

India-China Conference - 2018
Economic Growth in India and China: Social and Economic Impacts
Jointly organised by Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC)
and
Sichuan Academy of Social Sciences (SASS)
26-27 September 2018

Concept Note

With increasing economic growth, India and China, being two large and rapidly growing economies of the world, have been the subject of much global debate. Their per capita incomes have grown fast since the decade of their liberalization and economic reforms, respectively 1991 and 1978 for India and China. A number of scholars and studies have examined the implications of the rapid rise of India and China and their consequences. Although the rise of India has been less dramatic than that of China which has nearly become an economic super power recently, there is a need to understand rapid economic growth and their causes in the context of two different political systems.

Further, few countries have reached high per capita income levels without urbanizing adequately. India and China have been constantly urbanizing, although China has urbanized more rapidly than the former, with urbanization contributing significantly to economic growth and output in each of the countries. While in India, the natural growth rate of population is a major contributor to urbanization, in China, the hukou system has led to a situation where Chinese cities are largely under-sized, leading to cutting back on city level economies of scale.

With Beijing and Delhi and many other Chinese and Indian cities being engulfed with smog and pollution, carbon emissions have assumed tremendous importance in the policy debates in each of the two countries, especially because of their implications for public health and mortality. Urbanization and its associated economic activities -- manufacturing, fuel consumption, mobility, are all polluting by nature, with the result cities in these countries have been frequently blamed for carbon emissions.

There are also concerns being raised in each of the countries about the impacts of increasing urbanization, as to whether it poses a threat for food security, with declining land for agricultural production. But there are studies which show that in each of the two countries, the process of urbanization has been continuing without affecting agricultural productivity, just as Lewis' two-sector model of growth predicts—that labor can be moved out of agriculture, without impacting agricultural productivity or output.

Urbanization and economic growth have led to spiralling land and housing prices in each of the countries, to the point of making them unaffordable to the common man. But the local governments in each of the two countries are weak in terms of their autonomy, and finances. Nonetheless, land has

become a viable source of financing for cities and local governments in each of the two countries, which has enabled many of them to provide good basic infrastructure and public services. Hence there is a need to study the structure of the local government in each of the two countries, and to understand if there are best practices to be learned from each other.

Poverty is a major concern in each of the two countries. While urban poverty is more challenging than rural poverty by nature, proponents of rural and agricultural growth argue the other way. Nonetheless urban poverty is characterized by food insecurity, social exclusion and housing unaffordability while rural poverty could be characterized by lack of access to basic services such as health and education. Hence there is a need to study both and the relative importance of rural and urban poverty in each of the two countries.

There are also social impacts that are unprecedented with the result of rapid economic growth, social exclusion being the most important. India's two percent of the population, and China's six percent of the population, most of whom live in poverty as per some estimates, will constitute the world's largest disabled population. In this context, it is important to explore if there have been proactive policies for the physically disabled in each of the two countries. However, community cohesiveness may be more prominent in the aftermath of urbanization and economic growth, and social integration may also be occurring in each of the countries and some recent research testifies to this.

Taking into account the above context, we are inviting broad papers that address these issues, to deliberate in this Conference:

1. Economic growth and development;
2. Urbanization and their social and economic effects;
3. Land and housing;
4. Pollution and the environment;
5. Finances of local governments;
6. Urban and rural poverty;
7. Migration;
8. Programmes and policies for the physically disabled and visually impaired.

Important Dates:

Expression of interest with author names, institutional affiliation, and paper title: 26th March, 2018

Last date for 500-word abstract submission: 15th May 2018

Full paper submission: 15th June 2018

Conference Dates: 26-27th September 2018

Those intending to contribute papers to the Conference should submit abstract to the seminar coordinators by email to isecsass2018@gmail.com.