

**Korzeniewicz, Roberto P. (College Park, MD, USA)
1999**

***Gender Inequalities, Economic Growth, and
Structural Adjustment: A Longitudinal Evaluation***

The relationship between economic growth and inequalities between men and women has become one of the most debated issues in policymaking arenas and in the social sciences. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) throughout the world are actively and critically assessing the impact of economic policies on women. Partly in response to these concerns, international agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations (UN) are attempting to better understand the gender-specific impact of alternative development strategies, while national governments often have become more active in promoting policies designed to reduce inequalities between, men and women. Accompanying these trends, there has been a burgeoning literature in the social sciences addressing the topics at hand.

Within this literature, feminist studies have generated their own internal critiques and debates regarding gender inequalities and development. For example, the "gender and development" (GAD) critique has called into question the ability of "women in development" (WID) programs to achieve equity and equality for women. Rather than focus on integrating women into existing strategies for economic development, as WID proposes, the GAD critique seeks to rethink development strategies from below and to analyze development in terms of the totality of social relations and institutions through which women's subordination to men is achieved and maintained. Furthermore, paralleling the GAD critique of WID, women's organizations in developing countries over the last decade have developed a distinction between, gender equality and women's empowerment, challenging existing notions of what should be the appropriate goals of gender-sensitive programming.

Despite these interests and debates, there have been few systematic cross-national studies of global changes in women's status and gender inequality over time. Our study analyzes and further develops a new set of data on women's status and gender inequality to evaluate the cross-sectional relationship between economic growth and these variables, as well as the cross-national, longitudinal impact of economic growth on changes in women's status and gender inequality. The findings reported in this article address key questions in the evolving debate over the character of gender differentiation and the goals of women's empowerment. Have strategies of economic growth in recent decades served to enhance or undermine the status of women? Are changes in the status of women accompanied by significant changes in gender inequality? What are the implications for existing debates? These are the key issues addressed in this article.

