

## **Abstract for General Public**

Inquiring women's labor force participation is not only an intellectual desire of knowledge, but it strongly matters for women and the societies they belong to. Women's participation in the labor market is essential for them as an individual and for their households as well. It enhances quality of life and provides for additional source to earn livelihood. Besides this, it serves as an important driver and outcome of economic growth and promotes human resource development. Although women have been contributing their share of social and economic effort, their participation in labor force has remained insubstantial owing to less developmental and employment opportunities, and cultural and social barriers.

It is widely understood that nature of social norms that prevail in a society tend to strongly influence women's preferences to work. In this research, we plan to reveal what causal mechanisms lay behind the relationship between social norms and participation of women in labor market. There is mix of theoretical evidence on causal direction between social norms and women labor force participation. Neoclassical and modernization theory affirm causal effect of social norms on women LFP, however, gender stratification theory proposed a contradictory evidence and state that causal direction run in opposite way i.e more women in LFP will tend to make more egalitarian gender role beliefs in society. Given these two theoretical foundations, our research is aimed at solving this puzzle by comprehensively examining the causal link between social norms and women LFP by using Pakistan as a case study.

The research will exploit two distinct exogenous variations to establish causal relationship 1) exposure to extreme weather events and 2) eligibility of women to cash transfer program. First, we will explore how exogenous variation in gender ratio by virtue of exposure to extreme weather events changes women's participation in labor market. The idea is that when an extreme weather event hits a region, it destroys means of income generation for people living in those districts. Consequently, as an adaptation strategy to such weather events, people are forced to relocate themselves to other unaffected regions because it is highly unlikely that these inhabitants will continue to live in those regions under high uncertainty of harsh climatic conditions. Therefore, we seek to explore link between climate-induced migration and gender ratio in regions that are adversely affected by extreme weather events. This link will enable us to identify the gender dimension of migration through which we will establish whether exogenous variation in gender ratio brings more women in the labor force or not.

Secondly, to explore the direction of causality from women LFP to gender role beliefs, we will investigate when women become eligible to a cash transfer program, how does it change their LFP decision which in turn may cause change in their gender role beliefs. This part of research will attempt to estimate how women participation in labor force can lead to changes in nature of social norms. This question will be addressed by using the datasets of a cash transfer program which determines the eligibility to receive cash transfer by women based on their poverty score. Hence, the research proposes an in-depth analysis of causal identification between social norms and women LFP. In the third part of our research, we plan to undertake a qualitative study in which we propose to have detailed face to face interviews with women who belong to the regions that are adversely affected by extreme weather events and also the recipient of cash transfer. We will try to discover how extreme weather events have affected their livelihoods, labor market participation and their social beliefs. This qualitative analysis will serve to understand the potential impacts of climate change that are difficult to capture comprehensively using quantitative data.