Economic welfare of a nation does not only depend upon the rate of development but also on its distributive aspect. Economic history proves that the development process starts in regions which are rich in resources and these regions attract investment but the problem in India cannot be explained with reference to availability of natural resources alone because in India there are regions which are rich in natural resources but are still backward. Many developments of growth theories have proved that regional disparities are blocking the progress of development. Such a pattern of development has encouraged me to take up this topic. The problem of regional disparities attracts the attention of scholars from various areas. It different aspects are often a matter of discussion at various levels. Yet many aspects of regional disparities remained unsearched for long and many are still lying unattended. The prevalence of regional disparities is almost a common process and it is present in both developed and developing countries. It is an important feature of the Indian economy.

The study depicts the nature, pattern and magnitude of regional disparities in economic development in Indian states during 1981-2004. The study also provides in-depth analysis of changes during the period in terms of income, poverty and social indicators such as literacy, gross enrolment ratios, life expectancy at birth, maternal mortality, infant mortality and access to safe drinking water.