

Assessing the Disability-Free Life Expectancy and Decomposition of Its Difference: A Gender Perspective on India over the Decade 2001-2011

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Abstract : "Health transition" is defined to be "a process through which high levels of mortality, morbidity and disability are reduced to low levels by influencing cultural, social and behavioural factors". Life expectancy in India has been on the rise and parallel the burden of disease and disability has also risen noticeably. Borrowing data from Indian Census (2001, 2011), this study identifies the gender-wise burden of disability by calculating disability free life expectancy (DFLE) and life lived with disability (LWD). Sullivan's method of calculating DFLE using proportion of disabled is used for this purpose. The change in person years lived with disability in the decade 2001-11 is further decomposed using Arriaga's method into mortality and disability effects (ME and DE) to check the magnitude and direction of contribution of mortality and disability. Nationally, along with DFLE, LWD has amplified too. Despite having the highest life expectancy and DFLE, LWD in Kerala, was highest for both sexes in 2001. But in 2011, the LWD was highest among the males of Orissa and females of Rajasthan. For the overall population, DE is positive for the prime working age groups of 20-40years indicating that there has been an increase in the disability proportion holding mortality constant for 2001-2011. Females exhibit higher positive DE implying greater loss of healthy years due to disability than males. The findings call for an immediate attention to the causes of rising disability burden among the working population, especially females, as this might heavily effect the availability of quality labour force and its relative economic output in the Indian labour market. This also hints at the degrading quality of the elongated life and needs to be given the required attention to enhance the quality of life lead in the Nation.

Keywords : disability-free life expectancy, disability effect, life expectancy, mortality effect

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