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AGRICULTURE

1. Singh, Sukhpal Kaur Manjeet and H S Kingra

[Agrarian Crisis and Agricultural Labourer Suicides in Punjab](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 13, 27 March, 2021

Punjab's economy is engulfed in a serious agrarian crisis. The capitalisation of agricultural production processes has squeezed employment opportunities and wage rates in the farm sector. The agrarian crisis in the state has pushed the agricultural labourers towards low earnings and debt traps, which have led them towards death by suicide. Based on a door-to-door and village-to-village survey of 2,400 villages falling in the jurisdiction of six districts of Punjab, the present study reveals that 7,303 agricultural labourers died by suicide in the state during 2000–18. The financial compensation, debt waiver, provision of healthcare and education of victim families along with safeguarding of legal entitlements regarding wage enhancements and land rights, and agro-industrialisation are main policy measures for addressing the act of suicide by agricultural labourers.

ECONOMICS

2. Awasthi, Arvind and Shukla Siddharth

[Cooperative or Coercive Federalism - Union Budget 2021–22](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 12, 20 March, 2021

The purpose of this article is to throw light on certain provisions of the Union Budget 2021–22 that have diluted the spirit of cooperative federalism in the country. These setbacks for the states will eventually push them at a subordinate position vis-à-vis central government, defeating the core principle of cooperative federalism.

EDUCATION

3. Kar, Biswajit and Sinha, Sachidanand

[Disadvantages and Segregation through School Choice - Elementary Education in India](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 12, 20 March, 2021

The manner in which privatisation in elementary education in India changes student composition, which then creates segregation across school types, is analysed. A unique situation where reproduction of the already existing advantage–disadvantage continuum across social groups gets reinforced, children from the historically deprived socio-economic groups are largely confined to public-funded schools.

HEALTH

4. Gupta, Atul

Impacts of Performance Pay for Hospitals: The Readmissions Reduction Program

AMERICAN ECONOMIC REVIEW: VOL. 111, No. 4, APRIL 2021

US policy increasingly ties payments for providers to performance on quality measures, though little empirical evidence guides the design of such incentives. I deploy administrative data to study a large federal program that penalizes hospitals with high readmissions rates. Using policy-driven variation in the penalty incentive across hospitals for identification, I find that hospital responses to the penalty account for two-thirds of the observed decrease in readmissions over this period, as well as a decrease in heart attack mortality. Quality improvement accounts for about one-half of the decrease in readmissions; the remainder is explained by selective admission of returning patients.

5. Nithyananda K V

COVID-19 Vaccines - Legal and Consumer Issues

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 15, 10 April, 2021

The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and National Disaster Management Act, 2005 grant the Government of India a great deal of autonomy and control in declaring an infectious disease as a pandemic and in suspending citizen's rights. Three distinct but related legal issues regarding the government's handling of intellectual property rights under the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Agreement of the World Trade Organization, consumer rights, and product liability for the COVID-19 vaccines are discussed, as the raging pandemic has created uncertainties in the implementation of these laws.

MONETARY POLICY

6. Juan J. Dolado, Gergő Motyovszki and Evi Pappa

Monetary Policy and Inequality under Labor Market Frictions and Capital-Skill Complementarity

AMERICAN ECONOMIC JOURNAL: MACROECONOMICS: VOL. 13, NO. 2, APRIL 2021

We provide a new channel through which monetary policy has distributional consequences at business cycle frequencies. We show that an unexpected monetary easing increases labor income inequality between high-skilled and less-skilled workers. To rationalize these findings, we build a New Keynesian DSGE model with asymmetric search-and-matching (SAM) frictions and capital-skill complementarity (CSC) in production. We show that CSC on its own introduces a dynamic demand amplification mechanism: the increase in high-skilled employment after a monetary expansion makes complementary capital more productive, encouraging a further rise in investment demand and creating a multiplier effect. SAM asymmetries magnify this channel.

7. Bilge Erten, Anton Korinek and José Antonio Ocampo

Capital Controls: Theory and Evidence

Journal of Economic Literature: Vol. 59 No. 1 March 2021

This paper synthesizes recent advances in the theoretical and empirical literature on capital controls. We start by observing that international capital flows have both benefits and costs, but some of these are not internalized by individual actors and thus constitute externalities. The theoretical literature has identified pecuniary externalities and aggregate demand externalities that respectively contribute to financial instability and recessions. These externalities provide a natural rationale for countercyclical capital controls that lean against boom and bust cycles in international capital flows. The empirical literature has developed several measures of capital controls to capture different aspects of capital account openness. We evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different measures and provide an overview of the empirical findings on the effectiveness of capital controls in addressing the externalities identified by the theory literature, that is, in reducing financial fragility and enhancing macroeconomic stability. We also discuss strategies to deal with the endogeneity of capital controls in such statistical exercises. We conclude by providing an overview of

the historical and current debates on the role of capital controls in macroeconomic management and their relationship to the academic literature.

TECHNOLOGY

8. Muralidharan, Karthik, Paul Niehaus, Sukhtankar, Sandip and Jeffrey Weaver
Improving Last-Mile Service Delivery Using Phone-Based Monitoring
AMERICAN ECONOMIC JOURNAL: APPLIED ECONOMICS: VOL. 13, NO. 2,
APRIL 2021

Improving "last-mile" public service delivery is a recurring challenge in developing countries. Could the widespread adoption of mobile phones provide a scalable, cost-effective means for improvement? We use a large-scale experiment to evaluate the impact of phone-based monitoring on a program that transferred nearly a billion dollars to 5.7 million Indian farmers. In randomly selected jurisdictions, officials were informed that program implementation would be measured via calls with beneficiaries. This led to a 7.8 percent reduction in the number of farmers who did not receive their transfers. The program was highly cost-effective, costing 3.6 cents for each additional dollar delivered.

TRADE

9. Emmanuel Dhyne, Ayumu Ken Kikkawa, Magne Mogstad and Felix Tintelnot
Trade and Domestic Production Networks
Review of Economic Studies: Vol.88, No. 2, March 2021

We examine how many and what kind of firms ultimately rely on foreign inputs, sell to foreign markets, and are affected by trade shocks. To capture that firms can trade indirectly by buying from or selling to domestic firms that import or export, we use Belgian data with information on both domestic firm-to-firm sales and foreign trade transactions. We find that most firms use a lot of foreign inputs, but only a small number of firms show that dependence through direct imports. While direct exporters are rare, a majority of firms are indirectly exporting. In most firms, however, indirect export is quantitatively modest, and sales at home are the key source of revenue. We show that what matters for the transmission of foreign demand shocks to a firm's revenue is how much the firm ultimately sells to foreign markets, not whether these sales are from direct or indirect export.

WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

10. Raja Krishna Murthy Morla

[Performance of Women and Child Development Sector in India - A Critical Evaluation](#)

EPW: Vol. 56, Issue No. 13, 27 March, 2021

This article is a sector-level analysis and evaluation of schemes for women and child development in India. It also makes recommendations towards the end wherein it is said that a synergy between various ministries working for child and women protection is needed for their wholesome development and empowerment.