

# DETERMINANTS OF FUELS CHOICE BEHAVIOUR AMONG HOUSEHOLDS: A CASE STUDY OF A DISTRICT IN MAHARASHTRA

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## **Abstract**

Energy consumption is an important determinant of the socio economic status of citizens across the globe especially the consumption of modern energy. According to the energy ladder hypothesis households move along the energy ladder as their income increases. At the lower level of the ladder are the low income and usually uneducated households who mainly consume traditional fuels while the middle class and those at upper strata of the society largely consume transitional and modern fuels. However the prevalence of energy stacking behavior where households adopt more than one fuel type has been observed even among the middle and upper income families. The paper assesses the combined influence of four variables which include income level of households, education level/exposure of households, households' size and modern fuels supply security on fuels adoption decisions of households. Household energy use survey in twenty villages in rural Maharashtra, India was carried out. Data was collected on energy uses at household level using a formal questionnaire survey along with field observation. The results showed that both firewood and gas were used primarily for cooking. There is modest evidence for the 'energy ladder' hypothesis but switch over to cleaner fuels is not complete and income is not the only limiting factor for fuel choice but household size, education, socio cultural factors also influence energy choices.

**Key words:** Biomass fuel, Household air pollution, Income, Wood, Dung, Rural energy