GLU Abstract

GVCs, the Distribution of Knowledge and Labour Regimes

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Global value chains (GVCs) are based on the disintegration of production by tasks. A coarse-grained division of tasks between firms is combined with wage and other employment differences in producing GVCs. The paper will look at the manner in which the division of labour by GVC segments is based on differences in knowledge levels required for the performance of various tasks and the manner in which labour regimes differ according to the knowledge level and type of tasks.

The analysis will be carried out at both sectoral level and within firms themselves. The analysis will also look at differences in labour regimes for women and men. The sectors included for analysis are some of those in which GVC-structured production is most common – garments, electronics, automobiles and IT services. The case studies used for the analysis will be from across Asian countries, including Bangladesh, China, India, and Sri Lanka. Case studies will be combined with data from the Indian NSSO employment survey.

After identifying the connection between GVC segments and labour regimes, the paper will look into ways in which changes in labour regimes can be brought about. The roles of firm strategy, labour power, market conditions, and international and national regulation will be considered in influencing changes in labour regimes within GVCs.