

Book Reviews

Growth, Disparities and Inclusive Development in India: Perspectives from the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, by Rajendra P. Mamgain (ed.), Springer, Singapore, 2019, pp. 441, ISBN: 981-1-364-427

India, the second most populous country in the world adopted the much decorated agenda of 'inclusive growth' in its eleventh five-year plan. However, with the existing and rising regional inequalities in the country it seems to be a far cry. Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state in India also shares a similar experience of regional disparity not only with other Indian states but also within it. The book under review, by Professor Rajendra P. Mamgain, is an excellent collection of chapters that highlights interstate regional disparities in numerous developmental indicators in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It is divided into five sections which is further divided into sixteen chapters. The introductory chapter of the book on "Growth, Disparities and Inclusive Development: An Introduction and Overview" by the editor himself, is an overall assessment of inter-state disparities in India in economic indicators like state per capita income, poverty; social indicators like life expectancy and infant mortality. He emphasises that joint efforts of both the central and state governments can achieve the socio-economic goals of inclusive development.

The first theme of the book is on Growth, Employment and Inequality. The first chapter draws a unique relation between the contribution of three dominant political parties that have participated in the government and the state's economic prosperity and social inclusion under their regimes. In the second chapter the author, recognises low level of education and poor formal skill as determinants of poor employability in Uttar Pradesh. The third chapter compares the employment data of South Asian countries with East and South East Asian countries and concludes that labour market outcomes in South Asia have not moved in the direction that will make economic growth more inclusive. In the fourth and the final chapter, the authors use data on developmental indicators from Directorate of Economic and Statistics, Government of Uttar Pradesh and analyse the patterns and trend in inter-district disparities. The findings indicate the existence of a wide range of regional disparity across the districts in the availability of social and economic infrastructure.

The second part of the book deals with Poverty, Vulnerability and Inclusion. The authors of the first chapter used the data of 50th, 61st and 68th rounds of consumption expenditure survey of National Sample Survey Organization to analyse poverty incidence at a disaggregated level of seventeen administrative divisions and four NSS economic regions of the state of Uttar Pradesh. The findings reveal divisions like Basti, Chitrakoot, Devipatan and Lucknow in the Eastern and Central regions are the most deprived and economically poor regions of the state. Similar to the first chapter, the second chapter also uses five NSS regions of Uttar Pradesh by rural-urban sectors and examines the issue of inclusion and marginalisation in context of access to income and its benefits that is reflected in the estimates of consumption. The findings show people belonging to Scheduled Castes to be the most marginalised social group in rural as well as urban Uttar Pradesh. In terms of food deprivation, eastern region of rural UP is found to be the most deprived. The third chapter uses 49th and 64th round of National Sample Survey and describes how remittances received both from internal and international migrants contribute significantly to poverty reduction in the states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The last chapter in this section, deals with a sensitive topic of civil rights violation and caste atrocities in Uttar Pradesh which is home to the largest scheduled caste population in the country. The author proposes practical policy recommendations ranging from implementation

of laws and monitoring mechanism to setting up special courts that will ensure human rights to lower caste people.

The third part of the book focuses on the pertinent issue of Agriculture Development: Challenges and Opportunities. The author hypothesizes that the major sources of agricultural growth are expansion in the irrigated area and the use of fertilizers. However, the findings show low growth rates of both irrigated area and fertilizer consumption have brought down the agricultural growth of the state. The second chapter suggests that a higher growth rate in agriculture in the state can be facilitated by an increase in the institutional credit and public investment in irrigation and rural infrastructure. The last chapter throws light on the important role of formal credit in increasing farm income and improving the welfare of the agricultural household.

The fourth section of the book deals with Industrial Development and Informality. This section has two chapters dedicated to industrialisation, one in urban and the other on rural area. The chapter on Industrialisation and Urbanisation explains the varying level of economic development due to the existence of inter-regional and intra-regional disparities in the state. On the contrary, the second chapter focuses on rural transformation and elucidates the need of informing policy makers regarding the regional variation in rural non-farm informal enterprises.

The fifth and the final section deals with Human Development Concerns. The first chapter discusses a striking development in the education sector in Uttar Pradesh, where there is a gradual disappearance of public sector schools and a rapid emergence of private schools. The second chapter examines the hypothesis that whether the districts of state are converging towards a homogeneous state or diverging by exploring its determinants. By analysing multiple sources of data sets, the findings tell that districts of Uttar Pradesh are converging but at a slow pace. The final chapter of the section and also of the book recommends strengthening of the public health system to ensure universal health coverage and healthcare for all.

The title of the book is ubiquitous in all the chapters of the book. The novel approach in combining theoretical perspectives and empirical findings with pragmatic policy recommendations accentuate the fact that the idea behind inclusive growth is not elusive but achievable.

Debashree Sinha
Research Scholar
International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai
E.Mail: debashree@iips.net