

M.A. Sociology Syllabus related Lecture Notes
On
Michael M. Cernea's Model of Major Impoverishment Risks in
Population Displacement
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**Reference: Michael M. Cernea's Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction:
A Model for Population Displacement and Resettlement (2002), The
Brookings Institution
(<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262688048>)**

Major Impoverishment Risks in Population Displacement **(Michael M. Cernea)**

- 1) Landlessness**
- 2) Joblessness**
- 3) Homelessness**
- 4) Marginalization**
- 5) Food Insecurity**
- 6) Increased Morbidity and Mortality**
- 7) Loss of Access to Common Property and Services**
- 8) Social Disarticulation**
- 9) Differential Risk Intensities**
- 10) Risks to Host Populations**

Landlessness

- The land is the natural and man-made capital because people's productive system, commercial activity and livelihood activity are constructed on it (Cernea, 2002).
 - The land dependent people become landless due to land acquisition by development projects.
 - For displaced people the landlessness becomes main form of de-capitalization and consequent pauperization after displacement (Cernea, 2002).
- Land productive systems for instances, land based farm system, subsistence farming, shifting cultivation, plantation farming, pastoral/livestock farming, nomadic farming, mixed farming, arable farming, etc., are impacted and polluted by the development projects.
- People's land based commercial activities like commercial farming, commercial gardening, plantation farming, mixed crop farming, fruit farming (truck farming), grain farming, livestock farming, livestock ranching and dairy farming have been disrupted partially or drastically by the development induced displacement (Cernea, 2002).

Landlessness

- **People's livelihood activities have been disrupted partially or drastically by the development induced displacement (Cernea, 2002).**
 - **The livelihoods based on natural capital (access to land, forests, water, grazing, fishing, wild products and biodiversity) gets affected due to displacement .**
 - **The physical capital (livestock, equipment, vehicles, houses and irrigation pumps) gets affected due to displacement .**
 - **The human capital (household members, active labour and people's education, knowledge and skills) gets affected due to displacement .**
- **Case Studies:**
 - **Nayak (2000) explained as how Kisan tribe of Odisha in India faced the consequences of landlessness because land compensation failed to restore their land based livelihoods and snowballed into other risks (Cernea, 2002).**
 - **Ota (1996) found from Rengali Dam project that the number of landless families after relocation was increased and Reddy (1997) found from coal mining displacements in Singrauli area that proportion of landless people remarkably increased (from 20% to 72%) (Cernea, 2002).**
 - **Mburugu (1993) and Cook (1993) reported from Kenya's Kiambere Hydropower project that farmers' average land holdings, livestock and yields per hectare were decreased and their family incomes were dropped significantly (Cernea, 2002).**

Joblessness

- **Population displacement create joblessness:**
 - Wage employments in the local enterprises may be lost
 - People's engagement in service sectors like transport, communication etc., may be lost
 - The workers may lose jobs in industry /service sectors in urban area.
 - The landless laborers may lose access to their work on sharecropped/leased lands
 - They may lose the use of assets under common property resources.
 - The self-employed small producers like craftsmen, shopkeepers and others business families tend to lose their small business and related income sources.
 - Though the "Employment boom" may be created by development projects in the early phase of project activities but remain short-time and not sustainable.
- For instance, due to Dam projects the "employment boom" temporarily absorbs some resettlers however, severely drops toward the end of the project. This leads to chronic or temporary joblessness situation (Cernea, 2002).
- **Case Studies**
- A report from Madagascar Tana Plain project in 1993 reveals that the people who operated private small enterprises such as workshops, food-stalls and artisan units not merely lost their places of business and customers but may not be provided the compensation that they lose.
- According to a survey of tribal households in five villages at Talcher, Odisha conducted by Pandey (1996) reveals that unemployment was increased (from 9% to 43.6%) and displaced/affected people got shifted their occupations from primary to tertiary in large scale during post displacement period (Cernea, 2002).

Homelessness

- For refugees, “homelessness” and “placelessness” go together; but including other displaceds homelessness results in their alienation and status-deprivation(Cernea, 2002).
- The homelessness often endures long even after completion of physical relocation of displaceds.
- Case Studies:
 - About 20 percent of relocated people due to China’s Danjiangkou reservoir project became homeless and destitute (Cernea, 2002).
 - A case reveals different fact that about only less than five percent of 2000 displaced families due to Cameroon-Douala Urban project received loans for assigned house plots (Cernea, 2002).
 - To speed up evictions shelters were destroyed as illegal squatters in case of Kibale Park area of Uganda (Cernea, 2002).
- The compulsory villagization schemes which forced people to resettle results “placelessness” (as reported by de Wet 1995 from South Africa).
- The resettlers’ movement into temporary shelters, relocation camps and emergency housing centers” are treated as a “temporary” backup by the projects.
 - The displaced people involuntarily live in such temporary/semi-permanent houses made by the development projects.
 - Some time they are bound to live in tents or under tarpaulins (experiences from Foun-Gleita irrigation project in Mauritania) (Cernea, 2002).
 - Many such cases are found from the Upper Krishna Dam and irrigation project in Karnataka, India and the Kukadi-Krishna irrigation subprojects in Maharashtra, India (Cernea, 2002; Joseph 1998).
 - In fact, The homelessness is closely related to the risks of joblessness, marginalization and morbidity (Cernea, 2002).

Marginalization

- The facets of marginalization are multiples. It may be economic marginalization and socio-psychological marginalization (Cernea, 2002).
- Economic marginalization :
 - Middle-income farm households become small landholders .
 - Small shopkeepers and craftsmen downsize and slip below poverty threshold.
 - Many individuals cannot use their earlier acquired skills in the new location
 - The “human capital is lost or rendered inactive or obsolete” Cernea, 2002:22) due to population displacement.
 - The farmers from fertile valley at bottom lands become marginalized when they are forced to move to inferior lands at uphill area.
- Case studies:
 - Marginalization takes place when the displaced loss their off-farm income sources as found in Nepal due to Kulekhani Hydroelectric project (Bjonnes, 1983; Pockharel, 1995) and in Sri Lanka due to Kotmale project (Soeftestad, 1990) (Cernea, 2002).
- Social and psychological marginalization:
 - When a drop in social status is felt
 - When a feeling of injustice is felt
 - Displacement caused vulnerability reduces resettlers’ self-image
 - When the displaced people gets stigmatized by host communities (Cernea, 2002).
 - The displaced people treated as “strangers” are often denied economic entitlements and opportunities in the new sites.

Food Insecurity

- **According to Cernea the “food insecurity and undernourishment are both symptoms and results of inadequate resettlement” (Cernea, 2002:23).**
 - **It is related to the questions of food availability, accessibility and affordability after resettlement .**
 - **It also deals with the problems of less quantity and quality of food consumption.**
 - **It leads to hunger or under nourishment/ mal nourishment.**
 - **It results in shifting from food crops to cash crops**
 - **The nutrition-related risks reinforces morbidity and mortality risks**

Increased Morbidity and Mortality

- **Involuntary uprooting increases the risks of undernourishment. Because of this the displaced people's calorie-protein intake levels may go below the required minimum for their normal growth (Cernea, 2002).**
- **The factors responsible for displaced peoples' morbidity and mortality are**
 - **Lack of availability of quality foods**
 - **Polluted environments – air, land, water etc.**
 - **High exposure and vulnerability to illness and severe diseases than before.**
 - **Socio-psycho and physical disorder - social stress and psychological trauma**
- **Displaced people's vulnerability to epidemics, chronic diarrhoea, dysentery and parasitic and vector-borne diseases take place due to unsafe water supplies and unsanitary wastes after displacement. The infants, children, and the elderly get severely affected in this situation (Cernea, 2002).**

Loss of Access to Common Property and Services

- **The displaced people loss of access to the common property assets deteriorate income and livelihood status.**
- **The following common property assets may not be accessible:**
 - Pastures
 - Forested Lands
 - Water Bodies
 - Burial Grounds
 - Quarries
 - Edible Forest Products
 - Firewood
 - Common Grazing Areas
 - Public Quarries
- **It affects displaced people's ways of collecting domestic fuels/ fodders /local forest produces in general.**
- **Though the lose of access to common property assets lead to many socio-economic consequences, it is hardly compensated.**
- **Case study:**
 - **The losses of common property assets get compounded by loss of access to some public services like school (Mathur, 1998; Mahapatra, 1999) and common services like sharing labour in agriculture activities and during natural calamities (Cernea, 2002).**
- **It results in encroachment on reserved forests and increases the pressure on the common property resources in the host area.**
- **This leads to social conflict and further environmental degradation.**
- **Thus landless and assetless displaced people tend to loss their instant incomes and livelihood sources after displacement (Cernea, 2002).**

Social Disarticulation

- **The social disarticulation destabilises displaced people's socio-cultural life**
 - It disperses and fragments communities
 - It dismantles patterns of social organization and interpersonal ties
 - Displaced people's kinship groups are scattered
 - It disrupts the informal networks of reciprocal help, local voluntary associations and self-organized mutual services.
- **It leads to loss of social capital that compounds the loss of natural, physical, and human capital.**
 - The social capital lost which is often not perceived and compensated. It leads to long-term consequences.
- **It multiplies the risks as Cernea explains that "the loss of reciprocity networks directly worsens the corollaries of poverty-powerlessness, dependency, and vulnerability" (Cernea, 2002:27).**
- **Case Studies:**
 - A study on Dam project in India conducted by Behura and Nayak (1993) reveals many manifestations of social disarticulation such as earlier intimate bonds are loosed, alienation and anomie are grown up, control on interpersonal behaviour and family cohesion are weakened (Cernea, 2002).
 - The displaced people often find it difficult to arrange dowries, feasts, and gifts for marriages after displacement (Behura and Nayak, 1993; Cernea, 2002).
 - A study on Hirakud dam done by Baboo (1992) reveals that the displaced households could not "properly integrated" in host villages for many years after relocation because their economic status was completely shattered by displacement (Cernea, 2002).

Differential Risk Intensities

- **These risks are forced upon displaced/affected populations beyond their choices.**
 - **The differential risk intensities vary as per the different variables i.e. area, time, site, age, sex, gender, group, community, class, etc.**
 - **The intensity of the individual risks varies as per the site circumstances, sector wise (urban or rural) and season wise.**
- **In a gender-oriented analysis, it is found that women are impacted severely than men (Feeney, 1995; Koenig, 1995; Pandey, 1998) (Cernea, 2002).**
 - **Discrimination in compensation criteria was revealed in a study conducted by Agnihotri (1996) in Odisha that different criterion of age for compensation was set at 18 years and 30 years for men and women respectively (Cernea, 2002).**

Risks to Host Populations

- **The displaced people in the host area not only increase their pressure on available resources/social services but also compete with others for employment and economic engagements.**
 - **As more heterogeneous groups are found in host area, their cultural clashes and social tensions occur continuously .**
 - **Price rise of essential commodities also increases the causes of health risks in the host area.**
 - **According to Cernea “secondary adverse effects on the environment hurt both the hosts and the displacees” (Cernea, 2002:28).**

Conclusion

- **In sum, the IRR model gives us a risks-pattern analysis that emerges from population displacement.**
 - **It captures a broad range of hazards including economic, social and cultural risks.**
 - **Addition to its eight risks, the IRR model also explores differential risk intensities and risks to host populations.**
 - **It gives rise to an analysis of multi-dimensional risk variables.**
 - **These risks must be countered with appropriate reconstruction-pattern strategies.**