🔓 **Research Article**

POPULATION OF ASIAN COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

Over the past three decades, more than half of the world's population lives in cities. In 1999, 47 percent of the world's population (2.9 billion people) lived in cities. By 2030, according to UN projects, this ratio will reach 60% and make up 4.9 billion people. About 95 percent of this major urban growth is occurring in less developed countries.

KEYWORDS

UN, region, urbanization problems of Asia, GDP, population.

INTRODUCTION

Also, it can be clearly understood from the statistics of population development that more than 60 percent of the growth of the world's population took place in Asia, especially in China and India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines and Vietnam. In 2030, the overall urbanization rate in Asia (53 percent) will be lower than in other regions. In 2030, Asia's total urban population will exceed 2.6 billion.

The prospect of such large-scale urbanization in Asia and elsewhere raises concerns that the world will not be able to sustain such a large urban population. For some, cities are seen as potential disasters. The increasing concentration of people is a major challenge for providing economic opportunities, developing adequate infrastructure and livable housing, and maintaining a healthy environment. In poorer cities, a large proportion of the population is forced to live in substandard housing, often in areas highly vulnerable to natural disasters such as floods or landslides.

The main part. There are also reasons for optimism. The historical link between economic development and urbanization is well established. Cities are important environments and institutional agglomerations for economic growth. Existing studies show that even in less developed countries, natural population growth in urban areas is lower than in rural areas, average household incomes are higher, and education levels are much higher than in rural areas. Thus, cities can also be seen as places of opportunity, with the primary need for effective governance and service delivery, economic opportunity, and the provision of a safe and healthy environment.

• Urbanization problems of Asia

• To some extent, the problems of urbanization are the same everywhere. These include increasing economic opportunities for city residents, providing transportation infrastructure and housing, providing social services, maintaining a comfortable living environment, and developing effective management and governance systems. Therefore, it can be argued that there is nothing unique about the problems associated with Asian urbanization.

• However, upon closer examination, the process of urbanization in Asia has several distinctive features, some of which stem from the region's large population:

• Dominance of population giants. Unlike any other region, Asia has five developed countries with a population of about 3 billion - China, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Indonesia. These countries accounted for 75% of Asia's population in mid-2001. In 2030, they will be joined by Iran, the Philippines and Vietnam, and together these countries will account for 81% of Asia's population. The combined urban population of these 8 countries will grow by more than 1 billion people during

that period, accounting for about four-fifths of the total urban growth in Asia. The predominance of population giants in Asia-wide averages should be kept in mind, as changes can be observed in many of the region's smaller countries.

The size of some Asian populations forces governments to cope with massive urban growth in a very short time. For example, the urban population of China and India will exceed 340 million by 2030. This creates major challenges in infrastructure provision, environmental management and employment.

Even a small country like Laos (5.3 million in 2000), one of the poorest countries in the world, will increase its urbanization rate to only 43 percent in 2030, adding 3.2 million people to its urban population. During that period, the total population of the country grew by 60%. Given its very low national income and the high proportion of the population remaining in rural areas, even in the capital city of Vientiane, it will be very difficult to prioritize urban development strategically.

By 2015, according to the UN World Urbanization Prospects: The 1999 Revision, 16 of the world's 24 megacities (cities with more than 10 million inhabitants) will be located in Asia. Most of these megacities will be located in population giants. While most urban dwellers in Asia and elsewhere continue to live in smaller towns and cities, Asia's urban hierarchy is dominated by the emergence of these megacities.4 Urban development often occurs in corridors between primary cities and secondary cities. It looks like a megalopolis in the eastern part of the United States.

In the last two decades, Asia has overtaken the rest of the less developed world in terms of integration into the global economy, creating ample opportunities for urban development. This development has continued unevenly and may result in a two-tiered urban system

in Asia (see table). Some cities become more and more integrated into the global economy and acquire an international character. These cities and towns, such as Seoul, Singapore, Taipei and Shanghai, must manage the challenges and opportunities associated with rapid economic growth and change. On the other hand, there will be cities with slower-growing domestic economies. These urban areas face major challenges in terms of poverty and creating opportunities for economic growth. Cities such as Dhaka, Phnom Penh and Vientiane are examples of this group.

The two-stage structure of Asian urbanization described above can be illustrated by comparing the region's two largest cities, Seoul and Dhaka.

Seoul Metropolitan Area: Planning with Growth

With a population of 10.3 million in 1998, Seoul is part of the South Korean capital region, which includes the city of Inchon and Gyeonggi Province. In 1998, including Seoul, 20.7 million people lived in this region. As the capital, Seoul has been at the center of South Korea's remarkable economic transformation over the past four decades. In 1961, the national population was 24.6 million, per capita income, was US$83, and primary production accounted for 37 percent of GDP.6 By 1990, the population had nearly doubled to 46 million, and the main contribution to GDP was the contribution of the sector increased. fell to 10 percent. The national level of urbanization rose from 28 percent to 75 percent. Much of this social change was due to the growth of industry, which increased its share of GDP from 20 percent in 1960 to 44 percent in 1990[1].

Much of South Korea's industrial growth in the 1960s was concentrated in Seoul, which by 1970 accounted for 52 percent of the country's industrial workforce. The main contributor to growth was rural-urban migration, which accounted for 50 percent of the country's urban growth in the 1960s[1]. Seoul's extremely rapid population growth has put pressure on the city's infrastructure, leading to significant growth in squatter settlements, increased traffic congestion, and air pollution. In the 1970s, decentralization led the government to adopt a national strategy that sought to shift industry to other parts of the country. New industrial complexes were built in the southeastern part of the country. Efforts to decentralize economic activity continued in the 1980s, and ahead of the 1988 Seoul Olympics, Seoul was heavily invested in infrastructure and public and quasi-public housing.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, Seoul continued to lose employment in industry and gain employment in the service sector. For example, 44 of South Korea's top 50 trading firms are headquartered in Seoul. As a result of this trend, the population in the Seoul area has decreased. In addition, due in part to the city's success in hosting the Olympics, Seoul has embarked on a massive effort to become a global city, adding a new airport and a vastly expanded subway system. Today, Seoul ranks 13th out of 44 in Asiaweek's Quality of Life Index for Asian Cities. In short, although Seoul still has many problems, the government has successfully responded to the urban challenges that many other Asian countries will face in the next three decades.

Dhaka's 6.5 million inhabitants are packed into 360 square kilometers, creating one of the highest urban densities in the world. The city also forms part of the Capital Development Authority, which manages an area of 1,530 square kilometers, an area of approximately 10 million people. Unlike South Korea, Bangladesh has not experienced rapid economic change, and agriculture remains a major component of GDP and a major source of employment. Although overall economic conditions have improved somewhat

over the past two decades, Bangladesh is still a very poor country. In 2001, gross national income (based on purchasing power parity) was US$1,530 per capita, above the Asian average of US$3,930[2]. Although estimates vary, most analysts say the poverty rate in rural and urban areas ranges from one-third to one-half of the population.

Dhaka's population growth rate has slowed slightly over the past three decades, but it is still one of the highest in Asia (4.2 percent per year). The steady increase reflects the ongoing migration from rural areas to the Dhaka urban area. Such growth accounted for about 60 percent of the city's growth in the 1960s and 1970s, but more recently the city's population also grew as a result of the expansion of its administrative boundaries, a process that added 1 million people to the city in the 1980s. In contrast, the city's natural growth rate (that is, growth at the expense of the excess of births over deaths) is declining, as is the case in other cities in Asia.

Dhaka's growth has not been driven by the expansion of productive employment opportunities in relatively high-wage areas. Instead, employment in the low-productivity, low-income sector, such as petty retailing or rickshaw driving, is increasing. This means that between 1980 and 2001, the number of people classified as poor in the city increased by nearly 2 million. Although the introduction of textile export industries and remittances from international labor have begun to diversify the city's economic base in recent years, it still remains very poor (see table).

Dhaka presents a very different statistical picture from that of Seoul. The population is growing very rapidly due to rural-urban migration, expanding urban boundaries and declining natural growth. This rate of growth is exacerbated by increasing life expectancy and population growth (a high proportion of the population is under the age of 15), although infant mortality remains high. Current investment in social services is insufficient given the large urban population and generally low incomes. The number of children per classroom and the number of people per hospital bed is among the highest among cities in the Asian Development Bank database. Dhaka also has poor physical infrastructure, with the transport system dominated by pedestrians and rickshaws.

Dhaka has a very uneven mix of physical services. Only a quarter of the city's population is connected to sewerage systems and only two-thirds of households are connected to water. Most unconnected households use open latrines. The result shows that Dhaka has one of the highest death rates from infectious diseases among all cities in Asia. Finally, Dhaka is located in a floodplain and is vulnerable to floods and other environmental disasters. In short, Dhaka is a city on the edge of sustainability. National policies that promote economic growth and provide urban governance will be critical to creating sustainable, livable and healthy cities in the future[3].

The preceding examples suggest two extremes of the political challenges facing Asia's emerging megalopolises. In fast-growing cities like Seoul, many environmental, transportation, and livability issues are being addressed. The central policy issues in such cities arise mainly from managing growth and mitigating the negative impacts of economic expansion, particularly in the environmental sphere. At the same time, it should be noted that there are still many poor people who need help in such cities.

In contrast, the health and livelihoods of people in low-income cities such as Dhaka are undermined by weak social infrastructures, lack of opportunities, and significant vulnerability to disease and environmental disasters. In such cases, the main needs are to create a

city where basic needs can be met and opportunities can be created. Economic, educational, environmental and health policies should be aimed at alleviating these problems.

Urbanization currently underway in Asia contains a much larger population than any other region of the world and is occurring on a scale unprecedented in human history. Given these facts, it is necessary to consider their numerous policy implications, all of which include improving the efficiency of urban governance. Effective policy development should include:

- Creation of effective city databases that allow continuous monitoring and evaluation of city activities.
- Reassess the relationship between national and municipal authorities as urbanization continues. For example, decentralization programs introduced in the Philippines in 1992 led to the transfer of fiscal control to local governments and created many successful local initiatives.
- Provide more housing for low-income populations, improve transportation systems, clean water and sanitation, and social services.
- Stimulating the participation of civil society in city management. For example, creating adequate infrastructure for Asian cities will require trillions of dollars of investment over the next two decades, some of which must come from the private sector. For this process to be effective, it needs the input not only of the private sector and local municipal authorities but also of citizen groups working at the street level, as well as national governments and international aid agencies.
- Development and implementation of environmental standards. Civil society can also be involved: One of the important aspects of

urbanization in Asia today is the emergence of community organizations that develop effective local responses to environmental degradation in poor areas. These organizations are often supported by NGO networks that spread their practices to other cities. City governments should learn to work with such groups[4].

CONCLUSION

This seems too difficult for many people. In Asia, ad hoc approaches do not lead to the development of sustainable and livable cities. The first steps to overcome the challenges of Asian urbanization are to recognize that urbanization is an integral part of development and to give strategic priority to urban sector policies.

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