

Rural Development as a Strategy to Deter Migration in India - Re-Examining the Ideology of Cluster Development

Authors : Nandini Mohan, Thiruvengadam R. B.

Abstract : Mahatma Gandhi advocated that the true indicator of modern India lay in the development of its villages. This has been proven with the recent outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic and the surfacing predicament of our urban centers. Developed on the Industrialization model, the current state of the metropolis is of rampant overcrowding, high rates of unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, and resources to cater to the growing population. A majority of each city's strength composes of the migrant population, demonstrated through the migrant crisis, a direct repercussion of COVID-19. This paper explores the ideology of how rural development can act as a tactic to counter the high rates of rural-urban migration. It establishes the need for a rural push, as India is predominantly an agrarian economy, with a vast disparity between the urban and rural centers due to its urban bias. It seeks to define development in holistic terms. It studies the models of 'cluster' as conceptualized by V.K.R.V. Rao, and detailed by Architect Charles Correa in his book, The New Landscape. The paper reexamines the theory of cluster development through existing models proposed by the government of India. Namely, PURA (Provision of Urban Amenities in Rural Areas), DRI (Deendayal Research Institute), and Rurban under Shyama Prasad Mukharjee Rurban Mission. It analyses the models, their strengths, weaknesses, and reasons for their failure and success to derive parameters for the ideation of an archetype model. A model of rural development that talks of the simultaneous development of existing adjacent villages, by the introduction of set unique functions, that may turn into self-sustaining clusters or agglomerations in the future, which could serve as the next step for Indian village development based on the cluster ideology.

Keywords : counter migration, models of rural development, cluster development theory, India

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