

Growth, Wellbeing and Gender Imbalance: Evidence from India

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Abstract

This paper revisits the issue of imbalanced gender ratio in the backdrop of the growth-health-poverty nexus which is widely documented in the literature. Based on the state level panel data from India the simultaneous equation model attempted in the study is indicative of the adverse impact of poor health condition on gender ratio, bringing out the gender inequality involved in the health status of the population. On the other hand, improvement in health services and health outcome can raise the survival of girl children and women, resulting in an increase in the overall gender ratio. Further, with higher gender ratio (decline in masculinisation) IMR is seen to decrease, suggesting the beneficial effect of greater presence of women in the population on survival of girl children especially. Declining gender ratio in the process of economic growth is discernible, implying that growth alone is not sufficient to curb gender inequality. Female labour force participation rate is seen to have favourable effects on gender ratio, indicating the wide range of social and economic implications of women's access to resources.