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23 August 2008

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/10142/>
MPRA Paper No. 10142, posted 25 Aug 2008 01:08 UTC

**SOCIOECONOMIC, INSTITUTIONAL & POLITICAL
DETERMINANTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES:
A SUBNATIONAL STUDY OF INDIA, 1993 – 2002**

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ABSTRACT

Unlike much of previous literature on determinants of human rights performance between the countries, we conduct an econometric analysis of socioeconomic, institutional and political factors determining government respect for human rights within India. Using time series cross-sectional data for 28 Indian states for the period 1993 – 2002, we find that internal threat poised by number of social violence events, presence of civil war and riot hit disturbed areas are strongly associated with human rights abuses. Amongst socioeconomic factors, ‘exclusive’ economic growth, ‘uneven’ development, poor social development spending, youth bulges and differential growth rates between minority religious groups explain the likelihood of human rights violations. Capturing power at the state and central level by Hindu national parties’ viz., Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Shiv Sena, further help understand the incidence of human rights violations within India. These results brings important recognition to the fact that human rights abuses are not evenly spread within a country rather than viewing each country as homogenous. Moreover, it also has numerous advantages in seeking the determinants of the causes of such abuses as many more variables are held constant within a single country than in previous studies.

Keywords: Human rights; civil war; socioeconomic conditions; sub national politics; India.

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Acknowledgements: I would like to thank Anonymous referees of William Davidson Institute at University of Michigan, USA, Mr. Srivyal Vyyuri, formerly with Ohio State University, USA & Founding member Sphoorti Foundation (www.sphoorti.org), India, for their discussion on the topic and valuable comments and suggestions. I also extend thanks to Dr. Henrik Urdal, Senior Researcher, Center for Study of Civil War (CSCW), PRIO, Norway, Dr. Caroline Beer, Professor, University of Vermont, USA for providing valuable information about key databases. However, remaining errors if any are mine.

“It is not the so-called Naxalities who have fathered their violence but those who have persistently defied and defeated the laws for the past so many years - be they politicians, administrators, landlords, or moneylenders. When such happens to be the situation and when the institutions and process of democracy are found to be so woefully lacking, is there any wonder that discontent, frustration, anger, and what should turn the minds of some towards violence as the only possible saviour?”

- Jayaprakash Narayan

Face to Face (1970)

1. Introduction

Several competing theories have formulated to explain the cross-national variations in factors influencing government respect for human rights¹. Prominent studies like: McKinlay & Cohan (1975 & 1976); Strouse & Claude (1976); Ziegenhagen (1986); Park (1987); Boswell & Dixon (1990); Henderson (1991); Cingranelli (1992); Henderson (1993); Poe & Tate (1994); Davenport (1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1997); Fein (1995); Blasi & Cingranelli (1996); Meyer (1996); Cingranelli (1996); King (1997); Richard (1997); Cingranelli & Richards (1997); Poe, Tate & Keith (1999); Davenport & Armstrong (2004); Carey & Poe (2004) and Landman (2005) have focused on explaining various key determinants of human rights performance across the countries. They have all jolted down certain conditions which induce government towards repression. We classify them into three major categories namely, socioeconomic factors, institutional factors and political factors. The findings in the literature shows any improvement in socioeconomic conditions often result in better human rights performance, while institutional factors like conflicts (Dreher, Gassebner & Siemers, 2007) and political competition (Beer & Mitchell, 2006; Richards & Gelleny, 2007 and Cingranelli & Filippov, 2008) lead to the opposite. Taking these factors into consideration, the task of this study is to determine if causal relationship exists between these factors, acting as independent variables and human rights abuses.

All the studies mentioned above, examine the determinants of human rights abuses across the countries. Often national aggregates may not capture the local factor dynamics very well and such local factors may be well argued to cause higher or lower human rights abuses. This is exactly the case of India which is rated high on democracy scale but its performance is very poor on human rights front. The cross national analysis of Davenport & Armstrong (2004) suggests that a polity score anything of eight or above eight should lead to good human rights performance. In the case of India, the polity score is 9 and

¹ The concept of Human Rights abuses has always been problematic to define. However, we would like to take into account all those aspects, which in some or the other ways are related to abuses of human rights. Generally human rights considers “integrity of people” which include: torture, extrajudicial killing, political imprisonment, and disappearances, and “empowerment rights of people”, which are political & civil rights of people and workers.

human rights performance measured by Political Terror Scale² (PTS hereafter) is 4 and 0 according to CIRI data of human rights on Physical Integrity Rights index³ (PIR hereafter). Therefore, this study highlights the need to go below the national level to see if the regional dynamics and local factors influence the variation in human rights performance. Also, India is an ideal case to test for this relationship simply because of its vast diverse nature of economic, social, cultural and demographic factors within the regions, institutional design which is majoritarian yet ethnically very diverse and divisive regional political structure. This apart, huge regional variance in human rights violation events, social violence events and also ready availability of the data makes India as an attractive region for this study. To the best of our knowledge this is first such attempt after Beer & Mitchell (2006) to test this relationship using subnational factors.

Our goal is to build an original and parsimonious model for the states within India taking into account the standard models used for national level in the literature. Our idea is to see whether these national level factors could be revalidated and replicated along with certain key local and regional dynamics to make further inroads into the study of determinants of human rights abuses at subnational level. We do so using the dataset that spans for the period 1993 – 2002 for 28 Indian states. Using pooled cross-sectional time series analysis we begin by reexamining the hypotheses originally tested for national level in literature by setting up an appropriate model which then adds various important regional factors relevant in the context of Indian states to guide our analysis on subnational study. This perhaps recognizes the fact that human rights abuses are not evenly spread within a country rather than viewing each country as homogenous. Moreover, it also has numerous advantages in seeking the determinants of the causes of such abuses as many more variables are held constant within a single country than in previous studies.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we position our analysis in the Indian subnational context by postulating various socioeconomic, political and institutional factors acting as major determinants of human rights abuses. The section 3 designs the empirical models for human rights abuses within Indian context. In section 4, we begin with bivariate analysis and discuss the empirical results, and sections 5 conclude the study and highlight the scope for further research on Indian subnational context.

2. Socioeconomic, Institutional & Political Determinants

Previous research on violations of human rights has established that there are several key factors that explain why governments violate human rights (McKinlay & Cohan, 1975; Strouse & Claude, 1976; Park, 1987; Cingranelli, 1992; Poe & Tate, 1994; Davenport, 1995, 1996, 1997; King, 1998; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Carey & Poe, 2004 and

² Based on a codification of country information from Amnesty International's & US state department annual human rights reports PTS is scaled from 1 (best) to 5 (worst) human rights respect.

³ PIR is an additive index constructed from observations on torture, extrajudicial killing, political imprisonment, and disappearances. It ranges from 0, meaning no government respect for these four human rights to 8, full government respect for these four human rights.

Landman, 2005). Based on the literature and taking into account the important regional factors in India, we divide these determinants into three major heads namely, institutional, socioeconomic and political factors.

a. Institutional Factors:

The first and the foremost reason why the governments are engaged in process of repression is due to threats. Sometimes these threats can be either real or simply preconceived by the government. Thus, whenever the governments are faced with such threats, they resort to the means of repression (Stohl, 1975; Rasler, 1976; Tilly, 1978; Lopez, 1986; Gurr, 1986; Mason & Krane, 1989; King, 1999; Muller & Weede, 1990; Gartner & Regan, 1996; Franklin, 1997; Loveman & Davies 1997; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Mahoney-Norris, 2000; Poe, Tate & Lanier, 2000; Lee, 2001; and Kaufman, 2001). Threats can be of several types like civil war, ethnic war or even international conflicts, in the federal context, sometimes it can also be conflicts between the states and provinces. To control the state disorder, government represses the human rights (Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Blanton, 1999; Apodaca, 2001 and Blanton & Blanton, 2004). Thus, we believe that the government respect towards human rights is lower when the governments are faced with threats in the form of conflicts. Thus, we formulate three propositions:

Hypothesis 1: Presence of civil war leads to increase in human rights abuses.

To capture the civil war presence in the state, we include the dummy variable 1 if there exists civil war in that particular state and 0 otherwise. The data comes from the calculations based on the information available from Uppsala database updated version of 2007.

Hypothesis 2: Increase in number of social violence events is associated with lower government respect for human rights.

The data for number of social violence events is event count for each state in each year adapted from India subnational problem set codebook, 1960-2005 developed by Marshall, Sardesi, and Marshall (2005) for the project 'State Failure Task Force', Center for Systemic Peace.

Hypothesis 3: Higher the number of disturbed areas, greater the state repression.

The disturbed area in the state is where the riots have taken place. We code the dummy variable 1 if there were riots in that particular state in that year and 0 otherwise. The data comes from the study of Beer and Mitchell (2006).

The relationship between ethnic composition and violations of human rights is not very clear. Many works in the literature shows that ethnic composition has a significant impact on internal conflicts (Hibbs, 1973; Muller & Seligson 1987; Lindström, 1996; Collier & Hoeffler, 1998; Ellingsen, 2000; Sambanis, 2001 and García & Marta, 2002). While others could not find any significant affect (Henderson, 2000; Fearon & Laitin, 2003).

There are also other studies who have taken more cautious stand. The study of Hegre & Sambanis (2006) finds that ethnic fractionalization could be a root cause only in low-intensity armed conflicts. Similarly, Besancon (2005) argues that the societies which experience higher levels of inequalities, lower levels of socioeconomic and human development are more prone to ethnic conflicts. Moreover, many scholars have empirically shown that ethnic civil wars are different from non-ethnic civil wars, and that the former last longer and are more violent. The two most prominent studies on this topic developed by Lee et al. (2002) and Walker & Poe (2002) focus on the effects of ethnic diversity on multiplicity of human rights abuses. They find limited support for the proposition that ethnic composition reduces the government respect for human rights. India is a classic case to study the impact of ethnic composition on conflicts. With over 28 states, 29 languages spoken by more than a million native speakers and nine major religions being practiced, it would be imperative to study impact of changes in ethnic composition giving rise to societal conflicts and thereby may lead to human rights abuses.

Hypothesis 4: Higher the religious and linguistic fractionalization, greater the risk of political violence, thereby human rights abuses.

For this purpose, we develop a single indicator viz., religious and lingual fractionalization index which is average values of degree of language and religious fractionalization adapted from the study of Urdal (2008). There are vast number of studies in literature which have highlighted the importance of change in growth and composition of ethnic groups. This argument is popularly known as differential growth hypothesis. More specifically, advocates of this theory argue that when different ethnic groups grow with different pace this could lead to political instability risking societal violent conflict (Horowitz, 2001; Lake & Rotchild, 2001; Weiner & Teitelbaum, 2001 and Urdal, 2008). Testing this argument empirically Toft (2007) finds for global sample that indeed differential growth in ethnic groups along with decline in the growth in majority groups leads to risk of violence. This apart, she also finds that closer the gap between the sizes of two largest ethnic groups in the country, higher the chances of violent conflict.

These arguments hold good for India because of substantial variation in growth of different ethnic groups in different states. Though Hindus make 80.5% of the population, the share of Muslims increased significantly from 6% in 1981 to 13.43% in 2001 (Census 2001). While the rate of growth of population of Hindu majority declined substantially from 25% in 1991 to 20% in 2001, the growth rate of Muslim population if not increased, it remained almost at same levels of around 30% (Census 2001). The annual growth of Muslim population in India between 1961 and 2001 has been 2.74%. This figure by all international standards is quite high. Justino (2004) empirically found that lower volume of riots in India is associated with larger majority of Hindus in total population in each state. This suggests that religiously diverse states are more likely to experience episodes of civil unrest.

Hypothesis 5: Increase in non-hindu majority population in states is more likely to experience communal violence, there by human rights abuses.

The non-hindu majority population share to total population is a dummy variable coded “1” if non-hindu population is the majority in that particular state and “0” otherwise. The data for this variable is adapted from Urdal (2008).

Hypothesis 6: Increase in the share of Muslim population relative to the total population in a state, greater the risk of conflicts leading to human rights abuses.

In the case of India, religious and caste diversities are most likely to be correlated with socioeconomic inequalities (Harriss-White, 2002; Justino, 2004). This often runs the risk of social violence. Violence against minorities in India is often regularized in the name of communal and national security (Kumar, 2005). Chadda (2006) opine that denial of democratic and political participation rights led to failure to integrate the minority groups into the main stream society is actually risking human rights violations by the government in India.

Hypothesis 7: The risk of societal conflict is higher with the increase in share of Schedule Caste/ Schedule Tribe population relative to the total population in a state leading to human rights abuses.

The percentage share of Muslim and SC/ST population to total population is calculated from the data set of Census 1991 and 2001 published by Central Statistical Organization (CSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation Government of India.

b. Socioeconomic Factors:

Economic conditions play a significant role in determining the government’s respect for human rights. But the relationship between economic development and human rights is not clear. According to the modernization theory, economic development leads to higher respect for human rights as development process tends to reduce threats and the likelihood of state repression is less (Lipset, 1959 & 1994). On the other hand, dependency theory claims that economic development would hamper respect for human rights (Chase-Dunn, 1989). This is because if the goods in the society are unevenly distributed creating economic unrest leading to outbreak of violence. However, prominent studies in the literature show that indeed economic development often leads to government respect for human rights (Zimmermann, 1980; Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Boswell & Dixon, 1990; Davenport 1995; Blanton, 1999; Frey et al., 1999; Milner, 2002; Richards, Gelleny & Sacko, 2001; Blanton & Blanton, 2004 and Eriksen & de Soysa, 2008). The relationship between economic development and state repression surely deserves to be tested in the case of Indian states. This is because previous research studies (Gupta, 1999) argue that there is uneven progress and development within India. There is a higher level of economic development in industrial states including some of the Western and Southern states, while many of the North-Eastern states are isolated from the success story of development.

Hypothesis 8: Higher the levels of economic development in states, lower the state repression.

In the case of economic development atleast there are large numbers of prominent studies which show positive association with human rights. But this is not the case with economic growth. The research community is evenly divided on this topic. Some expect that economic growth would increase state repression because it leads to instability as the rebellion increases (Olson, 1963; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999 and Blanton & Blanton, 2004). The rebellion initiates because of the disproportionate wealth being generated out of rapid economic growth by the rich and elites. Thus, by repression the state would stop the large section of the society to demand for their pie in the share of the wealth generated (Brown, 1988). There is also interesting evidence which shows that economies grow fastest when basic human rights are respected (Sen 1999; Kaufmann 2004 and Kaufmann, Kraay & Mastruzzi 2004). While, others show that growth would increase economic activity leading towards socio-economic and human development. This reduces the scope for instability and increases the respect for human rights (Mitchell & McCormick, 1988 and Marks & Diamond, 1992). Apart from these, there are also studies who could not find any relationship between the two (Zimmermann, 1980 and Weitz, 1986).

We try to gather some evidence about the direction of the relationship in the case of Indian states. This becomes even more interesting due to three reasons. One, the states in India experience uneven economic growth rates. Most of the industrial states tend to outperform the rest interms of economic growth. Two, the states experience volatility in economic growth. This is due to several factors like poor monsoon, drought and slowdown in industrial growth. Lastly, economic growth in most of the Indian states looks exclusive. This means the benefits of the growth is being enjoyed by only a section of the society.

Hypothesis 9: Higher levels of economic growth rates are often associated with human rights abuses.

We control the effects of development and growth by introducing logged value of per capita GDP in INR constant terms and GDP growth rate respectively. The data is drawn from Reserve Bank of India's economic database.

There is a vast amount of literature which shows that population is directly related to human rights (Goldstone 1991; Henderson, 1993; Homer-Dixon et al. 1993; Poe, Tate, 1994; Howard & Homer-Dixon 1995; Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999; Blanton, 1999; Blanton & Blanton, 2004 and Eriksen & de Soysa 2008). There are also other studies which have used various other indicators as proxies for human rights like civil and political liberties and socioeconomic rights indicating negative linkage with population pressures (Frey & Al-Mansour 1995; Moon 1991 and Williamson 1987). We predict that states with large size of population often witness violation of human rights respect. This is because large levels of population place the pressure on the state's scare natural resources and on governments to deliver the public services (Vadlamannati, 2008). This can lead to rebellion amongst people and when repressed, it tends to look large due to its size of population.

The rate of growth of population is also a key determinant of government's respect towards human rights. It is well argued that population levels lead to resource crunch (Henderson 1993; Poe, Tate, 1994 and Poe, Tate & Keith, 1999). Added to this, a higher rate of growth of population would exert more competitive pressure on resources. This pressure caused by higher growth rate of population might result in rebellion against the state, allowing state to use repressive measures.

Hypothesis 10: Human rights abuses will increase when population levels are large.

Hypothesis 11: Human rights abuses will increase when growth rate of population is higher.

Along with population pressure, youth bulges (the population between the age group of 12 – 25 years) have also been argued to potentially increase the opportunity of civil war (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004; Urdal, 2005; 2006 & 2008). In the first attempt of such studies, Goldstone (1991 & 2001) argues that youth bulge has been associated with political crisis. Large youth populated countries are likely to witness violence if they face the problems related to unemployment, expansions in higher education with limited employment opportunities, lack of political openness, and crowding in urban centers (Moller, 1968; Choucri, 1974; Braungart, 1984; Goldstone, 1991; 2001; Cincotta et al., 2003). Supporting the view are the studies of Hudson & den Boer (2004) Urdal (2008) have found that large surplus of youth population particularly in the case of India lead to considerable security risk. This security risk often ends up with rebellion against the state, forcing the state to use repression.

Hypothesis 12: 'Youth bulges' are associated with higher human rights violations.

We take into account the log value of total population and youth population falling under the age group of 14 – 25 of each state and calculate from those values the rate of growth of population. The data for population comes from Economic Survey 2007, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

Ideally speaking, poor socioeconomic conditions in the form of income inequality which is the difference between 'haves and have nots' and poverty levels, people living below 1 US\$ per day pose serious problems for the governments. The larger the percentage of people living below poverty line and higher income inequality create social discord leading to political instability and risk of societal conflict between 'haves and have nots' in the society. In the process if situation goes out of control, government resorts to repressive measures⁴. Gurr (1985, 1986) argue that the benefits of economic growth are enjoyed by few sections of the society, the elites and rich. Refusing to share the wealth

⁴ Perhaps the best suited example for this in Indian states context is the incident occurred in the state of Andhra Pradesh's capital city Hyderabad in 2000 when the Communist Party led activities were organizing the protests against the ruling TDP (Telugu Desam Party) government's neoliberal policies. When the police failed to stop the protestors, government resorted to firing. In the process total 6 protestors are reports to have killed, leaving several injured and protest was suppressed.

evenly with the 'have nots', often leads to rift in the society. Thus, the elites and rich influence the government to repress the protests carried out by the poor.

There is a vast amount of literature which has shown that inequality and persistent poverty levels in the society are responsible for the outbreak of riots, civil wars and insurrections. Popular among such studies include Olson (1963); Sigelman & Simpson (1977); Hardy (1979); Weede (1981, 1987); Muller (1985); Park (1986); Muller & Seligson (1987); Midlarsky (1988); Londregan & Poole (1990); Boswell & Dixon (1990); Brockett (1992); Perotti (1992); Svensson (1993); Binswanger, Deininger & Feder (1993); Alesina & Rodrik (1994); Keefer & Knack (1995); Alesina & Perotti (1996); Alesina et al. (1996); Perotti (1996); Schock (1996); Piketty (1997) and Mansoob & Gates (2005) all of them show that inequalities of various forms are generally found to be associated with political instability leading to conflicts. Latest in the block includes the study of Boix (2004) which reveal that income inequalities are one of the strong determinants of different forms of conflicts ranging from simple protests, revolutions, and riots to civil war extending even to guerrilla wars⁵. Similarly, Do & Iyer (2007) finds that conflict intensity is significantly higher in places with greater poverty in the provinces of Nepal. Blomberg, Hess & Thacker (2006) and Murshed (2007) opine the higher levels of poverty are detrimental to development leading to conflicts. In a recent conceptual note by Justino (2008) argues that poverty affects the onset and duration of violent conflict.

But, there are also studies which find no relationship between inequality and repression (Muller, 1985). The study by Duff and McCamant (1976) also show no existence of any kind of relationship between the two. Even research findings related to this topic in Indian context is divided. The studies by Sergenti (2005) and Kumar, Haridwar & Kant (2005) find that inequality and poverty are strongly associated with riots and conflicts. The study by Justino (2004) could not find any statistically significant relationship between income inequality and the volume of rioting within India. Given the contradictory nature of the results in the literature and higher levels of poverty and inequality in majority of the Indian states, we feel logical to test the relationship between the two and human rights abuses.

Hypothesis 13: Higher levels of Urban and Rural Poverty rates are associated with Human rights abuses.

Hypothesis 14: Larger the difference between Rural and Urban Poverty rates, greater the risk of societal conflicts leading to human rights abuses.

The time series data for combined poverty levels was difficult to obtain for all the states. Therefore, we obtained the data separately for rural and urban poverty levels the dataset developed by STICERD, EOPP group, LSE. The differential poverty rate is the subtraction of rural from urban poverty rates.

⁵ One the principle slogan of Naxalites and Maoists in India is that their guerrilla warfare is the resultant of governments' failure to reduce inequality and poverty.

Hypothesis 15: Greater the inequality levels in the states, more likely the government to use repressive tactics.

The data for inequality was difficult to obtain. First the dataset developed by EOPP of LSE was considered. But the data for the states ended at 1994. Also only 16 states were covered by EOPP. Therefore, we considered the dataset of pay inequality developed by the team of Prof. James Galbraith, University of Texas: Inequality project. The regional inequality data set for India was constructed for 28 states using emolument and employment statistics of the manufacturing sector of 25 sub-sectors.

Theoretically speaking, if a state meets the condition of high income and high growth, it leads to increase in employment opportunities with reasonably high levels of salaries. This prosperous development climate yields dividends in the form of civil peace. Following the method of Ali & Galbraith (2005) and Vadlamannati (2007), we include an interaction effect between GDP growth and the level of income (percapita GDP). But if the growth and development process happens to be 'exclusive', this could risk societal conflict. Similarly, if the condition of high income and high growth is met then inequality and poverty levels should eventually fall because people secure job opportunities with higher levels of salaries which improve their socioeconomic conditions and lower the risk of conflict. However, if the condition of high income and high growth becomes 'exclusive' then the benefits are enjoyed only by certain sections of the community leading to the risk of conflict. To capture this effect, we include interactive measure of three variables viz., GDP growth, level of percapita GDP and income inequality. Similarly such interaction measure is introduced with urban and rural poverty rates.

Hypothesis 16: Meeting the condition of high income and high growth would reduce the risk of societal conflict leading to government respect for human rights.

The basic responsibility of any government for that matter is to provide basic public goods and services to the citizens of the state. The basic public services include providing education, healthcare facilities, drinking water, sanitation and food to name a few important items in the list. Van de Walle & Nead (1995) find that basic health and education services almost universally yield benefits for the poor. But failing to provide these services adequately means the failure of the government. This leads to economic and social dissatisfaction amongst the poor and middle class in the society. The end result of poor governance is increase in unemployment, inequality and poverty levels risking political stability in the country. The governments start feeling pressure and would resort to repression measures to keep the situation under control.

With over 1.13 billion population⁶ and 21% of people living below poverty line and around 33% of income inequality⁷, India acts as a perfect example to measure the impact of socioeconomic needs of the poor on human rights abuses in states. There are vast number of studies which argue that in order to reduce poverty and inequality levels, the government needs to further increase its spending on social and rural sector development

⁶ Figure drawn from Census 2001, estimates for 2008. See: <http://www.censusindia.net/>

⁷ Data comes from World Development Indicators, World Bank 2006.

(Dev & Mooij, 2002; Howes, Murgai & Wes, 2004 and Keefer & Khemani, 2004). Infact studies have found that every increase in public expenditure on social sector and anti-poverty programmes has a significant impact on reducing overall poverty levels in India. This effect is found more for rural poverty rates (Nayyar, 2005). Similarly, Datt, Kozel and Ravallion (2003) found that government response towards poor in the form of social sector spending is one of the main and key determinants of poverty reduction in India during the period 1960-1995. Interestingly Besley & Burgess (2002) find that the needs of vulnerable citizens are reflected in government policy in situations where vulnerable populations rely only on state action for their survival and the group has substantial power to swing the electoral outcome. Thus, it is clear from the previous research findings related to India that spending towards socioeconomic needs of the people would lead to betterment of the society. But the commitment of the governments in doing so is far from clear. In direct evidence, Justino (2004) show that conflict in India has been negatively affected by the level of expenditure on social services.

Hypothesis 17: Greater the socioeconomic needs in the states, higher should be the government spending on social sector and lower human rights abuses.

The social sector spending as percentage of State GDP is taken as proxy for government spending to cater to the needs of socioeconomic needs of the people. The data comes from Reserve Bank of India's state finances database.

Human development is seen as a form of distribution of assets (Perotti 1996; Bourguignon 2002). An important study by Barro (2001) and Lee & Barro (2001) confirms the importance of higher schooling levels as the key determinant of economic growth, and these findings are confirmed by many other empirical studies. Fedderke & Luiz (2008) finds that human capital matters for growth through its quality dimension; for distributional conflict by raising political aspirations. Indeed the study conducted by World Bank (1991) shows that increase in human rights respect leads to improvement in education levels and more particularly of females. Higher education levels reflect the way in which the states invest in human capital. This leads to overall well being leading to civil peace in the society.

In the case of subnational study of India, Pradhan & Abraham (2002) finds that human development position of the states in India is strongly determined by the human development policy pursued. The economic growth impact significantly depends upon the human development policy. It confirmed that the government allocation for education is critical for economic development. In an another study by Meghani (2003) show that strong human development, in the form of increased literacy, the pro-poor effect is strengthened. But there are very less number of studies which have probed the direct relationship between human development and conflicts within India, given the fact that conflicts increase human rights abuses. The notable study by Justino (2004) finds a significant negative impact of human development in the form of School enrollment associated with number of riots. However, Urdal (2008) and Sergenti (2005) could not find any significant impact of literacy rates on conflicts risk and riots respectively. To account for the possibility of violence eruption in the state is less likely with higher levels of educated population.

Hypothesis 18: Higher human development yields positive dividends for government respect for human rights.

To account for human development, we include literacy rates prevailing in states. The literacy data, which measure the percent of literate adults in a state, come from 1991 and 2001 Census of India at points of time. So, we consider the time variant series developed by Beer & Mitchell (2006) for all states and union territories from 1993 to 2004.

c. Political Factors

The effect of political institutions and competition on conflicts was first observed by Alesina et al. (1996) and Barro (2002). It is widely believed that instigating riots and conflicts by certain sections of political fraternity is a means to protect their political power. Bawn (1995) argues that where there is higher electoral competition it gives rise to higher levels of human rights violations through violence. This is true atleast in Indian case as we have seen the instances of the incumbent government exercising the control over their agents to instigate communal mob violence and riots. We have seen this happening in case of Gujarat in 2002 and Uttar Pradesh in 1992. There is a perception that communal violence and riots are largely associated with the presence of extreme right wing ideology political parties in power. In India, the rise of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP hereafter) as Hindu national party since early 1990s is seen as extreme right wing ideology political party⁸. While historically the Indian National Congress (INC henceforth) which single handedly ruled India for almost over 40 years is widely seen as grand secular party of India. Historically, the Muslim, Christian religious minorities and other Hindu minorities are comfortable with INC led governments. On the other hand, the BJP is known for its 'Hindu nationalistic ideology' is traditionally pro-upper caste and anti religious minority groups. The INC blames BJP for championing for socio-religious cultural values of the country's majority community by instigating communal riots and violence against minorities. At the same time, BJP also accuses INC of playing the card of minority politics highlighting the role of INC in inciting and participating in anti-Sikh riots that killed thousands in 1984. BJP also accuses INC for showing favoritism towards appeasing Muslim and Christian communities to consolidate the minority vote bank and deliberately fragmenting Hindu community.

Over the years political populism overshadowed economic development, is the major root cause of deep rooted social crisis in Indian society. Practicing political populism to the core is the INC, which saw its seat share increase to all time high during the 1984 union elections which was held due to the assassination of the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. In 1989 however, for the second time in Indian political history, INC failed to

⁸ The BJP was previously known as Jan Sangh and was formed in 1980 by Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani. It is an important member of 'Sangh Parivar' (family of a unit). BJP in its ideology is anti western, socialism and Nehruvian Secularism and predominantly aims for building up of 'Hindu Rashtra' (Empire of Hindus) dominated by upper castes. Over the years it has strongly developed negative attitude towards minorities, particularly towards Muslims and Christians. Even in the economic development aspect, the idea of development substantially differs from the rest of political fraternity. BJP believes in 'Swadeshi' policy (economic independence and self reliant policy).

get an absolute majority. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi gave a fresh lease of life to the INC as it fell just short of simple majority in 1991 union elections⁹. On the other hand, BJP which was formed in 1980 obtained just two seats in the union elections of 1984 saw its tally increase to 64 seats in 1991 elections. But the BJP was largely restricted to North of India as its votes primarily came from in Northern and Western India as well as in Karnataka in the South. In Northern India, BJP captured power in 1991 in the then largest state Uttar Pradesh¹⁰ by instigating communal violence. Lal Krishna Advani's country wide 'rath yatra' in 1991 for the construction of God Ram temple in Ayodhya in the place of Mosque led to massive outrage of communal violence which cause many victims. The destruction of Babri Mosque in Ayodhya by Hindu activities including BJP workers, Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS hereafter) and other Hindu organization activists led to social insecurity amongst 140 million Muslim population only increasing communal tensions. This had spillover effects on other parts of India as many states like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh witnessed heavy casualties in mob violence between Hindus and Muslims¹¹.

Equations of class-structure changes led to socio-political polarization as increase in middle class started predominantly supporting the BJP. After a brief two year political instability during 1996-97 saw BJP emerging as single largest party in 1998 union elections. Its vote share increased from 7.4% in 1984 to 25.60% in 1998. From just two seats in 1984, it obtained 182 seats in Lok Sabha elections in 1998. On the other hand, INC during the last 15 years (1984 – 1999) lost 15% of its vote share to the BJP¹². With the help of its allies BJP formed National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government¹³ and ruled for six years. Many experts like Basu (2001) argue that the success of BJP came from provoking communal violence prior to gaining control in some of the biggest states. Wilkinson (2004) also believes that the communal card is played by BJP to gain and regain the power. The best example perhaps came from Godhra riots in Gujarat in 2002, which was largely done to retain the power by BJP. There were large numbers of Muslims deaths recorded during those riots, which is termed by the national and international media as one of the worst ever riots India has ever seen. The Human Rights Watch world report on India (2002) states in its report that: *“Godhra massacre was immediately followed by a four-day retaliatory killing spree, in which over two thousand people, mostly Muslim, fell victim to mobs that looted and burned their homes, destroyed places of worship and Muslim-owned businesses, and gang-raped and sexually mutilated Muslim women and girls. In some cases, pregnant women's bellies were cut open and*

⁹ INC secured only 195 seats in 1989 union elections. This rose to 235 seats in 1991 elections.

¹⁰ At the moment the present largest state in India is Maharashtra as Uttar Pradesh was bifurcated in 2000 and Uttarakhand was formed.

¹¹ Many see the Mumbai blasts by terror outfits in 1993 as a response to the demolition carried out by Hindu activities of Babri Mosque.

¹² There are several reasons for the fall of INC. Most of it is attributed to the Dalits, Adivasis, Muslims and Upper Castes turning away from INC. While Muslims saw new support in the form of new regional parties like Samajwadi Party, RJD, JD (U), Upper castes, Dalits and Adivasis moved towards BJP. With the help of the social work put on by RSS, Dalits and Adivasis got closer to BJP.

¹³ The formulation of NDA was seen as a major step in building of the coalition governments in India. It is led by the BJP and had 13 other regional parties, who were historically anti-INC in their stand supported NDA at the time of its formation in 1998. Later on, as many as 26 small regional parties also joined NDA.

fetuses were pulled out before the women were killed. In addition to the children who were direct victims of the mobs, children were witnesses to horrifying violations and deaths of family members..... much of the violence was planned well in advance of the Godhra attack and was carried out with state approval and orchestration. Gujarat is headed by the BJP, a Hindu nationalist party that also heads a coalition government at the center. State officials and the police were directly involved in the violence: In many cases, the police led the charge, using gunfire to kill Muslims who got in the mobs' way. The groups most directly responsible for this violence against Muslims included the VHP, Bajrang Dal and RSS, collectively forming the sangh parivar ("family" of Hindu nationalist groups)."

Also, ever since the BJP led NDA government was in power in center from 1998 – 2004, there were reports of large number of attacks on Muslims and Christians particularly in the states of Gujarat and Orissa. According to the Human Rights Watch (2001) the attacks on Christians and other minority groups increased significantly during the BJP led NDA rule. Since 1998, it claimed that there were over 500 forceful attacks. The Human Rights Watch (2000) reported that: *"More incidents of violence against India's Christian community were recorded during the past two years than in all the years since independence. Attacks occurred primarily in the tribal regions of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Orissa, as well as the state of Maharashtra. Activists belonging to militant Hindu extremist groups, including the Bajrang Dal and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council, VHP) were often blamed for the violence. While the central government officially condemned the attacks, spokespersons for the BJP characterized the surge in violence as a reaction to a conversion campaign by Christian missionaries in the country."*

The BJP is also credited with introducing one of the most repressive enactments during their tenure at center, POTA (Prevention of Terrorism Act) in 2002. Along with opposition parties like INC and several others, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and other NGOs criticized BJP for implementing POTA as an act of curtailing civil rights. According to NHRC, POTA gives the government and law enforcing agencies all-encompassing powers to arrest suspected persons as terrorists, seize communication and curtails free movements of suspects. Joe Saunders, Deputy Director of Asia at Human Rights Watch (2001) opines, *"We're concerned that the proposed law could open the door to police abuse. One can understand renewed concern with terrorism in light of recent events, but the new provisions are a throwback to earlier laws that caused nothing but trouble. In its haste to act, India should not repeat past mistakes"*

Critics also argue that authorities at the helm often misused POTA powers for political purposes. However, things changed full circle as BJP lost power in 2004 union elections and the INC led United Progressive Alliance (UPA)¹⁴ formed the government and repealed the POTA. Human Rights Watch (2004) expressed: *"government's repeal of the*

¹⁴ The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was formed by Indian National Congress party after the 2004 union elections. Prior to the elections there existed an informal alliance, but came under one umbrella only after the election with a seat sharing agreement and most importantly with an common policy ideology named National Common Minimum Program.

controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) was a major step forward for civil liberties in India. POTA empowered security forces to hold individuals for up to 180 days without filing charges, broadening the scope of the death penalty, dispensing with the presumption of innocence by placing the burden of proof on suspects, and admitting confessions into evidence despite the frequent use of torture. The law was often used against marginalized communities such as dalits, indigenous groups, Muslims, and the political opposition.”

Thus, literature and historical evidence on political competition and violence shows that party ideologies would have a greater influence on government policy on state repression. Showing evidence of the same in Indian case is the study by Justino (2004) which included national level variable representing the result of national elections on number of riots. She finds that INC majority is negatively associated number of riots. To this extent, it can be said that electoral competition and the kind of party ideologies will increase human rights violations. Based on these discussions, we formulate the following propositions:

Hypothesis 19: Increase BJP seat share in state legislative assemblies is associated with higher levels of human rights abuses, while it is vice-versa in the case of INC.

Hypothesis 20: Presence of BJP led federal government increases human rights violations.

Hypothesis 21: Presence of BJP led state legislative governments are associated with increasing human rights violations, while it is vice-versa in the case of INC capturing power at state.

The data for seat shares¹⁵ was obtained from two different sources. For major 16 states, the data was taken from the political dataset for states developed by STICERD, EOPP group, LSE¹⁶. While for other 12 states, the data was adapted from Beer & Mitchell (2006). The dummy variable construction for BJP presence at center was done using the information of Elections Commission of India’s data sources¹⁷.

3. Research Design: ‘Modeling Human Rights Abuses within India’

In political science literature, human rights are measured by either physical integrity rights or empowerment rights developed by Cingranelli & Richards (1999) of CIRI or political terror scale of Gibney (2004). This apart, many have also used Civil and Political rights freedom developed by Freedom House. However, these datasets are only restricted to national level. Any Subnational level data for any country is absent. Therefore, we adopted the dataset constructed by Beer and Mitchell (2006) for 25 states and seven union territories. They followed the method of collecting the information about

¹⁵ In some Northeastern states and Southern states like Tamil Nadu and Kerela, the BJP seat share is nil because of absence of the party there. In such cases we put the value “0”.

¹⁶ Data can be accessed from: http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/eopp/_new/data/Indian_Data/default.asp

¹⁷ Data can be accessed from: <http://www.eci.gov.in/StatisticalReports/ElectionStatistics.asp>

human rights abuses for each state and union territories from U.S. State Department reports. In the reports of the State Department, there is Section 1 for each country which provides detailed information on extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture, degrading treatment, arbitrary arrests, detention and exile, denial of fair trial by judiciary, use of excessive police and paramilitary forces to suppress any forms of protests and violation of Human rights Law. The U.S. State Department inturn depends on collecting this information for India for each year from Amnesty International reports, UN sources and NHRC¹⁸ reports in India. Using this measure, Beer & Mitchell (2006) have come up with “number of human rights violation events”. These are simply even count of number of times each state and union territory was mentioned in section 1 of the U.S. State Department reports of human rights abuses. We use pooled OLS regression analysis for all the models. Thus, the model for human rights violations can be specified in the following format:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Human Rights Violations}_{it} = & \delta_1 + \psi_2 \text{ Number of social Violence events}_{it} + \psi_3 \text{ Civil War}_{it} + \psi_4 \\
 & \text{Disturbed areas}_{it} + \psi_5 \text{ Economic Growth}_{it} + \psi_6 \log(\text{Economic Development})_{it} + \psi_7 \log(\text{Population})_{it} \\
 & + \psi_8 \text{ Growth rate of Population}_{it} + \psi_9 \text{ Youth Bulges}_{it} + \psi_{10} \text{ Religious \& Linguistic Fractionalization}_{it} \\
 & + \psi_{11} \text{ Non Hindu Majority}_{it} + \psi_{12} \% \text{ SC/ST Population share}_{it} + \psi_{13} \% \text{ Muslim Population share}_{it} + \\
 & \psi_{14} \text{ Literacy Rate}_{it} + \psi_{15} \text{ Social Sector Spending/GDP}_{it} + \psi_{16} \text{ INC seat share}_{it} + \psi_{17} \text{ BJP seat share}_{it} \\
 & + \psi_{18} \text{ BJP Presence at center}_{it} + \psi_{19} \text{ Time Dummy}_{it} + \eta_{it} \dots\dots\dots (1)
 \end{aligned}$$

ψ are the corresponding coefficients, δ is the intercept and η is the error term, while i and t help distinguish the state and time period in the panel. This empirical analysis covers about 28 Indian states for the period 1993 to 2002. We use pooled time-series cross-sectional (TCSC) to fixed effects method because some of the variables like c fractionalization indices, share of SC/ST and Muslim populations, seat shares of BJP and Congress and differences between urban and rural poverty are time invariant series. The data may also exhibit Heteroskedasticity and serial correlation problems. While these problems do not bias the estimated coefficients as pooled regression analysis in itself is a more robust method for large sample consisting of cross section and time series data. However, they often tend to cause biased standard errors for coefficients, producing invalid statistical inferences. To deal with these problems, we estimated for all the models the Huber-White robust standard errors clustered over countries. These estimated standard errors are robust to both Heteroskedasticity and to a general type of serial correlation within the cross-section unit (Rogers, 1993 and Williams, 2000).

¹⁸ The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was established on 12th October, 1993 under the legislative mandate of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. The NHRC is formulated by the central government, while the commission chairman is appointed by President of India. It collects information related to human rights violations in the country and hears the complaints and investigates the incidents. It also has the power to intervene in any proceeding involving any allegation of violation of human rights pending before a court with the approval of such court.

4. Empirical Results & Estimates

4. 1. Descriptive Statistics & Bivariate Plots

The sample of state-years that we examine in total make up of 280 observations. In Annexure 1, we present summary statistics for this sample for all the variables that we employ in the regression analysis. The mean value for number of human rights violation events is 5.12 per state-year with a large standard deviation of roughly 12.11. The sample largely also includes those states in which there were no observations related to human rights violation events and hence, the distribution of the human rights violation events is skewed strongly to the right. Regarding GDP growth rate we can find that the median growth rate is 9.77%. Moreover, the variance in GDP growth rates is quite high, with a standard deviation of 6.76% and growth rates ranging from -7.92% to 38.16% . With respect to percapita GDP, the mean value is Rs. 10950.64 with a standard deviation of Rs. 5630.03.

In Annexure 2, we present the cross-sectional variation of average number of human rights violation events by state. We see that the state with the highest mean number of human rights violation events is Jammu and Kashmir with 56.4 and the state with the fewest is Goa with 0.1, while for the union territory, Andaman & Nicobar it is 0. Jammu & Kashmir is followed by Assam (13.4), Punjab (12.9), Tripura (9.7), Andhra Pradesh (7.8) and Manipur (7.3). The annexure 2 also presents ranking for states for both human rights violation events and GDP growth rates.

The rankings show that usually states with higher average of human rights violation events are characterized by lower GDP growth rate. These include: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. There are also notable exceptions which saw both higher GDP growth rates and higher human rights violation events. Examples of such include: Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Karnataka and West Bengal. We see this relative relationship clearly with the year-by-year plots of GDP growth rate and number of human rights violation events presented in figure 1. We see that in mid-1990s human rights violation events increase as GDP growth rate fall. In figure 2 we calculate the rate of growth of human rights violation events and plot it on year-by-year graph along with GDP growth rate. We see again that in mid-1990s the growth rate of human rights abuses events increase significantly. During the same point of time, we also see the decline in average growth rate of GDP.

In figure 3 we capture the relationship between human rights violation events and BJP seat share average values for the study period. We find that increase in human rights violation events is associated with increase in BJP seat share in the states. In figure 4 we also see the relationship between BJP seat share and rate of growth of human rights violation events. In the graph we find that increase in BJP seat share is associated with increase in growth rate of human rights violation events.

4. 2. Regression Estimates

The results of multiple regression estimates in assessing the socioeconomic, political and institutional determinants on human rights abuses within India are presented in table 1 to 2 (models 1 to 8). We control for the problem of Heteroskedasticity using White Heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors & covariance.

Beginning with institutional variables, in model 1 (table 1) we find that presence of civil war in the states has 1% significant positive impact on basic human rights violations. The human rights violation events suggest that the series is event count, meaning, higher the value, worst human rights abuses and lower value represent government respect for human rights. These results remain consistent across the board. Similarly, we find that every single social violence event is associated with 1.28% increase in human rights violation events. In other words, holding at its mean value, increase in social violence events by its highest value (1.08) would deteriorate the government respect for human rights by 1.28%. The statistical significance of 1% remains constant across all the models (see model 1 to 4; table 1). We also find that increase in disturbed areas lead to more human rights abuses. For the presence of each disturbed area per year-state is associated with 2.49% increase in human rights violation events.

Table 1: Human rights violation equation function

Dependent variable: Human rights violation events: Appearance of States

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	0.32 (10.83)	1.48 (10.82)	5.32 (10.72)	-0.78 (13.48)
Civil War Presence	5.14 * (1.10)	5.00 * (1.09)	4.52 * (1.13)	5.12 * (1.14)
Social Violence Events	1.28 * (0.14)	1.28 * (0.14)	1.30 * (0.14)	1.29 * (0.14)
Disturbed Areas	2.49 *** (1.35)	2.56 ** (1.35)	1.89 + (1.37)	2.62 *** (1.73)
Economic Growth	0.12 *** (0.07)	0.12 *** (0.07)	0.12 *** (0.07)	0.13 *** (0.07)
Log (Economic Development)	1.98 *** (1.13)	1.94 *** (1.13)	1.64 + (1.14)	2.10 *** (1.32)
Log (Total Population)	-3.85 * (0.79)	-3.88 * (0.78)	-2.82 * (0.64)	-3.92 * (0.82)
Population Growth	-1.26 * (0.38)	-1.30 * (0.37)	-1.02 * (0.38)	-1.27 * (0.37)
Log (Youth Population)	3.39 * (0.75)	3.37 * (0.74)	2.21 * (0.61)	3.44 * (0.80)
Religious & Language Fractionalization	-0.01 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.11)

Non-Hindu Majority	11.07 * (2.11)	11.15 * (2.10)	11.33 * (2.06)	11.25 * (2.35)
% SC/ST Population Share	-0.15 * (0.03)	-0.14 * (0.04)	-0.16 * (0.04)	-0.15 * (0.05)
% Muslim Population Share	0.22 ** (0.08)	0.22 ** (0.08)	0.21 ** (0.09)	0.22 ** (0.09)
Literacy Rates	-0.20 * (0.04)	-0.20 * (0.04)	-0.21 * (0.04)	-0.20 * (0.04)
Social Sector Spending/GDP	0.16 ** (0.06)	0.15 ** (0.07)	0.12 *** (0.06)	0.16 ** (0.06)
Congress Seat Share at states	-5.69 * (1.77)	-5.61 * (1.75)	-----	-5.64 * (1.87)
BJP Seat Share at states	3.34 ** (1.39)	3.43 ** (1.39)	-----	3.39 ** (1.40)
BJP government presence at Center	3.20 ** (1.24)	3.20 ** (1.24)	3.34 * (1.26)	3.17 ** (1.28)
Poverty Difference (Urban - Rural)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	-----
Pay Inequality	4.36 (3.68)	4.32 (3.65)	5.08 + (3.66)	4.62 (4.31)
Rule of Law	-----	-0.01 * (0.00)	-----	-----
Congress government presence at states	-----	-----	-1.55 ** (0.77)	-----
BJP government presence at States	-----	-----	0.80 (0.69)	-----
Urban Poverty Rate	-----	-----	-----	0.01 (0.03)
Rural Poverty Rate	-----	-----	-----	0.03 (0.05)
Time	0.28 (0.20)	0.29 (0.20)	0.26 (0.20)	0.29 (0.22)
R-squared	0.836399	0.838778	0.833712	0.836426
Adjusted R-squared	0.823766	0.825655	0.820871	0.823112
S.E. of regression	5.083061	5.055740	5.124639	5.092478
Log likelihood	-841.6440	-839.5934	-843.9250	-841.6207
F-statistic	66.20600	63.91792	64.92677	62.82238
Probability (F-statistic)	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
Number of States	28	28	28	28
Total number of Observations	280	280	280	280

Note: * Significant at 1% confidence level; ** Significant at 5% confidence level *** Significant at 10% confidence level; + Significant at 15% confidence level. The models are controlled for Heteroskedasticity. White Heteroskedasticity-Consistent Standard Errors are reported in parenthesis.

Consistent with some of the prominent studies in literature like Olson (1963); Chase-Dunn (1989); Poe, Tate & Keith (1999) and Blanton & Blanton (2004), Vadlamannati,

(2008), we find that economic growth and development process have significant positive impact on human rights abuses within the states in India. The positive impact of GDP growth rate and percapita GDP on human rights supports the view that growth and development would increase state repression because it leads to instability as the rebellion increases. For every 1% increase in GDP growth rate there is a corresponding 0.12% increase in human rights violation events. In the case of economic development, for every Rs. 1000 increase in percapita income is leading to 1.98% increase in human rights abuses. Both these results are significant at 10% confidence level and are consistent across the models, meaning, there is a strong positive link between economic growth and development and the occurrence of human rights violations during our sample period. These results are important because our bivariate graphic plots have shown a clear relationship between growth and human rights violation events, but we do not observe this relationship in the cross-section. Instead, our results are driven by the strong association between growth and human rights within the states over time. However, previous studies on Indian states like Miguel, Satyanath & Sergenti (2004) and Sergenti (2005) in the frame work of conflicts show that economic growth lead to decline in riots. As we have argued earlier in section 2 that any effect on riots (increase/decrease) will have a direct effect on increase and/or decrease in government respect for human rights. However, the study by Sergenti (2005) also shows that economic development (percapita GDP) does not have any significant effect on riots. Moreover, the sign remains positive. All these results tell us that growth and development process within India is not inclusive. This is precisely one of the reasons why income inequalities in the states are still at higher levels. There is also wide range of disparity amongst the states in terms of development process. Though the economic reforms process have ushered higher levels of economic growth, its benefits are not reached to the poor in the form of higher development and improvement in standard of living. The study by Gupta (1999) supports the fact the growth and development process in India are exclusive and have helped only certain sections of the society. The annexure 2 shows the average GDP growth rates for the states during our study period. This shows that the states are witnessing economic growth which is important, but this seems to be not enough, as it is not translating into real gains interms of economic development, which is a proxy for standard of living. With this analysis one can argue that economic progress within Indian states is not inclusive.

The most surprising results come from population pressures. Many studies like Hauge & Ellingsen (2001) and de Soysa (2002) Urdal (2005) have shown positive link between high population density and internal armed conflict in large cross-national time-series studies. However, we could not find that an increase in population levels exerts pressure on human rights abuses. On the contrary, we find a negative association of population levels and rate of growth of population on human rights violation events. The results are 1% significant and are consistent across all the models. The only possible explanation for this could be that during the post reforms period (post 1991) there has been a slow down in the growth rate of population in India. This is also evident in some of the states which have witnessed reduction in population growth rates. Infact we find some support in the form of Urdal (2005) research study which shows that rapid population growth and

increased population density¹⁹ are not significant factors in the onset of conflict. The State Failure Task Force study by Esty et al. (1998), also find no empirical evidence on the relationship between population growth and density and different forms of state failure. But the interesting findings emerge when we introduce share of your population levels. We find a positive and 1% significant impact of youth population levels on human rights violation events within the Indian states. It is a known fact that developing countries have 1.3 billion of youth population (between the age group of 12 – 25 years). In the study conducted by Urdal (2005) argues that in those countries where youth population make up 35% of the total population, the risk of conflict increases by 150% compared to countries where youth population share make up only 17% of the population. India is a peculiar case of youth bulges as it has the highest stock of population between the age group of 14 – 30 years. Consistent with the findings of Esty et al. (1998) Urdal (2008) on Indian youth bulges and conflict risk, we find that for 1% increase in youth population share leads to 3.39% increase in human rights violation events. The results related to religious and linguistic fractionalization are insignificant throughout. Even the signs are mixed across the models (see tables 1 & 2).

Again consistent with the findings of Urdal (2008) we find significant positive effect of non-Hindu majority populated states with human rights violation events. Increase in non-Hindu population leads to tensed situations with the majority of the ethnic group often leading to breakdown of conflicts and riots. For every single year-state increase in non-hindu majority dummy is leading to 11.07% increase in human rights abuses events. This relationship is highly consistent in all the models. In line with these findings, we also find qualified support for positive effect of increase in percentage share of Muslim population to total population on human rights violation events. For the largest percentage share of Muslim population value (75%) would raise human rights violation events by 0.22%. But strangely, we find the results to be in opposite direction for SC/ST population share. This suggests that non-Hindu minority population increase is more prone to human rights abuses within India.

Contrary to the findings of Justino (2004), we find that social sector spending/GDP help increase human rights violation events. He found that any increase in the same is associated with lower number of riots. However, for our study period we could not find the same. Essentially, social sector spending is considered to be the most powerful tool in the hands of the government to fight poverty. But previous research shows that many programs through this spending with an objective to reduce poverty have been dismal and expensive failures (Van de Walle, 1995). This is due to the fact that mere spending on social sector cannot result in improving the socioeconomic needs of the society. Rather, quality of spending matters. For example, state governments incur huge amount of expenditure on subsidies. But in reality the subsidies are not properly targeted as a result on one hand the poor is not able to reap the benefits of the subsidy granted and on the other hand, the amount spend on subsidies are wasted. However, the previous research on social sector spending in India shows that as the states increase their spending on social and rural development in the 1990s, the poverty levels also came down marginally (Vyas

¹⁹ We also wanted to include Population density factors. Unfortunately, due to lack of appropriate data for all the states, we were forced to ignore this variable.

& Bhargava, 1996). Agreed that this was only marginal reduction, this highlights the potential of the government spending towards development. If the efficiency of government spending is improved by tackling problems like corruption, lack of accountability and inefficiency in management, this could make a significant contribution towards reduction in inequalities and poverty levels, thereby reducing economic and social insecurities. This would have a direct positive consequence on reducing the risk of conflicts and thereby greater respect for human rights.

Amidst the findings of the studies related to Indian states on human development, riots and conflicts, our study finds 1% significant negative impact of human development on human rights violation events. The largest value of literacy rate (91.3%) would reduce human rights violation events by 0.20%. Human development in countries like India is very important because it has a potential of positive spillover effects not only in the form economic but social and societal development as a whole. Thus, higher rate of human development help reduce poor socioeconomic conditions and social unrest leading to civil peace and greater respect for human rights. Strangely, though poverty differential variable and pay inequality do tend to increase human rights violation events with their positive sign, but are not statistically significant. However in model 3 (table 1), we find that pay inequality increase human rights abuses. This result is in line with Boix (2004) and Justnio (2004) who find that inequality levels are often risk conflicts and riots and this is detrimental to human rights respect. This also means two things, one, it suggests that inequalities play an important role in instigating violence thereby human rights abuses and two, the result could be due to the presence of other types of inequality not captured by pay inequality data²⁰. In model 4 (table 1) we decompose the poverty difference data into urban and rural poverty rates. Even here, though we could find positive sign, but the statistical significance is absent.

The most interesting findings of the study are that of political factors. We find that any increase in seat share of INC within states is having a negative effect on human rights violation events (see table 1). This relationship is 1% significant and is robust throughout all the models in the study. Every 1% increase in INC seat share in state assemblies would lead to reduction in human rights violation events by almost 6%. On the contrary, for every 1% increase in BJP seat shares in state assemblies, human rights violation events would increase by 3.34%. Not just in states, we also find the mere presence of BJP led government at center is associated with human rights abuses within states. Each year presence of BJP led government at center would increase human rights violation events by 3.20%. Both these variables are 1% significant and are consistent across all the models (see models 1, 2 & 4; table 1). This proves our theoretical groundings that capturing power by extreme rights wing conservative ideological parties either at state assemblies or at center would reduce human rights performance.

²⁰ There is a substantial difference between the Gini and pay inequality data which is developed by the team of Prof. James Galbraith, University of Texas: Inequality Project using emolument and employment statistics of the manufacturing sector of 25 sub-sectors. While this reflects the inequality interms of wages and payments of laborers in industry, Gini measures household income inequalities.

Table 2: Human rights violation & interaction effects equation function

Dependent variable: Human rights violation events: Appearance of States

Variables	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Constant	17.87 (4.87)	18.56 * (5.01)	20.56 * (94.91)	17.59 * (5.09)
Civil War Presence	5.13 * (1.10)	5.09 * (1.11)	4.80 * (1.08)	5.19 * (1.00)
Social Violence Events	1.29 * (0.14)	1.29 * (0.14)	1.30 * (0.14)	1.29 * (0.14)
Disturbed Areas	2.22 *** (1.37)	2.44 *** (1.36)	3.01 ** (1.34)	2.29 *** (1.45)
Economic Growth X Economic Development	9.51E-06 ** (4.57E-06)	----	----	----
Economic Growth X Economic Development X Urban Poverty	----	2.02E-07 *** (1.13E-07)	----	----
Economic Growth X Economic Development X Rural Poverty	----	----	3.81E-07 * (1.32E-07)	----
Economic Growth X Economic Development X Pay Inequality	----	----	----	2.44E-05 *** (1.57E-05)
Log (Total Population)	-3.94 * (0.75)	-4.27 * (0.77)	-4.55 * (0.79)	-4.08 * (0.77)
Population Growth	-1.25 * (0.380)	-1.22 * (0.37)	-1.21 * (0.36)	-1.26 * (0.41)
Log (Youth Population)	3.48 * (0.74)	3.64 * (0.73)	3.87 * (0.76)	3.67 * (0.75)
Religious & Language Fractionalization	0.01 (0.09)	-0.01 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)
Non Hindu Majority	11.27 * (2.08)	11.97 * (2.13)	12.44 * (2.14)	11.60 * (1.99)
SC/ST Population Share	-0.15 * (0.03)	-0.14 * (0.03)	-0.17 * (0.04)	-0.15 * (0.04)
Muslim Population Share	0.22 ** (0.08)	0.21 ** (0.08)	0.20 ** (0.08)	0.21 ** (0.08)
Literacy Rates	-0.17 * (0.04)	-0.16 * (0.03)	-0.18 * (0.03)	-0.16 * (0.04)
Social Sector Spending	0.13 ** (0.06)	0.14 ** (0.06)	0.13 ** (0.06)	0.13 ** (0.06)
Congress Seat Share	-5.76 * (1.78)	-6.13 * (1.71)	-5.50 * (1.64)	-5.59 * (1.69)
BJP Seat Share	3.29 ** (1.33)	3.42 ** (1.34)	3.68 * (1.35)	3.05 ** (1.35)
BJP Presence at Center	3.34 ** (1.28)	3.33 ** (1.31)	3.24 ** (1.30)	3.41 * (1.28)

Poverty Difference	0.02 (0.03)	-----	-----	0.02 (0.03)
Pay Inequality	3.96 (3.80)	4.73 (3.67)	5.63 *** (3.66)	-----
Time	0.25 (0.21)	0.26 (0.21)	0.30 + (0.21)	0.22 (0.21)
R-squared	0.834239	0.831179	0.834348	0.830196
Adjusted R-squared	0.822125	0.819537	0.822924	0.818486
S.E. of regression	5.106665	5.143688	5.095184	5.158642
Log likelihood	-843.4807	-846.0408	-843.3879	-846.8536
F-statistic	68.86940	71.39001	73.03308	70.89279
Probability (F-statistic)	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000	0.000000
Number of States	28	28	28	28
Number of Observations	280	280	280	280

Note: * Significant at 1% confidence level; ** Significant at 5% confidence level *** Significant at 10% confidence level; + Significant at 15% confidence level. The models are controlled for Heteroskedasticity. White Heteroskedasticity-Consistent Standard Errors are reported in parenthesis.

If a state meets the condition of high income and high growth, its effect would be increase in employment opportunities thereby improving the socioeconomic conditions of the poor. This scenario yields dividends in the form of civil peace and higher respect for human rights. To capture this effect of high income and high growth we introduce interaction between economic growth and development (see model 5; table 2). Contrary to the conventional wisdom, we find positive effect of this interaction on human rights violation events. If a state meets the condition of high income and high growth, poverty and inequality should eventually fall because people would get employment opportunities. But, this seems to be quite opposite in the case of Indian states as the results show that the real benefits of higher economic growth is not translating into high economic development. In other words, the growth and development process in Indian states remains exclusive (Gupta, 1999). In models 6 and 7 (table 2) we capture the interactive effect of economic growth, development with both urban and rural poverty rates to see whether impact of decline in poverty rates on human rights abuses events is conditional upon high income, high growth scenario. We find the results to be opposite, which means high income, high growth scenario is not helpful to make poverty rates (urban and rural) reduce human rights abuses. When the growth and development process remains exclusive, certain sections of the society, particularly, the poor and unorganized sector is excluded from the ‘growth story’. We find the similar results in model 8 (table 2) for interactive effect of economic growth, development and pay inequality. These results reiterate the failure of pay inequality to exploit high growth, high development process in helping to bring down human rights violation events.

5. Summary & Conclusion

Earlier many attempts were made to study the various issues pertaining to human rights performance using cross sectional studies. However, studies of the same related to subnationals are absent. Therefore, we highlight the need to go below the national level to see how differently the regional dynamics and local factors may influence the human rights performance. In doing so, we choose India because of its vast diverse nature of economic, social, cultural and demographic factors within the regions, institutional design which is majoritarian yet ethnically very diverse and divisive regional political structure. While doing so, the study segregates various determinants into socioeconomic, institutional and political factors highlights regional and local dynamics necessary while conducting a subnational study. We take into account 28 states of India for the time period 1993 to 2002. Using pooled regression analysis we find that internal threat poised by number of social violence events, presence of civil war and riot hit disturbed areas are strongly associated with human rights abuses. Amongst socioeconomic factors, exclusive economic growth, uneven development, poor social development spending, youth bulges and differential growth rates between minority religious groups explain the likelihood of human rights violations. Capturing power at the state and central level by Hindu national parties like the BJP further help understand the incidence of human rights violations within India. We also could not find any positive impact of high income – high growth effect on reducing human rights violation events. Added to this, the conditional effect of high income – high growth on poverty rates (urban & rural) and inequality in fact increase human rights violation events. This goes to show that growth and development within India is not inclusive of all sections in the society.

What Next?

While we have focused on the most contentious topic in political economy, the determinants of human rights performance for subnational study using India as an example, our study suggests avenues for further research on this topic pertinent to India. It seems appropriate in the case of Indian states to gauge the impact of electoral competition on human rights performance. Investigation can be performed to explore whether government respect for human rights in states goes up during election years as compared to non-election years? Consistent with the idea that an incumbent government might exert greater effort in an election year to improve its respect for human rights, the timing of elections becomes important. In other words, whether the timing of elections affect government respect for human rights or not? If this theory holds on, then scheduled elections could be associated with increase in government respect for human rights.

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Annexures

Annexure 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Human Rights Violations	GDP Growth rate	Percapita GDP	Population	Population Growth rate	Urban Poverty rate	Rural Poverty rate	Differential Poverty rates	Youth Population
Mean	5.12	10.14	10950.64	33788.30	2.20	25.10	27.18	2.08	19452.90
Median	1.00	9.77	9403.50	21160.16	2.06	23.41	30.34	-2.29	13030.50
Maximum	98.00	38.16	31665.00	177869.7	6.02	67.81	57.94	37.28	99134.00
Minimum	0.00	-7.92	2728.00	295.75	0.46	1.98	0.10	-50.05	179.00
Std. Deviation	12.11	6.76	5630.03	39657.00	0.89	17.42	13.53	21.26	21837.59
Sum	1434.00	2840.17	3066180.	9460724.	616.80	7028.68	7611.58	582.89	5446812.
Observations	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
Cross sections	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28

	Language Frac	Non Hindu Majority	Social sector spending	Literacy rates	Percent share of SC/ST population	Percent share of Muslim population	Civil War	Social Violence events	Disturbed areas	Religious Frac
Mean	3.15	0.17	11.19	65.86	31.88	10.88	0.20	1.08	0.28	1.64
Median	1.49	0.00	8.20	65.17	22.80	7.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.42
Maximum	20.63	1.00	44.90	91.03	94.50	75.00	1.00	47.00	1.00	3.91
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00	40.30	1.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.08
Std. Deviation	4.72	0.38	7.68	11.61	23.51	14.37	0.40	3.70	0.45	0.56
Sum	884.61	50.00	3133.40	18440.93	8928.00	3049.00	56.00	304.00	79.00	459.92
Observations	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
Cross sections	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28

	BJP Seat Share	BJP Government Presence	INC Seat share	INC Government Presence	Rule of Law	GDP *Per capita GDP	GDP *Per capita GDP * Urban Poverty	GDP *Per capita GDP * Rural Poverty
Mean	0.13	0.17	0.30	0.38	9.42	109461.3	2688351.0	2580785.0
Median	0.03	0.00	0.27	0.00	-0.81	89795.18	2061063.0	2152311.0
Maximum	0.68	1.00	0.88	1.00	1459.26	634100.0	17139723	20302990
Minimum	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-92.80	-114817.9	-4566308.0	-3729285.0
Std. Dev.	0.19	0.37	0.23	0.48	98.79	94816.54	2929412.	2605233.0
Sum	36.88	48.00	85.78	107.00	2636.89	30649167	7.53E+08	7.23E+08
Observations	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
Cross sections	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28

Annexure – 2: Ranking of States in sample

(Average number of Human rights violation events & average GDP growth rate)

Sl. No.	State(s)	Average number of Human Rights violation events (1993 – 2000)	Rank	Average GDP growth rate (1993 – 2000)	Rank
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	26	2.98	28
2	Andhra Pradesh	7.8	5	12.96	7
3	Arunachal Pradesh	0.3	21	3.44	27
4	Assam	13.4	2	10.01	17
5	Bihar	6.5	7	10.63	15
6	Chandigarh	0.3	21	8.66	20
7	Delhi	5.8	8	8.44	21
8	Goa	0.1	25	8.84	18
9	Gujarat	1.4	15	11.36	14
10	Haryana	0.4	19	13.83	3
11	Himachal Pradesh	0.2	23	6.5	24
12	Jammu & Kashmir	56.4	1	12.23	9
13	Karnataka	1.7	13	13.24	5
14	Kerala	0.3	21	14.28	2
15	Madhya Pradesh	1.5	14	11.47	13
16	Maharashtra	1.2	17	12.03	11
17	Manipur	7.3	6	4.8	26
18	Meghalaya	0.4	19	6.93	23
19	Mizoram	1.2	17	13.52	4
20	Nagaland	3.9	10	8.76	19
21	Orissa	1.3	16	11.92	12
22	Punjab	12.9	3	12.4	10
23	Rajasthan	0.2	24	12.29	8
24	Sikkim	0	26	6.01	25
25	Tamil Nadu	2.8	11	13.17	6
26	Tripura	9.7	4	7.96	22
27	Uttar Pradesh	2.1	12	10.4	16
28	West Bengal	4.2	9	14.97	1

Figure 1: Economic growth rates & human rights violation events

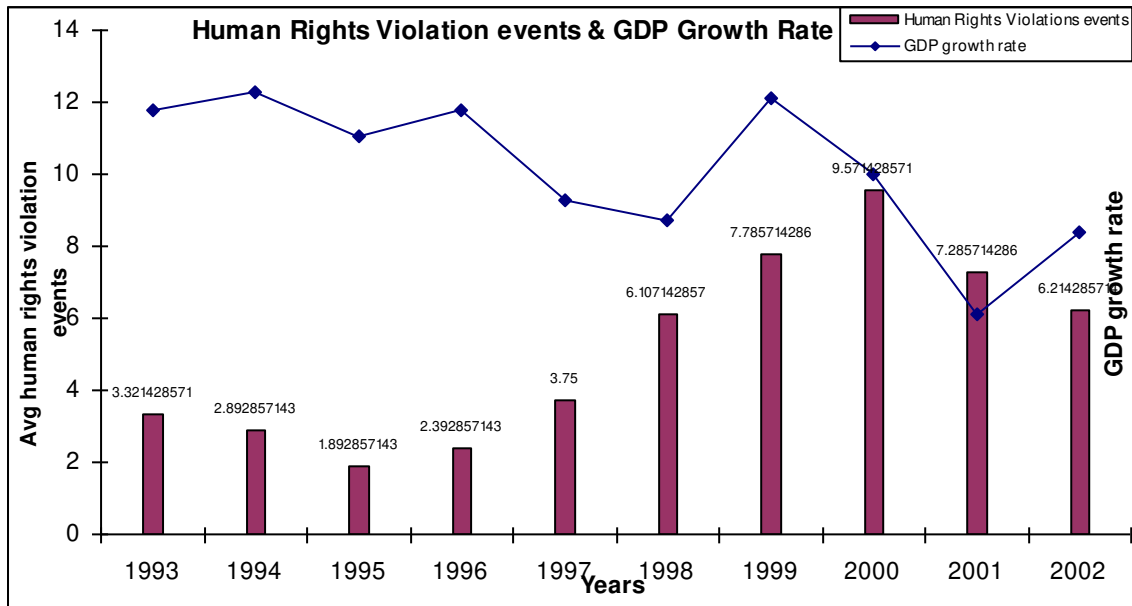


Figure 2: Economic growth & growth rate of human rights violation events

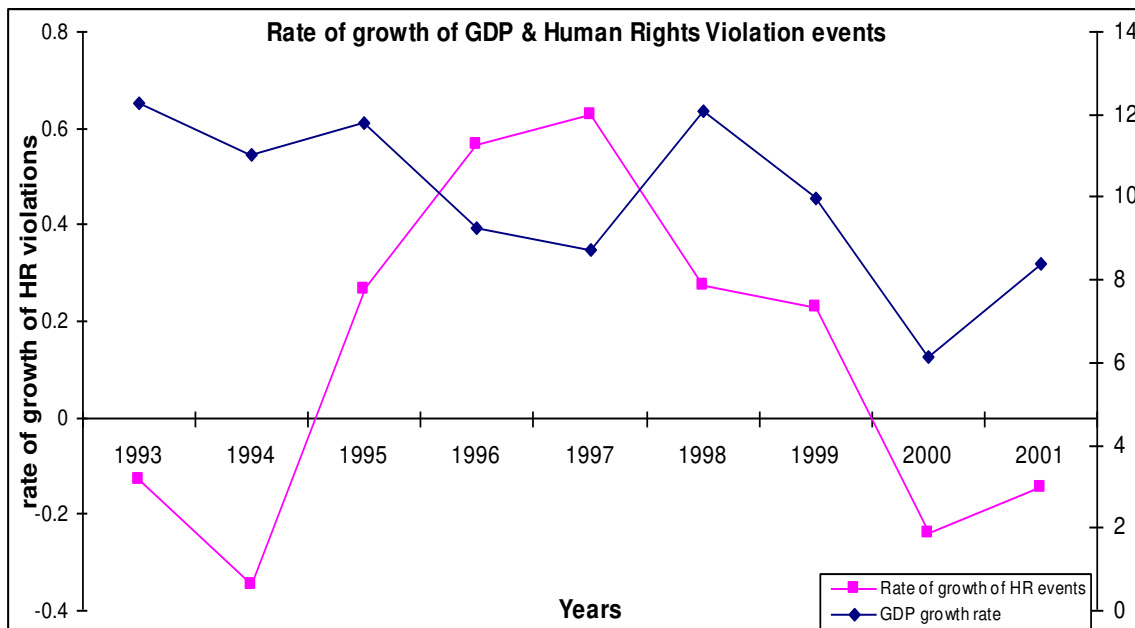


Figure 3: Seat share of BJP & human rights violation events

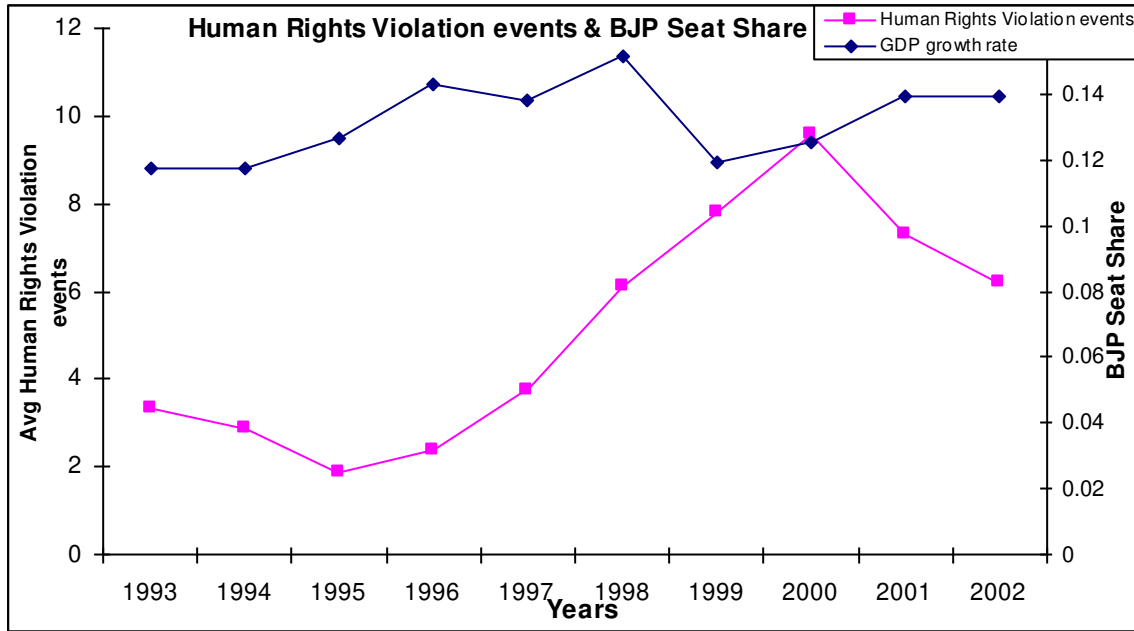


Figure 4: Seat share of BJP & growth rate of human rights violation events

