

PREFACE TO THE EDITION

It is with great pleasure that we present the forthcoming issue of the **Journal of Economic Insights and Research (JEIR)**, bringing together a diverse collection of studies that examine contemporary economic issues through empirical, methodological, and policy-oriented perspectives. The articles in this issue reflect the changing nature of economic systems and highlight the importance of rigorous evidence in understanding markets, institutions, labour, technology, and public policy.

The issue opens with a methodological contribution on gold price risk assessment, which explores the application of reliability and survival analysis to commodity price behaviour. By examining adverse gold-price events through reliability concepts, the study demonstrates both the potential and the limitations of applying survival-analysis frameworks to financial markets. Its emphasis on methodological interpretation and the boundaries of statistical inference provides a valuable contribution to the study of commodity risk.

The issue then turns to an important labour-market question in India through an examination of fare-free public transport and female labour supply. Using staggered policy reforms across Indian states and robust econometric approaches, the study investigates whether reducing transportation costs can encourage women's participation in the labour market. Its findings draw attention to the role of mobility in shaping employment opportunities, particularly for urban women and those whose work requires travel beyond their immediate locality.

The transformative influence of Artificial Intelligence on the global economy is examined in another contribution. Addressing economic growth, productivity, employment, international trade, innovation, and inequality, the study presents AI as both an opportunity and a source of significant economic and policy challenges. The discussion of technological preparedness, workforce reskilling, ethical governance, cybersecurity, and unequal access to digital infrastructure underscores the need for inclusive approaches to technological transformation.

The issue also presents an analysis of India–Russia bilateral trade, examining recent trade patterns alongside the macroeconomic factors influencing bilateral trade flows. Particular attention is given to energy imports, the persistent trade deficit, oil prices, exchange-rate movements, and the broader prospects for strengthening economic relations between the two countries. The study provides useful insights into the interaction between international commodity markets and bilateral trade relationships.

The relationship between public health expenditure, governance quality, and infant mortality forms another important theme of this issue. Through a dynamic panel analysis of Indian states, the study demonstrates that the effectiveness of public health expenditure is closely connected with administrative capacity. The findings therefore move beyond the question of how much governments spend to consider the equally important question of how effectively public resources are translated into health outcomes.

The issue concludes with an examination of the size and composition of India's gig workforce, with particular attention to Assam and the Guwahati Metropolitan Area. By considering sectoral, occupational, skill-level, and formal–informal dimensions of gig employment, the study contributes to understanding an increasingly important component of India's changing labour market and provides a framework for estimating the scale of gig work at the sub-national level.

Taken together, the contributions in this issue demonstrate the breadth of contemporary economic inquiry. From financial-market risk and monetary transmission to women's employment, technological transformation, international trade, public health, and emerging forms of work, the studies illustrate how economic analysis increasingly intersects with social, technological, institutional, and policy dimensions. They also reinforce the importance of methodological rigour, reliable evidence, and careful interpretation when addressing complex economic realities.

We hope that this issue of the Journal of Economic Insights and Research will stimulate further academic discussion, encourage new research, and provide useful insights for researchers, economists, policymakers, practitioners, and students. We sincerely thank all the authors, reviewers, and editorial contributors whose efforts have made this issue possible.

Dr. Sinitha Xavier
Chief Editor

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