opposite trend is observed with the proportion of children living with no parents increasing with age.

This shows the increase in number of children moving to Male' for higher secondary or similar higher education institutes as the age increases, especially between 14 to 17 years. Interestingly, as seen in Figure 3.7, more girls than boys move to Male'. In Atolls the opposite trend follows where more boys live with no parents, but compared to Male' the proportion are much lower for both the sexes as well.

Figure 3.7: Living Arrangement of Children by Age and Sex, Male' and Atolls



The proportion of children living with one parent fluctuates across ages. However, the percent of children with one parent is higher in Atolls than in Male'. Similarly, boys who live with two parents and one parent in Atolls remain higher.

3.5 Household Composition of Population below 18

In census living quarters are classified into house, flat, apartment, establishment/worksite, other housing units, labour quarters/staff quarters and other collective living quarter.

Table 3.5: Children by Household Type

Locality	Number		% share of persons	
	Male'	Atolls	Male'	Atolls
Total Children	37,257	73,850	100.0	100.0
All types of living quarters	36,983	73,607	99.3	99.7
Houses/flat/apartment	36,958	73,525	99.2	99.6
Boats and Other Mobile Units	18	16	0.0	0.0
Establishment /Worksite	3	2	0.0	0.0
Other Housing Units	4	64	0.0	0.1
All types of collective living quarter	274	243	0.7	0.3

As can be seen from Table 3.5, 99 percent of children in Maldives live in house/flat/apartment. Of the remaining, 0.7 percent reside in the collective living quarters.

When it is compared with census the average household size for all type of living quarter for Male' is 5.8 while for Atolls it is 6 people for household. And for collective living quarter it is 15.1 and 7.1 in Atolls.

3.6 Conclusion

A great majority of children live with their parents: with both biological parents, or stepparents or relatives. Only very minor percent of children live with non-relatives.

And among these children more than 90 percent of parents are alive. However, there are some parts of the country where children only live with one parent and in some instance with no parent for various reasons.

In the design of 2014 census focus was only given to understand the existing living arrangement of children below 18, without detailed enquiries. Similarly, while the married couples with the husband working in a resort or spouse living away from the household were identified during the interviews, there is no way to link their children to the parents, as only those persons living in the household were included as household members and the of household head was the reference person used.

A more focused study will be needed to get detailed information on living arrangements of children and socio-economic issues surrounding them, the number of adult earners in single parent households, the frequent failure of noncustodial parents to provide child support, and similar aspects. This is an important area for future analysis

CHAPTER FOUR

Literacy, School Attendance and Educational attainment

This chapter will report on literacy of Maldives' child population, school attendance, out of school children, and highest grade completed and highest certificate achieved.



4.1 Introduction

The role of education in a country is crucial in promoting sustainable development within the individuals in a society. In Maldives Education has always been a top priority. The Rights from the constitution serves to make it compulsory to make primary education available and free for all. In addition, the constitution bestowed education as a human right and is mandatory for the serving government to provide free education up to secondary level (10th grade or O-Level).

While in some parts of the world, large numbers of children are still out of school and access to school remains inequitable, with entire groups of vulnerable and marginalized children excluded from education, this is not the case in Maldives. Universal education outcomes were achieved in Maldives in the early 2000s, meaning education of some sort was available and accessed by almost every child in the country. However, what is available and what is accessed differs from Male' to the Atolls and across the Atolls.

Census 2014 collected information on Literacy in mother tongue as well as in English language, current school attendance, highest grade completed in school and highest educational attainment. In Census 2014, questions on education was asked for population 5 years and above. However, questions on literacy was asked for population 10 years and above and highest educational attainment for those 15 years and above.

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

- (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;*
- (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;*
- (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;*
- (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;*
- (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.”*

Article 28, Para 1: Convention on the Rights of the Child

4.2 Literacy

To be literate is important simply because it allows entry into the realm of education. In Maldives, since the early 80s, the literacy figures for the population had begun to reach levels of over 90 percent, due to a literacy campaign conducted by the Government during the early 80s.

In Census-2014, literacy in English and in mother tongue was determined by the person's ability to read and write, with understanding. Mother tongue for Maldivians is the local language Dhivehi. The literacy rate of the Maldivian children aged 10 to 17 years old was 98 percent in Dhivehi language.

Table 4.1: Resident Maldivian Population 10-17 years of age by Literacy in Mother Tongue, Locality, Census 2014

	10-17 years Population	Literate	Illiterate	Not Stated	Literate	Illiterate	Not Stated
	In numbers				In %		
Republic	43,726	42,847	302	577	98	1	1
Male'	14,567	14,272	77	218	98	1	1
Atoll	29,031	28,451	225	355	98	1	1

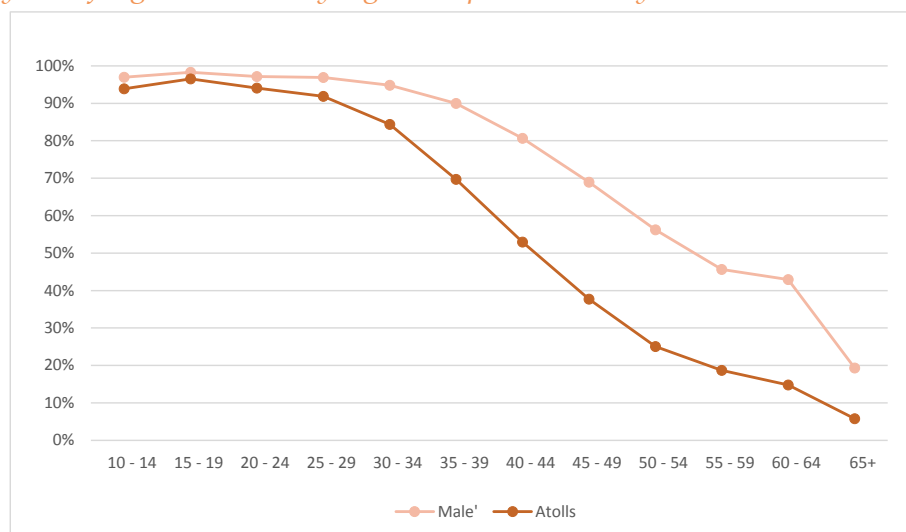
As seen in Table 4.1, out of the 43,726 children in the age band of 10 – 17 years, 42,847 (98%) was able to read and write with understanding in the local language Dhivehi. It remains at 98 percent for both Male' and Atolls as well.

Table 4.2: Percentage of Resident Maldivian Population 10-17 years of age by Literacy in English, Sex and Locality, Census 2014

	Literate			Illiterate			Not Stated		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Republic	96	96	97	2	3	2	2	2	1
Male'	98	98	98	1	1	1	2	2	1
Atoll	95	95	96	3	4	3	2	2	1

As seen in Table 4.2, the literacy rate in English for the children of the age group 10-17 years for the Republic is noted to be at 96 percent, which is 96 percent for boys and 97 percent for girls. The literacy rate for the children of this age group living in Male' is at 98 percent for both boys as well as girls. Whereas this percentage is noted to be slightly different for children living in the Atolls at 95 percent for boys and 96 percent for girls.

Figure 4.1: Literacy in English of Resident Maldivian Population 10 years of Age and Over By Age Group and Locality, 2014



Though the illiteracy in English language for both girls and boys is minimal in percentage terms, in numbers a total of 1,054 children are recorded to be illiterate of which 620 are boys and 434 are girls. In the Atolls there were 941 children while in Male' there were 110 children who were illiterate. Figure 4.1 shows children and younger generation to have much higher literacy rates in English.

4.3 Children currently studying and not studying

Before moving forward with looking at the different mode of studying among children, it is important to look at the currently studying population. As seen in Table 4.3, the 94 percent of children are engaged in studying (through any mode) while 4 percent of the children are currently not studying. As seen before (as in the case of literacy), the percentage of girls engaged in studying is slightly higher compared to boys at 94 percent for girls and 93 percent for boys.

Table 4.3: Resident Maldivian Population 5-17 years of age by currently studying and not studying by Sex, Census 2014

Age Group (5-17)	Republic (in numbers)				Republic (in %)			
	Total Population	Children Studying	Not Studying	Not Stated	Total Population	Children Studying	Not Studying	Not Stated
Both Sexes	75,395	70,786	3,103	1,506	100.0	93.9	4.1	2.0
Male	38,589	36,038	1,741	810	100.0	93.4	4.5	2.1
Female	36,806	34,748	1,362	696	100.0	94.4	3.7	1.9

Figure 4.2 Attendance in Education of School age resident Maldivian Population 5-18 years, census 2014

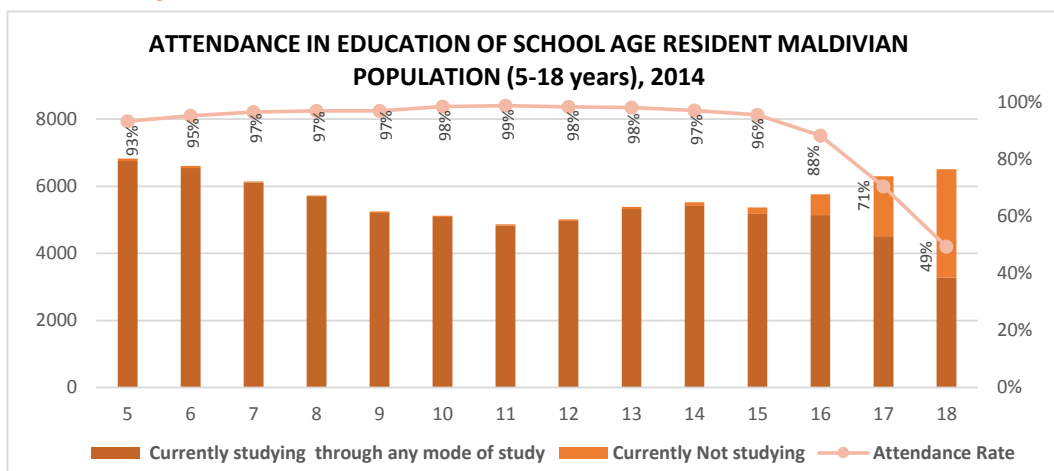
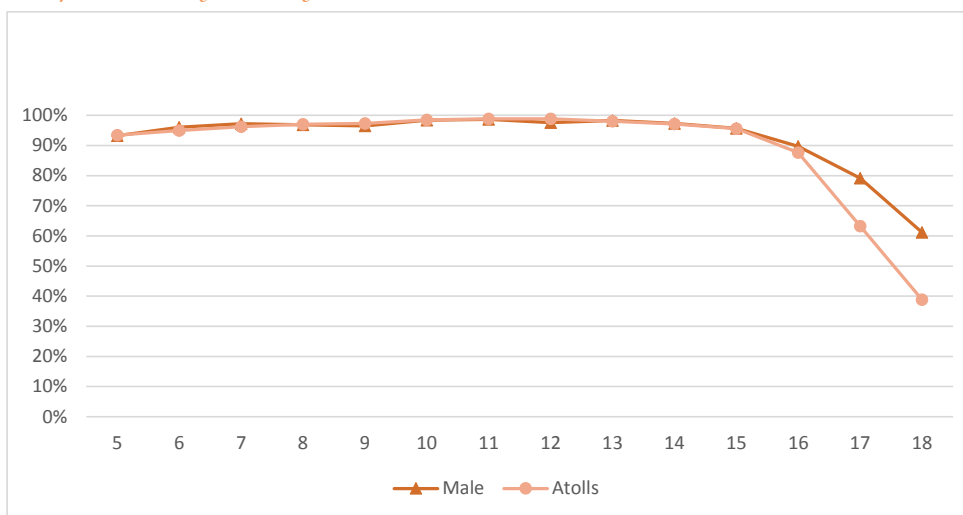
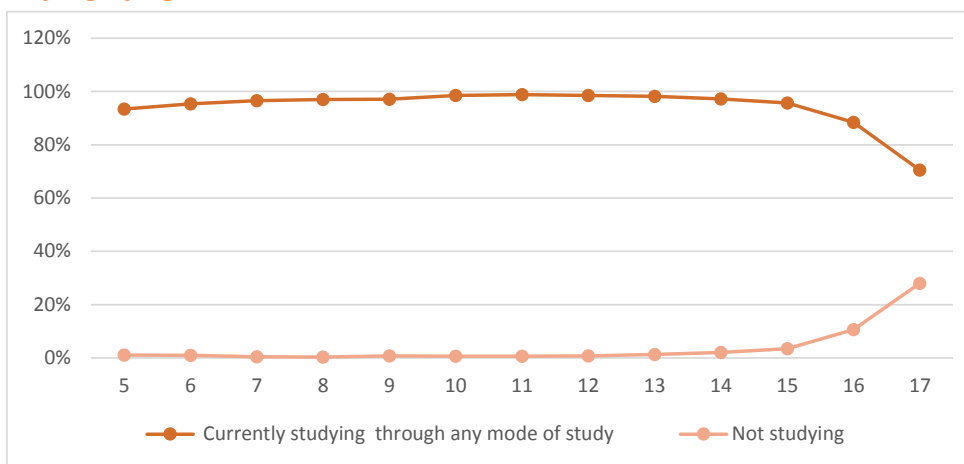


Figure 4.3 Attendance in Education of School age 5-18 years resident Maldivian Population, by locality census 2014



It is also important to look at the breakdown of currently studying population by age. As shown in the above two graphs in Figure 4.2 and 4.3, the percentage of children currently studying stays high above 90 percent in the ages 5-15, and then starts declining towards the age of 16, with a much steeper decline for the Atolls than for Male. The population 5-15 years is the school age population who are normally expected to be attending primary and lower secondary levels. The sharp drop in the attendance from age 16 years onwards indicates much lower levels of educational attendance beyond lower secondary, especially in case of children living in the Atolls.

Figure 4.4 Percentage of children 5-17 years of age currently studying and not studying by age, census 2014



Those aged 16–17 years is considered the higher secondary school age population. Figure 4.4 shows a declining trend with 88 percent to 71 percent among those children studying at age 16 and 17 years respectively. An opposite trend can be seen on the currently not studying population of this age group it increases sharply at age 16 to 17. This is a quite a normal phenomenon in Maldives, where children at lower secondary will finish their O’level and not all school in islands.

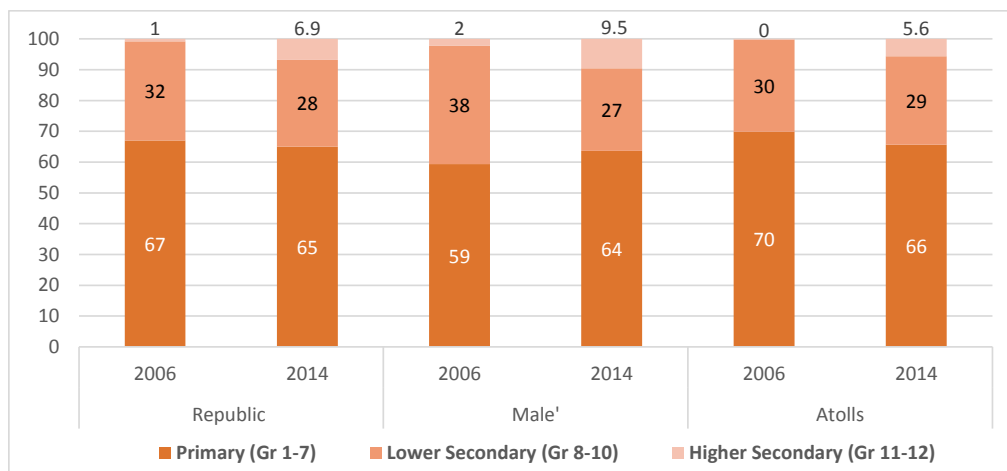
4.3 Children in Schools and Mode of Study

In Maldives, Primary schooling (grades 1-7) begins at the age of 6 years, while lower secondary (grades 8-10) begins at the age of 13 and higher secondary (grades 11-12) begins at the age of 16 years.

In census 2014, the children attending school is based on whether or not an individual is attending a school or education institution. Other training institutions are referred to places where education is taught academically or vocationally. Other modes of study include home schooling, studying online etc.

Out of the total population of age group 5-17, 91 percent (68,881) of the children are attending school, 2 percent (1,617) is studying in other training institutions, and 0.2 percent (163) is studying through other modes of study.

Figure 4.5: Children 6 – 17 years of age by broad grade in School, by locality, Census 2006 and 2014

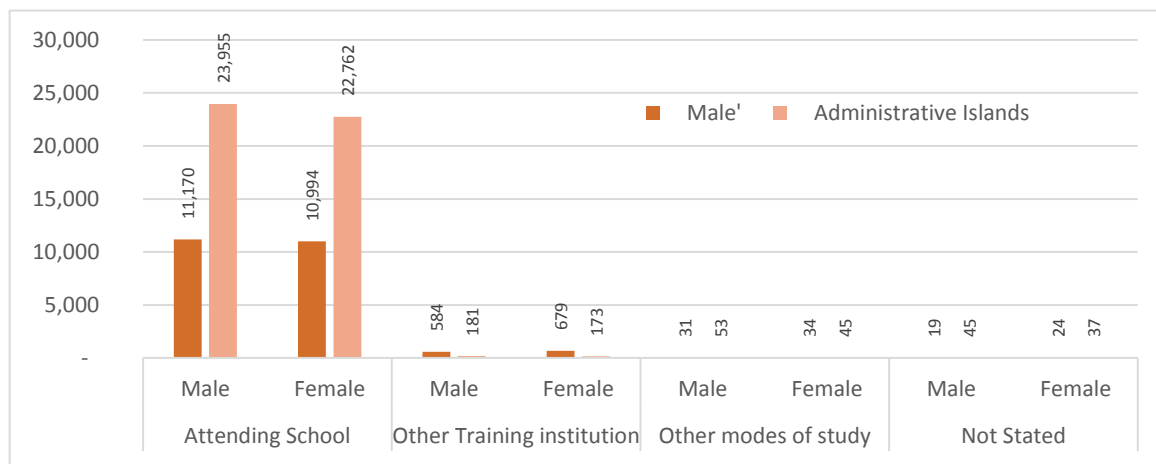


The school attendance by level of education as shown in Figure 4.5 is taken for primary level (Gr 1-7), lower secondary level (Gr. 8-10) and higher secondary level (Gr. 11-12).

As in Figure 4.5, during census 2014, 65 percent of the children of age 6-17 years of age were attending school while 67 percent of the children were attending school during census 2006 in the Republic. While Male' shows an increase of 64 percent which was at 59 percent during census 2006, Atolls show a decrease to 66 percent from 70 percent in census 2006. An increase in the school attendance is seen in the higher secondary level at 7 percent during census 2014, while this number was at 0.8 percent during census 2006 in the Republic. Both Male' and Atolls show increase of 10 percent and 6 percent for this level while it was at 2.2 percent and 0.3 percent during census 2006.

The decline in the percent of children studying in primary, secondary between 2006 and 2014 owes to the demographic shift in the population of the country. As evidence from Figure 2.1 (Chapter 2), the child cohort of 0-4 years in 2006 have moved to the age group of 10-15 today. Since the population in this age group is less compared to other ages within the child population, this is reflected in the distribution of school attending population in Census 2014. Primary and lower secondary school aged children aged 6-17 years in the population decreased from 91,121 children in 2006 to 86,401 by 2014.

Figure 4.6: Children 5 – 17 years of age by mode of Education, by locality, Census 2014



At Republic level more males are attending school than females. More than 94 percent of the children are reported to be attending school while more than 5 percent of the children are attending other institutions in Male' and less than 1 percent in the Atolls.

Across the Atolls percentage of students, attending schools were 99. The percentage of students going to other training institutions were higher as the age of the child increased.

4.4 Children currently not studying (out of school)

The children currently not studying refers to those not attending any schools, other training institution, or not studying through any other modes

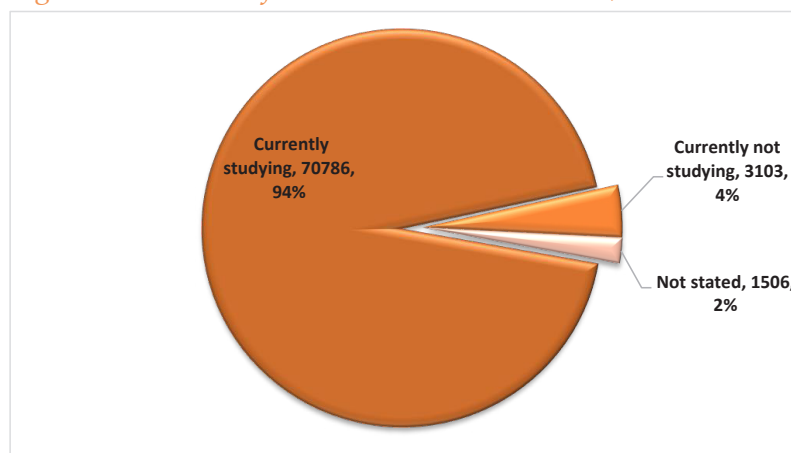
As the education, strategies of the country mainly focus on providing education for all academically or vocationally, under the specific policy of “no child is left behind”, the primary age group of the population 6-12 years is expected to be enrolled in a school or an educational institution.

Table 4.4: Children who never attended school and children who are out of school, by sex Census 2014

Age	Republic			Male'			Atolls		
	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female	Both Sex	Male	Female
Total	3,103	1,741	1,362	947	503	444	2,068	1,153	915
5	75	40	35	27	12	15	48	28	20
6	63	35	28	11	7	4	51	27	24
7	27	15	12	6	2	4	20	13	7
8	21	9	12	8	4	4	13	5	8
9	40	15	25	9	2	7	31	13	18
10	31	16	15	8	4	4	23	12	11
11	32	14	18	9	4	5	23	10	13
12	40	28	12	13	10	3	26	17	9
13	67	39	28	13	6	7	53	33	20
14	116	85	31	28	20	8	88	65	23
15	185	118	67	56	26	30	126	89	37
16	620	375	245	193	117	76	412	243	169
17	1,786	952	834	566	289	277	1,154	598	556

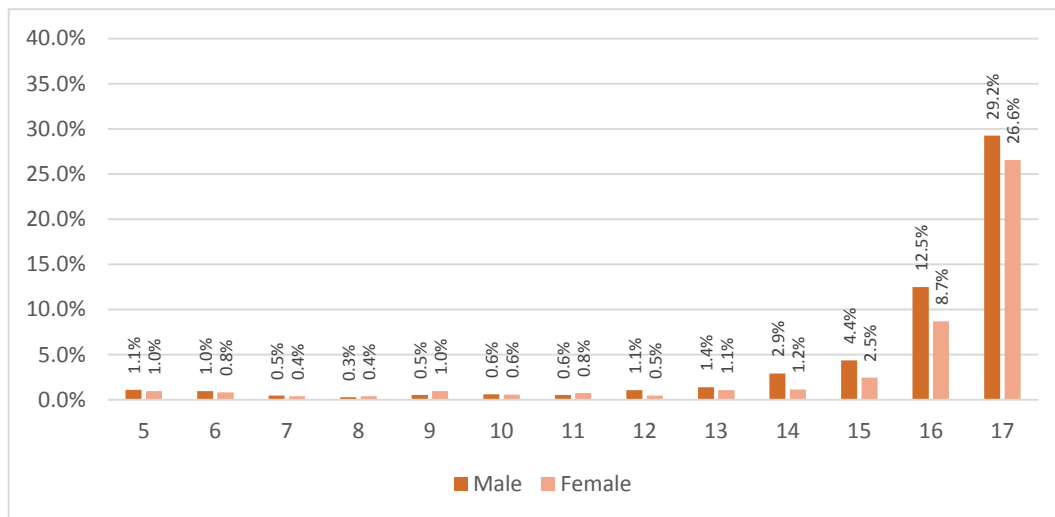
Table 4.4 shows the currently not studying population. Majority (78 percent) of these children are 16 and 17 years of age. Among those, currently not studying 4.5 percent, (1,741) were boys and 3.7 percent (1,362) were girls.

Figure 4.7: Status of current school attendance, Census 2014



The number of children aged 5-17 years who were not currently studying or attached to any educational institution was considerably different in Male' and Atolls showing that it was higher in the Atolls 2,068 (67 percent) (includes children living in non-Administrative islands) and 947 (31 percent) live in Male'.

Figure 4.8: Percentage of Children 5 – 17 years of age who are currently not studying, Republic, by sex, Census 2014



Out of the studying population of the country taken in single years, from the age of 14 till 17 years more boys are out of school than girls. At the age of 14 it is at 2.9 percent, while at 15 it is at 4.4 percent, 16 years is at 12.5 percent and 17 years it is at 29.2 percent of boys are currently not studying.

Figure 4.9: Percentage of Children 5 – 17 years of age who are currently not studying, Male', by sex, Census 2014

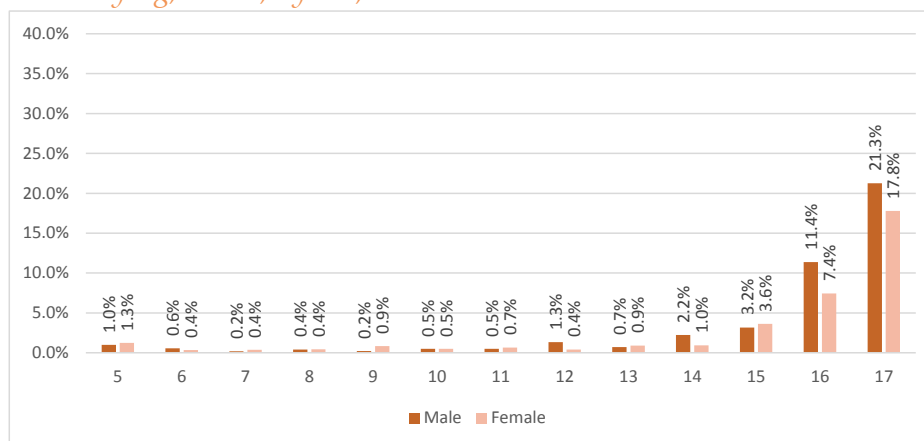
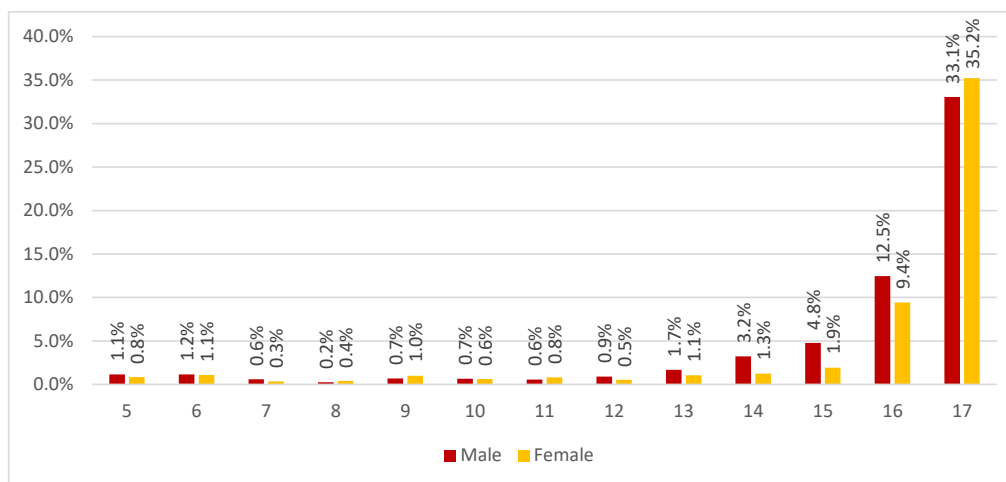
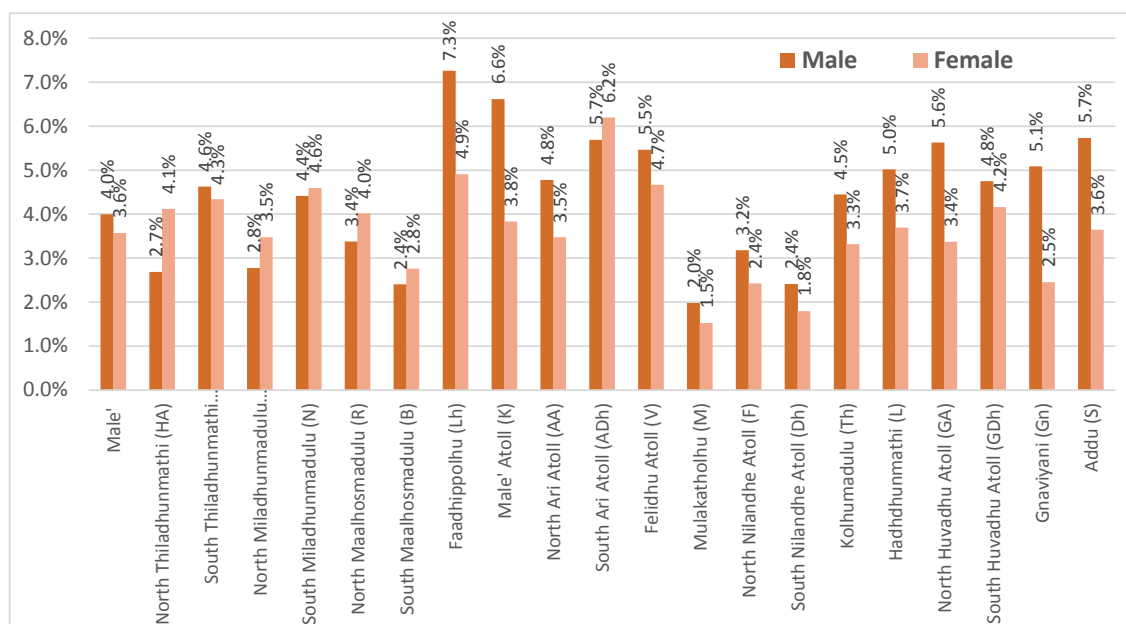


Figure 4.10: Children 5 – 17 years of age who are currently not studying, Atolls, by sex, Census 2014



In Atolls a higher share of boys are out of school than in Male'. The same phenomena can be seen with young children of 5 to 6 years being out of school, and then again from 12 years of age the out of school children starts to increase. For the younger ages (5 to 11), more girls stay out of school in Male' while this changes from the age 12 – 17, where except for age 13 and 15, it is more boys staying out of school.

Figure 4.11: Children 5 – 17 years of age who are currently not studying, by locality and sex, Census 2014



The share of children who were out of school was the highest in Faadhippolhu (Lh.Atoll) at 6.1 percent and South Ari Atoll (ADh) at 5.9 percent, while it was the lowest in Mulaku Atoll (M) at 1.8 percent and South Nilandhe atoll (Dh Atoll) at 2.1 percent. It was observed that the atolls in the central region of the country had relatively higher percentages of children out of school compared to the rest of the country.

The three highest share of boys who are currently out of school was in Faadhippolhu (Lh.Atoll) atoll at 7.3 percent, Male' Atoll (K) at 6.6 percent and Addu Atoll (S) at 5.7 percent. The highest share of girls are in South Ari Atoll (Adh) at 6.2 percent, Faadhippolhu (Lh.Atoll) at 4.9 percent and Felidhe Atoll (V) at 4.7 percent.

The share of girls than boys who were out of school was highest South Ari Atoll (Adh) at 6.2 percent, South Miladhunmadulu (N) Atoll at 4.6 percent and North Thiladhunmathi (HA) Atoll at 4.1 percent.

Figure 4.12: Pre-Primary school age (5 years) who are out of School by sex and locality, Census 2014

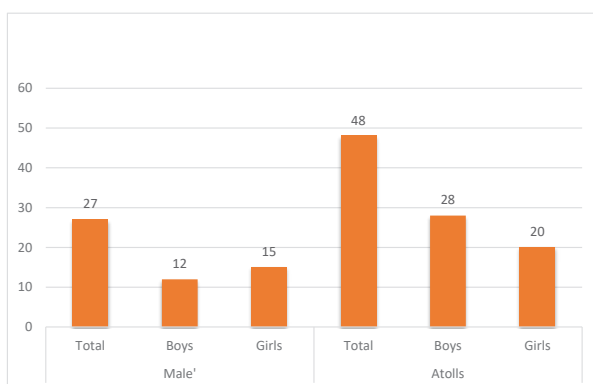
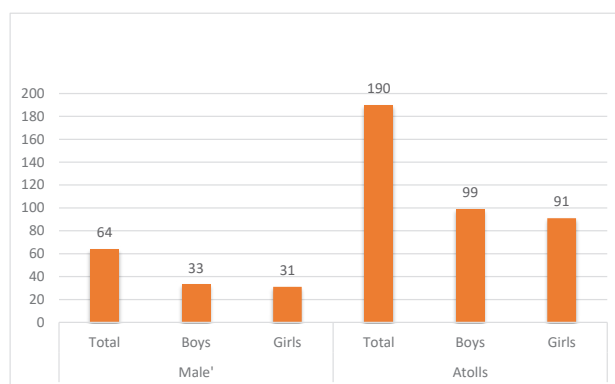
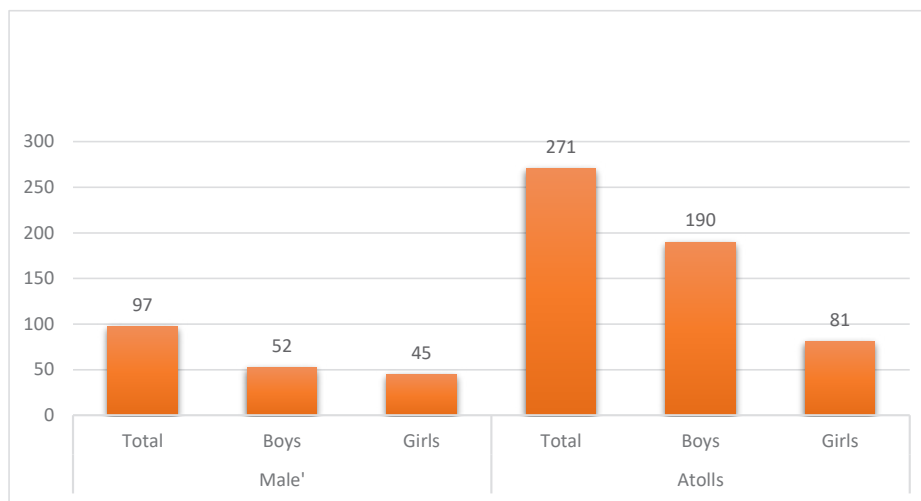


Figure 4.13: Primary school age (6-12 years) who are out of School by sex and locality, Census 2014



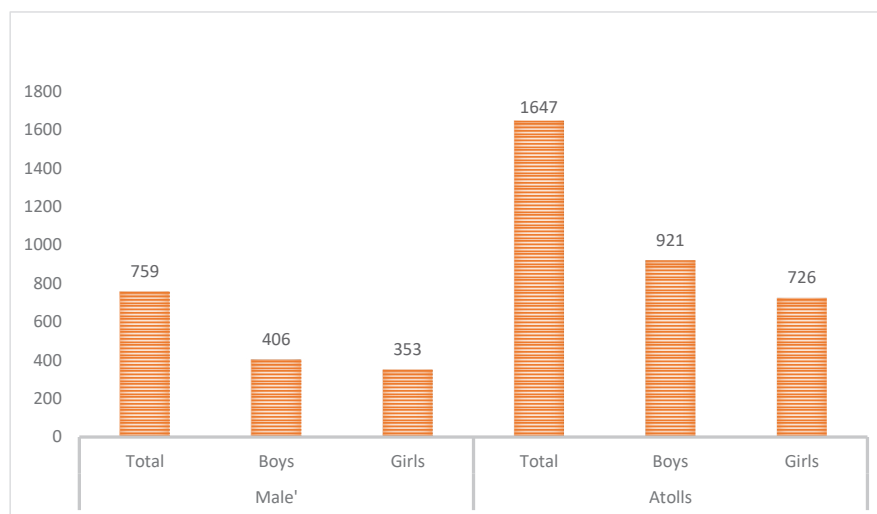
Looking at the number of children of 5 years who were not currently studying by levels of education, 12 boys and 15 girls are not currently studying in a school in Male' and 28 boys and 20 girls are not currently studying in a school in the Atolls (refer to Figure 4.12). At the primary level these numbers are higher in the Atolls than Male' (refer to Figure 4.13)

Figure 4.14: Lower Secondary school age (13-15 years) who are out of School by sex and locality, Census 2014.



In the lower secondary level same as in the pre-primary and primary level 190 boys and 81 girls are not attending school in the atolls while 52 boys and 45 girls are not attending schools in Male' (Figure 4.14)

Figure 4.15: Higher Secondary school age (16-17 years) who are out of School by sex and locality, Census 2014

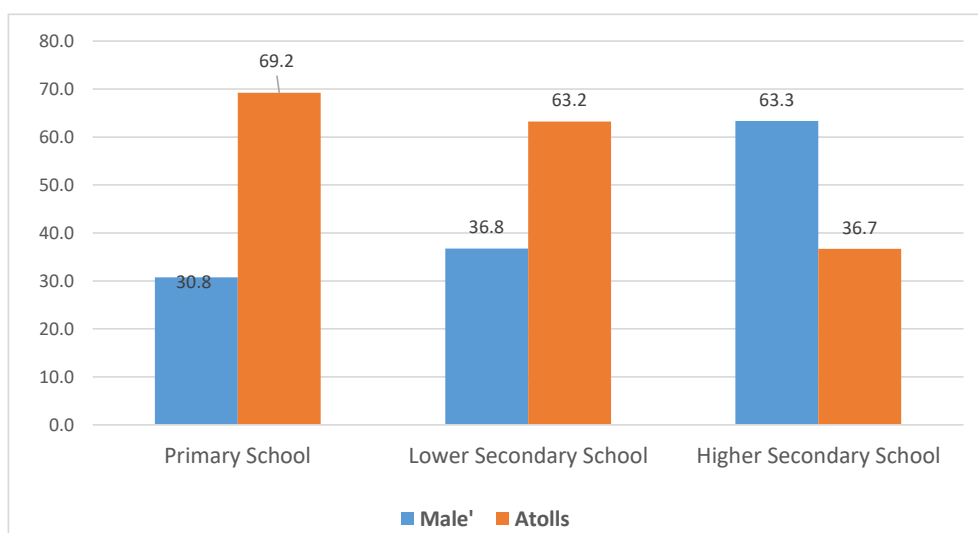


There are 759 children in the Higher Secondary School age (16-17 years) who are out of school in Male' out of which 406 are boys and 353 are girls. This is high in the atolls at 1,647 children out of which 921 are boys and 726 are girls.

4.5 Educational Attainment and Highest Grade Completed

Educational Attainment represents the indication of the level of skill of the people in a community. In census 2014, data were collected on the highest grade completed (5+ population) and the highest certificate achieved (for 15+ population).

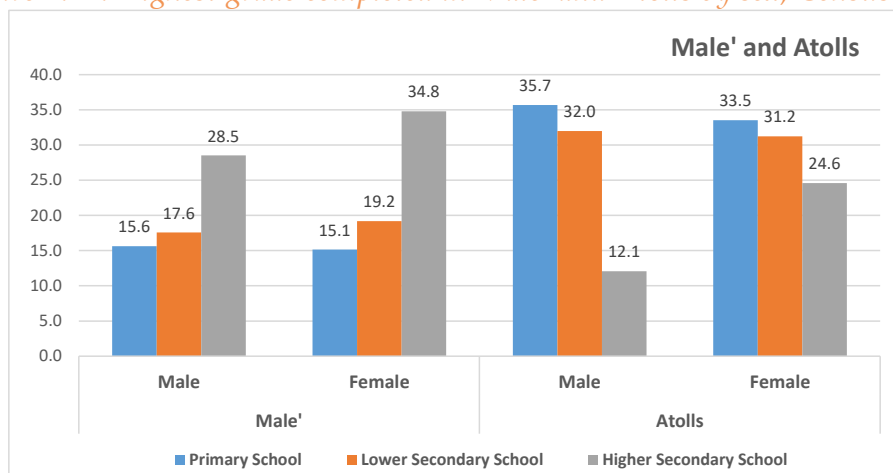
Figure 4.16: Population 5-17 years by highest grades (levels) completed in Male' and Atolls, Census 2014



Note: Excluding 'not stated'

Figure 4.16 presents the proportion of children currently between the ages of 5 to 17 who have completed each of the level. As the Figure enable to see that out of 75,401 children in this age group, 32 and 63 percent of children had completed at least lower secondary education in Male' and Atolls respectively. However, the proportion of children who completed higher secondary education (i.e. Gr. 11 and Gr. 12) had declined sharply in Atolls with 37 percent. Conversely, this proportion has change for Male, where more children at this age group had completed higher secondary education (63 percent).

Figure 4.17: Highest grade completed in Male' and Atolls by sex, Census 2014

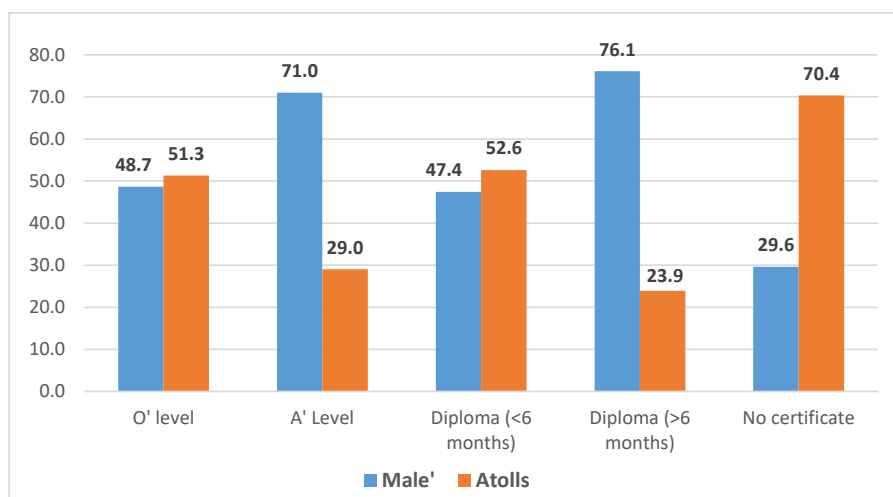


Note: Excluding 'not stated'

Similar to the figure 4.16, higher proportion of children in both primary and lower secondary are witnesses in Atolls and the opposite in higher secondary is seen in Male'. Figure 4.17 also shows the percentage of males and females who had completed highest grade. As it can be seen, there is almost no difference (i.e. less than 2 percent) between males and females in both primary and lower secondary level.

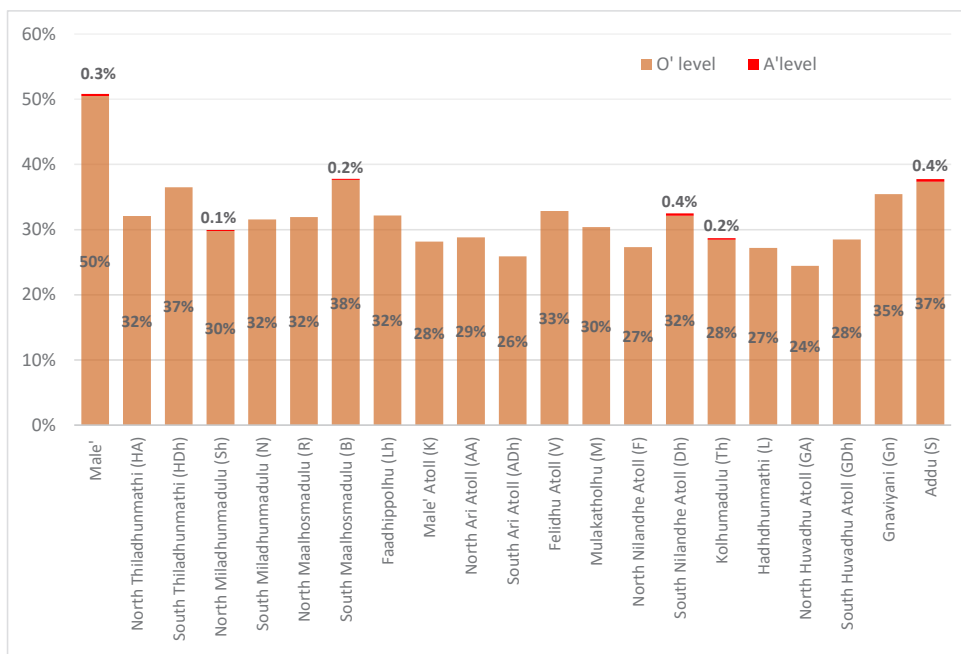
There are greater gender differences with respect to progression to higher secondary education. There are considerably females than males in this level both in Male' and Atolls (Figure 4.17). This difference emerges at the end of compulsory education, male participation rates decline faster due to many reasons. More females stay in education longer than males.

Figure 4.18: Percentage of Children age 15 – 17 by highest educational attainment, Male' and Atolls, Census 2014



The proportion of males and females vary considerably between Male' and Atolls in tertiary education. Figure 4.18 illustrate a little over half (51 percent) of children currently between the ages 15 to 17 had completed O'level in Atoll and this proportion sharply drops at A'level at 29 percent. The differences in the choice and the opportunity pronounced the decrease momentum to the next levels. In Male' around 76 percent of children had completed Diploma (diploma that are designed for more than 6 months), where over half in Atolls has completed Diploma (less than 6 months) (Figure 4.18).

Figure 4.19: Children age (15-17) with O' Level certificate as highest educational attainment, by Atolls, Census 2014



A little more than half of the children in Male' had O' level as their highest level of educational attainment that was the highest followed by 38 percent in South Maalhosmadulu (B) Atoll and 37 percent in Addu City (Figure 4.19).

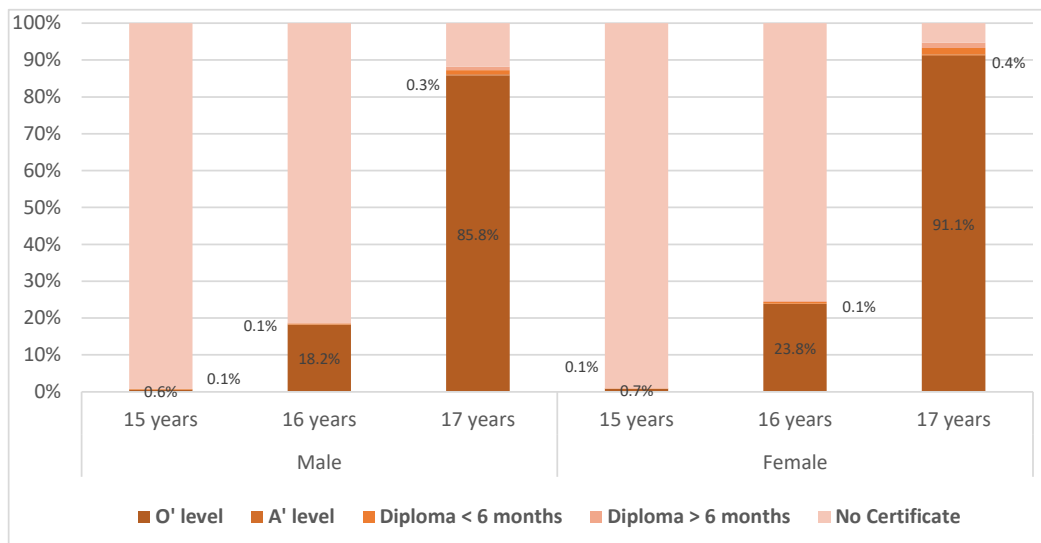
Table 4.5: Children 15 – 17 years of age with O' Level certificate as highest educational attainment, by Atolls, Census 2014

Locality	Republic				Male'				Atolls			
	Completed O' level	Attending Grade		Attending A' level	Completed O' level	Attending Grade		Attending A' level	Completed O' level	Attending Grade		Attending A' level
		Grade 11	Grade 12			Grade 11	Grade 12			Grade 11	Grade 12	
15	35	-	-	4	23	-	-	2	12	-	-	2
16	1,188	600	-	83	708	362	-	37	480	238	-	46
17	5,489	2,750	609	232	2,571	1,017	384	105	2,918	1,733	225	127

From the total number of children who have completed O' level at the ages 15, 16 and 17, 65 percent of the children are engaged in further studying in the Republic. 47 percent of the children are studying in Male' and 53 percent are studying in the Atolls. It is reported that approximately 50 percent of the students are in Grade 11 and approximately 11 percent are in Grade 12 of the age of 17 years. The grade levels defined are those currently attending schools for further studies. A very minute number of children as reported to be attending A' level classes privately, which is at 4 percent for the Republic at the age of 17 years.

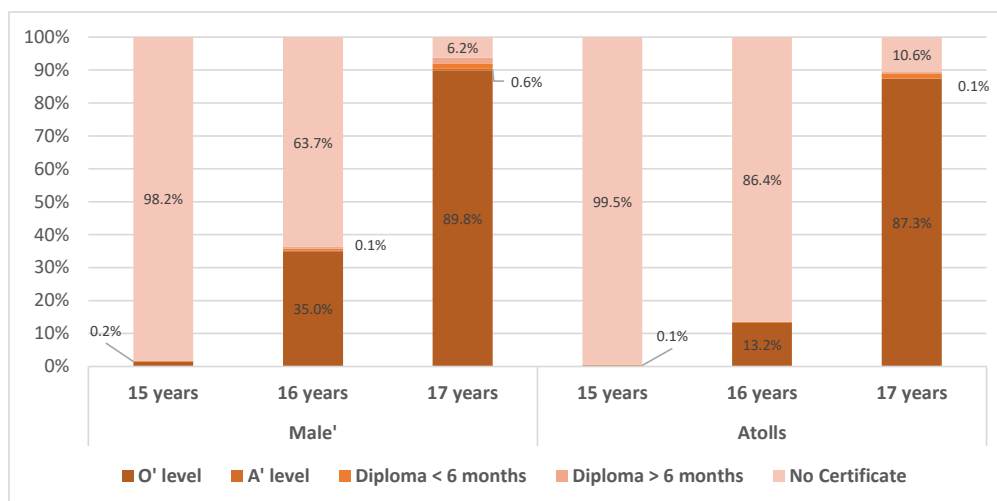
Among the number of children in Male' who has completed O' level 40 percent of the children are studying in Grade 11 while this number is at 59 percent in the Atolls for the age of 17.

Figure 4.20: Percentage of Children 15 – 17 years of age by highest educational attainment, by sex, Republic, Census 2014



Based on the highest certificate achieved in the Republic, at the age of 17, 88.4 percent of the children have achieved O' level, 99.1 percent of children of 15 years of age does not have a certificate. This is expected as students are attending grade 9 or 10 at the age of 15 and they do O' level exams after completing grade 10 only. There are 20.9 percent of children who has completed their O' level at the age of 16 which increases to 88.4 percent by the age 17 years, while those without a certificate decreases.

Figure 4.21: Percentage of Children 15 – 17 years of age by highest educational attainment, Male' and Atolls, Census 2014



As in Figure 4.21 above in Male' 0.2 percent of the children has completed O' level at the age of 15 and 98.2 percent of children have no certificate for this age. While 35 percent of children are reported to have completed their O' level at the age of 16 in Male', only 13.2 percent are reported as those who have completed their O' level at 16 years of age in the Atolls.

More females (41 percent) had O' level certificate, 4 percentage points more than the proportion of men. 61 percent of the males did not have a certificate while this proportion for females was at 57 percent.

It should be noted that in the census, information on highest educational attainment was collected from population 15 years and above. Hence, the percentage is low as this is the age at which most of them are engaged in their studies.

4.6 Conclusion

It is determined by the government that every child has a right to education. As the education strategy focus on coverage of every single child to be included in the education system by academic or vocational training, there are changes in children's engagement in education at different levels. Although the countries education system is universal, there is a minimal number of children who are out of school. Though this number is small in percent and does not show much significance, this is of something to consider for further analysis such as reasons for not engaged in a school.

Furthermore, with the less number of higher education opportunities in atolls, though it is minimal; there is an effect on out of school children in the ages of 15, 16 and 17 years with in the Atolls as well as Male'.

CHAPTER FIVE

Children in Labour Force (15-17 years)

In this chapter, the situation of the Child population 15 – 17 years of age is examined in relation to economic activity areas where the employed children are working, whether they are combining school and employment, average hours spent working and highlight such issues by age and by geographic areas.



5.1 Introduction

The minimum age of employment is specified as 16 years in the Employment Act of Maldives (Act No 2/2008). Minors are allowed to participate in the family's line of work and also allowed to be employed in trainings associated with their education. According to the act, a minor (children aged 16 -17 years) can only be employed with written approval of their legal guardian. Even then they shall not be required to be at work during school hours and after 11 pm at night. However, Employment Act prohibits minors to be employed in work that may have a detrimental effect on their health, education, safety or conduct. Penalties are also identified in the act for persons contravening these clauses.

Effort is also made to try to understand whether there exists any indication of child labour in the country ². Data used in this chapter, excludes the foreigners residing and working in the country and includes resident Maldivians only. Children in the labour force here refer to children between 15 to 17 years of age.

Labour force or economically active population consists of persons who are either employed or unemployed. This includes persons involved in an economic activity for one hour or more during the census reference week or who were seeking and available for employment during the reference week. The scope of economic activity in 2014 Census included those economic activities generating income directly for the person or to their family. Those who did not fall in these categories but spent time doing their own household chores and or personal or family care activities, were not considered as economically active.

Persons outside of the labour force, refers to those who were not involved in an economic activity and were seeking but not available, available but not seeking and those neither seeking nor available for work during the reference week

² The international standards define the target population for measuring child labour as "all persons in the age group from 5-17 years, where age is measured as the number of completed years at the child's last birthday." (para 9 of the Resolution concerning Statistics of Child Labour). The term child labour refers to the subset of children's work that is injurious, negative or undesirable to children and that should be targeted for elimination. Three main international conventions – the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) and ILO Convention on Minimum Age to Employment, 1973 (No. 138) – provide the main legal standards for child labour and a framework for action against it.

"States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:

- (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;*
- (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;*
- (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article."*

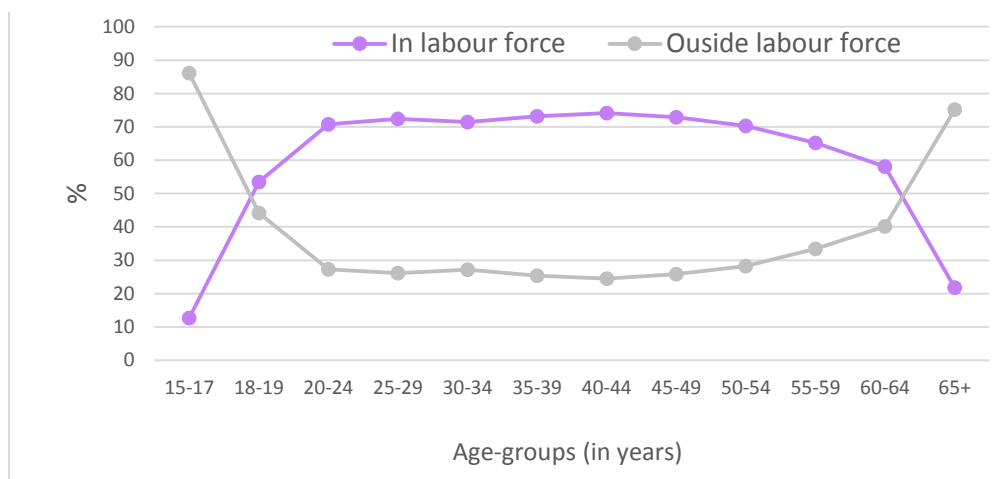
*Article 32, Para 1 and 2:
Convention on the Rights of the Child*

5.2 Economic Activity Status of Child Population

Out of the 153,762 resident Maldivians in the total labour force (15 years and over) 2,224 were children between ages 15-17 years. These children account for 1.5 percent of the total labour force.

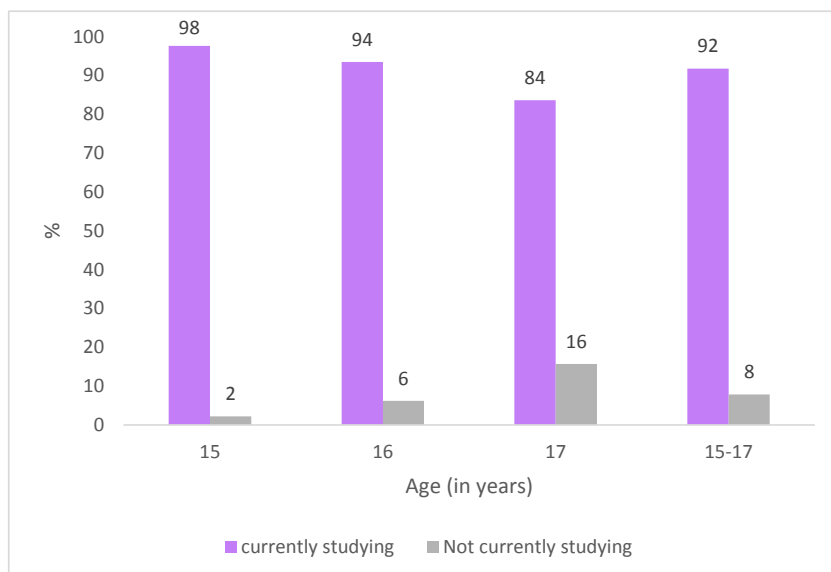
These 2,224 children in the labour force accounts for 13 percent of the total child population 15-17 years of age (17,629) in the country (1 in 8 children). The vast majority of the 15-17-year-old children accounting to a total of 15,180 (86%) are outside of the labour force, as seen from figure 5.1 below. This is expected as this is the age where children attend secondary school.

Figure 5.1: Percentage of population in and outside the Labour force by five-year age-groups, 2014



Out of these 15-17-year old's who were outside of the labour force, 92 percent were studying (figure 5.2). The distribution by single years of age shows the numbers as well as the percentage shares of employed children currently studying decreases with age, from 98 percent of 15-year old's to 94 percent among 16 year old's and 84 percent among the 17 year old's.

Figure 5.2: Percentage shares of children outside labour force by education attendance and age



Breakdown of the 2,244 children in the labour force (labour force = employed + unemployed), shows 1,878 children as employed or working and 366 children as unemployed or looking and available for work. These employed children account for 11 percent of total 15-17-year-old population in the country and unemployed children to 2 percent.

The distribution of these children by single years of age shows the numbers as well as the percentage shares of children in the labour force increases with age, from 3 percent of 15-year old's in the labour force to 9 percent among 16 year old's and 24 percent among the 17 year old's, as seen from table 5.1. and figure 5.3 below.

Table 5.1: Activity status for 15-17-year old's by age, 2014

Activity Status	Age (in years)			
	15	16	17	15-17
	(in numbers)			
In Labour Force	183	530	1,531	2,244
Outside Labour Force	5,177	5,233	4,770	15,180
Not Stated	58	53	94	205
Total	5,418	5,816	6,395	17,629
	(in percentages)			
In Labour Force	3.4	9.1	23.9	12.7
Outside Labour Force	95.6	90.0	74.6	86.1
Not Stated	1.1	0.9	1.5	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Figure 5.3: Number of children by activity status and age, 2014



5.2.1 Economic Activity Status of Children by locality

Out of the 15-17-year old's in the country 6,611 children (38%) lived in Male' while 11,018 children (62%) lived in the Atolls, in 2014.

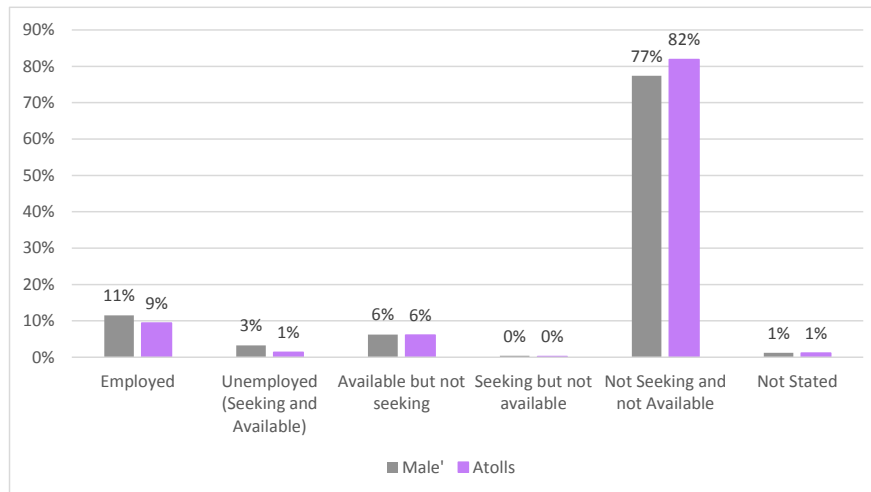
The percentage share of children in the labour force is 3 percent higher in Male' (14.8%) compared to the Atolls (11.5%), as seen from the table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Activity status of Children 15 to 17 years of age, 2014

Activity Status	Republic Male' Atolls			Republic Male' Atolls		
	(In Nos)	(In Nos)	(In Nos)	(In %)	(In %)	(In %)
Economically active (labour force)	2,244	976	1,268	12.7	14.8	11.5
Employed	1,878	760	1,118	10.7	11.5	10.1
Unemployed	366	216	150	2.1	3.3	1.4
Outside the Labour force	15,180	5,556	9,624	86.1	84.0	87.3
Available but not seeking	1,076	413	663	6.1	6.2	6.0
Seeking but not available	53	27	26	0.3	0.4	0.2
Not seeking and Not available	14,051	5,116	8,935	79.7	77.4	81.1
Not Stated	205	79	126	1.2	1.2	1.1
Grand Total	17,629	6,611	11,018	100.0	100.0	100.0

Out of the 6,611 children aged 15 – 17 years living in Male’, 84 percent (5 out of 6 children) were outside the labour force (6% were available but not actively seeking employment while 77% were neither seeking nor available for employment) while 15 percent were economically active or in the labour force (11% were employed, 3% were unemployed).

Figure 5.4: Children 15 to 17 years of age by locality, 2014



In the Atolls, among the 11,018 children aged 15 -17 years, 87 percent were outside the labour force (6% were available for work but not actively seeking and 82 percent were neither seeking for available for work) while 11 percent were in the labour force (9% were employed and 1% were seeking and available for work or unemployed).

The economic activity status of children in Male’ and Atolls were quite similar although the percentage share of those not seeking and not available for work were 5 percent higher in the Atolls compared to Male’ and those employed being 2 percent lower in case of Atolls.

5.2.2 Economic Activity Status of Children by sex

Out of the child population 15-17 years in the country 8,682 children (49%) were Females and 8,947 children (51%) were males.

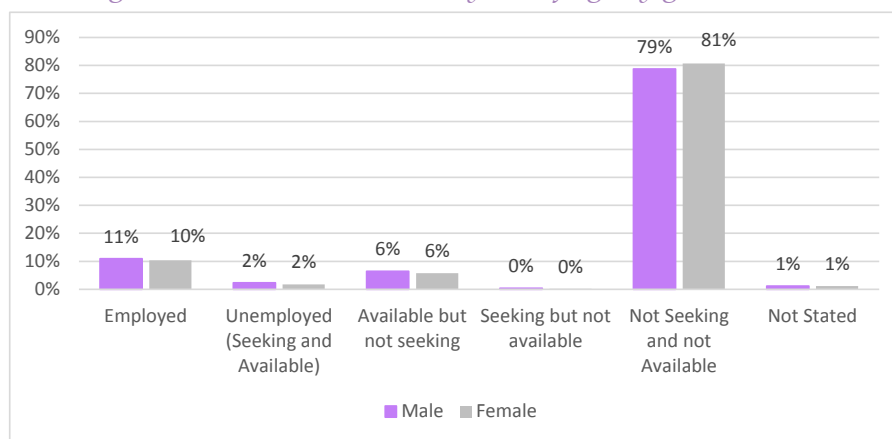
Out of the 8,947 males in the age group 15-17, 13 percent were in the labour force (11% were employed, 2% were unemployed,) while, 86 percent were outside the labour force (6 % were available for work but not actively seeking while the majority of 79 percent were neither seeking nor available for work) as seen from figure 5.5 below. This is expected as most of the children of this age are full-time students enrolled in secondary schools.

Similarly, out of the 8,682 females in this age group, 12 percent were in the labour force (10%

were employed, 2% unemployed) and 87 percent outside the labour force (6% available but not seeking work and 81% were neither seeking nor available for work).

The economic activity status of males and female children were quite similar although the percentage share of those not seeking and not available for work were 2 percent higher among females compared to males and those employed being 1 percent lower in case of females.

Figure 5.5: Children 15 to 17 years of age by gender, 2014



5.3 Children in Employment

According to ILO “Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children’s or adolescents’ participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling, is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business, or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children’s development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.”

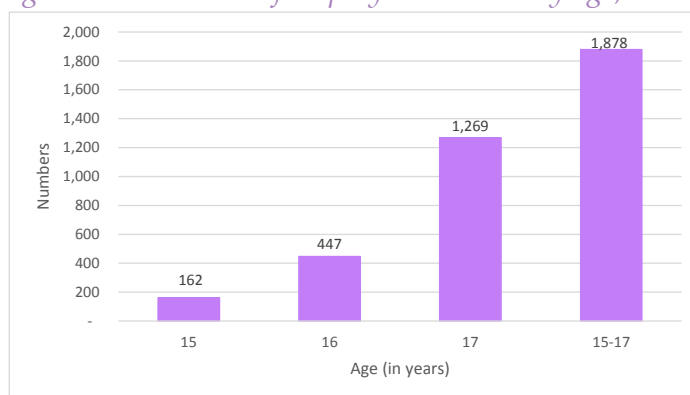
Amid the 145,757 persons in the total employed population 15 years and above, only 1,878 children accounting for a mere 1.3 percent are children 15 – 17 years of age. Amongst these employed children, 975 were males (52%) and 903 were Females (48%).

Looking at employed children by locality, 760 of them were in Male’ (40%) and 1,118 were in the Atolls (60%). This is similar to the distribution that of 15-17-year-old population by locality, where 38 percent were living in Male’ and 62 percent in the Atolls. Among the administra-

tive and non-administrative islands these shares are somewhat different. Only a small number of 15-17-year old's amounting to a total of 95 children are found in non-administrative islands (resorts and industrial islands) which is 5 percent of the employed children of these ages. In terms of the total 15-17-year-old population, only 0.7 percent children were in non-administrative islands.

Number of employed 15-17-year old's, accounted for 1,878 children or 10.7 percent of child population 15-17 years of age. Their numbers increase with age, from 3 percent employed among 15-year old's to 8 percent among 16-year old's and 20 percent among the 17-year old's. In terms of percentage shares of employed children majority (68%) were 17 years, 24 percent 16 years and 9 percent aged 15 years.

Figure 5.6: Number of employed children by age, 2014



5.3.1 Children combining school and employment

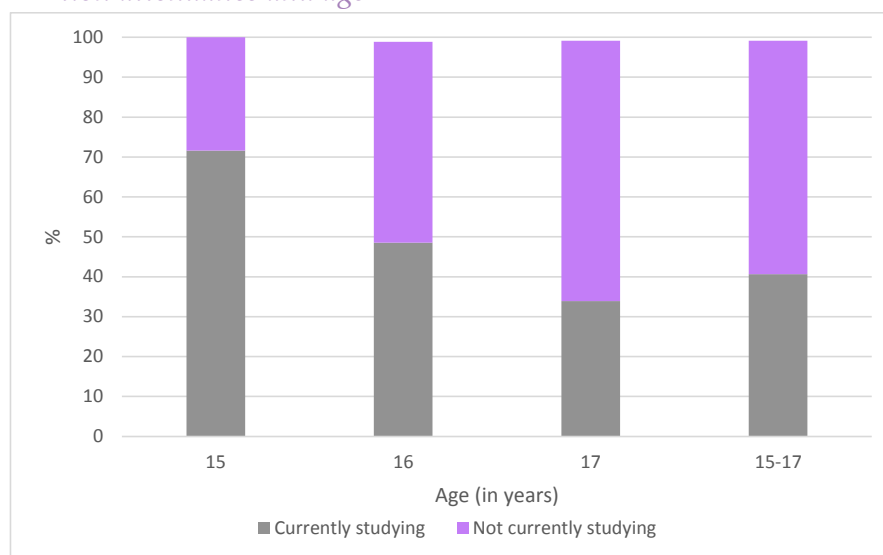
Out of the 15-17-year old's who are employed, 41 percent worked while they studied. Majority (72%) of the employed 15-year old's were attending school or studying, which decrease with age to 49 percent for 16 year old's and 34 percent for 17 year old's, as seen from table 5.3 and fig 5.7 below.

Children not in school increasing for those 16 and 17-year old's is in line with the situation in the country where most children finish their lower secondary or 10th grade at age 15 years ,some at age 16 years with many of them not enrolling in higher secondary school. This can be seen from the Net enrolment ratios of the Ministry of Education's administrative statistics, which shows net enrolment rates dropping from 98.6 percent in primary to 81.5 percent in lower secondary to 23.6 percent in higher secondary in the year 2014. Calculation of these rates using 2014 census data gives somewhat different results, although the trend remains the same.

Table 5.3: Employed children by education attendance and age, 2014

Education attendance status	Age (in years)			
	15	16	17	15-17
(In numbers)				
In school/ studying	116	217	430	763
Not studying	46	225	828	1,099
Not stated	-	5	11	16
Total	162	447	1,269	1,878
(In percentages)				
In school/ studying	71.6	48.5	33.9	40.6
Not studying	28.4	50.3	65.2	58.5
Not stated	0.0	1.1	0.9	0.9
Total	100	100	100	100

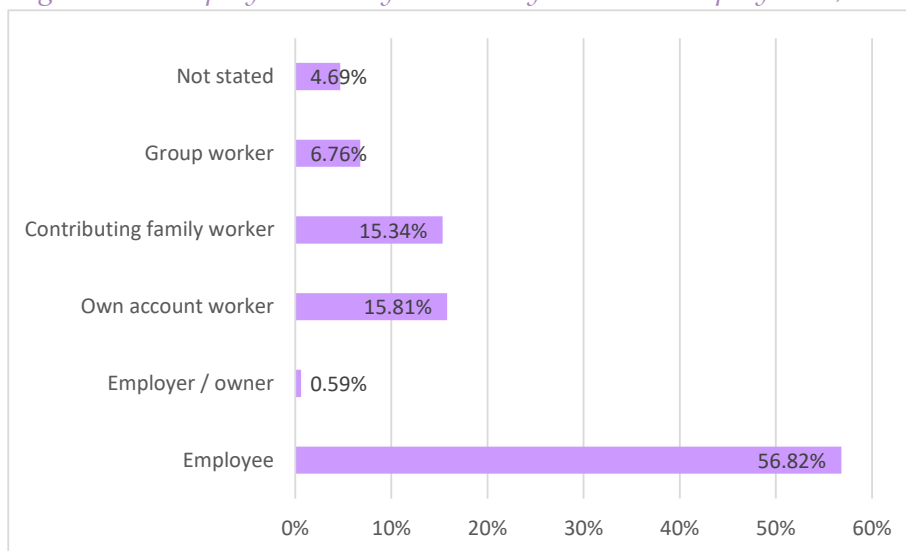
Figure 5.7: Percentage shares of employed children by education attendance and age



5.3.2 Employed Children by Status in employment

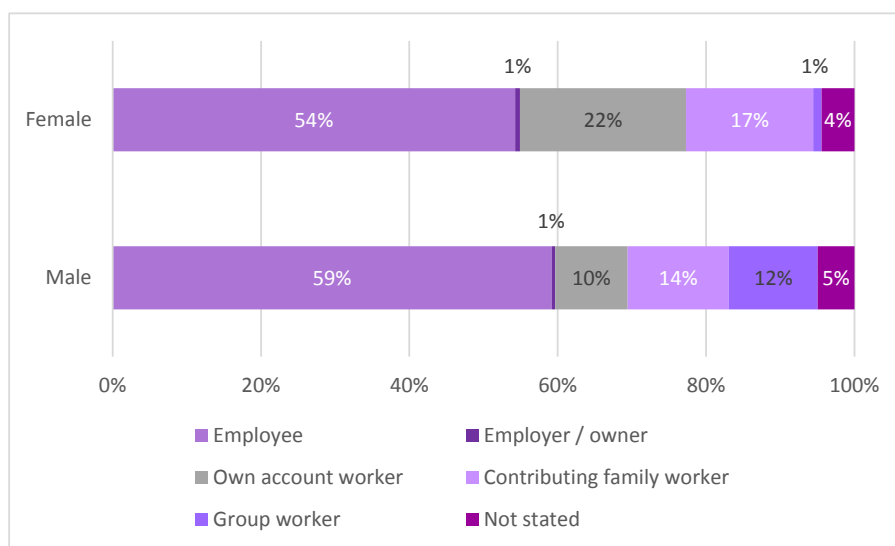
Amongst the 1,878 children employed, 1,067 children (57 percent) are working as employees while 297 (16 percent) work as own account workers, 288 (15 percent) as contributing family workers, 7 percent as group workers and less than 1 percent as owner or employer.

Figure 5.8: Employed 15-17 year old's by status in Employment, 2014



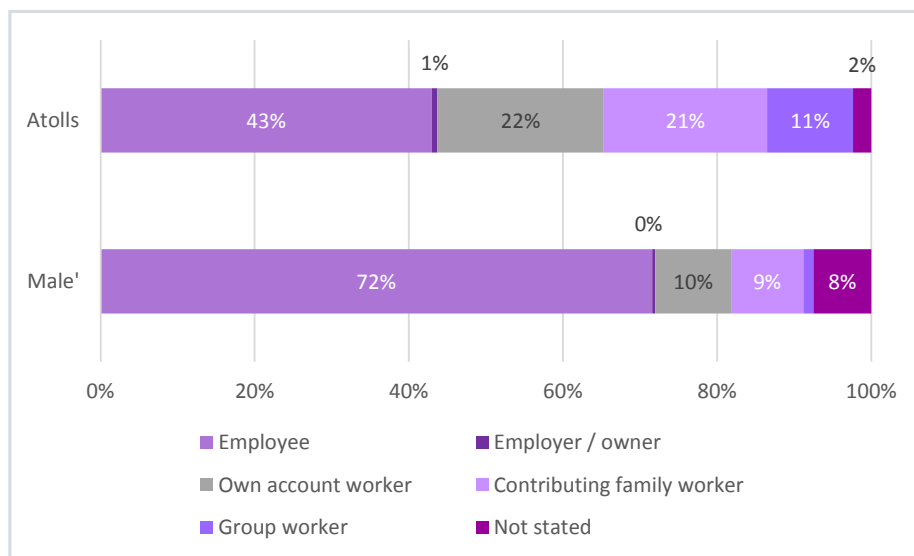
Among those children who worked as employees, 34 percent (358 children) aged 15-17 years were still attending school or studying. Three fourths (75%) of children who worked as employees were 17 year old's.

Figure 5.9: Employed 15-17 year old's by status in Employment by gender, 2014



The gender distribution observed of the children employed were similar to the overall distribution and no significant differences were observed between the sexes except for two major categories, own account workers and group workers, where the females had a significantly higher percentage in the former (22 versus 10) while males in the latter (12 versus 1).

Figure 5.10: Employed 15-17-year old's by status in Employment by locality, 2014

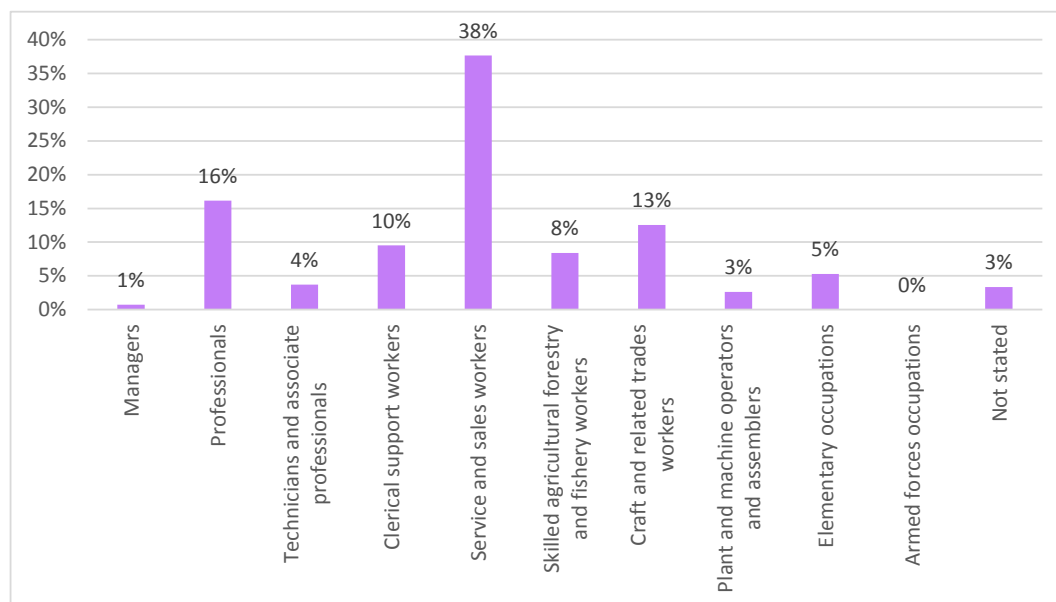


Between the localities, there were significant differences in the status of employment, the most significant being in the category of employees. In Male' 72 percent (about 3 out of 4 employed children) were employees while this number stood at 43 percent (about 2 out of 5 employed children) in the Atolls. Atolls had a significantly higher share of own account workers (22 versus 10) and contributing family workers (21 versus 9) and group workers (11 versus 1) compared to Male'. This signifies that a more formal structure of employment exists in Male' compared to the Atolls.

5.4 Employed Children by Occupation and Industry

Occupation describes the kind of work the person does on the job while industry defines the kind of business it is. The magnitude of the burden a child carries in being employed largely depends on the type of work he or she does and the kind of business they are involved in. Data on occupation from 2014 census was classified according to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) at 3-digit code level.

Figure 5.11: Employed 15-17 year old's by occupation, 2014

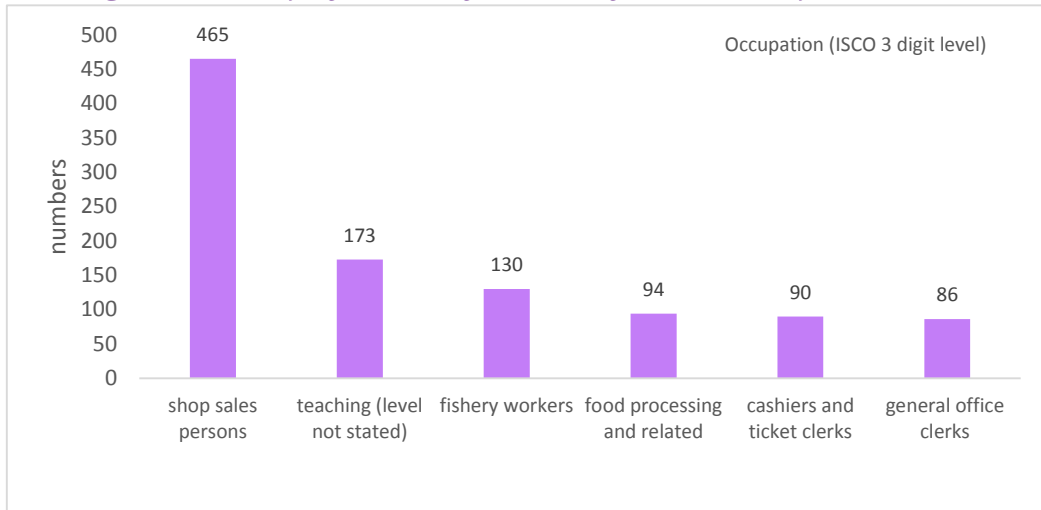


When the occupation is looked into, the three most significant occupation listed are service and sales workers (38 percent), Professionals (16 percent) and craft and related workers (13 percent). These are according to broad (1 digit) ISCO occupational categories.

Under the service and sales workers category, 25 percent were that of shop sales persons and 5 percent were cashiers and ticket clerks. Among the category professionals 9 percent were teachers -level not stated and 3 percent primary school and early childhood teachers. Clerical and office clerks accounted for 5 percent of the clerical support workers category. Under the crafts and trade related workers category 5 percent are in food processing and related trades. Under the skilled agriculture forestry and fishery workers category 7 percent were fishery workers.

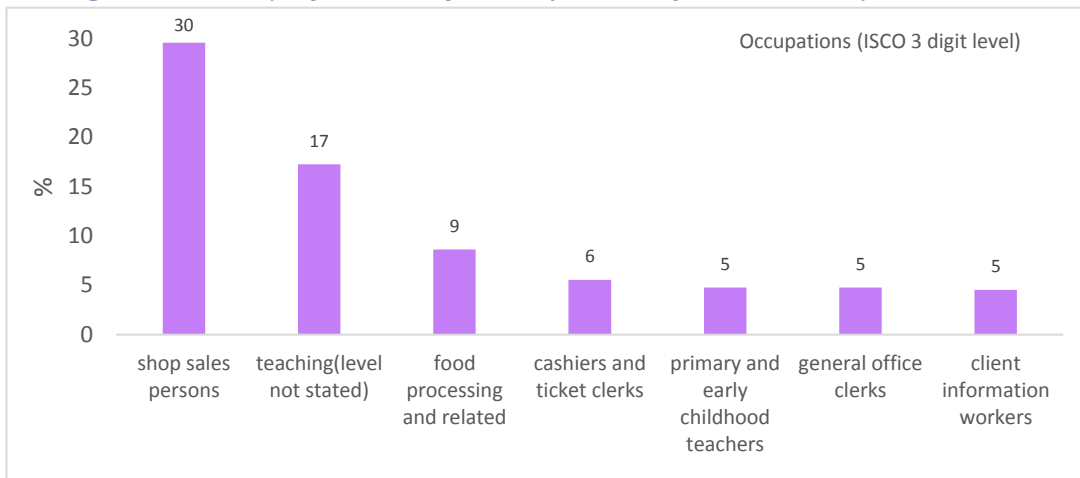
More detail review of occupation categories (ISCO 3-digit level) shows 55 percent of employed children (1,038 out of 1,878 employed children 15-17 years) being concentrated in six main occupations with highest number of children (465) working as shop sales persons (25%). (Refer figure 5.12 below).

Figure 5.12: Employed 15-17 year old's by detailed occupations, 2014



Looking at the top occupations for female children, 30 percent of all employed female children (267 children out of 903) were shop sales persons, followed by teaching personnel-level not stated, (156 children or 17%).

Figure 5.13: Employed 15-17 year old females by detailed occupations, 2014



Looking at the top occupations for male children, 20 percent of all employed male children (198 children out of 975) were shop sales persons, followed by fishery workers (129 children) or 13 percent.

Figure 5.14: Employed 15-17 year old Males by detailed occupations, 2014

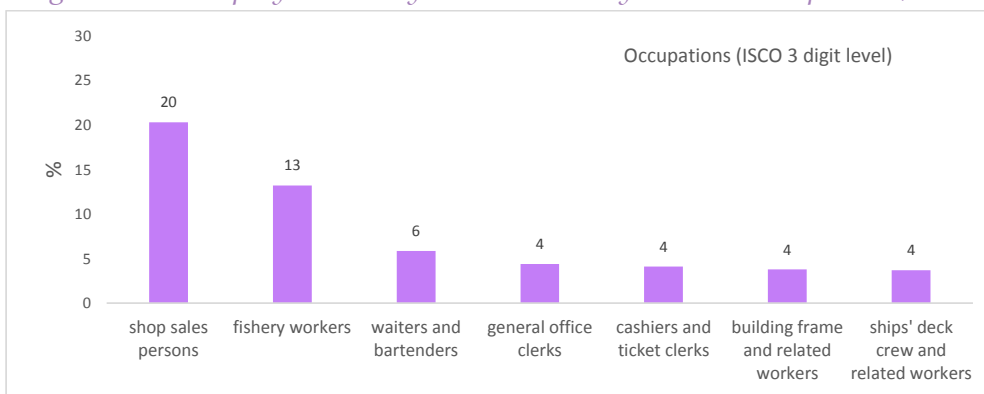


Table 5.4: Percentage of Employed 15-17 year old's by major occupations by locality, 2014

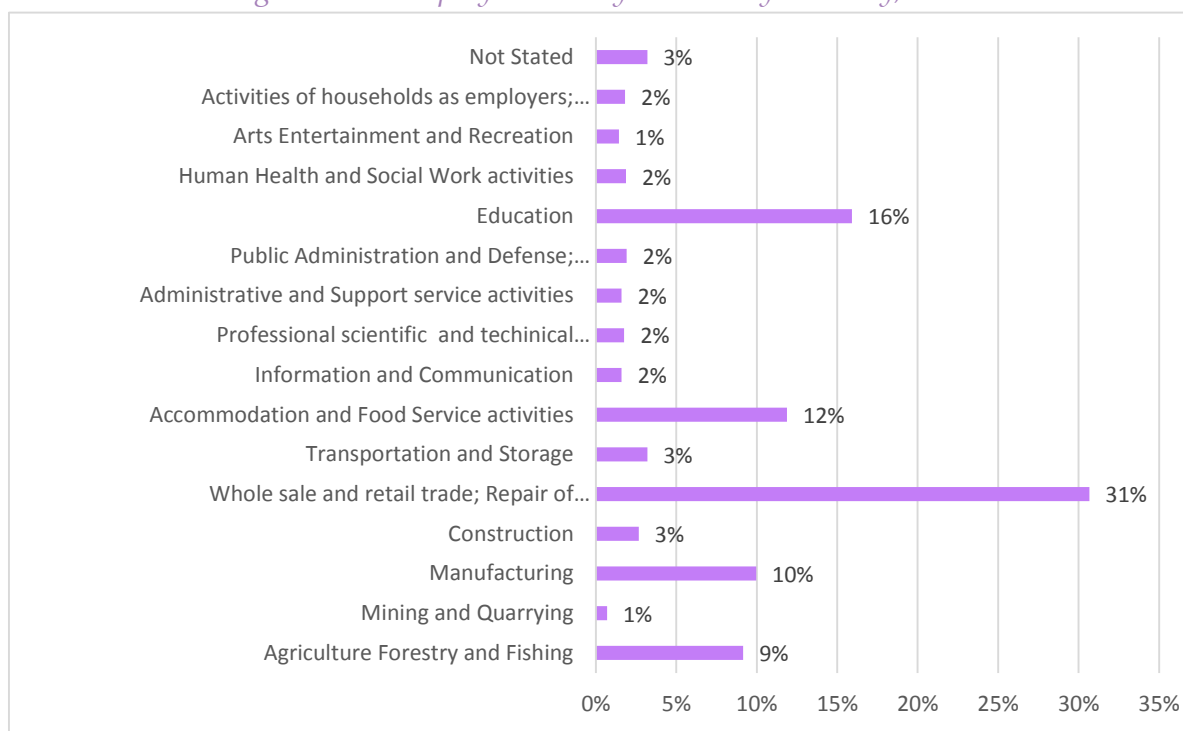
	Total	Male'	Administrative islands	Industrial and Other islands	Resort islands
Managers	1	1	0	0	0
Professionals	16	15	18	0	6
Technicians and associate professionals	4	5	3	8	5
Clerical support workers	10	17	4	8	11
Service and sales workers	38	42	35	17	34
Skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers	8	1	15	8	2
Craft and related trades workers	13	8	16	25	8
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	3	2	2	0	13
Elementary occupations	5	3	6	25	14
Not stated	3	6	1	8	6
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

A total of 760 employed children accounting to 40 percent of employed children 15-17 years reside in Male' in 2014. The top three occupations listed in Male' were service and sales workers (42%), Clerical support workers (17%) and Professionals (15%). In the administrative islands of the Atolls with a total of 1,023 employed children (54%) this distribution was slightly different where service and sales workers (35%), Professional (18%), Craft and related workers (16%) very closely followed by skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers (15%).

The resorts and industrial islands employed a total of 95 children, accounting for 5 percent of employed children 15-17 years. Their major occupations include elementary occupations, craft and related trades workers and service and sales workers.

5.5 Employed Children by Industry

Figure 5.15: Employed 15-17 year old's by industry, 2014



Data on industry from 2014 Census was classified as per the International Standard Industrial Classification of all Economic Activities (ISIC Rev.4)

As far as the industry is concerned, the three most significant are Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (31%), Education (16%) and Accommodation and Food Service activities (12%).

Out of the 567 children employed in the Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles 15 percent are engaged in retail trade in non-specialized stores and 6 percent in retail trade in specialized stores and 4 percent in retail trade not specified.

Out of the 299 children employed in Education 8 percent are in education (level not stated), 3 percent in pre-primary and primary education, 3 percent secondary education, and 2 percent in other education.

Out of the 230 children employed in Accommodation and Food Service activities, 8 percent are in short-term accommodation activities while 4 percent are engaged in restaurants and mobile food service activities.

As for manufacturing 4 percent of employed children in the industry are in engaged in the manufacturing of other food products and 2 percent in Manufacture of products of wood, cork, straw and plaiting materials.

Of the 132 children employed in the broad industry category Agriculture, forestry and fishing, 7 percent are engaged in fishing.

Table 5.5: Percentage of Employed 15-17 year old's by selected major industries by locality, 2014

Selected Major Industries	Total	Male'	Administrative Islands	Industrial and Others	Resort
Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	9	1	16	8	0
Manufacturing	10	8	12	8	0
Construction	3	1	3	67	2
Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	31	40	26	0	0
Accommodation and Food Service activities	12	6	10	0	93
Education	16	14	19	0	0

In Male' 40 percent of these children were employed in the Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles while 14 percent in Education 8 percent in manufacturing. The distribution is slightly different in the administrative islands of the Atolls with 26 percent in the Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles while 19 percent in Education and 16 percent in Agriculture, forestry and Fishing.

The resorts and industrial islands employed a total of 95 children aged 15 – 17 years. Of these 77 children (81% of employed children the non-admin islands) work in short-term accommodation activities while 10 children (11%) are working in Construction of buildings.

5.6 Employed Children by Occupation and Industry

Table 5.6: Number of employed 15-17 year old's by major industries and occupations, 2014

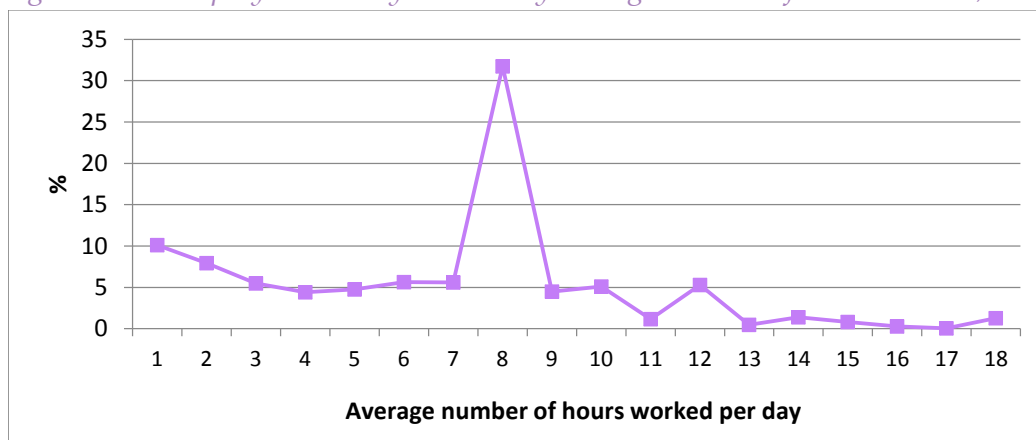
Occupation and Industry	Total	Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	Manufacturing	Construction	Whole sale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Transportation and Storage	Accommodation and Food Service activities	Education
Total	1878	172	187	50	576	60	223	299
Managers	14	0	0	1	8	0	1	0
Professionals	303	2	1	0	4	0	7	270
Technicians and associate professionals	70	1	1	4	7	6	6	3
Clerical support workers	179	0	7	7	19	8	29	19
Service and sales workers	707	1	5	1	515	6	115	3
Skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers	158	154	0	1	0	1	2	0
Craft and related trades workers	236	9	167	24	11	3	10	2
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	49	1	3	0	1	25	14	0
Elementary occupations	99	4	2	12	9	11	32	1
Not stated	63	0	1	0	2	0	7	1

Among the 576 employed children 15 – 17 years of age who are engaged in Wholesale and retail trade; Repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, 515 are working as service and sales workers. These are likely to be those helping- in family-owned shops. Out of the 299 children engaged in Education sector, 270 are working as professionals, probably as tutors at tuition centers or as a household activity.

5.7 Employed Children by Hours Worked

Highest number of 15-17-year-old employed worked an average of 8 hours per day during the 2014 census reference week. One third of these children (32%) worked an average of 8 hours per day.

Figure 5.16: Employed 15-17-year old's by average number of hours worked, 2014



Given this chapter tries to examine existence of an indication of child labour in the country; this aspect is looked into using the hours worked data for the employed children 15-17 years.

The ILO Convention, the Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33), sets two hours per day, on either school days or holidays, as the maximum for light work from the age of 12 years. Permissible light work is defined in the present context as any non-hazardous work by children (12-14 years) of less than 14 hours during the reference³ week. Children over twelve years of age may, outside the hours fixed for school attendance, be employed on light work the duration of which does not exceed two hours per day on either school days or holidays and the total number of hours spent at school and on light work in no case to exceed seven per day.

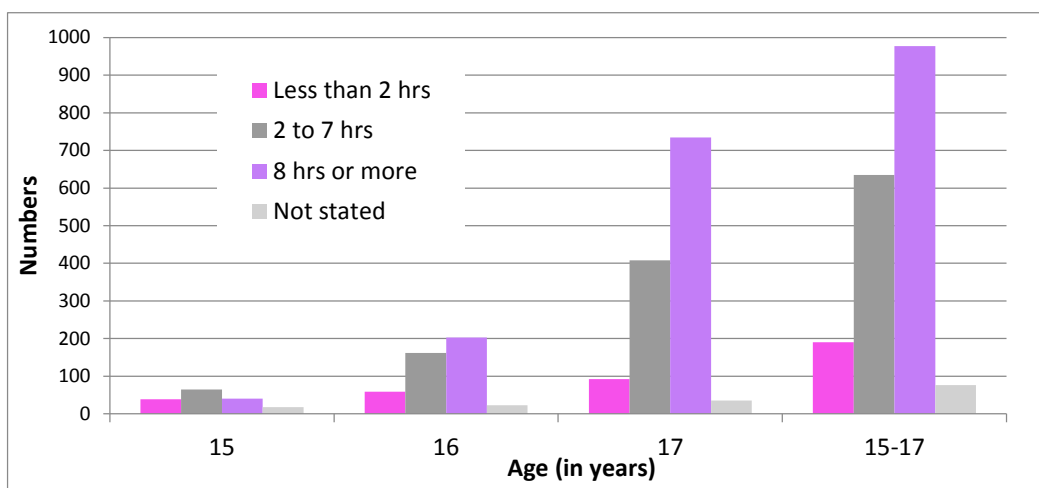
³ Article 3 (para. 1) of the Convention states that “Children over twelve years of age may, outside the hours fixed for school attendance, be employed on light work (a) which is not harmful to their health or normal development; (b) which is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school or their capacity to benefit from the instruction there given; and (c) the duration of which does not exceed two hours per day on either school days or holidays, the total number of hours spent at school and on light work in no case to exceed seven per day”.

Average number of hours worked per day for employed children taken in 2014 Census is classified according to this guideline and presented below. It shows 977 children or half (52%) of the employed children 15-17 years, worked 8 or more hours per day with majority being 17-year olds (three fourths or 75%). If we look at employed children below the legal minimum age set for work set in the Maldives of 16 years, gives 40 children out of 162 aged 15 years working beyond this 7 hour threshold (Refer table 5.7 and figure 5.17 below)

Table 5.7: Employed 15-17-year old's by average number of hours worked, 2014

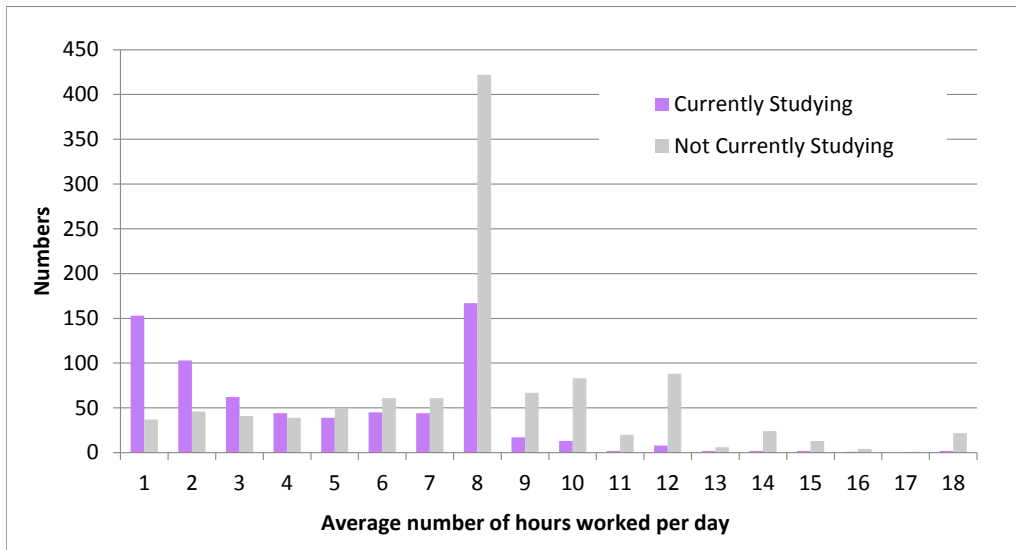
Average hours worked per day	Employed 15-17-year old's			
	No. of children by Age (in years)			
	15	16	17	15-17
Less than 2 hours	39	59	92	190
2 to 7 hours	65	162	408	635
8 hours or more	40	203	734	977
Not stated	18	23	35	76
Total	162	447	1,269	1,878
	%			
Less than 2 hours	24	13	7	10
2 to 7 hours	40	36	32	34
8 hours or more	25	45	58	52
Not stated	11	5	3	4
Total	100	100	100	100

Figure 5.17: Employed 15-17-year old's by age and categories of average number of hours worked, 2014



Looking further at the average hours, employed children that combine studies with employment and those not studying, shows less number of hours put into work by those studying. (Refer figure 5.18 below). Among those children employed and studying 20 percent worked for less than 2 hours per day on average and 28 percent worked beyond the 7-hour threshold.

Figure 5.18: Employed 15-17-year old's currently studying and not studying by average number of hours worked, 2014



CHAPTER SIX

Nuptiality and Fertility among Children



6.1 Introduction

Nuptiality level and pattern reflects the demographic characteristics of a country, its social norm, and other socio-economic characteristics. Much vested interested in nuptiality is at large, as it is an important determinant of fertility in a country. The impact of nuptiality on fertility is determined by the extent to which childbearing occurs after marriage.

Marriage sometimes start with a young age and it is important to analysis nuptiality and fertility within the child age group. Such an analysis is particularly relevant when discussing children because there is an expectation that majority of them would be in school.

In the Maldives the legal age at marriage is 18 years with certain exception to this. This chapter will first look at the marital status of the children between 15-17 years with a closer look at the married child. This will be followed by fertility of the child population with children born among the ever-married child population (15-17 years).

6.2 Marital Status among children

The Census 2014 collected marital and fertility information for those aged 15 years and above.

Tables 6.1 present the distribution of the child population by their marital status. The data shows that 95 percent of the children have never been married while only 0.60 percent of the children are currently married. This accounts to 106 children of 15-17 as being married at the time of the census. While 18 children of the age 15 are married, this is at 62 children for those aged at 17 years.

Table 6.1: Marital Status for 15-17 population, Census 2014

Locality and marital status	Total population (15-17 years)	Age groups		
		15	16	17
Republic				
Both sexes	17,629	5,418	5,816	6,395
Never married	16,792	5,293	5,576	5,923
Married	106	18	26	62
Divorced	2	0	1	1
Widowed	3	0	0	3
Not stated	726	107	213	406

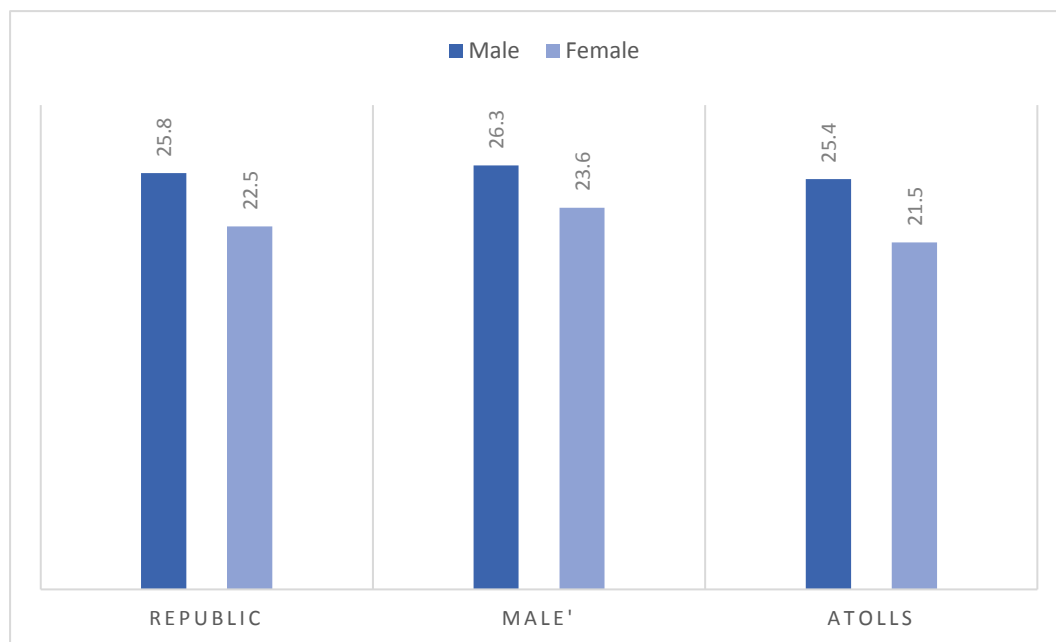
Looking at the distribution of the married child, more married children are residing in Male' while only 46 children are distributed among the 20 Atolls (Table 6.2). It is interesting to note that more child marriages occur among girls than among boys. It would be worthwhile to analyze the driving factors for such marriages.

Table 6.2: Child marriages by age and sex, by Locality

Child marriage by Locality and sex	Married population (15-17 years)	Age groups		
		15	16	17
Republic				
Both sexes	106	18	26	62
Male	44	8	10	26
Female	62	10	16	36
Male'				
Both sexes	60	6	18	36
Male	23	2	7	14
Female	37	4	11	22
Atolls				
Both sexes	46	12	8	26
Male	21	6	3	12
Female	25	6	5	14

As the census data shows that marriage is taking place amongst adolescents. Owing to the fact that more girls are getting married at 15 - 17 years compared to boys, it is important to compare it with the overall mean age of marriage of the population. The census 2014 results show that the singulate mean age at marriage is at 26 years for males and 23 years for females. Same trend is identified between Male' and Atolls. (Figure 6.1). This shows that women get married earlier than men; by 3 years.

Figure 6.1: Singulate mean age of marriage, Census 2014



While the census data discussed shows the currently situation, it is also important to look at the population that has moved or transited into the reproductive age whether they were married before they reached their maturity. Thus the indicator “proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before the age 15 and before age 18” looks at population 20-24 years who have married before the age of 18. This is an indicator which is gaining momentum and a key indicator included in the Sustainable Development Goal to measure gender equality (Goal 5, Indicator 5.3.1).

Table 6.3: Population aged 20-24 years who were married before the age of 18, Census 2014

Detail	Population 20-24		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female
Total Population	36,440	18,643	17,797
Marriage before the age of 18	103	41	62
Proportion of population married before the age of 18 (%)	0.28	0.22	0.35

Table 6.3 shows that the child marriage among 20-24 year old population is slightly less than those among the current child population (15-17 years). Thus the proportion of women 20-24 years who were married before the age of 18 was at 0.35 percent. Though this is a very low percentage, the fact that child marriages are taking place is a concern and marriages that is taking place at a lower age is still more for girls than boys has to be reasoned out.

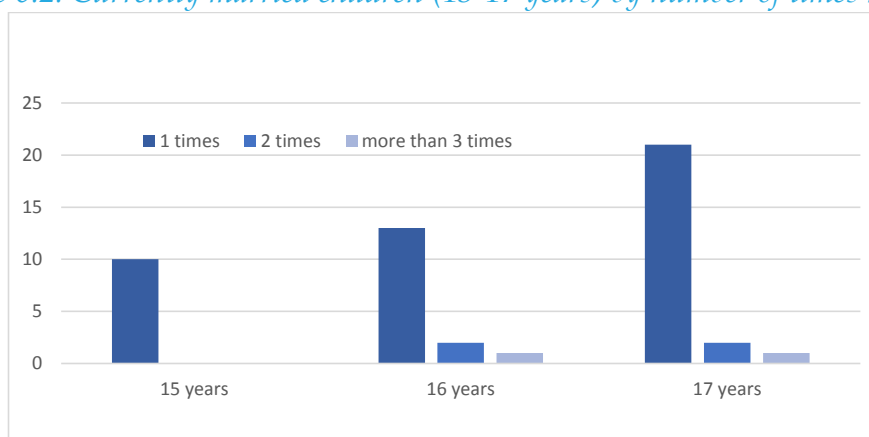
While 106 children of 15- 17 years are currently married, it is important to explore other marital characteristics of the child population who are currently married.

Table 6.4: Currently married children (15-17 years) by number of times married, Census 2014

Republic	Currently married	Number of times married			Not stated
		1	2	3+	
Both sexes	106	44	4	2	56
15	18	10	0	0	8
16	26	13	2	1	10
17	62	21	2	1	38

As can be seen from Table 6.4, majority of the children are experiencing their first marriage. However, it is noticed that even at a younger age, there are children who have married more than twice. Figure 6.2 illustrates this whereby, the number of times married increases as the child ages. However due to the high 'not stated' cases in this category, it is difficult to draw out conclusions on the findings.

Figure 6.2: Currently married children (15-17 years) by number of times married



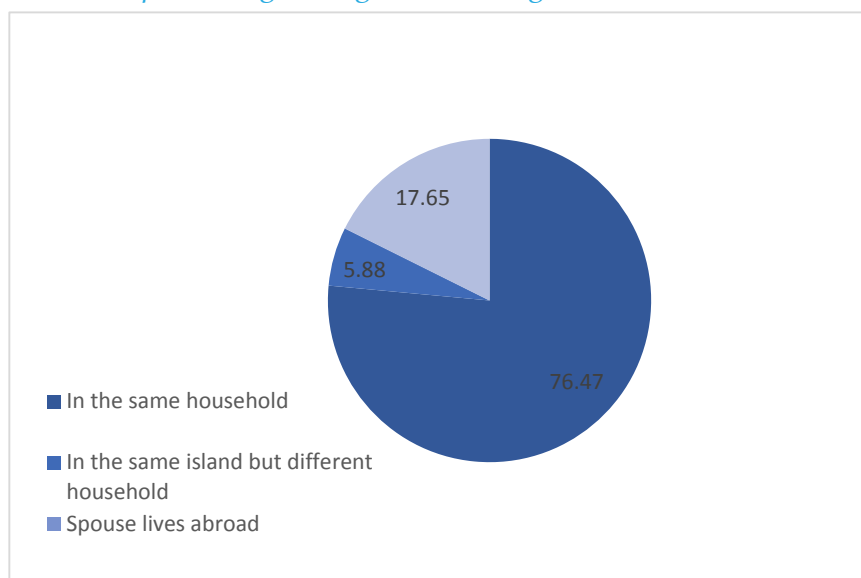
Census also collected information on the number of persons a person has married. The number of persons married by the child population is akin to the number of times married (Table 6.5). This shows that they are in their first marriage and with their first husband/wife. However, there are few exceptional cases where the children has had another spouse previously.

Table 6.5: Currently married children (15-17 years) by number of persons married, Census 2014

Republic	Currently married	Number of persons married			Not stated
		1	2	3+	
Both sexes	106	45	4	1	56
15	18	10	0	0	8
16	26	14	2	0	10
17	62	21	2	1	38

It is also important to look at other socio-economic characteristics of children who are currently married. As such Figure 6.3 shows the living arrangement among the married children (15-17 years). The figure illustrates that 76 percent of them lived with their spouses. For a minimal number, some of these children are married but living in different households. For 18 percent of the children, their spouses are living in another island in the Maldives.

Figure 6.3: Couples living arrangement among married children, Census 2014



* Note: calculations has been done excluding the 'not stated'

It is also important to shed light into the economic status among the married children. As such, Figure 6.4 depicts the percentage distribution of married children by economic status. Among the children who are married, majority of them are outside the labour force while close to 50 percent of them are employed. The Figure 6.4 also shows that only 3 percent of them are unemployed.

Figure 6.4: Percentage distribution of married children by status in economic activity

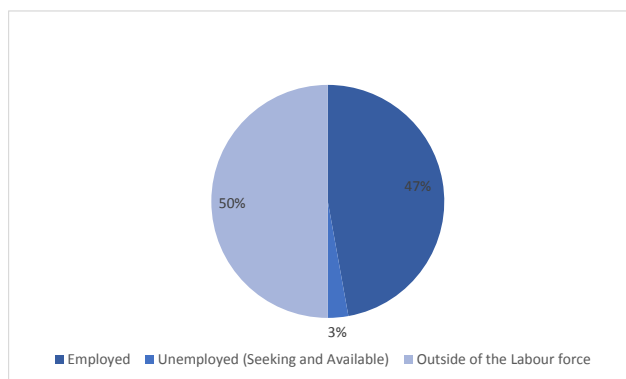
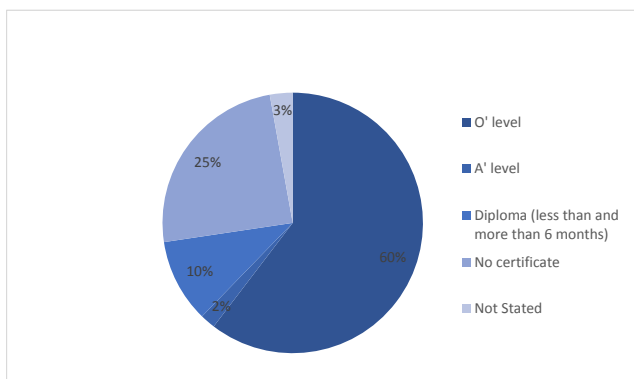


Figure 6.5: Percentage distribution of married children by highest certificate achieved

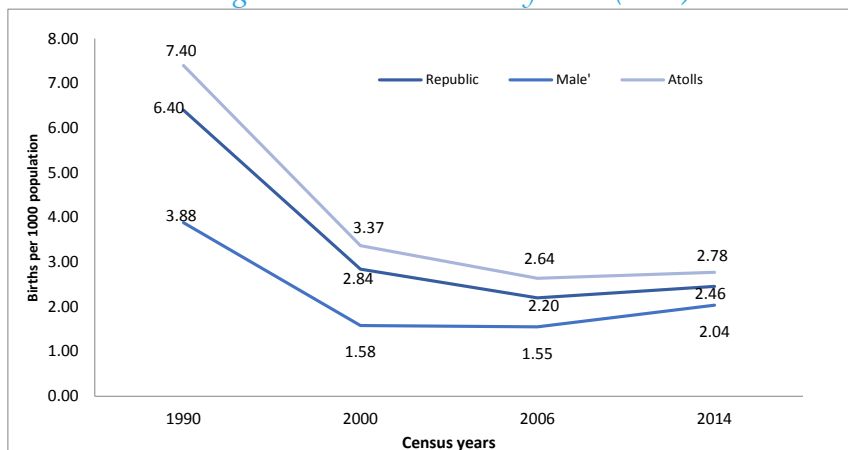


Similarly when we look at the educational attainment among the married children. As such, Figure 6.5 shows the percentage distribution of married children by level of highest certificate achieved. A great majority of the children have completed O' level. Only 2 percent of them have completed A' levels.

6.3 Fertility Status among children

Maldives on average has experienced a drastic reduction in the fertility rate over the years. While the fertility rate or the average number of children a women had was around 6.4 in 1990, today the fertility rate has gone down close to replacement level fertility (at 2.46 children per women).

Figure 6.6: Total Fertility Rate (TFR)



Source: Statistical Release 5, Census 2014

The decline in fertility rate piques the interest in looking at the changes that has taken place in the reproductive age group. As shown in population pyramid in chapter 2 (Figure 2.1), the high fertility rate around 1990's was due to the huge bulk of population moving into the reproductive age group (15-49 years). The past population trends has shown that the number of children moving into the reproductive age has increased over time (Table 6.6). Today the percentage of women in the reproductive age stands at its highest with 28.9 percent out of the total female population.

Table 6.6: Women of reproductive age over time, Census 1995-2014

Women of reproductive age (15-49 years)	1995	2000	2006	2014
15-19	12,562	16,676	19,749	15,159
20-24	11,077	11,894	17,876	17,797
25-29	9,389	10,285	12,666	19,327
30-34	7,785	9,271	10,613	15,567
35-39	6,317	7,871	9,394	11,341
40-44	3,297	6,130	8,043	9,923
45-49	3,215	3,484	6,697	8,658
Women of reproductive age (in %)	21.9	24.3	28.4	28.9

Though the number of women in the reproductive age is high, Maldives is experiencing a low fertility rate and this is attributed by many factors. The fertility rate drives on other socio-economic, health conditions and the prevailing fertility rates in the country.

Figure 6.7: Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR), Census 2014

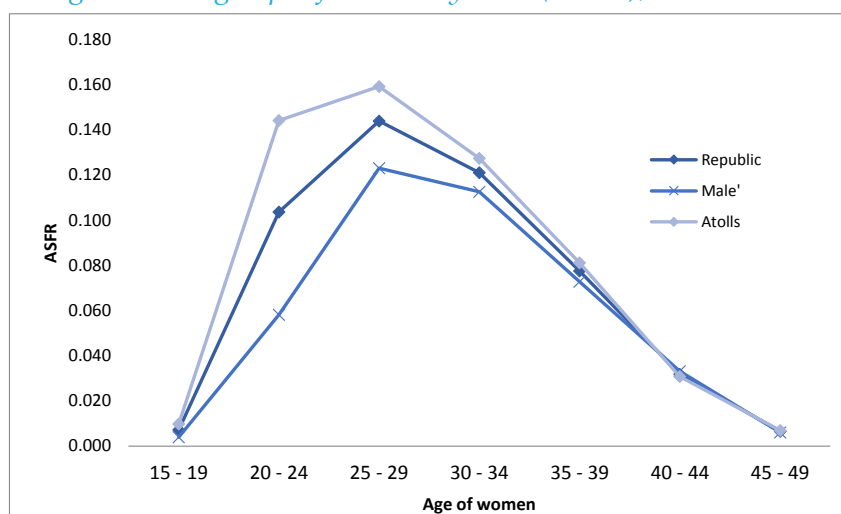


Figure 6.7 represents the Age Specific Fertility Rate (ASFR) among the women of reproductive age group. The fertility level among the children is low and while its highest among the age group 25-29 years old. The graph also shows that fertility pattern is high across different age groups in the Atolls than in Male' and this is significant even among the children.

Table 6.7 highlights the number of the children born by girls in the age group 15-17 years. Among the female children of this age group, less than 1 percent of them have given birth. The number of girls having children increases as the women ages.

Table 6.7: Girls 15-17 years with number of children ever born, Census 2014

Republic	Girls 15-17 years	Girls 15-17 years with children	Number of children ever born			Not stated
			1	2	3+	
Both sexes	8,682	54	26	5	3	20
15	2,728	5	3	2	0	0
16	2,814	18	11	0	2	5
17	3,140	31	12	3	1	15

On average the number of children which the women of 15-17 years of age is having is 1 child. However, very few of them have had more than 1 child. Since the female girl child is child bearing at a very young age this needs to be assessed further as this has many implications on the female (15-17 years).

6.4 Conclusion

The nuptiality analysis of the children has shown that in Maldives child marriages are taking place. Though it is less in number, the fact that marriages are taking place is a concern which needs to be address. The result has also shown that girls tend to get married earlier than boys and this has to be looked in detail.

Furthermore, most of the children are in their first married and with their first husband/ wife. Few children are in their second marriage and this pattern increases with the increase in age

Fertility pattern among children is less with slight difference between Male' and Atolls.



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