Academic Discourses on Causes of and Solutions to Poverty in India

Ameeta Motwani
Department of Commerce, Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi, India

Abstract:
This paper analyses academic discourses about factors that cause/perpetuate or eliminate poverty. It finds that the academic debates on the subject have been dominated by economists and have concentrated mainly on economic backwardness and/or unequal distribution of productive assets as the major causes of poverty in India. The consensus that emerges from these suggests that growth is important but other factors such as the growth of employment and real wage rates are equally important since the majority of the poor in India are rural labour households with marginal or no landholdings. The alternative discourse by political scientists highlights the importance of political factors and unequal distribution of power and resources in causing poverty and therefore suggests land reforms, empowerment, the need for inclusive policies/politics and peoples’ movement as some of the solutions. Sociological studies of poverty bring out the role of social institutions such as the caste system (a system of institutionalized inequality) and patriarchy in bringing a disproportionate burden of poverty on certain disadvantaged sections of society such as the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women, etc. State level studies highlight the importance of ‘Quality of Governance’ while village level studies provide useful insights based on the people’s experience of falling in and out of poverty. The paper thus finds that the understanding of causes of poverty is affected by – (a) Academic Disciplines of the researchers; (b) Ideology of the researchers and (c) the level of enquiry, i.e. national, state, district or village.

Keywords: Poverty in India, Causes of Poverty, Solutions to Poverty, Poverty Alleviation Programmes, Academic Discourses.

Introduction
This paper analyses the academic discourses about factors that are supposed to cause/perpetuate or eliminate poverty. The literature on the subject of causes and solutions to poverty in India is huge and an attempt is made here to present some of the important aspects of this discourse.

The academic/scholarly discourses on this subject may be divided into two groups: the dominant ones that identify the economic causes of poverty and accordingly suggest economic growth, employment, improvement in technology, credit etc. as solutions and the alternative discourses produced by other social scientists which blame the social and political structures/institutions for causing and perpetuating poverty and therefore suggest land reforms, empowerment, need for inclusive policies/politics and peoples’ movement as some of the solutions.

There are few others who suggest climate, geography, natural and historical factors etc. as important influences on poverty of an area/region and even though empirical evidence confirms the importance of these factors, they
have not received much attention in the discourses on causes.

It is pertinent to note that in USA much of the debate on poverty centered around deserving vs. undeserving poor (Katz 1989). Himmelfarb (1984) too provides testimony that similar debates occurred at different points in time in U.K. Such debates, have however been absent in the academic literature on poverty in India. Unlike the West, ‘culture of poverty’ kind of explanations (Lewis, Mayhew in Himmelfarb) which blame the initial conditions of poverty for the mindset which leads to a low-level equilibrium do not find place in the discourse on causes of poverty in India. There has been a kind of consensus among scholars of poverty that poor in India cannot be blamed (at least not in the academic discourse) for their own poverty. The reason for this seems to be that until recently a significant proportion of the population in India fell into the category of poor. Another fact is that majority of the poor here are working and not sitting idle on relief. It is not surprising therefore that unlike the West there have been no debates among academics studying poverty in India on the issue of deserving vs. undeserving poor. The poverty of the masses is therefore explained in the academic discourse in terms of economic, political or social structures.

The Dominant Discourses on Causes of Poverty

The academic debates by and among economists have concentrated mainly on economic backwardness (underdeveloped nature of the economy) and/or unequal distribution of productive assets as the major reasons behind the mass poverty found in India. Depending on their ideological orientations, they have debated the relative merits of policies promoting economic growth vs. welfare measures as strategies for reduction of poverty. The welfare measures include income transfers and provision of basic needs (primary education, health, drinking water, sanitation etc.) and are known as ‘direct attacks’ in the literature on poverty (Ghate 1984, Bhagwati 1994). The ‘indirect attacks’ include policies aimed at promoting economic growth through provision of infrastructure (roads, electricity, irrigation, marketing facilities) and promotion of superior technology through provision of inputs such as High Yield Variety (HYV) seeds, fertilisers, credit etc. Other measures such as population control are also suggested as ways to reduce/eliminate poverty. An attempt is made in the following pages to analyse the impact of various factors on poverty by briefly explaining the theoretical arguments advanced by scholars and putting the evidence from the state level and village level studies against these.

Economic Growth

Among various factors contributing to poverty alleviation, economic growth has always been recognised as an important one in the discourse of economists and policy makers. The trickle down impact of growth has remained the dominant ideology of development. Empirical evidence (employing econometric models and time series analysis) in the form of national/regional studies is presented by economists in India and at the World Bank to establish the relation between economic growth and level of poverty. Economists have found that the benefits of growth are observed to be accruing to different economic groups approximately in proportion to their initial incomes. However, GDP growth rates of less than 3% are associated with worsening of poverty and growth rates exceeding 6% are considered good for reduction in poverty ratios (Bhagwati 1994, Ravallion and Datt 1996).

The research on poverty further suggests that not just the rate of growth but the composition of growth too is important for the alleviation of poverty. It is generally agreed that growth in agricultural output has a more pronounced effect on poverty alleviation than growth in the industrial sector. Ahluwalia (1978) demonstrates through data that the proportion of rural poor fluctuates with agricultural performance and falls in periods of good agricultural output.

Besides sectoral composition of growth, these discourses assign great importance to the
availability of infrastructure, physical as well as institutional for achieving a reduction in poverty (Ravallion and Datt 1996). It has been argued that apart from the direct effect of the development of infrastructure on enabling a faster pace of ‘trickling down’ of benefits of growth to the poor, it also enhances the mobility of the poor, and with it the potential areas for employment opportunities.

**Role of Poverty Alleviation Programs**

The strategy of Poverty Alleviation Programmes (PAPs) or the ‘Direct Attacks on Poverty’ has been an important subject for debates in the academic discourse. Those who reject the approach believe that economic growth is the best poverty alleviation programme and therefore public money should be used for development of infrastructure and other growth enhancing activities rather than on PAPs (Bhagwati 1984). There is an alternative view that looks upon PAPs as an effective way to improve the access of the poor to development opportunities. They argue that growth may create opportunities but if people are not in a position to respond to these stimuli, poverty alleviation cannot take place. According to them PAPs are therefore needed to build capacities of people so that they may benefit from the growing opportunities. Some however concede that though growth alone in the long run can eliminate poverty, in the interim there is need for ‘safety nets’ for the poor and vulnerable.

The discourse (based on innumerable evaluations of the poverty alleviation programmes) however is almost unanimous on the following aspects of PAPs in practice:

1. There have been large leakages in the distribution of benefits under various programmes.

2. Self-employment programmes such as IRDP have not been helpful to the very poor as they expect the poor to possess the entrepreneurial skills and therefore those who have benefited from such programmes are either non-poor or those who are just below the poverty line. For the very poor, wage employment programmes such as NREP, RLEGP and later JRY have been more helpful.

3. Nutrition support programmes such as PDS or ICDS have had mixed success.

**Alternative Discourses on Causes of Poverty**

While the dominant discourse (produced by the economists) explains poverty in terms of lack of economic growth, employment opportunities, superior technology etc., the alternative discourses produced by political scientists and sociologists (and economists with left leanings) highlight the importance of political and social factors in causing and alleviating poverty.

Inequalities in distribution of power and resources is recognised as an important causative factor in this discourse. These explanations shift away from the pure economic perspective and argue that the problems of poverty lie in the nature of the socio-political environment. It is argued that majority of the poor in this country live in the rural areas and one of the major causes of their poverty is landlessness. Land reforms and mobilisation of the poor therefore find a prominent place in the solutions to poverty suggested in this discourse.

Political scientists have argued that the problems of poverty lie in the nature of class configurations, which according to them have led to the weak response of the state in matters of poverty alleviation. They argue that the capitalist model of development, promoted through the dominance of the propertied classes whose influence has not waned since the days of the nationalist movement, has not provided adequate support for policies to remove poverty. According to them the dominant class has supported the trickle down philosophy because that alone is a justification for pursuing the capitalist path of development (Mathur 1995).

These explanations of the weak performance of the Indian State on the poverty front are useful to understand the broad contours of the national
political will with regard to the issue of poverty alleviation in the country.

Rudolph and Rudolph (1987) however argue that the state in India has not been the same at all times and in all contexts. They highlight the importance of various ‘demand groups’ in Indian polity and show that the Indian State has been varying between ‘demand polity’ and ‘command polity’ over different periods. Concluding their detailed study of the ‘Political Economy of the Indian State’ based on empirical evidence they wrote,

“Like Hindu conception of the divine, the state in India is polymorphous, a creature of manifold forms and orientations. One is the third actor whose scale and power contribute to the marginality of class politics. Another is a liberal or citizens’ state, a juridical body whose legislative reach is limited by a written constitution, judicial review, and fundamental rights. Still another is a capitalist state that guards the boundaries of the mixed economy by protecting the rights and promoting the interests of property in agriculture, commerce and industry. Finally, a socialist state is concerned to use public power to eradicate poverty and privilege and tame private power. Which combination prevails in a particular historical setting is a matter for inquiry.” (Rudolf and Rudolf 1987: 400-401)

Jayal (2001: 19) agrees that, “…like society, the state too is highly differentiated, and not monolithic in its nature.” She further writes, “The complexity of its structure means that there is no necessary coherence between the functioning of state institutions at the local, intermediate and national levels.”

Kohli (1987) has pointed out that the performance of distributive policies shows regional differences because of differences in regime characteristics in the states. He mentions leadership style, ideology of the ruling party etc. as the factors influencing the way poverty alleviation programmes are implemented.

Kuldeep Mathur (1995) concedes that while the reasons for the failure of policies to eradicate rural poverty may lie in the political and administrative environment behind the formulation and implementation of the poverty alleviation programmes, this environment varies at the operational level and that this difference provides an opportunity to the states to apply their resourcefulness and succeed given the necessary political will for it.

The state level evidence confirming the above arguments have brought the issue of ‘good governance’ center stage in discussions on poverty alleviation in recent years.

Sociological studies of poverty bring out the role of social institutions such as the caste system (a system of institutionalized inequality) and patriarchy in bringing a disproportionate burden of poverty on certain disadvantaged sections of society such as the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women, etc. The inclusion of ‘powerlessness’ in the definition of poverty (World Bank 2001) has created interest in these explanations of poverty and accordingly the solutions to poverty prescriptions now include ‘participation and empowerment’ of these marginalised sections of society.

An important contribution of ethnographic studies which focussed on the experiences of the poor in India (e.g. Djurfieldt and Lindberg 1975, Gulati 1981, Kalpagam 1994) has been that these bring out the various types of coping strategies that are used by the poor in order to survive. They highlight the importance of common property resources, family and community ties and social networks in the lives of the poor. These have given rise to discourses on the role of social capital in recent years.

Besides the academic discipline and the ideology, identification of causes of poverty have also been affected by the level of inquiry. An attempt is made in the following pages to analyse the impact of various factors discussed above by looking at the evidence from the state level studies confirming or refuting the above arguments.
State Level Studies

The state level studies point out that though the positive impact of agricultural growth on the income of small farmers and more particularly on the wage income of agricultural labourers cannot be denied, of late, it is the indirect contribution of agriculture by way of increase in opportunities for off-farm employment combined with the increase in foodgrain production resulting in the decline of the relative prices of foodgrains that has become more important than the direct contribution of agriculture by way of providing employment. These studies point out that when there is a significant investment in human development (as reflected in Human Development Index) and greater equality in the ownership of assets, the trickle down effect of growth becomes more pronounced. The consensus that emerges from these studies suggests that growth is important but growth by itself may not ensure a 'spread effect'. The latter will be facilitated to the extent that there is (a) a developed infrastructure and (b) low concentration of assets i.e. the poor also have access to productive assets (Vyas and Bhargava 1995).

The negative correlation between economic growth and absolute poverty can be seen in the case of Punjab and Haryana. High agricultural productivity resulting from the use of HYV seeds and new technology has contributed to the economic prosperity of these states. Bhalla (1995) however points out that in case of Haryana, this economic prosperity has not been translated in increases in the quality of life indices in an equal measure. The study of Gujarat by Hirway (1995) shows that growth by itself is not sufficient unless it is sustainable and regionally balanced and leads to generation of employment. She argues that in order that growth leads to reduction in poverty it has to be ensured that certain groups do not remain excluded.

Hirway points out other causes such as: (i) droughts in three consecutive years leading to a negative rate of growth of agriculture in the state, (ii) unemployment caused due to the crisis in the textile industry and (iii) the communal riots of the 80s, as responsible for stagnation of poverty ratios in the state during 1983 to 87-88. She points out that ensuring remunerative employment to the poor goes a long way towards alleviating poverty.

Bhalla (1995) agrees that since majority of the poor in India are rural landless labour households or those with marginal landholdings, growth of employment and real wage rates are the most important factor determining the incidence of poverty in India.

The evidence from the states on the role of PAPs is highly varied. At one extreme Parthasarthy (1995) found that the reduction in poverty in Andhra Pradesh during the later part of the 80s may largely be due to the poverty alleviation programmes such as the Rs. 2 a kilo rice. On the other extreme Bhalla (1995) found that the centrally sponsored programmes for poverty alleviation were 'strictly peripheral' in the process of poverty reduction in Haryana. According to her, public expenditure on some of these programmes has been to a large extent a waste of money.

The empirical evidence available from the state level studies of poverty show that in the states which have implemented land reform measures with seriousness, these measures have contributed significantly to their poverty reduction. For example, in Kerala, land reform measures along with organised labour movements leading to rise in wages and public provisioning of social goods by the left dominated political leadership have been responsible for its impressive performance on the human development indicators (Kannan 1995). Similarly, West Bengal, “a very poor and very rural state, has vastly improved its relative position on a broad range of economic, social and rural indicators. Land reforms, the development of panchayats and implementation of poverty alleviation programmes through them, and political mobilisation of the rural poor” are identified as the major reasons behind these developments, since 1977 by Dasgupta (1995: 2691).

On the other hand Parthasarthy (1995) finds that “There is a revival of absentee landlordism and...
rise in tenancy on a large scale as the big landlords shift their surpluses and residences to urban areas” (p. 2585). He argues that the spread of naxalism in Andhra Pradesh is due to “the failure of the implementation of land alienation laws, coupled with declining access to forest produce, have marginalised large sections of the tribals. Effective implementation of alienation laws and improved access to forests are a must to curb social unrest” (Parthasarthy 1995: 2585).

This evidence lends support to Atul Kohli’s argument that “only organised left-of centre regimes are capable of facilitating reforms of a distributive nature within India’s seriously constrained political economy” (Kohli 1987). The state level studies also confirm that the quality of political leadership and administration has important bearing on the incidence of poverty in a state.

For example, much of the economic prosperity of Punjab and Haryana (Bhalla 1995) can be attributed to the far-sighted policies of providing irrigation, electricity and connectivity to the rural areas implemented by chief minister Partap Singh Kairon. On the other hand, the unresponsive political leadership, bureaucratic inefficiency and rampant corruption at all levels to the point where it is said that in Bihar ‘the state has withered away’, have been identified as the major factors causing and perpetuating poverty in Bihar (Sharma 1995).

“The division of society into castes has penetrated not only politics but also into the bureaucracy, academics and other professions, seriously affecting the efficiency and functioning of the entire system of governance and development machinery. Caste tensions and in some parts of the state, caste riots, have seriously eroded social harmony” (Sharma 1995: 2587).

In case of Bihar besides the political, social and climatic reasons mentioned above poverty is caused also by the high density of population (1106 persons per square km. in 2011), resulting in small average per capita operational holding (0.39 hectare as against 1.08 ha. for India and 3.62 ha. for Punjab). As a result three-fourths of the operational holdings are marginal (Government of India 2019).

### Evidence from Village-level Studies

Since majority of the poor live in villages and most of the urban poor have migrated from the countryside in order to escape poverty, it is important to look at village studies to identify the causes of poverty. There are very few studies that record the changes which have taken place in particular villages over a period of time. Epstein’s study of two South Indian villages after almost four decades (Epstein et al 1998) and the study of changes over five decades in Palanpur (Stern and Lanjouw (eds.)1998) are the important longitudinal village studies available. These are therefore analysed in some detail here.

Epstein (ibid.) presents a comparison of two villages. Wangala which had adequate irrigation has developed a prosperous agricultural centre with a strong community life and large scale development of social infrastructure like school, social institutions etc. and Dalena which lacked irrigation and its residents had to seek their fortunes outside the village which has resulted in its decline as a community. Epstein uses the terms ‘village introversion’ implying strong village identity and resistance to outside interference in intra-village affairs and ‘village extroversion’ to describe the different types of developments that have taken place in the two villages respectively.

Though different factors played an important role in deciding the respective destinies of the two villages, canal irrigation in case of one and closeness to highway in case of the other, one common factor that emerged as an important influence in the socio-economic and political development of the two villages is ‘education’.

A very important factor in case of Wangala is the critical role played by T. Thimmegowda (who is also a co-author) an IAS officer born in Wangala. Thimmegowda played a decisive role not only in bringing development schemes of the government to his village but also in discouraging factional politics in the village and maintaining village unity. He identifies the following factors as important in bringing about economic prosperity to the village: (a) introduction of canal irrigation in the 1930s, (b) the district Community Development
Programme that started in 1950s, (c) the Intensive Agricultural District Programme, (d) the advent of electricity that along with the boom in jaggery prices encouraged the establishment of cane crushers. But he notes that all sections of the village have not benefited equally from this prosperity. According to him inequalities have increased. He notes that the general trend has been that “…the progressive rich are becoming richer while the unenterprising poor are becoming poorer” (ibid.: 55).

From the Palanpur study (Stern & Lanjouw 1998: p. 112-13) one can identify the following as the reasons for the backwardness of the village: “the absence of any credible system of local governance, the persistence of near universal illiteracy among disadvantaged castes, the resilience of extreme forms of gender inequality, the retarded pace of the demographic transition and the lethargic state of collective institutions ….”

The causes identified as instrumental for the improved economic condition of the poor by Jodha (1988) are: better climatic conditions like good rainfall and improvement in farming techniques and better marketing on the one hand and reduced incidence of disease and unemployment due to DPAP and rural works programme as well as institutional reforms on the other as also the increased factionalism(?) among the rich.

In between the state and village level studies are some district level studies such as the study of the scope for and limits to direct attacks on poverty (Ghate 1984). This district level study shows that direct attacks (PAPs), trickle down and changes in political and administrative structures are not alternative strategies but are interrelated. In order to make a dent on rural poverty all these have to be taken into account.

At the micro level, Dube (1998) has attempted to look at the changes experienced by the poor in India through the experiences of a Scheduled Caste Pasi family in a central UP village over a period of 50 years correlating these with the macro changes taking place in the country during this period. The story of the painfully slow climb out of poverty achieved by this family tells us about some of the mechanisms through which it became possible. We are told that the first generation migrated to Bombay to work in the railways. This enabled the son of the migrant to pay off the family debts and to buy some land and it also enabled the grandson to get an educational edge over other village children and to eventually become a teacher and buy more land. The family ends up with an operational holding of 5 acres (half owned, half share-cropped). The role, if any, played by the poverty alleviation or other welfare programmes is minimal though reference is made to some farm-land (2/3 of an acre) being received by the family under a welfare scheme. The book tells us that the family belongs to the small percentage of poor who have escaped poverty. In case of other castes such as Jatabs, however, there was little improvement in their economic condition and they continued to live in conditions of acute deprivation on the margins of society. The reason for this has been attributed to the importance of caste based connections in securing outside employment.

What is of importance here is that studies of particular villages (particularly longitudinal ones) and sometimes even of a single family can provide insights into important factors that cause and perpetuate or eliminate poverty in general, provided the studies are in-depth and relate their evidence to changes taking place at the macro level.

Recent evidence from village level studies from Rajasthan and Gujarat (Krishna et.al 2003) shows that escaping poverty and falling into poverty are not symmetric in terms of reasons. This study finds that reasons associated with escaping poverty are different from those associated with falling into poverty and argues that different policies will therefore be required to deal with each set of reasons. While growth has been found as a significant factor contributing towards the households’ escape from poverty, other factors such as expenditure on health and ceremonial expenditure leading to debt and debt bondage have been found more significant in case of households’ descent into poverty.
Other Factors

The importance of climatic and historical factors in determining the level of living enjoyed by the people of a particular region has been pointed out by few scholars. Chambers quotes Harrison on this: “The correlation between mean monthly temperature and poverty is truly astonishing and it cannot be a coincidence that almost all the poor countries lie between the northern and southern isotherms of 200°C, and almost all the industrialised countries outside it” (Chambers 1983: 39). It is true that majority of the poor in the world are concentrated in two regions: South Asia and Sub Saharan Africa. Each of these regions shares a common climatic and cultural legacy. In case of India too, it can not be a coincidence that a large number of the poorest districts lie in the tribal belt running across Southern Orrissa, Jharkhand and Chhatisgarh sharing more or less similar ecology.

Many of the village level studies (e.g. Epstein 1998, Jodha 1988) also point to the importance of natural/ecological factors in causing backwardness. The state level studies also confirm this. For example, in case of Rajasthan, the factors found to be responsible for poverty are mostly natural e.g. fluctuating levels of rainfall and consequent frequency of drought conditions (Sagar 1995). Similarly, among the various factors identified for the acute poverty situation of Bihar (including the present state of Jharkhand) following were included as important:

Floods in large parts of the plains of Bihar, specially in north Bihar are a recurring feature and cause havoc destroying crops and the quality of land and threaten the life and livestock by causing large-scale displacement.

Some of the districts in the south Bihar plains and plateau regions are drought-prone. (Sharma 1995)

The reasons for little importance given to the natural/ecological and historical factors in different explanations of poverty may have something to do with the fact that these factors are not amenable easily to policy solutions. Chambers argues that “…the colonial and racist associations of climate and contingency explanations have been responsible for their premature and scientifically unwarranted burial” (1983: 40-41).

Analysis of causes according to ‘Types of Poverty’

In recent years, some attempts have been made to disaggregate poverty into different types. For example Deepak Lal has distinguished between three types of poverty: (a) mass structural poverty, (b) destitution and (c) conjunctural poverty (Lal 1998). According to him while mass structural poverty is a result of the underdeveloped state of a society and was present in all pre-industrial societies, destitution is a problem of those members of society who lack labour power to work (e.g. the aged and the infirm). He mentions climatic crises and political turmoil as principal causes of conjunctural poverty. According to him the only answer to mass structural poverty is transformation of a pre-industrial agrarian economy into an industrialised one and to achieve high rates of economic growth. On the other hand income transfers are the only way of tackling destitution and conjunctural poverty. He also discusses the role of public transfer vis-à-vis private transfers in this regard and argues (citing evidence from other studies) that private transfers are more efficient as compared to governmental ones.

Mahendra Dev argues that it is important to separate ‘persistent poor’ from the ‘transient poor’ since the policies needed to combat the two types of poverty are quite different (Dev 1995). For example, he feels that rural works programmes or relief operations may be helpful in alleviating transient poverty while systematic asset or income transfers may be needed to address the problem of persistent poverty.

This kind of distinction between various forms of poverty has important implications since policies to deal with each type of poverty have to be designed differently. In the academic debates, however, such a distinction between various forms of poverty has not received much attention.
One way of knowing the causative factors is to ask the question: Who are the poor? The answer to it may throw light on the real causes of poverty. The available data (Sundaram 2001) shows that the incidence of poverty is unevenly distributed among various regions and social groups. It is much higher among the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes than in the general population. The incidence of poverty is more in states with low per capita SDP than in states with high per capita SDP; poverty is more in rural areas than in urban India; age-wise incidence of poverty is more for under 15 population than adults and based on sex, poverty incidence is higher among females than males. The major poor groups in rural areas are (a) those belonging to ST, SC and other backward castes and (b) agricultural labourers, rural artisans, and marginal farmers. The rural ST/SC/BC population belonging to labour households are the poorest group followed by marginal and small farmers belonging to SC/ST/BC. The severity of poverty (based on occupational grouping) is highest among rural labour households and of these the non-agricultural rural labour households are the worst affected.

Conclusion

There is some truth in most explanations of poverty. The above analysis of the discourse on causes and solutions to poverty suggests that the understanding of causes of poverty is affected by:

(a) Academic disciplines: economists identify low productivity, lack of remunerative employment and other such bottlenecks, political scientists argue about the power equations in society and the importance of ‘regime types’ and sociologists cite evidence about the role of social structures such as the caste system and patriarchy.

(b) Ideology: While right wing scholars find evidence in favour of economic growth as the most important anti poverty programme, Marxist ideologues emphasize the need to bring about changes in the structures of power through redistribution of productive resources and the socialists argued in favour of the state welfare programmes meant for the poor and the vulnerable.

(c) Level of Inquiry: The evidence about causes of poverty is not only influenced by the academic discipline and ideology of the researchers but also by the level of inquiry. Thus, while macro studies bring out the importance of economic growth, the state level studies throw light on the importance of political and administrative factors. Studies of villages and individuals bring out the importance of individual entrepreneurship, social networks, common property resources etc.

Conflict of Interests

No conflict of interest.

References


