Welcome to the July-September edition of JJDMS. This issue includes five articles on diverse social problems like socio-cultural determinants of health among tribals of Jharkhand, encapsulation of HDI indicators of Jharkhand, elementary education in Bihar, health care and ageing among old widows, and oil exploration and issues of rural livelihood. Besides, two book reviews have also been incorporated in this general issue of the journal. The brief ideas about the papers are mentioned below.

The first article titled “Health and culture nexus among Oraon female adolescents in Jharkhand” by Papia Raj and Kumari Vibhuti Nayak addresses the influence of culture in shaping the perceptions of health among female adolescents of Oraon tribe of Jharkhand. By using ethnographic method and analyzing the field data collected from Gokulpur village in Gumla district of Jharkhand, the authors have found that Oraon female adolescents view health as daily routine performance, i.e. their ability to remain physically active and work according to their prescribed roles like doing household and agricultural works, rearing cattle, selling agricultural products in market and taking care of the family members. The study expects to give voice to the health concerns of the tribal female adolescents and intends to contribute towards framing of informed government policies for tribal communities, particularly to the policy of health for Oraon female adolescents. The authors believe that the findings of the study could be helpful in developing tribal health policy specifically in Jharkhand.

Human Development Index provides a useful yardstick by which one can gauge the human development of a country or state relative to others. In the second paper titled “Human Development Index: Encapsulation of indicators of well-being of Jharkhand”, Shiv Kumar has made an attempt to examine the inter-district variation in multiple dimensions of Human Development Index of Jharkhand. By analyzing secondary data from various relevant sources the author has computed HDI of Jharkhand under the dimension of education, income and health. The study concludes that in Jharkhand E. Singhbhum is the most developed district followed by Dhanbad and Ranchi. On the other hand, Godda was found to be the most backward district in Jharkhand preceded by Pakur, Chatra and Giridih. According to the author, the HDI may be a very useful element to focus on the developmental picture of indicators of the districts. Problems like corruption, naxalism, and failure of programs, regional imbalance and concentration of the
development in limited pockets/area are pulling the State back. The author believes that the regular assessment of the districts on the basis of HDI at regular intervals of time could be of immense importance for human development in the State.

There has been a very long history of neglect and complacency about the growing educational backwardness in the state of Bihar. For measuring the performance of the competing districts under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) it is important to analyse the current learning levels of the children enrolled in the elementary schools and also to understand the gap between teaching-learning processes. The third paper titled “Elementary education in Bihar: A situational analysis” by Chandra B. P. Singh and Madhu Ranjan Kumar attempts to examine the district wise Educational Development Index (EDI) of Bihar and their trends of improvement. By analyzing secondary data of the previous two years 2014-15 and 2015-16 the authors have found that there are certainly many signs of change in the context of elementary education in Bihar. The authors argue that increasing access without increasing chances of success is becoming a new form of social exclusion within the education system. The authors believe that a large scale assessment cannot simply ensure quality improvement in learning unless the system is ready to reflect on the findings and use them for improving the situation of elementary education in Bihar.

Health care issues of aged people need special attention as it is claimed that multiple illnesses and physical ailments often accompany ageing. In India the share of elderly in the total population is increasing. In the fourth paper titled “Health care and ageing: A study of old widows in rural Haryana” Kanchan Bharati and Sandhya R. Mahapatro have attempted to study the health conditions of old widows and their access and support in rural Haryana. Based on primary data collected through fieldwork, the authors conclude that old widows see health difficulties as part of ageing process. Once a problem disrupts their daily routine and increases their dependency they get worried and seek medical care. The authors are of the opinion that health care and ageing need a more inclusive approach. The authors suggest that in order to provide care and support to this group of population the foremost step is to develop strong geriatric care facilities in urban as well as rural areas with better accessibility and affordability.

The oil sector bears a significant role in the economy of Assam but when the performance is judged in terms of contribution to local rural livelihood and issues of sustainability several impacts remain unreflected. In the fifth paper titled “Oil exploration and the issues of rural livelihood – A study of Lakwa ONGC oilfield in Sivasagar district
of Assam” Nilutpal Chutia and Anjan Bhuyan have attempted to study the effects associated with land acquisition, threat to indigenous occupation, occupational change and occupational sustainability with the help of field observation and primary data. The authors have found that an occupational shift from indigenous to industrial works have taken place as ONGC is providing some casual and contractual employment to the local people of the study area. Furthermore it was also found that industrial pollution has severely affected paddy cultivation and sericulture in the study area. Overall, it was found that land acquisition for the purpose of oil exploration, temporary job arrangements by the oil industry and industrial pollution affecting cultivation have generated vulnerability to many aspects of sustainable livelihoods of the rural people in the study area. The authors suggest that since oil production is very important for economic development of the country, so the oil exploration companies as well as the governments should pay attention on the issues of sustainability of the local people of oil villages otherwise they will have to bear more costs in terms of loss of livelihood in coming days for the sake of national development.

This issue of the journal also includes two book reviews. The first one is by Shreyoshi Sen who presents a comprehensive review of a recently published book titled “Strengthening decentralization through PRIs and SHGs” written by Sujit Kumar Paul, published by Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi. According to the reviewer the author has made a great effort in compiling all the studies related to the decentralized governing in West Bengal. The author presents a thorough study of the effectiveness of PRIs and SHGs. The reviewer feels that there could have been more detailed approach on people’s perspectives about the functioning of PRIs and SHGs in the State. According to the reviewer even though the book has a lot of drawbacks it will be of great help to the students, teachers, researchers, planners, and policy makers for understanding the functioning of a decentralized government.

Finally, Sudeep Kumar presents the book review of the “Why people protest: An analysis of ecological movements” authored by Subhash Sharma and published by Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi. According to the reviewer, the book contributes to the knowledge of those who are interested in ecological studies especially in the area of environmental issues. The reviewer records that the author, by using secondary data from various sources has been able to broaden the vision of the readers and generate public awareness on environmental issues. The reviewer observes that the book could have been richer, if
the analysis were based on micro level primary data collected through fieldwork. According to the reviewer, ignoring the shortcomings, the book is highly useful for students and teachers of social sciences as well as intellectuals, planners, policy makers and non-governmental organizations.

We hope that the articles in this general issue will be read by practitioners and decision-makers, not only for the factual light it sheds upon the various social problems, but also for the insight of the persons concerned on the issues related to development and management. We are thankful to the contributors who have generously submitted their revised papers within the stipulated time frame. Our sincere thanks go to the esteemed reviewers of the journal for their critical eyes, constructive comments, and rich advice that enhance the academic quality of this journal. We welcome articles on a host of development and management themes as well as reviews of books - preferably of reputable publishing houses.

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