

Re- organisation of Bihar at District level –A conceptual study

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Introduction:

It is said that political set-up is a culmination of the socio-economic development. When world was sleeping in doldrums and ignorance, India was enlightening knowledge and was in position in delivering messages of well-beings of entire humanity. Bihar, a noted integral part of India played a pivotal role in crushing the pebbles of hindrances, disdaining the frowns of winds and meteors and breaking the shackles of all types of bondages of human beings. Hence it is essential to summarize the gloriously brilliant past of Bihar.

LOCATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE HIERARCHY OF BIHAR

Bihar lies in the eastern part of the middle gangetic plain demarcated by West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand in the east, west and south respectively. Nepal makes its northern boundary. Closeness to the Himalayan rampart and interior position has made it unique geographical personality. Latitudinally it extends between 25°N and $27^{\circ} 31' 15'' \text{N}$ and its longitudinal extent is between 84°E and $88^{\circ} 17' 4'' \text{E}$. Its total geographical area and population (2011) is 94423 km^2 and 10.38 crore, respectively. Its administrative hierarchy has been changing over the time mostly due to political consideration ignoring geographical reality. Currently Bihar has 38 districts 22 in North Bihar and 16 in South Bihar. The river Ganga is the life-line traversing through its central part from west to east. Sheohar district lying in North Bihar and Shekhpura district in South Bihar are two smallest districts of Bihar. Both these districts are basically districts of ulterior political considerations. But density of population is the highest in Sheohar district. Among all districts Gaya and West Champaran (one south and one north) are two largest districts.

Like other states of India, Bihar, now economically a truncated state has also British model of classification of districts. Now we have 38 districts of distortional areas having different levels of developmental states. Hence for all round development of each district, classification of districts should be based on the basis of different levels of development. For this one socio-economic indicator cannot be used. Moreover, a number of indicators which may in unison can provide an integrated and easily comprehensible picture of reality. Thus there is a need for building up of a composite index of development based on various socio-economic variables. In the light of above consideration, the proposed study builds a composite index of development based on various socio-economic indicators.

India is basically a country of democratic socialism. Hence the goal of planning since independence has been in the direction of securing rapid economic growth and expansion of employment. Reduction of disparities in income and wealth, prevention of concentration of economic power and creation of the values and attitudes of a free and equal society has been among the objectives of all our plans. To achieve the goal under reference states in India were divided into administrative hierarchy of which 'district' has been a 3rd order administrative-cum development unit. District is a creation of British mode of administration and development. However, a number of studies have established that an elaborate administrative set up already in action since independence has not been able to achieve the goal of planned economy. In lieu of balanced growth, intra-state as well as intra-state disparities have grown up with the progress of time. All districts have shown not uniform level of development and progress. There are certain constraints which block the process of development. But the most fundamental fact is that the spatial distribution of resources is not uniform everywhere. Consequently, the districts having better resources capability and good back-up have shown uptrend in the pace socio-economic growth and vice-versa for other districts.

Sustainable development implies satisfaction of physical, psychological and cultural needs in addition to economic needs of people constituting all strata of society. In other words, people needs should be the driving force for all development activities. The people of any place have hierarchical needs viz., basic needs, psychological and cultural needs, convenience and better quality of life. For the fulfilment of basic needs, the development imperatives are to create opportunities for good clothing, shelter, health services etc. Development imperatives for the achievement of psychological and cultural needs are to provide investments and create investment opportunities for higher education, tourism, entertainment etc. For support facilities are development quality life infrastructural imperatives.

The above mentioned development imperatives must be taken into consideration at the time of framing plan for the purpose. But the present system of district level planning for socio-economic development has not proved itself as a workable proposition. Because scheme to be implemented at the grass root level are framed at the level of higher hierarchy having 'no knowledge or partial knowledge of ground reality. As we know that 'development' is a multidimensional process, its impact cannot be captured fully by any single indicator of development. Moreover, a number of indicators when analysed individually, do not provide an integrated and easily comprehensible picture of reality. Hence there is a need for building up of a composite index of development based of various socio-economic variables. Building up a composite index of development based on various socioeconomic indicators will provide us a clue to identify where given state or district stands at in relation to others. It will prove extremely helpful in gauging the impact of schemes for socio-economic development already in pipe. The present study has been undertaken to refashion the district planning which has been in existence for long pretty time. Firstly, attempt will be made to estimate the level of socio-economic development by constructing the composite index of development at the district level. On The basis of composite index of development, the districts are to be classified into different categories and for the poorly developed districts, model districts would be identified.

Keeping in view all aspects of socio-economic development, nineteen different indicators of socio-economic development will be utilized. Indicators of socio-economic development are as such:

1. Per capita availability of cultivable area in hectare.
2. Percentage of area sown more than once to net area sown.
3. Percentage of net irrigated area to net area sown.
4. Consumption of fertilizer per hectare cropped areas (in Rs.)
5. Per capita food-grains production (in Rs.).
6. Yield rate of creeds in quintals per hectare.
7. Percentage of main workers to total population
8. Percentage of agriculture labours to total main workers.
9. Decadal growth rate of population.
10. Density of population per km² of area.
11. Percentage of literacy.
12. Number of High Schools per lakh of population.
13. Population per Bank (in '000)
14. Credit/deposit ration.
15. Number of post offices per lakh population.
16. Number of Telephones and mobile per lakh population.
17. Percentage of villages electrified.
18. Length of total roads & rails (in Km.) per 100 km² of area.
19. Average number of population served by Hospitals, dispensaries (P.H.C. in 000) and number of Hospital beds per lakh population.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the above mentioned indicators to be used to evaluate the level of socio-economic development of each district, classification of districts is to be done so that planning for balanced growth of each

district can be framed accordingly. It would be quite, interesting and useful to examine the extent of improvement required in different socio-economic indicators of the less developed districts of the state of Bihar. It will also provide avenues to bring about uniform regional development of the state. Such information may help the planners and administrators to read just the resources to reduce inequalities among different districts of the state.

In the light of result taken out from the study, it may be hypothesized that higher percentage of agro-labourers to the total main workers, higher decadal growth rate of population, higher population density and larger number of population per bank are negatively associated with the development, whereas the higher values of other indicators contribute positively.

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