

**Economics  
Seminar  
Series  
2019**



**SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF ECONOMICS**

**Seminar**

***Trajectory of gender disparity in health across life course:  
The case of Indian Women***

***Dr Nandita Saikia  
CSR, Jawaharlal Nehru University  
Delhi***

**Date:** September 05, 2019  
(Thursday)  
**Time:** 2:30 p.m.  
**Venue:** Multipurpose Hall, Mezzanine Floor  
Akbar Bhawan, Satya Marg,  
Chanakypuri, New Delhi

**All are Welcome**

---

**ABSTRACT**

In this talk, I will speak on the trajectory of gender disparity in various health outcomes among Indian women throughout their life. In the absence of real cohort data in India, I used data from various nationally representative Census/surveys of India viz. Census, NFHS, IHDS and NSSO. I examined the pattern of disparity in conditional sex ratio at birth, excess female deaths in age 0-5, health care expenditure, and source of finance in-patient care in adulthood and disabled life expectancy at old age.

On average Indian women live 3.08 years longer than Indian men. However, this masks extreme gender disparity they face across their life course. Conditional sex ratio analysis shows that there is deliberate sex selection at birth for higher order births. Excess female under five mortality rate is about 19-2 per 1000 live births in India during a period centered on 2003. This corresponds to an estimated 242,000 excess deaths per year. While 90 percent of Indian districts experience excess female death in age group 0-5, contribution of four large states (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) to excess female deaths was the largest. However, in most recent time, excess female deaths have been minimized. During adulthood, prevalence of short-term and long-term morbidity is higher among Indian women than Indian men; yet, access to health care and health expenditure is substantially lower among women than men. The likelihood of using distress health care financing is much lower among Indian women than men. At old age, disabled life expectancy is higher for women than men indicating poor quality of life.

Despite the elimination of excess female deaths at young age in most recent period, India women experience disadvantage in most of the health outcomes, from birth to old age.