

Strategies for De-Peripheralization; A Study of Coastal Wards in Thiruvananthapuram

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Abstract

The state of Kerala, India, is globally recognized for the "Kerala Model" of development, characterized by high human development indicators despite modest economic growth. Kerala, India, is internationally known for the "Kerala Model" of development, which is distinguished by strong human development indicators despite modest economic growth. However, this account masks significant intra-state spatial inequalities. The concept of inclusive development is put to the test by the multidimensional peripheralization that coastal fishing communities, especially in Thiruvananthapuram, endure on an ecological, social, economic, and spatial level.

The study develops a Composite Peripheralization Index (PI) across five dimensions geographical, ecological, economic, social, and demographic using 22 indicators obtained from Census 2011, Marine Fishery Census 2016, CMFRI data, NCESS erosion studies, and expert inputs (fuzzy Delphi technique). A weighted additive model is used to assess the fifteen coastal wards listed in the Thiruvananthapuram Master Plan 2040.

The findings show that peripheralization varies significantly, with PI values ranging from -0.35 (Poonthura, most peripheral) to +0.53 (Vellar, least peripheral). The main causes aren't population density but rather ecological fragility (coastal erosion, flooding, saline intrusion) and economic dominance dependent on fishing. In terms of infrastructural access, housing quality, tenure security, travel time, and occupational diversity, there is a distinct core-periphery split between CBD wards and coastal wards. Economic and social disadvantages are more accessible to legislative intervention than ecological degradation, which is essentially permanent.

The study results in the conclusion that coastal peripheralization of Thiruvananthapuram is a socially and politically constructed condition influenced by environmental factors, market dependence, and institutional ignorance. It suggests comprehensive de-peripheralization initiatives that prioritize increased transportation connectivity, tenure regularization, livelihood diversification, and ecological risk management.

Keywords

Peripheralization, De-peripheralization, Coastal wards, Core-periphery, Spatial justice, Peripheralization Index.