CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of regional disparities in the levels of economic development is an universal phenomenon. Both developed and under-developed economies have witnessed this problem in the path of their economic progress but its adverse impact has been felt more in the latter. This phenomenon is a natural outcome of the development process itself, wherein certain regions develop faster than others due to a number of factors.

Uneven regional development results in numerous complications such as wastage of resources, increase in public costs, social injustice, deceleration of economic growth, threat to national integration and political instability. There is an urgent need to tackle these problems, otherwise, they will further aggravate the imbalances in the economy. Political, economic, social and ethical considerations also call for measures to attain greater parity in the levels of development. Many experts in the field of regional economics and development economics have graphically narrated the adverse consequences of persisting disparities in various studies.

Harvey Armstrong and Jim Taylor contend that severe regional differences in levels of employment are dangerous for social cohesion. Co-existence of backward regions along with developed ones with lower purchasing power in the former makes inflation worse than it otherwise would be. According to them, national employment and output could be substantially enhanced if regional unemployment disparities are reduced. When such disparities are reduced with more geographic distribution of demand for
labour, inflationary pressures would be less severe. There will be optimum utilisation of social overhead capital.

As pointed out by Friedman and Alonso, reduction in regional disparities would pave way for greater national integration, increase in economic growth and political stability. On the contrary, if the disparities are widening, a sense of unfairness and injustice may kindle regional and parochial movements, as seen in many countries. Reduction in income disparities is also in line with the noble goal of social justice. There is a general agreement that there should be greater equality in the living standards of people residing in different parts of the country.

Reduction in disparities is also crucial to accelerate the growth of economy as a whole. This is particularly relevant in the under-developed economies. Myrdal and J.G. Williamson in their studies have highlighted the fact that regional disparities are more prominent in under-developed economies than in the developed ones. Moreover, national income can be increased only when the resources and potentialities in backward regions are used for productive activities.

All the adverse socio-economic implications discussed so far underline the immense need for the appropriate measures to minimise regional disparities. Backward regions have to be assisted so that their potential is properly tapped enabling them to attain higher level of development. This calls for evolving proper strategies for the overall development of such regions. But, before we adopt any strategy we have to tackle a fundamental problem related to the adoption of a clear concept of a region and its backwardness. This would help us to have a better perception of the problems of such a region and its future prospects.
An understanding of the concept of a region is the first requirement of any regional analysis. The term ‘region’, in general, has been used to mean a geographical area or space. But, in the field of regional economics this term has been used with a specific focus. Eminent scholars such as J.R.Boudeville and Walter Isard have given a specific meaning to the term ‘region’ with the following three criteria. On the basis of homogeneity criterion, there are regions with homogeneous spatial and economic characteristics. Secondly, the nodality criterion analyses polarisation around an urban or a market centre within a given region. Finally, there are regions with the system of inter-related administrative and political missionary based on the programming criterion.

There are also different regions classified on the basis of their size for planning purposes. At the local level, there are micro-regions, which are very small spatial units. In the Indian context, it consists of a taluka or a district. Next in order is the meso-region comprising a State or group of States. At the highest order there is the macro-region composed of the previous two types of regions.

As far as the term ‘backward region’ is concerned, there have been some attempts to define it, but they are quite vague, evasive and have failed to give a clear-cut picture of what exactly constitutes such a region. Scholars have tried to define the term ‘backward region’ with reference to the typical problems encountered by such regions, their potential for development, efficacy of regional plans and factor endowments. Generally, the issue of regional development has been widely discussed in relation to a developed area and development at an aggregate level rather than focussing attention exclusively on the backward regions.
The difficulties faced by a researcher in the study of backwardness of a region without a common definition are indeed quite challenging. The report of the National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas (NCDBA) also draws our attention towards this problem. In its view, "thus a clear concept of backwardness seems to be missing and the term is used in a more or less vague sense to designate areas that do not seem to be benefiting adequately from general development measures. Many of these special schemes are more palliatives that fail to tackle the root of problems of backwardness. What seems to be missing is recognition that most backward area has a potential for growth, which can be tapped if certain special initiatives are taken. The important task of planning for backward area is to identify these special initiatives in each type of backward area." In view of this lack of unanimity, we have to resort to various regional development theories put forth by different scholars and the empirical studies conducted in different countries, which give us valuable insights on various aspects of a backward region.

In addition, the problems of backward regions differ from one country to another, depending upon their level of economic development. Therefore, it is essential to study different types of backward regions and analyse the developmental issues in their own setting.

A major study to classify the regions according to their problems was produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1970. Based on a comprehensive study of 15 industrialised countries, it classified regions into four types. They are under-developed, un-developed, reconversion and congestion regions. Out of the four types, the first is highly relevant in the present context. This is because it has many features such as limited industrialisation, declining source of income.
from the primary sector and out-migration, which characteristically belong to a backward region.

R.P. Mishra attempted to study the problems of some backward regions, which were located in between growth centres. These regions were in the process of transition with increased outflow of men and material. He cited the examples of mining regions in the United States of America as evidence for this type of region.

Keeping the twin criteria of levels of income and potential for development, Stefan H. Robock has come out with a three-fold classification of regions. They are depressed area, lagging area and under-developed/pioneer/frontier area. While the force of retrogression is quite evident in the first type, comparatively lower progress and natural obstruction could be seen in the cases of second and third types.

The European Economic Community has also attempted an operational classification of backward regions. It comprises, first, regions situated near one or more large industrial centres. This is composed of zones of old industrialisation, zones of transmission industries and agricultural zones. Secondly, there are regions where agriculture is dominant and population is dense. Finally, there are regions where agriculture is dominant and population is scattered.

There are several empirical studies, which have tried to classify regions on the basis of their potential for future development. Some of these regions possess natural advantages such as good quality soil and adequate rainfall, which give them immediate growth potential. At the same time, there are other regions without such advantages and thus remain backward. Their problems are further compounded by the absence of good
infrastructure and easy accessibility. But these regions may also possess certain advantages such as good climate, which can be quite favourable for their future development. Against these regions with some potentiality, there are other regions also which remain backward mainly on account of technical factors. These regions are mainly agriculture-oriented without substantial improvement in production technologies. Naturally, the productivity level of these regions is quite low.

Apart from factor endowments, distance factor also plays an important part in determining the level of development of a region. Generally, it is observed that the frontier or peripheral region, which lies at a distance either from a city or urban core, tends to be comparatively under-developed. Several studies, as discussed in chapter II have proved the fact that greater the distance, lower is the rate of development.

Related to the productive sectors, McCrone has made two broad classifications of backward regions. The first type of region consists of agricultural areas untouched by industrialisation and the second, industrial areas facing the problem of industrial stagnation.

In addition, some scholars have also tried to classify regions on the basis of certain problems faced by them. The National Committee on the Development of Backward Areas has listed six types of backward regions facing various adverse physical problems. They include chronically drought-prone areas, desert areas, tribal areas, hilly areas, chronically flood-affected areas and coastal areas affected by salinity. The committee regards these six categories as six types of fundamental backwardness.
Allan and Hermansen\textsuperscript{11} have classified some regions as backward on the basis of specific problems. First of all, there are sparsely populated regions with labour force widely scattered in small village settlements engaged in primary activities. Secondly, there are regions where modern developments have not yet began and finally, there are industrially depressed regions with high proportion of declining traditional industries.

**Identification of backward regions**

After evolving an exact concept of a region and different types of backward regions, the next step is to adopt a method for proper identification of backward regions. Further, it is necessary that one should have a clear conception of the principles/rationale guiding the selection of these regions and they should be objective.

In a federal set up, identification of backward provinces becomes extremely important for two main reasons. First of all, it facilitates the determination of the transfer of resources from the federal government to the backward provinces. Secondly, it becomes necessary to assess the competing claims for additional federal assistance and investment. In the absence of proper identification, each province may set its own standard to identify backward regions within themselves.

To prevent such a situation happening, a common standard needs to be evolved to identify backward regions by operationalising the concept of backwardness on the basis of consensus on the subject. Two ways have been suggested by NCDBA to operationalise the concept of backwardness. The first is to rely on some overall index for ranking regions and treat those regions, which are below some cutoff point as backward. The
second is to identify problem regions under different categories by specifying the constraints on development that can be mitigated by special measures.

In addition, a number of statistical techniques are being used to determine development or backwardness of selected regions. A set of monetary and partial indicators have been used with application of specific techniques such as cluster analysis, factor analysis and preparation of composite index.

Making use of these theoretical tools several committees and scholars have tried to identify backward regions in India in a scientific way. It is of immense value to refer here the views of the Committee on Dispersal of Industries appointed by the Small Scale Industries Board in 1960, study groups appointed by Planning Commission of India, Pande Committee, Wanchoo Committee, Chakravarthy Committee, Sivaraman Committee and works of scholars such as Ashok Mitra and Hemlata Rao. Reports of the Committees and works of these scholars have been discussed in chapter II.

Causes for economic backwardness of regions

Once certain regions are identified and classified as backward the next step is to find out the root causes of backwardness. The factors that are responsible for the relative backwardness of a region are many. The roots of uneven development lie in both natural deficiencies and improper or inadequate human intervention.

Certain historical events have contributed greatly to either development or backwardness of different regions. R.P. Mishra and B.S. Bhooshan\textsuperscript{12} have opined that the world economy during past two or three centuries was organised in such a way that it had inevitably led to creation of pockets of poverty. During this period, there emerged
dichotomy between the rural and urban areas due to the colonial powers and their policies of self-perpetuation. These colonies have seen a situation where the urban economy has dominated over the rural with their inter-relationship moulded on the exploitative tendencies. Due to such tendencies, the urban centres have become, what the authors call as 'suction points', draining agricultural surpluses into large urban agglomeration. These agglomerations, capitalising on their economies of scale have become growth centres leaving rest of the region backward.

Apart from historical events, a number of geo-physical factors have hindered the progress of certain regions. Unfavourable topography, poor qualities of soil, inadequate rainfall, harsh climatic conditions have an adverse impact on the productive capacity of these regions.

The problems of backwardness in some regions are further aggravated by adverse economic factors such as inefficient primary sector, low per capita income, adverse terms of trade and poor quality of infrastructure. In addition, low quality of human capital manifested in terms of deficient health and education has created an unattractive base for any productive ventures. These factors have also paved the way for weak political and business leadership. However, one should note that some of these economic factors are overlapping and their cause and consequential relationship have to be distinguished for a proper understanding of the problem of backwardness.

As pointed out by Jim Taylor, possession of a favourable industrial mix is of fundamental requirement for the development of any region. Those regions, which have more number of what he calls it as 'nationally fast growing industries', can prosper with faster output and higher employment growth than regions which have a higher proportion
of 'nationally slow growing industries'. He observed that some regions might be more fertile breeding ground for new firms than other regions. According to him, factors such as presence of incubator firms, occupational structure, educational qualification, access to capital, industry mix, market demands and push factors were extremely important for the entry of new firms into the region.

Free play of market forces has also been cited as a major factor responsible for backwardness of some regions. Such forces, as claimed by Myrdal\textsuperscript{14}, bring about clustering of economic activities in few centres. The backwash effect in this process reduces the competitive advantage of backward regions. Likewise, Hirschman\textsuperscript{16} cites stronger polarisation effects and weaker trickling down effects for the co-existence of developed centres and backward regions in a free enterprise economy.

Demographic factors are also responsible for the backwardness of some regions. There is a general tendency of rural communities to increase more rapidly in size than that in urban regions. This is in spite of comparatively restricted economic opportunities in the rural regions. This would result in high rate of migration from these regions to better prospecting regions, leaving the former relatively backward.

Social factors are also a major contributor to the problem of overall backwardness of some regions. These factors manifested in the form of access to land and income derived from it, caste segregation, ethnic origin have led to the domination of social scene by a minority over the majority.

Thus, numerous historical, natural, economic, demographic and institutional factors are behind the problem of the inter-regional and intra-regional disparities. In this
context, it is necessary to point out for the sake of conceptual clarity the distinction between two vital issues, regional diversity and regional disparity. The former is the result of natural factors whereas the latter is mainly the product of human factors. Both the factors are responsible in their own ways for differential levels of development of regions across a given space. Once these factors are identified and we get a clear idea of the backwardness of some regions, we can proceed to tackle the next problem pertaining to the measurement of development or backwardness of a given region.

**Measures and indicators of development**

In the field of development economics, the concept of development has evaded precise definition. Development in its narrow sense implies material improvement and in its broad sense, it could be understood as changes in institutions, attitudes and better quality of life. This concept is generally identified with per capita real income\(^1\), resource utilisation\(^2\), stages of economic growth\(^3\) and levels of welfare. All these connotations represent directly or indirectly an improvement in material facets. Keeping all these aspects in mind, the term ‘development’ has been used in the present study to imply material well being of the people residing in a region.

A major problem that arises in this context is how to measure the material well being of the people? Hemlata Rao\(^4\), in her study, has examined the relative merits and demerits of such measures of development under two classifications, namely, (a) Monetary and (b) Physical.
Per capita income is a widely used monetary measure to judge the extent of
development of a selected region, which is regarded as objective and easily quantifiable.
Users of this measure assume direct relationship between the level of per capita income
and economic development.

However, one encounters many practical problems while using this measure. Quite often, ranking of regions on the basis of per capita income alone does not reflect their real status. For example, if we look at the district profile (Annexure 4, Table 2), the district of Kodagu is ranked at the top and placed above Bangalore Urban district. This is not realistic, as Kodagu does lag behind Bangalore Urban in many sectors. This inconsistency, according to Hemlata Rao, is because income as an aggregative concept does not indicate structural and distributional aspects. Moreover, this measure does not cover values which fall out-side the monetary sphere. Therefore, there are both theoretical and calculative problems in the usage of per capita income to assess levels of development. That is why, at best, it could be taken as an indicator of development rather than relying on it as an objective measure of development.

To make up for the deficiencies of the monetary measures and also to cover the non-monetary aspects, physical indicators are being used extensively in various studies. Researchers are using partial indicators such as productivity, calory intake, employment, fertility and mortality rate in the preparation of index of development. These indicators are partial in the sense that they reflect only certain aspects of development and do not give us a comprehensive or comparative picture. This is mainly due to the structural differences and variations in physical and biological features. Moreover, indicators such as productivity and employment are very difficult to measure when they are taken independently.
Thus, for a meaningful study of regional development many experts have used various physical indicators in constructing the composite index of development. Though this measure is quite comprehensive, the method of assigning weights to these indicators has been questioned for its degree of subjectivity. One cannot assign equal weights to the indicators having different degrees of importance and the process of assigning weights ought to have theoretical justification. Therefore, while constructing the composite index of development, the indicators should be assigned weights on scientific basis. To do so, a method of composite weighted index has been developed. This is based on the principle of combining the various socio-economic and cultural factors to get an aggregate picture.

For the scientific assignment of weights different experts have evolved different methods. Hemlata Rao has reviewed some important works in this regard, of which mention may be made of works by W. Beckerman and R. Bacon, Drewnowski, McGranahan, Ashok Mitra, Nanjappa and lyengar.

The Planning Department of Karnataka State is also using the composite index method in the preparation of Five-year and annual plans. It has selected 22 indicators which have been classified into (a) Demographic factors, (b) Occupational structure, (c) Land utilisation, (d) Agricultural development, (e) Industrial development and (f) Infrastructural development. Weights have been assigned on the basis of the proportion of previous plan outlays. However, this method of assigning weights is not rational as the previous plan outlays might have been guided by non-economic factors and may not correlate with the indicators.

Thus, it is very clear that one should avoid arbitrariness and subjective valuation while assigning weights to the indicators. Therefore the scientific method of deriving
weights assumes great importance. One of the scientific methods on which we can rely upon is 'Factor Analysis'. It provides factor loading for each variable and the factor loading is the co-efficient of correlation between the observed variables and the unknown derived factor. The same method is being used in the present study to construct a composite index of development both at sectoral and at aggregate levels. While constructing such a composite index of development, the first principal component method has been taken into consideration. This method, at two stages, is resorted to make inter-regional comparison of relative levels of development.

With this method of deriving scientific weights one should also keep in mind the problem of proper selection of indicators. Since we are dealing with the concept of development there is all the possibility of making erratic and arbitrary selection of indicators. Therefore, proper selection of indicators is extremely important to make the optimum use of the data and also to find out answers to the issues raised.

While selecting indicators, one should also pay attention to the differences in the meaning of concepts to be used and whether the indicators are related to static or dynamic settings. Confusion about structural and developmental indicators should be avoided. Such indicators, which cannot be meaningfully connected to our concept of development, should be eliminated. Therefore, both selection and use of indicators should be on proper rational and logical grounds. Skill of a researcher in the exact interpretation of indicators also assumes great significance.

A researcher who is probing a research problem like the one taken up in the present study has to face a major constraint of inadequate availability of reliable data. For a study with long-time span and covering multi-sectors, it is very difficult to prepare a
general index of development. One has to cross-check the data with different sources and eliminate any inconsistency and inaccuracy. One has to inevitably forego some indicators if the data on the same indicators are not available for all the selected years and regions. This is inevitable, as we cannot present a comparative picture if the data are not comprehensive. Therefore, the discretion of a researcher in the selection of indicators ultimately guides him to the realistic results and successful completion of his research endeavour. Rationality, selectivity, reliability, objectivity, measurability and comparability ought to be the main consideration for a researcher. With these considerations we can take up now some of the important issues pertaining to the regional disparities in Karnataka right from the time of State’s reorganisation.

Karnataka, which is regarded as a moderately developed State in the Indian Union, is facing the problem of inter-regional and intra-regional disparities since its reorganisation in 1956. The problem of disparities is a source of great concern for administrators, planners and most importantly, the people residing in such regions. Many historical and economic factors are responsible for these disparities along with the influence of regional diversities seen across the four major regions of the State.²¹

The old Mysore State, which comprised most of the southern parts of present Karnataka State, had dynamic rulers and administrators. Their sincere efforts have greatly improved the socio-economic conditions, earning for it the title of ‘Model State’ in the entire country.

At the time of State’s reorganisation, on 1st November 1956, many Kannada speaking regions, which belonged to the then neighbouring States were integrated and the new and the enlarged State of Mysore was established. Though this integration fulfilled
the emotional aspirations of both Kannada speaking people and their leaders, it brought-in numerous economic problems along with it. The newly integrated areas, presently known as the Hydrabad-Karnataka and Bombay-Karnataka, were considerably backward in the major sectors of the economy. The Malnad region was also lagging behind in many sectors in spite of its rich resource base.

There is no doubt that the initiation of Five-year plans in the State gave some thrust to the development of these regions. However, even after the completion of eight Five-year plans with its various policies, programmes and mammoth expenditure, there is a general complaint about the relative backwardness of some districts in these regions. Though some of these districts made considerable progress in absolute terms, their relative backwardness, compared to their counterparts in the south, has created a lot of discontentment among the people. There are severe allegations that their regions have constantly being neglected and that the State Government is adopting what they call as ‘step-motherly attitude’ towards them. They also complain that the political lobby has a definite tilt towards the south and their region is looked down upon. Recently, there are some highly disturbing calls for a separate State for the North-Karnataka region, which has alarmed many people in the State. Similar voices are also being heard from the district of Kodagu. Even among the southern districts, developmental efforts will have to be geared up in some key sectors of the economy.

Why some districts lagged behind in spite of long-term efforts and what prospects do they have for future development are questions that need to be answered in scientific and systematic way. How to attain greater balanced regional development in Karnataka so as to protect its integrity and promote harmonious development is a matter of immense importance for both academicians and administrators. Some of these major issues have
been taken up for a detailed analysis in the present study with the following research design.

**Research Issues**

The present study attempts to examine the following issues, which are very relevant in the context of greater balanced regional development of Karnataka State. The first and the foremost issue pertains to some fundamental questions such as What is backwardness? What is development? How do we identify backwardness? What are the types of backwardness? and How can they be classified?

The term, development or backwardness, is highly subjective. There are numerous definitions giving different interpretations of these two terms. Development or backwardness may relate to any field, social, political, physical, psychological, natural, technological and moral. In economics, these two terms are commonly used with reference to availability of per capita real income, employment opportunities, infrastructure facilities, amenities and services. These two terms can also be interpreted as an increase or decrease in the material well being of the population inhabiting a particular area. This material well being is assumed to be reflected in the present study by either an increase or decrease in the levels of development in the major sectors of the economy as shown by the value of indicators selected.

Secondly, with this concept of development, answer is sought for the next question, as to what constitutes a backward region? As pointed out earlier, the term region is closely associated with the concept of ‘area’ or ‘space’. But it is also used to mean different spatial units by different scholars. In the present study, district has been
taken as a regional unit as it satisfies the following conditions. First of all, district, as a regional unit is more or less geographically contiguous. Further, availability of data at the district level is comparatively better than what it is in cases of still smaller regional units. Moreover, a district could be regarded as an economically viable unit and due to this, it can be taken as a region for planning purposes at the micro-level. A district has an administrative system with its own well-defined jurisdiction. In addition, the size of a district enables maximum concentration of the effects of various developmental programmes.

Thus, the selection of district as region in the present study satisfies most of the requirements of an ideal region. Its level of development or backwardness is judged on the basis of its sectoral performance over a period of time. For this purpose, development in nine major sectors of the Karnataka's economy in each of the districts has been analysed in detail. This has been done to assess the performance of each district in a particular sector during the study period. It includes a close scrutiny of some of the complicated problems faced by each district and its prospects for future development.

Thirdly, it is important to identify the underlying causes of backwardness and to find out the factors that have hindered the progress of a region. As stated earlier, backwardness of a region could be the result of either the regional diversity or the regional disparity. The latter is more crucial as it is mainly the creation of human factor, which is subjected to correction with adoption of proper policies and programmes.

Fourthly, a very important issue, which helps us to have a clear perception of the nature of regional disparities, pertains to the dimensions of development and typology of backwardness. An analysis of these two aspects is very important to understand those
factors which cause the gap between the differentially developed districts and to find out whether this gap is increasing or decreasing. Further, one can understand the type of backwardness in a region which could be quite useful in grouping homogeneous regions at different stages of development.

The term 'dimensions of development' in the present study refers to the development that is taking place in one or more sectors. There could be uni-dimensional, bi-dimensional or multi-dimensional development process in a region.

The 'typology of backwardness' refers to the type of backwardness of a region. For example, a region may be backward in agriculture or industry or infrastructure or combination of different sectors. Thus, our understanding of both dimensions of development and typology of backwardness is extremely important to arrive at appropriate policies and strategies to remove certain deficiencies coming in the way of aggregate development of a region.

The final issue pertains to the different ways of developing a backward region. That is, how a backward region can be developed in both absolute and relative terms? How disparities can be reduced? What are the actions needed from the concerned authorities and administrative missionary to realise the goals of harmonious development with fuller utilisation of developmental potentiality of Karnataka State?

Objectives

In the light of these research issues, the following objectives have been set forth for the present study:
1. To identify the backward regions in the Karnataka State.

2. To classify the districts on the basis of differential levels of development and also at different time-points with the help of sectoral indices along with an analysis of inter-regional variations.

3. To analyse the factors responsible for the backwardness of districts, in particular, and regions, in general.

4. To analyse the dimensions of development and typology of backwardness and to trace out the developmental trends across different regions over a period of time.

5. To suggest appropriate strategies for the development of backward regions to overcome their problem of sectoral deficiencies and to reduce the regional disparities.

Methodology

The study is empirical in nature. The required data have been collected mainly from secondary sources. Data related to the main sectors of Karnataka’s economy have been collected from respective Departments of Government of Karnataka. Though time-series data for 35 years starting from 1960-61 for all the selected sectors were collected, the same could not be made use of, as there were severe problems of comparability, computational inconsistency and variation in different variables. Therefore, after minimising these problems, comparable data have been compiled for the period 1960-61 to 1994-95. For some sectors, 1994-95 has been taken as the last time-point and for others, 1995-96 has been taken, as the published and authenticated data were available only for those years.

This is followed by the preparation of a list of development indicators to be used in the present study on the basis of logic derived from our earlier discussion on 'measures
and indicators of development'. These indicators have been assigned statistical weights derived through factor analysis method. The indicators have been standardised and on the basis of factor matrix, an index of sectoral development has been prepared. All the districts have been ranked according to their index values and districts have been classified, on the basis of State average for each sector, into 'Highly developed', 'Developed', 'Backward' and 'Highly backward'. A detailed analysis of the problems of districts falling under the last two categories has been made. This has been done by analysing the values of selected indicators within every district for the latest time-point. In other words, the indicators scoring the lowest value in a district has been traced out as the main factor retarding its progress. The study employs the method of co-efficient of variation to trace the trends in inter-district disparities in all the selected sectors. The changes in the index values have been examined to trace the direction of development. Finally, the sectoral indices have been pooled together to derive a comprehensive composite index of development. This gives an aggregate and comparative picture about the changes in the levels of development of all the districts over two time-points, 1980-81 and 1994-95. Further, a six-fold classification of the districts has been done on the basis of the State average. In addition, to have clear insight of the problems of backwardness of some districts and their future prospects, a detailed analysis of dimensions of development and typology of backwardness has been attempted. This analysis also gives us a comparative picture for the two time-points, 1980-81 and 1994-95. Descriptive and analytical methods have been adopted to evaluate various plans and policy measures to bring down these disparities.
Scope

The scope of the study covers the entire Karnataka State. It is a district-level study covering all the 20 districts of (Bangalore Rural and Urban combined) the State as at the end of 1995. It includes an analysis of regional variations across the four physiographic regions.

The present analysis concentrates on different issues pertaining to the development of backward regions from 1960-61 to 1994-95. The selection of these time-points is on the logic that from 1960 onwards there has been more administrative stability in the State and the plan process have got strengthened during the period. It is an attempt to assess the impact of developmental process from the beginning of Third Five-year plan till the end of Eighth Five-year plan of the State. It is limited to an analysis of nine key sectors of Karnataka’s economy covering productive sector, social sector, economic infrastructure and financial infrastructure.

Chapter Scheme

The study has been classified into nine chapters. The present chapter covers the introductory topics and research design. The second chapter narrates a set of theories of regional development from which valuable inference has been drawn along with a review of relevant literature. A brief profile of Karnataka State covering all the districts has been presented in the third chapter. Chapters four, five, six and seven contains the in-depth analysis of inter-district disparities in productive sector covering agriculture and industry; social sector with education and health; economic infrastructure covering transport, communication and power; and financial infrastructure with banking and co-operation.
respectively. In these chapters, problems and prospects of backward districts have been given special focus. In the penultimate chapter, a composite index of development has been prepared giving a comprehensive and comparative view of developmental status of all the districts of the Karnataka State. The final chapter contains the major findings, policy suggestions and conclusions. It presents a detailed analysis of dimensions of development and typology of backwardness of districts with different policy options, strategies and approaches to reduce regional disparities in the Karnataka State.

References and Notes


The State is divided into four regions physio-graphically namely, Northern Maidan, Southern Maidan, Malnad Region and Coastal Region. For further details, refer chapter III.