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The economy of Gujarat and its policies

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ABSTRACT

Governmental policies and its impact on the development of Gujarat as the economy of Gujarat is one of the fastest growing economies among all Indian states. The State emerged stronger and a symbol of hope for the rest of the country in terms of economic and industrial development. Gujarat is one of the states to have responded punctually and effectively to the new liberal policies. The government has been open to new ideas, technology, including organizational and management governance practices, and has designed policy responses to overcome economic challenges. The analysis in this paper suggests that stakeholders in Gujarat have been able to create an environment in which improving quality of living, focusing on basic needs, and quality of life are the main focus of public policies and discourse. Such focus is favorable to broad-based growth and upward economic and social mobility, and diversity, permitting introduction of new ideas in organizing different activities.

Keywords— Development of Gujarat

1. INTRODUCTION

The economy of Gujarat is one of the fastest growing economies among all Indian states. The people of Gujarat are worldwide recognized as highly entrepreneurial and industrious. The risk-taking ability, along with the mature level of commercial knowledge, has made the State the fountainhead of a new enterprise. The labor force in Gujarat is reasonably skilled in areas such as diamonds, chemicals, petrochemicals and pharmacy sectors. Gujarat is one of the most urbanized states in the country with nearly 40 percent of the population residing in urban areas. This has had a positive influence on the growth of industry in the State. Moreover, the results of economic liberalization could be seen most clearly in Gujarat in the first decade of the new century, beginning in 2001. The State emerged stronger and a symbol of hope for the rest of the country in terms of economic and industrial development. Gujarat is one of the states to have responded punctually and effectively to the new liberal policies. Under the new policy system, with effective central level pro-industries policy measures, the state has been successful in attracting fresh flow of domestic and foreign investment. It has made a quantum jump in industrial investment, particularly in the large and medium scale industries. as a result, the average annual rate of development of the state economy (at 1980-81 prices) in the post-reform period, i.e. from 1990-91 to 1997-98 has been 8.65 percent, which is among the maximum in the country. The investment climate and industry-friendly policies of Gujarat have made it industrially Vibrant State. Gujarat is among the top few States in India to attract investments and create jobs. In particular, the State Government began organizing the now-famous, biennial Vibrant Gujarat Global Investment Summit (VGGIS) from 2003 onwards to showcase the State as a major investment destination.

The impressive growth of the state is the result of purposeful policy of unbalanced growth followed by the state government to accord high priority to industrialization ever since its inception as a state in 1960 (Dholakia Ravindra³. 2000) The federal structure of Indian democracy makes it possible for the state governments to follow different economic policies to attain their different economic goals and objectives framed on the basis of central planning. Throughout the last four decades, the Gujarat state policies have been definitely in favor of the industrial sector. As a result, the growth is not regular for all the sectors.

2. AGRICULTURE AND STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The production of most of the agricultural crops in Gujarat has been rising over the years; it is the export of these crops that have considerably chosen up during the last decade. Gujarat has an edge in the production of castor, cumin, fennel, isabgol, sesamum, groundnut, mango, garlic, dehydrated onion, fish and seafood and cotton in the international market (GITCO, 2009). However, agriculture productivity and exports are noticeably low in the International market. Considerable improvement of the economy needs to be done to take advantage of opportunities in the international market to improve the condition of the population dependent on agriculture. The performance of agriculture was fair during the 1960s and the 1970s. These reasonable growth rates during this period were largely the result of intensive and extensive farming escorted by the green revolution techniques in the 1970s. The involvement of the primary sector in the state domestic product was 47.6 percent against the national average of 45.8 percent for the year 1971. The workforce participation for the same year was 64.5 percent for Gujarat against 72.6 percent of the national average. Thereafter the share of the primary sector in the SDP has come down to 27.4 percent and the share of the

workforce has come down to 56.2 percent by 1991. For the same year, average values for all India were 32.9 and 67.4 percent respectively.

The structural change is taking place largely on account of two sets of factors natural and man-made on one hand Gujarat has very little rainfall, degradation of land due to salinity ingress and expanding desert, On the other hand, the state has a policy environment favoring accelerated industrial development. The development policies of the state are uninterested towards environmental issues, which intensify the adversities of the natural factors. This is mainly seen in the unfavorable effects on agricultural productivity. In addition, targeted efforts by the state government to develop agricultural productivity are not adequate to compensate for the productivity loss Government expenditure is an significant indicator of the degree of preference allotted to the sector In Gujarat, government expenditure on agriculture, irrigation and electricity shows a declining tendency in the 1980s So, we can say that the agricultural sector is neglected rather than being assigned the required priority (Desai et al8) argue that this amounts to forgoing the opportunity both to increase production and productivity and to stabilize weather-induced fluctuations to which Gujarat is more level. The following discussion 73 highlights the important natural and man-made factors responsible for deterioration in the performance of the agriculture sector.

The industrial sector has performed constantly well within the secondary sector, the industrialized sector in general and the registered industrialized in particular has experienced remarkable development. The annual Average growth rate of the industrialized sector has increased from 3.03 percent in the 1960s to 5.55 percent in the 1970s to 8.11 percent in the 1980s and to above 9 percent in the 1990s. The outstanding performance of the Industrialized sector is largely due to the very high growth rate in the registered factory sector from 3.7 percent in the 1960s to 10.06 percent in the 1980s.

Since 1991 trade policy reform measures were expected at the integration of industrial, trade and exchange rate policies to improve the efficiency in the economy. The object of these measures has been aimed to eradicate optional controls on international trade transactions, decrease the nominal as also the effective protection available to domestic industry, and to fetch domestic prices closer to world prices. The Gujarat government has set up Gujarat agro-industries corporation limited (GAICL) for providing support to food processing units. The government of India has initiated the National Mission of Food Processing (NMFP), realizing the need for processing of food items show that farmers and primary sectors can develop its income.

An Industrial Policy of the Gujarat state was introduced in the year 2003 to address industry requirements on a long-term basis. Its Facilitating access to concrete, speedy and genuine information to entrepreneurs; up-gradation of Industrial and Urban infrastructure; development of thrust industries; constitution of Gujarat Industrial Promotion Board (GIPB) to provide single window mechanism for large projects; Promotion and development of SEZs and Industrial Parks; flexibility of labor laws in SEZs; power reforms; cluster development for SMEs; Human Resource Development and creation of employment opportunities; creating a Global Brand Image for Gujarat and its products as well as growth of an existing manufacturing base, and environment protection.

A new industrial policy by the State in 1995, titled 'Gujarat 2000 AD and Beyond', aimed at diversification of the industrial sector especially through the manufacture of garments (including hosiery), gems and jewellery, agro-processing (except edible oilseeds), food processing, leather products, ancillary engineering, and export-oriented units. The policy provided for incentives like capital investments and cash subsidies to the eligible small-scale units.

3. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Development of infrastructure was assigned high priority. The Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board (GIDB) was set up in 1995 to ease the private sector investment in the infrastructure sector and to act as a coordinator amongst various agencies concerned in the development of infrastructure projects in the State. The Industrial Policy in 2003 aimed at achieving Global competitiveness by the industries, emphasized on reform of the District Industries Centres (DICs), renamed as District Industries Development Centres (DIDCs). DIDCs across the State acted as nodal centers for industries and investors, which also coordinated for the other line departments such as Labour, Energy, Environment, Revenue, GIDC, and Gujarat Industrial Investment Corporation (GIIC) etcetera. Moreover this, the Government initiated the steps to check the completion of investment proposals, development of industrial clusters and subsidies for R&D activities. The new industrial policy emphasized investment, which was required to boost employment opportunities and improve product quality. The policy focused on the development of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), development of Special Investment Regions (SIRs), the establishment of large industrial projects, like automobile components, semiconductors, Nano Technology, Air Craft Maintenance, Shipbuilding etc.

4. AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED POLICY INITIATIVES

The government has been open to new ideas, technology, including organizational and management governance practices, and has designed policy responses to overcome economic challenges. The above characteristics are illustrated by the selected policy initiatives.

4.1 Investment summits

Investment summits during the post-2002, the State Government initiated a step towards being practical in attracting investment through institutionalized approach; attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). At each investor summits, the State offered significant data to the potential investors, which projected Gujarat as Ideal Investment Destination. The investor's summit held in 2003 agree with the Navratri festival, while the following summits help in 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011 and 2013 coincided with the Uttarayan festival. The value of investment proposals during the different summits increased from Rs.68,254 crores in 2003 to Rs.1,06,160 crores in 2005, Rs. 4,61,835 crores in 2007, Rs. 12,39,562 crores in 2009, Rs. 20,64,046 crores in 2011 and Rs.

1,60,000 crores in 2013 summit. However, the FDI is very slow which is reflected in actual implementation data of the projects post investor summits. In Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) the other states in India have to lead the MoUs during 2006-10, Gujarat signed MoUs worth Rs. 5.35 lakh crores with the potential of 6.47 lakh jobs. But during the same period Maharashtra and Tamilnadu with Rs. 4.20 lakh crore and Rs. 1.63 lakh crore worth MoUs, expect about 8.63 lakh and 13.61 lakh jobs. Similarly, Chhattisgarh and Odisha were signed MoUs worth 3.61 lakh crore and 2.99 lakh crore without creating a much-hyped event in Gujarat.

In addition to India-based businesses, international companies and delegations have also attended the successive summits (the 2015 summit was attended by senior policymakers and officials from USA, Japan, and many other countries), making the VGS “a global event” (Biswas, 2015). Several other states from India have also been active participants, using VGS to promote their respective states. The VGS has thus become an indispensable economic and investment event for India as a whole. The VGS has been evolving from investment-focused event to knowledge-sharing and networking event. This recognizes the role that exposure to and spread of good ideas play in broad-based economic growth.

4.2 Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC)

The progress of Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation (GIDC) GIDC has been contributing considerably to the development of industrial estates and sheds in the State. There were only 57 industrial estates and 843 allotted sheds with 49.11 hectares of allotted plots in 1970-71. The number of estates increased to 265 and allotted plots to 13.16 thousand hectares in 2001-02. The number of sheds allotted was 12.19 thousand in the same year. Here are the several schemes GIDC helps to boost up Gujarat economy:

- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)**- The Policy focuses on making Gujarat an attractive investment destination of choice, not only in India but also in the world. The primary policy objectives are (1) Facilitating investment in the state (2) Employment generation and employability enhancement (3) Adherence to high-quality standards.
- **Gems and jewelry sector**- The State has also maintained a constant lead in terms of new industrial investment flow in the country in promoting exports and qualities of gems and jewelry sector.
- **Environment protection measure and infrastructure**- Environment Protection Measures and Infrastructure have emphasized upon setting up of common environment infrastructure plants viz. Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) and Treatment, Storage & Disposal Facilities (TSDFs).
- **Xport infrastructure Assistance to States for Developing Export infrastructure and other allied activities (ASIDE)**-The objective of the scheme is to involve the states in the export effort by providing assistance to the State Governments for creating appropriate infrastructure for the development and growth of exports.

4.3 Special economic zones in Gujarat

Gujarat like other states in the country is now enabling SEZ to be formed on demand not based on central, state and regional (district) scheduling requirements but on the demands of private capital. Gujarat SEZ Act 2004 and its following amendments in 2007, formulate about 90 SEZs that are under different stages of implementation in the State. The land for these SEZs is acquired or purchased by public and private enterprises without any resettlement and rehabilitation policy. The GIDC was utilized as a tool to get land from the farmers and facilitate the setting of SEZ for private capital investment.

4.4 Special Investment Region (SIR) in Gujarat

The State Government has spread a legal framework – The Gujarat Special Investment Region (SIR) Act, 2009. The State Government has a strategy to generate large investment regions and industrial areas in the State; and to particularly allow their development as global hubs of economic activity supported by infrastructure, civic facilities, centers of excellence and pro-active policy framework; and to set up an organizational structure for such regions. The SIR Act, 2009 has provision for the development of such economic hub(s) with global standards. An Investment Region will be developed in an area of more than 100 sq. km. (10000 ha.) and an Industrial Area will be developed in an area of more than 50 sq. km. (5000 ha). The regulation provides for the establishment of a four-tier administrative mechanism for the establishment, operation, regulation, and management of the SIRs. The structure will include of an Apex Authority, a Regional Development Authority (RDA) for each region, a Project Development Agency and project-specific SPVs. The Government has already approved the formation of such a project development company in the name of “Gujarat Industrial Corridor Company” (GICC).

4.5 Jyotigram Yojana

Faced with the challenge of substantially improving rural and agricultural power supply, the Gujarat government responded through the Jyotigram Yojana for rural electrification. Jyotigram Yojana was implemented on a pilot basis across eight districts in Gujarat in 2003. In 2004, the scheme was extended to the entire state and completed in 2006 by providing a 3-phase power supply across 18,000 villages and 9,700 hamlets of Gujarat (Government of Gujarat, 2010).

The domestic line offered 24/7 power supply for domestic use to homes, schools, hospitals, etc. The agriculture line offers eight hours of electricity at pre-determined times at a higher voltage (430-440 voltage), and with limited interruptions (Shah et al, 2009). Electricity prices for agriculture are subsidized by 75 percent by the state government while domestic electricity is commercially priced (Brabeck-Letmathe, 2014). Total expenditure on the Jyotigram Yojana scheme was INR 1.3 billion of which INR 1.1 billion was a government grant. The overall net benefits of the Jyotigram Yojana scheme have been positive. This is because when combined with the investments in connecting all the villages, the economic and employment benefits generated would have enabled even those such as landless laborers, who may have been negatively affected by the Jyotigram Yojana scheme taken in isolation. This suggests the importance of not assessing the impact of each particular initiative in isolation but to

approach it from a system perspective, which takes into account the similar combined impact of several relevant initiatives. The scheme has contributed to improving the profitability of the state electricity board; and turning a state with an excess demand for electricity in 2001 to a state with an excess supply of power (Debroy, 2012). Gujarat was also able to reduce TDS (Transmission and Distribution) losses in electricity from 36 percent in 2002-03 to 20 percent in 2010-11 (Debroy, 2012). The TDS losses, however, are still high and need to be further improved.

In 2014, the key ideas of the design and implementation of Jyotigram Yojana were adopted nationally in the form of the Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana. The Central Government has allocated INR 75.6 billion for rural electrification across India, of which INR 43.0 billion is earmarked for feeder separation and INR 32.6 billion for distribution (Bhaskar, 2014). Through the Jyotigram Yojana, the Gujarat government demonstrated its interest to charge the rural population and farmers for electricity and providing equal quality and reliability of power supply.

4.6 Chiranjeevi Yojana

The Chiranjeevi Yojana is planned on a public-private partnership (PPP). Its aim is to develop the access of families Below Poverty Line (BPL) to private sector specialists for maternity services. The partnership is between the Department of Health and Family Welfare of the Gujarat government, and obstetrician/ gynecologists based in private clinics, nursing homes, and private hospitals. The Chiranjeevi Yojana was launched in December 2005 in 5 five most weak districts—Banaskantha, Dahod, Kutch, Panchmahal, and Sabarkantha, and extended state-wide by January 2007 (Acharya and McNamee, 2009). There is considerable scope for improvement in these indicators in Gujarat. To access the scheme, a beneficiary woman is requisite to provide the BPL card or a document from a village official verifying the BPL status (Ravindran, 2011). BPL status is determined by multidimensional means-testing or designated by the village authority (Acharya and McNamee, 2009). The revisions in the BPL lists are infrequent targets of interfering. In exchange, the hospitals are likely to provide maternity services to the beneficiaries without charging a fee. Patients and their attendants are also reimbursed part of their travel costs (Mohanan, 2013).

After Chiranjeevi Yojana was initiated, found that 94 percent of beneficiaries in 2007 belonged to low-income households (Bhatt, 2009). In 2009, it was estimated that maternal deaths within the scheme were 20 times lower than expected maternal deaths based on maternal mortality rate (Acharya and McNamee, 2009). A 2010-11 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report highlighted the scheme's limited outreach with no doctors opting in for the scheme in 40 percent of the talukas. It was also noted that a fund of INR 0.27 billion was un-utilized in six tribal districts due to lack of eligible health care providers and facilities (Ravindran, 2011).

4.7 Sahbhagi Jal Sanchay Yojana

This first step helps Gujarat government's initiation of the Sardar Patel Sahbhagi Jal Sanchay Yojana or the Sardar Patel Participatory Water Conservation Project (SSPWCP) in 2000. The project visualized building structures for groundwater recharge, using partnerships between the governments, local organizations, and farming communities as the primary implementation method. Under SSPWCP, over half of the total dams were constructed in the Saurashtra region, benefitting agriculture in at least two ways; the farmers were able to protect their crops against potential early withdrawal of monsoon; and facilitated irrigation based crop diversification (Gulati et al, 2009). To decrease rising dependence on groundwater reserves the government also initiated water transfer projects by interlinking rivers and basins to boost utilization of surface water. This is mainly through the Sardar Sarovar river-valley project, which includes 387 projects such as Sardar Sarovar Canal, the Sujalam Sufalam Yojana initiative, and 179 Rural Regional Water Supply Schemes (Debroy, 2012; Biswas-Tortajada, 2014). By 2013, the project connected 82.8 percent of the households in the Saurashtra region to the state-wide supply grid. A supplementary investment of INR 1.7 billion was to further develop water facilities in the region (Biswas-Tortajada, 2014).

In addition to the policy initiatives indicated above, the Gujarat government also undertook several other measures to improve the agricultural sector. These included the Krishi Mahotsav (Agrarian Festival) to spread knowledge and awareness, empowering farmers through reforming the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committees (APMC) Act; facilitating GM crops such as cotton; and rural electrification.

4.8 Krishi Mahotsav

The Krishi Mahotsav initiated in 2005, is a month-long festival held every year linking over 0.1 million government officials, APMCs, and local organizations to increase awareness among farmers towards new technologies, market opportunities, new crops, and government schemes. Shah (2012) suggests that the festival had a high impact in terms of awareness (69 percent of farmers interviewed knew of the festival), although adoption of new technologies is low. The festival currently faces the challenges of approaching innovation to ground action at a quicker speed and also moving away from common messages to more crop/area specific recommendations. Despite this, the scheme is considered to “mark a shift from ‘propitiative’ to ‘proactive’ governance of the agricultural economy” (Shah et al, 2012).

Gujarat liberalized the APMC (Agricultural Produce Market committees) Act to free farmers to sell their produce directly to processors. In 2007 the government amended the act to allow farmers to remove middlemen and sell directly to wholesalers and exporters at individually stated price²³ (Trivedi, 2006). The state also allowed farmers access to genetically modified (GM) crops such as Bt cotton. The state-regulated prices on the commodity to benefit the farmers declared cotton as an “essential commodity”, and allowed them to emerge as hybrid seed suppliers (Shah et al, 2014). The modifications in the Gujarat APMC Act in mid-May 2015 permit private markets to operate thus expanding economic freedom of the farmers. They have removed the requirement that fruits and vegetables can only be sold through APMCs. This is expected to reduce supply-chain and logistics costs for fruits and vegetables, thus improving consumer welfare.

5. CONCLUSION

The scrutiny suggests that Gujarat has recognized that growth drivers require a technocratic and managerial, rather than an ideological approach to managing the economy; and adopting an outcome driven system-oriented approach. Future orientation, particularly in investment and skills development, is also evident. In strategies for skills development, it is essential that training is provided not just for current skills in demand but also for the likely skills essential in the future. The state of Gujarat, by increasing competition from other states in attracting domestic and foreign investments and in pursuing growth policies, which also results in more fast development in social indicators particularly in education and health. The analysis in this paper suggests that stakeholders in Gujarat have been able to create an environment in which improving quality of living, focusing on basic needs, and quality of life are the main focus of public policies and discourse. Such focus is favorable to broad-based growth and upward economic and social mobility, and diversity, permitting the introduction of new ideas in organizing different activities. It also facilitates re-structuring of the economy necessary for increasing per capita income and sustaining competitiveness. The analysis in this paper suggests the usefulness of the modified growth diagnostic approach to analyzing economic management characteristics and growth strategy.

Gujarat has given preference to industrial development as a necessary strategy for its economic growth. Consequentially, it has emerged as an important contributing state for the industrial development of India. Nevertheless, there are several unresolved issues especially concerning the growth of the MSMEs and their development, despite the fact that their contribution to industrial employment and exports is immense. Although industrial infrastructure has spread across the State, the backward areas have received less attention due to spatial constraints. Since the 1980s, the State is experiencing a shift of its workforce from the primary sector to secondary and tertiary sectors. The spatial transition in the concentration of industries was observed in the State that during the 1960s, it focused only on agriculture. Now, after five decades the focus of the State has shifted to only industries. It is important to think about the future direction of development in Gujarat.

Gujarat Government realizes that new investment climate of liberalization, privatization, and globalization has opened new opportunities to attract industries in the State from within and outside the country. The State has now started to compare itself not only with other Indian states but also with the emerging regions of south-east and East Asian countries for investment in the industrial sector. With the continuous flow of land, incentives, and concessions from the Government, the industries might find it very attractive, more so with large scale and mega-industries with an investment of more than 100 crores to 500 crores. Nevertheless, whether industrial growth would sustain in future in absence of skilled workforce is question would be more important in the next decades. The fastest growing industrial sector, however, is not able to provide wage employment to all the job seekers. The trend is stronger in the period of liberalization.

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