

Infrastructural Constraints to Socio-Economic Development in South 24 Parganas of West Bengal: A Case Study

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Abstract: How much basic infrastructure investment Physical, water and sanitation systems, new electricity lines, roads, storm water drainage, and other services provided at districts level society affords? What levels and types of subsidies for recurrent operating and maintenance costs assure that low-income people can meet their basic infrastructural service needs? These questions continue to bedevil policy makers. One reason is their failure to integrate into investment decision-making some basic aspects of socio-economic cost benefit analysis, covering a variety of direct, indirect, developmental, ecological and geographical factors. The direct economic benefits of infrastructure for low income people have long been recognized. Indirect benefits include more time and resources for women, dramatic environmental benefits, public health benefits (which require infrastructure of a sufficient quality so as to enhance rather than endanger health), and the desegregation of urban society (with respect to enhanced employment, educational and cultural opportunities). While there are often costs associated with large, new basic-infrastructure programmes, the benefits justify increased investment. If subsidies and tariffs are restructured to assure entitlement provision to plus rising block tariffs for higher use of resources, it appears possible to significantly augment what the government is presently suggesting as a minimum set of investment and service provision in its Municipal Infrastructure Investment framework.

Keywords: Infrastructure, Development, Financing and Policy

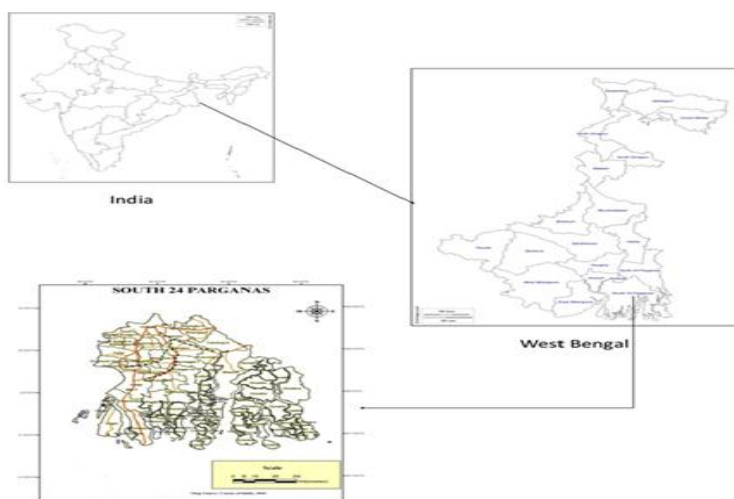
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I. INTRODUCTION

The economic progress of any region is directly linked with the development transportation System, railway, roads, waterways, and communication media, like radio, telephone, telegraph, postal system, economic activities, agriculture and industry. Empirical studies has Shown that economic linkages are vital for agriculture, industry and transport, ecotourism upliftment of South 24 Parganas. Under this backdrop, a part of the state of West Bengal has been selected as the area of study to establish the relationship between infrastructural development and economic growth in the area. A quantitative approach has been attempted to ascertain the objectives.

LOCATIONAL MAP



II. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The district of South 24 Parganas emerged out consisted of the erstwhile 24 Parganas district on the first day of March, 1986. It lays between 20° 20' North and 20° 06' North latitudes, 88° 20' East and 88° 16' East longitudes with a total area of 9960 Sq. km. This South 24 Parganas district, consisting of the Alipore (Sadana) subdivision and the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the undivided 24 Parganas district. This is bounded by North 24 Parganas, Kolkata district and partly by Bangladesh in the east. The Bay of Bengal marks the Southern boundary of the district and in the Western side the river Hooghly flows north to south separating the district from Howrah and East Medinpure districts. The district has 29 community development blocks and 312. Covering 3470 villages while the urban part of the district is constituted by 23 urban centers spreading over 7 municipalities. The Sundarban area contains 37 islands and has a reserve forest with an area of 1696.25 sq. km.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

a) ShyamalGhosh (1989), in his study on the “Ecological Aspects on Anti Social behavior in the township of South 24 Parganas”, has analysed the environment of the said area thoroughly and brings out the changes in the ecological balance and environments due to manmade causes.

b) Sarmila Das (1994) worked on the “Geographical Pattern of resource use in South 24 Parganas”. In the study she also points out the pattern of resource use and conservation of ecology.

IV. OBJECTIVES

The study aims at analyzing the relationship between the existing resource base, the potential development of land, transport network, ecotourism etc. and how the growth would help in economic development of south 24 Parganas. Economic planning would also be vital for a planned setup of infrastructure and balanced growth of the region.

The district, located in the delta region of the State, is a part of one vast plain, sloping very gently towards the sea. The Sundarbans area consists of low flat alluvial plains in the active delta region. In this region according to census 2001, the district has a population of 69, 09,015 of which 35, 64,241 are male and 33, 44,474 are female, giving with sex ratio of 938 (number of females per 1000 male). To make recommendation for the overall improvement in economic development of South 24 Parganas, about 53 percent of the working population is directly dependent on agriculture. A sizable part of the population is also engaged in fishing activities. The cultivated area is 403906 hectares. Although rice is the principal crop, cultivation of other cash crop such as cereals, oilseeds, water melons, fruits and vegetables is whole worthy. There are no major industrial centres in this region. However, some industries have come up in the Falta export processing zone. Also CESE has taken up a 500 MW thermal Power Plants Project at Pujali. The number of small industrial establishments in 2000 is 15502 employing 121370 persons. The South 24 Parganas are gifted with some great tourist spots. The low lying plains of the region are fertile with revering deposit and full of mangrove forests.

The nature of spatial correspondence between the indices of economic development, e.g. per capital income, consumption of electricity, industrial output gross domestic products, number of educational institutions, employment in primary, secondary and tertiary sector economy, Population, transport network and agriculture both comes qualitatively and quantitatively.

HYPOTHESIS

- Evolution of the existing infrastructural constraints area to assess their adequacy for intensive economic development.
- To study the present status of the basic indicators of economic development and the measures and projection for the constraints.
- To prepare planning and strategies for economic development to South 24 Parganas, West Bengal.

V. METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for the present investigation is divided into three segments. Pre-field interpretation, field survey and post-field interpretation and GIS analysis. The following steps will be followed for Pre-field interpretation, field survey and post-field interpretation to carry out the investigation. The research methodology to be followed is discussed below-

PRE - FIELD METHOD:

Includes a survey of literature in the libraries and internet sites on the various aspects of the district of South 24 Parganas, of West Bengal. It also includes the study of Block map, air Photographs, collection of Secondary data and map on the respective issue from different Government and non Government organization.

FIELD METHOD:

Includes collection of Primary data by questionnaire Schedule with the help of household and field survey.

POST-FIELD METHOD

Includes accumulation, verification, classification, tabulation and computation of the data with the help of proper statistical techniques. This stage is also associated with the preparation of map, charts, and diagrams.

VI. CONCLUSION

The district is rich economic resources. But the resource potential has not yet been fully utilized. The present study is expected to bring forth a conclusion which will substantiate the hypothesis that this area is highly economically. The study will help proper diagnosis of weakness of structure take care of all these in planning for over all development of the area.

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