

Review of
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Revisiting Kerala's Performance on the Education Front

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Abstract

Kerala's performance in education is a part of the vaunted 'Kerala model of development'. The authors of this paper examine the record of this performance in all its facets: literacy, current education status, enrolment, drop out rate. For each aspect they compare Kerala's results with all-India achievement figures. The paper also estimates the costs of maintaining the state's public education system and to assess the return on investment in education by computing worker population ratios by education groups. While Kerala's literacy growth rates were far ahead of the rest of the country in the two decades 1961 to 1980, they dipped drastically in the following decades. This could be because when the literacy rate is already high eradication of residual illiteracy poses a different and very difficult challenge. But the paper establishes that much of Kerala's progress in literacy was achieved before the formation of the state and not through its subsequent policy or action. Other results of this study are: for all sections of society, education levels are higher for Kerala than for any other state or India as a whole; though the state may actually be approaching a stage of complete enrolment, over reporting has resulted in gross over estimates of enrolment rates; the official state drop out rates are sharply at variance with figures from other sources; unemployment among the educated indicates that the high cost to families and society of educating children is not justified by comparable high levels of employment.

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Performance of Foreign Multinationals and Domestic Companies in India since Liberalisation: A Comparative Study

Manikandan A.D

Abstract

Since 1991, when the new industrial policy was announced, the Government of India has actively encouraged the inflow of foreign direct investment. The benefits expected are mainly transfer of technology, marketing expertise, modern management techniques, and promotion of exports. This study compares the performance of foreign multinationals and domestic companies in the three performance areas of finance, trade and technology. Following a review of literature, an analysis of performance in these three areas has been carried out at both the aggregate and disaggregated levels. The major conclusion is that there is no significant statistical difference between foreign multinationals and Indian companies in financial, trade or technology performance. This raises the policy question: should India accelerate FDI inflow? The paper offers some policy suggestion on ways in which FDI should be encouraged in order to achieve better performance and reap greater benefits.

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Agricultural Development and Crop Diversification in Jammu and Kashmir: A District Level Study Patterns, Processes and Determinants

Rajeev Sharma

Abstract

The concept of crop diversification conveys different meanings to different people at different levels. Crop diversification means a shift of resources from farm to non-farm activities, use of resources in a larger mix of diverse and complementary activities within agriculture, and a movement of resources from low value crops to high value crops. Agricultural development in the mountainous regions is circumscribed by mountain specificities, namely, inaccessibility, marginality, fragility, niche and human adaptation mechanisms created by unique vertical dimensions that distinguish them from the plains and other eco-systems. So, in the case of J&K, despite knowledge and techniques of land-use management available at present, there are limited possibilities of raising agricultural output by increasing the area of cultivation without disturbing the ecological balance. Increase in agricultural output would, therefore, have to be achieved only through intensification and diversification of agriculture and rational land use. A number of studies, have shown that agriculture in the mountains faces serious problems of dwindling crop yields and resource degradation which may aggravate further if remedial measures are not undertaken immediately. The object of the study is three-fold: first, to study the trends in the cropping pattern of different crops in Jammu and Kashmir at the district level; second, to study the patterns and processes of agricultural development and crop diversification in different districts and, finally, examine the determinants of agricultural development and crop diversification for an effective policy framework.

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Does the Incidence of Hospitalization make Elderly Households Poor? The Case of Kerala

Syam Prasad

Abstract

Health risks are very high among aged persons. The precise implications of population ageing for future levels of health and health care utilization depend on whether the increases in life expectancy experienced in general are accompanied by an increase or a decrease in health problems in later life. The health risks in the presence of an aged person in a household can result in a catastrophic shock for the family and render such households more exposed to poverty. The increased cost of medical bills in these households means that large numbers of the elderly in the developing world are deprived of access to health and to better health treatment. This paper empirically examines this question using the largest national survey in the Indian state of Kerala, comparing elderly with non-elderly households. The paper also explores the impact of unhealthy life styles on the financial status of these households, due to the incidence of hospitalization as a result of an aged person's illness.

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Debating Participation: Organic Lessons for Practice Perspectives from Literature

K. Jayashree

Abstract

The participatory approach to development has existed since the 1940s but it attained its most popular dimensions in the 1970s and 1980s. This paper attempts to pin down theoretical and empirical cues from literature since colonial times. Though ideally participation should bring about a more egalitarian society, the literature surveyed and examination of a few cases, national and international, establish that mere adoption of a participative approach need not be people-supportive; on the contrary, it could be manipulative. Participative practice is too diverse and complex to allow for oversimplification of either its potentials or its pitfalls. Taking up, as a case study, the work of the Tamil Nadu NGO, SPEECH, with women's sangams in Kottam, the paper describes how a truly participatory approach can transform society. Pointing out that, inevitably, there are hidden agendas in political prescriptions of participative norms, the author concludes that, when people are no longer treated as objects of study, they become thinkers who reflect on their experiences and come out with pragmatic solutions for better living.

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Electrification of Madras Presidency, 1900-1947

Y. Srinivasa Rao

Abstract

Examining the development of electrical production and supply in the Madras Presidency during the British Raj, this article deals with the power balance between the colonial masters and local agencies. While the former viewed electrification as a means for increased revenue through large scale industrialization, the latter (comprising mainly Indian engineers and politicians) wanted its use diverted to rural development in agriculture and small industries. In the process, the author also studies the emergence of engineering colleges and technical institutes. The article is a brief summary of a doctoral research project. Hence, research problems and methods are listed, as are the contents of the proposed thesis. An exhaustive bibliography of primary and secondary sources of information is provided.

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