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Energy poverty in tropical island economy: a latent class model



Fuel poverty in tropical territories cannot be defined and measured with traditional indicators based on heating issues (expenditure, restriction or the sensation of cold inside houses). We propose a new framework to identify fuel-poor households, referring to Amartya Sen's Capability Approach. To accurately assess fuel poverty in tropical areas, using observable objective characteristics of a decent, safe and healthy dwelling, we use latent class model (LCM) methodology. This methodology allows us to categorize households between those who are fuel poor and those who are not fuel poor. The main results show that fuel poverty cannot be defined in a binary dimension because it is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. This methodology can enable policy makers to clearly identify fuel poverty in tropical areas and can aid in the development of policy actions to alleviate the problem.

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