

Abstracts

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Post-Apartheid South African Muslim Migration to Brisbane, Australia

Goolam Vahed, *Department of Historical Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 4041, South Africa (email: vahedg@ukzn.ac.za)* examines the migration of Indian Muslims from post-apartheid South Africa to Brisbane, Australia. The focus is on the reasons for emigration, migrants' impression of the host society, and their relationship with the broader Muslim and mainstream Australian society, especially post-9/11. Migrants emigrated largely because of concerns around violence and crime, and to a lesser extent fears of affirmative action, and political and economic uncertainty. While most found the move difficult, they gradually established the infrastructure to live 'proper' Muslim lives. Religion has been important in assisting migrants adjust to their new home even while religious practices and identities have been undergoing change. Migrants straddle several identities—Indian, Muslim, South African, Australian—which are constantly being reconfigured, although being Muslim seems to be more salient in Australia than it was in South Africa. The identity 'Muslim' is being reimagined into a 'Southern African' one. The question of a broader organic 'Australian Muslim' identity remains unresolved because of the many differences among Muslims who are only drawn together by being homogenised by outsiders.

Urbanisation and Economic Performance in West Africa

Olusegun Odularu Gbadebo, *Department of Economics and Development Studies, College of Business and Social Sciences (CBS), Covenant University, P.M.B. 1023, Km 10 Idiroko Road, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria (email: gbcovenant@yahoo.com)* investigates the relationship between urbanisation and economic development in West Africa, specifically the impact of urbanisation measures on economic growth (as measured by growth rate of real GDP per capita for the West African countries). The paper aims at ascertaining empirically the relationship between urbanisation and economic growth for West African countries from 1995–2004. The relationship is analysed using panel data approach and Arellano- Bond estimator for dynamic panels. The study estimates the relationship between economic growth and urban growth conditional on main macroeconomic variables. Urbanisation plays a significant role in the provision of employment opportunities. The urban areas are the most crucial readily available markets in most developing countries. Urbanisation could partly help in the improvement of the welfare level of the citizenry, thereby targeting the attainment of the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The study hopes to recommend policies that would help in managing urbanisation and at the same time fostering economic growth in West Africa.

Socio-Demographic Factors and Fertility in Rajshahi District, Bangladesh

Md. Mosiur Rahman, *Department of Population Science and Human Resource Development, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh (email: swaponru_2000@yahoo.com)* investigates the effects of socio-demographic characteristics on fertility of the ever-married females. Using the information from 2,000 ever married women of Rajshahi district within the reproductive span (15-49 years), finds that age at first marriage, age at first birth, duration of breastfeeding, and women's level of education play an important and significant role in reducing reproductive performance of women. The rural residents have a higher fertility than that of urban areas. Muslims have higher fertility than non-Muslims. Women with independent working status (paying jobs) have slightly lower fertility than those not involved in paying jobs. This study helps in understanding the influence of some selected socio-demographic factors in reducing fertility and may provide comprehensive information about the components, which significantly affect fertility.

Konkani and Assertive Multilingualism in Goa, India

Ganesh Somayaji and Joanna Coelho, *Department of Sociology, Goa University, Goa – 403 206, India (email: ganesh@unigoa.ac.in and joannc1@rediffmail.com respectively)* think that the magnitude of multilingualism in India has made scholars wonder how communication happens and how social cohesion is maintained. This linguistic diversity itself is not a problem but it is what we intend to do with this diversity that could be a problem. One feature of the multilingual heritage of India is the addition of languages rather than the reduction. A recurring factor in the emergence of new languages is the challenge to the existing socio-political order by an emerging social group that seeks a separate cultural, social and political identity and power. Situating itself in this context, the authors examine the relation between the changing nuances of the Konkani language and society of Goa in India. This phenomenon is a characteristic feature of linguistic plurality, not only in Goa but in India as a whole. The paper deals with the shift from organic accommodating linguistic plurality to institutional assertive multilingualism, while focusing on two issues pertaining to assertive multilingualism in Goa. The authors feel that there is a clear transition from functional multilingualism to contested multilingualism, and that some form of language-related conflict has always been present.

Rural Poverty Reduction in Cameroon: Current Trends in Policy Approaches

Fombe Lawrence Fon, *Department of Geography, University of Buea, P. O. Box 63, Buea, SW Province, Cameroon (fombef@yahoo.co.uk)* and **Ajuh Joshua Fon**, *Department of Geography, University of Yaoundé I, Boite Postale 755, Yaounde, Cameroon* present the scenario of poverty in Cameroon where the poor lack opportunities and are deprived of social and public amenities. The lack of educated and committed leaders or policy makers further adds to their woes. This paper highlights the concern for the rural poor as the imbalance in the socio-economic and other developments which create a type of core-periphery or dichotomous human milieu. This concern also stems from the large income, poverty, nutrition, health, education and infrastructure gaps between the rich and the poor,

which are widening in spite of attempts by the government to harness the problem. Some past and recent approaches towards rural poverty reduction have been analysed, looking at the dismal situation in Cameroon. The authors note that integrating the poor in the fight against poverty is instrumental because they feel the pains and can always propose ways in which it can be relieved. The point here is that apart from pure economists, economic geographers and development planners must put in a lot of effort to ensure that rural poverty reduction can be physically apparent.

The Child Support Grant as a Means of Addressing Child Poverty: South African Experiences in the Post-Apartheid Era

Barbara Simpson, *School of Social Work and Community Development, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, 4041, South Africa (simpson@ukzn.ac.za)* in this paper says that South Africa has introduced a child support grant as a poverty alleviation measure to specifically target poor children. This is a means-tested, cash transfer paid to the primary caregiver of the child up to the age of 14. This article analyses the child support grant and examines whether it is indeed addressing child poverty. The extent of child poverty in South Africa is described and the child support grant is discussed in the context of the South African economic and social security systems. The impact of the grant is assessed by means of a review of relevant literature and research. The results of the literature review indicate that despite concerns that the child support grant is not reaching the country's poorest children, it has made good progress in improving the lives of children and that nearly eight million children now receive the grant. Evidence is emerging that the grant positively impacts on the nutritional status and school attendance of children. The means test and the requirement that children have identity documents are identified as obstacles to the implementation of the grant and the article concludes by examining an alternate recommendation by many concerned parties in South Africa that the child support grant be replaced by a universal basic income grant.