Attaining higher levels of development and achieving a marked degree of stability is the focus of every society existent in time and space. The status of excellence obtained on mitigating development disadvantages and bridging the gaps between the advanced and the backward has been the ‘El Dorado’ of all geographically measured spatial entities. To come to these stature human settlements would have to stabilize their stages of development defined to the highest degree. Yet how a particular region begets this position would make for some engrossing research enquiry. The discipline of Development Geography emerged as a fructification of these lines of enquiry and it is towards this end that the present study is directed. Thus, a study of the stature of regional disparities that are dynamically stabilizing, accentuating or squeezing over time and the spatial diffusion of development forms the basic agenda for any research exercise in Development Geography. With the shift in focus of world economy towards achieving liberalization, privatization and globalization, disparities in the levels of regional development have ignited yet again the debate on the existing inequalities between the developed and developing countries in general and between different regions in particular. In the case of developing countries like India, it becomes all the more critical to examine these disparities as a popular notion holds the new economic policies responsible for widening the gap between rich and poor regions.

Various studies have confirmed the unevenness of a fractional development process. Perroux (1950) was the first to state the fundamental fact of spatial development as “growth does not appear everywhere and all at once, it appears in points or development poles, with variable intensities, it spreads along diverse channels and with varying terminal effects for the whole of the economy” (Hanson 1970). Hirschman (1961) emphasized that ‘in the geographical sense,
growth is necessarily unbalanced'. All developed countries like the United States, Canada, UK, France, Netherlands, Sweden and others were noted for their severe regional disparities as recently as the first quarter of the 20th century. Subsequently, especially after the World War II, the record is mixed though most showed a tendency towards convergence (Singh, 1981). Thus, it can be concluded that countries at the initial stage of the developmental process tend to display striking regional disparities.

Another aspect is that problems arising from regional disparities in developing countries are of a magnitude that is capable of threatening their social, economic and political stability. Thus, ameliorative steps to correct the situation become most imperative. For a developing country like India, where spatial structure of socio-economic development has been distorted largely due to deep rooted socio-economic, politico-historical, natural and other forces of its spatial organization, making an understanding of regional disparities inescapable (Sharma and Kumar 1989).

The framework, within which regional disparities in India may be meaningfully studied, is anchored on the regional structure of underdevelopment experienced during colonial rule. The impact of exploitative mechanisms of the imperial imprint continues to persist in many of its essential features. The regional dimension of disparities can, therefore, be usefully explored in the context of distortions introduced into India’s regional system under the British rule, as also of the factors that led to its persistence post-independence (Kundu and Raza, 1982).

The British followed a policy of regional discrimination as a part of their governance and development approach. They developed areas of their own choice. Soon after Independence India set in motion four simultaneous revolutions of democracy, socialism, secularism and planned development to catch up with the advanced nations. A federal structure with a unitary bias was seen as the best answer to the question of regionalism; a socialistic pattern of
society as a basic condition for eradication of poverty; secularism as a necessary response to the issue of ethnicity; and planned development as an effective strategy for not only raising the standard of living of the people but also for removing regional imbalances (Krishan, 2000). The national government initiated planned development in 1951 but the processes of development fructified invisible results only in some areas (Tripathi and Tiwari, 1993).

Planned development was practiced as an effective strategy in sectoral frameworks for economic growth. The model, however, failed as a redistributive device in the absence of institutional changes mandatorily required to support the ‘trickledown’ effect of economic growth. The persistence of regional disparities in development consequently became one of the negative fallouts notwithstanding the avowed goals of planning for balanced regional development. For instance, the Green Revolution strategy for the agricultural development remained confined to certain select areas where irrigation facilities were existent and people had the resources to invest in innovations. It lead to a further widening of the disparities. In another instance growth poles were planned as heavy industries sectors planted strategically in the resource rich yet economically backward tribal regions of the country but these failed in their esteemed spread effects over the surrounding areas. Thus, development strategies have been largely unable to solve the widening regional disparities problem.

A visible change in thrust of our economic policy has been seen in recent years. The liberalization process initiated in the 1990’s, was an effort to transform the planned economy to a market one. Disparities in the regional context are said to be one of the implications of the new economic policy. Disparities among states and regions within states, between urban and rural areas, and between various sections of the community, have been observed to be steadily increasing in the past few years and the gains of rapid growth witnessed in this period have not reached all parts and all sections in an equitable manner (Government of India, 2008, p. 137), making regional disparity a matter of serious concern. A number of recent studies (Kant, 1999; Nagaraj, et al. 1998; Rao, et al, 1999; Shand and
Bhide, 2000; Ahluwalia, 2000 & 2002; Krishan, 2001; Singh, et al., 2003; Ghosh and Narayana, 2005; Kumar, 2005; Mazumdar, 2005; Nayyar, 2005; Kar and Sakthivel, 2007) have observed widened regional disparity in India during the 1990’s especially. It is a proven fact that ‘in a large economy (like India), different regions with varying resource base and endowments would have a dissimilar growth path over the time’ (Williamson, 1965).

The growth rate of gross domestic product (GDP) has accelerated since the 1980’s. From 1950’s to 1980’s the average annual GDP growth rate was only 3.6 percent, which increased to 5.6 per cent in the 1980’s and after the initiation of economic reforms in the 1990’s, it rose to 6.0 per cent and more (Bhattacharya and Sakthivel, 2004). The foreign investment also increased during this period, while public investment witnessed sharp deceleration due to fiscal constraints. The states having better infrastructure, metropolitan urban centers and coastal locations received higher investments due to these policies further aggravating the regional disparities. Spatial efficiency reigned over spatial justice, widening the gap between the developed and the underdeveloped, thus making research into the concepts and processes involved in ‘Regional disparities’ all the more imperative (Figure 1.1).

The Initiation of Regional Disparities:

The dawn of civilization saw a crystallization of the concept of ecumene and non-ecumene, inhabited lands and uninhabited lands as also the conceptualization of the developed and the undeveloped regions. The origins of regional disparities can be traced to the process of the earliest human settlements. These refined in disposition gradually with concerns of control over people, resources and other areas or regions evolving steadily.
Figure 1.1 Regional Dimensions of India’s Backwardness in the Global Context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poverty Density (Poor or disadvantaged people/km²)</th>
<th>Market Access (Population density, Transport costs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chile’s “Zonas extremes”</td>
<td>• N.E. China’s “Rust belt” region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Russian North (State sponsored settlements)</td>
<td>• Developed Country ‘Coal towns’ (France, UK, US.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northern Canada</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thailand’s Northeast</td>
<td>• India’s ‘Central Belt’ * (poor and populous States)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mexico’s Southern States</td>
<td>• Italy’s Southern Mezzogiorno.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* The World Development Report mentions it as India’s Hindu Belt. This being a questionable observation, we have put it as India’s Central Belt, representing the location of backward areas in India.

These settlements in the river valleys of the Nile, Mesopotamia, Indus, and Hwangho river systems in the first instance; the sea coast civilizations of the Greeks, Creats and Romans in the second instance and later on the Incas, Mayas and Aztecs in Latin America lead to the emergence of successive ecumenes which flourished in contrast to non-ecumenes (Map 1A) which were unexplored and undeveloped regions. The Brandt Commission (1980) described developed areas as North and underdeveloped as South, explaining the periodic shift in the development foci over time in human history. Thus, the North-South line divides the world into the developed and the underdeveloped halves (Map 1B).
Then evolved the concepts of the developed, underdeveloped and developing countries; the First, Second and Third world countries; and the north/south inequities are in sharper contrast after the Second World War. However, the ‘modern notion of development’ has long and well-established antecedents. Soviet planners were perhaps the first to recognize the significance of a sound regional development strategy. From the beginning of their planning era in 1928, in former USSR, the reduction of economic disparity among regions and early liquidation of backwardness were primary objectives. The removal of backwardness from the Central Asian republics like Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz and Turkmenia were initially attempted (Gidadhubli, 1978, p. 43). On the American continent President Truman’s speech of 1949 noted how the underdeveloped world’s poverty was a handicap and threat to both .... and greater production was the key to prosperity and peace.

Hoselitz (1960) described three periods in history when ‘secular growth’ was a key focus of intellectual thought: (i) during the early industrialization of Europe, between 1550 and 1750, when mercantile economics held sway; (ii) between 1775 and 1832 when the Industrial Revolution was in full swing and the classical economics of Malthus and Ricardo had come into being; as well as (iii) the period after 1875 when industrialization of Europe, particularly Germany, encouraged German theorists to discuss economic growth (Hoselitz, 1960, p. 5). He adds that the early economic theories were formulated to find solutions to practical problems as they arose at different stages.

If one looks into the etymological origins of the words, ‘regional’ and ‘disparities’, one has to revert to the 14th and 16th centuries, a throw back to when disparity entered human experience and vocabulary. The word ‘region’ was derived from an Anglo-French word ‘regioun’ in C.1330, which literally means direction, boundary, district, country and so on; and the word ‘disparity’ was taken from the French derivative ‘disparite’ in C.1555, which means ‘inequality’ (Online Etymology Dictionary, www.etymoline.com).
Map 1.1

WORLD: Regional Disparities in Ancient and Modern Times

1. a) Nile valley, b) Mesopotamia, c) Greek, d) Roman Civilizations
2. a) Indus valley, b) Indo-Gangetic cultural hearth
3. Hawangho valley and Chinese civilization
4. a) Aztecs, b) Maya, c) Inca civilizations


Source: North-South Commission. 1980
Concept of Regional Disparity:

The concept of development in general and of regional disparity in particular became the focus of research and teaching in the post World War II era, however, a retrospective examination of the themes has appeared only in recent times when globalization, liberalization and privatization emerged on the world scenario.

Streeten (1981) has cited many reasons embedded in the changing material conditions of the post 1945 world which lead to the origin of development studies in modern times. First of all, decolonization processes unfolded several problems that were kept hidden behind colonial patronage and provoked development planning as a first priority after the political independence of many countries. Secondly, the growth of the First and Second world rivalry on ideological lines extended to newly-emerged nations and one of the battlegrounds took the form of development assistance. Thirdly, the declining mortality rates in Third World countries, combined with the persistence of steadily increasing high birth rates, led to high overall population growth rates. The ensuing ‘population explosion’ exacerbated the plight of the poor, accentuated the problems of unemployment, and intensified pressure on scarce resources, which resulted in the urgency of attending to development issues. Finally, better communications and transportation technology, combined with increased use of propaganda between the East and West, raising world consciousness of disparities in standards of living.

The ‘First Great Ascent’ from poverty which began in Europe and North America in the late nineteenth century in the wake of the industrial revolution, and the ‘Second Great Ascent’ from poverty started in the 1950s in the developing world, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. While the first one led to an early take off, the second one could not generate the desired results (Guinness and Nagle, 2005).
Concerned over this, the United Nations declared in 1959 that the 1960s would be the ‘development decade’. Modernization theorists and others saw the advancement of the developing world as an achievable reality in 20-30 years. However, the United Nations declared a second development decade in the 1970s and a third one in the 1980s. The 1990s began with a renewed surge of optimism. The end of Cold War provided an opportunity for the world to channel new resources into human development (Guinness and Nagle, 2005, p.172).

The distinction between the ‘developed North’ and the ‘developing South’ was made clear by the Brandt Report (1980) on the ‘North-South Commission’. The main objective of this report was to provide an accurate and contemporary assessment of the global development situation and to offer detailed recommendations for closing gaps in development. A follow-up report entitled ‘Common Cause’, published in 1983, observed that, the situation had further deteriorated. Similarly, it was noted later on that while in 1965, the average income per capita in the richest quintile of countries was 31 times the income of the poorest quintile. This difference rose to 60 times in the 1990s and 78 times in the 1996. Ironically there were large increases in regional disparities in the first half of the 1990s, the so-called ‘golden era’ of globalization. This widening gap reflected the growing marginalization of the poorer countries.

The basic trends of agglomerations at various spatial levels and through various actors have tended to underline socio-economic barriers to development. From Marshall and Losch, through Myrdal and Perroux, to Krugman and Storper, regional and local agglomerations have become well-recognized drivers of uneven economic and social landscapes. Henceforth, the role of devolution of power in reducing spatial disparities was considered a necessary auxiliary. Rodriguez-Pose and Gill (2003) concluded that the widespread decentralization of powers to regional governments across the world has proved popular and seems to be associated with significant social and political benefits. They made a case for the role of devolution in the emerging ‘geography of disparities’.
Processes of Development and Regional Disparities:

Hand-in-hand with the concern for regional disparities has been a corresponding quest for theory explaining the process of development (Farmanfarmanian, 1976). This interest was the outcome of three main factors: (i) a striking disparity in the standards of living of people in the developed and developing countries, (ii) a serious attempt being made by the developing realm to achieve a socio-economic progress through planned development and (iii) a keenness on the part of social sciences to contribute to this grand task of reconstruction (Krishan, 1980). The first factor aroused the intellectual curiosity for explanation, the second stimulated a search for appropriate models of development, and the third brought out a variety of perspectives in which the development process could be viewed (Gosal and Krishan, 1984).

Here an attempt is made to locate the concept of development in general and regional disparities in particular, amongst the social sciences, and to preview the geographer’s concept of development. Among all the social sciences concerned with the process of development, economics has contributed the most in generating theory and policy prescriptions (Higgins, 1976). Economists interpreted economic development as growth in per capita income making this growth the chief concern of developmentalists. The ‘Proposals for Action’ (UN, 1962) established that development is growth plus change. It further added that this change, in turn, is social, cultural, economic and qualitatively measurable as well as and quantitatively...the focus being improvement of peoples quality of life. Earlier, Hoselitz (1952, 1960) defined development as growth plus change especially in terms of values and institutions. It lead to a growing concern for equity. Adelman and Morris (1973) and Chenery (1974) discussed redistribution with growth with a focus on meeting the basic human needs.

Sociologists, by comparison, opted primarily for the conceptualization of the development process, postulating social development to be a pre-requisite for economic development. They evinced a special interest in social development, measured in terms of quality of life (Talcott et al., 1949), and in societal
development judged mainly from the viewpoint of social justice. Jones and Pandey (1981), stressed that economic development was hampered and rendered fruitless in the absence of social development which was truly the ultimate goal of any societal transformation. They underlined the significance of institutional and structural changes as agents of economic growth.

Political scientists highlighted the fact that development took place in a given political context. Examples of Indonesia, Burma, Pakistan, and Sudan were cited by Eisenstadt (1964), where the process of modernization failed due to lack of political development. Lewis (1970) noted that political authorities in India had to take a lead in the sphere of development after Independence. He underlined the increasing role of government as the principle planner, energizer, promoter and director of development. Now it is recognized that people’s participation is essential for development to take place (Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1987). In case of India, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments ensured the utilization of the creative ability of the local people, local wisdom and local resources to accelerate the development process further.

Ecologists stressed the relevance of environmental conservation for sustainable and compatible development. Meadows (1972), Dasmann (1973), Pestel et al. (1974) and Singer (1975) saw a threat to ecology as inherent to current style of development. Strahler and Strahler (1973) have seen the crises extending on the spatial and temporal scales, from the local to global and from the present to the indeterminable future. Issues relating to pollution and resource conservation were rated crucial for developed countries, as compared to maintenance of soils, water and habitation qualities were more crucial to the developing realm. Wood (1977) pointed out that development level of any region should be adjudged from the degree of its concern for maintaining an ecological balance.

Psychological factors of personality traits of societies, like achievement motive and sensitivity to opportunity were emphasized by McClelland (1961) and Hagen (1962) for causing development and underdevelopment in a specific region or
nation. Industrialization, group activity and proper child rearing are suggested as instruments for breaking down traditional thinking and encouraging entrepreneurship.

Historians have not contributed in any significant way to the theory of development (Krishan, 1980). As synthesizers Geographers, on the other hand, examined the development process from a spatial perspective. A primary task for a geographer in development studies is to find ways and means of providing a more realistic description of the current and changing patterns of economic development in different areas (Hartshorne, 1960).

Development determinants in any area include its ecology, technology, ideology and the exposure of that area to external influences (Figure 1.2). Ecology here refers to the resource base of a region and its sustainability in the future, ideology relates to the governance and technology represents the advancements achieved through industrialization and modernization. An exposure to the external influences helps in a way as closed societies stagnate with time and areas having healthy and progressive relations with other advanced regions are benefited in the long run.

Figure 1.2 Factors in Development
Some basic questions with which a geographer is directly concerned may be listed as follows: Why some parts of the world are developed and many others underdeveloped in the way they are? Why within the developed realm are there zones of underdevelopment and in contrast there are in the underdeveloped world the pockets of development? How does development occur in specific locations and diffuses to the other areas later? What are the forward and backward linkages in the process of development? What is the nature of spatial organization in a developed or backward area?

These queries prompt both empirical investigation and theoretical formulation in respect of spatial patterns and the processes of development. We will discuss the models and theories propounded by social scientists from varying perspectives.

**Development Models/Theories:**

Models or theories that describe the process of development and underdevelopment at local, regional, national and international levels can be classified into categories depending on the criteria adopted for their classification. Keeble (1972) classified the models of socio-economic development into the non-spatial and spatial models and looked upon them at the supra-national, national and sub-national levels. Nash (1963) categorized the spatial theories of development into three groups’ viz., spatial differentiation, spatial diffusion and spatial integration. Browett (1980) further improved this classification and grouped these theories into three classes (i) those which compared development levels of different regions (ii) those which identified various stages in the development of a specific region and (iii) those which examined the process of spatial diffusion of development. Dubey (1992) classified the theories explaining development in the spatial context into two categories, viz., theories emphasizing intra-regional factors and theories emphasizing spatial interaction. Singh (1998) classified the development models into non-spatial and spatial in which the former portrayed stage-of-growth theories and the latter were based on the concepts of spatial differentiation, interaction and diffusion. Kalantari (1998) tried
to categorize development models into the descriptive and prescriptive under the broader non-spatial and spatial dimensions of socio-economic development. Das (2004) presented a critique of theories received in the domain of uneven development and regionalism. He analyzed these theories in five major groupings. These are (i) marginilists, location and self balance, (ii) institutionalists and imbalances, (iii) interventionism and territorial integration, (iv) dependent periphery and scalar catch, and (v) radical geography and spaces.

A typology of models enumerated is presented in figure 1.3.

**Non-Spatial Models/Theories of Development**

The greater majority of interpretations and models of economic growth produced by economists have been non-spatial. These are a simplified description of reality, which stresses crucial variables as opposed to variables of secondary importance (Borts and Stein, 1964). For a better understanding, these are described as Descriptive, Analytical and Normative non-spatial models/theories of development.

**A. Descriptive Non-spatial Models/Theories**

These describe the sequence and stages of development based on historical experiences of the developed countries. Here the existing disparities between the developed and developing countries are more a matter of time lag. Earlier scholars noted for their classical theories include Smith (1776) emphasizing division of labour; Ricardo (1817) suggested an underlying entrepreneurial class as generator of development; and Malthus (1820) who highlighted demand as a promoter of investment and production. They emphasized capital accumulation, sound administrative system, stable government and well organized financial agencies as favorable economic, social and institutional inputs for development.

During the late 19th century, German economists attempted to describe development in terms of stages. Fredrich List (1916) based his model on the criteria of dominant occupation viz., savage; pastoral; agricultural; agricultural
and manufacturing; agricultural, manufacturing and commercial. Hildebrand (1848) described his model based on the character of economic exchange system practiced like barter, money and credit economies. Schmoller’s (Nau, 2000) model of territorial economic organization used stages of village, town, regional, national and world economies. Bucher’s (1901) model of industrial evolution looked through household, town and national economies. Sombart’s (2001) model, based on degree of social interaction, used stages of individual, transitional and social economies.

Marx (1992) described the evolution of societies in five stages as defined by their mode of production, i.e. political economy, primitive communism, slave holding system, feudalism, capitalism and communism. As a critique to Marx’s model, Rostow (1960) in his non-communist manifesto listed five stages of economic transformation of a society as traditional, pre-condition for take-off, take off, drive to maturity and age of high mass consumption.

All these theories described the processes of social advancement, economic growth, and overall development of society through different stages. It was also emphasized, through the historical experience of advanced countries, that organized social institutions, surplus capital, efficient administration, and mature political systems lead to a higher level of development among nations.

B. Analytical Non-Spatial Models/Theories

These models bring out the play of intra-regional factors in development or underdevelopment.

Nurkse (1953) in his vicious circle theory noted that there is a circular constellation of forces that tend to act upon one another in such a way as to keep a country in a state of poverty, and reacts in a feedback effect on the size of the market and their capacity to save, which in turn limits capital accumulation. The statement ‘A country is poor because it is poor’, sums up the situation.
In his ‘dual society theory’ Boeke (1953) analysed that most developing countries are characterized by the existence of two circuits – the upper one of an advanced imported western system and the lower one of an indigenous, pre-capitalist, agricultural system. The small group of the upper circuit usurps the gains of development while the lower circuit forming a large majority remains steeped in poverty. These structural inequalities result in the overall backwardness of a society/settlement that is spatially defined.

Higgins (1976) advocated the theory of technological and economic dualism differentiating capital-intensive and labour intensive sectors. He stated that the backward labour-intensive sector could be transformed by a gradual diffusion of western capitalism supported by the transplantation of technical assistance. Santos (1979) in agreement with Boeke analysed that the upper circuit was characterized by modern commercial flows and the lower circuit involved labour intensive manufacturing, local services and limited trade.

Psychologists like McClelland, Hagen and Schultz emphasized the role of psychological and technological factors in the determination of development. They felt that the prevailing economic conditions could not wholly explain the lack of development in a stagnant or traditional society. They cited the examples of developed countries, which were backward or underdeveloped earlier but had been motivated to advance. McClelland (1961) found the lack of achievement motivation as the real cause for the backwardness of a society. The other factors in development were creative intelligence for Hagen (1962) and requisite knowledge and skill for Schultz (1964).

Hoselitz (1960) in his ‘social deviance theory’ found a role for deviants in development. According to him, deviants break traditions and adopt innovations. They accelerate the process of transformation of a society from underdevelopment to development.
Figure: 1.3 A Framework of Development Models/Theories
Significance of natural resources was highlighted by Ginsburg (1957) and Ullman (1958), as their absence posed a serious impediment for developing or underdeveloped countries while their abundance promoted both exports and foreign investment. By a comparison of data from over 50 countries, it was observed that resources were of critical importance in explaining differences within a group of countries having similar historical and cultural features (Chenery 1964). These resources become comparatively less important once development increases.

Models in this group have assigned importance to the role of factors like social institutions, technological advancement and natural resources in the development process.

C. Normative Non-Spatial Models/Theories

Normative non-spatial models for economic growth and development stimulated the status of the American economy after the Great Depression and reconstruction of damaged countries after World War II. Important models are discussed below.

Keynes’ (1929) General Theory analyzed the causes of unemployment, saying that employment depended on the level of national production, which is governed by the volume of demand for consumer goods and the size of subsequent private and public investments. He favored the government’s control on economic activity in national interest as state capitalism. In this manner, free economy responded to the decisions of welfare maximizing consumers and profit maximizing producers ensuring the development process following a virtuous circle.

Schumpeter (1934) contends that significant economic progress is the result of disharmonious leaps and spurts resulting from innovations that help in the exploitation of new investment horizons. Herein, the entrepreneur occupies the central position and the innovation is the principal force behind all progress.
Harrod-Domar (1949-1957) assigned a key role to investment in the process of economic growth, but also underlined the dual character of investment hooked to the demand-supply nexus. Demand creates income and supply affects as it augments the productive capacity of an economy benefiting from more investment. So development does not depend only on savings but on the productivity of investment as well.

Questioning Keynes’ theory, Lewis (1954) propounded a different theory of economic development. With unlimited supply of labour in the productive sector and capital accumulating as a result of the transition from subsistence to commercial economy, it is the savings and the capital formation that determined the development process.

These theories therefore, have been propounded by different economists who explored the role of national production, new innovations, demand supply nexus and savings as well as capital accumulations as the determinants of development of any state.

**Spatial Models/Theories of Development**

Geographers being more concerned with spatial models and theories of development and underdevelopment, signify the relationship of a shift of preoccupation with temporal change to spatial variations in the development process. These theories also have been classified into Descriptive, Analytical and Normative models/theories.

**A. Descriptive Spatial Models/Theories**

The vicious circle mechanism of Nurkse, according to which a country is poor because it is poor, a number of studies devoted to the description of development and underdevelopment from a spatial perspective were influenced. In the early fifties, Winslow (1951) demonstrated as to how one negative factor functions as both cause and effect of other negative factors and leads to the low level of development of a region.
Johnson (1965) associated development inequality with the varying access to urban market. He elaborated that farther away the area from an urban centre, more backward would it be. Berry (1968) elaborated the development role of an integrated urban hierarchy in which innovations filtered down from cities to towns and then to the surrounding countryside. Llyod and Dicken (1972) observed that a definable hierarchy of central places was a characteristic feature of an economically developed region.

Barnet and Muller (1974), while observing the relationship between the developed and the developing countries, viewed multinationals as a source of political and economic control describing them as instruments of neo-colonialism.

On the left side of the development thought, the dependency theory traces its roots to the tradition of Marxist thinking. Sweezy (1942) and Paul Baran (1957) popularized the theory of dependency. They viewed development and underdevelopment as two faces of the same coin. Development in one region was almost always at the cost of the underdevelopment of another region through appropriation. Potekin (1962) and Fanon (1963) also followed these ideas. Amin (1974) called this ‘peripheral capitalism’ and Santos (1979) described it as ‘dependent capitalism’.

B. Analytical Spatial Models/Theories

Analytical spatial models and theories viewed spatial interaction as the main framework within which the processes of development and underdevelopment took place.

Myrdal (1957) tried with the help of ‘backwash and spread effects’ analogy to describe the development process in spatial terms. He emphasized that if things were left to the market forces, unhampered by any policy interferences, almost all economic activities would tend to cluster in certain regions or localities, leaving the rest of the country more or less backward. The interplay of ‘backwash and spread effects’ influences the spatial flow of labour, capital and commodities between regions, and regional disparities are reduced only if the spread effects
supersede backwash effects. Hicks (1959) furthered the concept with a systematic description of growing and lagging regions.

Hirschman (1961) analyzed the development process in terms of ‘polarization’ and ‘trickling down’ effects to describe the mechanism whereby developed areas exerted an influence on the backward areas. Spatial interaction between the growing (North) and lagging (South) regions, gave rise to polarization processes with development getting concentrated in the already developed area. This situation is corrected by government intervention through investments in the backward area. As a consequence development starts trickling down to the lagging region.

Friedmann (1956, 1972) put forth the ‘core-periphery’ model. He explained that the development map of any area is determined by the nature of relationships between the developed core and the underdeveloped periphery. He listed four phases of relationship viz., phase of colonial relationship; phase of unequal relationship; phase of conscious inequality and phase of equilibrium. With this framework, he observed that an unexploited region comes in contact with a colonial power; it gets exploited in its physical and human resources. With the beginning of industrialization an unequal relationship is established and further development leads to conscious inequality. The stage of equilibrium is achieved when the space economy gets fully integrated.

Frank (1966) propounded the ‘metropolitan-satellite’ model. It explained the development of underdevelopment, which has been typical of all colonized parts of the world. The polarizing tendencies get manifest in increasing disparities at all levels in the metropolis satellite chain. Slater (1973,1977) further elaborated the ideas and explained that colonialism was a formal device by which large parts of Latin America, Africa and Asia were incorporated into the international capitalist economy.

Johnson (1970), on the other hand, opposed the primate city distribution as it hinders a country’s development. He criticized the lopsided spatial and
hierarchical distribution of urban places. He called for bridging the void between the ubiquitous villages and parasitic great cities by building a proper Loschian hierarchy of urban centers, which ranges from small towns to intermediate cities and national metropole.

C. Normative Spatial Models/Theories

Spatial normative models and theories represent the thinking on regional development planning. They generally provide a statement of what might appear in certain idealized circumstances.

Ohlin (1933) propounded the 'law of comparative advantage', when there are differences in factor endowments between regions, economic benefits are maximized if they specialise in production and export of those commodities for which they are best suited. He argued about how area specific specialization and trade would result in regional equality over time.

Isard (1951, 1957) elaborated that regional development can be achieved through appropriate industrial locations, planned development of industries in resource rich regions with optimum and planned use of available resources in resource poor regions. Interregional differences in factor productivity tend to increase over time unless there are radical changes brought in the structure of demand or technology.

Losch (1954), while criticizing the Christaller’s theory, suggested a hierarchy of central places in a multi-hexagonal pattern for achieving spatial equilibrium. North (1955, 1961) emphasized that a strong export base determines the pattern of regional growth.

Perroux (1950) highlighted the spread effects of a developed core as compared to Myrdal’s backwash effects. He underlined the concept of the growth pole and the propulsive unit emphasizing the role of growth poles as catalysts for development of surrounding areas through mechanisms of backward and forward
linkages. Mishra (1983) made a case for adoption of this model as a recipe for narrowing down regional disparities in India.

Perloff et al., (1960) opined that the development of a region depends upon its capacity to industrialize in a big way, which is related with the factors of locational advantage and access to market. As compared to regional growth, he focused on national development which is determined by accumulation of capital, technological change and population growth.

Kuklinski (1983), influenced by the Hagerstrand’s (1967) innovation diffusion model as a spatial process, called for minimizing the time for adaptation of innovations for reducing regional disparities. He argued that the frequency of innovations is basic to the regional development process, the cycle of which is shorter in developed nations. He emphasized speedy spread of innovations through strong, effective and efficient communication systems.

Hoover (1975) put forward an integrated strategy of development through simultaneous growth of all sectors by adopting target group and target area approaches. He emphasized on the reduction of social inequalities rather than economic disparities for the overall development.

Of late, strategies for the removal of regional disparities and overall regional development are being reinvented. Emphasis is now being placed on the bottom up approach as compared to the earlier top-down strategy. Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978) observed that by increasing the accessibility of rural populations to the regional hierarchy of urban centers, equity in the regional development can be ensured.

Friedmann and Weaver (1979) outlined an ‘agro-politan development strategy’ through functional and territorial approaches. An agropolis being a central place having strong interaction with the surrounding countryside. It plays a vital role in the regional development. It favors self-sufficiency in meeting basic needs of the
people in a region. Stohr and Taylor (1981) favor the ‘development from below’ approach as the road to reduction in regional disparities.

The behavior of regional disparities over time received considerable attention from social scientists, including geographers. Three different viewpoints can be seen regarding the evolving patterns of regional disparities over time. The first is ‘self perpetuation’ a hypothesis propounded by Hughes (1959) and validated by Booth (1964). They believe that ‘Regional disparities widen in the process of economic development’. An antithesis propounded by Hanna (1959) and empirically validated by Hanna (1959) and Perloff et al., (1960) stated that ‘Regional disparities converge or get reduced in the course of economic development’. The third view or overall synthesis was given by Williamson (1965) that ‘Regional disparities increase in the early development stage, converge or begin to stabilize with further development and decline in the mature development stage’.

On the basis of some new generalizations derived from the experiences of developing countries, Dubey (1995) put forward a fourth hypothesis (no trade-off hypothesis) that ‘there is no association between development and regional disparities’. It was found that regional disparities in various components of development do not move with the same intensity and sometimes moved in opposite directions (Singh and Dubey, 1985; Dubey, 1989).

Which model/theory or hypothesis best spells out the course of the Indian development process and best conforms to the Indian situation or best explains the patterns of and trends in regional disparities in India, is one of the primary research questions of the present piece of research. The answer to this query is provided in the last chapter of summary and conclusions.

**Concept of Development in Geography**

The status of development studies in Geography leaves much to be desired as compared to that of other social sciences. This could be due to lack of tradition in
multidisciplinary research among geographers; their pre-occupation with the idiographic approach rather than the nomothetic; their satisfaction in the enrichment of systematic geographies; and the non-availability of data on indicators of development for micro-scale spatial limits and other such factors (Singh, 1998). The irony, however, is that among the scholars who propounded various theories and models of development reviewed above there are hardly any geographers.

Coates et al., (1977) observed that ‘too conspicuous a difference between affluence of the developed realm and poverty of the underdeveloped world’ did not arouse spontaneous geographic interest. Adding that ‘within developed countries there were zones of underdevelopment, and in developing countries the pockets of development were not absent’.

Now, however, the academic landscape is rapidly changing. Issues of social and economic inequality, the subject of study in other social science disciplines for some decades, have received much attention from geographers. Chapman (1969), Chisholm (1971), Wise (1977), and McIntosh (1978) have advocated the relevance of geography to development studies. Bibliographic works by Connell (1973), Slater (1973, 1977), DeSouza and Porter (1974), Brookfield (1975), Freeman (1979), Browett (1980), Rimmer and Forbes (1982) and Forbes (1984), may be listed in this regard. Ginsburg’s (1961) work was a good start for laws underpinning spatial regularities in developing areas. His work, ‘Essays on Geography and Economic Development’, highlighted case studies of underdeveloped countries.

The diffusionist paradigm propounded by Hagerstrand (1952, 1967), and elaborated by Rogers (1962), Taaffe, et al., (1963), Gould (1970), Weinard (1972) was adopted by development geographers. Its impact was so pervasive that all development geography text books of the sixties and seventies were firmly wedded to its ideology (Browett, 1981). The radical paradigm also influenced development geography whereby “Antipode: A Radical Journal of
"Geography" was the epitome of a different prototype. Introduction of a political economy perspective in the geographic study of development by radical geographers gave an antithesis to the capitalist development perspective. Bunge (1969) emphasized the need for re-exploring the human world; Harvey (1972) advocated for ‘territorial social justice’, and Blaut (1973) exposed the fragility of the western development theory for its interpretation of the Third World. Development was considered a ‘dirty word’ by Buchanan (1974). He exposed exploitation of the poor by the rich behind the altruistic façade of development. A rethinking on the entire theory and practice of development was pleaded.

Meanwhile the welfare approach paradigm in geography was underlined by Streeten (1972), Smith (1977), Tata and Schultz (1988). Smith (1977) generated the question of ‘who gets what, where and how?’ The issue of inequality thus came under sharp focus. At this stage the concept of social and spatial justice got incorporated into the mainstream of the subject.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank (WB), the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and other such international agencies are now increasingly focusing on the issues of disparities and poverty, particularly in the Third World countries, and the widening gap between the developed and the developing world. The World Bank (1990) in its publication focused on global poverty. Similarly, the World Development Report (1999) addressed the changing development scenario of the early 21st century, and observed that “Development thinking has evolved into a broad pragmatism; realizing that development must move beyond economic growth to encompass important social-goals, reduced poverty, improved quality of life, enhanced opportunities for better education and health and more”. The Human Development Report (United Nations, 2001) emphasized that, “Human development is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives in accordance with their needs and interests. It is about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that...
they value. And it is, thus, about much more than economic growth, which is only a means – if a very important one – of enlarging people’s choices”.

The adoption of the ‘Millennium Development Goals’ (MDG’s, Annexure I), drawn from the United Nations Millennium Declaration, is a seminal event in the history of mankind. The world today is largely equipped with resources and technology to make the right to development a reality for everyone and to free the entire human race from want. There is a shared vision of development (United Nations, 2005). These MDG’s are a step towards correcting regional disparities the world over.

National Human Development Report (Planning Commission, 2002) and India Development Report: 2008 (Radhakrishna, 2008) has also emphasized that the process of development, in any society should ideally be viewed and assessed in terms of what it does for an average individual. It has to be seen in terms of the benefits and opportunities that it generates for people and how these are eventually distributed between men and women, the well off and the depraved across regions.

**Concept of Development in Indian Geography**

Development studies from the geographic perspective gained momentum in India after the 1960’s. The realization dawned that India with its geographical diversities, required the integration of sectoral and regional approaches to planning for optimization of economic efficiency and minimization of regional disparities. The declaration of the 1960’s and the 1970’s as the first and second development decades respectively by the United Nations acted as a stimulant to this emerging trend.

Though planning had started in India from 1951 onwards, the issue of regional disparities, however, came into sharp focus in the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74). Earlier plans (1951-1969) were growth oriented and emphasized the sectoral development of industry and agriculture. All successive plans gave attention to the problem of structural and regional disparities. Various area development
programmes, namely the Hill Area Development Programme, Desert Area Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Development Programme and others, along with other schemes for disadvantaged areas, such as industrially backward districts and tribal areas, were geared to the task of removal of regional disparities. This stimulated a spate of studies on the spatial patterns of development in India.

Schwartzberg’s (1962) work was a pioneer effort towards examining the spatial pattern of economic development during the early fifties. A peculiar feature recognized as typical of India’s development was the existence of a number of manufacturing, commercial or administrative centres like Kanpur, Hyderabad and Jaipur, the growth levels of which did not reflect the development of their surrounding areas. Such developed urban pockets were in the nature of islands of development in an ocean of poverty all around.

During the sixties, Mitra (1967) brought out the positive dimension of the otherwise undesired regional disparities in India. He observed that regional disparities in the country were not along any ethnic or sub-cultural lines and one could not find any North/South polarization as met in the European or the American context.

Kundu and Raza (1982) made an in-depth analysis of the Indian economy from a regional perspective. They presented a vivid picture of the regional disparities during the seventies. They highlighted the fact that present regional disparities were a colonial legacy. Several negative conclusions were reached; among which were the Green Revolution having widened the regional disparities in agricultural development; growth poles in the form of industrial projects in the public sector failed to stimulate the regional economies and the big cities were ineffective in promoting development of their surrounding areas.

Bharadwaj (1982) noticed that prevailing disparities took root in the colonial experience of the country, which had concentrations of development in a few favoured pockets and neglect over larger tracts.
Krishan (1989) analysed the emerging trends in regional disparities during the 80's. He noted that only a few geographers carried out these studies. Mathur (1978) described the efforts made after Independence to minimize regional disparities through planned development. A decline in these disparities was noted by the mid-sixties (Mahajan, 1982). The subsequent years, however, recorded opposing trends (Ansari, 1983; Mathur, 1983; Mishra ed. 1985). This was attributed to a decline in the relative share of government investment in development plans and this hit the backward areas more (Ahuwalia, 1985). A negligible decline, however, was seen in the eighties (Prasad, 1988). It was also found that the differences in regional growth within India were significantly explained by the initial availability of various key infrastructural inputs, such as irrigation, power and transport (Mathur, 1987). Disparities in the agricultural sector were observed to increase over the years (Sen, 1969; Krishnaji 1975; Bhalla and Alagh 1979; Bhalla and Tyagi, 1989). This was attributed to the Green Revolution that took place in certain irrigated parts of the country. Regional disparities in the industrial sector declined, because of the deliberate policy of the government to favor backward areas for industrial investment (Sekhar, 1982).

Krishan (1989) identified newer features on the development map of India. First was an incipient form of corridor development, particularly along trunk railway lines connecting Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras with each other. Second was the fact that the sharp distinction between former British administered areas and the erstwhile princely states, in terms of their development level, were blurred. Third was the declining urban-rural disparity in areas of commercial agriculture due to a diffusion of the development process. Fourth was the process whereby all the union territories and smaller states were recording a faster rate of development. Then, finally, was the incongruity between the economic development of Punjab and the social development of Kerala. Krishan (2000) noted the emerging spatial contours on India's development scene and analysed the possible reasons for the patterns of regional disparities in India.

Some scholars were concerned about the methodological issues in identifying the patterns of regional development. The compilation of a general index of development level in a given area to afford comparability of different areas, and to examine whether there is a regional grouping of areas with respect to the degree and nature of development was suggested by Pal (1968). Pathak and Kundu (1972) reviewed the techniques of measurement used by various schemes for the identification of various development levels. It was observed that even though researchers intended to conduct an objective analysis yet they could not escape subjectivity in the selection and manipulation of indicators. Kundu (1975) stressed on eliminating the bias of scale and determining weightages to different variables in the composition of various indicators in development studies.

Review of Literature

A search of literature on regional disparities in India led to discovery of around three hundred publications on the theme including, research papers, proceedings of the conference/seminar/symposium, government reports, books and above all M.Phil/Ph.D theses. The effort spread over journals in geography, economics, and other social sciences and of course innumerable postings on the Internet. Figure 1.4 provides a synoptic view of the literature surveyed. Map 1.2 provides a spatial version of the same.
Even though literature on the theme has been multiplying with the passage of time, but there is hardly any work which deals with regional disparities in India for as long a period, as assigned to the present study, which is from the historical times to the present. A close relationship was also found between production of data and publication of literature on regional disparities. The years of census publication and completion of five-year plans were prolific in terms of publications on regional disparities.

Krishna Menon (1933) presented a paper, *The Standard of Living in Asia* with a regional flavor at the International conference on *Birth Control in Asia* on the theme of, held at London on 24-25 November 1933. It discussed the problems of population in India, its relation to the standard of living of the Indian masses, and the necessity to consider measures for the limitation of population as a part of deliberate social policy. United Provinces and West Bengal were noted for high poverty rates. Ogilive (1938) looked at regionalization of India with special reference to its development levels. Earlier, Stamp (1927), Baker (1928) and McFarlence (1938) studied regionalization schemes of India, with reference to how different parts differed on the level of their economy.

Balakrishna (1948) was the first, after Independence, to produce a book on Regional Planning in India. Pannikar (1955) discussed the role of geographical factors in the evolution of Indian history. Deshpande (1956) made a note of applying geographical techniques to planning problems in India.

References mentioned above have an affinity with the theme of regionalization and regional planning of India. These are helpful for understanding better the personality of India with its physically challenged as well as economically prosperous parts. (These references have not been listed in the figure 1.4).

The Indian Institute of Public Opinion (1957) was a pioneer in examining the impact of the First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) on the issue of regional disparities through an analysis of the income levels of the reorganized states. Coale and Hoover (1958) brought out a book on the theme “Population Growth and
Economic Development in Low-Income Countries: A Case Study of India’s Prospects. Subba Rao (1958) also published his paper on regions and regionalism in India, which was rooted in its regional disparities.

One of the first monographs on the problem of regionalism in India was published in 1958 by the Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley. It highlighted the impact of reorganization of Indian states in 1956 through its report on ‘Regionalism and Provincialism: A Study in Problems of Indian National Unity’. Hoselitz (1960) took note of the urban-rural contrast as a factor in socio-cultural change in India. Schwartzberg (1960) worked on the ‘Occupational Structure and Levels of Economic Development in India: A Regional Analysis’, for his doctoral degree at the University of Wisconsin. He analysed the regional levels of development in India on the basis of the 1951 census data. This work was reproduced as a monograph by the Government of India in 1969. He experimented with three approaches to the mapping of economic development in India and observed the existence of scattered, important manufacturing; commercial or administrative centers, the levels of growth of which did not reflect that of their surrounding areas.

It was in 1962 that the Planning Commission of India published a monograph on the economic development of different regions in the country. It also identified resource and development regions of India in 1964. Based on the Census of India 1961 data, Mitra (1965, 1967) ranked the districts of India on the basis of their development level. He found no disparities along ethnic or sub-cultural lines and deduced that there was no north-south polarization. The industrial centers failed to demonstrate their multiplier effects but creditable dynamism was displayed by Punjab, Haryana and Kerala. On the other hand the Middle Ganga plain, despite its contact with developed areas through out-migration, received little stimulus for its own internal growth.
Figure 1.4 A Synoptic View of Literature Survey on Regional Disparities in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publication</th>
<th>Spatial Unit of Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar/conference Proceedings</td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.Phil/Ph.D</td>
<td>Technical/Theoretical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>Region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles/Paper</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>D District</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atlas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encyclopaedia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Review of Literature

'Review of Literature includes studies available on the theme till 2008.
INDIA
Literature on Regional Disparities
Spatial Context

Number of studies
- 16-21
- 8-15
- 5-7
- 2-4
- 0-1

0 500 Kms
While Chaudhry (1965) looked into the variations in incomes of states within an underdeveloped economy, the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (1966) analyzed regional incomes over three Plan periods and looked into the disparities in regional income growth. Berry (1968) described the interdependence of spatial structures in the Indian context, with the help of general field theory. He felt that the four metros and other big towns were determining the economic space of the country.

A landmark study by Dandekar and Rath (1971) initiated a new thinking on poverty in India. In the same year, Dasgupta (1971), Gupta (1971) and Roy Burman (1971) respectively presented a socio-economic classification of districts of India; spatial development patterns; and the economic and socio-cultural dimensions of regionalization.

Thavaraj (1972) traced regional imbalances in India on the basis of data on colonial investments made during the period 1860-1947. He observed that investments made in terms of irrigation canals, railway tracks and industrial projects led to the start of development in specific areas while others remained behind in the sphere of development.


Patel (1975) looked into the dilemmas of balanced regional development in India. Raj (1975) looked at the basic issues for linkages in industrialization and development strategies in India. Majumdar (1976) highlighted the inter-state disparities in income and expenditure. Veit (1976) examined India’s second revolution describing a new dimension of development in India. After the success
of the Green Revolution in attaining self-sufficiency in food production, and a new industrialized India was envisioned.

Sampath (1977) traced the trends in income inequalities in India for the period 1951 to 1971. Mohapatra (1978) while describing the trends in regional disparities presented an alternative model for measuring the divergence-convergence hypothesis, with the help of regional per capita incomes during the 1960-61 and 1973-74 period. Mathur (1978) examined the policies and programmes followed by the Government of India in response to the prevailing regional disparities. Karan et al., (1978) discerned the association between the level of development in India and birth control practice by the states while Krishna (1980) provided a regional account of the overall economic development.

The late seventies can be seen as a watershed in the production of literature on regional disparities in India. With the release of the report of National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas (1981), a large number studies on development and regional disparities emerged. This report highlighted the major issues related to the development of backward areas.


Velagudham et al. (1984) also analyzed the regional disparities in India as a whole.

Chattopadhyay (1985) reflected on the geographical enquiry into the inequalities in India. Mishra (1985) and Mishra et al. (1985) dealt with the regional structure of development and growth in India.

Kulkarni (1986) examined whether the inter-state disparities were growing over time. Mathur (1987) tried to answer why growth rates differed within India? Mandal (1987) and Joshi (1987) analyzed the inter-state disparities and imbalances in the planned development of India.


There is very less literature on sector-wise studies dealing with the issue of regional disparities in India in different sectors viz., agricultural and industrial. Majumdar (1964) explored the interstate differences in the agricultural incomes in the pre-Green Revolution period where areas with irrigation facilities were noted for higher agricultural production. Bagchi (1965) highlighted wide differences in the growth rate of agricultural production amongst different states. Sen (1969) described the regional dispersion in agricultural incomes across Indian states.

Evaluating the post Green Revolution scenario of agricultural development, Rao (1971) discovered widened inter-regional variations in agricultural growth. In an
extensive study, Bhalla and Allagh (1979) evaluated the district-wise performance of Indian agriculture. Dev (1988) and Mukhopadhyay (1988) dealt with disparities in agricultural development in India from different perspectives. While the former dealt with the issue of agricultural productivity and rural poverty, the latter explored the variations in agricultural development with the district level data for the 1960-61 and 1980-81 period.

Amongst industrial sector studies, the Working Group on Backward Regions of the Planning Commission (1969) identified industrially backward states and also recommended a set of indicators to identify industrially backward districts. Sastry (1970), Nath (1970), Alagh et al. (1971) analyzed the level and diversification of the industrialization processes and found huge disparities at the regional level.

Ahluwalia (1985) looked into the disparities in industrial growth of India. Sharma (1986) and Singh (1987) analyzed individually the regional disparities in industrial development and growth in India.

State-level studies are a diminutive part of the literature on regional disparities in India. Selective studies on regional disparities at the state level are revealed as under.

The Atlas of Mysore state (Learmonth and Bhat, 1960) was the first one depicting the resources and levels of development in a regional context. Epstein (1962) described regional variations in economic development and social change in South India. Ram (1972) looked at the impact of early colonization on the South Indian states.

particularly that of Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram. Banu (1978) analyzed the socio-economic development of Jammu & Kashmir. Gosal and Krishan (1984) provided a comprehensive treatment to the regional disparities in socio-economic development in Punjab. Rao (1984) sketched the picture of regional disparities in Karnataka in a taluk level study. All these studies were united in analyzing the fact that there were certain developed pockets which were far ahead of the backward districts of respective states.

Tiwari (1985) analyzed the regional disparities in the agricultural development of Uttar Pradesh. Emphasizing the role of infrastructure in the development of a region, the Government of Gujarat (1987) brought out a report on the regional disparities in the transportation facilities in the state.


Studies covering techniques for measuring the regional disparities in India are quite scarce. Sengupta and Sdasyuk (1968) analyzed the problems and approaches to the economic regionalization of India. Pal (1968), in his dissertation, elaborated the techniques of regional analysis for the national development. Pathak and Kundu (1972) presented a critique of the techniques used for measuring the levels of development in India. Chattopadhyay and Pal (1972) worked on comparative studies on the construction of composite regional indices.

Towards the end of the eighties, there was a decline in the publication of literature on regional disparities. This was probably due to the wait for the next
Census of India to make fresh data available. With the availability of the Census of India 1991 data and adoption of the new economic policy in 1991-92, the literature on regional disparities began accumulating. Accounts of the decade wise studies on trends in regional disparities are presented below.

**Trends in Regional Disparities: 1950 onwards**

Sarkar (1994) studied the 1950-87 period. He found that disparities between states were on the increase till 1980-81 and were then subsequently reduced. Punjab and Haryana were the most developed states and Bihar, the least developed, during this period.

Mathur (1994) dealt with the period from 1950 to 1990 and observed increasing regional disparities during the first two and half decades. A depressive influence of high demographic pressure on structural change of economy was noticed. Had there been no state action, the picture of regional differentiation in economic development would have been worse. Likewise, Sharma (1995) traced the trends for four decades, 1950 to 1990, finding a converging or narrowing down trend of regional disparities.

Krishan (1999) traced the trends in regional disparities from the First to Eighth Plan periods. He found that the outcome of India's planned development was a mixed bag of fluctuating trends in regional disparities. The Green Revolution encouraged regional disparities because areas with developed agriculture got higher per capita incomes and areas without agricultural development remained at lower income levels. The creations of growth poles in the backward states were also not able to generate the desired effects. Similarly, Lakshaman Rao (2000) traced trends in regional development from 1951 to 1995 and observed that, both, the national income and per capita income fluctuated significantly over this period. The rate of growth has not been adequate enough to take care of the twin problems of unemployment and poverty.
Trends in Regional Disparities: 1960 onwards

De (1981) discerned a rise in disparities during 1961-1971 and called for the integration of planning for both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. Neglect of either leads to imbalanced regional development.


On the basis of data for the period 1960-1995, Ghosh et al., (1998) found evidence of divergence across states. They found that despite higher allocations of funds to poorer states, disparities were increasing due to lower efficiency and infrastructure inadequacies. In the same vein, Rao et al., (1999) traced the trends for the 1960-1995 period and found that patterns of economic growth in India since the mid 1960s did not conform to predictions of neo-classical growth theory and showed a high order of fluctuations. Kundu and Gupta (2000) traced the trends for the 1961-1991 period, and observed that the decreased mobility of population posed major challenges for the development strategy being followed in countries like India. They advocated the dispersal of economic and employment opportunities to backward regions to enable balanced regional development. Ghosh et al., (1998) found an exponentially rising tendency towards income disparity among major states during 1960-1995 blaming the rising regional disparities on lower efficiency.
Certain other studies examined the trends in regional disparities at the level of individual states or regions with the help of district or block-wise data. Prakash and Mahapatra (1980) looked at Madhya Pradesh for a period from the 1960's to the mid-seventies. An equal spatial distribution of agricultural productivity was underlined while other sectors showed a differentiation. In contrast was the noticeable persistence of disparities as in agricultural development studied by Parmar (1985) in his study of the Saurashtra region of Gujarat covering the period 1961-1979.

Shashtri (1988) traced the trends in regional disparities in Rajasthan for the period 1961-84 and found that developed or underdeveloped regions were almost the same during this period. It was deduced that financial institutions would need to pay more attention to the backward districts by reshaping their lending polices on more progressive lines. While dealing with the case of Bihar, Chattopadhayay et al. (1996) stressed the need for generating employment opportunities for minimizing regional disparities.

**Trends in Regional Disparities: 1970 onwards**

Gupta (1991) traced the trends in disparity for the years 1971-1985 and found an association between the structure of the economy and the economic growth during this period. A similar exercise undertaken by Shand and Bhide (2000) covered the period 1970-1995 in which they underlined the role of the agricultural sector in reducing regional disparities. Gaur (2002), while applying the Herfindahl Index of industrial concentration for the years 1975-1995 in respect of Indian states, found that the plan component had, ironically, contributed more than the non-plan component in causing disparity.

At the state level, Bronger (1986) dealt with Andhra Pradesh for the years 1971-1982, and highlighted the distinction between the core regions of the developed coast and the underdeveloped interior emerged distinctly.
While attempting a block level analysis of Sitamarhi district of Bihar for the years 1971-81, Das (1987) studied district and block level planning done to mitigate regional disparities. Presenting the scenario of Himachal Pradesh during 1971-91, Kant (1998) explained that low spending on human resources was responsible for increasing inequalities. Literacy was underlined as the most significant parameter for human development of the state.

**Trends in Regional Disparities: 1980 onwards**

Dev (1988), while analyzing agricultural labour productivity and rural poverty in India, found disparities in levels of development increasing over time.

The EPW Research Foundation (1994) presented a picture of the regional disparities for the year 1981-1992 and observed that the social indicators did not correspond to the broad indicators of economic development. The Southern states were ahead of the Northern states in social development while it was the reverse in the case of economic development. An analysis of growth trends by Nagaraj (2000) for the period 1980-2000 pointed to the fact that India’s growth process during these two decades had polarized the economy. There was no association between the growth rate and poverty alleviation. Growth favored urban India, its organized sector, rich states and property owners in contrast to rural India, its unorganized sector, poor states and wage earners. Kaur and Ghuman (1993, 1995), found that the relationship between growth and inequality parameters across regions of India followed an inverted U-shaped pattern.

While attempting a comparative picture of the pre and post-reforms period of 1980-2000, Bhattacharya and Sakthivel (2004) observed that the growth of the agricultural sector was outpaced by the service sector.
which enabled the urban areas and advanced states to get ahead of the rural and backward ones. Kar and Sakthivel (2004, 2007) found that there was no fixed relationship between high growth rates and trends in regional inequality in the Indian context. While the high growth rates led to diminishing inequality between the industrial and service sector during the eighties, the reverse took place after the reforms.

Ali and Reddy (1995) observed widening urban and rural differentials in the case of Andhra Pradesh during the eighties. Singh (1988) examined the case of natural resources and disparities in the development in Manipur. He found that physiography played an important role in the development process. In case of Gujarat, Desai (1995) found that migration from backward regions of the state was accentuating the regional disparities.

Trends in Regional Disparities: 1990 onwards

Dubey (1990) described the regional and structural inequalities in India in the context of its special geographic, socio-economic and historic attributes, where the vagaries of the weather are permanent, the monsoon is often truant, natural calamities are rampant and centrifugal tendencies are regular in operation. Likewise, Kant (1998, 1999) found that human development is not only low in India in general but there are wide inter-regional and intra-regional disparities. The Spatial distribution of population underwent a radical change due to influx of workforce from depressed areas to the core centres of economic activity. The New Economic Policy was expected to further accentuate disparities but ‘Regional safety nets’ for backward regions were envisioned to thwart any adverse effects. Rao et al., (1999) found that the divergence in per capita incomes had increased since 1991 i.e. since the initiation of the new economic policy.
Trends in Regional Disparities: 2000 onwards

Nagaraj (2000) found that the economic reforms have improved growth rates without adversely affecting the trends in reduction of poverty. By comparison, however, Dasgupta (2000) found some divergence during the reference period. There seemed to be a tendency of overall convergence towards the national average. Jha (2000) suggested that examining the dynamics of growth, inequality and poverty from the aggregate perspective could be misleading. In some cases there is divergence and in others convergence. Shand and Bhide (2000) made a case for the achievement of higher growth rates through promotion of the agricultural sector. Ahluwalia (2000), while investigating the economic performance of states in post-reform period, found Punjab to be five times richer than Bihar.

Keshri (2001), while describing the dilemmas of sustainable development in India, called for an eco-friendly approach in development, especially with respect to industrialization. Kurian (2001) observed that bigger investments in rich states would further worsen the problem of disparities. He added that the stabilization of population in the BIMARU (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) states was important for their sustained economic growth. Naik (2001), while analyzing the tribal regions of western Maharashtra, found that urbanization and industrialization had led to the displacement of the tribal people pushing them further into the interior. Dash (2001), describing disparities in the tribal regions, noted that there were less disparities in the Aravalli region as compared to those in the Dandkarnya and Chhota Nagpur regions due to the growth of mining and industry in the latter. Sreekumar (2001) elaborated the profile of the Andaman and Nicobar islands and noted an overwhelming change among them during the last decade.

Aggarwal and Hazarika (2002) examined the regional disparities in the economic development of Assam. They found Kamrup, Jorhat and North Cachar hills to be relatively more developed. Berbera and Mahanta
(2002) analyzed disparities in agricultural development in Assam and discovered Sibsagar and Kokrajhar at two extremes. Dev and Mooij (2002) found that during the 90’s, India’s social sector expenditure was lower than that in the 80’s and also less than that of most developing countries. Three states of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, in particular, where the expenditure in the social sector was the least, were drifting away from the high income states. Mallikarjun (2002) observed that the regional differences in Andhra Pradesh were insignificant but within each of the three regions there were wide disparities at the district level.

Bhakar and Bhargava (2003) found infrastructural variations to be a significant factor in the socio-economic disparities observed in Rajasthan. Debroy and Bhandari (2003) identified 69 most backward districts of India concentrated in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Mukhopaddhyay and Das (2003) found that fiscal mismanagement resulted in horizontal imbalances which could be reduced with the development of poorer states. Noorbakhsh (2003) noted evidences of divergence in regional disparities in India at the state level. Sundram and Tendulkar (2003) observed that among 15 major states, 12 recorded an improvement in poverty ratio while Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa stagnated.

Adabar (2004) found a conditional convergence in some variables of economic growth amongst 14 major states from 1976-77 to 2000-01, including the post-reform era. Deaton and Kozel (2004) felt official estimates of poverty reduction during the 1990’s were too optimistic, particularly for rural India while Nair (2004) noted increasing regional disparities in socio-economic development despite the reforms. Kant (2004) acknowledged that coastal states, along with high income states, have benefited more from the flow of foreign direct investments (FDI) as compared to states having a peripheral location, disturbed law and order.
situations and poor economic and social infrastructure. Kalwar and Yadav (2004-05), analyzed that the districts of Haryana through which National Highway No.1 passed were more developed. Khan (2004) noted the Jammu region to be more developed than the Ladakh and Kashmir Valley. Mishra and Sharma (2004) took a note of the variations in levels of development in Rajasthan.

Bagachi and Sarkar (2005) assessed North West Bengal to be the least developed part of the state. Dhal and Saxena (2005) underlined a weak inter-industry linkage as the main factor underlying income disparities in Orissa. Ghosh and Narayana (2005) found economic reforms to have affected the Indian economy in a significant manner. Private final consumption expenditure (PFCE), investment (GCF) and all the GDP variables, except that of the services, were found to be substantially higher during the post-reforms period than what they would have been in the absence of reforms. At the same time, the reforms bypassed investment in the agricultural sector leading to widening gaps between urban and rural areas. Ingale and Pawar (2005) identified drought prone areas of the Southern Plateau of Maharashtra as backward. Mehar (2005) found all districts of Orissa backward not only in economic development but also in human development. Nayyar (2005) observed that high growth rate was associated with significant poverty reduction in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Haryana. By comparison, slow growth rate was responsible for persistant poverty in Assam, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Phadke and Mukharji (2005) noted the Western Coastal region of Maharashtra as more developed than the interior inland.

The Planning Commission of India (2005) published a report of the Inter-Ministry Task Group on redressing growing regional disparities. The Report identified 170 most backward districts of India, including 55
extremist affected districts. Most of these districts were in Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh.

Ghosh (2006) observed evidences of regional convergence in human development despite considerable divergence to real per capita income. This signified that while poorer states have failed to approach the rich states in terms of per capita income, they tend to catch up in terms of human development. Reddy (2006), while criticizing the recommendations of the Twelfth Finance Commission, feared that linking borrowing limits to capacity to service debts and uniform fiscal deficit reduction will be to the disadvantage of backward states and would further accentuate regional imbalances.

Pal and Ghosh (2007) found diverging trends in the levels of development. Dev and Ravi (2007) analysed that despite higher overall growth, the extent of decline in poverty in the post-reform period was not more than that in the pre-reform period. Jayadev et.al, (2007) examined the patterns of wealth disparities in India and discovered a rise in the wealth levels in the country, across all sections of society, accompanied by a small, perceptible rise, in interpersonal wealth inequality. However, faster growing states were noted for a greater rise in wealth inequality.

Bhaduri (2008) noted that the much hyped story of India’s economic growth hides the scenes of a heightened inequality, as well as hostility of the state towards welfare. Nayyar (2008), in a panel study of 16 major states for a period from 1978-79 to 2002-03, found that the states were not converging to identical levels of per capita income in the steady-state, which refers to the steady ratios of capital:labour. However, once the factors that affect steady-state levels of income are controlled for, the poor states show a faster growth rate than the rich states and there is an increase in the dispersion of per capita incomes across states over time. The Planning Commission (2008), depicted the disparity in per capita GSDP, noting that, the gini coefficient between lowest and highest per capita
GSDP states have increased from 0.1917 in 1993-94 to 0.2771 in 2002-03. Rangrajan and Srivastava (2008) reviewed the fiscal transfer arrangements in India to resolve the vertical and horizontal imbalances.

Thus, there is no dearth of literature on regional disparities in India and has been increasing year by year. Literature has been coming up since the mid fifties. It doubled in the seventies and tripled in the eighties and further increased in the nineties. There may be some disparity in the production of literature during the pre and post-reform period. Most studies dealt with patterns of regional disparities at one point in time or gave a few comparisons. Studies like Schwartzberg (1962), Mitra (1967), Sundram (1970), Kundu and Raza (1982), Krishan (1987, 2000) have aptly depicted one point patterns of regional disparities. Sarkar (1994), Mathur (1994) and Krishan (1999) traced the trends in regional disparities for a specific period while Kant (1999), Nagraj (2000), Shand and Bhide (2000), Kurian (2001), Nair (2004), Nayyar (2005), Singh (2006), along with others, looked into post-reforms scenario of regional disparities in India. Bhattacharya and Sakthivel (2004), Kar and Sakthivel (2007) compared the pre and post-reform periods in levels of development. Many other studies are from the economic perspective and do not consider the spatial context, thus providing the rationale for undertaking the present study.

Rationale for the present Research Work

Studies on regional disparities in India are many. Notwithstanding their academic value, these leave a wide scope for additional work. The studies reviewed pertain only to a certain point in time or a specific period. None examined the historical roots of regional disparities in India, from ancient times to the present. There is no documentation of regional disparities for the entire post independence period, including the New Economic Policy phase. Nor is there any exercise based on district-wise data even for two successive decades. The present research is an earnest effort towards bridging these gaps. Before framing the research
design of the present work, it is imperative to construct an operational
definition of development, on which the present research work is based.

Operational Definition of Development

It is difficult to attempt a universal definition of the term ‘development’ as it is a
relative term linked to an individual’s value system. Various disciplines of the
social sciences define development according to their own theoretical
formulations. Economists describe it in terms of growth; sociologists look for
evolution of societies, political scientists visualize it in terms of decentralization of
power, and ecologists highlight the concern for environmental issues, and so on.

Boudeville (1966) makes a distinction between the three interrelated concepts of
growth, development and progress. He states that growth is merely a set of
increases in quantities produced; development is growth plus a favorable change
in productive techniques and consumer behavior, and progress is development
and the decrease of social tensions between groups within a society. The
implication is that growth without development and development without progress
is a possible situation, which an area or a country may experience. In other
words, whilst growth is an economic process, development is socio-economic in
nature and progress is primarily an outcome of the socio-economic growth.

Thus a precise definition of development is not readily available. Only abstract
and theoretical concepts exist. The transformation of such an abstract,
thoretical concept into something concrete, observable, and measurable in an
empirical research exercise is only possible through an operational definition. An
operational definition is a description of something, such as a variable, term or
object, for which the required data or information are available for its validation.
Properties described in such a context must be publicly accessible and other
persons should also be in a position to independently measure or test it.

Geographers are concerned with the spatial aspects of development within this
continuum from growth to progress. They synthesize the concept and perceive it
in a holistic manner. The present study will use an operational definition
proposed by Krishan (1980): “Development in geographical parlance denotes the quality of functioning of a regional system in terms of economic progress, social advancement, political maturity and environmental conservation” (Figure 1.5).

Figure 1.5 Development and Related Issues

In this case, economic progress may be measured in terms of the standard of living of the people, and the provisions made in various spheres of economy; its goal is to ensure affluence. Social advancement represents social justice, social cohesion and quality of life of the population; its objective being the upgradation of human resource. Political maturity may be expressed in terms of administrative efficiency, decentralization of power and mass participation in welfare activities; it seeks the emergence of a civil society. Ecological balance stands for a development process which ensures effective checks on erosion of soil, contamination of water and pollution of air, with maintenance of quality of the habitat; and its target is sustainability.
RESEARCH DESIGN

The following objectives, research questions and hypotheses encapsulated by the research design of the present work are detailed below:

Objectives:
The present study intends to fill a research void highlighted in the review of literature above. The broader objectives are:

- To understand the historical roots of regional disparities in India;
- To trace the trends and patterns of regional disparities in India during the 20th century, more particularly since Independence;
- To assess the impact of the New Economic Policy on regional disparities; and
- To examine the role of public policies in resolving the issue of regional disparities.

Research Questions:
The objectives mentioned above generate the following research questions:

- What were the patterns of regional disparities during different periods in the history of India and to what extent these persisted during the 20th century, before and after Independence?
- How far were the various Five Year Plans since 1951 effective in reducing these regional disparities?
- How has the New Economic Policy affected the patterns of regional disparities in India?
- Which models best explain the patterns of and trends in regional disparities in India?

Hypotheses:
In this case, economic progress may be measured in terms of the standard of living of the people, and the provisions made in various spheres of economy; its goal is to ensure affluence. Social advancement represents social justice, social cohesion and quality of life of the population; its objective being the upgradation of human resource. Political maturity may be expressed in terms of administrative efficiency, decentralization of power and mass participation in welfare activities; it seeks the emergence of a civil society. Ecological balance stands for a development process which ensures effective checks on erosion of soil, contamination of water and pollution of air, with maintenance of quality of the habitat; and its target is sustainability.

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- How far were the various Five Year Plans since 1951 effective in reducing these regional disparities?
- How has the New Economic Policy affected the patterns of regional disparities in India?
- Which models best explain the patterns of and trends in regional disparities in India?
Hypotheses:

Based on the research objectives enumerated and the research questions raised, the study postulates the following hypotheses:

- “There is a positive relationship between diversity and quality of natural resources and the level of development of different regions in India”.

It is generally established that natural resources play an important role in regional development since regions endowed with a richer base of resources attract more economic activity and people.

- “The areas which were previously under the British rule are more developed while other, which were under the rule of the princely states are backward”.

As the Britishers developed infrastructure, agriculture and industries in areas under their control and gave them an organized administration, these got an early start in the development process against others, which were under princely rule.

- “Districts along international borders are at lower levels of development, while in contrast, costal districts are relatively developed”.

It is an accepted fact that areas or districts on the international borders stagnate due to their remoteness and prevalent feeling of insecurity, which discourages investment, particularly by the private sector. On the other hand, coastal areas are better linked and more exposed to external influences.

- “States having better provisions of infrastructure are more developed”.

There is considerable agreement over the role of infrastructure as concomitant to the overall development of any area.

- “The pressure of the State Capital / Metropolitan city stimulates the development of the surrounding areas”.
It is understood that development percolates or diffuses more in developed areas and due to State Capital / Metropolitan city stimulates development spread effects.

- **“Areas enjoying strong urban–rural linkages are at a higher level of development”**.

Inter-linkages between urban and rural areas lead to a faster diffusion of the development process.

- **“Central government finance allocations have a significant impact on regional patterns of development”**.

Under the federal structure of India, the states receive considerable funds from the Centre. With possible differentiation in allocations. Hence, the investment in development in various states would be a function of what they receive from the Central government.

- **“Regional disparities increased after the adoption of the New Economic Policy”**.

Higher private sector investments in the more developed states under the liberalization regime are expected to widen regional disparities.

**Significance of the Study:**

Regional disparities are generative of regional tensions within a federal polity like that of India. Backward regions are likely to carry a feeling of neglect and discrimination. These give rise to fissiparous tendencies which are injurious to the national unity. Equally important is to identify as to which factors are promoting development or others, which are detrimental to the development process. The Planning Commission (2008, p. 140) has rightly pointed out that redressing regional disparities is not only a goal in itself but is an essential for maintaining an integrated social and economic fabric of the country without which the country may be faced with a situation of discontent, anarchy and breakdown of law and order.
Such an understanding seems helpful in formulations of the desired kind of policies and strategies. This calls for an intensive analysis of the regional disparities emerging over time and this is what the present work attempts to accomplish.

METHODODOLOGY

The identification of regional disparities involves three basic problems: selection of appropriate and judicious indicators to represent various dimensions of development; to use an objective technique for the combination of a variety of data relating to all the indicators for every basic spatial unit; and to choose appropriate statistical and cartographic techniques to represent the process and patterns of development (Dubey 1992). Figure 1.6 represents all this in a diagrammatic form.

**Figure 1.6 Steps Involved in Measurement of Regional Disparities**

**Indicators:**

Selection of judicious and appropriate indicators to represent various dimensions of development, that is economic, social, political and ecological, is very crucial. Indicators should capture the spirit of the theme under study in a comprehensive manner. These should be quantifiable. To the extent possible, these should not overlap.
In the present study, four indicators have been deployed to identify spatial patterns and trends of regional disparities in India: (i) proportion of population above the poverty line, to represent economic development; (ii) female literacy rate, to represent social development; (iii) percentage of rural non-agricultural workers, to represent rural development; and (iv) degree of urbanization, to represent level of modernization.

**Statistical Techniques:**

First of all, the data on the indicators was standardized following the Z-Score method for every individual district. Secondly, deprivation scores were derived using the following formula:

\[
\text{Deprivation score} = \frac{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Specific value}}{\text{Maximum value} - \text{Minimum value}}
\]

Finally, the development score for each district, was calculated applying the following formula:

\[
\text{Development score} = 1 - \text{Deprivation score}
\]

Development score of different districts was referred to a normalized score of 100 for India. Details of these statistical techniques with examples are provided in the text, wherever appropriate.

**Data Sources:**

For the requisite quantitative data, all possible efforts were made to collect data from a variety of authentic official sources, particularly the Census of India publications. Various Census of India publications, especially 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 have been utilized for the data collection. Statistical Abstracts of the States, Citizens Reports, and other such Government, Planning Commission and NGO publications were gone through for the relevant data and information.
For looking into the historical roots of regional disparities standard historical works covering different periods were searched. All the Five Year Plans were accessed for looking into the trends of disparities during the Plan periods.

Literature on development models and theories and other related concepts has been derived from Socio-Economic Models in Geography by Chorley and Haggett (1968) a number of geographical journals and United Nations and other publications. For obtaining the latest information regarding the subject matter, Internet services were also utilized fully.

**Basic Spatial Unit of Study:**

The selection of an appropriate basic areal unit is of fundamental importance in any geographic investigation. Such a spatial unit is expected to be homogeneous in terms of development level, is capable of unfolding regional variations in this respect and can be quantifiable through available data. Considering these essentials, the district was chosen as the basic spatial unit of study.

**Study Period:**

As the title of the study suggests, it is a spatial analysis of regional disparities in India since historical times in general, and the post-Independence period in particular. For examining the impact of the New Economic Policy on regional disparities, a detailed analysis of the 1991-2001 decade, district-wise data was used for the purpose.

**ORGANIZATION OF MATERIAL**

The present study is organized into seven chapters. The lay out of the chapter scheme is as follows:

**CHAPTER-1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY**

This is the present chapter which introduced the research theme, reviewed the accessible literature, enunciated the research problem and design, and elaborated on the methodology.

**CHAPTER-2: THE HISTORICAL ROOTS**

It traces the evolution of regional disparities in India through ancient, medieval and modern times. It is based on literary evidences from the rise of the sixteen
Janpadas (Republics) in the six century B.C. to 1947 that is India’s freedom from the British colonial rule.

CHAPTER-3: REGIONAL DISPARITIES SINCE INDEPENDENCE TILL 1991
This chapter describes the patterns of and trends in regional disparities in India on the threshold of the New Economic Policy.

CHAPTER-4: ISSUE OF REGIONAL DISPARITIES UNDER THE FIVE YEAR PLANS
This chapter investigates the issue of disparities under the successive ten Five Year Plans, with a focus on the policies adopted to reduce regional disparities.

CHAPTER-5: NEW ECONOMIC POLICY AND REGIONAL DISPARITIES
It analyses the patterns in regional disparities after the liberalization of economy and initiation of New Economic Policy in the 1990’s.

CHAPTER-6: TESTING OF HYPOTHESES
This chapter presents the results emerging from testing of certain hypotheses, which were constructed in the light of research objectives and research questions encapsulated in the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER-7: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
This chapter presents the summary of research findings and the conclusions. Policy implications of the findings are also spelt out. Questions for future research are also indicated.

BIBLIOGRAPHY
A comprehensive bibliography has been listed. It follows the well-known ‘Chicago Manual of Style’, latest version of fifteenth edition, as being followed by the Annals of the Association of American Geographers.

ANNEXURES
Data on indicators and other relevant material which has been used in this research work are presented in the form of Annexures.