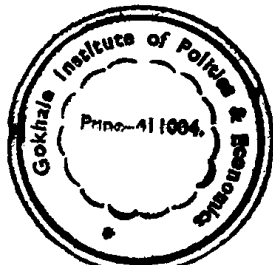


REGIONAL AND DISTRICT PLANNING :
CONCEPTS, EXPERIENCES AND APPROACHES
(A REVIEW OF LITERATURE)



A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
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BY
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The existence of regional imbalances in economic development is a problem facing many countries at present. Growing concern with regional inequalities and the consequent search for alternative theories to explain this phenomenon, have resulted in a vast amount of literature since the late 1950s. It was Myrdal in 1957 and Hirschman in 1958, who initially questioned the validity of traditional trickle down, spread effects and convergence hypotheses to show that an exclusive reliance on market mechanism for redressing disparities can only worsen these disparities by draining the resources of peripheral regions in the vicinity of the more developed regions.

The concept of regional planning was mainly developed to tackle such problems of regional imbalances in development. The developed countries of the West were early starters in this field. Regional planning in these countries was, initially, used for curing the problems of depressed and congested regions. But soon it was realized that for effective national planning, regional approach is indispensable.

The countries of the Third World are late starters in this field. The origin and the nature of the socio-economic spatial structure and hence the regional problems, in these

countries, have been influenced by the external colonial domination. But these countries pay little attention to such qualitative differences and blindly adopt the regional planning concepts and strategies developed in the Western countries. There has been a rather slow realization that these strategies are mostly irrelevant to the completely different socio-economic conditions of the Third World. The Third World countries should build indigenous strategies that would suit their peculiar socio-economic conditions.

The Socialist Countries, like U.S.S.R. and Poland, adopt a very comprehensive approach to regional planning. The Third World Countries can fruitfully learn from the regional planning methods and their scientific and theoretical foundations developed in these countries. Regional planning without science and theory would be a blind venture. Hence international exchange of experiences can be highly useful for developing regional planning methods and techniques.

Elimination of regional imbalances in development continues to be one of the principal objectives of economic planning in India right from the beginning. But, the problem of imbalances in development still exists. Such imbalances in development lead to disparities in income, wealth^{and}/employment opportunities among the inhabitants of different States or different districts of a particular State. Discontent that arises out of these reasons often gets reflected in social tensions and agitations, which may pose a threat to national progress and integrity. A nation that is very much bent upon

creating a socialistic pattern of society cannot allow these imbalances to persist for long. India has been trying to develop its vast backward areas through various policy measures and recently the idea of regional, district and block level planning has been accepted for the same reason.

This dissertation is a modest attempt to review the regional planning experiences in some of the developed capitalist countries, socialist countries and the developing countries. An effort is made to understand how this international experience in regional planning (both the success and failures), can be helpful for India.

ORGANIZATION

Chapter 1 starts with a review of the theories explaining dualistic development.

Chapter 2 briefly deals with the rationale for regional planning and the experience of some of the developed capitalist countries in this field. Likewise the experience of the Third World countries of Latin America, Africa and Asia is dealt with in Chapter 3. Similarly Chapter 4 deals with the experience of the Socialist Countries.

Chapter 5 discusses the evolution and the present state of regional planning in India. The needed re-directions in the policy are also stated.

Chapter 6 reviews the progress of district planning in India and particularly in Maharashtra. After discussing

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the present state of district planning it seemed necessary to give a brief account of the approaches to district planning. This is done in Chapter 7.

Finally in Chapter 8, concluding remarks are presented.

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