

Abstracts

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Effects of Female Education, Age at Marriage and Age at First Birth on Fertility in Rajshahi District, Bangladesh

Md. Ismail Tareque, *Department of Population Science and Human Resource Development, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi-6205, Bangladesh (email: tareque_pshd@yahoo.com)* presents the findings of a study of education, age at marriage, and age at first birth of ever-married women and their impact on fertility in Bangladesh. The data were collected from a survey of 2,250 ever-married women in urban areas and 2,250 ever-married women in rural areas of Rajshahi district, Bangladesh. The study reveals that about 80 percent of respondents in rural and 64 percent of respondents in urban areas were married when under 18 years. More educated women were married at higher ages. More educated women are not interested in early marriage. The study also shows that, in all areas of Rajshahi district, as age at marriage and age at first birth increase, the ever-married women are less likely to have 3+ children.

Equality of Siblings and Alienation from the Umbilical Cord: The Unintended Effects of South Africa's New Customary Marriages and Proposed Inheritance Laws

Thokozani Xaba, *School of Social Work and Community Development, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban 4041, South Africa (email: xabat@ukzn.ac.za)*, **Mothokoa Mamashela**, *College of Law and Management Studies, University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Pietermaritzburg 3209, South Africa*, and **Bulelwa Magudu**, *Policy Research, Gender Commission, KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 4000, South Africa*, in their paper use the principle of valuing local culture and systems to highlight the implications of the South African Law Commission's Discussion Paper 93 of Project 90 on the integrity of African families, particularly those in rural areas. Using the Bill of Rights, discussion Paper 93 proposes that the Customary Law of Succession is unconstitutional and should be done away with and that there should be equality among the offspring of married people whether the offspring were produced in or out of wedlock. This paper argues that the intentions of the customary system of primogeniture to keep family property (primarily the household) in family hands will be subverted by proposals of Discussion Paper 93. Specifically, this means that the equalisation of status and rights among siblings will result in the alienation of members from the household, what the household stands for (symbolically and in fact) and, consequently, from the ancestors. This paper argues that such outcomes became possible because the value of local cultures and systems were not taken into consideration when the proposals were made.

Informal Sector and Political Cooptation in Lesotho: The Case of Street Vendors

Pius T. Tanga, *Department of Social Anthropology/Sociology, National University of Lesotho, P. O. Roma 180, Lesotho (email: tanga8_2000@yahoo.co.uk)* examines whether political cooptation is practised in Lesotho's informal sector of street vending, especially as African countries' leadership constantly seeks for avenues to politically corrupt, thereby eliciting their support in elections. The study was conducted in Lesotho in 2007 with 556 street vendors, using semi-structured questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions. The findings show that there was little in terms of political cooptation of vendors by government or political parties in Lesotho. However, political parties most often make promises during campaigns but these promises are not meant to placate them in exchange for favours with regard to their trade, street vending. This is unlike in many developing countries where governments attempt to control such organisations for their selfish interests.

The International Sociological Association's 2006 'XVI World Congress of Sociology' and Sociology Today: A Documentary Analysis

Geoff Waters, *Faculty (retired), Sociology Programme, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 4041, South Africa (Resi: 46 Kentucky Drive, Durban North 4051, South Africa; email: geoffwaters@24.com)* reports on a content analysis of official documents from the ISA's 2006 'XVI World Congress of Sociology' and identifies what this suggests concerning the nature of contemporary Sociology as a whole. Focusing primarily on the official congress Programme, it analyses both a sample drawn from the 'List of Authors' and complete enumerations of various congress sessions. In terms of the number of participants, their specialised areas of interest, and the distribution of both prestige and authority, the developed world is identified as having dominated the Congress, with Europe being the leading region but the United States the dominant nation. Variations in the degree and nature of intellectual interests are found amongst developing nations represented. It is suggested that these are all hallmarks of contemporary Sociology as a whole. Sociology today, it is further suggested, is therefore a mildly reformist discipline that is pursued primarily in democracies in both the developed and developing worlds, with the former dominating the latter in all these respects.

Accumulation Strategies in the Merchant Navy and its Impact on Seafaring Labour Markets

Shaun Ruggunan, Industrial, Organisational and Labour Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban 4041, South Africa (email: ruggunans@ukzn.ac.za), in this paper demonstrates the complex ways in which shipping capital has restructured since the 1970s. He argues that in keeping with the shift from Fordist to post Fordist modes of regulation, shipping capital has been restructured. The article further demonstrates how this restructuring has played out in the industry. The oil crises of 1973 and 1979 impacted profoundly on the profitability of shipping companies. In their efforts to remain commercially viable, shippers engaged in three strategies to prevent falling profit rates. These include the tendency of shipping companies to engage in post Fordist accumulation strategies such as flag of convenience (FOC) shipping to absorb high labour costs; to engage in organisational restructuring of their companies to make them more profitable; and to take full advantage of the post Fordist technological revolution to ameliorate declining profit levels. The article presents how shipping companies engaged in post Fordist practices to ameliorate falling profit rates and the consequences of this for seafaring labour.

Life Skills Development Programme for the Mental Health of Juveniles in Kerala, India

Jessy John, Faculty Member, ICFAI National College, Jaipur, India (Resi: Plot No. 75, G-2, Shine Residency, Shanti Nagar, D.C.M Extension, Ajmer Road, Jaipur, Rajasthan-302019, India (email: jessyjohn03@gmail.com) argues that juveniles who are institutionalised in juvenile homes for care and protection are often perceived as detrimental to society who cannot be moulded into fruitful persons. This negative perception towards institutionalised children prevails even among officials of juvenile homes because of repeated incidences of juveniles escaping from juvenile homes, violence, unhealthy sexual behaviour and recidivism of criminal behaviour both during and after institutionalisation. This paper throws light on the fact that mere institutionalisation and vocation based training is not sufficient to build the juvenile's skills for facing adverse circumstances of life. This paper is an endeavour to seek the attention of the Social Welfare Department of Kerala about the need to inculcate life skills training in juvenile homes not only to improve the mental health of juveniles but also to equip them with the necessary skills for facing the challenges of life. The paper is framed on experimental methodology with the aim to find out the significant levels of improvement that a life skills development programme can bring forth in the mental health of juveniles in juvenile homes.

Review Essay:

Media, Communication, and Children - R. Sooryamoorthy