

India's Pathways to Sustainability

Economy,

Ecology and

Equity

Prof. Kabita Kumari Sahu
Dr. Pratap Kumar Jena
Prof. Sudhakar Patra
Mr. Biswajit Sarangi



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India's Pathways to Sustainability Economy, Ecology, and Equity

Editors:

Prof. Kabita Kumari Sahu

Professor & Head, Department of Economics
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha

Dr. Pratap Kumar Jena

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha

Prof. Sudhakar Patra

RBI Chair Professor, Department of A & A Economics
Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Mr. Biswajit Sarangi

Assistant Professor of Economics, CDOE
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha

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Prof. Sudhakar Patra and Mr. Biswajit Sarangi

First Impression: August 2025

**India's Pathways to Sustainability
Economy, Ecology, and Equity**

ISBN: 978-93-49359-35-2

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17164276>

Rs. 1000/- (\$80)

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Published by:
Empyreal Publishing House

Preface

Sustainability has emerged as a guiding principle in shaping global, national, and local development agendas. For a country as diverse and dynamic as India, achieving sustainable development requires a holistic approach that balances economic growth with social equity and environmental stewardship. Recognising the importance of dialogue and research in this direction, the Department of Economics, MSCB University, Odisha, organised a two-day International Conference on “India’s Pathways to Sustainable Development” on 19–20 April 2025. The event was generously sponsored by the R&D Cell of MSCB University and the Bank of India.

The conference served as a vibrant platform for scholars, practitioners, policymakers, and students to share ideas, empirical findings, and policy insights on India’s multifaceted journey toward sustainability. The deliberations spanned across four wide themes—economic sustainability, environmental sustainability, digital sustainability, and social sustainability—reflecting the evolving landscape of sustainable development research.

This edited volume, *India's Pathways to Sustainability: Economy, Ecology, and Equity*, brings together a curated selection of high-quality papers presented at the conference. The chapters represent rigorous academic contributions as well as field-based insights that together highlight the diversity of India’s development experiences and the complex interplay between policy intent and grassroots realities. The book is thematically organised into chapters that capture core areas such as sustainable growth, environmental governance, sectoral sustainability, social equity, technological innovation, and regional development challenges. This volume contains the first set of proceedings from the conference.

We believe this compilation will be a valuable resource for academicians, policymakers, researchers, and students engaged in the fields of economics, public policy, development studies, and environmental science. More importantly, it is hoped that the book stimulates critical thinking and constructive debate on crafting inclusive and sustainable futures for India.

We sincerely thank the authorities of MSCB University, all organising committee members, all contributors, resource persons, and peer reviewers, for their support and cooperation. We also acknowledge the efforts of our internal expert committee and external review committee, who have helped bring this volume to publication.

Last but not least, we really thank Empyreal Publications, India, for the publication of this edited book.

Prof. Kabita Kumari Sahu

Dr. Pratap Kumar Jena

Prof. Sudhakar Patra

Mr. Biswajit Sarangi

About the Editors



Prof. Kabita Kumari Sahu

Prof. Sahu is currently serving as Professor and Head, Department of Economics at MSCB University (erstwhile North Orissa University), Baripada, Odisha. She earned her M.Phil. & PhD degrees from Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, and has contributed over 125 publications to reputed journals and edited volumes to date. Her academic work includes four textbooks, four research books, and three edited books. She has also completed two ICSSR-funded research projects, with one ongoing project funded under UFIRP. She has to her credit the supervision of 07 Ph.D. and 35 M.Phil. scholars, while 07 Ph.D. scholars are still pursuing their research under her guidance.



Dr. Pratap Kumar Jena

Dr. Jena is working as a full-time Assistant Professor of Economics (teaching and research) in the Department of Economics, Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University. He has nearly 13 years of teaching experience at the PG level. Before joining this university, he worked for a short period at GITAM University, Vishakhapatnam and Central University of Karnataka. He obtained his Master's degree, M.Phil. degree and Ph.D. degree from the University of Hyderabad. He has been teaching Macroeconomics, International Trade & Finance, Econometrics and Time Series Modelling to MA students. His research interests are broadly in the commodity market, climate change, agriculture, rural development and applied macroeconomics. He has published 3 books, 7 book chapters and 22 research papers in refereed journals, and also completed 4 research projects.



Prof. Sudhakar Patra

Prof. Patra is presently serving as RBI Chair Professor, PG Department of Analytical & Applied Economics, Utkal University, Bhubaneswar. He was a former Professor & Head, Economics and Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Berhampur University, Odisha. Prof. Patra has 36 years of teaching and research experience, completed 05 research projects and published 23 Books, 109 research papers in Journals & 48 chapters in edited books. Prof. Patra has guided 17 research scholars for Ph.D./D.Lit degree and has made 13 academic visits to different foreign countries. He teaches financial Programming, Monetary Management, Econometrics, and Mathematical Economics. Apart from many NAAC visits as a Peer Team Member, he is an expert in data analysis in SPSS, STATA, and EViews.



Mr. Biswajit Sarangi

Mr. Sarangi is currently serving as an Assistant Professor in Economics at CDOE (Centre for Distance and Online Education), MSCB University (erstwhile *North Orissa University*), Baripada, Odisha, and is also pursuing his PhD from the same University. He completed his Graduation in Economics from F. M. Autonomous College, Balasore, in 2020 with a CGPA of 8.51, and his Post-graduation in Analytical & Applied Economics from Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, in 2022, securing a 9.05 CGPA with specializations in Econometrics, Mathematical Economics, and Financial Institutions & Markets. To date, he has published seven papers in various reputed journals, three books and one book chapter.

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and Dr. Smrutirekha Mohanty*

ABOUT THE EDITORS



Prof. Kabita Kumari Sahu

Professor & Head, Department of Economics
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha



Dr. Pratap Kumar Jena

Assistant Professor, Department of Economics
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha



Prof. Sudhakar Patra

RBI Chair Professor, Department of A & A Economics
Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Mr. Biswajit Sarangi

Assistant Professor of Economics, CDOE
MSCB University, Baripada, Odisha

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book presents a collection of twenty-one scholarly papers that explore different aspects of sustainable development, economic growth, and social equity in India. Divided into four thematic parts, the book covers a broad spectrum of issues. The first part examines the dynamics of sustainable economic growth, addressing health expenditure, income inequality, financial inclusion, FDI, and agricultural transformation. The second part focuses on energy, industry, and environmental sustainability, with chapters on air pollution, decarbonization strategies, low-carbon energy adoption, clean cooking initiatives, and green political agendas. The third part highlights technological innovations and sustainable solutions, showcasing the role of AI, green innovation, the circular economy, and inclusive leadership in driving change. The final section presents sectoral and regional perspectives, with studies on heatwaves and labour productivity, education through a gender lens, empowerment of marginalized and tribal communities, and management of land resources. Importantly, it also features a study on Nepal's hill communities, reflecting shared ecological challenges and cultural adaptations between India & Nepal, thereby broadening the book's regional relevance. Altogether, the book offers fresh evidence, regional insights, and policy directions for achieving inclusive and sustainable growth.



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