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Dynamics of traditional village transformation in the era of globalization: A geographic analysis

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Professor Lal Mervin Dharmasiri's impactful academic and leadership journey began in 1992 when he completed his M.A. in Rural Development at SK University, India, supported by an ICCR scholarship. He later earned a Pg. Diploma, an MSc in Norway, and a Ph.D. from the University of Pune in 2009. Currently, he serves as Senior Professor and Cadre Chair in the Geography Department at the University of Kelaniya. Beyond academia, Professor Dharmasiri has Chaired the Central Environmental Authority (CEA) and Directed the National Centre for Advanced Studies (NCAS). His remarkable contributions have earned him an international ICCR award, recognized by the Government of India, for promoting understanding, goodwill, and friendship between India and Sri Lanka. In 2023, he was also honored with the Best Academician Award in Geography by the Pangea Geographical Association (PGA) in India.

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Dynamics of traditional village transformation in the era of globalization: A geographic analysis

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Abstract

This study examines the dynamics of the era of Globalization, focusing on traditional village transformation through comprehensive Geographic analysis. The research gap is the need for a contemporary, integrated analysis of spatial, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental aspects, along with the interplay of endogenous and exogenous factors, and the study also aims to address the lack of information on sustainable rural transformation strategies. The primary objective is to analyze the transformation dynamics of traditional villages, considering various dimensions, and understand the driving factors and their impacts on local communities, the environment, and culture. The research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative demographic, income, infrastructure, and land-use data with qualitative insights from interviews, focus groups, and participant observations in selected traditional villages. The study identifies four distinct generational groups within the study area, each characterized by demographic variations, types of dwellings, economic activities, development efforts, and technological advancements. These generational phases offer insights into different developmental eras, shaped by both endogenous and exogenous drives. Generation I, predating 1950, relied on hunting, gathering, and primitive chena cultivation, shaped by direct observation and cultural traditions. Generation II (1951-1970) continued this trend with slight advancements in semi-permanent housing, population growth, and healthcare and education initiatives. Generation III (1971-1990) saw significant changes driven by the Mahaweli Development Program, including infrastructure development and resettlement. Generation IV (from 1990 onwards) focuses on revitalization, with modernized education, new farming methods, globalization-driven migration, expanded built environments, and adapted cultural practices. This study offers a comprehensive understanding of how traditional villages transform in the era of Globalization due to the interplay of endogenous and exogenous factors, leading to significant changes in rural landscapes, socio-economic conditions, and cultural practices.

Keywords: Rural Transformation, Exogenous and Endogenous Drives, Revitalization and Pre-revitalization Drives

1. Introduction

‘Rural transformation’ is an extremely vague concept. Broadly speaking, it describes a profound and complex process of change with not only economic but also social and cultural dimensions. It is a process through which rural incomes grow, rural economies diversify, and linkages with urban and peri-urban areas evolve (Kruseman et al., 2020). Further, it is seen as a shift of value added and employment from the rural-agricultural to the urban-industrial sectors, accompanied by increased agricultural productivity, growing farm size and intensified rural-urban linkages (Rauch et al., 2016).

Rural transformation signifies the comprehensive changes encompassing economic, social, and cultural aspects across broader rural landscapes, driven by factors like urbanization and technological progress. In contrast, traditional village transformation focuses on alterations within specific villages, involving shifts in economic activities, infrastructure, and social dynamics while retaining distinct local customs and practices. Accordingly, ‘Traditional Village Transformation’ involves changes within a specific village or group of villages that have traditionally followed specific customs and social structures. This process includes shifts in economic activities, infrastructure development, and alterations in social dynamics within those villages.

A ‘traditional village’ refers to a cohesive entity comprised of a limited number of people who have gathered and reproduced spatially within a specific region over an extended period. These individuals are primarily engaged in fundamental economic activities. Specifically, they participate in cultural practices and adhere to norms while embracing community cohesion. Particularly, ethnographic approaches were utilized to grasp the impact of transformation on cultural practices, traditions, and community cohesion. This involved the documentation of personal narratives and stories that offer deeper insights into the cultural changes occurring within the traditional villages. The concept of a traditional village lacked specificity. Yet the term has been used and accepted by people in everyday usage. Some people also call it “ancient village”, “old village”, “characteristic village”, and so on (Qin & Leung, 2021). Traditional villages are relatively independent regional societies in which social activities and social relations occurred. Traditional villages are the result of human activities and natural environment interactions in a specific historical period, so they reflect the economic, political, and cultural characteristics of the society at that time (Zhang, 2015). They are mainly reflected in cultural heritage, which includes scientific value, architectural value, artistic value, etiquette value, social value, historical value and spiritual value (Zhang, 2015).

In the changing nature of the World, the transformation of traditional villages stands as an inducing narrative of adaptation and evolution. The era of Globalization, which could be described by infrastructure development, rapid urbanization, technological advancements, shifting economic paradigms, and evolving societal dynamics, has accompanied in a new mode in the history of these rural settlements. This study undertakes a geographical analysis to explore the dynamic nature that underlies the transformation of traditional villages in the

modern world. Through an examination of spatial, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental aspects, this research aims to uncover the multifaceted dimensions of traditional village transformation. Additionally, it sheds light on the complex interplay of forces shaping their paths in this era of change.

Geography deals with the Earth's spatial and temporal distribution of phenomena, processes, and features as well as the interaction of humans and their environment. The interdisciplinary nature of the geographical approach depends on an attentiveness to the relationship between physical and human phenomena and their spatial patterns (Hornby & Jones, 1991). By examining the dynamics through a geographical point of view, a more comprehensive understanding of the evolution of a traditional village can be attained, offering insights into both the timeline and distribution of these changes. This approach assists in unraveling the complexities associated with the transformation process, thereby enhancing our grasp of the larger picture and facilitating informed decision-making for the development process.

In Geography, a specific rural region is conceptualized as a rural territorial system. The interactions between human activities related to production and life and the natural-human environments within these rural areas form the foundational structure of their respective rural territorial systems, resulting in the manifestation of distinct functions (Li et al., 2012). The intricate correlation between rural areas and the interactions between humans and their surroundings, especially evident in the functions they serve, offers a pathway for Geography to contribute to the investigation of rural revitalization.

The idea of 'physical determinism' has been surpassed by the recognition that social factors also hold significance in determining the location and inherent characteristics of any settlement (Daniel & Hopkinson, 1985). However, with rapid development, a multitude of traditional villages or clusters of settlements are experiencing a gradual decline and degradation owing to a variety of natural and human-induced factors.

The primary concern of this study focuses on determining whether the transformation of the traditional village takes the form of a dynamic localized process or adheres to a pattern occurring as a natural global-scale phenomenon.

2. Objective

The primary objective of this study is to conduct a comprehensive geographic analysis of the dynamic local process of the transformation of traditional villages in the era of Globalization. By examining the spatial, socio-economic, cultural, and environmental aspects, this research aims to provide a holistic understanding of how traditional villages are evolving amidst contemporary changes. Further, the study aims to understand how different factors work together and influence the changes happening in traditional villages. It will provide information about what is causing these changes, how they affect the local communities, and what this means for making sure the changes are good for the environment and the culture.

3. Methodology

As the objective of this study concerns the dynamics of traditional village transformation in the era of Globalization, a mixed-methods approach was employed. This approach combines both quantitative and qualitative techniques to comprehensively analyze the various aspects of village transformation.

Quantitative data, such as demographics, income distribution, infrastructure development, and land use patterns, play a vital role in providing measurable insights into the dynamics of traditional village transformation in the era of Globalization. On the other hand, qualitative data encompassed in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations, all conducted within selected traditional villages to gather insights from residents and community leaders. These qualitative methods facilitated the capture of personal experiences, cultural perspectives, and community dynamics related to the transformation process.

To gather primary data, a purposive sampling method was employed, selecting a total of 8 respondents. The sample structure was organized as follows: 1 respondent from the first generation (only one member was alive in the village), 2 respondents from the second generation, 2 respondents from the third generation, and 3 respondents from the fourth generation within the area. Remarkably, the village displayed an apparent stratification into four generational layers, with each layer represented by at least 1 respondent. This approach facilitated the selection of 8 respondents for the present study, and qualitative data was acquired through informal conversations for research purposes. The study primarily relies on qualitative research methods, which allowed us to gather data and insights from the sample using qualitative techniques. Additionally, secondary data were obtained from relevant offices associated with the Mahaweli Development Program (MDP).

4. Study area

Ginnoruwa, a traditional rural village nestled within the Mahaweli System 'C,' was selected as the central focus of the study because of its unique traditional characteristics. Situated in the Mahiyanganaya Divisional Secretariat (DS) within the Uva Province of Sri Lanka (refer to Figure 1), Ginnoruwa's historical record indicates that a sparse population resided in the region, predominantly comprising the *Vaddha* people, who are considered indigenous inhabitants of Sri Lanka.

Several villages, including *Yakkure*, *Hebarawa*, and *Ginnoruwa*, were situated on the right bank of the Mahaweli River. These villages were home to small, scattered populations, and the surrounding area was predominantly covered in jungle. The village itself had a largely uniform physical landscape, characterized by flat terrain, with the exception of a small mountain featuring an alone rock outcropping.

Presently, evidence of the indigenous people who once inhabited this area can still be discerned. Ginnoruwa village possesses a rainfed tank, capable of sustaining agricultural

activities during one of Sri Lanka's two primary seasons—specifically, the *Maha* season commencing in September and concluding by March, coinciding with the North-east monsoon. During the *Yala* season, the people of Ginnoruwa engage in Chena cultivation within the jungle.

The village has an area of 382 square kilometers or 627 hectares with 158 households with 2559 population at present. However, the rapid implementation of the MDP led to significant transformations in its socio-economic, cultural, and environmental dimensions. Therefore, the selection of Ginnoruwa as the study site is well-justified and appropriate.

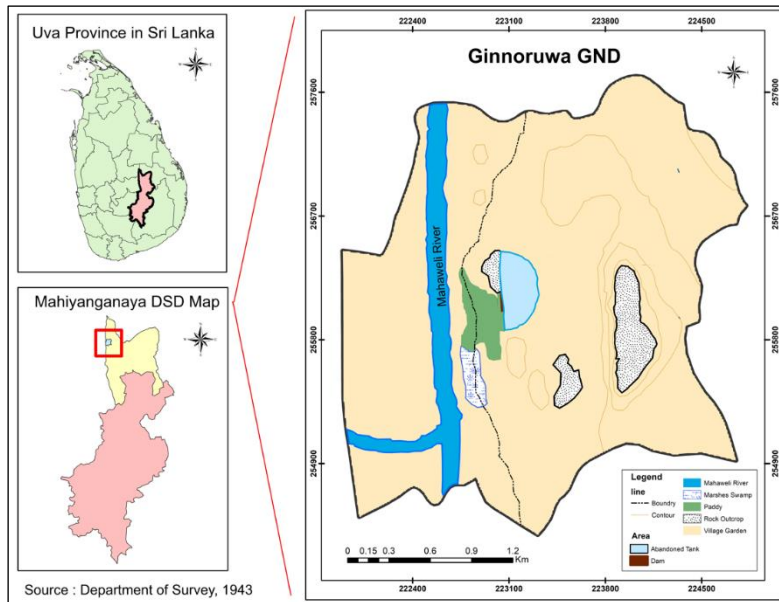


Figure 1: Study area

Source: Author compilation, 2023

5. Dynamizing of village transformation

'Dynamizing village transformation' refers to the process of revitalizing rural areas to bring about changes and development. In general, it is always expecting positive changes through development activities. This involves implementing a range of strategies, initiatives, and interventions aimed at enhancing the overall living standards of villages. It encompasses improvements in infrastructure, access to essential services, economic opportunities, social well-being, and environmental sustainability. The dynamization of village transformation often includes empowering local communities, modernizing practices, and utilizing resources sustainably to create self-sustaining rural environments. This approach acknowledges the unique strengths and challenges of each village, striving to establish a dynamic and progressive landscape that supports the aspirations and needs of its residents.

A village is a clustered human settlement or community, larger than a hamlet but smaller than a town (McMahon, 2023). Punchihewa (1979) noted that delineating 'what constitutes a village' is a challenging undertaking. It is evident that most of the villages are positioned in rural or non-urban peripheries. Consequently, the evolution of villages and rural areas

should be seen as comparable occurrences. To address these challenges, Copus et al. (2011) proposed three meta-narratives, summarizing the primary observed mechanisms of rural transformation in Europe: the rural-urban narrative, the agriculture-centric narrative, and the globalization narrative. These narratives offer a valuable overview of the various processes of rural change (Simone et al., 2015).

‘Rural’ and ‘village’ are separate terms, with ‘rural’ relating to areas outside urban centers, having lower population densities and agricultural activities, while a ‘village’ is a smaller settlement within rural areas, known for its tight-knit community and involvement in agriculture, crafts, and local economic activities. Although there are slight differences between the terms ‘rural’ and ‘village,’ I consider the village and rural transformation as equivalent ongoing processes.

Rural or village transformation is a process of comprehensive societal change whereby rural societies diversify their economies and reduce their reliance on agriculture; become dependent on distant places to trade and to acquire goods, services, and ideas; move from dispersed villages to towns and small and medium cities; and become culturally more like large urban agglomerations (Berdegué et al., 2014). Further, they explained that the rural transformation encompasses the evolution of rural societies, emphasizing their adaptability and growth instead of their decline. It involves the restructuring of communities within a specific geographical area, as opposed to the notion of a vacant space resulting from the migration of people and economic activities (Coşkun, 2021).

Transformation of a village is a complex process that involves changes in various aspects of a village's social, economic, cultural, and physical dimensions. Several theories and frameworks attempt to explain and understand this transformation. Rural transformation refers to the process of structural change in the rural economy, society, and environment that leads to economic growth and development. The transformation is usually characterized by a shift from traditional agriculture and subsistence farming to more modern and diversified forms of agriculture and other economic activities (Chigbu, 2015). It holds a significant relationship with the livelihoods of rural peasants, particularly through their economic activities. This process involves a comprehensive and societal shift, wherein rural communities undertake overall changes. They diversify their economic activities, reducing their dependence on agriculture. Further, they establish connections with distant locales for trading and purchasing goods and services. Simultaneously, they transition from dispersed village setups to embracing more urbanized forms, often centered around towns and mid-sized cities and become culturally more similar to large urban agglomerations (Berdegué et al., 2014).

‘Endogenous drive’ and ‘exogenous drives’ play significant roles in understanding rural transformation. Within the scope of rural development analysis, endogeneity entails the intricate interplay of internal variables inherent to rural communities. These factors, intrinsic to their growth and evolution, encompass cultural norms, socioeconomic structures, historical context, and more. Additionally, a deeper exploration reveals that endogeneity is tied to the extent to which local and regional rural economies are constructed upon primitive economic models (Oostindie et al., 2008). These models dictate the incorporation and

distribution of local resources and advocate rechanneling generated wealth back into the local network. These factors could range from local cultural norms and historical legacies to social structures and economic conditions. On the other hand, endogenous drives in rural transformation pertain to the intrinsic motivations and initiatives originating from within these communities. These could include the aspirations of residents, community-led development projects, and the utilization of local resources for sustainable growth. Recognizing both endogeneity and endogenous drives is crucial for designing effective policies and interventions empowering rural areas to drive their development by leveraging their unique strengths and addressing internal challenges.

It's important to note that village transformation is a multidisciplinary area of study, and various scholars from fields such as anthropology, sociology, development studies, economics, and geography have contributed to our understanding of this topic. The understanding of village transformation often emerges from the synthesis of ideas and concepts from these diverse fields.

6. Results

The research has uncovered the presence of four distinct generational groups within the study area, denoted as the I Generation, II Generation, III Generation, and IV Generation. Each generation is characterized by a unique combination of factors, encompassing demographics, family structures, socio-economic and cultural conditions, as well as various other elements. Based on these distinctive characteristics, the author has formulated a model termed 'Rural Transformation' that considers the observed attributes, discoveries, and contemporary societal shifts.

Subsequently, the author conducts a comprehensive analysis and provides a comprehensive explanation of the study's findings within the framework of the proposed model. This thorough examination occurs in the context of the four identified generational phases, as outlined below:

1. Demographic characteristics: Variations in population size and family composition constitute another dimension of the generational phases.
2. Types of dwellings: The generational phases are distinguished by differing housing types, including temporary, semi-permanent, and permanent structures.
3. Economic activities: The transition from primitive agricultural practices to modern farming methods signifies a significant shift across the generational phases.
4. Development activities: The extent of infrastructure development serves as a defining factor, illustrating the progression across generations.
5. Technological advancement: The degree of technological adoption embraced by each generation is a pivotal factor that delineates their specific phase.

As such, the study's findings undergo an examination within the framework of the proposed model (refer to Figure 2).

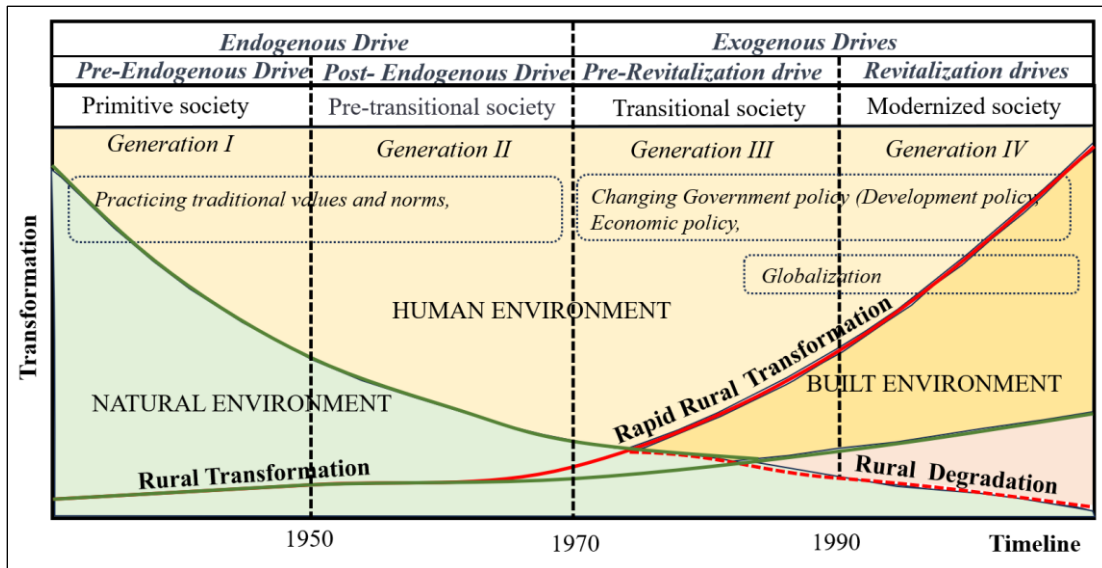


Figure 2: A Model of Village Transformation

Source: Author compilation, 2023

Certain economic and agricultural development theories that contribute to rural transformation have applied substantial influence over rural development policies throughout history. This influence becomes evident in subsequent phases of rural development practices in low-income countries, transpiring as a series of transitions. Ellis and Biggs (2001) have outlined various phases of rural development, commencing with community development in the 1950s, small farm growth and state-led rural development in the 1970s, process-oriented, participatory, and empowerment-focused approaches in the 1990s, and rural development centered on poverty reduction (Ellis & Biggs, 2001). Drawing from these theoretical stages and field-level data, distinct generational phases emerge, offering insight into different developmental eras. Consequently, this study identifies the ensuing generational phases as follows:

Generation I: Prior to 1950

Generation II: Spanning from 1951 to 1970

Generation III: Encompassing the years from 1971 to 1990

Generation IV: Commencing from the year 1991 onward

Generation I: In its historical context, Ginnoruwa village has been situated within dense forests and has served as the dwelling place for four indigenous families identified as 'Vaddas people.' While the exact population count of the initial generation remains unknown, it's likely that each family comprised a varying number of members, with estimates ranging from around 4 to 8 individuals. Collectively, the population in the area is

estimated to have been between 16 to 32 individuals. The elders of these families primarily hunted and gathered within the region's abundant forests, alongside practicing chena cultivation as a means of sustenance. Evidently, some of these families adopted primitive chena cultivation practices, which involved periodically changing the cultivation areas due to soil fertility decline.

The structure of their families was influenced by various factors, including natural disasters, limited or lacking healthcare access, illiteracy, and societal neglect. Additionally, the absence of effective birth control methods within the indigenous community contributed to elevated birth rates. However, this rise was somewhat mitigated by natural checks. The study findings revealed that the individuals residing there could be categorized as Generation I. This generation possesses a profound understanding and knowledge of the natural environment, largely acquired through firsthand experience.

The individuals of the Generation I resided in improvised shelters primarily constructed from wood and a diverse range of leaves, serving as a safeguard. These dwelling spaces were characterized by their unassuming size and were thoughtfully established in elevated positions or occasionally perched atop trees to provide defense against potential confrontations with wildlife. Certain individuals chose to construct their shelters at a certain height from the ground, a precautionary measure that offered protection. This approach was advantageous in earlier times as it facilitated access and movement, distinguishing it from the option of situating dwellings high within trees.

Generation I fall within the domain of **endogenous drives**, subdivided into sub-categories. **Pre-endogenous drives** pertain to influences or factors that preceded the emergence of internal forces within a system. In the context of 'Generation I' and their control of the natural environment, several potential pre-endogenous drives emerge.

During this era, indigenous individuals practiced direct observation to gather insights about the environment through their senses, interactions, and firsthand encounters with various aspects of nature. Cultural traditions and knowledge exchange within the community played a pivotal role in this Generation's understanding of the natural world. Elders and community members likely passed down traditional knowledge and wisdom associated with nature.

Furthermore, this generation heavily relied on the natural environment for sustenance and livelihood. Their profound interdependence with the environment necessitated a nuanced comprehension of its patterns, cycles, and resources. Additionally, their exposure to external influences that could reshape their perception of the natural environment was likely restricted. Hence, their understanding was predominantly molded by their immediate surroundings.

Generation I could be classified under the umbrella of endogenous drives, which can be further subcategorized. Pre-endogenous drives correspond to influences or factors pre-existing the emergence of internal forces within a system. In the specific context of 'Generation I' and their understanding of the natural environment, several potential pre-endogenous drives can be identified.

Figure 2 offers a simple representation of the rural transformation, showcasing minimal to negligible trends within Generation I. The transformation remains relatively steady or exhibits slight variations, a phenomenon linked to the influence of pre-endogenous drives on Generation I. This era could potentially have concluded after the nation gained independence in 1948, marking a shift in the country's colonial power dynamics.

Generation II: Generation I and Generation II share several common features. As depicted in Figure 2, the model reveals that **rural transformation** exhibits limited disparity between these two generations. This continuity can be attributed to the similar **endogenous drives** present in Generation I, as previously discussed.

The commencement of Generation II spans the period between 1950 and 1970, before the commencement of the accelerated Mahaweli Development Program (EMDP). In this phase, the study identified a slight shift. The number of indigenous families increased from a mere 4 before the result of the first-generation era to a total of 11 in the Ginnoruwa village. Generally, each family consisted of 5 to 10 members, resulting in a population ranging between 75 to 100. It is worth noting that these approximate figures were derived due to the absence of precise population data in the village.

During this time, the infant mortality declined, and the average lifespan experienced a slight extension, attributable in part to the implementation of primary healthcare initiatives in the area. This effort was set in motion following the establishment of a new government policy after the country's attainment of independence.

Although Generation II demonstrated limited technological advancements, there is a slight noticeable progress in their housing structures. These dwellings, constructed using mud and wood, display a semi-permanent characteristic. It is worth noting that these abodes are organized in clusters, offering protection against potential dangers from wild animals. The architectural principles of primitive societies reflect their societal and educational values, emphasizing a harmonious representation of noble traditional ideals. This embodiment of traditional values imparts numerous valuable life lessons (Widaningsih & Cahyani, 2015).

Generation II also falls within the domain of **endogenous drives**, subdivided into sub-categories. **Post-endogenous drives** pertain to influences or factors that preceded the emergence of internal forces within a system. As indicated in the context of 'Generation I' and their control of the natural environment, several similar potential pre-endogenous drives emerge.

During this period, the indigenous community joined in direct observation individually and in small groups to attain a deeper understanding of their surroundings. They adopted Chena cultivation, a seasonal form of shifting cultivation, which complemented rainfed cultivation practices. Expanding dwellings and cultivation zones within the village contributed to a slight decline in the natural environment's condition. In the second phase (Generation II) depicted in Figure 2, an inverse correlation is noticeable between the degradation of the natural environment and the evolving human environment.

Cultural traditions and knowledge dissemination within the community took a step forward compared to the 1st Generation. Elders assumed a pivotal role in guiding the community, serving as leaders within the society.

Furthermore, this generation heavily relied on the natural environment for sustenance and livelihood. Their profound interdependence with the environment necessitated a nuanced comprehension of its patterns, cycles, and resources. Additionally, their exposure to external influences that could reshape their perception of the natural environment was likely restricted.

Generation III: The study revealed a distinctive stage of rural transformation within the study area, as showcased in Figure 2. Driven by Governmental policy, the establishment of the EMDP brought about comprehensive changes to the entire landscape. Infrastructure development and the implementation of irrigation systems played key roles in reshaping the environment. Developmental efforts in the region, the Mahaweli Development Board (MDB) facilitated the resettlement of new families, acting as incoming colonists. Consequently, this phase can suitably be characterized as a '**transitional stage**'.

Figure 3 depicts the development plan that centers on the study village's efforts to advance System 'C,' which has been designated as a specific development zone within the framework of the EMDP. This initiative has led to the provision of upgraded infrastructure facilities, establishment of a new irrigation system and new settlements in the area. Consequently, a swift and transformative transition has commenced.

Exogenous drives are external factors or influences that impact the development and dynamics of a system. In the context of Generation III, these exogenous drives played a crucial role in shaping rural transformation and societal change. Several key exogenous drives can be identified that influenced Generation III's development and the changes they experienced.

Firstly, the establishment of the EMDP by the Government marked a significant exogenous drive. This large-scale development initiative brought about extensive changes to the landscape, including the introduction of irrigation systems and the establishment of infrastructure. The MDP had direct implications for Generation III, altering the availability of water resources and creating opportunities for new economic activities.

Secondly, external policies and interventions also exerted exogenous influences. Government policies aimed at regional development, modernization, population resettlement, and establishment of private commercial farms significantly impacted the indigenous communities during Generation III. These policies brought about new settlers from outside regions, leading to cultural exchanges, demographic shifts, and changes in community dynamics.

Figure 2 depicts a rural transformation characterized by a steady upward that encounters a marked and significant shift. This transformation is primarily attributed to the influence of **pre-revitalization drives**, which act as substantial exogenous forces, particularly driven by the EMDP. As part of this transformation, the establishment of model village hierarchies

that encompass 'Hamlet,' 'Village centers,' and 'Town centers' came into being under the MDP. Within this framework, Ginnoruwa emerged as a 'Village center' under the MDP. Notably, essential service centers such as primary education, retail trade, preliminary healthcare, and postal facilities were introduced.

The model emphasizes that the 'rural transformation' would have remained relatively static without the implementation of any developmental initiative, such as the EMDP, within the region. Under such circumstances, rural transformation would have continued along a linear progression, following Generation I and II patterns. The rural environment changes into an urban or semi-urban landscape within this process. Scholars like Wittfogel (1956) and Scarbourg (1991) have argued that irrigated agriculture, along with its technological and managerial aspects, could encourage urbanization at varying rates (Wittfogel, 1956). It holds true that certain facets of urbanization, such as population density, concentration, infrastructural growth, and shifts in economic and cultural dynamics, have indeed manifested in the Ginnoruwa village after the introduction of the EMDP.

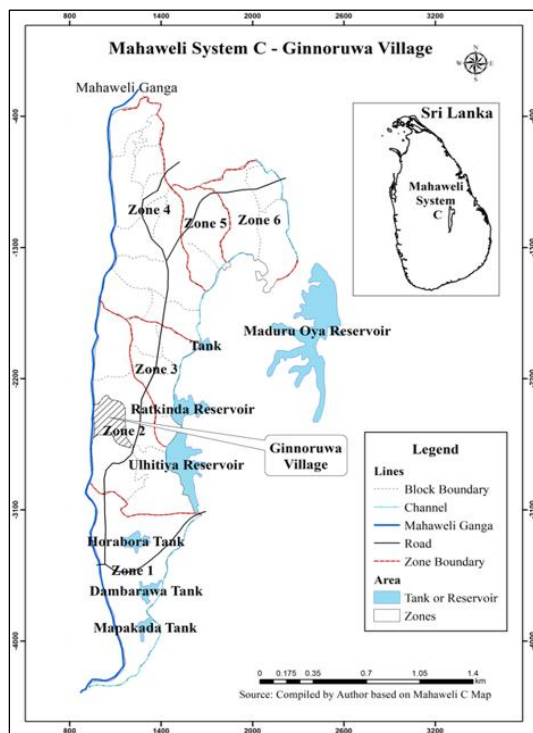


Figure 3: Mahaweli System C - Ginnoruwa

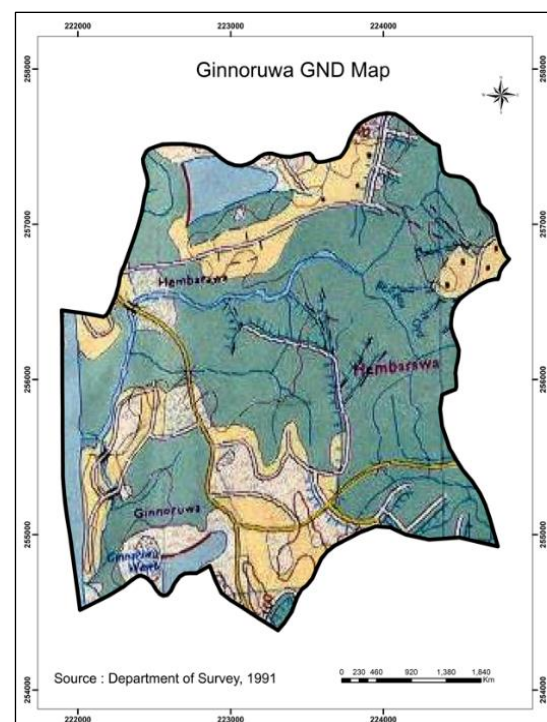


Figure 4: Present Land Use Pattern, Ginnoruwa

Source: Author compilation, 2023

The drive of rural transformation gained further movement through the integration of new families as settlers. Consequently, the total number of families increased to 58, comprising both indigenous residents and new settlers. During this period, family sizes were reported to range from 4 to 8 members, leading to an overall population rise of approximately 350 within the village. The presence of primary healthcare services within the village, coupled

with improved healthcare facilities in the nearby township of Girandurukotte, facilitated by the newly established transportation network, contributed to shifts in demographic patterns.

The imparting of education to these settlers played a key role in strengthening their technological capabilities, enabling them to interact more proficiently with the natural environment. This, in turn, triggered notable changes in their land management and cultivation practices. The adoption of machinery for land clearance and cultivation is a new phase in the rural transformation journey. A significant transformation was also observed in their agricultural practices, as they transitioned from traditional shifting cultivation methods to irrigated farming. This shift was necessitated by the limited availability of land and the previous practice of changing plots due to soil fertility depletion. Further, the integration of new settlers, advancements in healthcare, education, and changes in farming practices were pivotal factors that drove the ongoing process of transformation which could be identified as '**rapid rural transformation**' during this phase.

It was evident that with the onset of rapid rural transformation, the process of '**rural degradation**' was initiated. As various developmental changes and shifts occurred, certain aspects of the rural environment underwent degradation or decline. Rural degradation refers to the deterioration of natural resources, erosion of traditional cultural practices, and the disruption of harmonious relationships between communities and their surroundings. The point at which the natural, human, and built environments intersect marks the emergence of rural degradation, which gradually progresses over time. This phenomenon is depicted by the dotted line in Figure 2. With the arrival of new settlers in Ginnoruwa, a blend of cultures emerged, resulting in the beginning of rural degradation.

Generation IV: The current phase is identifiable as the Generation IV, which commenced around 1990, coinciding with the birth of the present generation (refer Figure 2). A significant portion of the younger population in the area constitutes the fourth generation, falling within the age range of 20 to 35. The average family size varies between 2 and 6 individuals due to the rapid rural transformation that unfolded in the region. Presently, Ginnoruwa comprises 158 households with a total population of 2559. However, discerning indigenous families amid the process of modernization has become challenging.

The attributes of this stage fall under the category of '**revitalization drives**', aligning with the line of a '**modernized society**'. Consequently, due to the comprehensive system, spanning education, socio-economic conditions, cultural practices, and the political framework of the village, it has undergone a process of modernization. As a result, '**rapid rural transformation**' was further strengthened.

In the dominion of education, traditional modes of learning have undergone a transformative evolution, adapting to the demands of the era of Globalization. This evolution has led to the incorporation of contemporary methodologies, including the integration of English as a second language and the integration of information technology (IT) as a subject domain in schools. These changes have enabled all students to access free education that aligns with the evolving global educational landscape.

Furthermore, it's noteworthy that even some members of the indigenous families have achieved significant milestones in education. A select few have successfully completed degree programs at local universities, demonstrating their remarkable dedication and adaptability. This achievement marks a crucial departure from historical educational patterns and has played a vital role in facilitating rapid rural transformation within the area.

The introduction of a new farming system in the area has been supporting higher income generation, subsequently contributing to a significant improvement in the living standards of the villages. This shift in agricultural practices has not only elevated the economic prospects of the community but has also influenced the broader quality of life. The current land use pattern of the area is depicted in Figure 4.

Moreover, a significant trend of migration has emerged, changing the traditional dynamics of the village. Many women have migrated to the Middle East to find employment opportunities, while a portion of the male population has similarly migrated to nearby cities in pursuit of work. This diversification in employment avenues has dramatically reshaped their livelihood patterns and fundamentally transformed their ways of living. Consequently, it is evident that the villagers have not remained untouched by the effects of Globalization. The interconnectedness of the modern world has introduced these rural inhabitants to new economic opportunities and challenges, prompting shifts in their socio-economic status and traditional ways of life.

Conversely, the residents of Ginnoruwa embarked on a journey of establishing permanent houses, trade centers, and various infrastructural buildings to meet their needs. Consequently, this endeavor has led to a notable expansion of the **built environment** within the village, although at the cost of further encroachment on the natural environment. This transition towards permanent structures signifies a shift in the village's landscape, underlining the progression towards modernization and enhanced functionality.

Cultural practices have also seen a shift, as traditional rituals and customs have interacted with and adapted to external influences of the **exogenous drives**. Even the influence of the political system created a different background in the village and further caused rapid rural transformation.

7. Discussion

The study's significance lies in its demonstration of how traditional villages transform in response to a complex interplay of exogenous and endogenous forces. While rural transformation is a global phenomenon, the Ginnoruwa case study illustrates how local dynamics can distinguish the transformation within a particular village from broader trends. Further, the study highlights the critical influence of education, technological advancements, and Globalization on the pace and direction of rural transformation. These factors not only drive economic progress but also lead to shifts in social and cultural norms within these traditional settings.

In a broader context, this geographic analysis serves as a valuable reminder of the complexity inherent in rural development. It highlights the need for informed decision-making that considers the unique characteristics and needs of each traditional village.

Generation I lived in dense forests and consisted of four indigenous families with a small population. They relied on hunting, gathering, and chena cultivation for sustenance, but their practices were primitive due to soil fertility decline. They faced challenges such as natural disasters, limited healthcare, illiteracy, and societal neglect, which shaped their family structures. They had a deep understanding of the natural environment based on firsthand experience and cultural traditions, residing in improvised shelters designed for protection against wildlife.

Generation II saw a slight shift with more indigenous families and modest progress in housing. Technological advancements remained limited, but there was a transition towards Chena cultivation. They continued to rely on direct observation and experiential learning to understand their environment. Despite minor environmental decline due to expansion, they maintained a nuanced comprehension of the natural world.

Generation III marked a transitional stage influenced by external factors, notably the MDP (possibly a development program). This period brought irrigation systems and infrastructure development, altering water resources and creating new economic activities. Settlers were introduced, changing demographics and empowering them with education to interact proficiently with nature. This led to changes in land management and cultivation practices, but it also witnessed the onset of rural degradation.

Generation IV emerged with a focus on revitalization. The village underwent modernization through education reforms, the adoption of new farming systems, and a migration trend driven by Globalization. Permanent housing and infrastructure expansion became prominent, altering the built environment. Cultural practices adapted to external influences, and the political system further fueled rapid rural transformation.

These generational shifts reflect the complex interplay of environmental, societal, and external factors, ultimately shaping the evolution of this community over time.

8. Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the intricate process of rural transformation within the context of traditional villages. The study underscores the multifaceted nature of this transformation, encompassing demographic shifts, economic changes, infrastructure development, and cultural adaptations. The study identified four distinct generational phases, from Generation I to Generation IV, sheds light on how traditional villages evolve in response to various internal and external forces. It highlights the pivotal role of exogenous and endogenous drives in rural transformation. Particularly, the introduction of EMDP and the resulting arrival of new settlers have significantly accelerated the pace of change.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of education, technological advancement, and Globalization in driving the rapid rural transformation witnessed in recent

years. These factors have not only improved economic prospects but have also influenced the social and cultural dynamics of the traditional village. Overall, this geographic analysis offers a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of traditional village transformation in the era of Globalization. It highlights the complexity of this process and the need for informed decision-making to ensure that these changes benefit both the environment and the local communities.

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