Philipps Universität Marburg

Discussion

“Education and the allocation of time of Iranian women” (Salehi-Isfahani & Taghvatalab)

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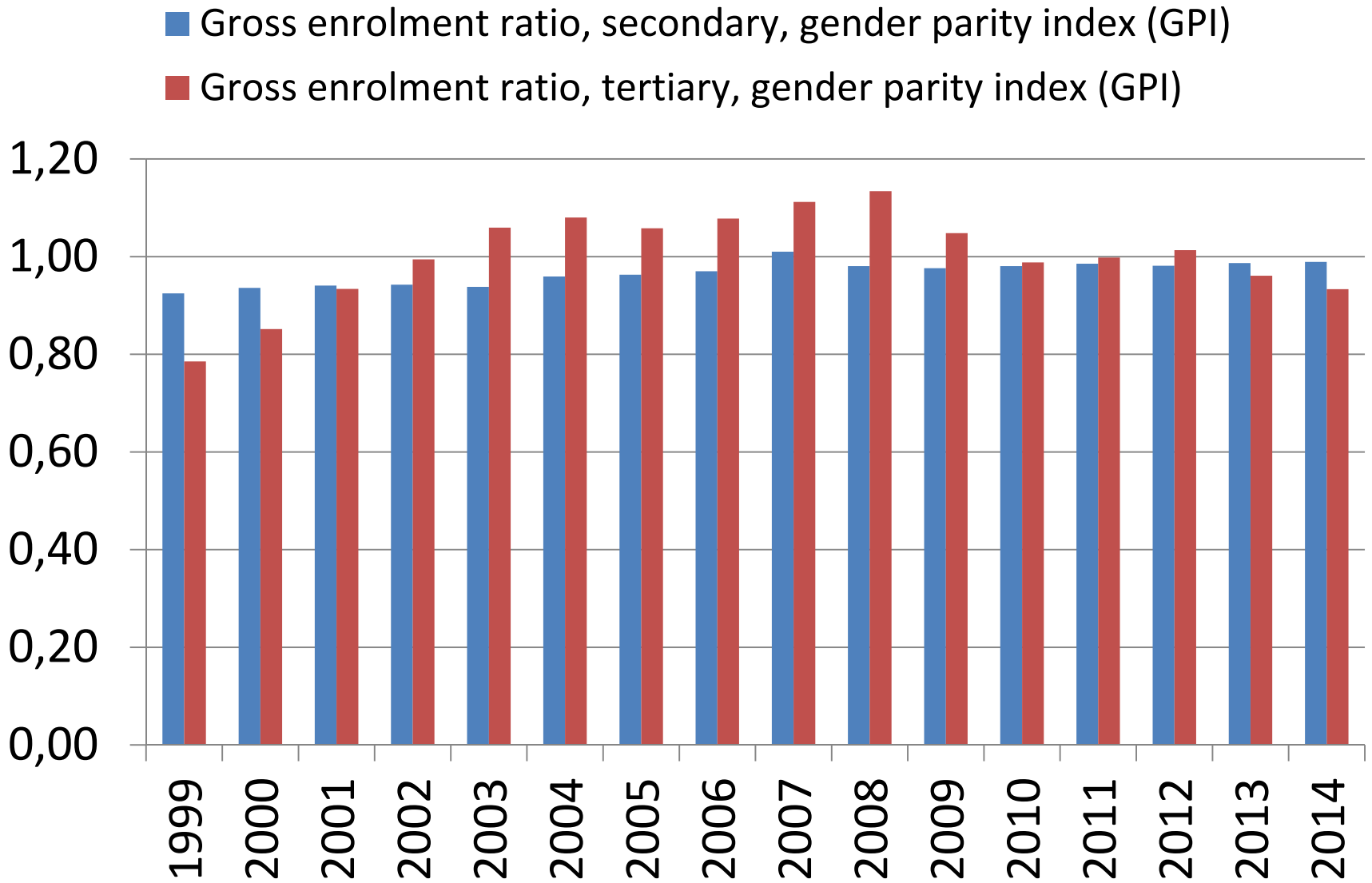
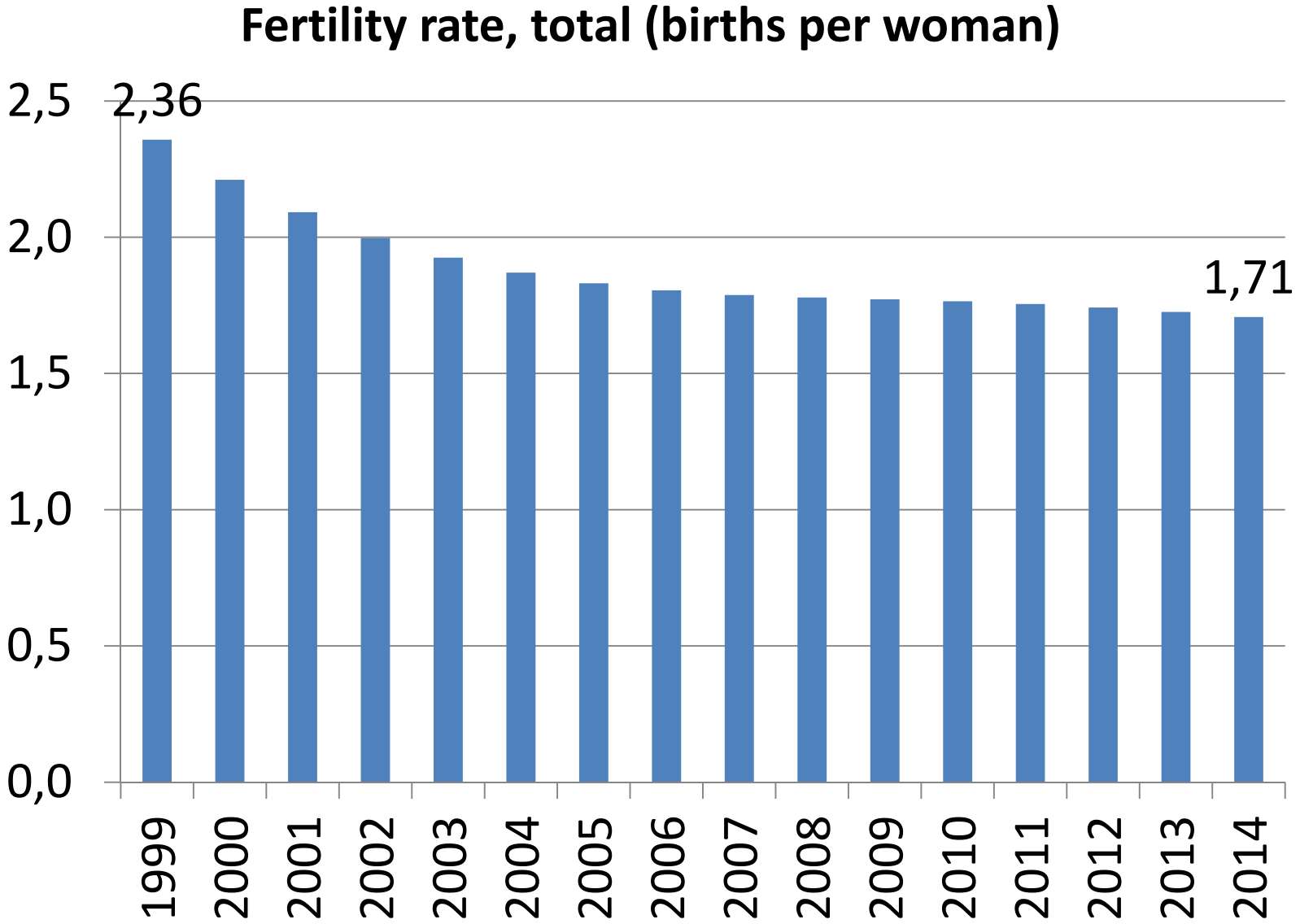
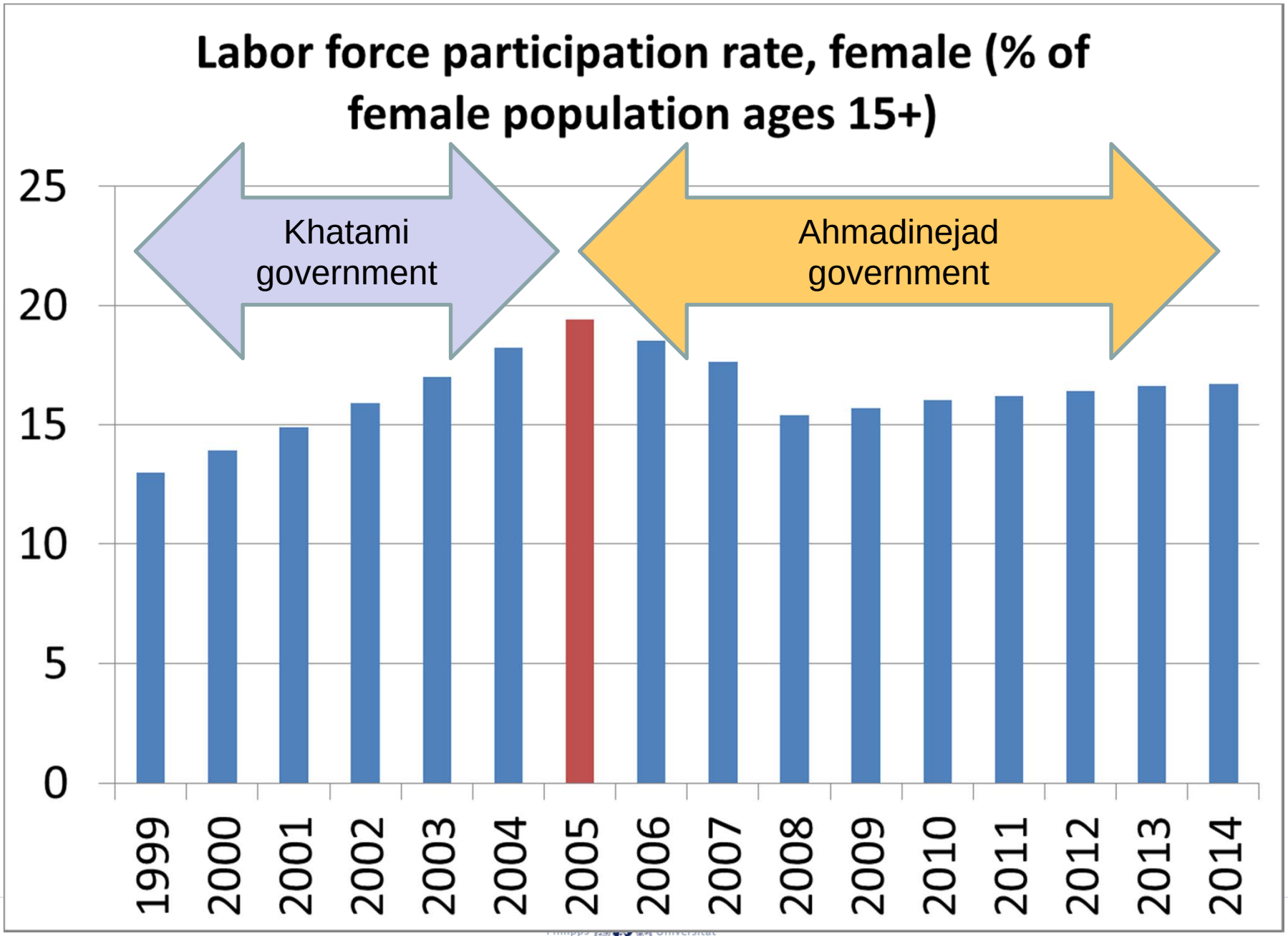
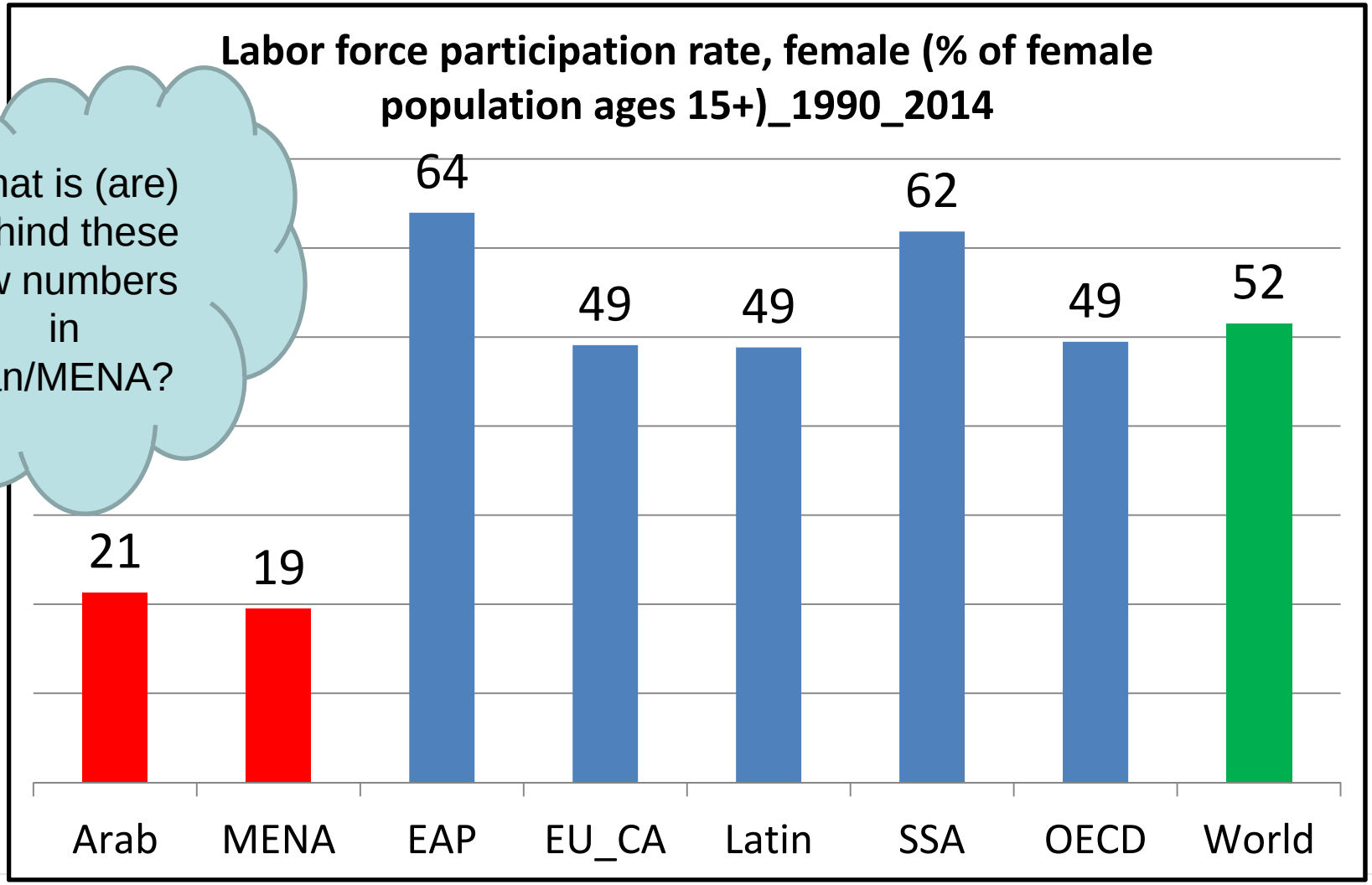
Gender parity index for gross enrollment ratio in tertiary education is the ratio of women to men enrolled at tertiary level in public and private schools.




Fertility rate, total (births per woman)
2,5
2,0
1,5
1,0
0,5
0,0
2,36
1,71
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014


Labor force participation rate, female (% of female population ages 15+)
Khatami government
Ahmadinejad government
25
20
15
10
5
0
1999
2000
2001
2002
2003
2004
2005
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014

and the whole MENA/Arab region is not that better!



Source: WDI (2016)

Findings and few comments

- Increasing women education in Iran have less reflection in their LFP, since **they use part of these increased education in educating their children** (time allocation form outside to inside)
- Probably this is due to **diminishing return on education**.
- But in **Iran**, wages and salaried may determined **administratively** and **diminishing return** to higher education **does not apply**.
- Authors suggest that even in such case, married women can increase their allocated time to both economic activity and children education by **reducing time allocated to leisure time**.

Q1: Increasing women education, when returns to schooling is convex (like in Iran), may increase time at job market and leisure time by reducing time on education of children by married woman: **Outsourcing education of children: private classes and tutors….**

Findings and few comments

Table 4: Time allocation of married women to childcare, child education, housework, and market work in week days

	Childcare	Child education	Domestic	Market
Mother's education				
Primary or middle school	0.037	0.024	0.195	-0.039
	(0.053)	(0.026)	(0.102)	(0.088)
High school	0.219**	0.128**	-0.175	0.181
	(0.067)	(0.032)	(0.128)	(0.110)
Associate degree	0.165*	0.174**	-0.612**	0.703**
	(0.080)	(0.039)	(0.155)	(0.133)
College or above	0.220*	0.068	-1.352**	1.982**
	(0.090)	(0.043)	(0.173)	(0.148)

Q2: College or above schooling does not show a significant effect on **child education** but positive effect on LFP.

Why at the country level we are not observing an improvement in LFP of women despite this finding?

Findings and few comments

Q3: In regressions, the effect of mothers education on their allocated time to *Childcare/ Child education/ Domestic/ and Market* is assumed to be constant at all levels of family wealth level.
Is this a plausible assumption?

- The final effect of mother education on different categories may depend very much on the household wealth.
- A married woman with some educational degrees who also enjoys a high degree of wealth by her own/parents or her husband may have less pressure for outside job, tending to spend more time on children!

Findings and few comments

- Another example:
- Final effect of mother education on allocated time to outside of home, child education etc may depend much on the age of children.
- **Age of children has been controlled but effect of mother education is not assumed to depend on it.**

The most common concerns in cross-section data (as in this study) are heteroskedasticity or spatial correlation (e.g. child education allocated time in in household A affects the same ting in household B), but both are easily corrected for with the robust and cluster options…

In results I see ordinary SE. Is it possible to use robust SE in SUR?

Findings and few comments

- SUR is appropriate when all the right-hand side regressors are assumed to be exogenous..
- **To what extent the erogeneity of RHS is investigated? For example wealth index of family may be a function of working or not working of wife/husband.**

Also, may be hard to control in this analysis but relevant for initial concern (low LFP of women):

Role of formal and informal institutions (government policies, norms, religiosity…)

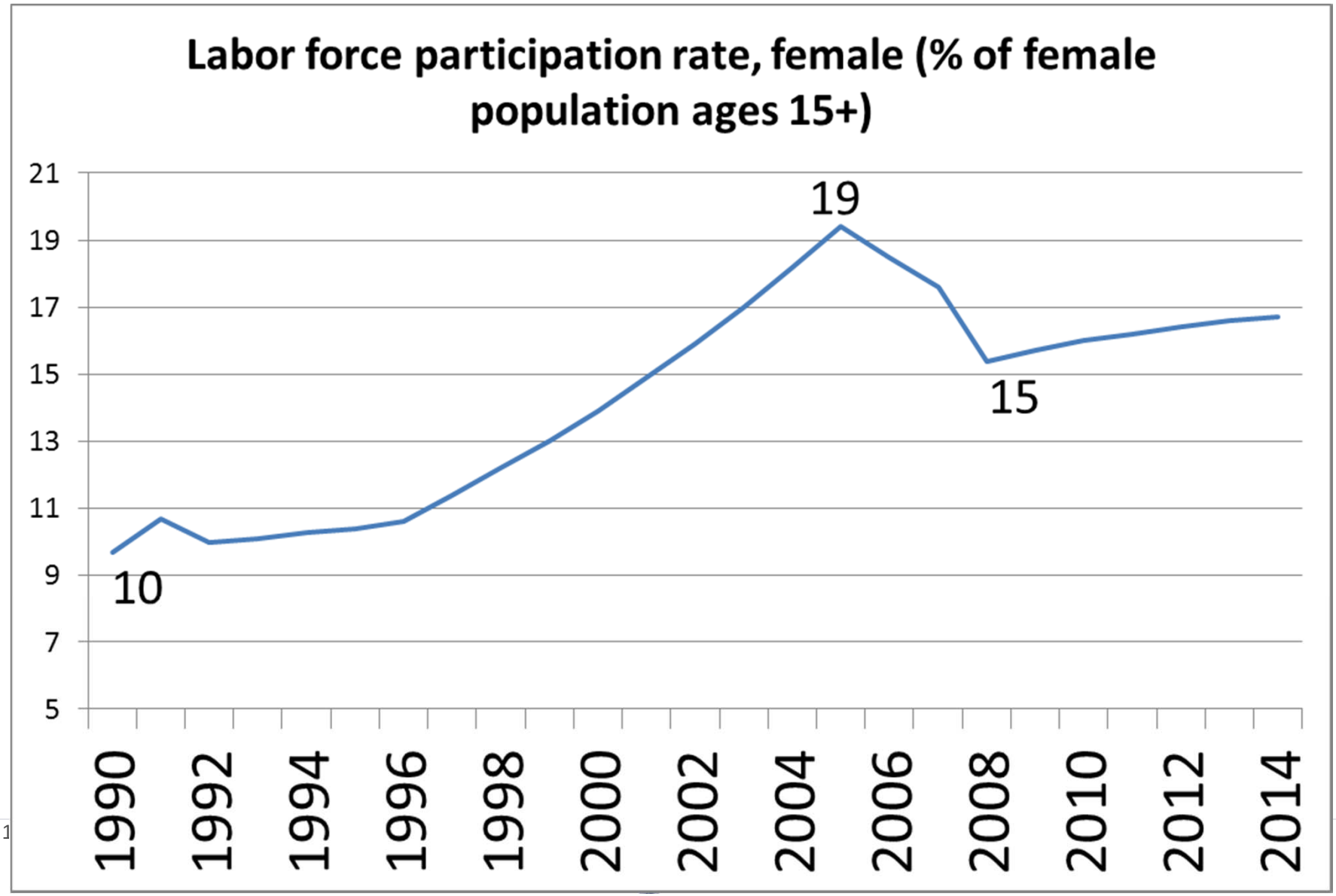
The Case of Iran

Beginning in the **mid-1990s**, **women** began to outnumber men **2:1** in universities by receiving higher scores in entrance exams.

This ratio led the **Iran's Majles** (the Iranian parliament, also known as the Islamic Consultative Assembly) to implement **a 60:40 affirmative quota for men**, and quite **a few schools even began rejecting women** in certain disciplines—some in science and engineering

Source: Chamlou (2016)

The Case of Iran



The Case of Iran

Among those women who are included in the active workforce, **unemployment is as high as 20 percent—nearly double the male unemployment rate**

Among employed women, one in five (20%) is a **family worker** (compared with only **2.5% of men**); about **24 percent are self-employed**, and only 56 percent are wage and salary workers (ILO, 2016).

The **male-female participation gap**, which is a measure of level playing field, is wide in absolute terms and in comparison with many other countries.

The Case of Iran

b) Legal barriers

- the ***Women, Business and the Law 2016*** (World Bank Group, 2015), which monitors the number and kind of gender-based legal barriers globally, reports that the **Iranian legal framework** imposes an **additional 23 specific and significant gender-based legal differences** that disadvantage women over and above the considerable difficulties men already face on a day-to-day basis

it places **Iran as having the third highest number of economic barriers for women**, even among Muslim-majority countries

The Case of Iran as an Islamic Country

b) Government policies

- For instance, women or their husbands **received cash incentives** if women were to quit their jobs;
- **working conditions were made difficult** for married women; and
- **employers were overburdened** with female-protective laws that discouraged hiring women (Moghadam, 2001).

In **2015**, the government announced that **between 2009 and 2014**, the **actual number of women in the workforce** declined from **3.7 million** to **3.145 million**—a yearly decline of 100,000 women who left the job market and were not replaced (Taghato, 20015).

The Case of Iran as an Islamic Country

b) Government policies

- The **decrease in the absolute number of female workers** in relation to **a rising share of 15-64 age cohort in the total population** (as Iran has a young population structure) **is one explanation** of a declining female labor force participation in Iran, which is among the lowest in the world

For those still economically active, **unemployment rate jumped from 16.8 to 19.8 percent between 2009 and 2013** when **male unemployment declined** from 19.8 to 8.6 percent (ILO, 2015) .