

In Pursuit of Regional Development in Mexico

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²Mexico, Círculo rojo, 2015.

At the moment, regional development is one of the challenges facing authorities and society in general, as they aim to harness potentialities in a sustainable fashion and do away with imbalances in the region. Development is no longer a concept applicable only to economics; starting in the 1990s, development began to take on more of a social connotation, including social welfare and living standards for the population.

This book provides a clear explanation of the concepts, methods, theories, problems, and examples that can serve to draw up a full diagnosis of regions and help achieve much-heralded development in the zone through decision-making based on a theoretical rationale. This book is a compilation of research on regional development, specifically, industrialization, the manufacturing industry, marginalization, employment, the environment, and geospatial analysis. These research studies were conducted by various Mexican scholars working at both national and foreign universities, and have been extensively coordinated.

The book is structured in such a way that it brings the reader along on a journey from the general to the particular, using concrete and specific cases in each of the chapters.

The majority of the research in the book speaks of regional development in terms of investment and attracting the manufacturing industry to the various regions of the country. It mentions how this industry has behaved in Mexico over the years and how agglomerations have formed in some regions in particular, as well as how this has affected their industrial concentration. For example, these agglomerations have had repercussions for the flow of technology knowledge into the region where they are established.

Equally interesting is the analysis of the evolution of marginalization rates at the state and municipal level, where the information introduced about the clusters of high marginalization in Mexico is of particular interest. Similarly, the research notes the importance of environmental management and planning hand in hand with a policy to mitigate imbalances in terms of poverty and public services to better engage the population in caring for the environment.

In general, each of the chapters that comprises the book has one factor in common, that is, each chapter concludes that it is necessary to come up with a formal industrial policy that will drive economic development in the country and make the manufacturing sector more dynamic, and, through productive chains, help grow the economic activities with which they are related. Moreover, the policy must not only promote the economy, but also foster scientific research and the exchange of information among companies.

There is only one chapter that seems unrelated to the other research topics, as it discusses productive activities in the context of rural development in Chimay,

Yazcaba, Yucatan, a Mayan community of extreme poverty, highlighting the limitations it has faced in achieving its own development, including the population, poverty, customs, primary activities, etc. It would be useful for this research to go more in depth to look at the change that development could bring about for the community, which could be observed as an area of opportunity.

This book contains aspects, as already mentioned, that address industrial development, metropolitan zones where this sector is concentrated, employment, productive systems, and the environment. One option to be considered would be to expand upon this research work and enrich it by studying other aspects important to regional development, such as an in-depth analysis of high industrial concentration zones and the way in which their economic structure is made up, as well as the strategies implemented to achieve development of the manufacturing industry and, moreover, analyze production factors (tangible and intangible) concentrated in these regions.

Another topic to be derived from this research would be an analysis of the population that migrates internally within the country from one state to another, towards regions of high industrial concentration, which translates into a situation where the destination region must confront the challenges brought on by population growth. One final recommendation would be to include a study discussing inequality and regional polarization, where government strategies in each region should try to benefit the highest number of towns and economic activities, in other words, diversifying the economic structure of each region.

Finally, the book provides interesting information about regional development in Mexico, which could serve as the foundation for future decision-making in regard to the manufacturing sector. But this book should be applied not only to the manufacturing sector. Rather, it should be considered as a methodology to obtain the same information from different economic sectors and find areas of opportunity to incentivize economic growth in different regions pursuant to their resources.

One factor that emerges in all of the research studies is the need for Mexico and each of its subregions to establish a well-structured industrial policy to breathe new life into the sector in a sustained way to harness and distribute the resources available in each region.

This book is highly recommended to readers due to the fluidity of information and the fact that it has been written in an easy to understand style. Moreover, it is directed not only at students interested in regional development, but also towards researchers and decision-makers in the industrial sector at all levels (local, regional, or national).