

# Gendered Trajectories and an expansive concept of Access to Higher Education in Haryana, India

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**WARWICK**  
THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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Institution: University of Warwick,

Project: A Fair Chance for Education ( <https://warwick.ac.uk/haryana> )



## Structure of Presentation

- Introduction to the research project
- Government colleges situated in Indian HE system
- Haryana – contextual background
- Research Questions
- Sampled Colleges
- Methodology
- Findings

## Fair Chance for Education: Gendered Pathways to Educational Success in Haryana

- Five-year action research project exploring the gendered factors that contribute to educational success for young people in Haryana, India.
- Haryana experiences significant **gender-based practices** that affect the ability of young people to access and remain within the education system, and to progress into **higher education**.
- The project therefore focuses on **gendered social relations** and **gender differences** in **choices, obstacles and opportunities** for young people as they progress through the education system, and ultimately intends to devise project actions that can bring about **positive social change**.
- We are focusing on **one state** in order to understand the state mechanisms and contextual nuances.
- This presentation focuses on the pilot research in year 2 of the project (Feb 2018).

# Government colleges situated in the Indian HE system

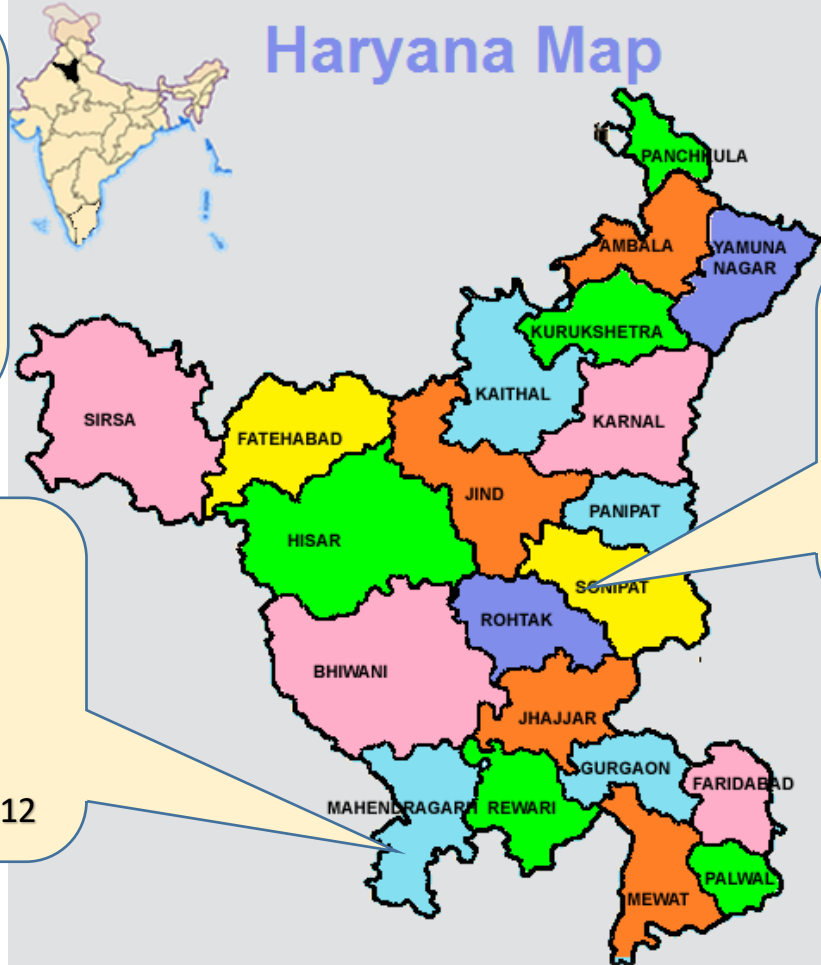
- Tierney and Sabharwal (2016) 'Social Ecology of HE'
  - Traditional Public University-Federal – Central Government funded, Open deemed universities
  - Traditional Public University – state funded
  - Traditional Private University – private
  - **Publicly supported public colleges – Government colleges**
  - Publicly supported private colleges – Private aided colleges
  - Privately Supported private colleges – Private unaided colleges
- In India, there are no widening participation programmes as such. Instead, the Indian Higher education is guided by constitutional provisions to practice **Affirmative Action** (popularly called the Reservation system).
- **Reservation system** ensures that 15% of the seats in all courses are reserved for students from Scheduled Caste (SC) or Dalit families, 7.5% for students from tribal (ST) communities, 27% for students from Other Backward Castes (OBCs) and some for children of freedom fighters, students with disabilities and students whose parents work in the Public Works Department.
- **Scholarships** for students from SC and ST (Scheduled Tribes) communities and for female students.
- Additional **subsidised hostel** services

# Haryana

- This north-Indian state is a **conundrum of economic development BUT social conservatism, low sex-ratio and violence against women** (Ahlawat 2012, Madan and Gill 2011, Yadav 2001 ).
- Haryana is a prominent location in the **Corridors of development** (Planning Commission 2009, Apex Cluster Development services 2015).
- High representation of girls and women in schools and universities in terms of parity but gendered inequalities persist in terms of entry into graduate employment and important life decisions.



## Haryana Map



### Haryana

Urban Population – 34.88%  
Sex ratio – 877  
Juvenile Sex ratio – 834  
Female Literacy – 65.9%  
Overall Literacy – 75.5%  
No. of Government Colleges – 113

### Mahendargarh

Urban Population – 14.41%  
Sex ratio – 895  
Juvenile Sex ratio – 775  
Female Literacy – 64.6%  
Overall Literacy – 77.7%  
No. of Government Colleges – 12

### Sonipat

Urban Population – 31.27%  
Sex ratio – 856  
Juvenile Sex ratio – 798  
Female Literacy – 69.8%  
Overall Literacy – 79.1%  
No. of Government Colleges – 4

Sources: Census of India  
2011, Dept of HE HR

# Research Questions

- Who gains access to the government co-educational colleges in Haryana?
- What are the gendered educational trajectories and decision making processes that have brought the students to the sampled colleges?

## The Two Colleges



### Sampled college in Mahendargarh

- **710 female** students and **2506 male** students
- There is a women's college nearby



### Sampled College in Sonipat

- **1701 female** students and **459 male** students are currently enrolled
- Is being changed into a women's college



# Methodology

## Methods

- Questionnaires (c. 250 across two colleges)
- FGDs (4 – 2x male and 2x female FGDs with groups of 5 students)
- Interviews (4x female undergraduates, 4x male undergraduates and 2x college Management Representatives)
- Documentary analysis of college information e.g. prospectus

## Implementation

- Team 1 – Mahendargarh (125 questionnaires, 2 FGDs, Interviews with 2 female and 2 male undergraduates and 1 Management Representative)
- Team 2 – Sonipat (125 questionnaires, 2 FGDs, Interviews with 2 female and 2 male undergraduates and 1 Management Representative)

## Analysis process

- Questionnaire – the quantitative data was analysed through SPSS
- FGDs, Interviews and secondary Documents– Thematic Coding and analysis with particular focus on Gender (and intersections with caste)

## Findings (Who is accessing HE)

- Gender

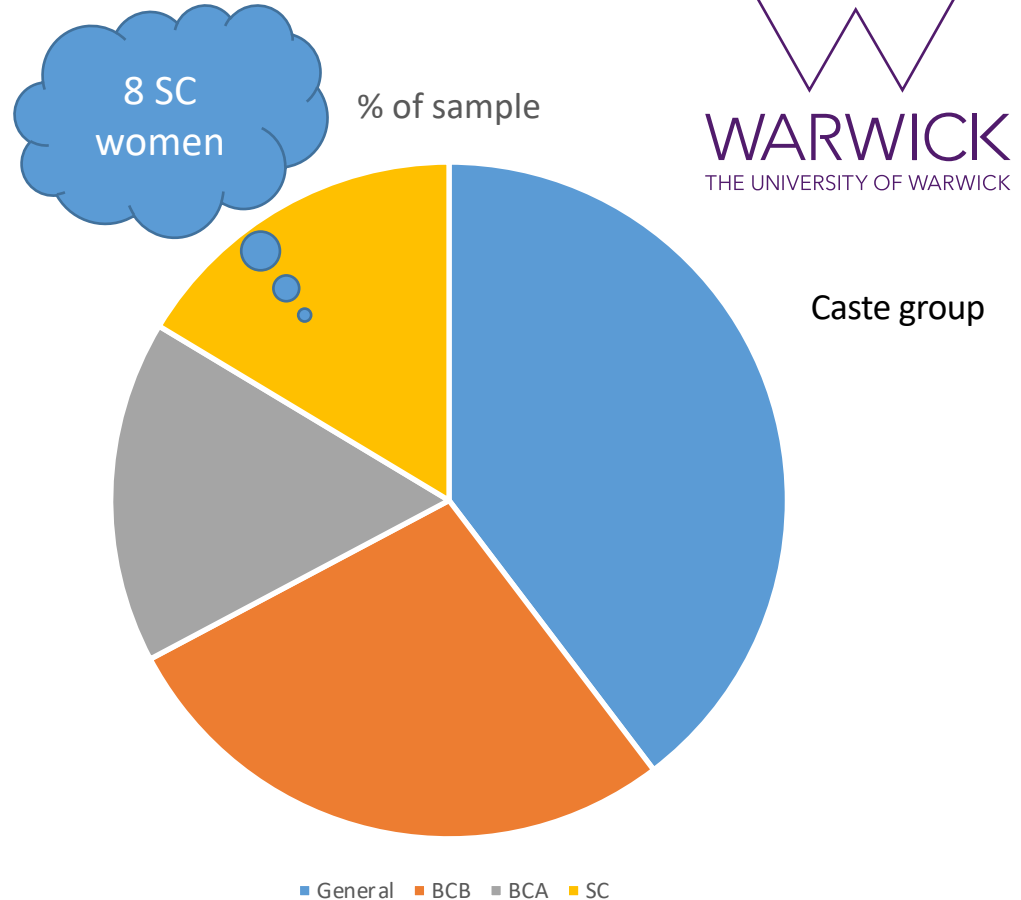
- 40.2% female (N=92), 59.8% male (N=137), no other genders listed.
- Sonipat: 66.4% female (N=73), 33.6% male (N=37)
- Mahendargarh: 16% female (N=19), 84% male (N=100)

- Religion

- All Hindu with 1 Jain and 1 Christian

- Marital status

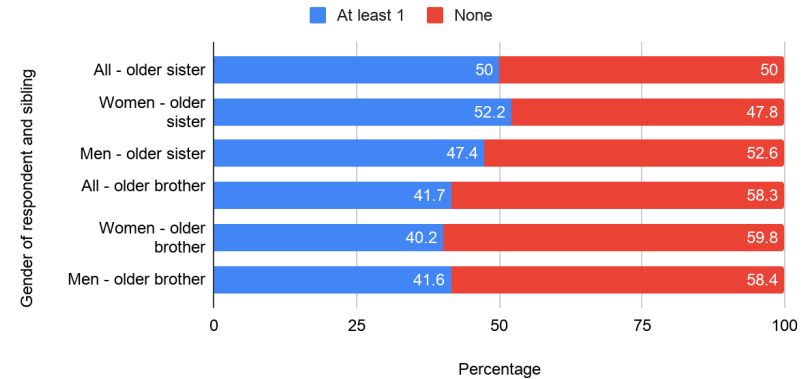
- 6 married (4F, 1M, 1 unknown) and 1 engaged (M)



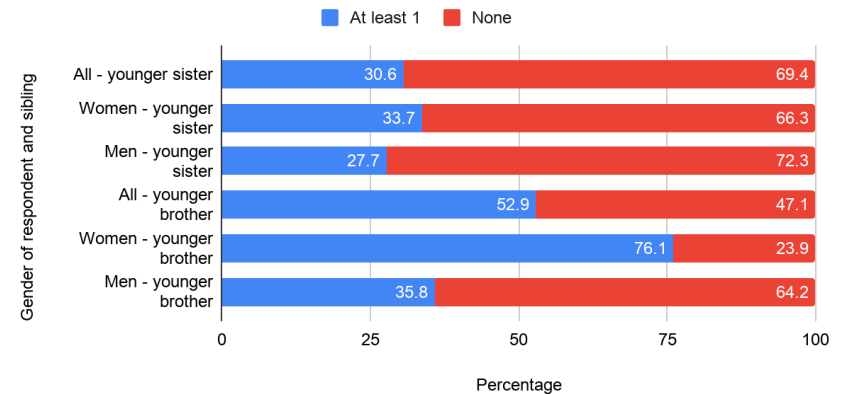
## Findings (Who is accessing HE - Family)

- Minimum household number= 3, maximum= 23 (?), mean= 5.56.
- Women respondents had a slightly larger mean household membership than men respondents, by 0.29 of a member.
- It was more common for men respondents to have 2 older sisters than for other groups (women and whole sample) to have 2 siblings, which would reflect the son preference of 'trying for a boy'.
- Men are more likely to have no younger siblings at all (27.7% having younger sister/s and 35.8% having younger brother/s).
- Women are more likely to have younger siblings in general (33.7% having younger sister/s and 76.1% having younger brother/s).
- Particularly significant is the statistic of 76.1% of women having younger brother/s, suggesting that parents 'keep trying' for a boy.

Older siblings compared by gender of respondent and gender of sibling

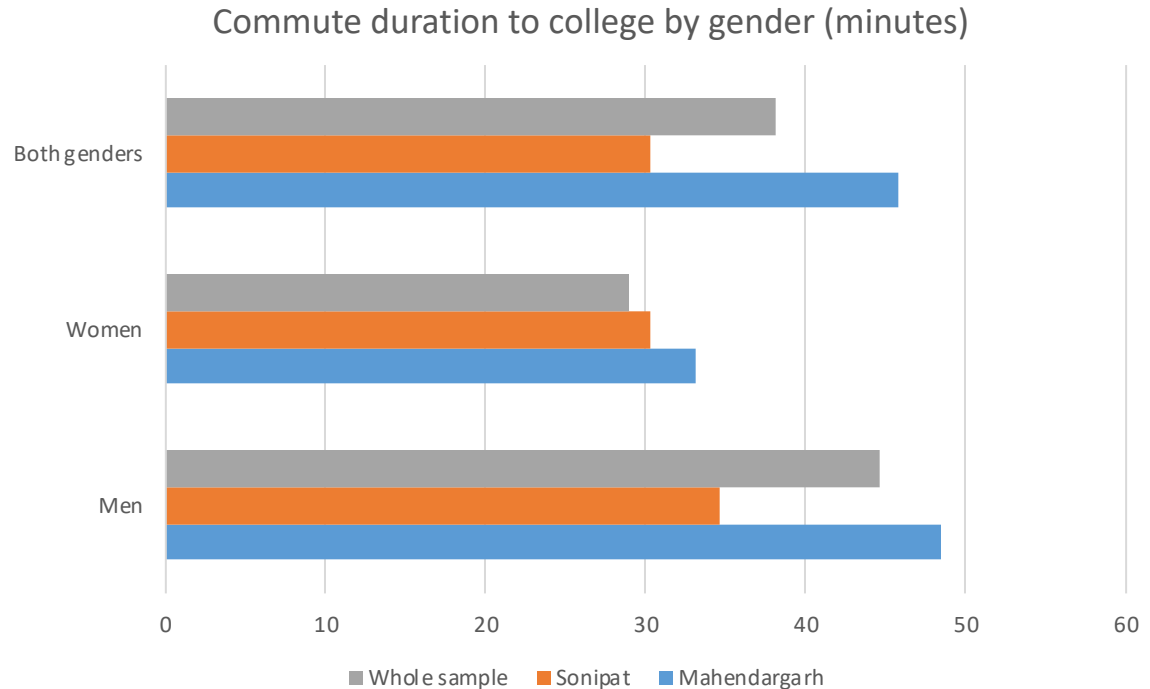


Younger siblings compared by gender of respondent and gender of sibling

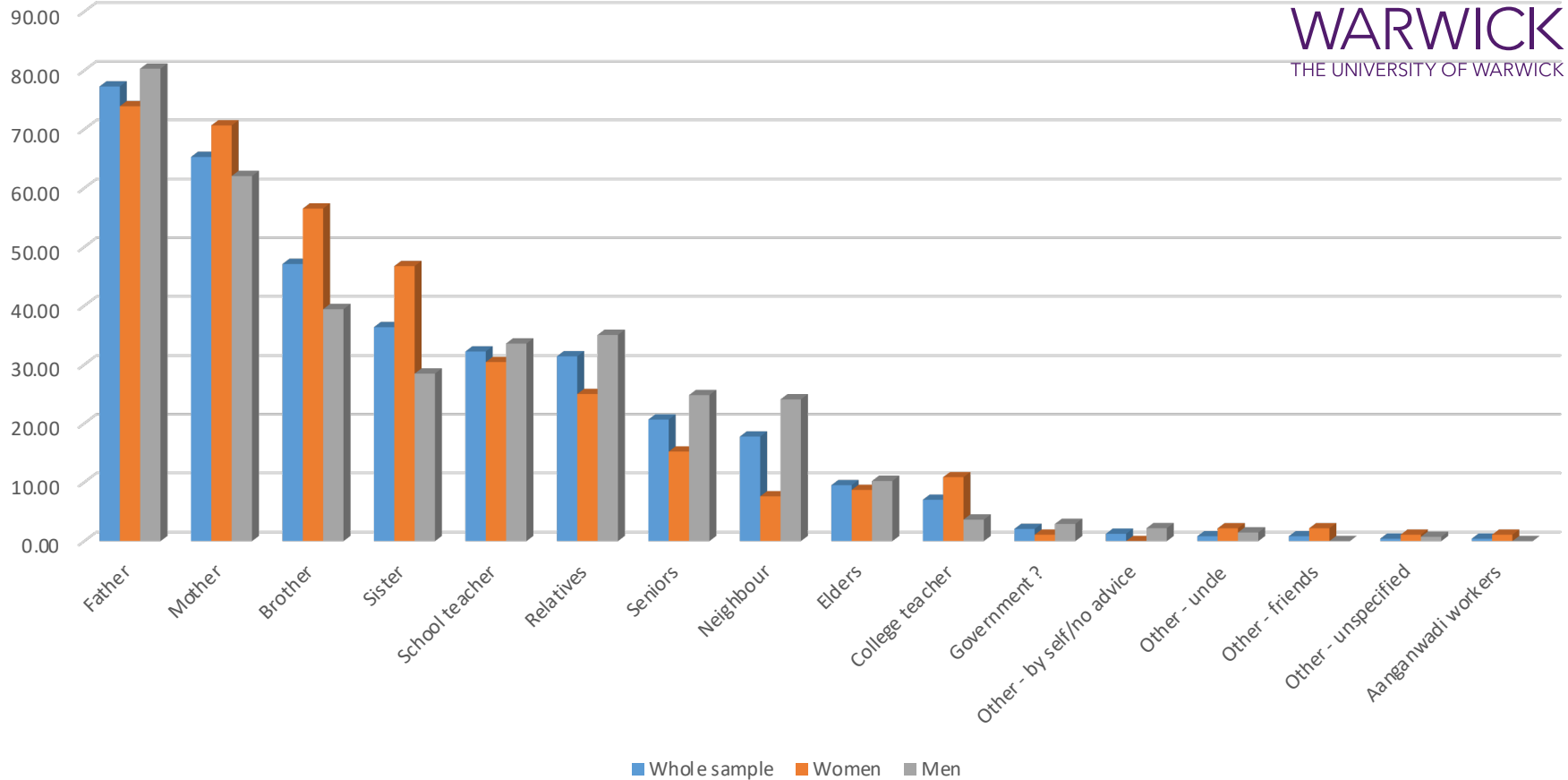


# Findings (Who is accessing HE – Distance and Commute)

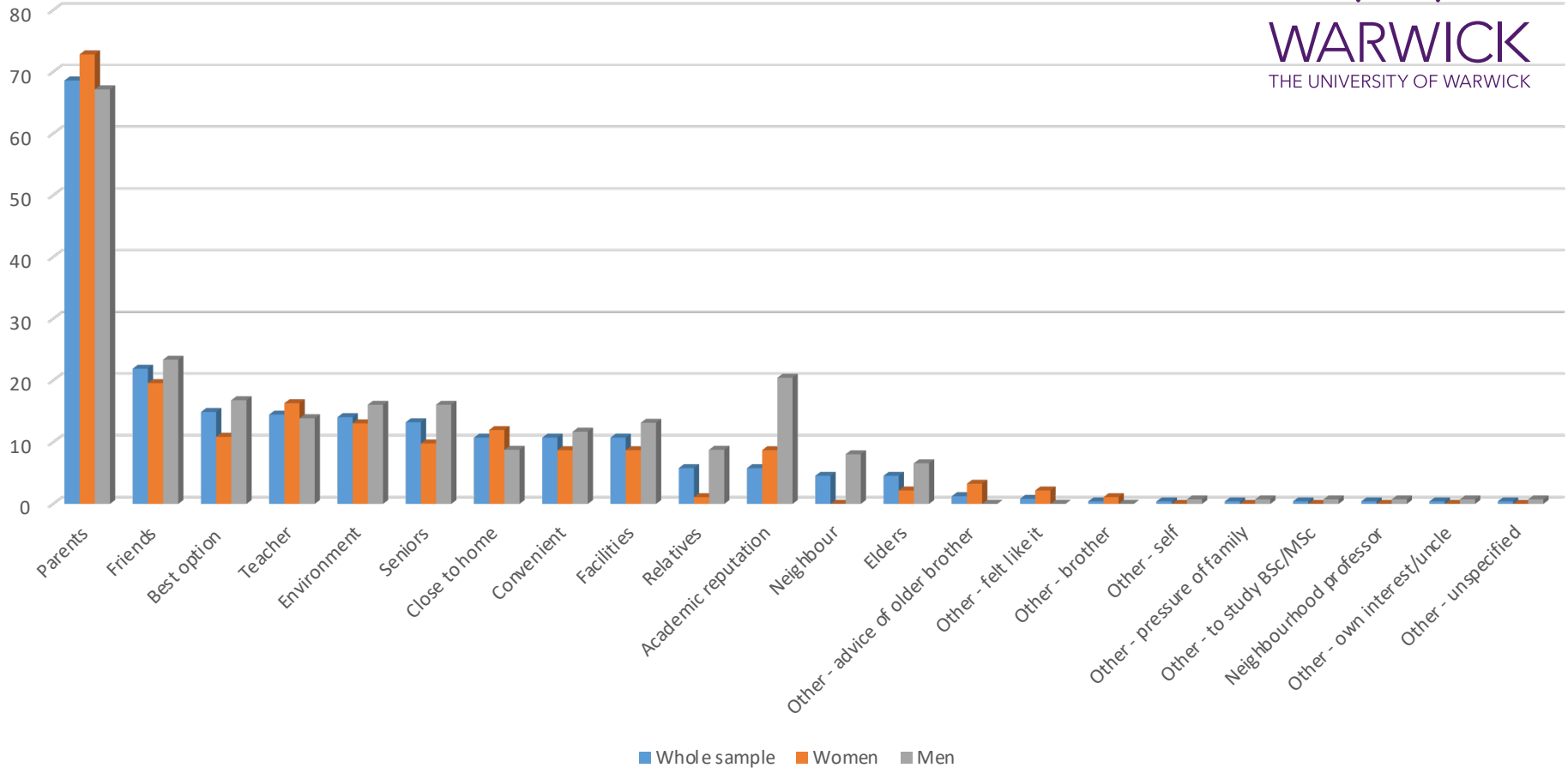
- 49 out of 126 respondents in Mahendargarh and 41 out of 118 respondents in Sonipat are from the same town as the college.
- Walking and buses are two of the most popular means of travel between home and college for a majority of the respondents from both districts.



## Sources of advice for applying to higher education



# Why did you finally enrol in this college?



- Importance of family comes through strongly in the decision-making process, but not always as a useful or positive effect – limited quality of advice.
- Others also come through eg teachers but again the interviews do not show teachers being particularly helpful
- Choice of college may be a subtle and complex process, influenced by familiarity with a particular college
- Applicants are often engaging in complex decision-making processes which may involve several stages – students have at times already taken other qualifications and college is the next step.
- Gender is appearing in the quantitative data as an important factor, eg in duration of commute – and this is backed up with interview data.
- However binarised and deterministic versions of gender are countered by the data where eg. (S, F1) states that it is her dream to be her parents' son.
- Finally the participants mobilise societal discourses about gender which can be read as a backdrop of norms to their own decision-making process.

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