

PREFACE TO THE EDITION

It is with great pleasure that we present the latest issue of the **Journal of Economic Insights and Research (JEIR)**, a scholarly platform dedicated to advancing rigorous inquiry into contemporary economic challenges and policy transformations. The articles featured in this issue collectively engage with some of the most pressing developmental concerns confronting India today, climate vulnerability, educational inequality, migration and remittance economies, rural infrastructure, labour welfare, and inclusive growth. Through the use of sophisticated empirical methodologies and policy-oriented analysis, the contributors demonstrate how modern economic research can illuminate pathways toward equitable and sustainable development.

A central theme emerging across this issue is the importance of evidence-based public policy. The opening article on climate change and agricultural productivity in Indian states offers a compelling assessment of how rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns are already influencing agricultural outcomes across the country. By employing panel-data techniques and non-linear climate specifications, the study provides important insights into adaptation strategies and the critical role of irrigation and climate-resilient technologies in protecting rural livelihoods.

The second contribution revisits one of the foundational questions in labour economics: the returns to education. Using the District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) as an instrumental variable, the study advances the literature on human capital formation in India and provides robust evidence of the economic value of schooling, particularly for women. The findings reinforce the transformative role of public investment in education and highlight its long-term implications for productivity, equity, and social mobility.

Regional development and migration economics are further explored through the study on remittances and economic growth in Kerala. By examining the relationship between international remittance inflows and state-level economic performance, the article contributes to ongoing debates regarding migration-led development. Its findings underscore the importance of financial intermediation and institutional capacity in translating diaspora earnings into productive economic growth.

Infrastructure and welfare are examined through an innovative regression discontinuity analysis of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY). The article provides strong causal evidence that rural road connectivity significantly improves household welfare, employment diversification, and poverty reduction. In doing so, it reaffirms the developmental importance of transport infrastructure as a catalyst for structural transformation in agrarian economies.

The issue concludes with a rigorous evaluation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), one of the world's largest public employment programmes. Using a Difference-in-Differences framework, the study demonstrates measurable gains in rural welfare, wages, and female labour-force participation, particularly among marginalized communities. The findings contribute meaningfully to debates on social protection, employment guarantees, and inclusive policy design in developing economies.

Collectively, the studies published in this issue reflect the growing methodological sophistication of contemporary economic research in India. They draw upon advanced econometric tools—including fixed-effects modelling, instrumental variables estimation, ARDL bounds testing, regression discontinuity design, and Difference-in-Differences approaches—to address real-world policy concerns with analytical clarity and empirical precision. Beyond their academic contributions, these articles speak directly to policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners seeking solutions to the interconnected challenges of growth, inequality, sustainability, and social welfare.

We extend our sincere appreciation to all authors, reviewers, editorial board members, and contributors whose dedication and scholarly commitment made this issue possible. We hope that the research presented in this volume will stimulate further discussion, inspire future inquiry, and contribute to informed policy discourse in economics and development studies.

Dr. Sinitha Xavier
Chief Editor

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