

Abstracts

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Understanding of Urban Poverty in Central Durban , South Africa

Thorin Roberts, Department of Sociology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban 4041, South Africa (Email: robertst@ukzn.ac.za), in this descriptive study uses micro-ethnographic techniques to present a qualitative exploration of the subjective experiences of poverty in central Durban. Rather than describing the objective characteristics of poverty through quantitative methods, the author sets out to understand poverty through the subjective experiences and conceptual frameworks of those who are themselves poor. The author provides a defence for the use of qualitative methods in poverty studies before presenting selected extracts from, and an analysis of the micro-ethnographic interviews carried out with residents of night shelters in central Durban. This study brings to light the important role qualitative data can play in better informing the conceptualisation of quantitative studies. More importantly it displays how the qualitative approach is able to lift the individual experience out of the statistical generalisations of the quantitative method and give the reader a real sense of what poverty means to those who are trapped in it.

“Power Corrupts ...”: A Study of Power Purchase Agreements in Andhra Pradesh , India .

M.V.S. Koteswara Rao and B.P.C. Bose, both professors at the Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar 522 510, Guntur Andhra Pradesh, India (Emails: mvsrk2002@yahoo.com and bpcbose@bmail.com respectively), present the spectacular growth of the Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board (APSEB) in India and the methods adopted by the State Government to make it an unviable enterprise. The authors argue that the private entrepreneur, in the name of Power Purchasing Agreements, was given undue benefit at the cost of public money and confidence. Coupled with this are the failure of the State Government to meet its statutory obligations, its failure to keep a healthy balance between thermal and hydroelectric power and its inability to control the power theft that forced the APSEB to borrow heavily and become an unviable sector. The authors contend that the purpose of these agreements is nothing but to pamper the promoters at the cost of public money.

Social Networks and Health Decisions: A Case of Two Villages in Tamil Nadu , India

K Srinivasan, Assistant Professor, Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management- Kerala, Park Centre, Technopark, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 581, Kerala, India (Email: ksrini7@gmail.com), and Raka Sharan, currently visiting professor at the LNM Institute of Information Technology, Jaipur, Rupa ki Nangal, Post Sumel, Jaipur-303 012, Rajasthan, India (Email: raka@iitk.ac.in), view the community as an interactive agency and part of a social network. Decisions are often made in isolation but they are the products of influence and confluence of social correlates. Studies of some sociologists report that often decisions are made in consultation with their community members. This understanding shifts the focus from individuals 'choice' to socially constructed patterns of decisions, including the consultation with others. Social networks provide the mechanism through which individuals learn to handle their problematic issues. Attempting to understand the extent of social network influence on health issues, the authors focus on the processes involved in the health decisions of a selected rural population in the state of Tamil Nadu in India .

Other Papers:

Consumption: A Cultural Product -Biju Vincent

Towards an Agenda for Communication and Development in South Africa -Simon Burton

Globalisation and Human Rights-Thushara James

Fostering Urban Development: Need for Scientific Data -Loyola Research Team

Wealth from Waste: Experience of Thumpoli Women (Kerala, South India)-MK George,, Kochurani Mathew, Jessy and Maya M,