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Democracy, markets, governance and development

T N Srinivasan

Abstract

The trend towards democratization in politics, global integration and the market mechanism in the developing world in the last two decades of the twentieth century has revived the interest in the theoretical and empirical analysis of the interrelationship between political democracy and economic development. The paper discusses selectively and critically some of the recent contributions to such an analysis and examines the role of governance and popular participation in development. It concludes that viewing democracy as a steady state equilibrium of political processes is problematic. The empirical evidence reviewed confirms that there is no necessary relationship between form of government (such as democracy and authoritarianism) and successful development. While elements of governance structures conducive to development can be identified, they are found in democracies as well as authoritarian regimes.

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Determinants of child immunisation in rural Karnataka: empirical evidence and policy implications

M R Narayana

Abstract

In the framework of a multivariate logit model, this paper estimates the effects of mother's formal education, social caste, knowledge of immunisation and public sources of immunisation on child immunisation, using the sample survey data of 750 eligible mothers from rural Karnataka. By separating the sample between Sub-Centres (SCs) in different Primary Health Centres (PH Cs) and between different elements of immunisation, the study offers varied evidence on the determinants of immunisation. Surprisingly, as compared to other determinants, the role of mother's social caste is found to have a lesser, influence on the probability of a child being fully immunised. These results have important current and future policy implications in India. For instance, within the existing framework of the Family Welfare Programme, the public sources of immunisation can be influenced by the locational decisions of the future PHCs/SCs; and mother's knowledge of preventive use of immunisation can be influenced by strengthening of the Information, Education and Communication activities. And, mother's formal education can be influenced in future by strict enforcement of compulsory school enrolment of female children.

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Land reforms in Maharashtra: a regional analysis

N. Rajasekaran

Abstract

The rhetoric (New populism) in the implementation of the land reform measures, as an instrument for social and economic change appears to be getting watered down in the process of economic

reforms. But eminent economists emphasized that in the process of liberalization, the discrepancies in the structural distribution of ownership pattern in agriculture cannot be brushed aside to make the system economically efficient and socially desirable. In this direction, the present study seeks to analyze the extent of achievement of land reform measures in Maharashtra and its impact in the reduction of socio-economic inequalities to assess the necessity for the continuance of it in the liberalization process. The findings of the study indicate that the reduction in economic and social inequalities does not seem to match the expected rhetoric due to the insensitivities of politicians, bureaucrats and other dominant classes. Holistically, in the regions where specific legislations were in operation and where people's movements were well organized, the impact is conspicuous in the reduction of socio-economic inequalities in the distribution of land.

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Maintenance of irrigation networks under major tanks in Tamil Nadu

K Sivasubramaniyan

Abstract

Management of any irrigation system depends upon proper maintenance of the physical facilities including channels carrying water from the supply source to the individual plots, drainage networks, and regulatory structures. This task requires careful attention and cooperation of both the users and the administrators of the system. Under tank irrigation system all the ayacutdars are not equally effective in the maintenance of the channels. Head reachers are mostly reluctant in maintenance when there is enough supply in the tank. However, they are active when there is inadequate supply to feed the entire ayacut, especially in multi-village tanks. In the latter situation the tail reach villagers are reluctant to participate in maintenance. Hence for effective maintenance of the channels enough supply in the tank to feed the entire ayacut is a necessary precondition. If enough supply is not available only those farmers who get supply from the tank take part in maintenance. This indicates that a proper involvement of all the ayacutdars is necessary for effective maintenance and distribution of available tank supply. This could be done either by way of lining of all main/branch channels up to a certain distance or a strong institutional set-up to be built-up for proper management in all tank irrigation commands. This paper provides an account of the maintenance of irrigation networks such as inlet, main, branch and field channels under two major system tanks in the Palar basin. More specifically, the paper analyses the extent of users' participation in the maintenance of irrigation channels in a normal tank supply year.

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Experiments in creative research: efforts to combine participatory with conventional methodology

Walter Fernandes

Abstract

The present paper is a sharing of experiences in the effort to combine participatory with conventional research. Disillusioned with conventional research that was initially geared to colonial needs and later to the maintenance of the system, some scholars tried a Third World Approach through research methodologies. Slowly others began to think that only a generic Third World Approach was adequate from the perspective of the poor. Efforts began in the direction of action

research and slowly they went on to participatory research. The present paper discusses some of the efforts of the author and of his colleagues in participatory research. An effort was made at first to work with social activists and the people together. The question asked was whether it is possible to use research as a tool of mobilisation, not primarily of information gathering. However, as the process progressed, we realised that it was essential to combine mobilisation with changes in policy. That brought us to the need to combine the two approaches viz. participatory and conventional. It raised questions also about the type of researcher for conventional research. An effort was initially made to turn the activist into a research investigator. While it was successful in a few places, in most cases it did not work out. Both research and action tended to suffer. So we had to fall back on external investigators. The second question that arose from it was about the type of investigators and supervisors. Instead of stopping at investigators from outside, one had also to find ways of building up local human resources that would provide ongoing support to the social activists. So ways had to be found of choosing the type of investigators or at least supervisors who would provide this type of support. Simultaneously we could not abandon the effort of building up human resources among activists. So we decided to choose investigators from among those groups that had the potential of growing beyond action and combining an intellectual with an activist approach. At the same time one had to be careful not to use activists only as cheap labour. It had to be a tool of continuing the process of building them up professionally. They had to be involved not merely in data collection but also in data analysis and report writing that can be useful to the local people. Questions had also to be asked about the type of report. If mobilization and policy changes had to be combined, one had to think in terms of having two different reports, the first meant for the people and the second for the world of professionals and decision makers. These efforts have only been partially successful. Many questions remain unanswered. The present paper tries to reflect on these efforts as well as on the questions that remain unanswered.

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The irrelevance of methodology and the art of the possible reading: Sen and Hirschman

Achin Chakraborty

Abstract

Economic methodologists have observed that economists do not practice what they think their methodology is. Two positions follow from this. One insists on the need for 'better' practice in maintaining 'scientific' standard, while the other takes the literary turn. Following the second route we argue that appraisal of economic theories cannot be done by applying a general 'scientific method' apart from practice. Methodological conversations, which are shaped by various strategies taken by practitioners to persuade each other, can only be studied and improved by reading the most persuasive of the authors in the discipline. Writings of Albert Hirschman and Amartya Sen are chosen to be read following our approach.

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