Maoist Conflict in India

An Annotated Bibliography

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Quantitative Studies on Maoism

Alok K. Bohara, Neil J. Mitchell, and Mani Nepal. 2006. "Opportunity, Democracy, and the Exchange of Political Violence: A Subnational Analysis of Conflict in Nepal." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50 (1): 108–128. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002705282872

Abstract: With more than 12,000 deaths in nine years, a homegrown Maoist insurgency, reinforced by ethnic and socioeconomic cleavages, has resulted in high levels of political violence and human rights violations in Nepal. With fresh district-level data and drawing on theoretical insights from both the conflict and human rights literatures, research that has relied primarily on cross-national comparisons, the authors develop and test hypotheses using a subnational research design. They find an exchange of violence between government and opposition forces that depends on the political and geographical opportunities for violence. Their findings contribute new evidence for the importance of geography but also suggest that democracy and social capital influence the selection of violence by both government and opposition.

Summary:

Aditya Dasgupta, Kishore Gawande, and Devesh Kapur. 2017. "(When) Do Antipoverty Programs Reduce Violence? India's Rural Employment Guarantee and Maoist Conflict." *Int Org* 71 (3): 605–632. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818317000236

Abstract: Theory and extensive evidence connect poverty and underdevelopment to civil conflict yet evidence on the impact of development programs on violence is surprisingly mixed. To break this impasse, we exploit a within-country policy experiment to examine the conditions under which antipoverty programs reduce violence. The rollout of India's National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme caused a large long-run reduction in Maoist conflict violence, as measured with an original data set based on local-language press sources. These pacifying effects were not uniform, however, but overwhelmingly concentrated in

districts with sufficient pre-existing local state capacity to implement the program effectively. The results demonstrate the potential for antipoverty programs to mitigate violent civil conflict by improving livelihoods, but also highlight the crucial role of state capacity in shaping these effects.

Summary:

This article exploits the unique roll-out of the NREGS program using a difference-in-difference analysis to assess the impact of the MNREGA on Maoist violence. They also account for the local state capacity using an index based on service delivery for the following: a paved road; ii) a primary school; iii) a primary health center; iv) and an agricultural credit cooperative. The authors use the total number of violent events and total fatalities as measures of conflict. They find that the roll-out of MNREGA causes a large long-run reduction in Maoist violence. However, this is largely in districts "with sufficient pre- existing local state capacity to implement the program effectively." . The data for the analysis comprises a district-level dataset using multiple local language press sources between 1999-2009.

Joseph Flavian Gomes. 2015. "The Political Economy of the Maoist Conflict in India: An Empirical Analysis." *World Development* 68:96–123. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2014.11.021

Abstract: We study the Maoist/Naxalite conflict in India by constructing a comprehensive district-level database combining conflict data from four different terrorism databases to socioeconomic and geography data from myriad sources. Using data on 360 districts for three time periods, we find that land inequality and lower incomes are important factors behind the conflict. Exploiting the micro structure of the data we show that growth of incomes of Scheduled Tribes significantly decreases the intensity of the conflict. Finally, we show that historical property rights institutions from colonial times that go back centuries affect present day conflict outcomes.

Summary:

To summarize the article, it says that. . .

Questions:

1) Is it true that the NSS data are representative at the district level? For Employment and Unemployment Survey, stratification at the district level only started with the in 2005-06(62nd round) onward. But perhaps it started earlier for the Household Consumer Expenditure Surveys;

2) How is land inequality calculated for the analysis? Were the binned nature of the landholdings data taken into account?;

3) Are NSS data a good source for measures of inequality? My understanding was that they tended to under-represent the rich households.