Regional Disparities in Development in India: An Inter-State Perspective

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Abstract: At the time of independence there were regional disparities in development in India. For a diverse and large country like India the objective of the planned process of development was to achieve the goal of balanced regional development so that national unity and integrity can be maintained along with economic advancement of the country. The motive was to create conditions in which resources in terms of natural endowment, skill and capital in each region are fully utilized. But the even after planned efforts and motives the regional disparities at inter-state level have increased with the successive five year plans. Some states have moved forward and others have remained backward due to differential rates of advancement in different sectors. The main objective of the present paper is to describe the magnitude of inter-state disparities over the period of time.

Key Words: Disparities, Development, Inter-state, Poverty, Infrastructure.

Introduction

Regional disparities in development are universal. It has been observed worldwide that over the period of time inequalities generally intensify. Taking into consideration the size and diversities in India, the welfare state decided to orient itself towards the goal of balanced regional development in the very beginning of the phase of planned era of development. In the Third Five Year Plan it was stated that the major aims of planned development are balanced development of different parts of the country, extension of the benefits of economic progress to the less developed regions and widespread diffusion of industries. It was decided that the successive five year plans will focus on realizing these aims.

It was decided that the motive should be to create conditions in which resources in terms of natural endowment, skill and capital in each region are fully utilized. In each region the nature of the problem and the impediments to rapid development in particular fields should be carefully studied, and appropriate measures devised for accelerated development. The essential objective should be to secure the fullest possible utilisation of the resources of each region, so that it can contribute its best to the national pool and take its due share from the benefits accruing from national development. Therefore, the development of different regions and of the national economy was viewed as parts of a single process.

It was further stated that whatever the present shortcomings, the aim must be that over a reasonable period all regions in the country should realise their potential for economic development and should attain levels of living not far removed from those of the nation as a whole. Progress in different regions must, therefore, be watched carefully and additional steps taken to speed up development in particular areas which are found to be seriously lagging behind. The objective of the present paper is to assess the magnitude of regional disparities in development at inter-state level in India. This analysis is oriented to assess level of regional imbalances in development in India in spatial and temporal perspective.

Magnitude of Regional Imbalances in India

Though regional disparities in level of economic development between different parts of the country are clearly visible, an exact measurement of these is a rather difficult task. The most important problem in this regard is that of indicators and relative importance or weightage given to various indicators. Differences in per capita income are often used to bring out disparities in different states. There are several other indicators also such as industrial growth, agricultural growth, level of literacy, poverty ratio, percentage of industrial workers to total workers, total road length, infant mortality rate etc., that can be taken into consideration for measurement of level of development. A number of scholars have tried to devise composite indices of development using the above mentioned indicators and brief description of these measures and indices is provided in the following section.

Growth of State Domestic Product (SDP)

The growth of State Domestic Product, as Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) and Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), is the single most important macro economic indicator of development for inter-state comparisons (Table 1). In the nineteen sixties, the highest economic growth rates were recorded by the erstwhile unified Punjab and adjoining areas (now Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana). The success of green revolution played a significant role in this. In this decade, Bihar was the slowest growing State economy recording just 0.7 per cent growth, which implied a decline in per capita income (-1.3 per cent) because the population was growing at higher and increasing rates. Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh recorded less than 2 per cent growth.

Table 1: Trends of Rates of Growth of NSDP and GDSP in Selected States

States	1960-61 to 1969-70 (NSDP)	1970-71 to 1979-80 (NSDP)	1980-81 to 1990-91(GSDP)	1993-94 to 1998-99 (GSDP)
Goa	NA	6.1	5.5	8.3
Punjab	5.6	5.4	5.4	5.0
Haryana	5.5	4.8	6.2	5.8
Maharashtra	2.9	5.7	6.0	7.1
Gujarat	2.7	4.5	5.1	8.0
All India	3.0	3.6	5.6	6.8
Bihar	0.7	2.8	4.7	4.2

Uttar Pradesh	1.6	2.6	4.9	4.5
Madhya Pradesh	1.5	1.3	4.0	4.4
Assam	4.0	3.0	3.6	2.7

In the seventies, the pattern of rates of growth changed marginally. Along with Punjab, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, the western States of Maharashtra and Gujarat, and the southern States of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu began to register higher rates of growth. Madhya Pradesh (-1.0) and Kerala (-0.2) were at the bottom with negative real per capita income growth in this period.

The national average rate of economic growth increased from the 3.6 per cent of the seventies to 5.6 per cent in the eighties. The inter-state disparities were lowest during the eighties (Table 2). The standard deviation of NSDP was 1.71 as compared to 2.2 of the seventies. In eighties the inter-state difference for the rates of growth was 4.0 percentage points between the highest for Delhi (7.6 per cent) and lowest for Assam (3.6 per cent).

During nineties the national average rate of economic growth picked up from 5.6 per cent of eighties to 6.8 per cent. But the inter-state variation increased with a standard deviation of 3.1 and the highest (Goa 8.3 per cent) and the lowest (Assam 2.7 per cent) difference of economic growth rates was recorded as 5.6 per cent. During nineties Punjab and Haryana recorded slower rates of growth as compared to the earlier decades, whereas Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharastra, Rajasthan and West Bengal recorded much higher growth.

Table 2: Disparity in Growth amongst States/UTs

Period	Measure of Disparity in Growth (Standard Deviation)	
	NSDP	Per capita NSDP
1970-71 to 1979-80	2.22	1.81
1980-81 to 1990-91	1.71	1.02
1993-94 to 1998-99	3.13	2.40

Source: Central Statistical Organisation.

Nineties onwards till date the trend shows a widening of the gap between the more and less developed States. The liberalization, globalization and privatization as new economic reforms have resulted into more investments in areas which are forward and backward areas have failed to attract investments.

Per Capita Income

For regional disparities, economists have used per capita income as a good measure and indicator of level of development. On the basis of per capita income there are wide inter-state income inequalities in India (Table 3). In the Tenth Five Year Plan the States were divided into following four categories on the basis of per capita GSDC. The first three categories group the general category States into five States each, based on their per capita GSDP. Group A comprises high income States, which include Goa, Punjab, Maharashtra, Haryana and Gujarat. Group B includes middle income States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. Group C comprises low income States of West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa,

Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar reflect their undivided status). Group D comprises all the special category States (excluding Uttarakhand).

Table 3: Per Capita Income (In Rs. measured as per capita NSDP), 2014-15

State/UT	Per Capita Income	State/UT	Per Capita Income
Arunachal Pradesh	103633	Mizoram	85659
Assam	54618	Nagaland	78526
Bihar	31380	Odisha	64869
Chhattisgarh	78001	Punjab	114561
Goa	242745	Rajasthan	76881
Gujarat	124678	Sikkim	210394
Haryana	148485	Tamil Nadu	130197
Himachal Pradesh	124500	Telangana	125832
Jammu & Kashmir	62857	Tripura	71666
Jharkhand	56737	Uttar Pradesh	43861
Karnataka	132880	Uttarakhand	134784
Kerala	139195	West Bengal#	78903
Madhya Pradesh	56182	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	121954
Maharashtra	134081	Chandigarh	225369
Manipur	52436	Delhi	249004
# West Bengal at base year 2004-05, others 2011-12.		Puducherry	158830

Source: Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, 03-August-2017.

Income inequalities in have intensified over the period of time (Table 4). The States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Odisha have maintained position in the category to low income states and likewise the States like Goa, Haryana, Punjab, Maharashtra and Gujarat have maintained their position in category of high income states. The levels of incomes have increased in all states and UTs. The per capita income of Bihar increased about 13.57 times between 1989-90 and 2014-15 and of Assam, 14.67 times. But the per capita income of high income states has increased at a faster pace. For instance, during this period the per capita income increased 23.87 times and 30.38 times for Haryana and Goa states, respectively. In 1960-61 the per capita income of Bihar was 65 per cent of the per capita income of Haryana, in 1970-71 it was 46 per cent, in 1980-81, it was 40 per cent, in 1992-93 it was 33.17 per cent and by 2014-15 it became just 21 per cent of the per capita income of Haryana. Thus, income inequalities have intensified in India.

In 2005, the share of the 20 per cent richest families of India in consumption expenditure was 42.4 per cent whereas the poorest 20 per cent families share was only 8.6 per cent. Income inequalities have further increased between 2004-05 and 2009-10 and it is reflected by Gini coefficient values. The Gini coefficient values for rural areas increased in this period from 0.27

to 0.28 and in urban areas from 0.35 to 0.39. In 2011-12, the consumption expenditure of richest 10 per cent families was seven times of the poorest 10 per cent families. In urban areas this difference was eleven times. Therefore, it is clear that inter-state, intra-state, inter personal and rural urban income inequalities have increased in this era of planned development.

Table 4: Income Inequalities in Selected States of India, 1989 - 2015

States	1989-90	1992-93	2014-15
Bihar	2312	2998	31,380
Assam	3723	4973	54,618
Haryana	6233	9037	1,48,485
Goa	7988	12,800	2,42,745

Source: Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, 03-August-2017.

Disparities in Industrial Growth

The initial distribution of industries in India was determined by the interests of the British rulers. Most of the industries were concentrated at a few centres that had an efficient link to the ports. This pattern continued after independence also. A study of 28 large-scale manufacturing industries in India in 1950 showed the dominance of the western region and West Bengal in the distribution of industries. About 34.6 per cent of the total productive capital was concentrated in western region and it was followed by West Bengal accounting for 24.65 per cent of the productive capital, making their combined share 59.25 per cent. These two regions accounted for 63.03 per cent of total industrial employment, 60.41 per cent of gross ex-factory value of output, and 63.95 per cent of value added by manufacturing.

Industrialization has been recognized as an important policy measure to accelerate economic growth in backward regions and to progressively reduce regional imbalances. In 1969, the Planning Commission constituted Pandey Working Group to suggest criteria for identification of industrially backward states and backward districts in such states. Pandey Committee on the basis of following six variables identified the industrially backward regions - (i) per capita income, (ii) per capita income from mining and industrial sources, (iii) number of workers register in industries, (iv) per capita consumption of electricity in industries, ((v) length of surfaced roads in relation to population and the area of the State; (vi) railway mileage in relation to the population and area of the State.

On the basis of these variables the Working Group identified Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Nagaland, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and all union territories, except Chandigarh, Delhi and Puducherry, as industrially backward. Subsequently, Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim were added in this list. The Committee identified 238 districts in these states as industrially backward regions of India. Later on within the frame work of the Industrial Policy Statement of 1980, 286 districts were identified as industrially backward districts. These were sub-divided (i) Category A (very highly backward) consists of 118 districts (including 87 'No Industry Districts'); (ii) Category B (highly backward)

consists of 55 districts; and category C (backward) consists of 113 districts. In another survey the Planning Commission (1983) recognized 279 districts as industrially backward as – 131 marginally developed, 55 slightly developed and 113 most backward.

The Ministry of Finance (1994) under the Chairmanship of MK Kaw constituted a study group for identification of the backward districts. On the basis of its report the scheme for providing tax concession to 123 industrially backward districts became effective from 1994 and remained in force until 2005. The 10th Five Year Plan adopted a new approach to deal with the issue of regional disparities. The creation of Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) in 2005-06 subsumed the ongoing programme of addressing regional imbalances. In the Eleventh Five Year Plan 272 districts were covered under the BRGF. The Industrial Infrastructure Upgradation Scheme (IIUS) and Industrial Corridor schemes such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) and Chennai-Bengaluru-Chitradurga Industrial Corridor (CBCIC), the Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor, the Amritsar-Kolkatta Industrial Corridor and Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor are major initiatives to develop manufacturing cities and industrial clusters and accelerate industrial growth and improve investment opportunities and to overcome regional imbalances in industrial development.

Although time to time a lot of studies have been conducted to identify the industrially backward areas of India and to suggest measures for their development but industrialisation has remained more or less concentrated mainly in six major industrial complexes of India. The pattern of industrial concentration has not changed much during the planned period despite attempts made at regional dispersal of industries. As late as 2003-04 the two states of Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu accounted for 29.0 per cent of factory employment, 28.3 per cent of invested capital, 28.6 per cent of gross output and 30.1 per cent of value added by manufacturing. Considering the three industrially advanced States of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu together, they accounted for 44.7 per cent of gross output, 44.3 per cent of value added, 45.2 per cent of total invested capital, and 38.3 per cent of employment in factory sector. As against these numbers, these three states were home to only 20.2 per cent of total population of the country as per Census of India 2011. Thus more than two fifths of the total output, value added and fixed capital and a little less than two-fifths of total employment in factory sector is accounted for only by these three states. This indicates the degree of regional concentration of the industrial activity in the country.

The physical and anthropogenic reasons are responsible for industrial backwardness of many parts of the country. The major causes for industrial backwardness are following – (i) physical factors such as topography, extremes of rainfall - aridity and heavy rainfall regions; (ii) economic – mainly lack of mineral and energy resources and poverty; (iii) socio-cultural – low level of literacy, unskilled work force and lack of entrepreneurial skills; (v) lack of infrastructural facilities such as transportation, communication, electricity and raw materials; (vi) demographic – population explosion, high fertility rates, ethnic tensions; (vii) lack of political will power and vision, insecurities, corruption and vote bank politics.

Disparities in Agricultural Development

Regional disparities exist in this regard too and they have increased over time. The states of Punjab and Haryana and western parts of Uttar Pradesh are well ahead of the rest of the regions. This is largely a result of the success of the programme of High Yielding Varieties (HYVP) of seeds in these states. This programme was introduced in the wheat growing states to begin with and these states got benefited to the greatest extent. Due to the introduction of the HYVP, the combined share of Punjab and Haryana in total output of food grains rose from 7.5 per cent in 1964-65 to 17.8 per cent in 2003-04. The share of national population living in these states is a mere 4.4 per cent. The per capita output of food grains (2003-04) was 978.3 kg in Punjab which was about five times the national average. The per capita output of food grains in Haryana was 594.9 kg, about three times the national average. The third ranking state, Uttar Pradesh had a per capita output of food grains amounting to 251.2 kg. Madhya Pradesh with a per capita output of 247.9 kg ranked fourth in this regard. Thus the per capita output in Punjab was about four times the per capita output in the third ranking State. The high productivity of agriculture in Punjab and Haryana is largely green revolution based on irrigation facilities, high consumption of chemical fertilizers, better quality seeds and mechanization of agriculture. In 2013-14, the agricultural productivity in main crop rice, Punjab recorded 3952 kg per hectare output followed by Haryana (3255 kg) and Tamil Nadu (3100 kg) but it was only 1759 kg per hectare in Bihar and 1474 kg in Madhya Pradesh. Likewise, in case of wheat, Punjab recorded 5017 kg per hectare productivity but Chhattisgarh recorded only 1303 kg per hectare output. It means the regional disparities created by green revolution still prevail in India.

Poverty

The growth performance of States on the basis of structural changes in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors have crucial implications in reducing the share of population below poverty line (BPL). The National Sample Survey based estimates show that the percentage of population below the poverty line has declined from 54.88 per cent in 1973-74 to 26.1 percent in 1999-2000 for India as a whole. There are wide variations in the level and trends of poverty in States (Table 5). It is noteworthy that overall trend represents decline in share of population below poverty but inter- state variations have increased. For instance, in 1973-74 the BPL share in Bihar was 2.2 times the share in Punjab and in 2011-12; it is four times of share in Punjab. States like West Bengal and Kerala have seen tremendous improvements in poverty levels due to expansion of social opportunities by land reforms and human development processes. In table 5 the increase in share of BPL population between 1999-00 and 2004-05 is due to change in the criteria for poverty line determination by Tendulkar Committee.

Table 5: Trends of Population Below Poverty Line, 1973-2005

States	1973-74	1983-84	1993-94	1999-2000	2004-05#	2011-12#
Jammu & Kashmir	40.83	24.24	25.17	3.48	13.2	10.35
Goa	44.26	18.90	14.92	4.40	25.0	5.09
Punjab	28.15	16.18	11.77	6.16	20.9	8.26

Haryana	35.36	21.37	25.05	8.74	24.1	11.16
Kerala	59.79	40.42	25.43	12.72	19.7	7.05
West Bengal	63.43	54.85	35.66	27.02	34.3	19.98
Assam	51.21	40.47	40.86	36.09	34.4	31.98
Madhya Pradesh	61.78	49.78	42.52	37.43	48.6	31.65
Bihar	61.91	62.22	54.96	42.60	54.4	33.74
Odisha	66.18	65.29	48.56	47.15	57.2	32.59
India	54.88	44.48	38.86	26.10	37.2	21.92

Source: Planning Commission, based on NSS and # based on Tendulkar Committee.

As per Tendulakar method the poverty ratio in 1993-94 was 50.1 per cent for rural areas, 31.8 per cent for urban areas and overall ratio was 45.3 per cent. In 2011-12 the overall poverty ratio was 21.9 per cent and for rural areas 25.7 per cent and for urban areas 13.7 per cent. Therefore, inter-state and rural urban poverty ratio differentials have increased.

Infant Mortality Rate

Improvement in the health status of the population has been one of the major goals of this planned era of development that too with special focus on under developed states and under-privileged sections of the society. Infant mortality rate (IMR) is a sensitive indicator of not only health status but also of the level of human development in the context of education, economic conditions and nutrition status. All states have registered declining infant mortality rates over the period 1961 to 2015, yet some states have done better than the others (Table 6). For instance, in Madhya Pradesh IMR was 150 which means deaths of 150 infants i.e. children up to one year age out of 1000 live births, and it declined to 50 by 2015 that is became one-third of the previous level. In case of Goa it declined from 57 in 1961 to 9 by 2015, that is about one-sixth of the previous level. The IMR is high even in the high income state Haryana and it is four times of IMR in Goa. Similarly in case of BPL share the industrialized states of Maharashtra and Gujarat fair poorly.

Table 6: Infant Mortality Rates

State	1961	1981	2001	2011	2015
Odisha	115	125	98	57	46
Madhya Pradesh	150	133	97	59	50
Uttar Pradesh	130	99	85	57	46
Rajasthan	114	87	83	52	43
Assam	NA	92	78	55	47
Bihar	94	75	67	44	42
Haryana	94	69	52	44	36
Kerala	52	42	16	12	12
Goa	57	51	36	11	9
India	115	77	71	44	37

Source: Sample Registration System, 2016.

Infrastructure Development Index (IDI)

Development depends on the infrastructural facilities. It represents the network of facilities to extend the goods and services to people. Its linkages in the economic system are complex and its affects production, productivity and consumption directly. The regional disparities in development in India are also reflected by regional variations in infrastructural facilities. The relationship is direct and positive. The states with better infrastructural facilities are having higher economic growth rates and they keep on attracting more investments. An infrastructure index was devised by the Eleventh Finance Commission for the year 1999. This index brings out a composite comparative profile of the availability of physical, social and institutional infrastructure in the States (Table 7). According to this index, Goa is the best-placed state in India followed by Punjab, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Haryana in infrastructure development. Amongst the major States, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh were weakest in infrastructure endowments in 1999. Infrastructural endowments of States are significant since they are important determinants in private sector investment decisions and consequently capital flows to States in this age of privatization and globalization. The infrastructure index value of states like Bihar, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan is less than half of the three most well developed infrastructure states.

Table 7: Infrastructure Development Index, 1999

States	Infrastructure Development Index (IDI)
Goa	200.57
Punjab	187.57
Kerala	178.68
Tamil Nadu	149.10
Haryana	137.54
Gujarat	124.31
Maharashtra	112.80
West Bengal	111.25
Sikkim	108.99
Karnataka	104.88
Andhra Pradesh	103.30
Uttar Pradesh	101.23
Himachal Pradesh	95.03
Mizoram	82.13
Bihar	81.33
Odisha	81.00
Assam	77.72
Madhya Pradesh	76.79
Nagaland	76.14
Rajasthan	75.86
Meghalaya	75.49
Manipur	75.39
Tripura	74.87
Jammu and Kashmir	71.46

Arunachal Pradesh	69.71

Source: Planning Commission, 10th Five Year Plan.

Human Development Index

Human development index (HDI) is considered as a very good measure and indicator of level of development. The HDI based on income, education and longevity is a composite index. On the basis of human development index Kerala is the best state followed by Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Haryana (Table 8). The level of development on the basis of HDI is below national average in states such as Assam, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Chhattisgarh. The HDI value of Kerala is 2.2 times of the HDI value of Chhattisgarh state.

Table 8: Regional Disparities in Human Development

States	Income Index	Education Index	Health Index	HDI (2007-08)
Kerala	0.629	0.924	0.817	0.790
Himachal Pradesh	0.491	0.747	0.717	0.652
Punjab	0.495	0.654	0.667	0.605
Maharashtra	0.351	0.715	0.650	0.572
Tamil Nadu	0.355	0.719	0.637	0.570
Haryana	0.408	0.622	0.627	0.552
Gujarat	0.371	0.577	0.633	0.527
Karnataka	0.326	0.605	0.627	0.519
West Bengal	0.252	0.575	0.650	0.492
Uttrakhand	0.302	0.638	0.530	0.490
Andhra Pradesh	0.287	0.553	0.580	0.473
Assam	0.288	0.636	0.407	0.444
Rajasthan	0.253	0.462	0.587	0.434
Uttar Pradesh	0.175	0.492	0.473	0.380
Jharkhand	0.142	0.485	0.500	0.376
Madhya Pradesh	0.173	0.522	0.430	0.375
Bihar	0.127	0.409	0.563	0.367
Odisha	0.139	0.499	0.450	0.362
Chhattisgarh	0.133	0.526	0.417	0.358
India	0.271	0.568	0.563	0.467

Source: Economic Survey, 2011-12, P- 310-311.

Conclusions

On the basis of trends and patterns of state gross domestic product, per capita income, disparities in agricultural and industrial development, poverty ratio, infant mortality rates and indices of IDI (Infrastructure Development Index) and HDI (Human Development Index) it is well established that inter-state disparities in development were present from the very beginning of this planned era of development. These disparities along with their consequences were well known to

planners and decision makers and therefore they focused on the goal of balanced regional development from the very beginning. But even after awareness and efforts to check regional disparities they have intensified over the period of time because of interplay of all factors like physical, social, economic, infrastructural and political. The Third Five Year Plan devoted a separate chapter on 'Balanced Regional Development' and in the Tenth Five Year Plan taking into consideration the intensification of regional disparities between forward areas and backward areas of the country at inter-state and intra-state level the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana has been initiated with the main objective of putting in place programmes and policies with the joint efforts of the Centre and the States which would remove barriers to growth, accelerate the development process and improve the quality of life of the people. The scheme aims at focused development programmes for backward areas which would help reduce imbalances and speed up development. The main objectives of the scheme are to address the problems of low agricultural productivity, unemployment, and to fill critical gaps in physical and social infrastructure. Balanced development is required to not only for sustainable development but also to maintain the unity and integrity of the nation.

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