



THE CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF MUREWA GROWTH POINT, ZIMBABWE

Makesure Chinyamakobvu¹,

Jemitias Mapira²,

Nyashadzashe Ngaza³

¹BSc Honours Student,

Geography and Environmental Science,

Great Zimbabwe University

²Professor, Geography and Environmental Science,

Great Zimbabwe University

³Lecturer, Great Zimbabwe University

Abstract:

The growth pole theory originates from Francois Perroux, a French economist who visualized growth poles in economic space (Perroux, 1955). As such, his theory had nothing to do with physical or geographical space (Glasson, 1978). In fact, Perroux was mainly concerned with interactions among industrial sectors rather than spatial development processes (Hansen, 1981). However, geographers and planners adopted his theory for planning purposes. In this way, they developed the growth center theory. Some of the proponents of this theory were Boudeville, Friedmann, Myrdal and Hirschman. The growth center theory was first applied in European countries such as Britain, France and Italy in order to address the problems of economically depressed regions. Later on the strategy was adopted in developing nations of Latin America, Asia and Africa. In colonial Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), it was adopted in 1969 with the aim of decongesting major urban centers such as Salisbury (Harare), Bulawayo, Gwelo (Gweru) and Umtali (Mutare). However, the main problem of colonial growth points was the racial context in which they were conceived. At independence in 1980, the new black government adopted growth centers or growth points as a national strategy for rural development (Underwood, 1986). While colonial growth centers were introduced under the Tribal Trust Land Corporation (TILCOR), those of the post-colonial era are under the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA). This study examines the challenges and prospects of Murewa growth point before and after independence in 1980.

Keywords: growth poles, growth points, challenges, prospects, Murewa, Zimbabwe.

¹ Correspondence: email jmapira2000@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The growth pole policy in Zimbabwe was introduced in 1969 by the Rhodesian government to reduce population pressure in urban areas. The basic aim of the strategy was to create '*African towns in African areas*' (Wekwete, 1991). Although one of the goals was to decongest prevailing urban centers, colonial growth points were designed within a racist perspective borrowed from apartheid South Africa. By 1978, growth pole policy had become part of a policy document titled "Integrated Plan for Rural Development" (Wekwete, 1991). Colonial growth points were developed under TILOR. Initially ten centers were identified for the purpose. They included Chisumbanje, Jerera, Gutu, Mataga, Wedza, Murewa, Nkayi, Sanyati, Mushumbi and Maphisa. The criterion for their selection was mainly on the availability of a strong resource base from where development would emanate. Initially a fixed sum of Z\$2.8 million dollars was allocated for each center. One of the most successful centers in the colonial era was Sanyati. Located in a thriving cotton growing region, it developed a cotton ginnery which was quite prosperous. By 1981 its population had grown to 3 500 indicating significant growth. However, other growth points were undermined by several factors including the waging war of liberation between 1966 and 1979.

In post-colonial Zimbabwe, the growth center policy was implemented under ARDA. This resulted in the selection of 18 growth points: namely Jotsholo, Lupani, Maphisa, Ngwezi, Gokwe, Tongogara, Hama, Ngundu, Jerera, Nyika, Chisumbanje, Hauna, Birchnough Bridge, Murewa, Wedza, Muzarabani, Mushumbi Pools and Sanyati. It was realized that colonial growth points had failed largely due to the racist context in which they had been implemented. At independence, racism was abolished and a new non-racial policy had to be adopted. The specific goals of post-colonial growth points, according to Wekwete (1991) included:

- a) Reducing inequalities between rural and urban areas in line with government's growth with equity policy,
- b) Providing services and markets for agricultural products to the rural population,
- c) Forging links between the rural and national economy, for example by strengthening the settlement hierarchy,
- d) Stimulating economic development in rural areas, and providing employment in rural areas, and
- e) Providing employment opportunities to rural areas through the informal sector.

These objectives would be achieved by investing funds into the development of infrastructure at growth points. Incentives such as tax relief concessions would be offered to investors locating their businesses at growth points. It was hoped that these strategies would encourage decentralization in the long run. The main differences between colonial (TILCOR) and post-colonial (ARDA) growth points are:

- a) ARDA growth points are part of the country's settlement hierarchy and therefore have linkages with the country's urban system. On the other hand, TILCOR growth points were designed to create separate development for Africans (Table 1).

- b) Unlike those of TILCOR, ARDA growth points are linked to local administrative structures such as district councils.
- c) ARDA growth points are part of a broad rural development plan unlike those of TILCOR, which were aimed at developing African areas only.
- d) TILCOR growth points were designed within a racist framework unlike those of ARDA, which are integrated to the whole nation space economy. However, both colonial and post-colonial growth points were targeted at the same areas (communal) populations.

Growth Points are centers of economic activities which are created to stimulate development in disadvantaged regions with the intention that one day they will eventually become centers of economic growth (Conyers, 2001; Helmsing, 1986; Carr, 1977; Perroux, 1958). When an area has resources, these will trigger development thus improving the attractiveness of that communal area as a potential ground for investors. According to the last population census Murewa has a population of 12 674 people (Central Statistics Office/CO, 2012). The center is located in Mashonaland East (Fig 1).

1.1 Achievements of Post-colonial Growth Points

Despite the fact that the impact of economic development has been disappointing, significant economic growth occurred in Gokwe and Sanyati located in areas where agricultural output was expanding thereby creating a market for secondary goods and services (Conyers, 2001 and Manyanhaire, 2009). Sanyati has grown due to a cotton ginnery which draws raw materials from surrounding cotton growing regions. ARDA built infrastructure in Maphisa during the mid-1980s including houses for workers and general dealer shops. Government also established administrative offices for government departments and built high density housing (Sibanda, 1995).

Table 1: TILCOR and ARDA Growth Points

Province	TILCOR	ARDA
Matebeleland North	Tsholotsho Nkai	Jotsholo Lupani
Matebeleland South	Maphisa	Maphisa Ngwezi
Midlands	Mataga	Gokwe Tongogara Hama
Masvingo	Ngundu Rutenga Jerera Gutu/Mupandawana	Ngundu Jerera Hama
Manicaland	Chisumbanje Murambinda Hauna Birchenough Bridge	Chisumbanje Hauna Birchenough Bridge
Mashonaland East	Mutoko Murewa Wedza	Murewa Wedza
Mashonaland Central	Madziwa	Muzarabani

	Muzarabani Mushumbi Pools	Mushumbi Pools
Mashonaland West	Sanyati	Sanyati

Source: Mapira (1997)

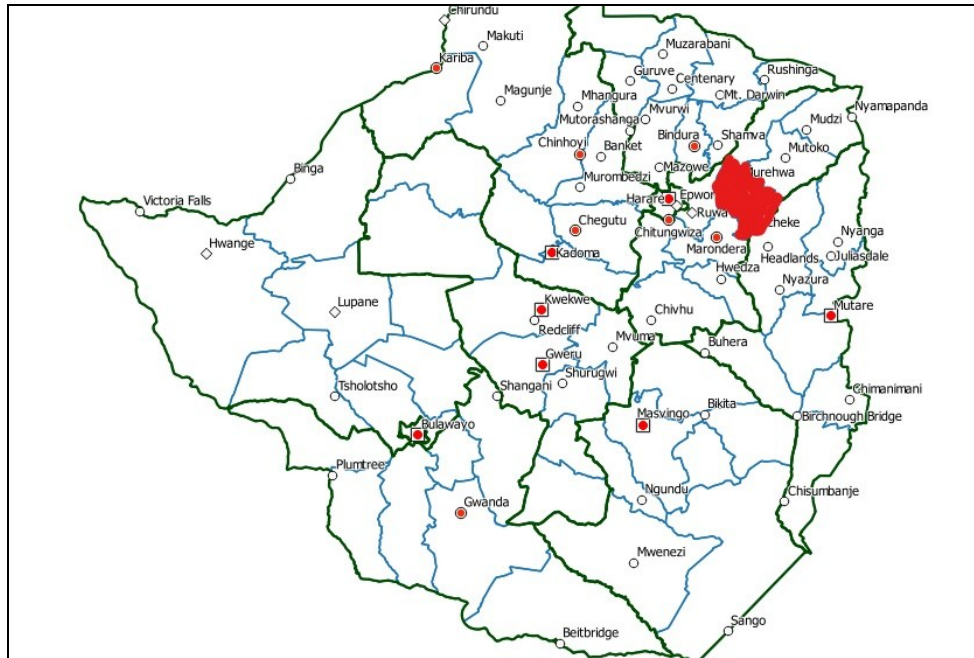


Figure 1: The location of Murewa Growth Point

2. Challenges of Growth Points

Growth points in Zimbabwe are characterized by labor migration. In some growth points, such as Gokwe, lack of infrastructure is hampering growth (Manyanhai et al, 2009). Growth Points in Zimbabwe have failed to trigger development due to the lack of essential ingredients for growth. Most of the centers designated for growth poles do not have the prerequisite potential or strong human resource base from where to ignite the process of cumulative causation, the subsequent growth leading to the stagnation of growth centers (Conyers, 2001).

It should be noted that lack of capital investment is the most outstanding challenge faced by industrialists. Also, lack of information on the market status and proper entrepreneurial skills is having bearing effects on the success of growth points as most industrialists at post-colonial growth points prove to be ignorant. High rentals and closure of firms hinders industrial growth because rentals are unaffordable for small businesses, operating licenses, water and electricity bills are also beyond their reach. Mashuku and Alimos, (2013) assert that rentals consume much of their profit margins. Those who fail to pay have their property confiscated by debt collectors.

Growth pole policy also suffers from “*too many centers syndrome*” (Wekwete, 1991). The country has too many centers (18 growth points and 63 district service centers) to take care of. Hence, Wekwete suggests that there should be a reduction in the number of centers that should be developed at any one time so that each one gets

adequate funding. This is difficult for a country like Zimbabwe with a melting down economy.

Things took a turn for the worse in 1990 with the introduction of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP). ESAP had negative effects on the growth pole policy. Mapira (1997) has claims that ESAP advocated for the free play of market forces while growth pole policy called for government funding and support for development and growth of these centers. Also, during the last 38 years no major industries have located at levels beneath the existing towns (Chinhamora, 2007). Even industrial investment in existing towns has been minor. (The apparent exception of Ruwa growth point is a deconcentration center a mere 22 km from Harare). A provincial capital like Masvingo has had no industrial investment. Some smaller towns and growth points are now known as 'death points'.

Sanyati's rapid growth (population: zero in 1977; 3500 in 1983) is not reproducible at every Growth Point and Rural Industries in Zimbabwe's 81 centers, have not been performing well. There are indeed some with similar opportunities, being at a considerable distance from an existing town and with a large hinterland able to take up a profitable crop. But Maphisa Township, next to the Antelope estate in Matabeleland South, is typical of several others. Its hinterland is agro-ecologically marginal and it is 65 km from a competing small town (Gwanda). Almost no industries have been set up, and not much commerce (Manala, 1996). The estate is weakly linked to the township and local council, let alone to the hinterland. Such townships remain '*dormitory towns accommodating agricultural labor*' (Sibanda, 1985: 20). Sibanda criticizes a top-down approach that emphasizes parachuting in the concentrations of physical infrastructure. He calls instead for first using those resources to build up the peasant agriculture of the area, to generate a basis for such centers. Even at Sanyati, the only significant industrial development has been the cotton ginnery. Otherwise, as of 1985, it had just the usual bakery, school uniform makers, welder, grinding mill, and distribution outlets. It would appear that most growth points in Zimbabwe, instead of decongesting major urban centers, actually sharpen the desire of locals to migrate to larger towns and cities.

3. Research Methodology

This study was based on secondary information, pilot surveys and primary data. Secondary information was collected through the perusal of literature on the subject matter. The literature review targeted textbooks, journals and newspapers dealing with growth points at global level and in Zimbabwe. This was followed by a pilot study whose aim was to provide a reconnaissance study of the areas under consideration. Direct observations involved systematic visits to the study area. The researcher observed the activities at Murewa growth point as a precursor for the study. Questionnaires and interviews were employed in order to collect primary data. While questionnaires targeted the general public, interviews were done among key informants such as government officials in the study area. The data collection process was

conducted between January and March in 2018. Information collected from the surveys was analyzed to provide the views which are expressed in this study.

3.1 The Nature of Industries at Murewa Growth Point

It has already been mentioned that the total population at Murewa was 12 674 in 2012 (CSO, 2012). Industrial activities at Murewa Growth Point are small scale; they play a pivotal role in supplying goods and services to the center and hinterland. The Grain Marketing Board (GMB) at Murewa mainly performs two functions that is, as a collection point for Murewa maize and as a supply point for agricultural inputs delivered to maize farmers in Murewa district. There are also eight grinding mills at Murewa. Of the eight grinding mills, besides processing of maize to mealie meal, 3 process sunflowers for cooking oil and 4 process ground nuts to produce peanut butter. The grinding mills offer milling services to the local community at the growth point as well as its catchment area up to a radius of about 5km from the center. The number of customers who visited the mills at the growth point during weekends in the month of January up to March 2018 is shown in the table below (Table 1). Cereals brought for milling were mainly maize, a handful brought millet, sorghum and wheat. It is vital to note that all these are produced by farmers within the vicinity. Of the 8 grinding mills, 7 are powered by Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) in Mutoko, 52kms away from Murewa GP. One grinding mill is powered by diesel.

Table 2: Numbers of customers visiting the grinding mills at Murewa between January and March 2018

Area	Distance in km	Number of customers
Murewa GP	0	9125
Magamba	2	7976
Nyamburi	3	5562
Murewa caves	4	4452
Chitongo	4	3452
Kambarami	6	2652
Mukwe	7	1250

Source: Field survey, 2018.

There are more chances of the growth of the grinding mills and ultimately the growth point as more people were recorded during that short space of time. There is clear evidence that more people in Murewa will rely on the 9 grinding mills at Murewa (Figure 2). There is also a variety of industries at the growth point (Table 3). They range from welding, sewing, carpentry, grinding mills, bakeries, brick molding to crafts. Such non-agricultural activities indicate the significance of the center in providing essential services to rural people.

Figure 2: Some of the grinding mills at Murewa growth point



Source: Field survey, 2018.

3.2 Other Activities

The manufacturing industrial sector at Murewa Growth Point is also performing exceptionally well. It has total of 52 industries. The retail and service industries dominate with 61 and 8 industries, respectively. A close analysis of the results clearly shows that most of the people are engaged in brick molding as evidenced through the highest frequency of all industrial activities next to general dealers. Brick molding was proliferating since a number of people were constructing houses at the center. Thus, the growth points seem to be selling the housing function more than industrial function. Extraction of river sand from Chivake, Nyamasanga, Muneni and other nearby rivers has contributed to land degradation- some are even extracting road sand for construction purposes.

Table 3: The Nature of Industries at Murewa Growth Point

Sector/Nature of Industry	Number of Industries
Welding	11
Sewing	13
Carpentry	7
Grinding mills	9
Bakeries	2
Brick molding	16
Crafting	4
Total	62

Source: Field survey, 2018.

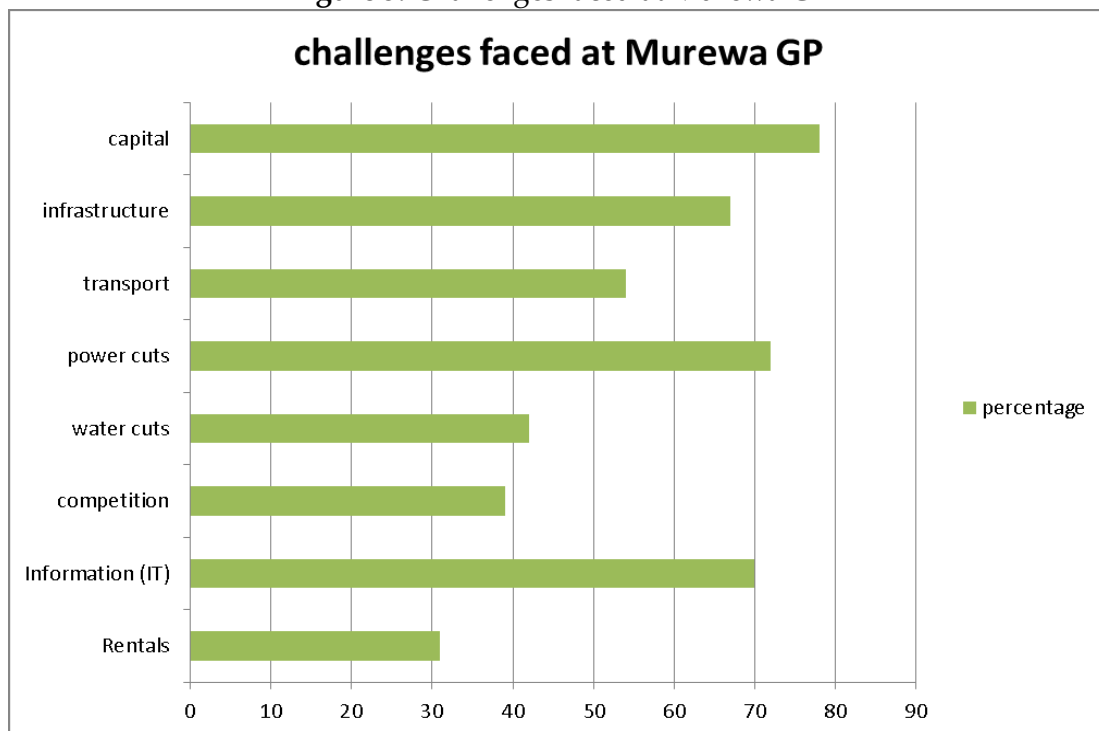
Also, a great number of investors were seen from 2009-2011 due to the introduction of the multi-currency system and stimulative economic recovery programs and policies. Natural hazards for example, 2002 and 2012 drought adversely affected the operation of

industrialists at Murewa. The economic sanctions had negative impacts on development at Murewa growth point. Most of the industries are run by individuals who happen to be the owners assisted by one or two relatives. These industries are failing to perform the function of triggering development. As a result, there is a massive rural-urban migration as people move away in an endeavor to find employment and better working conditions elsewhere.

4. Challenges Confronting the Center

Lack of capital is a major constraint at the growth point. Business people lack capital with which to buy raw materials, pay labor, rentals, pay bills and the like. Lack of capital has hampered industrial growth at Murewa (Figure 3). Manyanhaire (et al 2009) argue that the development of economic growth lies in the way natural resources are exploited hence lack of locally sourced resources is correlated to the level of stagnancy at Murewa. The problem faced by Murewa is the physical setting of the center which lies closer to Marondera and Harare. Ultimately, the center suffers from stiff competition from firms in Harare and Marondera.

Figure 3: Challenges faced at Murewa GP



Source: Field survey, 2018.

Most of the industrialists and business men had faced immense difficulties in trying to access funding from financial institutions and complained about unfair treatment compared to their urban counterparts who received preferential treatment. Chambers (1989) asserts that the rural populace is usually left out in developmental issues because of the ever increasing rate of urban bias. The loans received from Micro-King and Small

Enterprises Development Corporation (SEDCO) was inadequate to sustain their business ventures.

4.1 Information

The lack of information is another major challenge hindering success of industries, businesses and development of Murewa. There is lack of information on the market status and proper entrepreneurial skills. Most respondents emphasized that the government should organize some workshops on entrepreneurship, computers and geographic information systems (GIS) and remote sensing if industry at Murewa has to change for the better. The officials from the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise Development had dumped them from the time they last visited the center with the intention of forming clusters and associations which were to be the basis for knowledge exchange within the relevant industries. However, the official from the Ministry noted that they were not in a rightful position to assist the industrialists since they were also facing financial challenges. Murewa District council on the other hand highlighted that some NGOs should come and kick start projects. He cited the example of CARITUS which constructed biogas digesters and laid sewers in the High density area of Magamba. *“Unfortunately, when the NGOs relocated, the council was so financially crippled that it could not continue with such projects”*. Some of the equipment is now lying idle at the premises (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Biogas digester in Magamba



Source: Field survey, 2018

Waste from magamba residential areas and Sisk is used to produce biogas which is in turn used to light the tower light at site. The gas is used for cooking purposes at the site. The tower light provides light to those within the vicinity. The biogas is also used in the production of floor polish (cobra) at the site. About 5 people are now permanently employed at the site (Figure 5).

Figure 5: A worker at the site explaining how biogas and waste containers are used to produce floor polish



Source: Field survey, 2018.

They collect waste plastic containers from Murewa the growth point thereby assisting struggling municipalities in the collection of waste. They are left to collect non-biodegradable material only.

4.2 Infrastructure

From the study, 68% of the industrialists lack proper infrastructure (working space and machinery). This was mainly caused by the lack of capital to purchase adequate land from the rural district council (RDC) and inadequate funding to purchase new machinery since most of their machinery was obsolete. A key informant from the Ministry of Small and Medium Enterprise Development acknowledged that lack of working space was a threat to the entrepreneurial development. The informant further explained that as a responsible ministry, they are trying to boost industrialization through lobbying for the provision of adequate working space for the industrialists.

4.3 Rentals

Some 31% of the respondents cited high rentals as one of their challenges and this hinders growth because the rentals are unaffordable for small businesses. The rentals are mainly for the operating licenses, water and electricity bills which are paid on a monthly basis. These rentals are consuming much of their small profit margins. Most businessmen have resolved not to pay the rentals and this has led to the confiscation of property by debt collectors sent by the responsible authorities resulting in non-competitiveness of most enterprises at the center. All these rentals end up consuming much of the gained profits. Ultimately, capital expenditure exceeds income generated and this leads to liquidation of businesses hence, contributing to the ever increasing rate of industrial decline at Murewa Growth Point. According to RDC officials, the industrialists are to blame since they dilly dally and fail to pay up the rentals on time

thereby leading to accumulation of huge bills through penalty fees and interest. This is mainly caused by lack of operating capital and low income from the enterprises which cannot sustain high rentals.

4.4 Water and Power Cuts

In addition, power and water cuts have become a threat to their operations. Most respondents claimed that there were frequent power cuts and others said they were greatly affected by water cuts at Murewa. 97% of those in business at the Growth Point use electricity and 100% need water; hence, there is an ever increasing demand for power and water supplies. Power cuts seemed to be the greatest impediment to the business operations since the supplies are rather erratic due to the massive load shedding exercises. Also, some faults may go for one or two weeks without being attended to. This has adverse impacts on development of Murewa growth point. Most of the businesses at the center were failing to perform and efforts to negotiate with the responsible authorities, that is, ZINWA and ZESA had proved fruitless since power outages are now a national problem. A local councilor argued that the inadequate power supply has led also to water cuts since the pumping units are electrically powered. It can be safely concluded that the problems are posing a great threat to the survival and performance of the enterprises at the center.

There are two wholesales from which supermarkets and general dealers purchase products in bulk then sell them to consumers in small quantities. Butcheries have the largest frequency in number (Table 4) since there is cattle ranching in Murewa. Beef is also supplied by nearby districts such as Uzumba-Maramba Pfungwe (UMP) and Mutawatawa. A fairly good number of people are also employed in car repairs, barbers and hairdressers. There are also several retail outlets and other related services at the center (Table 5).

Table 5: Retail outlets and other services at Murewa

Wholesales	2
Supermarkets	12
Bottle store	11
Service provider Auto repairs	7
Tyre repairs	9
Butcheries	16
Hair salons and barbers	14
Banks	4
Total	206

Source: Field survey, 2018.

4.5 Reasons for the location of industries

There are quite a number of reasons for the location of small scale industries at Murewa center. There is the availability of market and centrality to the communal farmers in the area. In Murewa, there are also no frequent water cuts and there is efficient transport links with major centres such as Macheke, Marondera, Mutawatawa, UMP, Mutoko and Harare, thus promoting production and easy movement of inputs and outputs.

Communal farmers will not have to travel long distances to Harare or Marondera, instead, they sell their products at the growth point. There are also some small scale industries like welding, stone sculpting, carpentry among other activities.

5. The Nature of Businesses at Murewa

Murewa offers both low order and high order goods and services. There are commercial functions such as groceries, bottle stores, general dealer shops, carpenters who sell wardrobes, room dividers, beds and so on directly to consumers or wholesalers. Hardwares like Siyawamwaya, Grip and son sell all building materials directly to residents.

5.1 Health services at Murewa Growth Point

According to Craig, (2014), the health services in Murewa district are organized along two tiers; a network of rural health centres and a referral Murewa Hospital. There are two rural mission hospitals (Musami and Nhowe hospital) in the district. There are now more than 20 functional rural health centres in Murewa. Murewa is attractive with its business centres, markets and the easily accessible offices of social Welfare Services where certificates for free health care are obtained (Craig 2014). However, the quality of health care at the health centre is perceived as being poor.

Whilst there are about 26 clinics in Murewa District, it is vital to note that there are also 3 hospitals; Musami hospital, Nhowe hospital and Murewa District General Hospital. Musami hospital is located about 21km away from Murewa, Nhowe hospital is located 39km away along Macheke road whereas Murewa general hospital is located 800m away from the growth point (Table 6). Murewa hospital was established during the colonial era. It has a mortuary, theatre, maternity and out-patient departments, wards, laboratory, intensive care unit and houses for nurses, doctor and pharmacist. In November 2017, the X-ray machine was introduced and people living near the center no longer go to Musami hospital for x-rays.

5.2 Health facilities in Murewa

Table 6: Number of people visiting Murewa Hospital in 2017

Name	Status	Owner
Murewa district hospital	Hospital	Government
Musami hospital	Hospital	Mission
Nhowe hospital	Hospital	Mission
26 clinics	Rural health centres	Rural district council

Source: field survey 2018

5.3 Educational facilities at Murewa Growth Point

One of the major functions of Murewa Growth point is education. This is evidenced by the presence of two schools, that is Hurungwe primary and Hurungwe secondary. The former has a current enrolment of 1348 whilst the latter has an enrolment of 712. Hurungwe secondary has 27 teachers. Due to rapid population increase in areas within

the vicinity of Murewa, there is much room for expansion. 2km away from Murewa, there is Murewa mission which draws its pupils from the growth point and outside Murewa. Surrounding the center and within a distance of less than 6kms, there are quite a number of primary and secondary schools; Kambarami, Muchenje, St Clares and Chemapango. It is also crucial to take note of the presence of 2 colleges that are; Shalom academy and North East College.

6. Challenges at Murewa and their Possible Solutions

Attempts to implement growth center strategy at global level have met with problems. This is because of the weaknesses of growth center theory itself. Perroux's growth pole theory was developed in order to explain the operation of multi-sector investment. It was therefore a theory of the global rather than the local economy as required by the growth center strategy. The operations of a growth pole do not coincide with the geographical concept of a region. The former are supra-regional while Boudeville's Growth Center Strategies are regional in character. As a result, reconciling the two is problematic.

Despite the fact that farmers in Murewa have improved their livelihoods and transformed Murewa for the better, agriculture is being done at the expense of the land. Vast land in Bokoto and Chitowa is being degraded due to maize, tobacco, sweet potatoes... production. Bokoto farmers are indiscriminately cutting down trees for curing tobacco (Mhike, 2014). Due to urban agriculture, most of the wetlands near Magamba high density area have been disturbed.

Criel et al (1995) argues that substantial proportions of the population had no or limited access to a first line health facility fit to provide comprehensive, integrated and continuous care. Some people are so poor that they cannot foot medical bills. However, the district hospital after the government intervention now offers services and patients can make a payment plan thereafter. Moreover, it must be emphasized that there is poor performance of hospital out-patient department (OPD) in the delivery of good quality primary care in Murewa. This is due to rotation of staff at OPD and the new staff will not have patient's social and medical background (Criel, 1995).

It is also crucial to note that the available district budget does not permit funding of all projects and activities in Murewa district. Also, monopolistic patterns limit decentralization or relocation to depots or wholesales (Wekwete, 1982). Some shops in Murewa have dissolved whereas the popular ones lay Power Sales and Red Star have shut branches in Murewa and relocated to other districts.

Moreover, it is vital to note that rapid expansion of population has caused anti-social behavior for instance, prostitution and high rate of crimes like theft, robbery, pilfering at the growth point. This can easily be reduced through the implementation of night police patrols, awareness campaigns on the adverse effects of prostitution among others.

Despite the fact that Murewa council has placed bins at designated points, people still continue to deposit garbage anywhere. Also, this has been exacerbated as regular refuse collection has not been a priority. People, during the night are seen dumbing

waste along the streets of Magamba high density area or at the central business district of Murewa.

To mark this to an end, responsible authorities should collect garbage timeously and embark on clean up campaigns and make Murewa clean. Furthermore, roads have also been highly degraded. Maintenance of some local roads has not been undertaken regularly. Some roads are now full of potholes and have not only become an eyesore but dangerous to motorists. Murewa growth point has seen an increase in beer halls, bottle stores and night clubs. With the increase of these, the emergence of commercial sex workers has also risen. This is also a hindrand to the growth of Murewa GP. The loss of morals is seen to be brought in by these night clubs who have attracted these prostitutes. These are located just close or inside these night clubs. Examples of the night clubs include Shades and Sky Blue night club.

The commercial sex workers are seen to be increasing frequently and the local people are linking it to poverty as the impetus to such activities. Close monitoring of the night clubs by police and police night patrols should be carried out to curb the problems of anti-social behavior. This has really caused moral decadence in the society. Furthermore, some big private companies are reluctant to come and establish or invest in Murewa despite incentives promised by government to those who might relocate to designated growth points like Murewa. This is because of viability problems and the buying power of local commodities throughout the year – not only in Murewa but in the country at large.

6.1 Prospects at Murewa

Murewa is a vibrant growth point with various industrial activities. Three kilometres away is the GMB, there is repairing of cars at the centre, shoe making/mending, manufacturing of clothes inter alia. Commercial services including banks (CABS, CBZ, AGRIBANK), Post Office – to mention but a few services are available. Some of the roads at the growth point were resurfaced with tarmac including Macheke which has now been resurfaced up to Murewa Prison as of now. More road signs have also been erected. The most popular shops which are functional include: Power Sales, Bata, Speed Bulk and Metro Pitch.

Murewa is located north East of Harare and is surrounded by 15 villages. About 11 small workshops are now functional and fully engaged in welding and making small tools and scotchcarts. In addition, also found at the GP are several grinding mills, piggeries, poultry plant, small oil processing units, bakery, fruits, vegetables, grain and beef (Emmanuel et al 1997). Most of the tomatoes and vegetables supplied to Harare residents are sold by farmers from Murewa and UMP at informal markets such as Mbare Musika and other urban centres. Mount Bokoto, a resettlement area in ward 24 has the most tobacco and sunflower farmers. The farming started with a program of land reform which started in 2000. This has contributed greatly to the development of Murewa and people's lives have improved as evidenced through livelihood assets which are; building of personal houses in high and medium density areas of Murewa.

Some have also taken over and opened shops which had been shut in 2008 due to melting down of the economy.

The street lighting using solar power was spearheaded in 2015 to provide lighting to motorists from cross Macheke into the growth point. Pedestrians can now easily walk during the night due to the street lights introduced. More reports of arm bush and theft which used to be reported almost daily as people took cover of the darkness has nosedived. Also, landfill sited in 2016 West of Murewa GP was fenced in 2017 for proper waste disposal and management. Murewa center ponds and rehabilitation and Biogas digesters were located in the high density new stands of Murewa- Thanks to Murewa council in partnership with CARITAS, a Non-governmental organization. In Magamba, public sewers were laid to minimize pollution as most houses had septic tanks which always spilled during the wet season when the water table at times reaches the ground surface.

Murewa council spearheaded the construction of a cottage for the denigrated or downtrodden (Chamunorwa cottage). Moreover, Murewa waste management plant with assistance from Environmental Management Agency was sited. Nearby schools such as Hurungwe, Kambarami School and Kambarami clinic, Chitowa School and clinic have been electrified have been electrified under the rural electrification program.

7. Conclusions

This study is an examination of the challenges and prospects of Murewa Growth Point. It gives a background of Growth Point Policy and its applicability. It has shown that Murewa has a number of industries which have developed more shops, schools, a training center and more health service centers have been built. It is however crucial to note that the industries are failing to trigger economic development. There is no linkage between progress at Murewa and the resources in the hinterland. Massive rural-urban migration is also found in Murewa and there is an increasing gap between the core and the periphery. The researchers also found out that despite having many prospects of development, Murewa is facing a plethora of challenges. Among others, these include; lack of capital, poor infrastructure, poor transport, frequent electricity and water cuts, lack of information and know-how on the use of computers, knowledge on GIS and Remote Sensing to mention but a few. In spite of these challenges there is positive development taking place. Its population has grown to more than 12 000 as mentioned previously. In general, Murewa is achieving most of the objectives for which it was developed. For example, it is providing urban services to the surrounding communal lands thereby fulfilling a major goal for its establishment.

7.1 Recommendations

However, several recommendations should be made for its improvement. First, government should provide funding for rural development projects like biogas digester projects spearheaded by CARITUS. This is because there is lack of capital in the rural area projects. Moreover, the government and Murewa council should pour in the required money so as to help in the funding of such projects.

Secondly, government and council should secure private investment from donors and other international institutions to invest in growth points throughout the country.. They should secure assistance from developed countries. It is important for the government to invest in the development of the rural areas at all costs. Large sums of money have to be allocated to the Rural District Councils so as to make them meet their required development objectives.

Furthermore, the government should craft policies which attract foreign investors to growth points. This would lure potential investors from all walks of life, thereby going a long way in the development of not only Murewa center but other growth points in the country. Also, emphasis should be on bottom-up and not top-down policies so that local authorities are given more power in decision making. Mapira (1997) argues that top-down planning has proved to be a hindrance to the success of many development plans, development will end up being less controlled and spontaneous. Making of decisions can also be time consuming.

To arrest the problem of rural-urban migration being experienced at growth points like Murewa, the government should set up better living conditions for the rural dwellers. These include the construction of proper modern houses, more rural electrification programs and provision of good quality grocery shops in the area. Transport should be in good working condition so that villagers would not have to migrate to urban areas in search for better living conditions.

Above all, government should first of all identify a strong resource base in a particular area and then set up industries in line with what is available. For instance, Murewa's economy is agro- based and most of the farmers grow tomatoes. Hence, it is vital to set up an agro based industry like the tomato source plant at Murewa. This would help in job creation and ultimately in the development of the growth point.

About the Authors

Makesure Chinyamakobvu is a former BSc Honours student of Geography and Environmental Science at Great Zimbabwe University. Jemitias Mapira is a professor in Geography and Environmental Science while Nyashadzashe Ngaza is a lecturer in chemistry. Both are employed at Great Zimbabwe University in Masvingo.

References

1. Bradford M. G and Kent, J. V. 1987. *Theories and their Application*, Oxford University Press, London
2. Carr, M. 1997. *New Patterns: Processes and Change in Human Geography*, Thomas Nelson and Sons, London
3. Chazireni, E. 2015. Rural development challenges in Mwenenezi District, Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Research in economics and social sciences*, 5 (8): 191-195
4. Chifamba, M. 2012. Reviving Zimbabwe's Growth Points, *Inter Press Service* 3 (4): 94-101

5. Conyers, D. 2001. *Regional Development*, ZOU, Harare
6. De Souza, A. R. and Foust, J. B. 1979. *World Space Economy*, Bell and Howell Company, London
7. Gore, C.C. 2007. *Reasons in Questions: Space Development Theory and Regional Theory*, Routledge Publications, London
8. Hauratty, I. 1984. *Rural Growth Points and Industries in Zimbabwe*, Ideologies and Politics, The Hague
9. Helmsing, A.H. 1986. Rural Industries and Growth Points: Issues in an ongoing policy debate in Zimbabwe, Occasional paper no. 2, Department of Rural and Urban Planning < UZ, Harare
10. Manala, L. 1996. Maphisa Growth Point since 1980. Paper submitted to UZ on Maphisa Growth Point, Department of urban planning, UZ, Harare
11. Manyanhaire, I. O., Mhishi, B., Sivotwa, E and Sithole, N. 2009. Growth Points or Declining Points?: A case of Magunje Growth Point in Mashonaland West Province of Zimbabwe, *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol 10 No. 4:506-519
12. Mapira, J. 1997. 'An Evaluation of the Growth Center Strategy with Special Reference to Birchenough Bridge Growth Point', A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Science as part of requirements for the Master of Science degree in Environmental Science, University of Botswana, Gaborone
13. Mukono, G. 2014. Growth Point Strategy in Zimbabwe. A case of Nyamapanda. Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of a degree in development studies at Midlands State University
14. Mushuku, A and Takuva, R. 2012. Growth points or towns? Post-independence experiences of the industrialization process at Nemamwa growth point in Zimbabwe, *International Journal of Politics and Good Governance* 4(4.4)
15. Nhede, W. J. 2013. The Zimbabwean growth points phenomenon impact and implications on public service delivery, University of Pretoria, Pretoria
16. Prroux, F. 95 Note sur la notion de poles croissance, *Economie Appliquee* 1& 2: 307-320. (Translated in 1974 by Mette Monsted)
17. Potter, R.B. 2008. *Geography for development*, Pearson Education, London
18. Rambanapasi, C.O.1990. Regional Planning Practice in Zimbabwe: An Analysis of Determinants of Change. In Helmsing, A.H. and Wekwete, K. H. *Sub-national Planning in Southern Africa Eastern Africa*, Aldershot
19. Sibanda, B.M.C. 1985. Growth Points: A Focus for Rural Development in Zimbabwe. Vol 14:42-56
20. Wekwete, K. H. 1988. 'Rural Growth Points in Zimbabwe: Perspectives for the Future' *Journal of Social Development in Africa*, Vol 3: No 2:5-16
21. Wekwete, K. H. 1991. 'Growth Center Policy in Zimbabwe with special reference to service centers' In Mutizwa-Mangiza, N.D. and Helmsing, A.H.J. (eds) *Rural Development and Planning and Planning in Zimbabwe*, Avebury, Aldershot

Creative Commons licensing terms

Authors will retain copyright to their published articles agreeing that a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0) terms will be applied to their work. Under the terms of this license, no permission is required from the author(s) or publisher for members of the community to copy, distribute, transmit or adapt the article content, providing a proper, prominent and unambiguous attribution to the authors in a manner that makes clear that the materials are being reused under permission of a Creative Commons License. Views, opinions and conclusions expressed in this research article are views, opinions and conclusions of the author(s). Open Access Publishing Group and European Journal of Economic and Financial Research shall not be responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability caused in relation to/arising out of conflict of interests, copyright violations and inappropriate or inaccurate use of any kind content related or integrated on the research work. All the published works are meeting the Open Access Publishing requirements and can be freely accessed, shared, modified, distributed and used in educational, commercial and non-commercial purposes under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License \(CC BY 4.0\)](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).