

GROWTH AND DECLINE OF SMALL TOWNS IN MANIPUR: A REGIONAL UNBALANCE TRENDS OF URBANISATION IN VALLEY AND HILLY DISTRICTS

DR. N. CHANDRASHEKHAR SINGH

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT
STANDARD COLLEGE, KONGBA, IMPHAL-EAST, MANIPUR.

ABSTRACT

Historically, urbanisation has been viewed as an important factor in the arena of economic change and taking rural societies to a higher urban social formation. Urbanisation itself fulfilled three major economic roles. First it induced labour shifts from agrarian areas to expanding urban-industrial centres, thus providing necessary labour for the latter. Second, not only employment provider, but it also boosted labour productivity. Increase labour productivity led to increases in the production as well as expanded the domestic market for both industrial and agricultural products. Third, it also helped to facilitate the diffusion of technological innovations across space. Thus an accelerating pace of urbanisation might result in a mismatch in the space economy at various levels and in several forms, especially in the small border state like Manipur. As a result, has been a matter of growing concern to the planners, decision makers and development analysts. Rapid population growth, unbalance urbanisation and deteriorating human environment form the trilogy of problems, which Manipur is facing today and these together seem to negate all state planning and development efforts aiming at improving the quality of peoples in the state. Inadequacy of industrial development in this small state of North Eastern India has reinforces these problems and sometimes these appear to threaten the peace in the state. The present study concerned the growth and decline of small towns in Manipur is also one of the major problems of the planners, decision makers, and study groups especially urban geographers. Several factors, individually and jointly, are responsible for the growth and decline of small towns (class-v and vi category) like physical, location, demographic, economic, change of census literature and socio-cultural factors. This fluctuation of surprising growth and decline has been developed another problems in the capital city of Manipur. Inadequacy of social facilities and overwhelming importance to the service sector Imphal city, the only single class one city change to disproportionate increase in the number of urban households because of huge rural-urban transfers and a relatively higher rate of natural increase has always a tendency of outrun the number of housing units being made available in this urban centre. Moreover the present study analyses the dynamism of small towns in Manipur especially in the hilly region. The viability of small towns does depend on their size, location and rural field interactions and other economic functions. It is important to understand the growth and decline of small towns, as it is relevant in planning of decentralisation of population over space.

KEY WORDS: Urbanisation, labour –productivity, space-economy, socio-cultural factor, rural-urban transfer, demographic, census literature, decentralisation, unbalance urbanisation, dynamic character.

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