Skills training in Russia and India: Evidence from multilevel analysis

The goal of the present study is to explore the factors that obstruct individuals from obtaining skills training in Russia in the context of a BRIC country, which has a different (and even opposite) to Russia's stage of socioeconomic development, - i.e. India. In line with industrialisation theory, a greater role of pre-industrial factors of training is suggested for India. To verify this hypothesis, we proposed the Bayesian multilevel modelling of training against a wide range of socio-economic factors expected to determine its probability in both countries. Although the incidence of training in Russia is extraordinarily low, it is highly concentrated in confined and human-capital-intensive niches of the labour market, found in employment in the quaternary (informational services) sector and state-owned enterprises, skilled and gainful occupations, such as managerial positions, and professional and semi-professional vocations. Skills acquisition in Russia is much less influenced by demographic disparities on the labour markets than in India. Our study shows that the incidence of training in India is significantly associated with locality, marital status, religion, and household- and region-specific differences; that is, nine percent of the variance of training is due to differences between states, and 60 percent - to differences between households residing in the same area. However, our findings also suggest that market-influenced factors significantly contribute to acquiring formal training in contemporary India, thus revealing a modernisation potential for this BRIC country. First, there is a positive incidence of training for Indian women who, like their European peers, are more likely than men to ‘swim against the current’ in acquiring post-schooling learning and training. Second, Indian employees with little education (primary and middle, and below primary schooling) are significantly discouraged from getting formal training. In this peculiarity, India and Russia resemble each other. In both countries, inequality between occupations explains about seven to eight percent of the structural heterogeneity in the probability of training. The present study contributes to the growing literature on structural prerequisites for successful catching-up and on the contradictory development of the BRIC countries.