

SOCIAL HETEROGENEITY AND PUBLIC GOOD PROVISIONING

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ABSTRACT

The socio-ethnic and religious norms that engulf the Indian society, have been deep rooted since ancient times. Although such social fragmentation accounts for a unique identity for stakeholders belonging to the Indian society, historically it has been witnessed that such fragmentations have allowed for pervasive segregation within the heterogeneous groups belonging to the Indian society, especially due to the prevalence of the practice of untouchability and social superiority. This paper aims to study and evaluate the impact of heterogeneity and fragmentation within society on the distribution of public goods. This study aims to use the National Family Health Survey-2 (1998-99) and the National Family Health Survey-4 (2014-15) data. It was concluded that the provision of Bare Necessities has been skewed towards parts of Southern, Western and Northern India, as areas deficient in the provision of Bare Necessities in the 1990s continued to suffer the same predicament two decades later, signalling a lack of convergence. The study also analyses a newer set of commodities to be considered for inclusion as Bare Necessities in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.