

The May Review

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has been a leader in compiling international comparisons of hourly compensation of manufacturing employees over a wide range of countries. In recent years the Bureau has published groundbreaking work on employment and compensation costs in China's manufacturing sector. In our lead article this month, we extend a similar effort to another of the world's largest and fastest growing countries: India.

As Jessica R. Sincavage of BLS, Carl Haub of the Population Reference Bureau, and O.P. Sharma, the former Deputy Director of Census Operations in India, point out in this article, India is the world's fourth-largest economy, accounting for almost 5 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product. As the article demonstrates, the authors have undertaken considerable research in studying India's manufacturing industry, specifically focusing on the country's "organized" manufacturing sector. Firms in the organized manufacturing sector are formally registered with Indian state governments, making them subject to regulation and thereby much more likely to be subject to some level of data collection. The authors assess the availability and quality of data on the organized manufacturing sector, for all employees and for production workers. As a bonus, the article has a full section providing an in-depth comparison of the populations, labor supplies, and manufacturing sectors of India and China.

Our second article for May examines trends in summer work among

young people. BLS economist Teresa L. Morisi begins crisply, "Having a summer job has become a less common way for teenagers to spend their summers." The share of teenagers (16- to 19-year-olds) who are working in the summer months has been trending down since 2000. The trend has encompassed younger and older teens, both sexes, and the major race and ethnicity groups. The article illustrates the trend by use of data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) and examines possible reasons behind it.

The data suggest that there are several reasons behind the large recent declines in summer employment rates. A number of the reasons are related to education. For instance, enrollment in summer school has been growing substantially. More than half of people ages 16–19 years were enrolled in school sometime during the summer of 2009, a percentage close to 3 times higher than that of 20 years earlier. Teens enrolled in school are much less likely to hold jobs in the summer than those not enrolled. One spur towards greater school enrollment in summer is that the level and difficulty of high school courses has grown, at least partly because of tougher graduation requirements. Other phenomena, such as increasing emphases on community service and internships, also may be playing a role in limiting summer job participation by young people.

Our final article for this month takes a close look at how job openings, hires, and separations have fared during the 2007–09 period. Openings, which can be considered an indicator of labor demand, de-

clined during the period and reached a series low. Hires and separations, which can be thought of as measures of worker flows, followed the same pattern. BLS economists Mark deWolf and Katherine Klemmer examine these data from the Bureau's Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) in great detail, comparing their movements with overall trends in employment and unemployment. Their examination of the data provides insights into how employers react to changes in the business cycle and, arguably, provides additional evidence of the importance of data from the JOLTS program as business-cycle indicators.

Household ownership of computers

Quick, what percentage of American households own computers? If you guessed about half, you'd be right—as of a decade ago. According to data from BLS' Consumer Expenditure Survey, 48 percent of households owned computers in the year 2000. Not surprisingly, given the growth (or is it intrusion?) by computers into nearly all facets of American life, ownership of computers has been on the rise. A recent report from BLS summarizes this trend in computer ownership, and also casts light on some characteristics of computer-owning consumers, such as age and education level. The answer to the opening question above, by the way, is almost 76 percent by 2008.

The report, part of our *Focus on Prices and Spending* series, can be found online at http://www.bls.gov/opub/focus/volume1_number4/cex_1_4.pdf. □