

Endowments or Discrimination? Determinants of Household Poverty in Egypt

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Paper Abstract: This paper investigates whether there is feminization of poverty in Egypt and examines the determinants of poverty by household type. Furthermore, it decomposes the poverty differential between the various household types into a component due to endowments and another due to the return to these endowments. The paper uses data from five Household Income, Expenditure and Consumption Surveys, that span a period of far reaching economic, social and political changes, from 1999 to 2013. Results suggest that female headed households are indeed poorer than male headed households over the period. They are however, less poor than married couple households. Initially endowments were more important in explaining the poverty differentials between the various family types, however in more recent years the returns to these endowments, or the treatment effect, became the dominant factor. This suggests the need for policies to ensure more equitable returns to endowments for the poor.