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ASSIGNMENT COVER

REGION: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Harare\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAM: **Masters of Social sciences in Development Studies\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_INTAKE: \_\_3\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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COURSE NAME: **Rural Development\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** COURSE CODE: \_\_\_\_**\_\_MSDS 511**

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ASSIGNMENT TITLE: Growth Points can generally be defined as settlements (rural or urban) which central and local government consider to have potential for further development hence, need to be supported by further through public and private sector investment. In the context of your country, evaluate the plausibility of Growth Points as a rural development strategy. (100)

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**Evaluate the plausibility of Growth Points as a rural development strategy**

Definition of Growth Point

Growth points are centres that provide commercial ,administrative and industrial functions to rural communities. They have potential for further development and are supported by public and private sector investments.

Growth points are centres of economic activity ,which are artificially stimulated in disadvantaged regions with the intention that they will improve the quality of life as a result of triggering production and a chain of associated services

The term growth point entails increasing the size ,the number of facilities ,services and infrastructure at the identified centre. Introduction

In Zimbabwe growth points are a plausible strategy for rural development .The concept of growth points was meant to decongest cities and towns .This would curb rural to urban migration through the availing of basic services and employment creation.

They are meant to develop into towns with own housing and industries. Investor such as commercial business people need to build and start viable businesses. (Wekwete K H 2001).

Aim of growth points

Growth points aim to transform rural service or business centre into economic hubs for development .Decentralization of services such as obtaining of birth certificates enabled local communities to access such services at growth points .The activities such as trading ,service function and industries in growth points would create jobs ,those coming from neighbourhood would actually commute to and from their rural home to thereby keeping the family intact but at the same time contributing to national development .

The growth point strategy is about decongesting urban cities by elevating rural business centres to growth point status in order to provide jobs and services thus avoiding rural to urban agreement. Houses were also built to accommodate people staying in growth points. It led to socio-economic development of rural areas through concertation of economic activities at rural areas. The aim was to spread development close to rural villages.

Rural to urban migration

Urbanization implies the geographic concentration of people and non-farming activities in urban environments ;therefore, the growth point strategy is about spreading the urbanization to rural areas. People normally move from rural areas to towns to search for jobs and better services unavailable in rural areas therefore congesting the urban areas and public service delivery .The sewage pipes started bursting due to excessive loads and clean water was scarce due to high consumption.

The construction of illegal housing structures and other social ills is a result of congested residential areas. To curb the harm of congested cities Zimbabwe adopted the growth point strategy. Local industries and businesses relocated to growth points creating employment opportunities for rural people. ( T Chagonda,2010)

In the colonial era people were restricted coming to large cities like Harare. Those working in Harare were not allowed to come with their families to the city.

Achievement of the growth point strategy

In Zimbabwe there was construction of efficient telephone links, rural electrification program, postal services , reform for trading , retail premises ,land ownership, ware houses, modernization of education facilities among others .The growth points were carefully selected to cover the whole country notably Magunje ,Mutoko and Mupandawana growth points. Growth points such as Magunje provides all basic infrastructure ,with a residential component and a wide range of services such as banks ,transport ,residential ,,hence it attracted all rural non farming activities The growth point strategy managed to bring basic services to the people, there is now no need to travel to cities for obtaining a birth or death certificate. Government offices decentralised including Angrite making life very easy for farmers. Farmers simple sell their produce at the growth point instead of driving to cities there by making more profits. . (Wekwete K H 2001).

Since vending dominate among economic activities at growth points it means poverty levels for most people drops. Other downstream businesses erupted such as carpentry and hardware’s due to increase in the population in growth points.(Chagonda ,2010)

Prostitution ,laziness and drug abuse of jobless youth was reduced as they could get jobs locally.

Growth Point Challenges

The small enterprises at growth points are not labour intensive and can only accommodate unskilled people leaving the educated still migrating to cities for jobs.

The local councils are also failing to attract investors or maintain the existing infrastructure such as covering road pot holes .Provision of residential stands to ease accommodation woes was also an issue .

Although some companies such as Econet are at most growth points some of the banks are still not available at growth points so people are still travelling to rural areas for the sack accessing their salaries. (Semu L 2001).

*Mutoko*

Although the government has build structures at the growth point such Grain Marketing Board there is no meaningful private sector investment .Most of the retail outlets are shops and beer outlets .

Some of the youths are relying on farming as a source of employment .The quarrying activities have resulted in heavy citation affecting the water sources for market gardening. Employment at the black granite quarries is also being done corruptly with some youth being asked to bring goats as bribes .The quarry owner are consuming the natural resource with no reasonable benefit.

Some of the youths are now living as refugees in South Africa away from their families since the growth points are still under developed .

Some of the state buildings in Mutoko are incomplete ,while some of the completed ones never operated due to viability problems. Some of the dilapidated structures are now havens of criminal activities. ( Zinyama L M ,2001)

*Magunje*

Cotton granaries and tobacco sales offices are still not located at the growth point. Farmers travel very far to Harare to sell their tobacco, were they spent weeks sleeping outside. This is quite risk as some of the money is stolen by thieves .

Most of the farming is subsistence and the shops are mostly general dealers .So the growth point failed to stop rural to urban migration.

Magunje has been reduced to a mere dormitory town for agricultural labour

*Mupandawana*

The traditional leaders are not participating fully on growth point economic development since they feel they were not consulted .

The state is not allocating a sufficient budget for growth points. The national economic challenges also slow down economic growth for growth points.

The land reform left the growth points with no economic base for development.

The lack of capacity by the council to collect rubbish bins, supply clean water and repair roads is also chasing away investors .

At Mupandawana there is no space for expansion as some villagers are not willing to release their land .This overlapping of growth point and villages also causes accidents as unattended goats ,donkeys and cattle are seen on the roads. (Zinyama L M 2001)

*Zhombe*

There is need for establishment of rural firms for rural milling and rural abattoirs to increase rural cash flow. The small gold panners have not been able to develop Zhombe there is need for big business to invest.

Thus, the absence of viable economic activities at growth points meant less employment opportunities.

The prices of goods in most growth point shops are higher than in cities due to transport costs ,so some customers bring their groceries from the city.

The fact that large firms retrenched staff saw growth points overcrowded with desperate job hunters . ( T Chagonda,2010)

Private Sector Investment

Private investors feared that the buying power for rural communities was fluctuating due to harvesting seasons .If they have few produces to sell ,there lower buying power .

The small shops failed to generate enough employment for school leavers .

If a growth point has a small resource base ,it will fail to attract investors.( Rambanepasi C.O ,1990 )

Government Investment

The government can now eradicate inequalities by providing basic administrative services locally to effectively serve the rural communities in order to set a wave of modernisation to once marginalised rural communities through various development projects.

The state also promoted physical development of the growth points such as schools and health facilities. It also gave incentives for those companies willing to establish at growth points with the aim to attract potential investors. The state builds good roads to connect the growth points to cities. Such development included water reticulation, internal roads ,sewage, electricity and community services in order to lure business entrepreneurs.

The government has been spearheading rural electrification program and also tele communication boosters’ installations. New health centres and schools were build in the growth point residential areas and since growth points had basic services, they also managed to attract skilled staff . (Wekwete K H 2001).

The state improved the attractiveness of growth points as a potential investment area for private investors.

Conclusion

For growth point strategy to be successful there is need to channel resources to development .

There is need for mega investment of industries close to raw materials ,for example mango and tomato processing industry in Mutoko which is the highest supplier of those raw materials .This will go a long way in reducing unemployment and also cut costs for transporting unprocessed raw material. Value addition of the black granite must done in Mutoko and avoid exporting unprocessed rocks

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