

Abstract

The paper explores the extent to which people adapt to their deprived living conditions and what kind of form adaptation processes take. The study combines quantitative and qualitative information drawing back on survey data and case studies from two villages in Andhra Pradesh, India. One of the contributions of the paper is that two distinct adaptation processes in the context of poverty are identified, namely resignation and optimism.

Keywords: Adaptation, Subjective wellbeing, Poverty, India

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to D. Akthavala, K. Tejokiran and K. Sasikumar for their help in collecting the data on which this paper is based. I also want to acknowledge the support of the UK Economic and Social Research Council in form of a +3 Ph.D. studentship. An initial version of this paper has been revised with helpful comments and suggestions from David A. Clark, Laura Camfield, Wendy Olsen, Andrew Howes and Peter Rooney.

Daniel Neff is a final year PhD candidate at the Centre for Census and Survey Research (CCSR) and the Institute of Development Policy and Management (IDPM), University of Manchester, UK.