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Aims and Scope

The Journal provides a forum for in-depth analysis of the problems of social, economic, political, institutional, cultural and environmental transformation taking place in the world today, particularly in developing countries. It welcomes articles with rigorous reasoning, supported by proper documentation. Articles, including field-based ones, are expected to have a theoretical and/or historical perspective. The Journal encourages inter-disciplinary articles that are accessible to a wider group of social scientists and policy makers, in addition to articles specific to particular social sciences. The Journal also gives scope to Research Notes, Comments, Book Reviews and Review Articles.

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Poverty Redefined: A Shift from Welfare Maximisation to Capability Enhancement of the Poor

Mohammad L Kabir

Abstract

The methodology of measuring poverty is the subject of a century-long debate among economists. Similarly, the choice of factors that can be used as proxies to measure poverty too continues to be debated. Though this paper does not suggest any specific list of factors that may be used to measure poverty, it highlights the new philosophy of poverty developed by Nobel laureate Amartya Sen and how it can be used to measure poverty as a lack of human capability. This paper linked Sen's capability theory with the notion of 'multidimensional poverty' and contrasted the methodology of poverty measurement used under the capability theory with the traditional methodology used in poverty measurement. It also includes the result of an empirical survey that identified some important factors which can be used to measure multidimensional poverty among rural households. Overall, it would help in a quick understanding of the capability theory and how this new notion can be used in measuring multidimensional poverty.

Globalisation, Nation and Gender

Maithreyi Krishnaraj

Abstract

Globalisation can be described as the process of international integration, especially economic interdependence of national economies, but also interchange of views, products and ideas across the world. Today's globalisation is really global capitalism which has resulted in rapid increase in cross-border movement of goods, services and capital.

Global capitalism has increased inequality between nations and within nations. The present world economic system harbours monopolies of and control over natural resources and weapons of mass destruction. Financial flows have overtaken fixed investment through the play of international money markets regulated by international organisations. Some of the issues are: 1) To what extent have these trends diminished national sovereignty? 2) Is there a withering away of the welfare state? 3) Has labour lost previously won rights? 4) What has been the impact on gender? In the Indian context, what have been the effects?

Reforms in Participatory Irrigation Management in Japan: Policy Implications for India

Mamata Swain

Abstract

Japan's community management of water and land resources is often highly eulogised as a successful example of Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) around the world. The Land Improvement District (LID) of Japan is a farmers' organisation that manages water and land for increasing agricultural production. The LIDs are autonomous legal corporate bodies set up on the initiative of farmers with the approval of the prefecture (province) government in accordance with the Land

Improvement Law, 1949. In the post-War period, the LIDs have played a significant role in the construction of irrigation and drainage infrastructure and rural roads, farmland consolidation, land reclamation and operation and maintenance of farm facilities. However, in recent years, the LIDs have experienced many second-generation problems in water management due to numerous factors, including decrease in farm population, urban sprawl, increase in non-paddy areas, diminished profitability of agriculture, water pollution, decrease in precipitation and climate change. In the changed context, in addition to food production, the LIDs are expected to play multi-functional roles which include preservation of national land, water and environment, creation of resident-friendly countryside and establishing a sound water circulation system. On the basis of the Japanese experience, the paper concludes that India should incorporate the integrated water and land management perspective and environmental concerns in the functions and responsibility of newly created Water Users' Associations (WUAs) in implementing PIM in India.

Assessing and Explaining Technical, Allocative and Economic Efficiency of Groundwater-Irrigated Farms in Karnataka, India

A V Manjunatha and S Speelman

Abstract

Unsustainable use of groundwater resources is threatening irrigated production in India. This paper analyses efficiency measures of groundwater-irrigated farms using Data Envelopment Analysis. The results demonstrate that there is substantial technical, allocative and economic inefficiency in irrigated production due to overuse of inputs. In order to explain their variations, the efficiency scores were regressed on the farm characteristics. The education level of the farmers, the net returns per cubic metre of water and whether the farmers were active in the water market showed significant influence on the efficiency scores. Such results can provide useful insights for the policy makers and extension workers for improving efficiency of input use, especially in water-scarce regions of the country.

Social Disparity in Curative Care: Determining Factors across Social Groups in Rural India

Rajesh Raushan and R Mutharayappa

Abstract

This study focuses on caste disparity in curative care availed for shortterm illness among children under age of five years in rural India using India Human Development Survey (IHDS) data. To capture differentials on curative care aspects, socio-economic variables along with supply side structural factors are considered. The results depict differentials on curative care behaviour with the highest among OBCs and the lowest among STs with significant chi square value ($p < 0.001$). Odds ratio estimates of multinomial logistic regression show that social groups having poor socio-economic development perform poorly on their treatment seeking behaviour. The study found that village connectivity to road, distance to healthcare facilities, availability of government healthcare facilities and providers matter more for STs than any other social group ($p < 0.001$). However, there is intra-caste disparity too. Poor utilisation of government health facilities is still a major concern in rural areas and needs special attention in areas of less accessibility.

Effectiveness of Cash Compensation on Compulsory Land Acquisition: Case of Project MIHAN, Nagpur

Varsha Nerlekar

Abstract

The Government of Maharashtra has decided to develop a composite project called 'Multi-Model International Passenger and Cargo Hub Airport at Nagpur (MIHANTM). The project involves developing the existing domestic airport of Nagpur as an international passenger and cargo hub airport, along with a separate multi-product Special Economic Zone (SEZ) abutting the boundary of the airport. The Maharashtra Government had approved the acquisition of 3624.21 hectares of private land for project MIHAN, and Maharashtra Airport Development Corporation (MADC) had agreed to take care of the rehabilitation of Project Affected People (PAPs). Accordingly, MADC announced a rehabilitation package that includes relocation of the PAPs in rural areas to a site on the east of Khapri (Railway) village, and those in urban areas to Chinchbhuvan. Along with the other critical issues related to the rehabilitation and resettlement process, this paper attempts to answer two important aspects of the resettlement plan: whether compensation should be paid in cash or in kind, and, how to protect the interests of vulnerable groups such as tribal people, landless and semi-landless people and women's groups.

Gender and Conflict in Assam: A Critical Study

Rosy Talukdar

Abstract

Conflict may be of several types, such as ethnic, religious, communal, armed and so on. This study concentrates on the armed conflict and its impacts on the lives of women in Assam. It focuses on certain aspects which are crucial to the lives of women during conflict. Economic, social and physical insecurity, displacement, societal attitudes are some of the areas where women have to struggle after losing their breadwinners due to conflict, be it their brothers, sons or husbands.

Thus, the study and various literatures cited bring out the fact that conflict has gendered effect, which perpetuates the gender power imbalances. It is very important to understand the intersection between gender and conflict which is often overshadowed by the mainstream gender-blind representations of conflict. End of conflict is not a solution to the vulnerability and violence against people in the concerned areas. Rather, there should be an inclusive process, which recognizes the gender differences and prohibits the re-establishment of patriarchal institutions and practices in the aftermath of conflict.

The sole purpose of the study is to bring to light the various circumstances and situations in these women's lives under conflict, whose voices have been 'silent' for ages.

Impact of State Finances on Development: A Case Study of Haryana

Manju Dalal

Abstract

In this paper, an attempt is made to examine the impact of state finances of Haryana on Human and Infrastructural Development for the first decade of 21st century. It has been observed that, in spite of significant improvement in state finances during the study period (especially in the mid-2000s), development of human and infrastructure has not been satisfactory. This maybe because of the fact that the state achieved these financial improvements by two ways: (i) in some years, due to increase in receipts and contraction in expenditure policy and (ii) in the remaining years, due to rapid decline in expenditure than decline in receipts. Consequently, human and infrastructure development was affected adversely. Therefore, there is a need for more government expenditure on social and economic services, especially on health, education (especially for females), agricultural development, development of roads and bridges. However, the state also needs to improve the quality of capital expenditure so that scare resources may be used for capital formation and creation of efficient and effective infrastructure. The state should redefine its policy priorities to control unnecessary expenditure and try to raise its non-redeemable receipts from various existing and new sources.

Exclusion and Exploitation of Migrant Workers in Brick-Kilns: A Micro Study of a Backward Region in Odisha

Sanjukta Das and Rinky Seth

Abstract

Rapid economic growth and increasing urbanisation have facilitated the growth of the brick-kiln sector in India. However, the growth of this sector has failed to achieve inclusive growth. Labour, an important stakeholder in this sector, has not been able to reap the benefits of the growth, has operated at a very low level of equilibrium and seems to be trapped in this state. The capitalists, comprising the kiln owners and the Sardars (the intermediary agents) enjoy the huge surplus from brick-kilns. The passive role played by the police and the labour department officials, who are supposed to protect the labourers' interests, facilitates the accumulation of the surplus by the capitalists. This paper discusses these problems in a micro study of a backward region in Odisha. It examines the inspiring positive interventions in different places and makes certain suggestions for improving the situation of kiln workers and reverting their forced migration.

Levels of Living, Poverty and Inequality in Bihar: A District-wise Analysis

Reena Kumari

Abstract

The study addresses the issue of intra-state disparity in Bihar in terms of monthly per capita consumption expenditure and poverty ratio at the district level in the state. On the basis of a composite index, which is based on a combined score of different social and economic indicators, an attempt has been made to identify the backward regions/districts of Bihar. The paper investigates inter-state disparity in per capita monthly expenditure on health, education and monthly per capita consumption expenditure using data from the National Sample Surveys 2004-05 and 2011-12. The results show that Bihar has done badly in per capita consumption expenditure on health and education and its position is also poor when compared to the other regions of the country. Its economic growth in terms of net district domestic product has increased in recent times. However, the state has not been able to improve its condition in the social sector. There is a dire need for effective policy interventions to balance regional development in the state.

Research Notes

Health Insurance: Theory and Practice – **Reflections from Studies**

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Sharmila Mukund Borkar

Abstract

The unique and distinguishable characteristics of the health care sector generate problems like moral hazard, adverse selection and other distortions, resulting in inefficiencies and welfare losses in the market for health insurance. But health insurance, particularly to the poor, has become necessary largely on grounds of equity, in the wake of inadequate public health delivery, catastrophic health care costs, and heavy out-of-pocket spending faced by the poor. Amidst the presence of private players, publicly funded schemes and informal mechanisms of insurance, community health insurance seems to have emerged as an alternative measure. Though not devoid of limitations, community health insurance is being looked upon as a promising solution to address the context specific health needs of the targeted populations. This paper reviews relevant studies from health insurance literature, and makes an attempt to understand these critical aspects concerning the theory and practice of health insurance. A few possible areas for further research are also suggested.

Understanding South India: Its Political Regimes and Social Security

Anil Kumar Vaddiraju

Abstract

In the context of so much that is written about south India and its achievements in social policies (Sen and Dreze 1991, 1997, 2001), this note probes as to what enabled such social policies to be adopted in the first place. While delineating the specific and

general political factors that broadly enabled social security policies to emerge, the paper finally asks the question: is such combination of circumstances unique to south India or that the north Indian states can also emulate it thereby making the lives of its poor better? In the process of the argument, the note makes a fervent plea that the understanding of south Indian political regimes and social policies is possible only from a historical perspective.