



International Journal of Advance Research, IJOAR .org
Volume 1, Issue 7, July 2013, Online: ISSN 2320-9151

INCOME LEVEL OF BEGGARS: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

The present research paper is an attempt to analyse the spatial patterns of beggars' income, variations in the level of their socio-economic status, and the relationship between their per capita income (dependent variable) with selected variables of socio-economic development in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. The study is based on primary source of data, collected through the field survey in the Aligarh district carried out during 2009. Spatial analysis reveals the fact that the per capita income of beggars is recorded higher in the northern parts while, central and north-western parts witnessed the low per capita income among beggars of Aligarh district. However, any definite regular spatial pattern in terms of socio-economic development has not been observed in the district. The peripheral parts recorded high level of socio-economic development than the central parts of the district.

Key Words: Per Capita Income, Socio-Economic Development, Region.

Introduction

Beggars in India are the victims of an unbalanced socio-economic system. They are amongst the most vulnerable people in our society and show the low economic condition of that group. These are the human degradation to the lowest extent, and a menace to the healthy society. Most of them are the product of economic deprivation, destitution and neglect (Cama, 1945). Begging is commonly defined as the act of stopping people on the street to ask for assistance, for example in the form of food or money (Bose & Hwang, 2002 and Collins & Blomley, 2003). According to the Census of India (2001), beggars are “*vagrants, prostitutes and person having unidentified source of income and those with unspecified source of subsistence and not engaged in any economically productive work during reference period called beggars.*”

Mukharjee (1945) pointed out that “*Beggary is a symptom of social disorganisation*”. The major factors making for its prevalence are to be found in the breakdown of the socio-economic structure of the country. Moorthy (1945) has done a historical survey of pauperism and mentioned that while, individual charity and State aid played a great part in caring for the destitute, the socio-economic structure of ancient India minimised begging and distributed equally the incidence of relief. Beggars now depend almost wholly on indiscriminate charity which encourages thousands to join the legion of paupers and destitute. Gillin (1929) examined that how socio-economic conditions result the beggary and vagrancy. He highlighted the main causes which give rise to begging like economic and social disorganisation due to changes in the economic order or political instability, breakdown of agriculture, religious ideals and practices, the crusades, migrations decay of feudalism, a plague of famine. Norberg (1985) analyses the relationship between the rich and poor at their closest point of contact: poor relief. This study

provides a revealing account of one society's response to poverty. Adedibu and Jelili (2011) explore different aspects and correlate of begging and use same to identify a comprehensive control package. A comprehensive package covers the issues as physical planning, socio-economic, religious, legal and other control measures are recommended for consideration.

Primarily development can be perceived as reflection of personal values conditioned by societal framework in which one lives (Stohr and Taylor, 198). In the other words, development implies progressive changes in socio-economic structure of a country (Chand and Puri, 1990). The development is an outcome of the efforts made for the eradication of poverty and unemployment and regional inequalities (Seer, 1989). Thus, development is the state of change from a given situation of a region to become better one within a given period of time (Sharma, 1989). The concept of development may be taken to imply an improvement in the material and cultural well being of the people in a region. The development of a region can be identified with an increase in the employment opportunities, availability of infrastructural facilities, amenities and services, proper distribution of resources, increase in production, and investment in consumption and so on. Thus, the development refers to an improvement of all the sectors of economic, social and cultural pursuits (Verma, 1993).

Aims and Objectives

The present study has been undertaken with the following specific objectives:

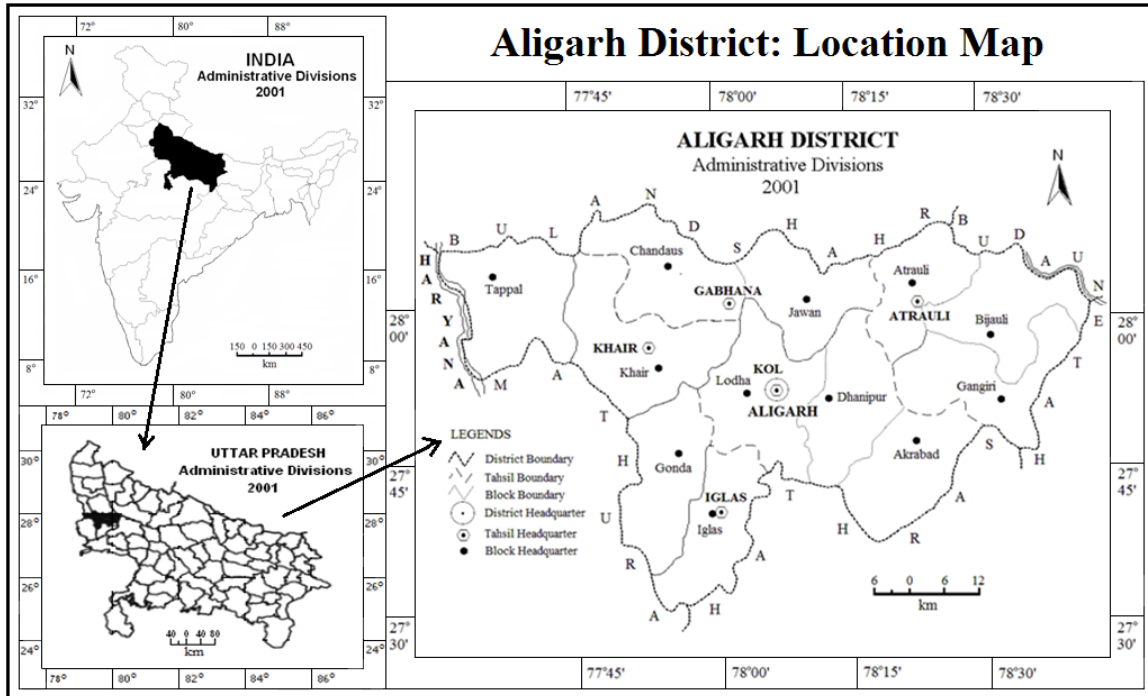
- i. to analyze the regional variations of per capita income of the beggars in the Aligarh district.
- ii. to inspect the inter-block disparities in the levels of development among the twelve blocks of the Aligarh district.

- iii. to find out the relationship among the per capita income of the beggars (dependent variable) with the selected variables of socio-economic development in the study area.

Study Area

Aligarh district, a medium sized district, is spreading over an area of 3700.4 square kilometers in the Western part of Uttar Pradesh. It occupies the north-western part of the Uttar Pradesh which is fertile region of Ganga and Yamuna, known as *Doab*. In the world map, the geographical location of this district is in North-Eastern Hemisphere and lying between the parallels of 27°29' and 28°11' north latitudes and meridians of 77°29' and 78°38' east longitudes. Its boundary touches the boundaries of five other districts (Bulandshahr, Badaun, Mathura, Hathras and Etah) of the Uttar Pradesh and one state (Haryana) of India. At present, the district is divided into five Tahsils namely, Koil, Khair, Gabhana, Atrauli and Iglas for the purpose of land record keeping, land revenue collection, judicial administration, etc. These tahsils are further sub-divided into 12 development blocks namely: Atrauli, Gangiri, Bijauli, Jawan, Chandus, Khair, Tappal, Dhanipur, Lodha, Akrabad, Iglas and Gonda.

Aligarh District: Administrative Divisions, 2001



Source: Census of India & Vikas Bhawan, Aligarh, 2008

Figure 1

According to 2001 Census, the district accommodates a residential population of 29, 92, 286 of which 29 per cent was classified as urban and 71 per cent as rural. The general density of population in the district was 820 persons per sq. km. However, it was 607 persons per sq. km. in the rural sector and 5,949 persons per sq. km. in the urban sector. The general sex ratio that is the number of females per thousand males was 862 in the district, whereas, the figures for the rural and urban areas were 856 and 876 respectively. The literacy rate in the district is 58.5 per cent and the male literacy rate is 71.7 per cent and females are 43.0 per cent literate while, the percentage of literacy in rural and urban population was 56.5 and 63.2 respectively.

According to the Census of India there were 7,50,307 beggars and vagrants in India in 1981, which declined to 5,42,875 in 1991, though it further increased to 6,27,688 in 2001. Out of the total beggars, about two third beggars were in rural areas while one-third in urban areas. The matter of begging is not the ignorable issue of the society, but in fact, the begging has become

one of the most problematic social issues of India. It is, therefore, necessary that empirical studies have to be undertaken aimed at collecting relevant data on the subject.

Database and Methodology

The study is based on primary source of data that has been collected through field survey in the Aligarh district, carried out during 2009. The villages have been selected on the basis of stratified random sampling technique. According to 2001 Census, the district had 1210 revenue villages of which 1180 were inhabited. The inhabited villages were stratified into three categories based on the size of population, so that, all types of population and villages may get reasonable representation in the samples randomly drawn for the survey. Keeping in view the constraints of time and cost, it was decided to collect data for this enquiry from 6 per cent villages of each category. In this way 70 villages were selected for the survey. Apart from it, all the 13 towns were selected for urban survey. Altogether, 892 households were selected for the present study, in which the rural survey consisted of 496 households and the urban survey comprised 396 households.

In the present analysis, a set of seventeen indicators of socio-economic development have been taken into account to determine the levels of socio-economic status at one hand and per capita income on the other hand in the twelve blocks of the district. These indicators fall into five categories like population characteristics, literacy, employment, income and household infrastructural facilities. In the first step, the raw data for each variable which determines the areal variations of per capita income and levels of their socio-economic status have been computed into standard score. It is generally known as Z value or Z-score. The score quantifies the departure of individual observations, expressed in a comparable form. This means it becomes a linear transformation of the original data (Smith, 1973: 85). It may be expressed as:

$$Z_{ij} = \frac{X_{ij} - \bar{X}_i}{\sigma_i}$$

Where: Z_{ij} = Standardised value of the variable i in block j ,
 X_{ij} = Actual value of variable i in block j ,
 \bar{X}_i = Mean value of variable i in all blocks,
 σ_i = Standard deviation of variable i in all blocks.

In the second step, the Z-scores of all variables have been added block wise and the average has taken out for these variables which may be called as composite score (CS) for each block and may be algebraically expressed as:

$$CS = \frac{\sum Z_{ij}}{N}$$

Where: CS stands composite score,
 $\sum Z_{ij}$ indicates Z-scores of all variables i in district j ,
 N refers to the number of variables.

The positive values relating to the districts' Z-score explain high level, while, negative values indicate the low level of per capita income of beggars, and their levels of socio-economic development in the study area. The correlation co-efficient is worked out among dependent variable (per capita income) and independent variables (selected variables of socio-economic development) and student t-test technique is applied to find out the determinants which are significant at 1 per cent and 5 per cent levels.

The correlation co-efficient has been computed on the basis of the Karl Pearson's correlation co-efficient (r) method which is as follows:

$$r = \frac{\sum xy - \sum x \sum y / n}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 - \frac{(\sum x)^2}{n}} \sqrt{\sum y^2 - \frac{(\sum y)^2}{n}}}$$

Where: r is the co-efficient of correlation,
 X, y are the two given variables,
 n is the number of observation.

To find out the computed 't' value, student t-test technique is used which is given below:

$$t = r \sqrt{\frac{(n-2)}{1-r^2}}$$

Where: t is the calculated value of 't' in the test of significance,
 r is the computed value of co-efficient of correlation,
 n is the number of observation.

Besides, advanced statistical techniques, GIS-Arc view programme (Version 3.2a) has been applied to show the spatial variations of per capita income, and socio-economic development of beggar population among the blocks of the Aligarh district through maps.

Regional Analysis of Per Capita Income and Socio Economic Development

Per capita income is widely accepted as a measure of development. It is customary to identify whether a region is backward or advanced in level of development with the help of per capita income. The regions which enjoy higher per capita income are deemed to be more developed than those regions with low per capita income. Block-wise z-score of per capita income given in Table 1 shows that among the twelve blocks of the district, z-score varies from lowest -1.74 in Dhanipur block to highest 1.49 in Gangiri block. Accordingly, all the blocks may conveniently be arranged into three grades i.e. high (above 0.50 score), medium (0.50 to -0.50 score) and low (below -0.50).

The Figure 2 reveals that four blocks of the district come under the high scores of per capita income, and, three of them, make a dominant region in the north-western part of the district, comprising the blocks of Jawan, Chandaus and Khair and one block (Gangiri) is found in the eastern part of the district. There are five blocks (Gonda, Akrabad, Iglas, Atrauli and Bijauli)

of the district which have medium grade of per capita income, four blocks of them, constitute two small regions in the district. First region, composes of the two blocks (Gonda and Iglas) in the south-western part of the district, while, second region have the two blocks (Atrauli and Bijauli) in the north-eastern part of the district, and, the remaining one block (Akkrabad)

Table 1: Block-Wise Distribution of Z-score of Per Capita Income, and Socio-Economic Development in Aligarh District, 2009

Name of the Block	Per Capita Income	Socio-Economic Development	Per Capita Income vis-à-vis Socio-Economic Development
Lodha	-1.47	-0.61	PCI ₃ SED ₃
Dhanipur	-1.74	-0.38	PCI ₃ SED ₃
Akrabad	0.12	0.52	PCI ₂ SED ₁
Gonda	0.28	0.16	PCI ₂ SED ₁
Iglas	-0.18	0.27	PCI ₂ SED ₁
Khair	0.54	-0.08	PCI ₁ SED ₂
Tappal	-0.69	-0.29	PCI ₃ SED ₃
Chandaus	1.08	0.45	PCI ₁ SED ₁
Jawan	1.16	0.01	PCI ₁ SED ₂
Atrauli	-0.26	-0.14	PCI ₂ SED ₂
Bijauli	-0.32	-0.12	PCI ₂ SED ₂
Gangiri	1.49	0.22	PCI ₁ SED ₁

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey by Researcher.

Note: PCI₁= High Level of Per Capita Income, PCI₂= Medium Level of Per Capita Income, PCI₃= Low Level of Per Capita Income, SED₁= High Level of Socio-Economic Development, SED₂= Medium Level of Socio-Economic Development and SED₃= Low Level of Socio-Economic Development.

Table 2: Levels of Socio-Economic Development in Aligarh District, 2009

Category	Z-Score	No. of Block	Name of the Block
Per Capita Income			
High	Above 0.50	04	Khair, Chandaus, Jawan and Gangiri
Medium	0.50 to -0.50	05	Gonda, Iglas, Akkrabad, Atrauli and Bijauli
Low	Below -0.50	03	Lodha, Dhanipur and Tappal
Socio-Economic Development			
High	Above 0.16	05	Chandaus, Iglas, Gonda, Akkrabad and Gangiri
Medium	0.16 to -0.16	04	Khair, Jawan, Atrauli and Bijauli
Low	Below -0.16	03	Lodha, Dhanipur and Tappal

Source: Based on Table 1.

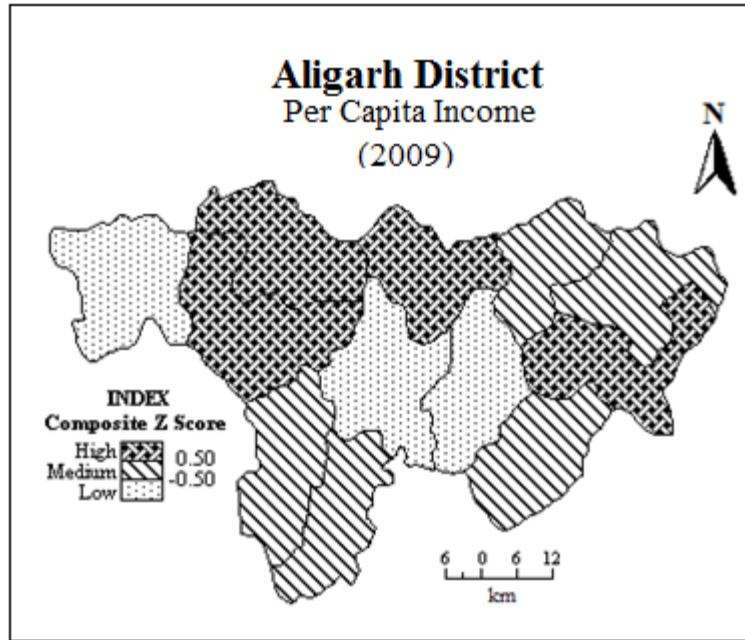


Figure 2

of the district does not share with any other surrounding block's boundary. Three blocks of the district namely, Tappal, Lodha and Dhanipur fall under the low category of per capita income, two of them, make a small region in the central part of the district and one block (Tappal) does not form any region. Spatial analysis depicts that high level of per capita income is found in the northern parts while, central and north-western parts witnessed the low per capita income among beggars of Aligarh district.

The level of socio-economic development is the aggregate output of the attainment of the various selected socio-economic indicators. Socio-economic development of an area can be measured with the help of several indicators but beggars are the persons who are considered as poorest of the poor and do not have so much facilities available within their households that is why, only a few indicators has been chosen to measure the levels of socio-economic development like demographic, literacy, employment, per capita income and household facilities.

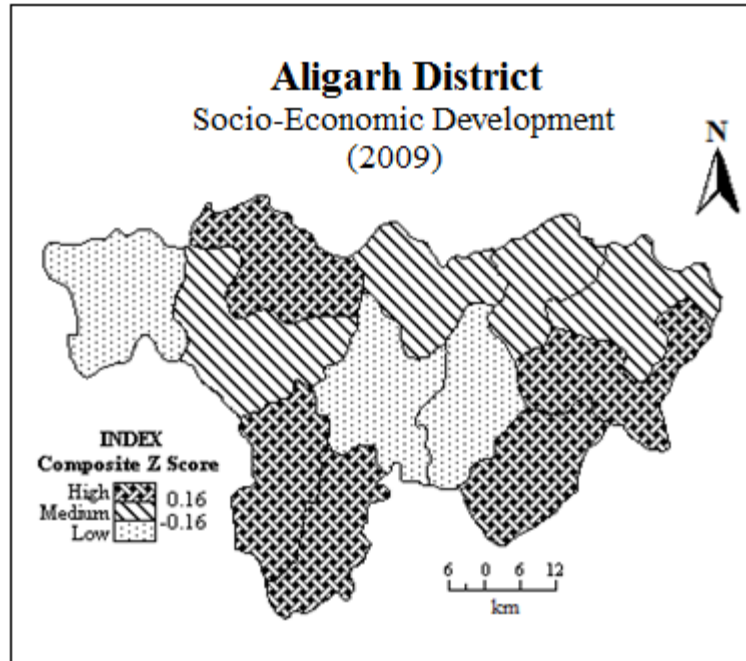


Figure 3

Table 1 shows that the z-score varies from lowest -0.61 in Lodha block to highest 0.52 in Akrabad block. Figure 3 exhibits that the five blocks of the district namely, Akrabad, Chandaus, Iglas, Gangiri and Gonda have high score (above 0.16 score) of socio-economic development and four blocks of them constitute two identifiable regions in the district. First region lies in the south-western part including the blocks Iglas and Gonda and second region locates in the south-eastern part comprising the two blocks i.e. Atrauli and Gangiri. Four blocks of the district have the medium level (0.16 to -0.16 score) of socio-economic development in the district and out of which three blocks namely, Jawan, Bijauli and Atrauli form a region, located in the north-eastern part of district and remaining one block (Khair) in the western part of the district, does not form any region. There are three blocks in the district which come under the low grade (below -0.16 score) of socio-economic development and two blocks of them (Lodha and Dhanipur), form a region in the central part of the district and remaining one block (Tappal) does not form any

region. Spatial pattern of socio-economic development shows that the peripheral parts of the district recorded high level of socio-economic development than the central parts.

Relationship of Per Capita Income with Socio-Economic Development

Figure 4 shows the regional distribution of per capita income and socio-economic development in the district. Figure 4 exhibits that three blocks (Tappal, Lodha and Dhanipur) of the district come under the low grade (below -0.50 z-scores) of the general per capita income, all these blocks also recorded the low level of socio-economic development, and, two of them (Lodha and Dhanipur) form a small region in the central part of the district.

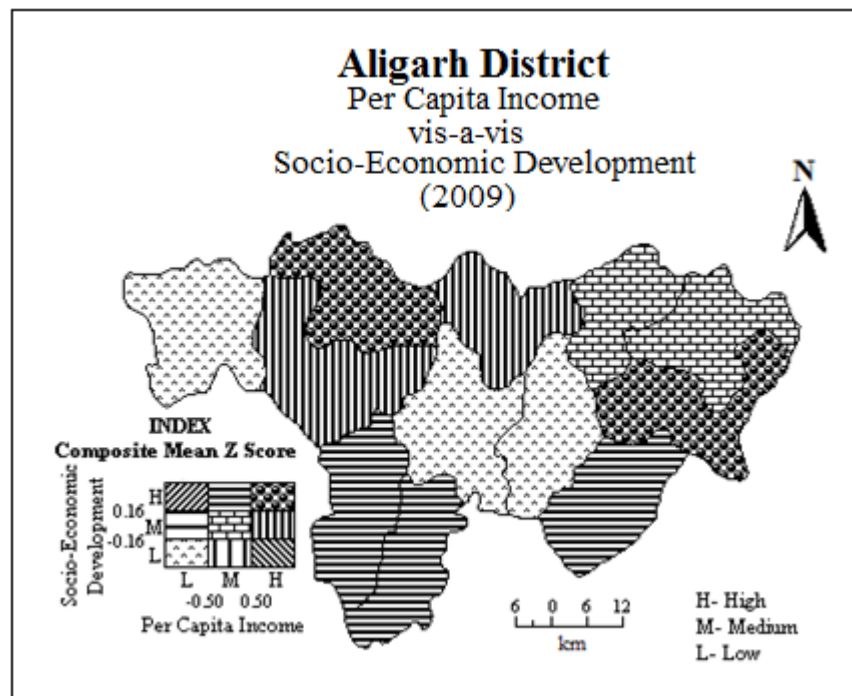


Figure 4

There are five blocks which witnessed the medium level (-0.50 to 0.50 z-score) of per capita income. Three block of them (Gonda, Iglas and Akrabad) have high level of socio-economic development, in which, Gonda and Iglas blocks make a region in the south-western part of the district, while, two blocks (Atrauli and Bijauli) observed the medium level of socio-economic development and form an identifiable region in the north-eastern part of the Aligarh district. The

high level (above 0.50 z-scores) of per capita income is observed in the four blocks of the district, in which, two blocks (Chandaus and Gangiri) also have high level of socio-economic development and two blocks (Khair and Jawan) have medium level of socio-economic development.

Correlation of Per Capita Income with the selected Variables of Socio-Economic Development

The analysis of simple correlation of per capita income (dependent variables) with selected socio-economic development indicators (independent variables) has been listed in Table 3. The result of correlation exhibits that among the seventeen independent

Table 3: Results of Correlation (r) between Per Capita Income, and Other Selected Indicators of Socio-Economic Development in Aligarh District, 2009

Variable	Definition of Variables	Per Capita Income
		(Y ₁)
X ₁	Percentage of male population to the total selected population	-0.153
X ₂	Percentage of female population to the total selected population	0.153
X ₃	Sex-Ratio	0.15
X ₄	Household Size	0.173
X ₅	Total Literacy Rate	-0.046
X ₆	Male Literacy Rate	-0.097
X ₇	Female Literacy Rate	0.202
X ₈	Total Employment Rate	-0.039
X ₉	Male Employment Rate	-0.141
X ₁₀	Female Employment Rate	0.077
X ₁₁	Per Capita Income	1
X ₁₂	Percentage of households having own houses	.602**
X ₁₃	Percentage of households living in pucca houses	0.212
X ₁₄	Percentage of households having the drinking water facility within their premises	-0.419
X ₁₅	Percentage of households having bathroom facility within their premises	-0.027
X ₁₆	Percentage of households having latrine facility within their premises	0.087
X ₁₇	Percentage of households having electricity facility within their premises	0.419

Source: Calculation is based on Sample Survey.

* Significance at 1 per cent level, ** Significance at 5 per cent level

indicators, the coefficient of correlation of only one indicator (X₁₂= percentage of beggars having own house) has a higher level of significant relationship with the per capita income. This

indicator is positively correlated with per capita income and significant at 95 per cent confidence level. Instead of one star and double star indicators, other indicators of socio-economic development are also correlated with the per capita income but not up to a significant level.

Conclusion

The geographical patterns of per capita income and socio-economic development and their relationship clearly depict that there are a wide range of variations among the districts of the study area. The regional analysis of the per capita income exhibits that the level of per capita income is found high in the blocks lying in the northern part of the district in comparison to the blocks of central and southern parts. Whereas, the central part of the district fall under the low level of socio-economic development, while, the medium level of socio-economic development is found in the north-eastern part, and the southern part comes under high level of socio-economic development. The relationship between per capita income and socio-economic development depicts that a high level of relationship is observed in the blocks of the district.

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