

Editor's notes

As is normal practice for this journal, the papers herein cover a wide range of theoretical and applied research and issues under our broader definition of regional science.

It is unusual in that it includes a short paper by our retiring editors Emeritus Professor Mike Hefferan and Professor Bruce Wilson regarding the further evolution of not just this journal but of the long-standing role of academic journals more widely. That concludes that there remains a sound and important future for such specialist journals but recognises the need for both short-term realignment and long-term evolution to meet adapt to a changed educational research and publishing environment.

As to specific issues, the paper by Zoellner considers vocational education and training in diverse geographic areas, exploring the effects of government involvement and of national competition policy, which has resulted in the development of new training programs into more remote regions and those areas with special training needs. In such regions and communities, the understandable requirement to produce qualified and specialised graduates needs to be balanced with a strong commitment to lifelong learning relevant to those communities.

Fern et. al considers the long-standing Theory of Cumulative Causation and explores whether it remains relevant in the contemporary environment. Using examples drawn from South-East Queensland, it concludes that those basic historic elements which supported the spacial layout of regions can often still be traced through to the present day. It notes however that the complexity of regional economies and communities is such that care needs to be taken in attempting to establish simple causal relationships.

Not unrelated to that is the paper by Wilson, this time by using Tasmanian local government areas in establishing better models for population studies and projections that are arguably more appropriate than referenced back to simple benchmarks in longitudinal studies.

Given the quality and level of sophistication of Australian industry and sectors, consumers and the population, in general, have taken for granted the reliability of supply chains and the production of goods both for the domestic and internal markets. This presumption has been tested for the first time in a generation by the Covid pandemic. The paper by Akbar et. al explores how those involved in the supply chain, in this case for agricultural production, affects the risk and risk-management of those supply chains, particularly in a volatile environment.

The paper by Baum and Mitchell takes an interesting approach to the impact on regional economies and their recovery from the Covid pandemic. Interesting here is the use of payroll data to provide a qualitative tracking of those matters over time, remembering that full effects of this, either negative or positive, may not be fully appreciated perhaps for some years to come.

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