

Journal of Social and Economic Development

Vol. 12

July - December 2010

No. 2

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Does the Development Level Influence the Relationship between Economic Growth and Urban Concentration?

(Evidences from Mediterranean Countries and EU)

Shekoofeh Farahmand, Majid Sameti and Seyed Salahaldin Sasan

Abstract

Urbanisation and economic growth go hand in hand in the economic development process. There is an extensive literature on urban development process and its relationship with the economic growth. Urban concentration shows whether resources are over-concentrated in one or a few large cities, or spread evenly across different cities. There is a significant relationship between economic growth and the degree of urban concentration, as measured by different criteria, including urban primacy or the share of the largest city in an urban system. Based on the Williamson's Hypothesis, the optimum degree of urban concentration is dynamic and increases in the early phases of economic development. It starts declining at later stages.

The main purpose of the study is to determine whether there is a significant relationship between economic growth and the degree of urban concentration; which is measured by primacy in this paper. Also, it is tested that if there is such a relationship, how does it affect the development, which is specified by Human Development Index (HDI)? This study takes into account the Mediterranean countries and the European Union (EU), both of which include developed and developing economies. The model used in this case study for 2005 is the Solow growth model (1956) with urban primacy and its interaction through development as independent variables.

The results show that for 2005, in both the Mediterranean countries and the EU, primacy has had significantly negative effects on growth, whereas the effects of the interaction of primacy and HDI have been significant and positive. This shows that the level of development affects the relationship between economic growth and primacy.

Infant Mortality in India 1972-2007: An Exploratory Analysis

Ankush Agrawal

Abstract

This study examines infant mortality rate (IMR) in its spatial and temporal dimensions in India. Given the focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), we examine whether the past trend behaviour lends any support to the belief that the MDG target for child mortality is realisable. The study examines, inter alia, the pace of reduction of IMR and deceleration observed in IMR in recent years. The study finds that IMR is getting concentrated in some of the states. High IMR, poor standard of living and low literacy coexist in a few states in the country. Almost half of the infant mortality occurs within the first four weeks of birth in the country and the slow pace of decline of neonatal mortality seems to be hindering the progress towards IMR reduction.

An Examination of Theoretical Basis and Elements of Trade and Industrial Policy Reform in Nigeria

Anthony I Monye-Emina

Abstract

This study examines the elements and theoretical basis of Nigeria's trade and industrial policy reform. While policy reconsideration was desirable in the wake of macroeconomic disturbances of the early 1980s, the economic reform programmes adopted by the country have not done much to lift the fortune of the economy, particularly in terms of trade and industrial development. Among others, this puts a question mark, in particular, on the propriety of the theoretical basis and elements of the policy as it concerns trade and industrial development. The implication of this is that the 'visible' hand of government is still desirable to some extent in regulating the flow of trade and in industrial development.

Response of Higher Education to Globalisation: Empirical Evidences from India

Jesiah Selvam

Abstract

This paper examines the response of higher education to globalisation in India and discusses the major challenges that globalisation has brought to higher education. The study uses data for 25 years (1981-82 to 2004-05) and applies the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) analysis with inclusion of various functional variables that may contribute to the higher education in the post- reform period. A regression model is developed by using the perspectives of the heterodox model which does not conclude that the non-significant variables necessarily imply that the hypothesised causal links are invalid. The study reveals that the relationship between globalisation and higher education is fragile revealing a gap between what the country has achieved on globalisation and what it has achieved on higher education. Hence, the government should ensure right allocation and appropriateness of budget on higher education. A fair controlling policy should be devised to monitor the quality of education and training provided in the private sector. A compliance policy should be enforced to ensure a strong network and congenial interface between mediocre institutions and those of excellence and also between the higher education institutions and industries, so that the application-oriented education and employability could be effectively offered to meet the challenges of globalisation.

Micro-Level Decision-Making Process of Farmers: A Study of Non-Price Factors

N Rajasekaran

Abstract

There are a large number of studies on supply response at aggregate level but hardly any significant work is found on the decision-making of farmers at the farm level. This study seeks to analyse the dynamics of non-price factors and the decision-making process of farmers in diverse situations. The results indicate that education, information and modernity play a deterministic role in all the cropping decisions and in the determination of other behavioural patterns. Hence, paying more attention to these variables would enable the farmers to take sound decisions with their bounded rationality by removing the constraints of cognitive, socio-psychological and infrastructural limitations. This also will equip them to withstand the overwhelming pressure of circumstances entangling crop failures.

An Analysis of Working of Forest Institutions in Orissa

Kailas Sarap and Tapas Kumar Sarangi

Abstract

Based on historical evidences, secondary sources of materials and the authors' own findings, this paper analyses the working of Participatory Forest Management (PFM) institutions and discusses the livelihood conditions of forest-dwelling communities involved in forest protection in Orissa. The twin objectives of forest policies up to Independence and till the 1970s were to generate revenue for the state and to restrict the access of the indigenous inhabitants to forests and forest products.

However, the National Forest Policy of 1988 emphasised the participation of primary stakeholders in the management and development of forests by ensuring their access to forest produce for sustaining their livelihood. Keeping these twin objectives in view, the Government of India enacted legislation in 1990 for formation of Joint Forest Management (JFM) to ensure the participation of forest dwellers along with the Forest Department for protection of forests. Accordingly, the Orissa government instructed its Forest Department (1993) to form Van Samrakshan Samitis (VSSs). Though the process of formation of VSSs was slow initially, it picked up momentum in late 1990s and later. All the afforestation programmes were unified under a Forest Development Authority during 2002-03. The formation of VSSs also continued under the Orissa Forestry Sector Development Project in 2006. However, the functioning of PFM has been weak and discriminatory to the disadvantage of weaker groups like the poor and women. Despite several measures undertaken by the state authorities, the conditions of forest-dwellers have not improved much.

Even though the PFM has been growing in Orissa over the last few years, its functioning is weak, because of lack of effective participation of the poor and several other factors. As a result, the livelihood conditions of the forest-dwelling communities in the state continue to be pathetic.