

confronting the challenge: why is India different?

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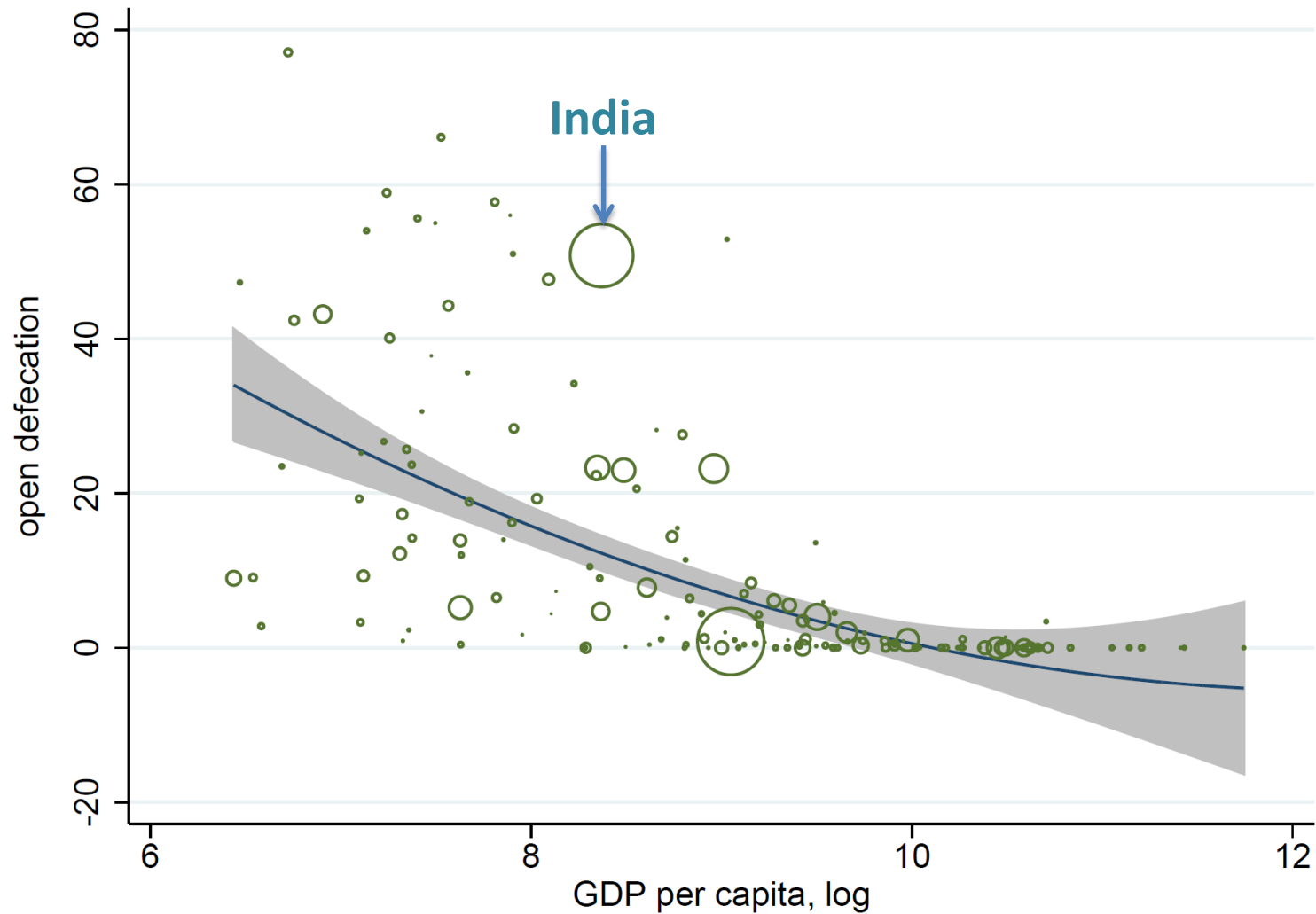




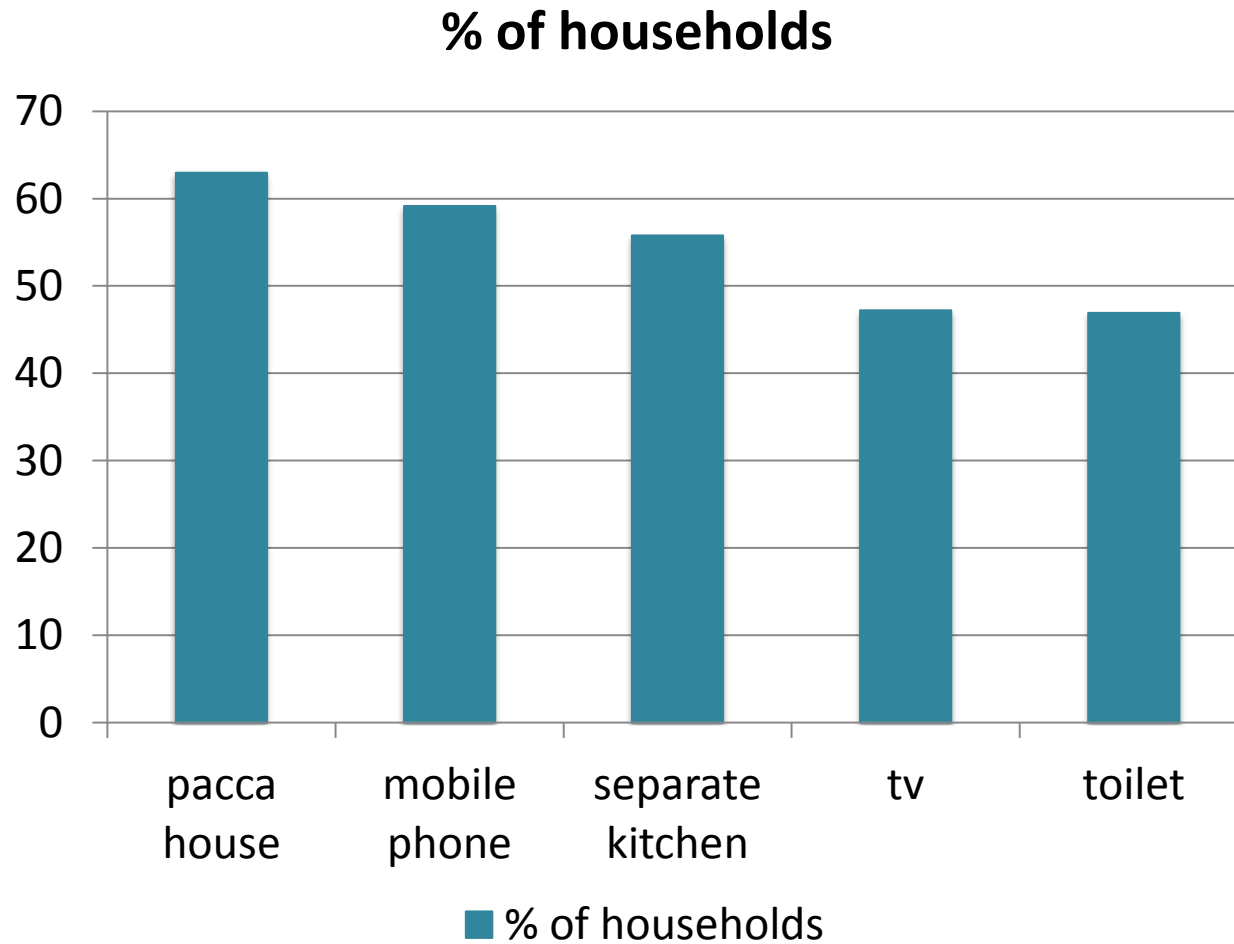
what have we already learned about sanitation in India?

one: recap: it's not about income or access

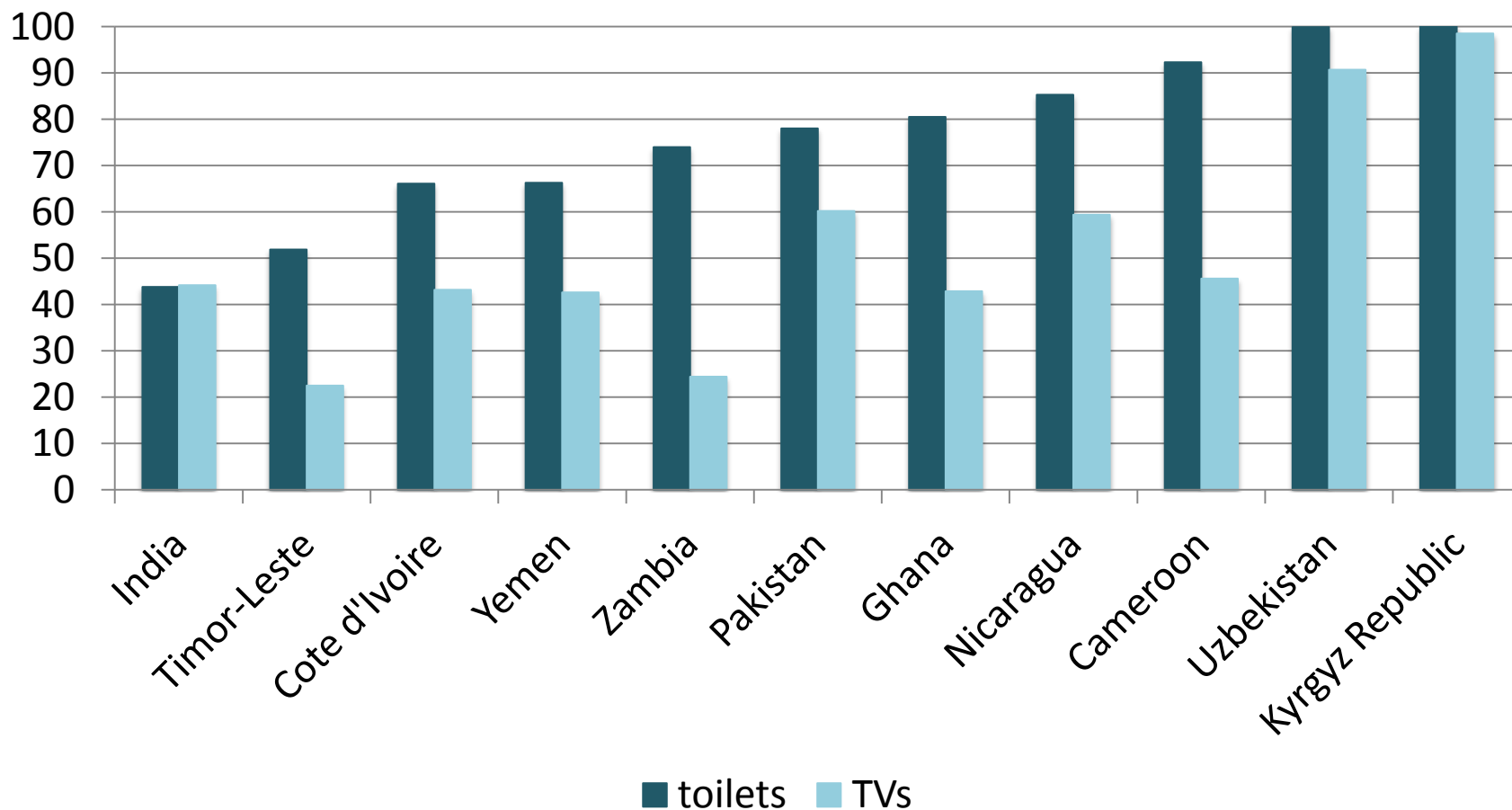
it's not about income



more TVs than toilets in India



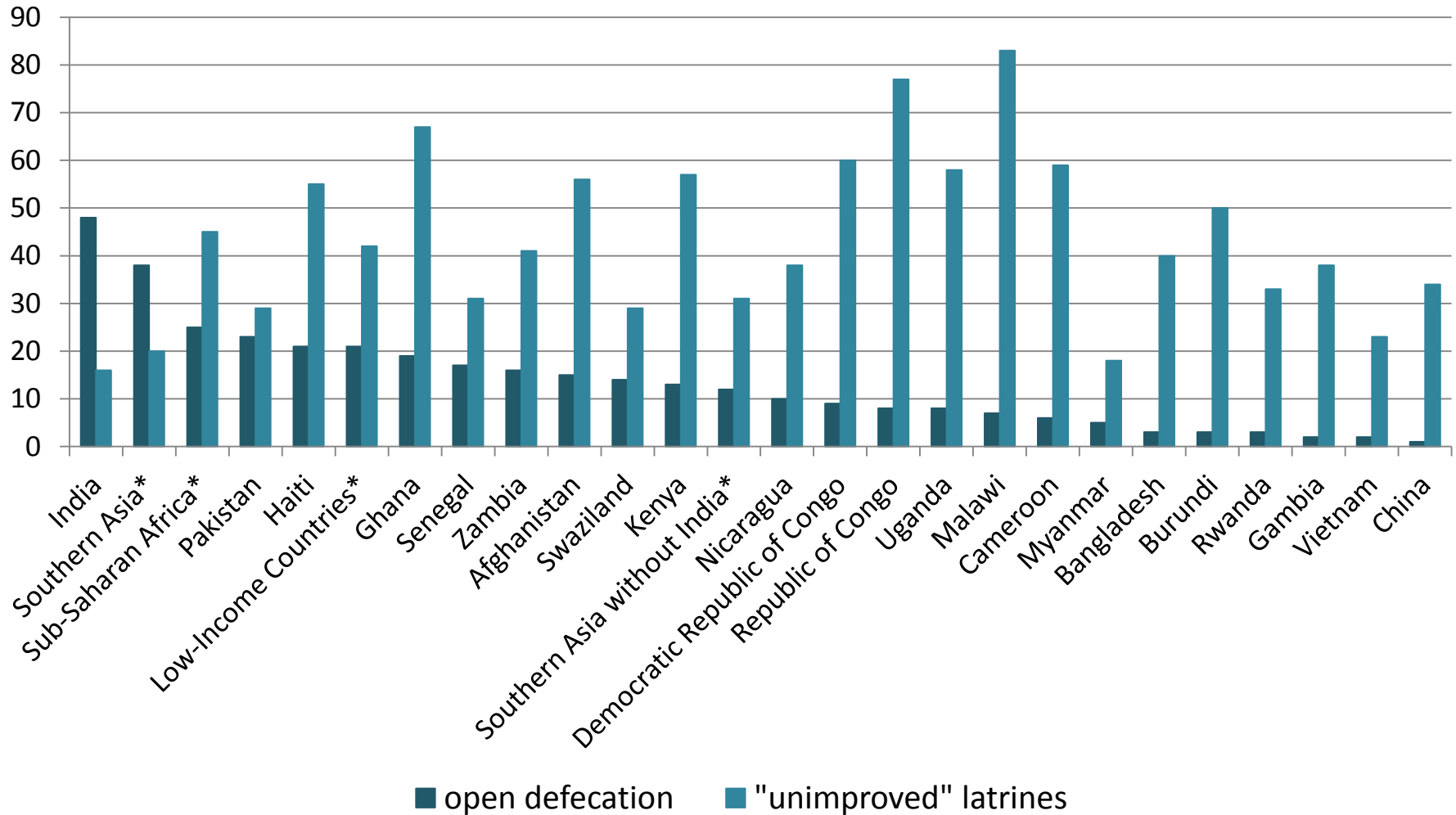
in other countries it's the opposite



country	gdp/capita (current us\$)
Uzbekistan	1,878
Nicaragua	1,851
Ghana	1,850
Zambia	1,540
Cote d'Ivoire	1,521
India	1,499
Yemen	1,473
Timor-Leste	1,371
Cameroon	1,315
Pakistan	1,299
Kyrgyz Republic	1,263

how did I pick
these countries?

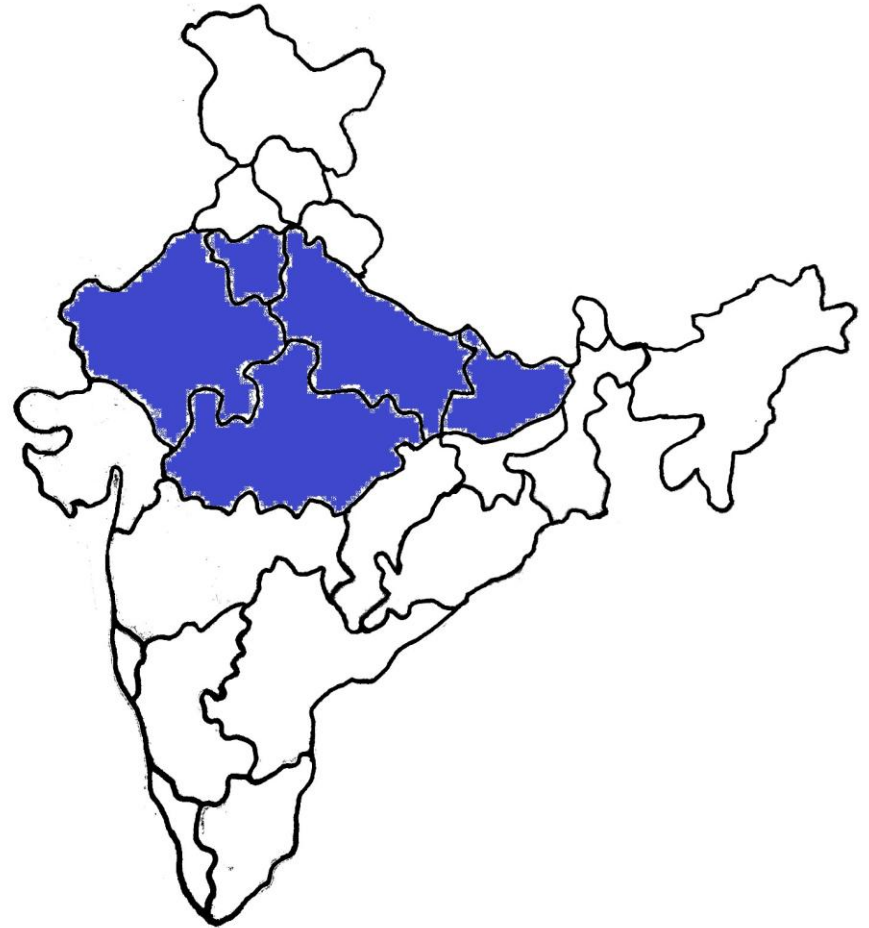
Indians do not use simple latrines



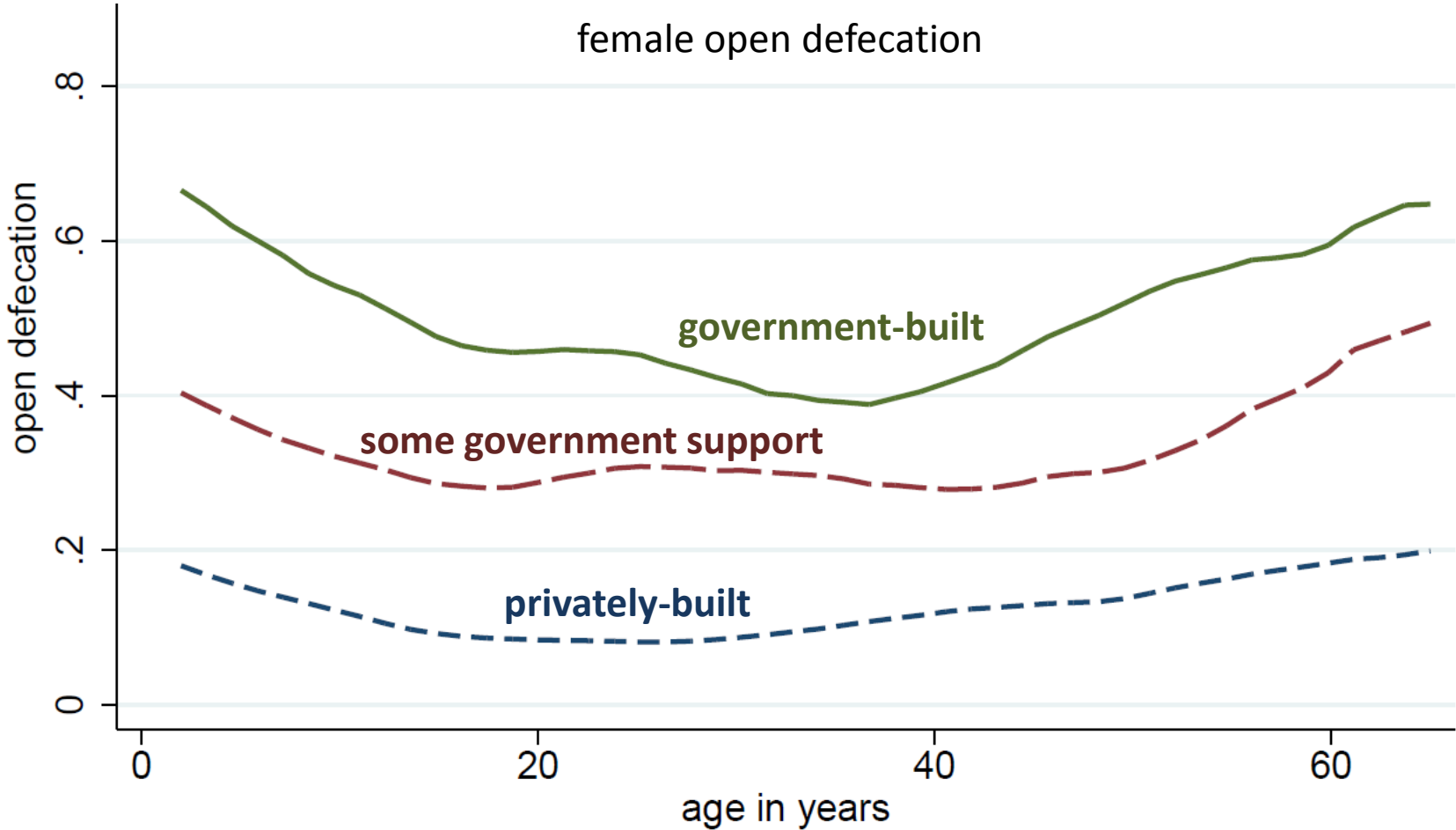
SQUAT Survey: five states one-third of global open defecation

rural Bihar, Haryana,
Madhya Pradesh,
Rajasthan, and
Uttar Pradesh

13 districts
3,200 households
22,000 individuals



open defecation despite having a latrine



India is different

survey of sanitation attitudes and beliefs shows
that it has to do with notions of
purity and pollution



why is India different?

five: beliefs and culture

purity, pollution, and caste

- concepts of purity and pollution often govern behavior
- people are born into a particular caste
- caste governs how people interact with each other
- castes are hierarchically ranked, with people from the highest caste considered to be the purest

“...corpus of beliefs concerning purity and pollution which I shall label herein the **Hindu Pollution Concept**...They define most of the gradations of ritual status between and within caste groups...”

-HNC Stevenson (1953)

feces are polluting

- people in the lowest caste – untouchables – are responsible for handling human waste and other things that are considered “dirty” in Indian society
- untouchables are considered polluted because of their contact with human waste
- people in higher castes consider contact with untouchables to be polluting

“In India...**the handling of human waste is taboo** for many Hindus and has been traditionally designated as a job for so-called **‘Untouchable’** or **‘sweeper’ communities** that have responsibility, under India’s caste system, for disposing of human excreta...the persistence of cultural norms relating to **notions of pollution and purity reinforces such practices.**”

- Jewitt (2011)

purity in public and private spheres

- people are more concerned about purity and pollution in their own homes and for their own bodies than in public spaces
- part of why it's not socially unacceptable to defecate in the open

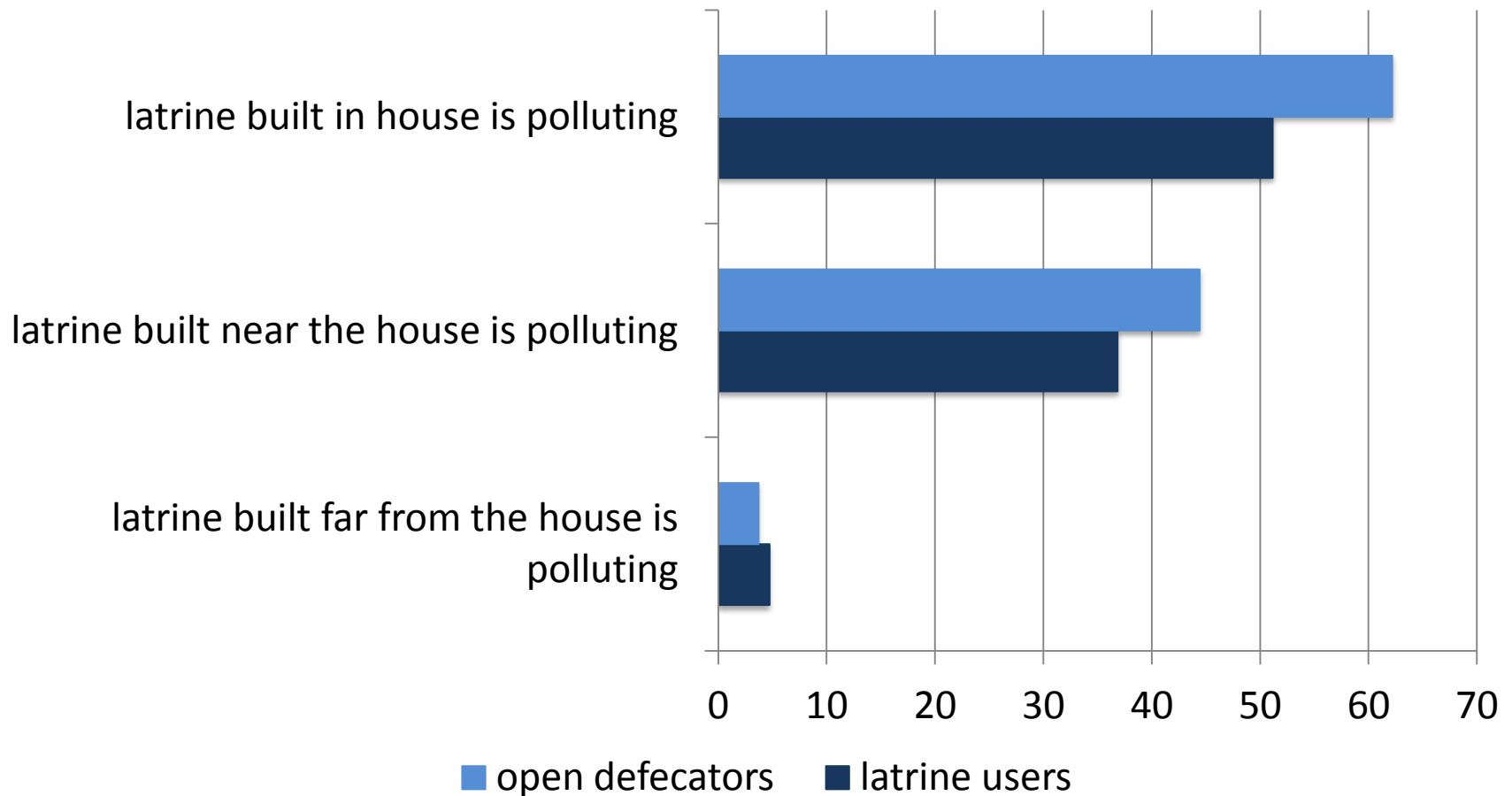
“once waste is pushed out of the physical boundary of the house, it then belongs to the ‘public’ . . . domain . . . and therefore, everybody is **entitled to dump rubbish or even defecate** in it.”

- Mukhopadhyay (2006)

SQUAT Survey questions

- Is a latrine **in** your house pure, polluting, or it doesn't matter?
- Is a latrine **near** your house pure, polluting, or it doesn't matter?
- Is a latrine **far from** your house pure, polluting, or it doesn't matter?

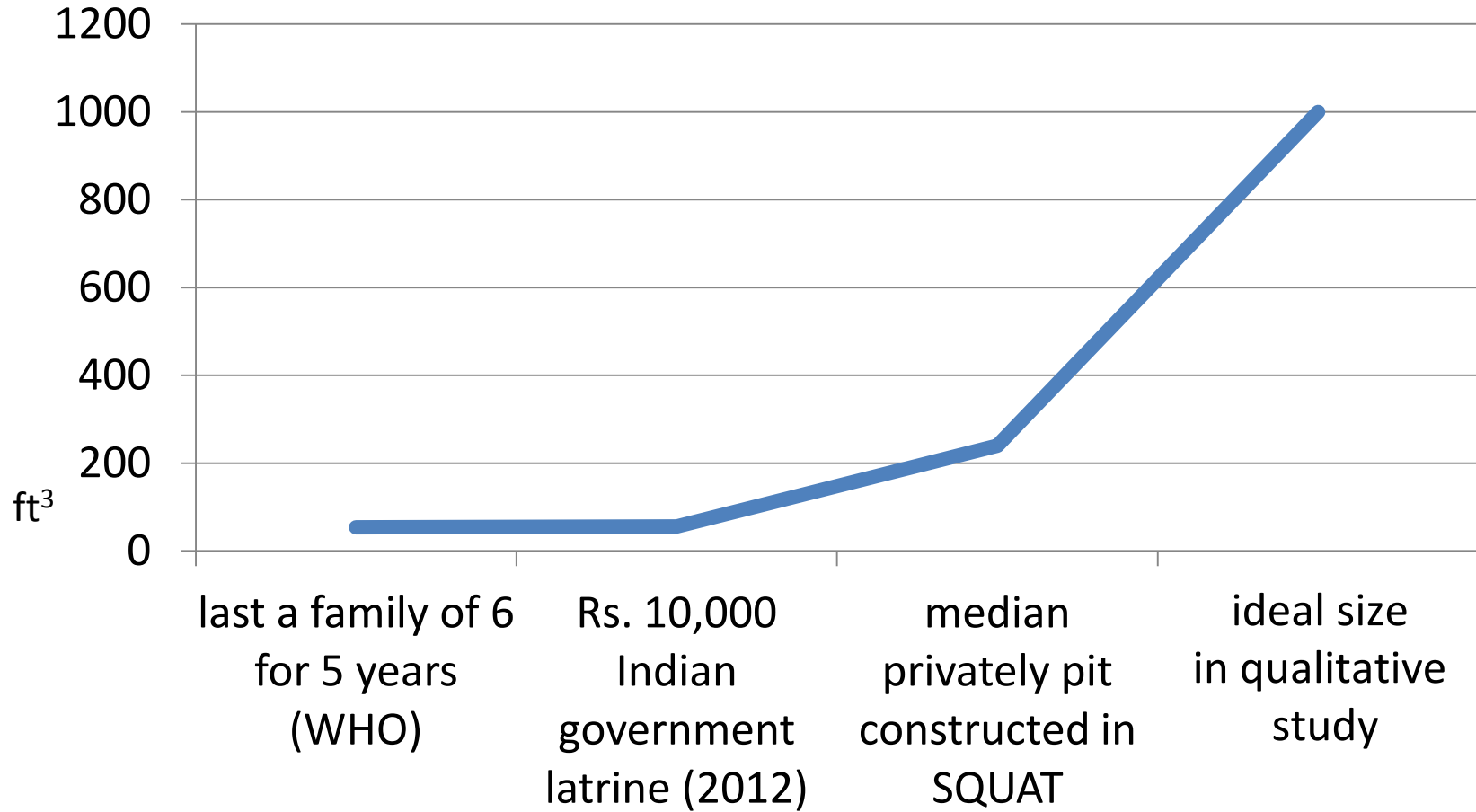
latrines in and near the home are considered **polluting**



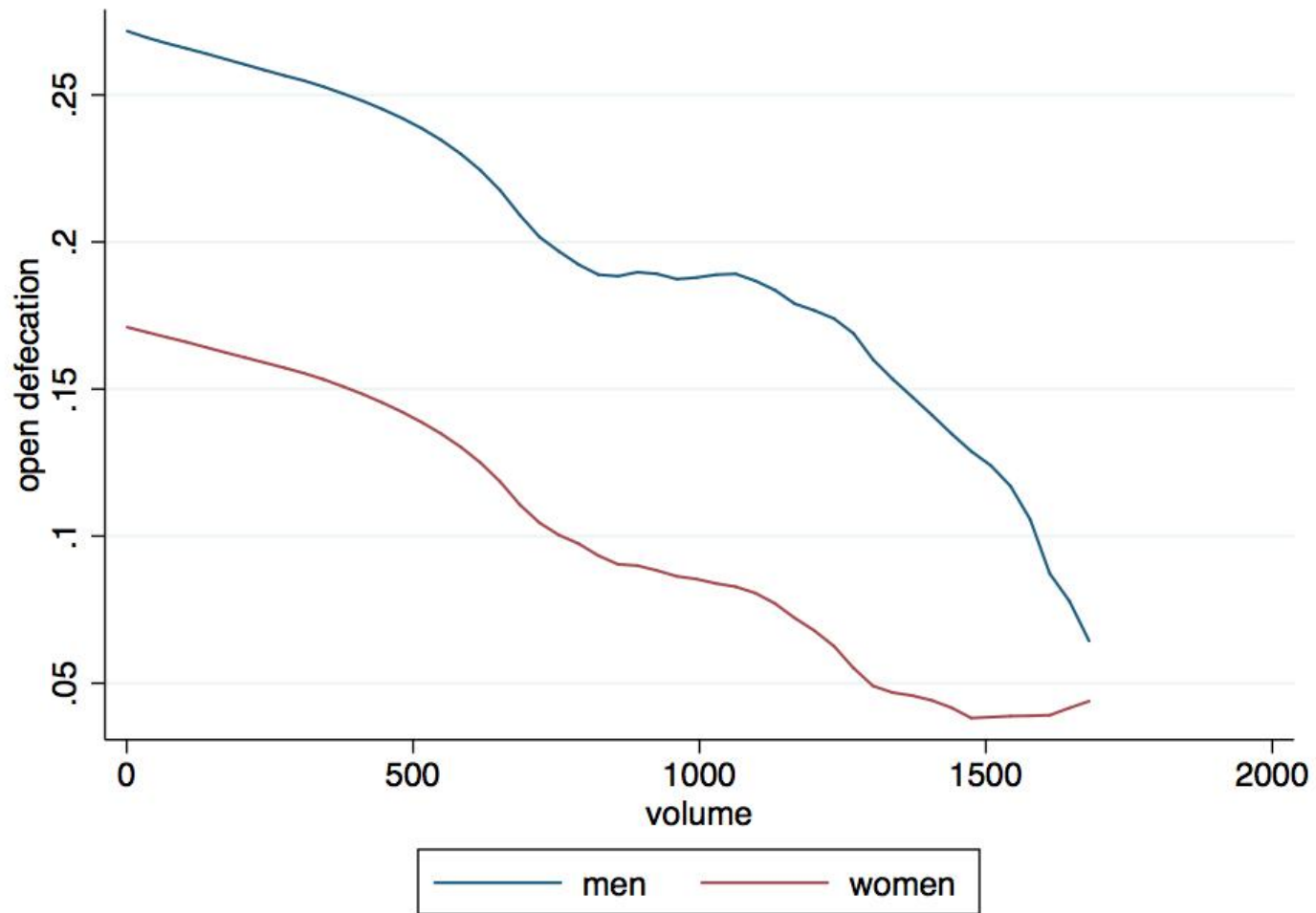
big pits help people avoid pollution

- the **minimum cost** of a latrine worth using is **Rs. 21,000 (\$350)**
- in many other places, people commonly use latrines costing **less than Rs. 5,000 (\$80)**

how big should a pit be?

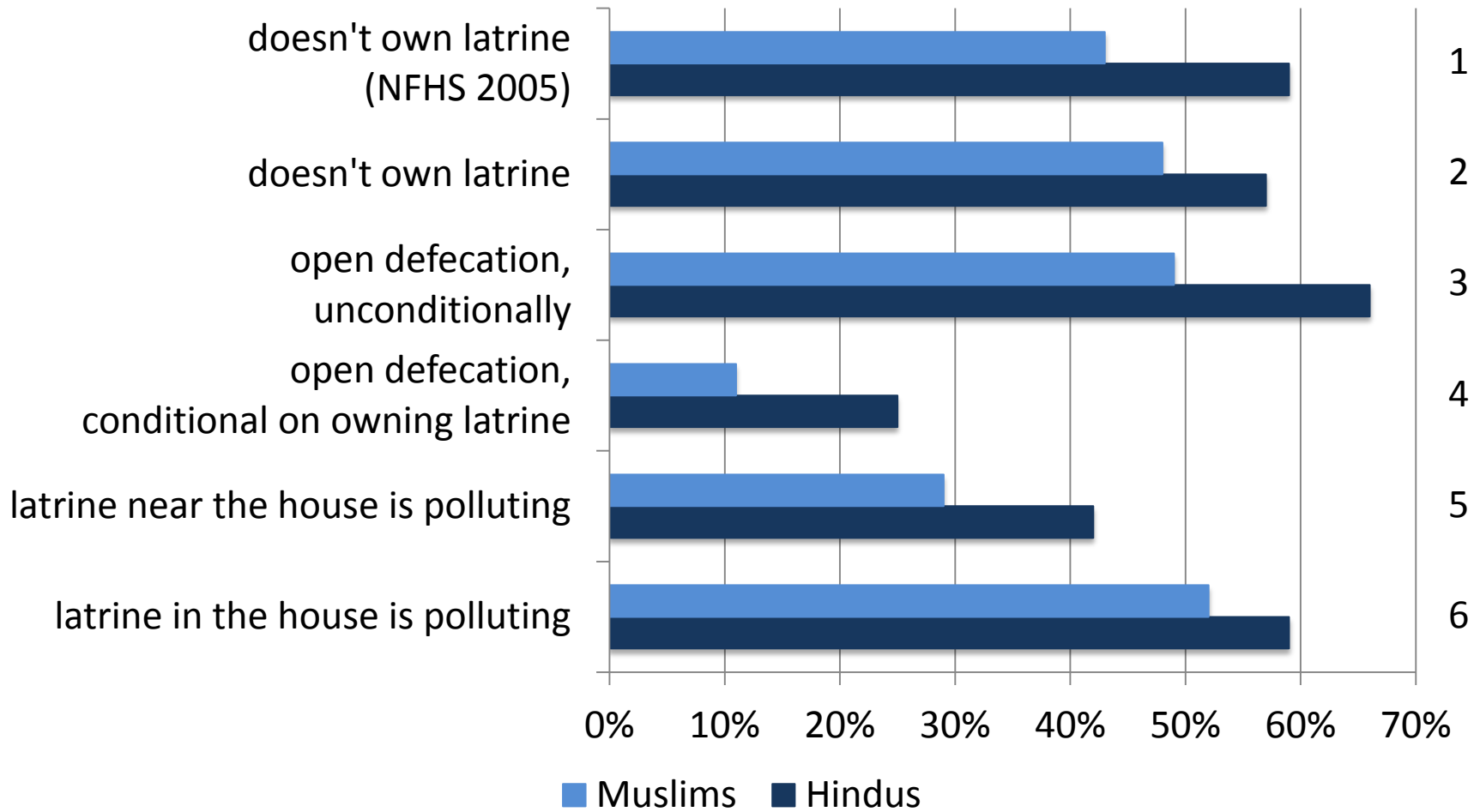


people go in the open less if they have a bigger pit

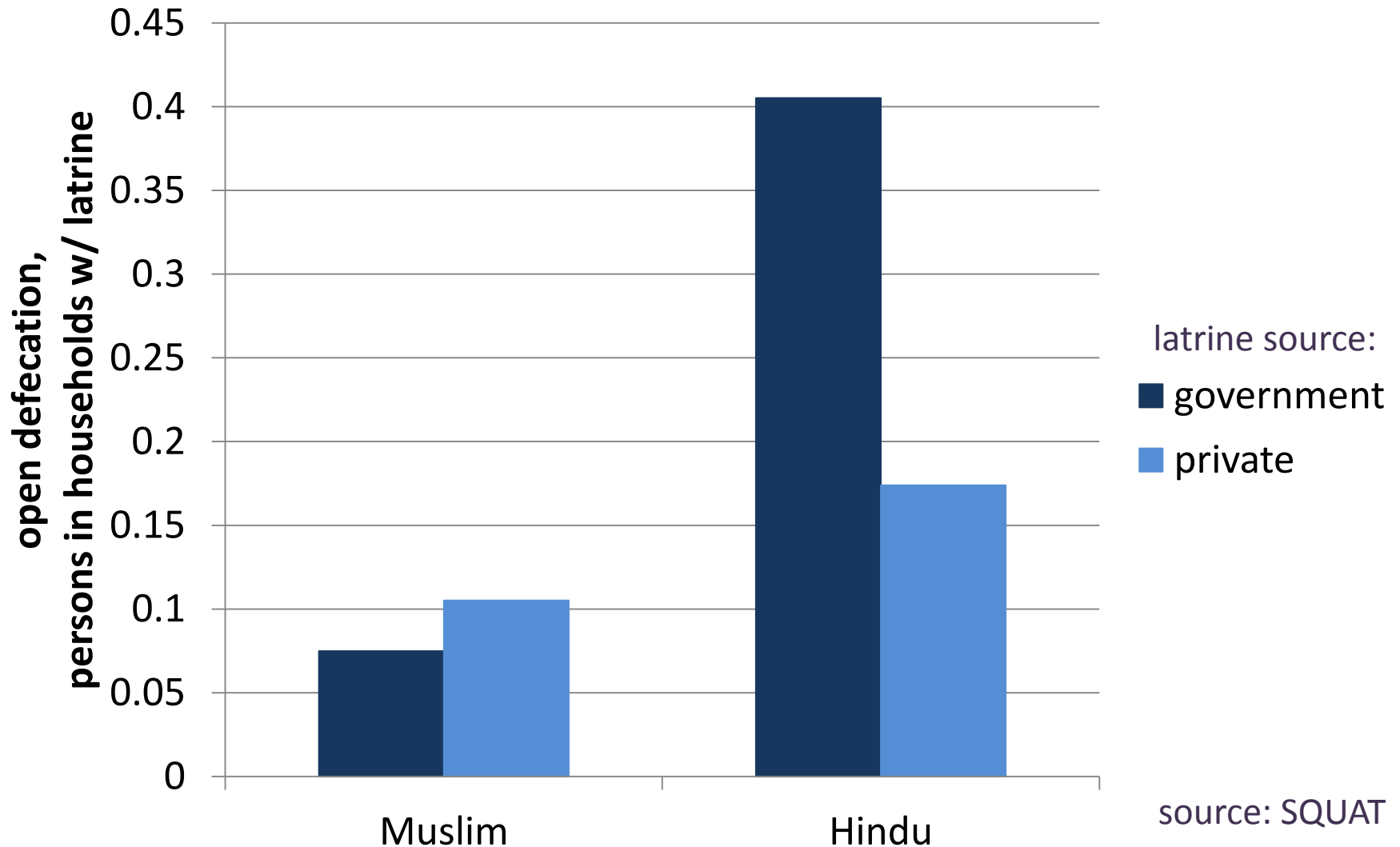


Hindu Pollution Concept

Muslims report and enact less aversion to latrines than Hindus



aversion to government latrines is concentrated among Hindus



Hindu concepts of **purity and pollution** could explain India's sanitation exceptionalism

this points to the role of **culture**