

Occupational Sex Segregation in the Unorganised Manufacturing Sector: The Case of Punjab

Anupama, Professor, Punjabi University Regional Centre, Bathinda, Punjab

Abstract

This paper shows that a high percentage of women workers are being employed in the least-paid occupations in the unorganised manufacturing sector of Punjab. Among the covariates, it is found that economic development in each district (represented by the income index) and the literacy rate have a weak impact on segregation. Moreover, an increase in the value of these variables increases the segregation. The important point to note is that only a decline in disparities between males and females in attainment of education, life expectancy and income can reduce segregation and improve the social status of women. A lower value of occupational sex segregation may raise the sex ratio (in rural areas), which has hitherto been a blot on Punjab society. The implication of these results is that neither increase in average income nor increase in average literacy rate leads to equal opportunities of employment for women. On the other hand, the decline in disparities between men and women with respect to the above-mentioned indices (an increase in the value of the Gender Development Index) can lead to a more integrated labour market, and of course, only equality in employment can lead to women's empowerment.

Poverty of Housing in Rural India: Status, Issues and Policy Options

M. Mahadeva, Associate Professor, ADRT Centre, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore 560072

Abstract

Despite forming the major part of the housing problem in India, rural areas have not received due attention in policy-making and public expenditure on housing. The approach to housing development in rural areas is distinctive in that the market plays almost no role and its stakeholders stand to gain less. Besides this, the approach has a series of lacunae pertaining to the very norms of public housing interventions, especially with regard to missing emphasis, per-unit cost structure, lack of integrated strategy, lack of priority for families suffering from widespread damages and so on. This paper suggests a new approach to housing development for rural India with new requirements for investment by governments formulated on the basis of average unit costs. It also analyses the role of the market and stakeholders. The paper offers some alternatives for policy-making concerning rural housing development, in general, and stepping-up of public expenditure, expansion of the housing finance market to rural areas and participation of stake holders through self-help groups, in particular.

Super-Cyclone Affected Coastal Orissa: A Social Vulnerability Approach

Pradeep Kumar Parida, Faculty Member, Department of Sociology, Pondicherry (Central) University, Puducherry - 605 014

Abstract

While an event like a super-cyclone in coastal Orissa may trigger-off or catalyse a disaster, the roots of disaster lie in the society-induced vulnerability associated with the geo-political features of the places and people concerned. This study reveals the fact that disaster is a result of 'human conditions'. It also emphasises how the organisation of a society and its economic and political arrangements contribute to increasing its vulnerability to disasters. The super-cyclone disaster brought to the fore critical issues related to stratification, poverty and inequality in Indian society, particularly, in rural Orissa.

Willingness to Pay for improvements in Irrigation Water: Malaprabha Basin, Karnataka, India

Durba Biswas, Research Scholar, Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore 560072

Abstract

The agriculture sector, being the largest user of water, needs to use scarce water efficiently; this requires economic valuation of the 'non-marketed' irrigation water. Any water allocation decision based on the current methods of valuation which depend mainly on the cost of water supply becomes ineffective in achieving the objective of efficient and sustainable use of water in the long run. As an attempt to estimate the true opportunity cost of water use, a contingent valuation (CV) study was conducted to estimate the economic value of irrigation water in the canal systems of Malaprabha Basin in Karnataka. The results suggest that the farmers were willing to pay much higher than the current water rates if the reliable irrigation water is assured. The results also imply that the CV method can be used effectively to elicit economic value of irrigation water especially in the developing country context.

Relevance of Fair Trade and Sustainability of Small Tea Growers in the Nilgiris

Abdul Hannan, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, School of Social Sciences, JNU, New Delhi

Abstract

This study tries to explore and analyse the deteriorating conditions of Small Tea Growers (STGs) in the Nilgiris. In this paper, various contemporary issues encountered by STGs in the Nilgiris vis-a-vis other regions of India have been highlighted. The nature of institutional or business linkages, particularly with reference to the Industrial Co-operative (INDCO) factories is addressed. A study of the cost of production and the factors affecting it, exemplified by citing cases from The Salisbury Industrial Co-operative Tea Factory Limited, Gudalur and INDCOSERVE, The Tamil Nadu Small Tea Growers' Industrial Co-operative Factories' Federation Limited, are highlighted, followed by a section on Issues Related to Fair Price of

Green Leaf. The issue of organising STGs into Tea Producing Societies (Self Help Groups) and grass-root level institution building is seen as an imperative and a necessity. Finally, the author observes the possibility and argues in favour of introducing the practice of Fair Trade in the Nilgiris. Two types of Fair Trade business models may be viewed in future: the INDCO-STGs business development model and the Bought-Leaf Factories (BLFs)-Tea Producing Societies (Self Help Groups) business development model. A healthy competition between the two would address the problem of market access of STGs in the era of globalisation.

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