

Rural Urban Divide – Changing Spatial Pattern of Social Variables

Sneh Sangwan and Randhir Singh Sangwan

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The present book attempts to give a spatio-temporal view of the rural-urban divide. *Rural Urban Divide* is one of the very recent approaches of explaining a demographic phenomenon for which earlier expressions like rural-urban dichotomy, or rural-urban continuum were used. The expression, rural urban divide, highlights the rural-urban differentials that exist in occupational structure, size of the communities, population densities, social interaction and mobility.

The study elaborates first on the trend of the rural-urban differentials in India (state-wise) for social variables like size of the household, vital rates, sex ratio and literacy. Then it examines the spatial patterns of the rural urban differentials (district-wise) for social variables like size of household, vital rates, sex ratio and literacy.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with the outline of the problem under study, review of literature, methodology and data sources. The secondary data sources for the years 1991 and 2001 are considered. Most of the data for the vital rates have been studied at the state level due to the non-availability of district level data. The methodology applied includes the study of disparity indices used by Sopher (1974) and its modification by Kundu and Rao (1982).

The second chapter discusses the population profile. This includes an in-depth study of the population profile in India. The spatial and temporal analysis of the population has been done for 1991 and 2001. The study of the population growth, distribution, density, sex and age composition, economic composition, religious composition, literacy and distribution of scheduled classes has been represented in detail. The rural and urban differentials for each of these parameters have been analysed.

The third chapter deals with the sex ratio at the state and district levels. The spatial and temporal analysis of the sex ratio in India and the trend of the rural-urban differentials are given. The rural urban differential index has been computed and three levels have been identified. Chapter four deals with the detailed analysis of the rural-urban differentials for literacy. Chapter five includes the study of the vital rates of fertility and mortality on the state level.

The sixth chapter is dedicated to the study of the size of the households in India. The trends in the rural-urban differentials in the size of the household have been analysed at both, the district and the state level.

The book ends with a summary and conclusions. Some of the conclusions are:

1. The urban household is marginally smaller than the rural one in most of the states. The authors observe that this is a virtual continuation of the traditional family pattern. Therefore, in most of the states, the urban population has retained a rural lifestyle and maintained its cultural heritage.
2. The rural-urban differentials are negatively correlated with the level of urbanisation. They are well marked in developed areas and marginal in backward areas.
3. There is a declining trend in fertility and infant mortality in urban as well as rural areas. There is a strong relation between rural and urban crude birth rates.
4. The fertility rates are increasing in some states like Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Assam, and declining in the rest of the states.

5. High literacy differentials are found in most of the areas, especially in the interior and hilly areas, whereas low differentials are found in coastal areas, urban areas and the peripheral areas.

The entire book has been very systematically presented with appropriate tables, maps and a detailed bibliography. A clear analysis of the population profile has been made. Phases of growth are well explained and each of the parameters is analysed in detail, thus bringing out the rural-urban divide.

Rural Urban Divide is not only a useful book for geographers concerned with population studies but also for planners, researchers and sociologists and also provides a useful basis for micro-level studies.

Ujwala Khare
Department of Geography,
Wadia College,
Pune 411 001