

# Gendered Heterogeneity in wellbeing: A state level analysis of India

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## **Abstract:**

In the complex mosaic of societal structures, the intersectionality of gender and well-being unfolds as a nuanced narrative, weaving together the diverse experiences of individuals within the broader fabric of a nation. This study, titled "Gendered Heterogeneities in Well-being: A State-level Analysis of India," seeks to delve into the intricate dynamics that shape the well-being of individuals through a gendered lens, discerning variations across different states of India. This study inquiries into the gendered dimensions of well-being across Indian states, utilizing Sen's Capability approach to shift the focus from income-centric metrics to a functioning-based assessment. With a dearth of empirical evidence within this framework, especially regarding gender, the research aims to address this gap and offer insights into the well-being of men and women. The study encompasses all Indian states, incorporating Delhi, and draws data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS 5) for well-being proxies and the National Statistical Office for per capita NSDP (2019-21). The methodological approach involves selecting indicators, converting them into binary variables, and constructing an overall well-being index through factor analysis. The findings showcase an overall improvement in well-being for women; however, persistent gender disparities reveal women lagging behind their male counterparts. Despite states like Gujarat exhibiting high per capita NSDP, the well-being scores for both genders are subpar in comparison to other regions. Income's positive role in overall well-being is evident, but its significance diminishes for women, emphasizing the need for a gender-specific approach. Regression results underscore the impactful role of gender, age, residence, caste, religion, household size, and the sex of the household on well-being. Women, particularly in rural areas, face a disadvantageous position. Therefore, a gender-focused well-being analysis becomes imperative to rectify the unequal relationship between women and men, aiming to alleviate the pronounced disadvantages experienced by women and girls. Importantly, the study reveals that income and consumption, while crucial, only provide a rudimentary measure of quality of life. A holistic assessment must consider health, longevity, knowledge, education, social relations, autonomy, and subjective feelings for a comprehensive understanding of the standard of living.

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