**Factors influencing access to basic handwashing facilities in developing countries**

Sacchidananda Mukherjee\*

\*-Associate Professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP), 18/2, SatsangVihar Marg, Special Institutional Area, New Delhi – 110 067, INDIA. E-mail: sachs.mse@gmail.com

**Abstract**

Access to handwashing facilities including soap and water is considered a basic minimum personal hygiene requirement to reduce spreading of infectious diseases like Novel Coronavirus Disease (Covid-19). Outbreak of Covid-19 and subsequent spreading of the virus across the world is a serious public health concern of the time. As on 10 April 2020 there are 1,521,252 confirmed cases of infected people of which 92,798 people have died across the world due to Covid-19. It has been suggested by the World Health Organization that social distancing and frequent sanitization of hands either by washing with soap and water or by using alcohol based hand sanitizer may reduce possibility of infection. However, access to basic hand washing facilities is not universal in developing countries. Even within a country the access varies across households. There are various factors which influence access to basic hand washing facilities. Therefore, the objective of the present paper is to understand country-specific factors influencing access to hand washing facilities in developing countries. The study is based on data of 94 countries for 10 years (2008-2017). The study throws some interesting results which may be useful to make policies and programmes to increase the coverage of hand washing facilities.

**Keywords**: Covid-19 pandemic, Access to Handwashing, Public Health, Developing countries, Human Development, Access to Water.