

Review article

Correlates of rural development: A case study of Sadar development block of Pratapgarh District in Uttar Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

Rural development aims at improving the quality of life of rural people, and in the process infrastructure variables play a crucial role. India is the second most populous country in the world and the majority of its population lives in rural areas. Rural development has been India's prime concern ever since the time of independence, and several strategies and plans were implemented from time to time to achieve a better level of development. However, neither top-down, nor bottom-up strategies of development could bring the desired changes. This article attempts to identify some correlates of rural development and tries to understand why the desired level and pattern of development could not be achieved even after seven decades of the planning process. The study analyses the case of 'Sadar' development block of Pratapgarh district in Uttar Pradesh. The analysis of 10 selected variables reveals that there is a vast disparity in the level of development in the study area. However, the study shows that lack of basic education, health and credit facilities is the cause of this disparity and poor level of development. In view of the findings the author suggests that a 'local resource-oriented development strategy' should be adopted to ensure the holistic development of the rural areas.

KEY WORDS: rural development, development disparity, planning period, development block, z-score, regression

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1. Introduction

The term 'rural' may be applied to a geographical area that is not 'urban'. In a broader sense this is an area where the economic is based on primary activities. This less diversified and low market value economy base keeps the rural world at the receiving end of its economic and infrastructural development. While the socio-economic and political factors play a crucial role in the rural development process, their differences cause a heterogeneity in the level of development.

With the growing concern over the holistic growth of rural areas, several strategies were evolved to address the challenges of development. Most prominent among these were the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' strategies. In the 'top-down', or urban-industrial growth-oriented approach, the rural areas were perceived as culturally backward and economically marginal. This model for rural

development was highly pursued by most of the European countries during 1960s-70s. But soon it was felt that this 'dependent-development' model was not able to address the diverse challenges of rural areas. There was growing evidence that this model had produced a distorted pattern of development due to its focus on selective sectors, business types and settlements which left others behind (TERLUIN, 2003). This development approach neglected the cultural-environmental aspects and the geographic heterogeneity of rural space (ALLMENDINGER & HAUGHTON, 2012). Failure of the exogenous development model to deliver a holistic rural development prompted planners to think about an endogenous 'from within' paradigm for rural development. This 'bottom-up' development approach values regional distinctiveness and views local human and physical capital as the driving forces of development (SHUCKSMITH, 2000; RAY, 1999). Both of these models conceive development

as a function of resource mobilization, which may occur from top to bottom or from bottom to top. However, the neo-endogenous 'network development' theory of rural development states that development is a dynamic process that is based on a two-way communication and feedback relationship between 'top' (the growth centre) and 'bottom' (the resource centre) (HEALEY, 2004; SHORTALL & SHUCKSMITH, 1998). This model opines that active participation of both the development agents - the state and also the community, is needed for capacity building and quality improvement of rural life, and this mixing of both these forces can be attained by network development. According to this approach, the accessibility of an area determines the level of development there (HARRIS & HOOPER, 2004; ROBERTS, 2003; GOODWIN, 1998). It is this influence, that causes remote rural areas to face a resource drain and migration of their residents towards accessible rural areas, which in turn become 'zones of accumulation' or 'growth points' as they receive inputs from both the urban and also the remote rural areas.

In India, a large number of studies have been carried out to measure the development disparities at different scales of spatial units namely states (NATH, 1979; BHAT ET.AL., 1982; DHOLAKIA, 2003; GULATI, 2012), National Sample Survey Regions (KUNDU & RAZA, 1982), districts (MITRA, 1967; KRISHNAN, 1984; NASEER, 2004; DIWAKAR, 2009) and talukas (RAMCHANDRA & RAGHU, 1987; BANERJEE, 1992; BERRY, 1964; MISRA & PRAKASA RAO, 1974; SMITH, 1979; SUNDARAM, 1983; KUMAR, 1990) etc. and it was observed that infrastructure is the most crucial element in the process of rural development as it affects basic as well as non-basic functions of any regional unit.

India is a country of villages with 70% of its population living in rural areas. During the planning periods, there have been shifting strategies for rural development. The first Five Year Plan (1951-56) adopted the community development strategy for growth of the rural areas. However, it was felt that growth of the agricultural sector was equally important and as a result, the theme of co-operative farming remained central during the Second Plan (1956-61). Even after serious efforts, no significant improvement could be noticed, and to meet the challenge, the Panchayati Raj System was re-strengthened during the Third Plan (1961-66). The Fourth Plan (1969-74) focused on the development of backward regions while the eradication of rural poverty became the theme of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79). However, the need to strengthen the socio-economic base for

ensuring faster development of rural areas, was greatly felt and, therefore, the 'Integrated Rural Development Programme' was launched during the Sixth Plan (1980-85). Going a step further, the skill development schemes were introduced during the Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) to enhance employment opportunities and to strengthen the economic base of the rural population. Strengthening the rural infrastructure to enhance the quality of life was the thrust of the Eight Plan period (1992-97). The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) kept its focus on the people's participation in the planning process. Enhancing rural connectivity, access to basic services and improving the quality of life were the objectives of the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007). The Eleventh Plan (2007-2012) was aimed towards faster and more inclusive growth with the view of securing the livelihoods of the rural poor. Reducing regional imbalance and strengthening the human capital of rural areas was the focus of the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17).

Apart from their broad objectives and huge budget allocations, these Five Year Plans have miserably failed to achieve the rural development goals due to their poor implementation and monitoring mechanisms. The focus of this article is, however, not to discuss the causes of institutional failure of these plans, rather it attempts to identify the causal factors responsible for rural development disparity in India. For analysis at a micro (village) level, the study takes the case of 'Sadar' development block of Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh state of India.

2. The study area

The Sadar block of Pratapgarh district lies between 25°48' and 26° North latitudes and 81°52' and 82°3' East longitudes in the middle of west Ganga plain. The geographical area of the block is 193 square kilometers of which 61% of the land is cultivable. But only 67% of this culturable area is irrigated and the rest of the land is highly dependent on monsoonal rain for the survival of its crops.

Administratively Sadar block is one of the 17 development blocks of Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. The total population of the block is 200641, constituted of 51% males and 49% females. The sex ratio of Sadar block is 967 and the total literacy rate is 75% with a notable difference of 22% in the male to female literacy rate. There are three towns (Bela Pratapgarh, Pratapgarh City and Katra Mediniganj) and 135 villages in Sadar block, and only 7% of the population lives in urban areas.

3. Methods

The study is mainly based on the 2011 Census data. The demographic details and the availability of basic infrastructural facilities were obtained from the Census of India. There were 10 variables altogether that were chosen to measure the pattern of development disparity at village level. The variables that were identified to measure the development in the study area are:

- X₁: Primary Schools
- X₂: Middle School
- X₃: Secondary School
- X₄: Senior Secondary School
- X₅: Arts and Science Degree College
- X₆: Community/ Primary Health Centre
- X₇: Primary Health Sub Centre
- X₈: Family Welfare Centre
- X₉: Post Office
- X₁₀: Commercial Bank

The data for these variables for 135 villages of Sadar block of Pratapgarh was standardized using the z-score technique to get a composite development index of all the development variables.

Multivariate correlation analysis was performed to see the correlation among different development variables. Further, t-test was used to test the significance of correlation at 0.05 and 0.01 significance level. Stepwise regression analysis was also performed to see the variance of different parameters with the level of development.

4. Results

Figure 1 shows the level of development of villages in the Sadar block of Pratapgarh district. Based on the development score, the villages were put into five groups: (a) Under developed (score below 0); (b) Poorly developed (0-4.9); (c) Moderately developed (5-9.9), (d) Comparatively developed (10-14.9) and Better developed (15 and above). As many as 90 villages were categorized as under developed; 28 were poorly developed; 12 moderately developed, 4 villages namely Ranjitpur Chibila, Sakrauli, Kohda, and Nariya were placed in the category of comparatively developed and only one village - Pratapgarh was considered to be better developed.

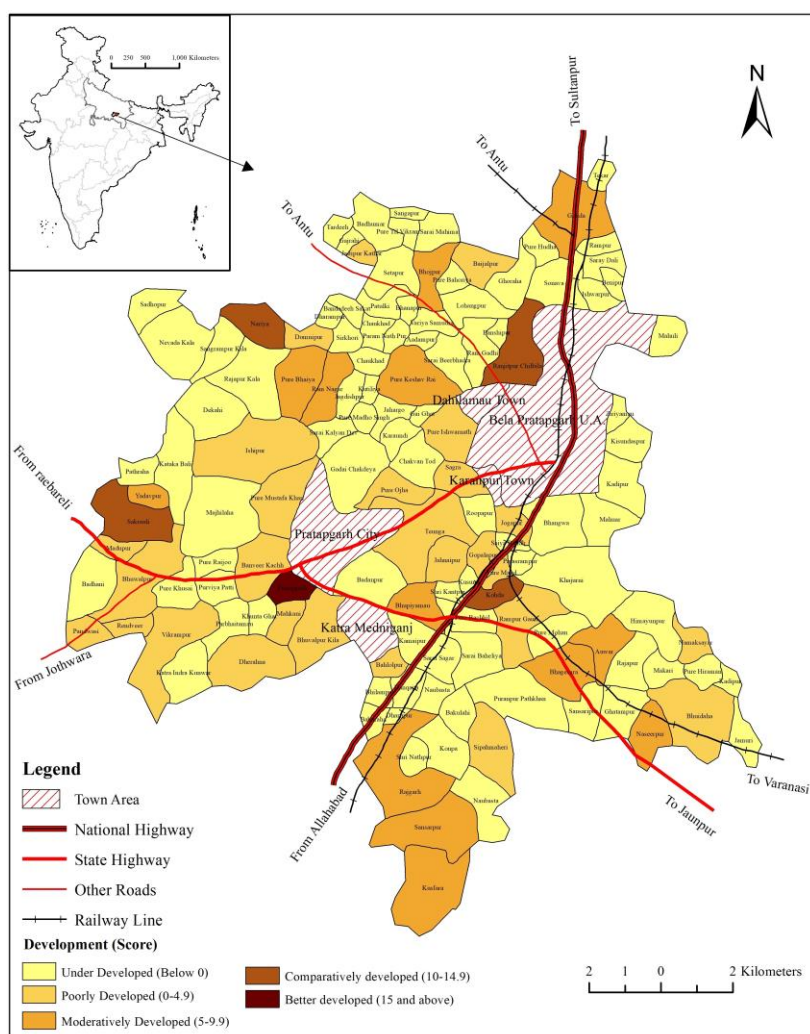


Fig. 1. Level of development of villages in Pratapgarh Sadar block

It is noteworthy that Figure 1 does not fully support the common thesis that the villages lying in the close vicinity of towns, or along roads, are better developed. It is evident that while the villages surrounding Pratapgarh city and Katra Mediniganj towns and situated in between Bela-Pratapgarh and Katra Mediniganj-Pratapgarh City are better developed while most of the villages lying around Bela-Pratapgarh Urban Agglomeration are under-developed.

Table 1 displays the correlation between different development parameters. The insignificant correlation values are meaningless and do not convey any notable association. However, all the significant correlations are positive and clearly show that infrastructure variables may boost the development potential of the companion variable. This is very important for policy perspectives

that the judicious installation of services and infrastructure facilities in the rural countryside can make the development process healthier and faster.

Table 2 shows the stepwise-regression results of selected development parameters. The model results clearly demonstrate that a basic education is the crux of rural development and the presence of a middle school (X_2) alone explains 40% of the variance of the model. The second most important variable for rural development is a banking and credit facility (X_{10}) and with the addition of the basic education service, it explains more than 60% of the variance of development. The next notable variable is the availability of a health service. Undoubtedly the primary health sub-centre (X_7) assures the reach of medical facilities in rural areas, and with basic education and banking services, it explains 71% variance of development.

Table 1. Inter-correlation matrix of various development variables

	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4	X_5	X_6	X_7	X_8	X_9	X_{10}
X_1	1									
X_2	0.51**	1								
X_3	0.27**	0.49**	1							
X_4	0.12	0.27**	0.51**	1						
X_5	0.02	0.08	-0.03	-0.03	1					
X_6	0.03	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	1				
X_7	0.03	0.14	0.25**	0.40**	-0.01	0.15	1			
X_8	-0.05	0.02	-0.04	-0.04	-0.01	-0.02	-0.02	1		
X_9	0.34**	0.26**	0.15	0.15	-0.04	-0.01	0.15	-0.05	1	
X_{10}	0.19*	0.16	0.14	0.34**	-0.02	-0.03	0.27**	-0.02	0.48**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 2. Model results of stepwise regression of the determinants of development

Model	R	R Square	Std. error of the estimate	Predictors
1	0.64	0.40	3.55	X_2
2	0.78	0.61	2.89	X_2 ; X_{10}
3	0.85	0.71	2.47	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7
4	0.88	0.77	2.22	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3
5	0.90	0.82	1.99	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6
6	0.93	0.86	1.76	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6 ; X_1
7	0.95	0.90	1.49	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6 ; X_1 ; X_8
8	0.97	0.94	1.14	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6 ; X_1 ; X_8 ; X_5
9	0.96	0.97	0.81	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6 ; X_1 ; X_8 ; X_5 ; X_9
10	1.00	1.00	0.00	X_2 ; X_{10} ; X_7 ; X_3 ; X_6 ; X_1 ; X_8 ; X_5 ; X_9 ; X_4

The regression result shows that high order services like Community/ Primary Health Centre (X₆), Family Welfare Centre (X₈), Post Office (X₉), Arts and Science Degree College (X₅), Senior Secondary School (X₄) and Secondary School (X₃) also have their role in the rural development process, however, they come only after the primary requirements of basic education, health and credit facilities are fulfilled.

5. Conclusions

The analysis reveals that there is a vast range of regional disparity within the study area and most of the villages are underdeveloped and are in a deplorable condition. Out of 135 villages in the study, there are only 5 which are at a comparatively better level of development. The results show that most of the villages lack basic services like primary education, health and credit facilities. It is quite strange that having completed 12 Five Year Plans and many other rural development initiatives, even the basic services are still missing in rural India. The results indicate that development could easily be achieved by fulfilling the basic needs, however, these could not be addressed due to the unthoughtful focus on the market oriented top-down development strategy for the rural areas. The holistic development of rural India will only be a dream until a 'Local Resource Oriented Development Strategy' is adopted.

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