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Violence and Urbanisation: The Kerala-Bihar Paradox and beyond

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Paper title: **Violence and Urbanisation: The Kerala-Bihar Paradox and beyond**

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to examine the alleged association between urbanisation and violence and to take some preliminary steps towards an exploration of the role of trust in improving urban governance and thus reduce violence. In this paper, violence is interpreted broadly to include both active or direct violence but also passive and social violence in terms of lack of voice, and as a symptom of governance failure. The paper includes a cross section analysis based on data for some 123 countries and an in-depth case study of India. I will also examine what may be termed as the *Kerala-Bihar paradox*. Kerala is well-known for its achievements in human development and according to India human development report of 2001, Kerala is ranked 1 on human development indicators while Bihar is among the states lagging behind in terms of human development. However, state level analysis of crime suggests that Kerala is more criminalised than Bihar. In examining this paradox, some inferences are drawn on the role of trust in improving accountable governance and how this may result in reducing violent crime. Some issues for further research are identified.

Key words: Violence, governance, trust, Kerala, Bihar
JEL: D7, H1, H3, H4, H7, K0, O10, O12, Z13

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1. Introduction

Cities, by virtue of being engines of growth and concentrations of administrative machinery, tend to be focal points of governance failures and dysfunctional institutions as well. Examples can include the alleged links between corruption and urban mega-projects in Thailand in pre-1997 Asian Financial Crisis and between political patronage, real estate and unaccounted financial flows in Mumbai. Insecurity is one of the manifestations of accountability failure and dysfunctional institutions. While physical insecurity and violence in cities is a cause for concern, there is some evidence¹ to suggest that the poor bear a disproportionately greater burden of both *active* violence (for example, during political unrests and protests) and *passive* violence (in terms of lack of voice, continuing neglect and lack of investment in social services such as water, sanitation, health care²).

However, there are positive forces also located in cities, namely, by virtue of 'agglomeration' benefits cities have opened spaces for the evolution of civil society organisations which have been playing an important role in improving governance. We can refer to this as 'social' governance to distinguish from traditional concept of governance which tends to focus on accountability in (and mediated through) formal institutions of authority. Civil society institutions that emerged from collective action by interest groups have over a period of time developed and used economies of scope to include issues related to voice, rule of law, and accountability. Examples can include the Self Employed Women's Association in the western Indian states, Exnora in southern India³, and to some extent, Sarvodaya in Sri Lanka.

An important but under-researched area in this context is that of trust⁴. Surveys such as Euro-barometer and Afro-barometer⁵ suggest that in many countries, the proportion of citizens who 'trust the government' has been in decline even as countries put in place mechanisms to increase accountability.

¹ Wilkinson (2004) argues that violence is associated with inequality. A study commissioned by Asian Development Bank and focusing on Phnom Penh and Dhaka is premised on the view that the urban poor bear the brunt of violence. Also see Moser and Holland (1997) for a study of Jamaica where one of the arguments concerns the correlation between poverty and violence.

² The WHO (2002) report on violence and health identifies three typologies of violence: self-directed, inter-personal, and collective and four types of violent acts: physical, sexual, psychological, and involving deprivation or neglect.

³ See Bhatt (2005) for a discussion on SEWA; see Anand, 1999; 2003 for a discussion on Exnora.

⁴ Trust has been considered an important area of political science research for quite some time: some of the early studies focusing on trust include Easton, 1965, 1975; Fukuyama, 1995; Hollis, 1998. However, with the resurgence in new institutional economics, there is now some interest in measuring trust using indicators of trust to test conjectures.

⁵ Though there is no equivalent Asia Barometer, some surveys have been published for East Asia. Approximately 36% of respondents in East Asian surveys said that they were either not at all satisfied or not satisfied with the way democracy works in their country (Wu and Chu, 2007).

Some studies suggest an association between high-level corruption⁶ and lack of trust (Uslaner, 2005; 2007; Morris and Klesner, 2008). While that is one explanation, it is also possible that accountability initiatives themselves contribute to increased expectations and measuring existing institutions using the new scales of increased expectations can lead to a sense of 'democratic deficit'.

Against this background, an attempt is made in this paper to examine some issues related to violence and urban governance. This paper has three main aims: to examine the association between urbanisation and violence, using crime-rate as an indicator⁷; to examine whether voice and accountability contribute to a reduction in such violence; and to explore the potential role of trust in improving the quality of governance institutions that can deliver significant and real reduction in crime in urban societies. As part of this discussion, I will be examining a so called Kerala-Bihar paradox. I will be mainly using secondary sources of data: (i) international cross-country data sets from UNDP Human Development Report, the UN Office of Drugs and Crime, and the International Crime Victim Surveys (ICVS); (ii) for the India case study, data from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India; (iii) for discussions on trust, some data from Asia Barometer and Indian data from CSDS polls. In section 2 an attempt is made to examine the association between urbanisation and violence using international cross-section data. A detailed case study of India including the Kerala-Bihar paradox is discussed in section 3. Some issues related to trust are discussed in section 4. Conclusions and some issues for research are presented in section 5.

2. 'Violence of urbanisation' thesis and a critique

What I would like to refer to as 'violence of urbanisation' thesis has been put forward by numerous studies. The argument is broadly that urbanisation leads to greater degree of impersonal transactions and increased vulnerability which results in increased violence. See for example, Gizewski and Homer-Dixon, 1995; to some extent in UN-HABITAT, 2007. *Prima facie*, it appears that there is an association between violence, criminality and urbanisation. Data on total recorded crime⁸ is available from the UN Office of Drugs and Crime. Using this data for 61 countries, in figure 1, we do find a positive association

⁶ Uslaner distinguishes between high-level corruption which concerns those with power and money (politicians, ministers, judges etc.) and low-level corruption (ordinary professionals such as teachers, journalists, doctors, and to some extent civil servants). Uslaner and Badescu (2004) find that low-level corruption has no impact on generalised trust or trust in government.

⁷ There are significant limitations in using crime rate as an indicator of violence. Many forms of violence including violence within families and communities and 'passive' violence are not captured in crime statistics. However, the arguments in this paper are premised on the view that crime rate represents a sub-set of violence within a society and that all things being the same, a more peaceful society will also have less crime.

⁸ Crime and violence are not synonymous. There can be many crimes such as economic crimes without any physical violence. However, in the light of a broader description of violence including 'social' or passive violence, I have used crime as an indicator of violence in this analysis.

between level of urbanisation and the rate of total recorded crime (number of crimes per 100,000 population).

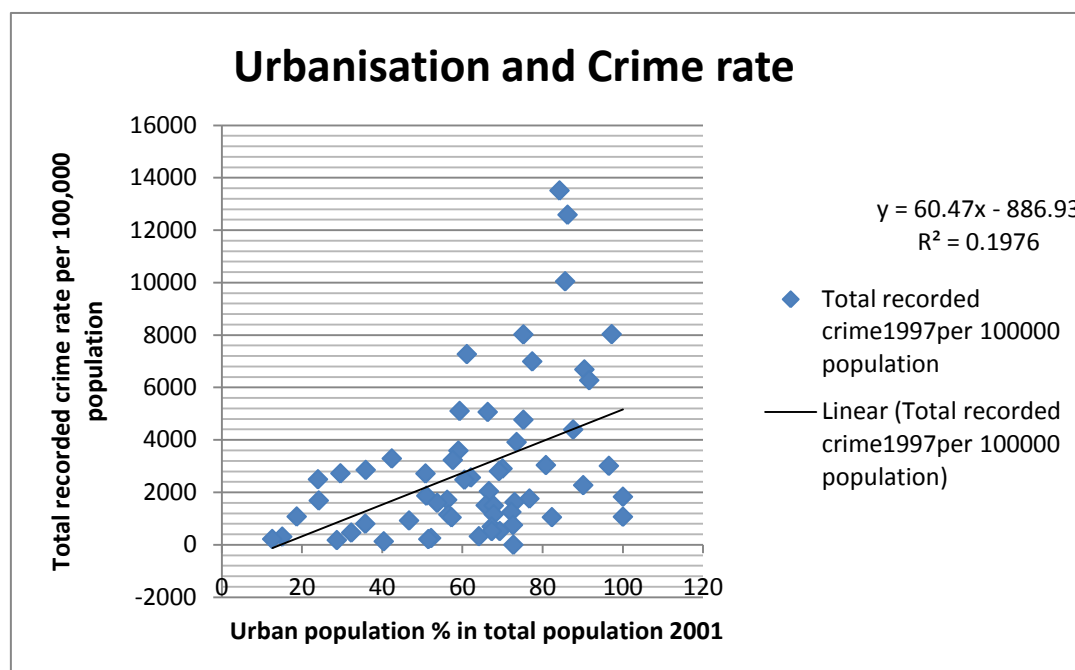


Figure 1: Urbanisation and total recorded crime rate (sample size 60 countries)

However, such alleged association must be considered with much care. First, availability of data has narrowed down the sample to 60 countries. Since high income countries⁹ are over-represented in terms of data availability, this sample is biased [*income effect*]. Further, a second type of bias is that high income countries (which are also highly urbanised) have better quality policing and criminal justice system and therefore, a greater percent of crimes in such countries are likely to be recorded [*reporting effect*]. Thirdly, while crime rate rather than incidence of crime (i.e., aggregate number of incidents of crime) is supposed to be a better indicator to take into account variation in crimes due to variation in population size, the resulting data is likely to be biased such that in populous nations such as China and India, crime rate appears to be very low [*population effect*].

Homicide is an alternative indicator of violence and lack of personal security and a more relevant one in relation to governance since protecting the citizens is considered to be one of the main responsibilities of the state¹⁰. An assessment of the purported relationship between urbanisation and violence using homicide rate as an indicator of violence does not seem to support the 'violence of urbanisation' thesis. Evidence is presented in figure 2 for 123 countries.

⁹ Data from UNODC and Victims of Crime Surveys (ICVS) suggest that crime rates are higher in high income regions such as North America and Europe.

¹⁰ For instance, in the three roles of state Adam Smith discusses in the Wealth of Nations, two of the functions are securing the citizens from being attacked by other nations or those within the nation.

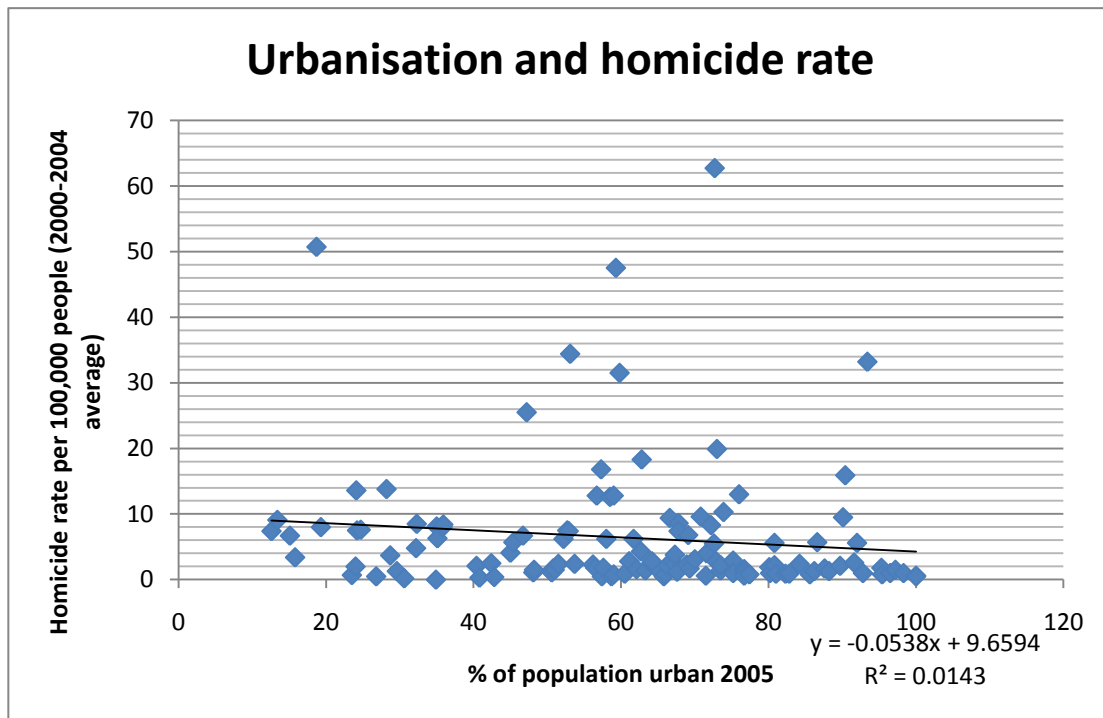


Figure 2: Urbanisation and homicide rate (sample size 123)

Globally, homicide rates are 23 per 100,000 people in Africa; about 19 per 100,000 in the Americas. Comparatively, homicide rates are lower in Asia at about 6 per 100,000 (UN Habitat, 2005:55).

Governance and violence

Governance concerns the development, functioning and accountability of institutions dealing with distributive justice. There are numerous indicators of quality of governance. For this analysis, I have used the governance indicators from World Governance Indicators dataset of Kaufman et al (2008). There is some evidence to suggest that there is an association between level of urbanisation and voice and accountability. Evidence in figure 3 suggests that there may be positive association between urbanisation and voice; evidence in figure 4 suggests that there may be a positive association between urbanisation and political stability.

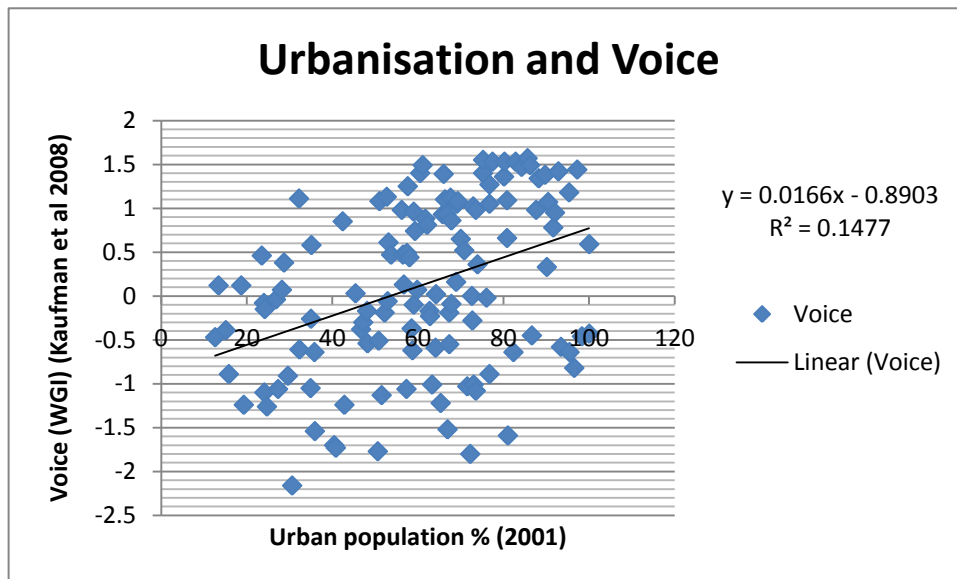


Figure 3: Urbanisation and voice and accountability seem to be associated (sample size 123 countries)

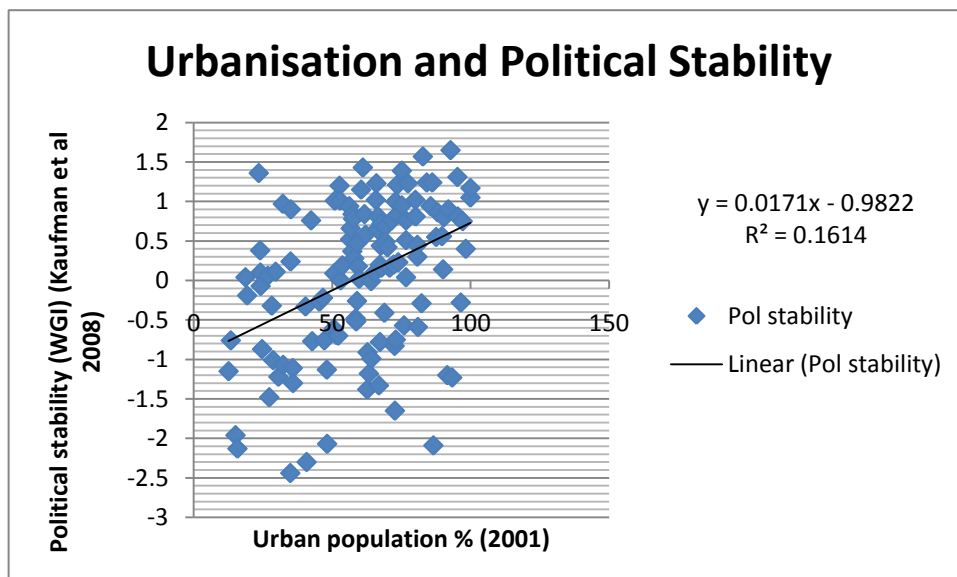


Figure 4: Urbanisation and political stability seem to be associated (sample size 123 countries)

Association is not causality and in the case of both voice and political stability urbanisation can be both a cause as well as a consequence.

As can be expected, there is negative association between voice and accountability and homicide rate (figure 5); likewise, there is a negative association between political stability and homicide rate (figure 6). In fact, the political stability indicator is described by Kaufman et al as 'political stability and absence of violence and terrorism'.

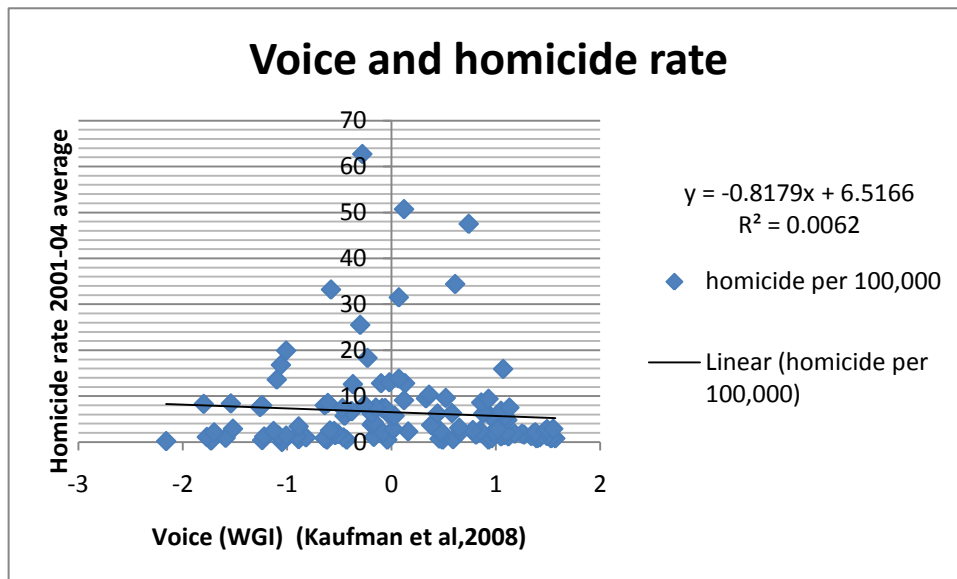


Figure 5: Voice and homicide rate (sample size 123 countries)

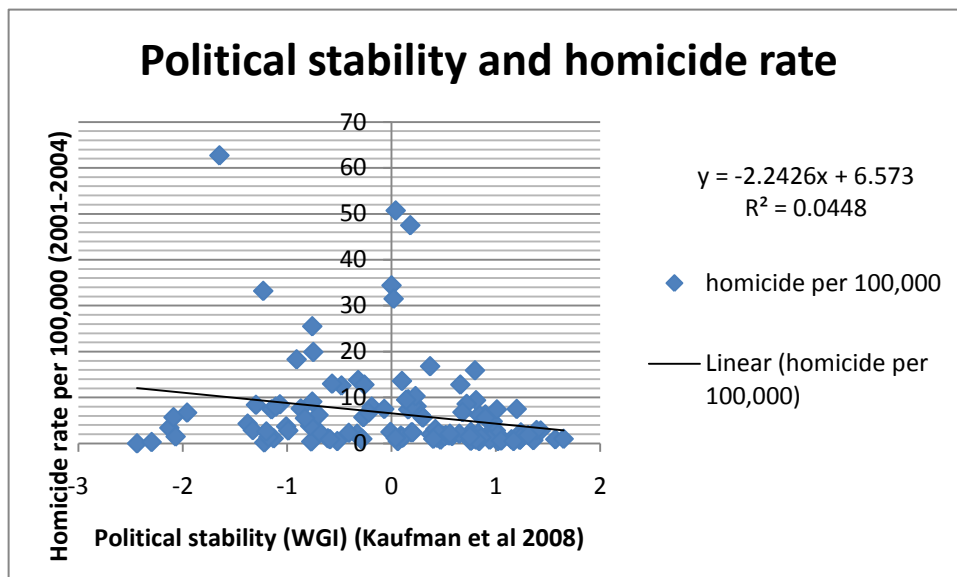


Figure 6: Political stability and homicide rate (sample size 123 countries)

The analysis presented so far seems to suggest that while total recorded crime may appear to increase with urbanisation, violent crime (such as homicide) seems to actually decrease with urbanisation. The positive associations between urbanisation and voice and accountability and political stability may provide a partial explanation. However, these preliminary results, crude and unsophisticated as they are, must be seen only as very preliminary indicators of potential relationships that need to be examined carefully. For instance, the gender-neutral language used so far does not do justice to the fact that women and children are likely to be the major victims of urban violence. For example, the COHRE (2008) report notes that violence emerged as the strongest cross-cutting issue for women in slums across the world.

3. A case study of India

Crime data is available at state level in the Crime in India reports published annually by the Ministry of Home Affairs. Crime can be recorded under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) or under special and local legislation (SLL). There has been a reduction in crime rate in India between 1996 and 2006: IPC crime rate has decreased from 183.4 to 167.7 in that decade; SLL crime rate has decreased from 492.2 to 287.9.

There is considerable variation among states in India in terms of population size, per capita income and urbanisation¹¹. A positive relationship between level of urbanisation expressed in terms of % of population in urban areas and crime rate (IPC) is noticed in figure 7 below.

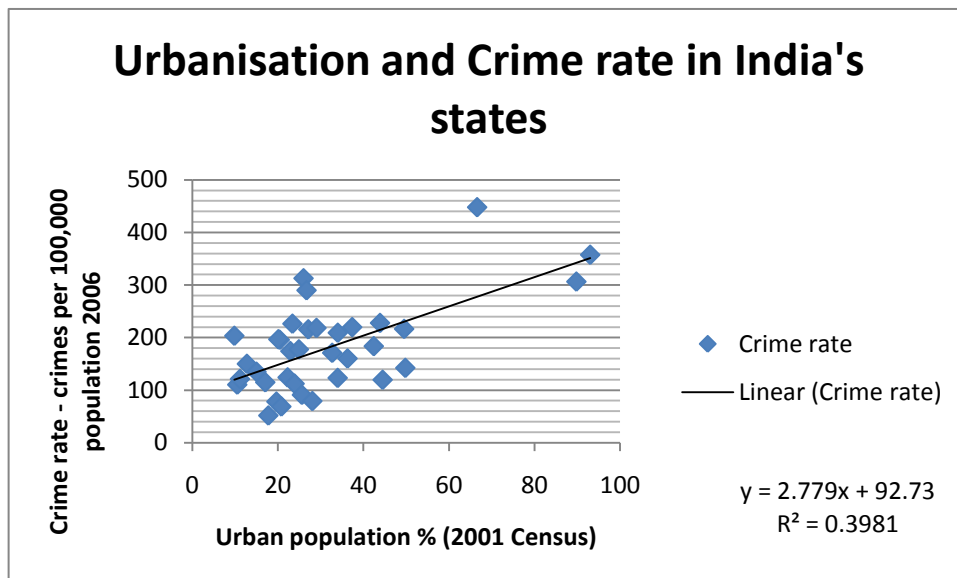


Figure 7: Urbanisation and crime- data for states in India

However, as discussed in the international cross-section analysis in the previous section, there is a need to explore this 'head line' relationship further.

The Kerala- Bihar Paradox

I was drawn to the topic of violence when I noticed a paradox while working on governance issues (Anand,2008). Kerala state in India is widely known for the progress that has been realised with regard to human development. Kerala ranked first among 15 Indian states in terms of human development among Indian states consecutively in years 1981, 1991 and 2001; Bihar ranked 15th in all these three periods (Planning Commission,2002:25). Kerala Human Development Report points out that the human development was achieved even while per capita income in Kerala lagged behind. The report argues that this implies a 'higher rate of translation efficiency in terms of public action and giving higher priority and precedence to these services'.

¹¹ Though India crime data for 2006 is used throughout this paper, Kerala-Bihar discussion is not affected by change of year. Data related to previous years also display the kind of patterns discussed here.

In 2000-01, the per capita net state domestic product¹² for Kerala was Rs 20,101 compared to Bihar's NSDP per capita of Rs 5,157 (the lowest among all states in India).

However, here is the paradox. There is no significant difference in the incidence of total number of cognisable crimes¹³ (IPC) for 2006 in Kerala (105,255) and Bihar (100,665) (Government of India, 2007). However, Bihar's population is approximately 91 million compared to Kerala's 34 million. The incidence of crime thus translates into a rate of 110 crimes per 100,000 population in Bihar and 332 crimes per 100,000 population in Kerala. Based on crime rate, Kerala is ranked 3 (in terms of criminality) whereas Bihar is ranked 30. Notwithstanding the tremendous progress in human development, Kerala seems to have much greater degree of criminality than Bihar¹⁴. How can this be explained?

Given that only 10% of Bihar's population lives in urban areas as compared to 25% of Kerala's population in urban areas, an observer could argue that the difference between crime rate in Kerala and Bihar is merely a confirmation of the 'violence of urbanisation' thesis. While higher level of urbanisation may be a factor, it cannot be the only explanation for this paradox.

Recall the point made earlier in the previous section that three effects, namely, income effect, reporting effect, and population effect may have some influence on the observed positive association between urbanisation and crime rate.

Data presented in figure 8 below suggests that income effect may have some role in explaining inter-state variation in crime rate in India too. Given that Kerala's income is much higher than Bihar's, we can argue that a reason behind high rate of crime in Kerala as compared to Bihar is due to this income differential i.e., an argument about *income effect*. This is similar to an argument about high crime rates in countries such as Sweden (13,516 in 1997), Denmark (10,051) and Germany (8025) with India (179 using IPC or about 671 including both IPC and SLL).

¹² States such as Goa, Delhi and the UT of Chandigarh all had per capita NSDP of above Rs 40,000. Per capita NSDP for Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu states was also greater than that of Kerala.

¹³ The analysis reported here focuses on state-wise crime rates based on crimes recorded under IPC. Though not reported here, broadly similar results hold for an analysis of SLL crime figures also.

¹⁴ A similar paradox is apparent in the case of corruption perception also. As per the Transparency International India studies, corruption in Bihar is described as 'alarming' while corruption in Kerala is 'high'. Some of the other states with lower level of human development than Kerala, have lower levels of reported corruption. This is discussed in Anand, 2008.

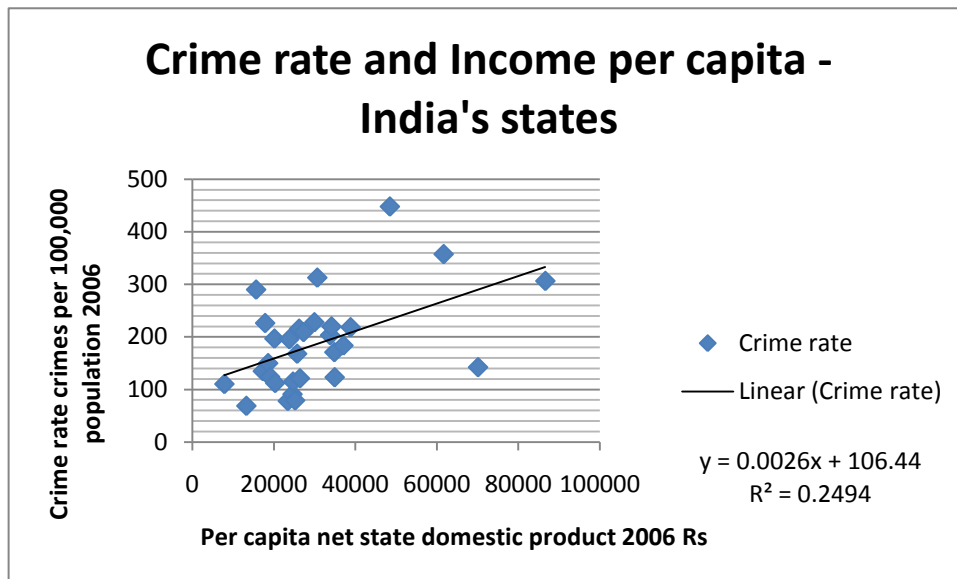


Figure 8: Per capita income and crime rate in Indian states

A second reason for the divergence can be population effect. Since crime rate is calculated as a ratio of incidence of crime to total population, the rates for populous states are likely to be smaller than those of less populous states. In the international data (for year 1997), for example, China (131) and India (167) have crime rates which are considerably smaller than corresponding rates for less populous nations such as Belgium (8035) or New Zealand (12,591). Thus, it can be argued that the most populous Indian states, namely, Uttar Pradesh (population 185 million and crime rate 68.6 IPC crimes) and Bihar (population 91 million and crime rate 110) appear to have low crime rates compared to smaller states such as Goa (population 1.5 million; crime rate 142) and Himachal Pradesh (population 6.4 million; crime rate 203). Population size, as shown in figure 9, has a negative effect on crime rate but the *population effect* does not fully explain the wide divergence between Bihar and Kerala.

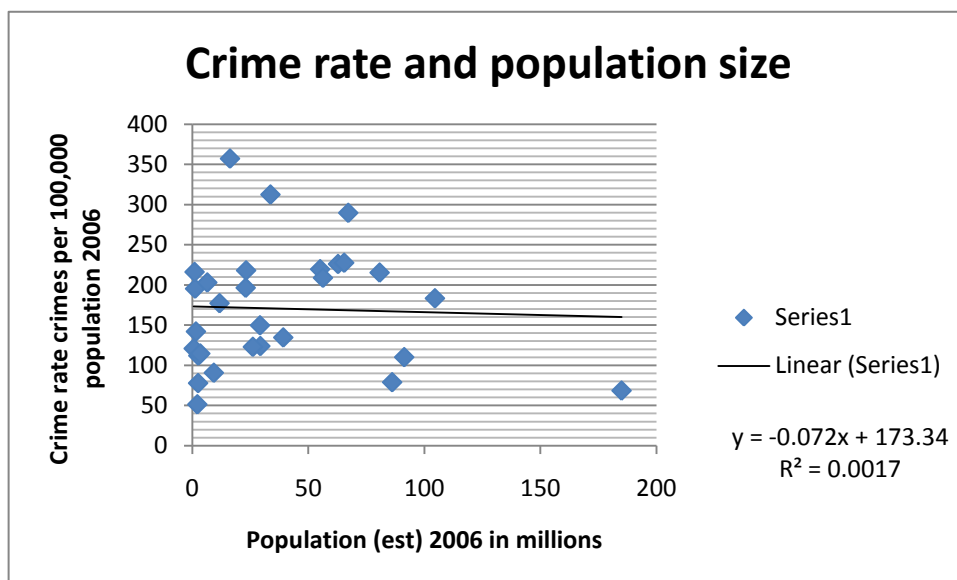


Figure 9: Population size and crime rate – relationship for Indian states

There could be three potential factors to explain this divergence which together constitute a 'reporting effect'. The first is with regard to composition of crime. While the incidence of crime (i.e., total number of cognisable crimes) in Kerala is slightly higher than that in Bihar, it is necessary to check whether there is a variation in the nature of crimes. Details presented in Appendix 1 suggest that Kerala indeed has fewer number of serious crimes such as murder, culpable homicide, dowry deaths, causing death by negligence, kidnapping and dacoity. There is much higher incidence of crimes such as hurt (bodily harm), burglary and riots in Kerala than in Bihar.

A brief digression may be necessary to discuss the issue of riots. Kerala has the highest rate of riots among all states in India. This can be partly explained by the fact that Kerala is the most heterogeneous of Indian states in terms of religious composition of the population¹⁵. As per Census of India, in 2001, Bihar had a population of 83 million of which 83% were Hindus; 16.5% were Muslims; Christians formed less than 0.07%. For the same year, out of approximately 32 million population of Kerala, approximately 56% were Hindus; 25% were Muslims; and 19% were Christians (see Appendix 2). With the exception of Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur, no other state in India comes close to Kerala's heterogeneity. However, heterogeneity and so called 'tolerant pluralism' has a long history in Kerala and therefore is unlikely to be a cause of violence. Such heterogeneity can at best be only a proximate cause of the high rate of riots in Kerala. It is not being suggested that having a heterogeneous mix alone leads to riots¹⁶. Heterogeneity can contribute to violence when other more important factors such as political, social, and economic insecurities persist and in the contests for control of the governance mechanisms such insecurities are manipulated through collective action by some groups or individuals who can overcome the cost of organising such collective action (Bardhan,2005). The Kerala Human Development Report notes that "...one of the major failures of human development achievements in Kerala has been the persistence of social group differences (horizontal inequalities) despite such a growth process" (Government of Kerala,2006:59).

Returning to the question of the higher rate and incidence of crime in Kerala, the second factor could be more sincere recording of data by Kerala police. For example, 89% of all cognisable crimes under IPC are chargesheeted by Kerala police as opposed to 74.6% in the case of Bihar. The corresponding ratios for murders is 90% in Kerala and 79.3% in Bihar (Government of India,2007: table 4.4). Likewise, conviction rate (namely the ratio of the number of convictions to the total number of cases tried) is 44% in Kerala compared to 16% in Bihar¹⁷. Another indicator of 'humane' policing in Kerala is from the incidence of police firing. One would expect that a high rate of riots

¹⁵ Heterogeneity, particularly, religious heterogeneity does not automatically lead to violence. However, it can be an indirect and preliminary indicator of the potential for organised violence.

¹⁶ For example, though Kerala lacks heavy industrialisation, its labour is more unionised than in many other states.

¹⁷ Though conviction rate is better in Kerala than Bihar, many other states in India have far better conviction rates- for example, over 90% in Mizoram and Nagaland and over 80% in Manipur, and over 60% in Uttaranchal, Tamil Nadu and Chattisgarh. [Government of India, 2007: table 4.10].

in Kerala would correspond with a high-handedness of police in controlling mob, including through firing. In 2006, there were 1,363 instances of police firing for all states in India combined; 472 civilians and 62 policemen were killed. However, there were only two such incidents in Kerala and no one was killed. In Bihar, there were 14 incidents of police firing and 8 civilians and 6 policemen were killed. (Government of India, 2007:table 14.1).

The third contributing factor to 'reporting effect' is that the more educated citizens of Kerala are likely to be more willing to report crimes to the police than in other states such as Bihar where the proportion of population who are literate is smaller. Literacy rate in Kerala is 90.9% (and highest among Indian states) compared to Bihar's 47% (the lowest among all Indian states). An indicator of the literacy effect is how the principals (i.e., the citizens) hold police accountable, for example through complaints against the police. In Bihar, only 58 complaints were made against the police in 2006- and in almost all cases, a judicial inquiry was initiated. In contrast, in Kerala 1718 complaints were made and in a great majority of these cases, a departmental inquiry was initiated- in only 1 case, a judicial inquiry was launched.

While we do not yet have data on state-wide governance indicators similar to the international indicators compiled by Kaufman et al, from the above details we can conjecture that Kerala would have higher scores on voice and rule of law indicators than Bihar.

The extent to which state governments behave in a fiscally responsible manner can also be an indicator of the quality of governance. From the Twelfth Finance Commission's report (Government of India,2005) we have some details. For the period 2005-2010, the total non-plan expenditure for Bihar was estimated to be Rs 1,272 billion; against this, the state's own tax and non-tax revenue (income) was projected to be Rs 220 billion (or income is approximately one fifth of planned expenditure). The corresponding figures for Kerala are: Rs 1,064 billion of non-plan expenditure and Rs 719 billion of tax and non-tax income (or income is approximately three fourths of planned expenditure). State government spending (aggregate) on education and health is much higher in Kerala than in Bihar. Of the total non plan expenditure for the five years, compensation and assignment to local bodies is less than 0.02 per cent in Bihar and 0.5 per cent in Kerala¹⁸. After the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments of 1992, there has been a statutory framework for local government in all states. However, democratic decentralisation is considered to have been more effective in Kerala because of the mass participation of citizens through gram sabhas or village assemblies, which was utilised by the Communist Party (CPM) when it was elected in 1996, as a means to expand its reach beyond its traditional base. The so called People's Campaign for Decentralised Planning, or Campaign for short attempted to rally through mass mobilisation experts, volunteers and

¹⁸ These figures from the National Finance Commission relate only to the funds devolved by the federal government. A significant share of local government finance comes from state finances. These are supposed to be allocated by State Finance Commissions.

local people to get involved in planning process. Thomas Isaac (2000: 7) noted that:

“...One of the major achievements of the Campaign has been the success in adapting the grama sabhas to suit the specific conditions of Kerala and to make them effective vehicles of citizen participation in the decision making process. In more than 100 panchayats the ideal of direct participation in governance is being realised through a network of neighborhood groups. Special emphasis has been given in the Campaign for the promotion of such community and beneficiary networks.”

Heller (2000) points out that in the Campaign, a technocratic incremental approach was rejected and instead a ‘big bang’ of financial devolution was used along with popular mobilisation banking on the previous successes of popular science movements in the state.

Putting all the above arguments together we can draw some inferences about the Kerala-Bihar paradox in particular and ‘violence of urbanisation’ thesis in general. Violence and crime are manifestations of governance failures. Observed association between urbanisation and violence needs to be examined carefully to uncover the underlying channels of interactions. Where the necessary institutions emerge, voice and accountability can be improved and this enhanced voice and accountability can monitor the policing institutions. In this ‘virtuous’ interaction mode, institutions can work to improve personal safety such that crimes such as homicide decrease. A higher headline crime rate may persist but it may be partly a result of *income effect* and *reporting effect*. Where accountability institutions exist, citizens may be more forthcoming to report crime and therefore, reported crime rate may go up. In the ‘vicious’ interaction mode, however, urbanisation can erode popular institutions and accountability mechanisms of policing. In such contexts, the higher headline crime rate may be caused by a significant increase in serious and violent crime including homicides and police brutality. The role of voice and ‘horizontal’ accountability through participation and active network of civil society institutions may be crucial in determining whether the urbanisation process in a society moves towards the ‘virtuous’ or ‘vicious’ equilibrium¹⁹.

4. Trust and governance

As already mentioned in the introduction, one way to probe deeper into institutions and governance is to pursue the formation of trust. Where good quality communications exist between the principals and agents and credibility of contracts has been established through repeated interactions, the extent of trust can be expected to increase. While this is a rather simple narration of the process, in the studies by Uslaner (2001 and 2007) the above kind of trust is referred to as ‘strategic trust’ as opposed to generalised or moralistic trust. Uslaner points out that strategic trust is not premised on a pessimistic view of the world but simply on the uncertainty. On the other hand, moralistic trust is

¹⁹ Morris and Klesner (2008) also allude to the possibility of circular causation between lack of trust and corruption.

normative and predicated upon a positive world view about the behaviour of others. Generalised trust depends on moralistic trust but that they are not one and the same thing. In Uslaner's view, the continuum between generalised and particularised trust is somewhat similar to Putnam's concepts of 'bonding' and 'bridging' capital. However, Uslaner differs from Putnam in that for Uslaner: "...it is not the types of organisation that determines whether you will develop trust, but rather the type of trust you have that determines your level of civic engagement" (Uslaner,2001:7-8)

There is evidence to the effect that trust and better quality governance co-exist. Of course, there are problems of endogeneity and also circular causation- namely, trust may not be the cause but a result of good governance. However, trust can be used as an indicator of the quality of institutions (and the extent to which they encompass both formal rules and informal norms of behaviour, in the definition of institutions given by North). Ikeda and Kobayashi (2007) point out that evidence presented so far on the relationship between trust and participation is inconclusive. Based on analysis of data for seven East Asian countries, they find a weak support for the hypothesis that social trust is positively associated with political participation. They notice a somewhat paradoxical result that political participation is positively associated with having short cut to access resources in terms of knowing someone ('having personal connection with powerful others'). Their explanation is that citizens may be actively participating in political processes and vote to return the favour received from such powerful elites previously.

Some preliminary results for India

Though data similar to East Asia Barometer are not yet available for South Asia, some data available from opinion polls and surveys conducted by CSDS for CNNIBN.

A question in these surveys asks respondent to express their trust in the chief minister and other political leaders on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 means a great deal of trust and 10 means no trust.

Table 1: Trust in state chief minister in 2006 and 2007

Steps on ladder of trust	Bihar January 2006	Bihar January 2007	Kerala January 2006	Kerala January 2007
1 (great deal of trust)	61.3	52.2	16.2	38.7
2	15.1	17.2	11.9	10.5
3	7.0	8.4	17.4	10.3
4	4.1	6.7	12.2	32.4
5	3.9	5.5	14.2	4.0
6	1.0	3.8	13.2	2.5
7	0.8	1.9	10.9	1.3
8	0.8	2.7	2.5	0.2
9	2.9	0.3	0.0	0.0
10 (no trust)	3.1	1.3	1.5	0.2

Source: CSDS (CNN IBN Poll) 2007

We notice that in the case of Bihar there has been a slight reduction in the level of trust in chief minister while in Kerala there has been a significant increase, owing to State elections that were held in April-May 2006 when CPM and CPI led coalition won the elections and formed the government. This could be foreseen from the fact the 'state leader 2' had higher level of trust than the then incumbent chief minister.

While we do not have details on generalised level of trust, in another poll in July 2006, we have some comparative details on the four southern states. One of the questions asked respondents: 'thinking of different dimensions of development which of these four states would you say is the best in terms of safety and security of life and property'.

Table 2: Opinion about safety and security of life and property

	Andhra Pradesh	Karnataka	Kerala	Tamil Nadu
Andhra Pradesh	54.9	8.8	4.8	19.0
Karnataka	15.3	62.5	11.4	15.4
Kerala	14.0	14.4	74.3	15.0
Tamil Nadu	14.3	11.0	9.4	50.5
No opinion	1.5	3.2	0.0	0.0

Source: CSDS – CNNIBN Southern states survey, 2006.

Results shown in table 2 indicate that almost three out of every four citizens in Kerala think that Kerala is the best state in terms of safety and security of life and property.

Another question in the same poll asked respondents as to how safe they feel living in the city where they were. The responses are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Opinions about safety in selected states in India

	Safe	A little unsafe	Unsafe	No opinion
Andhra Pradesh	65.1	30.6	3.4	0.9
Karnataka	67.0	26.2	4.1	2.6
Kerala	50.6	31.7	15.7	2.0
Tamil Nadu	42.5	48.9	5.0	3.6
Maharashtra	68.6	25.3	5.2	1.0
Delhi	21.1	63.2	13.7	2.1
West Bengal	82.5	14.0	3.5	0.0

Source: CSDS- CNNIBN Southern states survey 2006

The responses seem to be somewhat puzzling because within the same survey, respondents seem to be expressing somewhat different views about safety in Kerala. Though a majority of people in Kerala feel that the city they live in is safe, among the seven states considered here, Kerala had the highest proportion of people who thought that it was unsafe. Respondents were also asked whether compared to a few years ago whether they felt more safe or less safe. These responses are shown in table 4.

Table 4: More or less safe now than a few years ago: opinions in selected states in India

	More safe	Less safe	Same as before	No opinion
Andhra Pradesh	33.4	21.1	42.1	3.4
Karnataka	34.6	41.2	21.0	3.2
Kerala	24.5	43.2	27.9	4.4
Tamil Nadu	32.7	48.7	16.0	2.6
Maharashtra	32.0	38.1	26.3	3.6
Delhi	7.4	55.8	33.7	3.2
West Bengal	54.0	12.0	33.5	0.5

Source: CSDS- CNNIBN Southern states survey 2006

In five of the seven states more people seem to feel that it was less safe in 2006 than a few years before. On the whole, these results seem to suggest that perceptions of safety and satisfaction with economic conditions may be interrelated. They also seem to be affected to some extent by the level of trust citizens have in political leadership – though this is a very preliminary conjecture.

The Kerala experience seems to suggest that through policy steps can be taken to facilitate active participation in governance processes through people's movements. However, such mobilisation seems to have worked in Kerala because of the history and long tradition of such institutions (in the sense of Fukuyama, 1995; and Putnam et al, 1993) and high level of generalised trust (in the sense of Uslaner, 2001) due to high levels of literacy, education, and capabilities on the one hand and exposure to various sources of ethical values (for example, religion but also an egalitarian ethic inherent in communist political philosophy). Local governance in Kerala seems to

suggest that the existence and involvement of vibrant civil society has been crucial. This model of 'co-governance' or social governance may lead to multiple layers of accountability and thus increase trust. It appears that fiscal decentralisation and financial autonomy of local government units were also important factors. Along with the Campaign, a significant volume of resources were devolved to local government units. Thus, urgency was created for popular participation in the planning process so that resources can be directed to programmes which are most needed. With regard to the question is there evidence to suggest that increased voice results in less violence, the cross-country international data seems to provide some support. Previous work by Varshney (2002) suggested that inter-ethnic civic engagement (bridging social capital) is crucial in explaining why some cities remain peaceful while others face frequent communal violence. Though I have not examined the issue of inter-ethnic violence, the issue of criminality in general suggests that voice and accountability mechanisms may indeed contribute to a reduction in violence. However, political decentralisation in itself may result in decentralisation of corruption and elite capture which can be much more difficult to monitor and control (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2000). The work of MKSS in India suggests that right to information can be crucial in improving accountability in the functioning of local government institutions. In an exploration based on Oxfam's work in selected countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe, we find that even where right to information does not exist, civil society institutions can use approaches such as participatory budgeting and other such mechanisms to improve communication processes between the local government and the citizens (Anand and Jenkins, 2008).

5. Conclusions

Why do many citizens feel that the city where they live is less safe now than it was a few years ago? This seems to be in line with the 'violence of urbanisation' thesis. However, the discussion in this paper also highlights that relationships between violence and urban growth are complex and multi-faceted. The exploration here suggests that institutions may play a crucial role in influencing whether urban societies move towards a virtuous or a vicious circle. In the virtuous circle, even though overall crime rate may appear to be high, the composition of crimes shifts to less serious offences and much of the increase in crime rate can be explained by income effect, population effect, and the reporting effect. However, in the absence of necessary oversight institutions that encourage and facilitate participation, a top-down, and a predominantly legal and prescriptive approach to crime may not be effective. The roles of voice and political stability suggest that improving governance institutions may be crucial to improving personal safety and reducing violence associated with urbanisation. The discussion on Kerala-Bihar paradox helps to highlight many of these issues. This discussion also suggests that the role of civil society organisations seems to be an important one. A number of civil society or non-governmental organisations are functioning in Asia – whether they contribute to generalised trust which in turns leads to better interaction between citizens and the state institutions (Putnam thesis) or whether they thrive in contexts where governance institutions already facilitate the emergence of generalised trust (Uslaner thesis) is unclear.

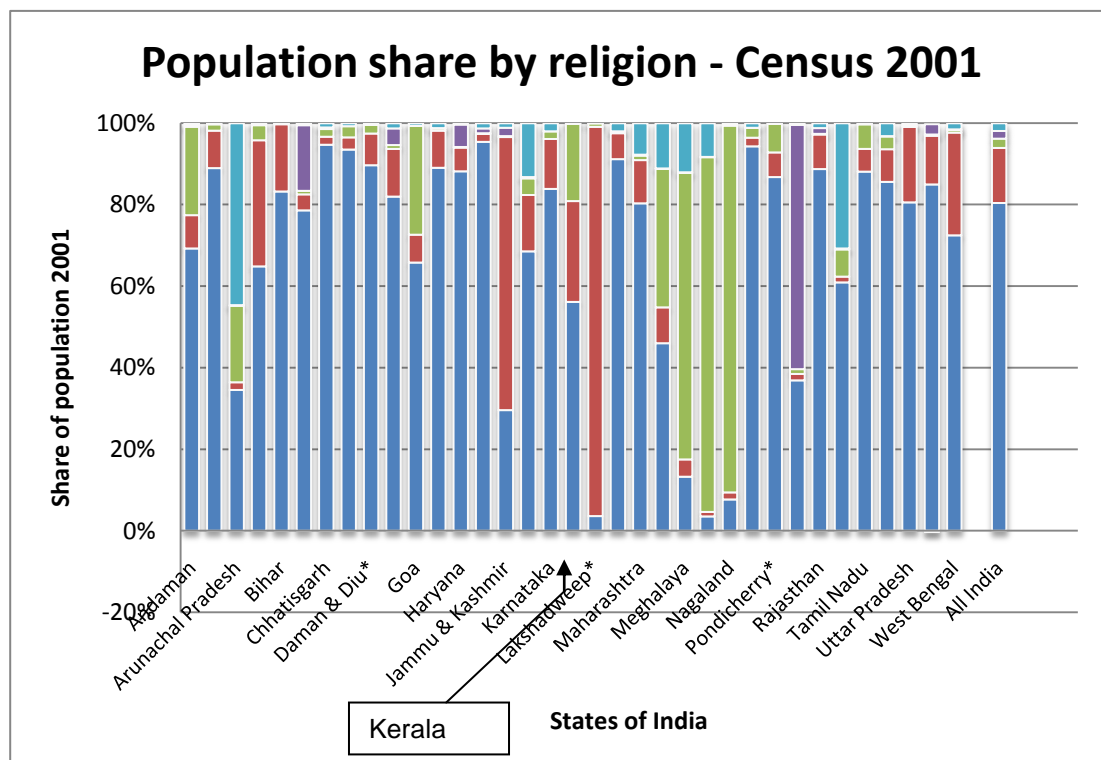
There is a need to examine further a number of issues. We need to identify the conditions that lead to development of social or generalised trust and how this influences or is influenced by trust in governance institutions. The East Asia studies (Ikeda and Kobayashi, 2007) and the Mexico study (Morris and Klesner, 2008) both suggest that these two forms of trust are independent from each other, though there is scope for each influencing the other. The Indian case study has given us an opportunity to make some tentative explorations to examine the divergence in the development of trust within a given cultural and value context. This needs to be further examined through careful and in depth studies such as through instruments created for this purpose and through case studies. In this paper, we have used the number of complaints against the police as an indicator of accountability of police; there is a need to explore further the governance of police institutions and the design of effective consultation and participation mechanisms in the governance of such institutions.

Appendix 1: Details of incidence and rate of crime (IPC) 2006

	Bihar Incidence Of crime	Bihar Crime Rate	Kerala Incidence Of crime	Kerala Crime Rate
Murder	3,249	3.6	393	1.2
Attempt to commit murder	3,303	3.6	347	1.0
Culpable homicide not murder	326	0.4	87	0.3
Rape	1,232	1.3	601	1.8
Kidnapping and abduction-women and girls	1,084	1.2	202	0.6
Kidnapping and abduction-others	1,535	1.7	92	0.3
Dacoity	1,001	1.1	129	0.4
Preparation for dacoity	140	0.2	125	0.4
Robbery	2,169	2.4	3,531	3.9
Burglary	3,531	3.9	4,245	12.6
Auto theft	2,023	2.2	2,014	6.0
Other theft	9,729	10.7	3,417	10.1
Riots	8,259	9.0	6,365	18.9
Criminal breach of trust	1,054	1.2	299	0.9
Cheating	2,171	2.4	3,316	9.8
Counterfeiting	97	0.1	68	0.2
Arson	785	0.9	435	1.3
Hurt	12,674	13.9	19,105	56.7
Dowry deaths	1,188	1.3	25	0.1
Molestation	530	0.6	2,543	7.6
Sexual harassment	53	0.1	222	0.7
Cruelty by husband and relatives	1,689	1.8	3,708	11.0
Importation of girls	42	0	0	0
Causing death by negligence	2,860	3.1	49	0.1
Other IPC crimes	39,941	43.7	56,777	168.6
Total cognisable crimes	100,665	110.2	105,255	312.5

Source: Government of India, 2007.

Appendix 2: Share of population by religion- States of India



Source: Created based on data from Census of India, 2001

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