Decomposition & Determinants of Multidimensional Poverty by Gender

Souvik Mondal

Research Scholar, Mumbai School of Economics and Public Policy, University of Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Abstract:

This study examines gender disparities in multidimensional poverty across South Asian countries, focusing on India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Using an individual-level Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), the analysis reveals that women experience higher deprivation levels than men, particularly in India and Nepal. The key contributors to this disparity include deficits in education, health, and asset ownership, exacerbated by socio-cultural norms that limit women's access to resources and opportunities. The Oaxaca decomposition method highlights that differences in endowments, such as education and household characteristics, primarily drive these gender gaps. While Pakistan and Indonesia exhibit relatively lower gender disparities in MPI, India, Bangladesh, and Nepal demonstrate persistent inequalities, with women facing systemic disadvantages in nutrition, school attendance, and economic participation. The findings emphasize the need for gender-sensitive poverty reduction policies, including improved access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for women. Addressing these disparities is crucial for achieving equitable development and sustainable poverty alleviation in South Asia.

Keywords:

Gender disparities, Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), Oaxaca decomposition, South Asia.