

PREFACE TO THE EDITION

It is with great pleasure that we present the latest issue of the Journal of Economic Insights and Research (JEIR). This issue brings together a collection of scholarly contributions that explore critical dimensions of economic development, public policy, labour markets, agricultural sustainability, infrastructure, education, migration, and social welfare. Through rigorous empirical investigation and the application of contemporary econometric techniques, the articles published in this volume provide valuable insights into the economic challenges and opportunities confronting India in an era of rapid structural transformation.

The issue opens with an important investigation into the relationship between climate change and agricultural productivity, offering robust panel-data evidence on the non-linear effects of temperature and rainfall across Indian states. The study highlights the growing necessity of climate adaptation strategies, emphasizing investments in irrigation, resilient agricultural technologies, and sustainable farming practices to safeguard food security and rural livelihoods.

Education, as a cornerstone of economic development, receives focused attention through a comprehensive analysis of the returns to schooling in India. Employing an instrumental variables approach based on the District Primary Education Programme, the study provides credible estimates of the economic value of education while highlighting the particularly strong returns experienced by women. The findings reinforce the importance of continued investment in equitable access to quality education as a catalyst for inclusive growth.

Migration and financial flows remain central to India's development narrative. The article examining international remittances and economic growth in Kerala provides compelling evidence that remittance inflows contribute significantly to long-term economic performance when supported by well-developed financial institutions. The research underscores the productive role of diaspora capital in regional development and offers policy recommendations for enhancing financial inclusion and investment opportunities.

Infrastructure-led development is examined through a rigorous evaluation of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) using regression discontinuity methods. The study demonstrates how rural road connectivity improves household welfare, expands employment opportunities beyond agriculture, and contributes meaningfully to poverty reduction. Its findings reaffirm the transformative role of public infrastructure in fostering inclusive and balanced economic development.

Public employment programmes are similarly evaluated through an empirical assessment of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA). Using a Difference-in-Differences framework, the research presents convincing evidence of improvements in household consumption, rural wages, female labour force participation, and poverty reduction. The study contributes significantly to the growing literature on social protection and demonstrates how well-designed employment guarantee programmes can strengthen rural resilience and economic security.

Complementing these empirical investigations, the issue concludes with a comprehensive review of social security policies and welfare schemes in India. By examining the objectives, implementation, and coverage of major government programmes, the paper offers an informative overview of India's evolving social protection architecture and its role in promoting inclusive development and improving the quality of life for vulnerable populations.

Collectively, the articles published in this issue reflect the journal's commitment to advancing high-quality economic research that combines methodological rigor with practical policy relevance. The contributors employ diverse analytical frameworks—including panel data estimation, instrumental variables, autoregressive distributed lag models, regression discontinuity designs, difference-in-differences analysis, and policy reviews—to generate evidence capable of informing academic debate as well as public decision-making.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the authors for their valuable scholarly contributions and to the reviewers whose expertise and thoughtful evaluations have ensured the academic quality of this issue. We also acknowledge the unwavering support of our Editorial Board, whose dedication continues to uphold the standards and vision of the journal.

We trust that the research presented in this volume will stimulate meaningful academic discussion, inspire future investigations, and contribute to the formulation of sound economic policies that promote sustainable, equitable, and inclusive development.

Dr. Sinitha Xavier
Chief Editor

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