

Dimensions of Urban Growth in Pakistan*

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The urban population of Pakistan has grown almost fourfold, over the last two decades. It is estimated that it will increase by 55.5 million by the year 2000 [Blacker (n.d.)]. The increases in urban population is attributed to either continued rural to urban migration or natural increase. As a consequence of the above increase in population the urban living conditions are under great pressure. It is therefore important to analyse the dimensions of urban growth and examine its social and economic implications. The objectives of the present study are:

1. To analyse the trends and variations in urban growth;
2. To decompose the components of urban growth and analyse which component has contributed more to urban growth; and
3. To analyse some of the implications of urban growth.

TRENDS AND VARIATIONS IN URBAN GROWTH

The urban rate of growth has remained higher than the national and rural rate of growth during 1951–81. However, the rate of urban growth declined from 4.9 to 4.3 between 1951–81 [Rukanuddin and Farooqui (1987)].

The difference between urban and rural growth demonstrated a decline between 1961–72, but reflected a slight increase between 1972–81. This increase has been attributed to changes in socio-economic conditions and definitional changes of urban areas in the country [Abbasi (1987)]. Due to consistent increase in the urban population since 1951, the existing cities are increasing more rapidly either through rural to urban migration or due to natural increase. The intercensal

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increase in the major cities may reflect the concentration of population in major cities and other urban areas. The number of urban localities increased from 238 in 1951 to 415 in 1981. With the increase in urban localities and the concentration of population in large cities, the question therefore is, whether large cities are contributing more to urban growth or the new urban localities are attracting more population. Table 1 shows that intercensal increase has been highest between 1961-72 for ten large cities and the trend was similar for other urban areas though slightly less than ten large cities for the same period.

Table 1

Intercensal Percentage Increase in Urban Population

Area	1951-60	1961-72	1972(adj)-81
All Urban	60.0	72.0	47.0
Ten Large Cities	67.4	69.6	43.2
Other Urban Areas (Excluding Ten Large Cities)	52.1	65.8	52.1

Source: [Abbasi (1987)].

The declining trend between 1972-81 both for ten large cities and other urban areas has been attributed mainly to general development strategy, declassification of urban localities to rural areas, which resulted the declining impact on rural to urban migration [Abbasi (1987)].

URBAN GROWTH BY YEAR 2000

In the past the rate of urban growth demonstrated variation but the overall increase has remained higher than the rural population. This growth momentum may continue for a long time because the natural increase may decline faster in the future but rural-urban migration will continue. Table 2 shows that under a constant fertility rate, the urban population will continue to grow faster. By the year 2000, 54 million (36 percent) people will live in cities and this is almost double the current population. Moreover it is estimated that metropolitan cities will grow by one percent, secondary cities by 1.59 percent and other cities by 1.41 percent [World Bank (1988)]. The maximum increase is expected in Karachi where the population will increase by 12.62 million from 5.27 million. The other major cities will increase by the same rate. Among the provinces, Other Urban

Punjab is projected to have the largest increase by the next century followed by Other Urban Sindh. Urban growth is the net result of reclassification, internal migration and natural increase. Therefore, the above components need to be isolated for analysis of urban growth. The reclassification of urban areas is difficult to isolate from natural increase due to lack of data. However, by taking the net effect of natural increase and internal migration, urban growth can be decomposed. Therefore, in the following sections the above two components of urban growth have been discussed.

Table 2

*Projected Population of Cities, Other Urban and
All Urban Areas by Year 2000*

City/Region	Population 1981 (Million)	Projected Population 2000(Million)
Karachi	5.27	12.162
Lahore	2.96	5.66
Faisalabad	1.11	2.02
Rawalpindi	0.79	1.28
Hyderabad	0.74	0.85
Multan	0.73	1.39
Gujranwala	0.63	2.09
Sialkot	0.31	0.72
Sargodha	0.29	0.67
Peshawar	0.58	1.39
Quetta	0.29	0.65
Other Urban Punjab	6.04	15.85
Other Urban Sindh	2.35	6.59
Other Urban NWFP	1.11	2.33
Other Urban Balochistan	0.40	1.33
All Urban Punjab	13.23	29.68
All Urban Sindh	8.36	19.61
All Urban NWFP	1.69	3.73
All Urban Balochistan	0.69	1.98

Source: [Blacker (n.d.)].

RURAL - URBAN MIGRATION

The migration from rural to urban areas is a universal pattern in Pakistan and, as a consequence, it is one of the important components of urban growth. It may be more appropriate to find out the proportion of population migrating from one area to another to estimate the net effect of migration on urban growth. Table 3 shows that the proportion of rural to urban migrants has been highest in 1981 (44.4 percent). There is another stream of migrants nearly 10 percent which is the urban to urban migration stream. The highest proportion of rural to urban migrants may be attributed to massive out-migration from rural areas to the Middle East during the seventies but with the decline in employment opportunities, the emigrants might have been potential urban migrants. The urban to urban migration stream may be due to the variation in incentives to migrants between one urban centre to another. Such migratory streams add further increases to the population of major urban centres.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of Internal Migrants by Previous and Current Residence 1981

Current Residence	Previous Residence	
	Urban	Rural
Urban	9.2	44.4
Rural	4.3	42.1

Source: [Government of Pakistan (n.d. b)].

The above argument has been substantiated from the national migration survey that the rural to urban migratory streams are contributing the highest volume of migrants to urban areas [Government of Pakistan (1988)].

NATURAL INCREASE

Of the three components of urban growth, the rate of natural increase has been higher in Pakistan (3.3 percent). Since Pakistan has experienced a decline in the death rate with persistently high birth rates, the contribution of fertility to the overall population increase has been higher and, hence, urban growth.

Trends in fertility between 1970–88 in terms of levels of fertility suggest that levels of fertility remained almost stable during the last two decades [Alam (1984); Government of Pakistan (1987–90)]. Moreover, the past evidence suggests

that urban marital fertility has been higher than the rural fertility [Sathar (1979); Alam (1984)]. However, the recent evidence suggests that younger females living in metropolitan areas show a slightly declining trend in marital fertility [Government of Pakistan (1986)]. Despite the above change in marital fertility, the recent demographic surveys (1984-88) reveal that overall marital fertility levels continues to be the same, which indicates that urban fertility remains higher than rural fertility.

In order to probe the query of higher urban fertility, the fertility behaviour of women residing in major cities has been analysed. Because the fertility of women residing in major urban areas may reflect a change in lifestyle which results in a change in fertility behaviour. Table 4 shows that metropolitan women have shown even a modest change in their fertility behaviour during last 10 years.

Table 4

Age-specific Fertility Rates for Major Urban-other Urban and Rural Areas 1974-75 to 1984-85

	Major Urban		Other Urban		Rural	
	PFS	PCPS	PFS	PCPS	PFS	PCPS
Current Age	1974-75	1984-85	1974-75	1984-85	1974-75	1984-85
15-19	91	38.7	113	61.8	141	70.2
20-24	276	184.0	263	232.7	277	230.0
25-29	384	255.6	322	286.0	309	260.8
30-34	254	210.8	271	251.2	256	236.9
35-39	168	142.3	192	189.9	189	229.0
40-44	28	146.4	86	145.5	81	119.0
45-49	15	77.0	3	86.9	12	66.3
TFR	5.9	5.2	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.0

Source: [Alam and Casterline (1984); Government of Pakistan (1986)].

The levels of fertility have slightly declined for major urban women and are lower than rural women, while the highest increase can be observed for other urban women. But the marital fertility rates from Table 5, suggest that levels of marital fertility between 1974-75 to 1984-85 have not changed. To Metropolitan women particularly show the least differentials with other urban women. Thus, the above evidence suggests that either marital fertility remained stable or specifically, the marital fertility of other urban areas increased during the last decade.

Table 5

*Age-specific Marital Fertility Rates for Major Urban Other Urban
and Rural Areas 1974-75 to 1984-85*

Current Age	Major Urban		Other Urban		Rural	
	PFS 1974-75	PCPS 1984-85	PFS 1974-75	PCPS 1984-85	PFS 1974-75	PCPS 1984-85
15-19	314	339.4	354	291.1	296	261.3
20-24	383	380.3	361	383.4	340	317.0
25-29	377	302.5	360	309.8	339	282.5
30-34	263	235.7	294	287.3	276	262.6
35-39	178	168.4	211	210.1	204	250.8
40-44	32	156.5	98	145.9	90	136.4
45-49	17	99.4	41	106.3	14	82.7
MTFR	7.8	8.4	8.4	8.6	7.7	7.9

Source: [Alam and Casterline (1984); Government of Pakistan (1986)].

Note: PFS: Pakistan Fertility Survey.

PCPS: Pakistan Contraceptive Prevalence Survey.

Despite the evidence that the contribution of natural increase in terms of fertility to urban growth had been substantial, the limitation remains there that the net effect of reclassification of urban areas could not be isolated. Moreover, the other component of urban growth, namely net in-migration also suggests a lower level in the recent past (i.e. 1972-81). But the contribution of natural increase is 3.36 percent, internal migration 0.82 percent and reclassification plus city extension 0.11 percent [Government of Pakistan (n.d.b)].

DEVELOPMENT EXPENDITURES FOR URBAN POPULATION

Despite the fact that urban growth is a natural and essential part of any country's progressive economic transformation, the rapid concentration of population in the urban centres leads to unplanned industrial growth along with uneven size of urban localities. This may lead to an excessive burden on the provision of social services.

In Pakistan, the urban infrastructure i.e. housing, education and health services costs 27 percent which will reach 30 percent by year 2000. The projected annual investment requirement for urban infrastructure by year 2000 is nearly 4.7 percent of projected GNP [World Bank (1988)]. It is possible that with the concentration of population in the major cities, spending on urban development may

increase over time and other important programmes such as rural development may be affected due to uneven allocation of resources and poor budgeting.

HOUSING

The increasing population is exerting a high pressure on the existing housing stock. Thus despite the increase in housing units over time both in the urban and the rural areas, the urban population growth (4.4) in the past was higher than the housing growth rate (3.71) during 1960–80.

Table 6 shows that the magnitude of the housing shortage is higher in rural areas since 1960. Over time, the housing shortage declined and the decline had been faster in urban areas. The overall per capita housing shortage has diminished by 24 percent between 1960–80 [Ghaus and Pasha (1990)]. In spite of the above evidence that the urban housing shortage has declined, the housing conditions for the urban population are not much better. There were 54.3 percent *pucca* housing units for the urban population, which shows that nearly 45 percent of the population lives in *pucca kutcha* and *kutcha* houses [Zaki (1981)]. With the continuing growth of the urban population the housing shortage will increase. Only in major urban centres like Lahore and Karachi there will be a need of 32 thousand housing units annually [United Nations (1988)]. During 1988–93 there will be 1.3 million housing units required in urban areas [Government of Pakistan (1988a)].

Table 6

Magnitude of Housing Shortage in Pakistan

	Census 1960		Census 1980	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Extent of Over Crowding (%)	58.4	72.3	52.6	67.2
Shortage of Rooms (000s)	88.2	31.76	12.50	48.34
Magnitude of Housing Shortage (%)	27.3	33.1	10.6	24.8

Source: [Ghaus and Pasha (1990)].

EDUCATION

The literacy trend has shown that during last 20 years literacy ratios have improved substantially especially among urban females [Government of Pakistan (n.d.)]. However still 50 percent urban males and more than 60 percent females are illiterate while the literacy ratios in rural areas are very low. This shows that

the majority of the population, especially the mothers are not aware of the consequences of large family size. There is an overall decline in the urban enrolment ratio between 1961–81 for both males and females for age groups 5–9 and 10–14 [Government of Pakistan (n.d.)]. This may be due to higher drop-out rates at the Primary and Secondary levels. Another cause of low literacy levels is that the government is allocating a minimum budget for education. Table 7 demonstrates that expenditure on education had been very low which is responsible for low literacy levels and overcrowding in educational institutions. During 1971–85 the government expenditure did not exceed more than 2 percent of its GNP which is very low. As a result, the quality of education further deteriorated. This shows that future costs of education may increase especially among urban areas due to influx of more rural migrants who are migrating mainly for better educational and other facilities and will lead to more pressure of population in urban areas.

Table 7

Private Expenditure on Education (As a Percentage of Total Household Expenditure)

Years	Urban	Rural
1971-72	2.26	0.77
1984-85	1.39	0.69

Source: [Sarmad *et al.* (1988)].

HEALTH

In Pakistan nearly 80 percent hospital beds and doctors are located in the urban areas while the rural share is very low but keeping in view the increasing urbanization, the health facilities are far from sufficient in urban areas. There is one doctor for 1801 people while for 610 persons one bed is available and for 50 thousand people one hospital is available [Rukanuddin and Farooqui (1987)].

The problems of water supply, sewerage and drainage is also further aggravated with the increase in population pressure on urban areas. Zaidi (1988) observed that of the 19.4 million urban population in 1983 only 7 percent had access to potable water.

Similarly, out of 12.12 million people 48 percent had sewerage and drainage facilities in 1983. This shows that with the increase in the urban population, the facilities are also becoming insufficient. These targets could only be achieved by the overall priorities of the better planning of health facilities. If population

continues to grow unchecked, the health facilities will grow slowly while if fertility declines faster, the per capita availability of health facilities and manpower may improve greatly.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

In spite of the decline in the rate of unemployment between 1973–81 both for males and females, urban unemployment remained higher compared to rural areas [Government of Pakistan (n.d.a)]. Moreover, the urban labour force had the highest percentage of working population (52.3 percent) engaged in the informal sector during 1981 while it was 45.5 percent during 1973. Thus, more job opportunities in the informal sector suggest that the shift from agricultural occupations to non-agricultural occupations will increase migration and thereby increase the pressure of population in urban areas. In the past, despite rapid labour force growth, labour surpluses have not appeared critical because of a strong economic performance which may be due to out-migration to the Middle East and labour segmentation by gender in agriculture. But, over time, the out-migration has shown signs of decline along with return migration from abroad. This may further aggravate urban unemployment opportunities. The reasons may be that majority of the returning migrants may reside in cities to earn their livelihood and make use of education and health facilities. Therefore, neither declines in unemployment rates, nor increases in employment rates in the urban sector could solve the problems. The need, therefore, is to check the high growth rates of the urban population.

There are various other sectors e.g. urban transportation, water supply, environment, power, sanitation and town planning etc. which are affected due to population concentration and require better planning in future due to rapid urban growth.

CONCLUDING NOTE

Despite the fact that the urban growth rate shows a slight decline over time it is difficult to draw specific conclusions from this analysis. A more systematic and thorough study would be needed to assess the dimensions of urban growth. However, among the components of urban growth, the evidence suggests that natural increase has been mainly contributing to urban growth followed by migration. As for the repercussions of urban growth are concerned, the provision of social services such as housing, education, health etc. seem to be better in the

urban than the rural areas. There is an imbalance between the rate of urban growth and expansion of these services. The projected urban growth also indicates that future population pressure will lead to overcrowding in cities and increase in the costs of living.

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