BOOK REVIEWS

In Search of Gendered Development: A Compendium, Kaiser Bengali (Ed)., Time Press, Social Policy and Development Centre, Karachi, pp.298, ISBN 978-969-8407-16-2.

Most of the empirical analysis on gender development are related to understand the effect of economic policies and interventions with economic growth of a country and are focused on financial development, globalization, corporate debt and environmental degradation. The related literature in this area covers very little empirical investigation to examine impact of these policies and interventions on the gender related issues present at national and household level.

The book highlights various dimensions of an important issue of our contemporaneous society which has hitherto received little attention in arena of the empirical studies, particularly for Pakistan. The book is a significant addition to the relevant literature by making the point that intensity of impact emerging from economic policies and reforms is totally different by gender differences. Furthermore, the gender inequality in the developing world, in general, and Pakistan in particular, augment additional problems which may fall disproportionately on structurally disempowered and marginalized groups of the society.

The first chapter provides the readers with a gendered based characterization of the head of households with particular reference to Pakistan. Since social composition of households changes with the change in social, culture, technological and economic relationship at local as well as global level; therefore, to empower female citizens of the country, the socio-economic characteristics of household headship is important to understand the level and improvements achieved by the Pakistan's society. Such analysis is also important to check the socio-economic vulnerabilities of Female Heads of Household (FHH), in particular, to close the gender gap in education and expansion of enrollment of girls and women at all levels. With such information, public awareness campaign could be designed to sensitize population with regard to the concerned issues of FHHs.

Chapter 2 gives an analytical framework for understanding as to how the public expenditure on education and health can affect population which has significant gender dimensions. Such analytical tools provide the share of benefits accrued by different groups from the public expenditure by gender. These insights are important to formulate gender sensitive and regional specific policies for Education and Health to reduce the incidence of "Feminization of Poverty".

Chapter 3 draws attention on research as to how the structure of labor market in a country is important to determine the way through which trade liberalization improve competitiveness of domestic producers which ultimately have significant impact on the demand and supply of labor. Such employment effects may change female employment level. Intensity of change depends where women are involved in the process of production. Empirical models are estimated to provide relative importance of various socio-economic factors including trade liberalization for Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR). Though trade liberalization appeared to be an important factor for enhancement of the FLFPR but population growth in terms of female working-age appear to be the most significant and have much greater impact on FLFPR. Thus, it is concluded that, both female educational achievement level and growth of female population in an economy could be important factors to raise probability of higher FLFPR. The study recommends, firstly, the need for a national strategy for sustainable macroeconomic growth, and secondly, to design a mechanism for promotion of awareness of women's protection rights.

Chapter 4 presents the experience of authors to evaluate gender difference in terms of patterns, determinants and the extent of participation in the rural non-farm sector of Pakistan in diverse economic and ecological settings. The discussion emerges from the survey of about 1,200 rural households in all the four provinces of Pakistan; to evaluate the impact of economic crises on unemployment level of women and how such crises further aggravate their poverty. The emerging negative impact is a result due to constraints and obstacles present in the non-farm work participation, because of lack of female employment opportunities, due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of vocational training, lack of financial resources and bad economic governance. The authors also found the positive association between female non farm employment and their age and education. Major policy oriented measures which may increase opportunities of female non-farm employment, is to boost the size of a non-farm rural economy in terms of small cottage industry with the help of tax incentives and availability of micro-finance facility.

In Chapter 5, the authors draw their own experience from a survey of displaced and resettled affectees of the Lyari Express way (in Karachi), with par-

ticular emphasis on evaluation of welfare impact for female and minor members of the households. In developing countries like Pakistan, usually gender related aspects of welfare change have never been analyzed for such mega development projects, whereas, women and minor are the most vulnerable members of the society who bear relatively greater risk in terms of loss of welfare gain during reallocation and resettlement due to such mega development projects. To evaluate welfare gain for affectees the author apply the Improvement Risk and Reconstruction (IRR) model and founds that women bear much more loss of welfare as measured in terms of gain in education and health indicators; which appear to be much lower after resettlement when compared to the original situation. Further incidence of loss of income, in terms of higher transport cost for female members of the community is also relatively higher than their male counter parts. Consequently, it appears that net-social benefit of mega development projects remain at lower side until and unless the gendered based planning is incorporated in the feasibility analysis for these mega development projects.

In Chapter 6, a similar type of analysis has been carried out by the authors while evaluating the impact of natural disaster, like floods and earthquakes. Unfortunately, female members of the community appear to be greater looser in terms of loss of educational opportunities and higher incidence of malnourishment for themselves and the Fetus. After the disaster, incidence of miscarriage and still births were reported at a higher rate among the female survey respondents. This higher loss of human lives entails a greater need of multifacet planning for these vulnerabilities faced by women, even prior to such disaster.

In Chapter 7, the authors estimate the cost of violence against women (VAW). Such analysis is very much essential to estimate the pecuniary impact of VAW and without such indicators, policies and respective interventions cannot be prioritized for the implementation. Though, the authors estimated the direct and indirect pecuniary costs which resulted from VAW, but it failed to measure the net social cost of these heinous crimes. Because VAW is a crime which ultimately affect all members of the household and community; therefore, all such persons who are attached or not with the victim are, affected by VAW. Health and Cognitive ability, especially of those who are dependent on the victims is significantly deteriorated. These losses entail huge social cost both in terms of loss of life, degradation of quality of life and fall in income. Furthermore, these costs are not necessary to measure the cost of preventive intervention – social and administrative – must be considered while measuring the cost of VAW. Without such measures huge flaw remain in estimation of the cost of VAW. This may lead to weak and inappropriate planning framework for the eradication of VAW.

Chapter 8 discusses the existing legal framework for the protections of women rights. It also highlights the flaws in the existing legislations. This chapter concludes by recommending various steps to improve the existing legislation through incorporating the cause and consequences of all types of VAW. For this the authors suggest to learn lesson from other countries which face such issues.

The book is a compilation of research reports, occasionally published by the SPDC. The editor and the authors have presented academic and deeply insightful readings based on field research into simple yet informative manner. The authors have attempted to document the experience of women in various regions of Pakistan. However, it would have been more appropriate if some case studies and experience of some women who are involved in multiple livelihood experience were included in the book.

The book is an important reading substance for those involved and interested in the research of gender related issues with respect to multiple socio economic paradigm. It is equally suitable for policymakers, academicians and NGOs who wish to learn, understand and widen the scope of gender issues in Pakistan. The book is also important for those who are deeply concerned with formulation of an appropriate framework and solution for violence against women in Pakistan.

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