

ABHANDLUNGEN - ANTHROPOGEOGRAPHIE
INSTITUT FÜR GEOGRAPHISCHE WISSENSCHAFTEN
FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN

BAND 48

SYED ALI MORTUZA

RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION
IN BANGLADESH

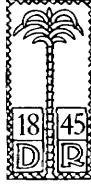
Causes and Effects

BERLIN

1992



DIETRICH REIMER VERLAG



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Berlin, December 1991

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
CBD	Central Business District
CUS	Centre for Urban Studies
DMC	Dhaka Municipal Corporation
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GNP	Gross National Product
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GOEP	Government of East Pakistan
GOI	Government of India
GOP	Government of Pakistan
GOSL	Government of Sri Lanka
HYV	High Yielding Varieties
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Project
MPO	Master Plan Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PIDE	Pakistan Institute of Development Studies
SAA	Small Area Atlas
SMA	Statistical Metropolitan Area.
UDD	Urban Development Directorate
UN, UNO	United Nations, United Nations Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN/ESCAP	United Nations/Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

Exchange rates (1984)

1 US \$	=	25.97 Taka
1 DM	=	8.27 Taka

Prices (1984)

1 kg Rice	=	7 Taka (Appx.)
1 kg Wheat	=	4.50 Taka (Appx.)
1 l Kerosene	=	7.50 Taka (Appx.)

ABSTRACT

Rural-Urban Migration in Bangladesh: Causes and Effects

In Bangladesh rural-urban migration is qualitatively the most important spatial pattern of population flow. In the recent past it has played a significant role in the growth of the large cities of the country. Especially Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, has been growing due to the continuous influx of migrants from the rural areas at an unprecedented rate.

Rural-urban migration in Bangladesh is considered to be an element and a consequence of the process of its underdevelopment. In order to understand the causes and effects of this type of internal migration, it is vitally important to perceive the process of underdevelopment in the country. Keeping this in view, this study attempts to analyse the causes and effects of rural-urban migration in Bangladesh and seeks to identify the complex interrelationship between this and the underdevelopment process. To define the topic the approach recommended in the "geographical development research", which strives to implicate development theories in the framework of spatial research, has been employed. Thereby, it refers to the discussion on the theme "migration as survival strategy", illustrated with examples of migration from the rural areas in Bangladesh.

A Major part of the migrant's stream comprises the marginalized rural population. They are concentrated in the poor quarters of the city, the so called *Bustees*. For this reason the field investigations, carried out in two phases, were exclusively concentrated in these areas.

Compared to other Third World countries Bangladesh is even more acutely characterized by a high density of population, a high poverty level and growing social and economic inequality. Due to the specific geographical setting, Bangladesh is frequently affected by natural hazards such as floods, river-erosion, cyclones etc. These hazards further aggravate the poverty of the people. This study shows that in the rural areas different factors which lead to impoverishment of large masses stand out as most important causes of rural exodus. In this perspective, rural-urban migration can be considered to be a "strategy", which the rural poor adopt, to escape the growing poverty and its concomitant devastating effects.

The case study further shows that people prefer to move to a large city, such as Dhaka. For different reasons, such as urban bias in planning both by the national and international authorities as well as international donors, adverse terms in exchange relations, etc., resources from rural areas are continually being transferred and concentrated in the urban centres. Within Bangladesh, Dhaka is certainly best known for its resources and infrastructure. Through various channels of information people in the rural areas become aware of these. Therefore, it is not surprising that to take a share of these resources, large numbers of the rural population orient their goal towards this city.

Most of these migrants are young males of working age. They often travel long distances to come to the city. For various reasons, many of them leave part of their families back at home, to join them at a later stage. It is perhaps not new, but still alarming to note that: **migration from the rural areas in Bangladesh is mainly a survival strategy. It is the hope of finding a way to survive.**

However, in the overcrowded city, poor migrants are faced with a lot of difficulties. The resources and amenities for which they have come to the city are actually not meant for individual but "collective consumption". There is almost no social network for the marginal groups in the city. Under such circumstances, poor migrants have to secure their survival mainly through participating in the "collective consumption" on the one hand and with the help of fellow migrants on the other. These phenomena are articulated structurally in the rapid growth of the "informal sector" and spatially in the expansion of *Bustees* in the city.

Although it apparently may not seem encouraging, from a migrant's perspective, however, migration to the city is a positive step. In spite of all the disadvantages migrants have to face, the city remains the place of security, because contrary to the rural areas, it offers even poor people a chance to survive.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Land - Stadt - Wanderung in Bangladesh: Ursachen und Auswirkungen

Die Land-Stadt-Wanderung ist - qualitativ gesehen - die wichtigste Form der räumlichen Bevölkerungsbewegung in Bangladesh. In der jüngeren Vergangenheit hat sie in bedeutendem Umfang zum Wachstum der Großstädte des Landes beigetragen. Insbesondere Dhaka, die Hauptstadt von Bangladesh, ist aufgrund eines ständigen Zustroms von Migranten aus dem ländlichen Raum in nicht vorherzusehender, fast dramatisch zu nennender Weise gewachsen.

Land-Stadt-Wanderung in Bangladesh wird als ein Element und gleichzeitig eine Folge des Prozesses seiner Unterentwicklung aufgefaßt. Will man die Ursachen und Auswirkungen dieser Art von Binnenwanderung verstehen, dann ist es von großer Wichtigkeit, den Prozess der Unterentwicklung in Bangladesh nachzuvollziehen. Vor diesem Hintergrund versucht die vorliegende Studie, Ursachen und Auswirkungen der Land-Stadt-Wanderung in Bangladesh zu analysieren sowie die komplexen Wechselbeziehungen zwischen dieser Form der Migration und dem Prozeß der Unterentwicklung herauszuarbeiten. In Verfolgung der Bemühungen geographischer Entwicklungsforschung, die Bedeutung der "räumlichen Dimension" in die entwicklungstheoretische Diskussion einzubringen, wurde der Untersuchungsgegenstand de-

finiert. Dabei handelt es sich um die Diskussion der *T h e s e* von der "Migration als Überlebensstrategie", dargestellt am Beispiel der Abwanderer aus dem ländlichen Raum Bangladeshs.

Der überwiegende Teil der Land-Stadt-Wanderer setzt sich aus Angehörigen marginalisierter Gruppen der ländlichen Bevölkerung zusammen. Sie konzentrieren sich in den Zielorten in den Hüttenvierteln, den sogenannten *Busteas*. Aus diesem Grunde konzentrierte sich die Untersuchung, die in zwei Feldforschungsphasen erfolgte, besonders auf diese Hüttenviertel Dhakas.

Extremer noch als andere Länder der Dritten Welt ist Bangladesh durch hohe Bevölkerungsdichte, unbeschreibliche Armut und zunehmende soziale und ökonomische Ungleichheit gekennzeichnet. Dazu tragen nicht zuletzt die durch die Landesnatur bedingten wiederkehrenden Naturkatastrophen in Bangladesh bei. Dazu gehören zum Beispiel Überschwemmungen, Wirbelstürme und die verheerenden Folgen der Erosion, die durch die Dammschlüsse an ihren Uferwällen oder an den sie begleitenden Terrassen verursacht werden. Diese Naturkatastrophen verstärken strukturell die Armut der Menschen. Die vorliegende Untersuchung zeigt, daß die Faktoren, die zu einer Verarmung großer Teile der Bevölkerung in den ländlichen Gebieten führen, auch die wichtigsten Gründe für den Exodus aus dem ländlichen Raum darstellen. Die Abwanderung in die Städte ist - wie diese Studie zeigt - geradezu als eine "Strategie" zu werten, dieser wachsenden Armut und ihren verheerenden Begleiterscheinungen zu entkommen. Weiterhin kann aufgezeigt werden, daß es die Menschen vorziehen, in *g r o ß e* Städte, wie z. B. Dhaka, abzuwandern. Dafür verantwortlich zeichnen u. a. die Bevorzugung der Stadt in der Entwicklungsplanung durch die nationale Regierung oder auch die internationalen Geber, die ungleichen Austauschbeziehungen zwischen Land und Stadt sowie die Tatsache, daß die ländlichen Ressourcen kontinuierlich in die städtischen Zentren abfließen, d. h. von privater Seite dorthin kanalisiert oder transferiert werden. Die Stadt mit der wohl besten Ausstattung an Ressourcen und Infrastruktur, Ergebnis dieser Vorgänge, ist innerhalb Bangladeshs zweifellos Dhaka. Über verschiedene Kommunikationswege erhält nun die ländliche Bevölkerung von diesen sich in Dhaka akkumulierenden Vorzügen Kenntnis. Es kann nicht überraschen, daß sich die Bevölkerung auf diese Stadt konzentriert, um an den dort vorhandenen Ressourcen zu partizipieren.

Die Mehrzahl dieser Migranten, die meist weite Strecken zurücklegen müssen, sind junge Männer im arbeitsfähigen Alter. Viele von ihnen haben ihre Familienangehörigen in den Herkunftsgebieten zurückgelassen. Erst zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt ziehen sie nach. Es ist zwar kein neues, doch zweifellos ein alarmierendes Ergebnis dieser Studie, wenn festgestellt werden muß: **die Abwanderung aus dem ländlichen Raum Bangladeshs hat in erster Linie rein existenzielle Gründe. Es ist die Hoffnung, eine Überlebensebene zu finden.**

Doch diese Hoffnung stößt in der überbevölkerten Stadt auf eine Fülle von Schwierigkeiten. So sind erst einmal die Ressourcen und Existenzmöglichkeiten, derentwegen die Migranten in die Stadt kamen, nicht für den individuellen, sondern für den "kollektiven Konsum" be-

stimmt. Außerdem existiert in der Stadt fast kein soziales Netz für die Angehörigen der marginalisierten Gruppen. Unter derartigen Umständen bleiben den Migranten nur zwei Möglichkeiten, ihr Überleben zu sichern: Sie erzwingen sich den Zugang zum "kollektiven Konsum" oder nehmen die Unterstützung anderer Migranten in Anspruch und bleiben damit auf der untersten Schwelle des Existenzminimums oder auch darunter. Dieses Phänomen findet seinen Ausdruck strukturell in einem raschen Wachstum des "Informellen Sektors" und räumlich in der Ausbreitung von *Bustees* im gesamten Stadtgebiet. Obgleich diese Tatsachen aus externer Sicht nicht als positiv gelten können, stellt die Abwanderung in die Städte nach Auffassung der Migranten doch einen positiven Schritt dar. Denn trotz aller Nachteile, denen sie ausgesetzt sind, kann die Stadt immerhin als ein Ort gelten, wo - im Gegensatz zum ländlichen Raum - sogar der arme Mensch Sicherheit und eine Chance zum Überleben findet.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION OF THE STUDY AREA

In recent decades the topic internal migration, particularly its rural-urban form in the Third World¹ countries, has gained the special attention of researchers. Though in many Third World countries rural-rural migration quantitatively predominates, rural-urban migration still plays a very decisive role in the socioeconomic changes. This actuality has led contemporary researchers to reexamine the exact nature of internal migration, its significance in urbanization and its interrelation with the "development process". To be more precise, the emphasis on internal migration research may be attributed to the following facts:

- a) During the last few decades the Third World countries have been faced with the problem of high concentration of population in the urban areas.
- b) Amongst other factors, rural-urban migration has been contributing substantially to the high growth of cities resulting in the so called "urban explosion".
- c) It has been repeatedly shown that despite the growing body of literature on rural-urban migration, a comprehensive framework for analysis is lacking.
- d) The complex nature of interrelationship between migration and development in the Third World countries has not yet been sufficiently identified.

Many of the countries of the Third World are extremely poor and urban growth partly as a result of natural increase, reclassification of new areas or due to exodus of people from non-urban regions or relatively smaller towns into the larger cities has made problems of housing, unemployment, education, health and nutritional conditions etc. more complicated. Repeated attempts on the part of national governments to "keep the population down on the farm" have not shown much effectivity. The trend apparently remains unchanged. In several cases the rural exodus has been expedited due to government supported urban-biased policies (see BREESE 1966:38-54; McGEE 1971:97-118; DUTOIT/SAFA 1975:2-5).

On the other hand, growth of cities in the Third World has been remarkable during the past few decades. Since 1950, the Third World urban population has roughly doubled itself. Although natural increase and "annexation" of new urban areas played a significant role in this growth, internal migration still remains a major component of this change. Thus in Latin America, within a span of twenty years from 1940, the number of cities with a population of

¹ In the present study, "Third world" refers to the poor countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America with low per-capita income. The other term "underdeveloped countries", also used in this study, denotes the same. The terms are employed in general sense and no strict index of per-capita income has been fixed.

one million increased from four to ten, and much of this have been due to migration (CARDONA/SIMONS 1975:19). Even in parts of Africa,

"... where kinship ties are still very strong, and people move to cities only on temporary basis, there are trends that some groups or individuals stay back in the city for longer period or eventually settle down." (DUTOIT/SAFA 1975:49-50)

In most of the developing countries nearly a third of the increase in urban population during 1960's is estimated to be due to migration from rural areas. In some countries of Asia and Africa it accounted for over 60 per cent of the urban growth, and in a few others even higher than 70 per cent (see WORLD BANK 1979; SETHURAMAN 1981).

While a sign of counter-urbanization is observed in some of the developed countries, very high rates of urban population growth are predicted to persist in the countries of South Asia, Latin America and Africa. In South Asia² the urban population is likely to grow at a very rapid rate. According to estimates, the city population in this region between 1975 and the year 2000 may increase three or four times (cf. HAY 1977:77). These themes are often discussed elsewhere and need no elaboration here³. It should, however, be noted that there are wide regional variations in the urban population growth. The relative importance of the factors of urban population change namely natural increase, annexation of new areas and internal migration is quite controversial. Yet it is claimed that with low levels of urbanization and moderately high rates of both urban and rural natural increase, net migration is going to play a vital role to urban population growth (cf. SALAS 1986).

In the South Asian region migration to urban areas is considered to be the most important spatial pattern of population flow after rural to rural movement. This is supposed to be made up of rural-urban migration and "seems to have been the principal type of urban-ward movement in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka ..." (SKELDON 1984:15).

Although, compared to other countries in south Asia, the level of urbanization in Bangladesh is still low (see chapter 3), the growth rate of urban population in the recent period has been quite significant. The exponential rate of growth of urban population in the country was 6.7 per cent in 1974 and it increased to 10.63 per cent in 1981 (GOB 1984a). In 1981 more than 15 per cent of the total population lived in the urban places (ibid.), out of which almost one half lived in the three major cities, i.e. Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna (UDD 1984). It is suggested that by the year 1990, urban population could increase to almost 25 million or 22 per cent of the anticipated national total (ibid.:18). Again, it is repeatedly asserted that the majority of the urban growth in Bangladesh is due to migration from the rural areas (CHAUDHURY 1980:32; KHAN 1982:383).

Besides the fact that urban population in Bangladesh increases at a high rate, it is further indicated that this population is being concentrated in a few large cities (see chapter 3). Assuming that the present trend continues, it can be stated that the growth of urban centers

² The "South Asian Region" refers to five countries, namely Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

³ For more statistical data on World Urbanization see UN 1969; DAVIS 1969; also HAY 1977.

(especially the large cities) will be very high in the near future and that rural to urban migration will continue to play a significant role in this growth.

Apart from influencing the spatial distribution of population, migration is considered to have vital implications in the development process. Unfortunately such an important issue has remained neglected in Bangladesh, in spite of its immense significance. With a few exceptions, published works on internal migration are quite negligible in the country. Again, only a limited number of the studies have been completed by direct field survey⁴. The migration literature in Bangladesh clearly reveals that most of the studies have been done to compile and analyze demographic data without giving sufficient emphasis on the complex interrelationship of migration and development.

Considering the importance of migration research and the dearth in literature on migration, the following study has been done, with the intention of examining the complex interrelation between internal migration and the development process in Bangladesh. Thereby, emphasis has been given to the investigation and analysis of the causes of rural-urban migration and its spatial as well as socioeconomic consequences, with examples from Dhaka.

Dhaka was selected as the study area for several reasons. It is the capital of Bangladesh and at the same time the most important city of the country in terms of administration, business and industry. The city has been traditionally an important center for politics, trade and commerce (see TAIFOOR 1956; KARIM 1964). Since the independence of Bangladesh, Dhaka has shown tremendous growth in population. Already in 1947, when Dhaka was the capital of the east wing of Pakistan, it had a special status in terms of politics and trade. During the period of Pakistan, Dhaka made major progress in the field of industry and trade. From a small city with 250,000 inhabitants in 1947, it developed into a large metropolitan city with more than 3 million population in 1981. Between 1951 and 1961 the population of Dhaka grew at an annual rate of 5.63 per cent. The growth rate further accelerated to 8.8 per cent during the intercensal period 1961-74. Within this period rural-urban migration accounted for 74 per cent of the population increase. This huge increase of population has obviously led to severe problems in housing, health, employment etc. In the absence of sufficient empirical studies it becomes even more difficult to suggest possible remedies. For these reasons the necessity was felt to select Dhaka as the study area.

To construct a framework for the present study, some consideration has been given to both theoretical as well as empirical studies on internal migration. The discussion of general theories which follows in the next section, has mainly been done to assess the validity of these in the analysis of internal migration in the Third World countries.

⁴ For a review of migration literature in Bangladesh see ISLAM & BEGUM 1983.

1.2 APPLICABILITY OF GENERAL THEORIES

The literature on migration frequently demonstrates the extremely complex nature of the phenomenon in its form, function and mechanism. Since the time of RAVENSTEIN (1889) there have been numerous attempts to set migration in a theoretical framework. The purpose of such was to provide a general framework within which individual researchers would be enabled to fit their empirical experiences. RAVENSTEIN presented his paper to the Royal Statistical Society in 1887 for the first time and returned to the topic two years later with data of more than 20 countries to support his previous statement. Termed under the heading "Laws of migration" he tried to show that migration follows a regular pattern. Among several other features, RAVENSTEIN ascertained that the volume of migration is directly related to development and technology. He further emphasized that economic motives dominate migration decision. More than three quarters of a century later LEE's (1969) model of migration was developed. The objective was to formulate a

"general schema into which a variety of spatial movements can be placed and, from a small number of what would seem to be self-evident propositions, deduce a number of conclusions with regard to the volume of migration, streams and counter streams, and the characteristics of migrants." (ibid.:285)

LEE's model has its base in RAVENSTEIN's analysis and implies a "push-pull" perspective. The factors which influence an individual to take the decision of move enter, according to LEE, into the following:

- 1) Factors associated with the area of origin
- 2) Factors associated with the area of destination
- 3) Intervening obstacles
- 4) Personal factors

LEE assumed that the decision to move on the part of "prospective migrants" is an outcome of comparison of the factors at origin and destination in that the balance goes in favour of the "positive factors" at destination. A few other models⁵ which are in a way analogous to that of LEE consider basically that migration takes place,

"when the positive factors at the place of destination are strong enough to pull migrants or the negative factors sufficiently great to push them, and that the intervening obstacles are no longer sufficiently great to obstruct it with occasional qualifying statements to the effect that advantages are as perceived by the relevant actors." (WEYL 1980:258)

LEE (1969:286), however, noted that the positive and negative factors both at origin and destination are differently defined for every migrant or prospective migrants. Indeed, the set of factors affecting the migration process are difficult to specify exactly. LEE himself comments that these (factors) are precisely understood neither by the social scientists nor by the persons directly affected. As such, positive and negative factors at origin and destination are always inexact.

⁵ See e.g. STOUFFER 1960; COX 1972. For more theories and models of migration see WITTMANN 1973/74.

The "push-pull" framework⁶ gained substantial importance in migration literature and remained as a major guideline for research. The models or partial theories developed in this approach have at least one aspect in common. They all attempt to establish some kind of regularities by high degree of generalization and abstractness, which is perhaps the main disadvantage of these models. Efforts to generalize migration has come under severe criticism from very early period. As for instance, immediately after RAVENSTEIN presented his paper HUMPHREY commented that "migration was rather distinguished for its lawlessness than for having any definite law" (LEE op.cit.:282). The migration process varies widely among societies depending on its social organization and dynamics of social change. Thus it becomes difficult to specify which set of factors is most decisive to cause migration. And perhaps for this very reason it is not possible to formulate a universally valid theory of migration (see ALBRECHT 1972:277-79).

Criticism of general theories and models for their limited applicability and abstractness has continued to the present time. Applicability of migration theories (based on Western data) has been repeatedly questioned in the Third World countries (WEYL 1980). A major problem lies in the fact that these theories or models overlook the historical processes of social, economic and political changes and their effects on migration which practically limits their applicability in Third World context. Moreover, rural-urban migration research in underdeveloped countries "... has yielded a far greater degree of diversity than prior theoretical formulations could have anticipated" (ABU-LUGHOD 1975:202). Finally, it should be mentioned that there is a dearth of dependable data and empirical research in the Third World countries, which should provide a base for making generalizations. This particular problem has led the contemporary researchers to concentrate more on the empirical studies.

To perceive the varied causes and consequences of rural-urban migration in different countries and regions, it is necessary to make a review of studies on the topic, done in different countries and from different perspectives. This follows in the next section.

1.2.1 Internal Migration in Third World Countries - A Review of Literature

A substantial body of research on internal migration in the Third World countries point to the fact that the great majority of people move for economic reasons and that economic incentives play an important role in the decision to migrate (see WORLD BANK 1975). Regional disparities, concentration of the opportunities in the cities, worsening economic and social conditions in the rural areas all stand out as causes which bring people from comparatively handicapped areas to the centers where the rural people find it easier to survive. Also the econometric works confirm that people move between two places for economic gains, from poorer areas to wealthier areas (BRIGG 1973). This pattern is of course essentially dif-

⁶ See MABOGUNJE 1972.

ferent from that which occurred in the Western world during the period of industrial revolution. Rural-urban migration gained significant importance in Europe with the emergence of industrial revolution. Growth of industries and commerce in the urban areas, technological advancement in the agricultural sector and development of transportation and communication created a basic dislocating force resulting in the influx of population into the cities. This was associated with a transformation of occupation patterns from Primary to Secondary and Tertiary types. Development of capitalism had two types of effects. Rapid growth of industries created new jobs and opportunities in the urban areas producing a labour deficit zone. On the other hand, mechanization of agriculture set substantial number of labour in the Primary sector free, creating a labour surplus area. Diffusion of industrial products and urban values also had their effects on the traditional craftsmen and artisans. Thus, labour moved from areas of surplus to the areas of deficit. The motives of such migration are generally attributed to the positive attraction of the industries rather than the negative repulsion of agriculture (McGEE 1979). As a matter of fact the patterns of rural-urban migration in the Third World countries have certain basic differences to that described so far. A striking dissimilarity may be seen in the fact that these are not necessarily induced by the growth of industries in the urban areas. In most cases the rate of industrial growth is so slow that such a concept would rather be confusing. On the other hand, there are ample evidences in many Asian countries where people leave their villages due to deteriorating conditions in the rural areas and move to the overcrowded cities. The tragedy is that the situation in cities is also deteriorating continuously and the city authorities are in no position to cope with the huge inflow of migrants.

In the Third World countries migration to the cities is a relatively recent trend. In early period the isolated and self sufficient villages were not likely "... to experience any rural urban migration, since in any case there would be hardly any cities in such areas" (MABOGUNJE 1972:196). Reasonably, awareness about the virtues of cities was absent among the rural population. Though there were some areas where urban centers existed, these had not much effect on the life pattern of rural hinterlands. The culture generated in their own streets and bazaars was not passed into the back country (AIRD 1957:16-17). As time passed, infiltration of urban values and goods in the isolated areas became more common. In other words, the isolation of the self-sufficient villages was gradually broken down. MABOGUNJE states that the breakdown was mainly attained through the forces set in motion by increasing economic development. He notes that in many African countries

"... this was brought about initially by the colonial administration and further reinforced in recent years by the activities of the new African governments" (1972:196).

It is further pointed out by him, however, that besides infrastructure development, a significant aspect of decreasing isolation is the greater integration of rural economy into a national economy, whereby the rural economy is subjected to a wide range of governmental

legislation or official policies. In other words, the rural community has little or no control on its affairs.

The effects of the breakdown are such that the rural areas are brought within the orbit of one or more urban centers and the rural people come to know more and more about the range of goods and services offered by the urban centers. In the present time there are very few villagers who have not known how it is like to work in the cities or what prospects are available there which could help them change their living conditions. Awareness about the urban situation has been greatly aided by the extension of education, transport and communication into the villages (see LERNER 1958). Flow of information, either through formal channels like radio, newspaper etc. or through informal channels⁷, provide people information about the urban areas. Thus, rural people can develop ideas about the possible places where they could eventually move. When villagers come to know about the goods and services in the urban centers, they try to acquire these. To do so they (the villagers) have either to produce more agricultural goods and enter into an "exchange relation" with the city, or they move into the city to sell their labour directly in exchange for wages (cf. MABOGUNJE op.cit.).

According to this perspective, it may be argued that people do not move to the cities without positive information (see CALDWELL 1969); although it is quite unlikely that rural people in every case make an accurate cost benefit analysis before they move. Hence, the postulates that each rational individual estimates the final costs and benefits resulting from moving between two unequal places (the "push-pull" model) or that migrants "... compare current rural incomes with the higher urban incomes he would expect to receive once he obtained an urban job" (TODARO 1969 & 1971) should be treated with caution. Studies in developing countries, nevertheless, show that real income⁸ in urban areas is in many cases much higher than that earned in the rural areas⁹ (PAPANEK 1975; MAJUMDAR 1978). Indeed, authors are often skeptical to establish wage differential alone as an important impetus for migration to urban centers. Firstly it is due to the fact that sufficient data on wages and employment are not always available, and secondly that available data do not always show any significant difference which would substantiate such a hypothesis¹⁰. Instead, it is proposed that if income differential is combined with cost of living differential, urban areas would show significant advantages which could be considered as a vital factor for attracting rural migrants. Cost of living is calculated in terms of food and housing prices. In urban areas the prices of food are in many instances cheaper due to subsidized prices (rationing). There are evidences that even in crisis situation, recipients of the rationing system may get food at a cheaper rate

⁷ Like persons returning to the villages and describing their experiences in the cities to friends and relatives.

⁸ Total amounts of money earned by individuals or families.

⁹ Which may be very poor and may not at all be adequate to maintain a fair living standard.

¹⁰ It should be noted that in the underdeveloped countries it is difficult to obtain accurate data on wage levels, particularly for prolonged period. Moreover, the average urban wage may be irrelevant for unskilled labour and for those engaged in the informal sector (see LIPTON 1977).

than the normal market price (STEPANEK 1979:71). The second factor is the low cost of living. The possibility to live with other people (friends or relatives) or squatting obviously reduces the housing cost and makes it easier for poor people to live in the urban areas. Thus, even a slight advantage in urban wages, when combined with the above mentioned advantages of food and housing may play a vital role in attracting rural migrants (see KHAN 1982:388; CHOGUILL 1983:69-70).

It is frequently claimed that rural-urban migration in the underdeveloped countries is mainly a result of "rural pushes" rather than attraction of the cities. McGEE states:

"... perhaps the most well-established generalization on the nature of south-east Asian rural-urban migration, ... has been the claim that such migration is generally motivated primarily by 'push' rather than 'pull' factors. This statement is reiterated again and again in many of the works on Asian migration. For instance the UNESCO publication report: 'it gives a clue to one of the most important features of Asian rural-urban migration, namely the push of the people from the countryside to the cities rather than pull of the industrial and employment opportunities in the urban areas.'" (1971:115)

It should, however, be emphasized that the factors termed as "pushes" or "pulls" are only the implications of a far-reaching problem, namely the "process of underdevelopment"¹¹, which characterizes these societies. Consequently, a clear concept of this process is a pre-requisite for understanding the migration process itself.

A conspicuous character of the Third World countries is the growing inequalities both within and between rural and urban areas, resulting in the marginalization of large parts of the population¹². Within the rural areas impoverishment of population, which may apparently result from growing population pressure on arable land due to "population explosion", man made or natural calamities (like war, famine, cyclone, tidal surges, epidemic, river erosion

¹¹ The discussion on underdevelopment in the Third World countries has gained significant importance and has yielded two broad lines of thought. "Modernization theories" for example, deal with the problem from the stand point of developed nations and try to explain the underdevelopment of "traditional societies" as stagnant, and advocate further that these should be activated and driven in the direction of developed nations (cf. BEHREND 1965; NUSCHELER 1974; HAUCK 1975; BRATZEL 1976). "Theory of dependency", on the other hand, asserts the dependent relation of weaker nations (politically/economically/militarily) on the stronger nations and due to the deforming effects of this dependent relation on the economic and social structure of the weaker nations (cf. SENGHAAS 1972, 1974, 1977; GALTUNG 1972; EVERS/VON WOGAU 1973; NOHLEN/NUSCHELER 1974; TIBI/BRANDES 1975; BRATZEL 1976; SCHMIDT 1976). In underdeveloped countries the structures are not the results of an autonomous historical process, rather essentially formed by the foreign hegemonic powers. Thus the 'exogenous' and 'endogenous' factors in forming the structure of the underdeveloped countries are inseparable from each other (SUNKEL 1972; EVERS/VON WOGAU 1973). (Translated from BLENK 1982:249-52, by author).

It is, however, not within the scope of the present study to discuss the theories in detail. For more on the topic see SCHOLZ 1985.

¹² SUNKEL (1972) explained the causes of marginalization of the large parts of population in terms of 'partial international integration' and 'selective national disintegration'. In the course of capitalistic expansion two types of polarization have emerged. On the one hand, the gap of living conditions between the developed and underdeveloped countries is widened and on the other, the gap of living conditions within the underdeveloped countries has grown sharply. SUNKEL differentiates between integrated and disintegrated, i.e. marginalized sectors in each country. While the integrated groups are interlaced in a world-wide capitalistic economy, the marginalized groups are either partially or totally excluded, and are only activated from time to time according to the requirements of the capitalistic sector. (Translated from BLENK 1982:252-53, by author)

etc.), unequal access to resources¹³ or from transfer of resources to center from periphery¹⁴ and so forth, is in fact a manifestation of the process of underdevelopment and it may act as a vital catalyst for rural exodus. It is, however, not conclusive that people migrate only due to deteriorating conditions in the villages. The argument that "the decision to migrate is a rational response to the economic condition" (see GILBERT/GUGLER 1982:57) itself is an evidence for that cities offer certain opportunities which attract people. Though the urban areas in the Third World countries are characterized by high rate of un- and underemployment as well as all pervasive poverty, the fact remains that people come to the cities mainly in search of jobs¹⁵. However, the rural urban migrants have very little prospect to gain access to the "protected labour force"¹⁶ and, as a result, many of them become part of the marginalized labour force and/or join the informal sector¹⁷. At this point the concept of "public expenditure" and "collective consumption" (EVERS 1982) appears to be very relevant. This notion claims that cities are leading in producing goods and services, meant not for individual but "collective consumption". This can be paraphrased in public amenities, or there may be other kinds of goods and services disposed by private entrepreneurs for collective consumption.

Especially in the underdeveloped countries there is great emphasis on public expenditure in urban areas. EVERS argues that participation in collective consumption makes it possible for a large number of city dwellers in the overpopulated cities in the Third World to secure their survival and hence appears to be an "essential motor" for rural-urban migration (cf. *ibid.*:167-168).

Thereby it should be noted that urban amenities are not unlimited and as the city population grows, access to these becomes continuously difficult. Appropriation of public amenities by one group or the other gives rise to conflicts in the cities, often articulated in the form of slum evacuation or cleaning of hawkers from the footpaths or even in violent actions. Nevertheless, in contrast to the rural areas where struggle for survival is becoming harder, cities always offer the migrants an alternative. The mechanism of achieving these may be highly complicated. Investigations in the Asian cities show a heterogeneous income structure among the migrants. It is observed that different family members exploit different income sources either in the "formal" or "informal" sectors. In other cases migrants leave their families back at home to take care of the small amount of land or homestead they possess and through the extra income in the cities maintain their living. Within the city areas the types of employment

¹³ In west Bengal, for example, there is positive correlation between the unequal access to land and the tendency to migrate (FAO 1980).

¹⁴ In this case, transfer of resources from rural areas to the urban centers.

¹⁵ It is, however, not to be denied that a certain portion of the migrants stream (who are numerically less significant) comprises of educated youths coming from families with relatively better socioeconomic background, who migrate in search of education or wider opportunities in the cities. These groups are given less emphasis in the present study.

¹⁶ The labour force whose wages, working conditions and tenure are regulated by legislation.

¹⁷ Defined and described in a separate section (see Chapter 4).

of individual migrants or single households may be highly variable and demand a high degree of adaptability on the part of migrants to cope with it (EVERS 1981:61-67).

With the increasing number of migrants to the cities a chain of contact is established between the villagers and the urban dwellers¹⁸. Many villagers have friends and relatives living in the cities. Presence of kins and friends in cities are supposed to influence migration significantly. While this is not strictly an economic variable, it has an economic component. Contact essentially reduces the cost of moving (see WORLD BANK 1975). Several authors have documented the positive role of contact persons in the city on newly arriving migrants (see GREENWOOD 1971; HUNTINGTON 1974; REMPEL 1981). Friends and relatives offer more than companionship. Aside from reducing the cost of moving they also provide information, a valuable service in the countries where job information channels are largely informal. The long time migrants offer the recent migrants a kind of "adjustment help" by managing a place to live and to work. It is likely that the recent migrants in most cases would move into areas where their fellow migrants are already residing for longer period of time. After arrival, migrants are often dependent upon their fellow migrants to "... guide them to their first jobs" or find a work-place where other known persons are already engaged.

The discussion carried out so far clearly demonstrates the incompetency of general theories in apprehending the migration process in Third World countries. At the same time it denotes the urgency of more empirical research permitting generalizations. Furthermore, it reveals some unique characteristics of rural-urban migration in underdeveloped countries. Based on these, a series of hypotheses have been drawn up, which the field study seeks to test in Bangladesh.

1.2.2 Basic Hypotheses

The hypotheses which are listed below, refer mainly to a few major aspects of rural-urban migration, namely the probable factors causing this type of migration in the Third World countries, the leading categories of migrants, their destination and the consequences of migrants in the areas of destination. It is assumed that:

a) The process of rural-urban migration in Third World countries is primarily an element and a consequence of the process of underdevelopment characterizing these countries. Hence, the questions regarding the causes and consequences of this type of migration can be best perceived and answered through the analysis of the process of underdevelopment. A distinct structural effect of this process is the growing social and economic inequalities leading to the impoverishment of the larger part of the population. The high rate of population growth and "sudden effects", e.g.

¹⁸ See COX's theory of chain migration in WITTMANN 1973/74:73-74.

natural hazards further aggravate the poverty condition. In the rural areas these are supposed to be major factors of out migration.

b) Due to various reasons such as urban biased planning, unequal exchange relations etc., resources in underdeveloped countries are continuously transferred from the rural areas and concentrated in a few large cities. These are exemplified in the goods and services which the cities produce for "collective consumption". Through various information channels migrants become aware of these and therefore, orient their goal particularly towards these cities. It explains largely the relatively faster growth of large cities in these countries.

c) The main stream of migrants in underdeveloped countries comprises the impoverished rural masses. They move to cities basically to find a way to survive. In this view, migration to cities represents an "alternative survival strategy".

d) Survival of the poor migrants in the cities is a "self reliant" process. This is mainly achieved through "dynamic" participation in the "collective consumption". This mechanism of survival is articulated in the random growth of poor quarters and the expansion of the "informal sector".

e) Presence of migrants friends and relatives in the cities play a very meaningful role in the whole process of migration. Besides being a vital source of information, inducing and guiding movement, these are a kind of social network strongly influencing migrant's adjustment process. Presence of friends and relatives in the city often results in clusters of migrants at residential and job location.

These hypotheses are depicted in the model (see figure 1).

The literature on human migration has multiplied during the last two or three decades and these have treated migration from different viewpoints resulting in a variety of approaches which are in many cases highly contradictory. Unlike other disciplines, geography is supposed to have treated migration in a different and more comprehensive way. The next section elaborates the relevance of geography in migration research and outlines the approach and scope of the study.

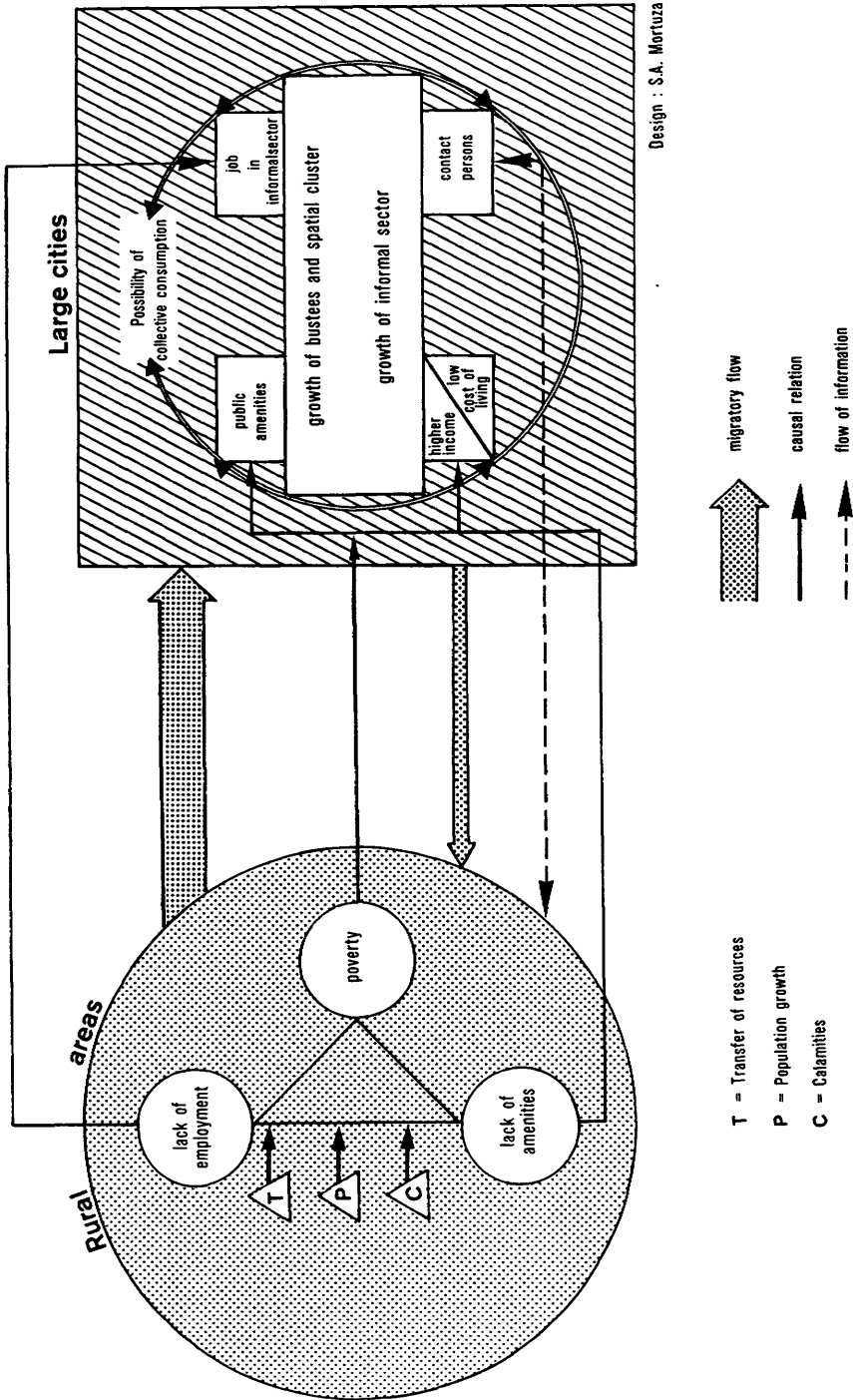


Figure 1: A Model of Rural-Urban Interaction in Bangladesh

1.3 APPROACH AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

It has been repeatedly emphasized in literature that

"... the problem of migration is a prime example of subject that requires the skill and approaches of scholars from several disciplines; neither the question that must be asked nor the methods for analysis required to answer them are within the province of any single discipline". (BROWN/NEUBERGER 1977:1)

The subject migration has, however, not been claimed by any particular discipline to belong solely to it. Migration itself is a broader concept and disciplinary bias should actually restrict the scope of research. Contrary to that, multidisciplinary approach widens the visual angle and enables researchers to analyze the problem more pragmatically. It obviously overlaps the field of several disciplines, but nowadays it is widely agreed that to make the studies of migration more meaningful common efforts are necessary.

Earlier literature on migration indicates that compared to demographers and statisticians who tried to make estimations of migration volume and direction or anthropologists and sociologists concerning themselves mainly with non-economic factors, geographer's interest was mainly in human settlement and mobility. The scope and sphere of geography in migration research has, however, notably increased with time. During the recent period, geographical research has gained new dimensions and proposals have come up to widen the scope of research in this discipline. In this regard it is worthwhile to hint at the discussion of the fifth convention of the GAE¹⁹ (25-27th May, 1984). At this convention the main theme of discussion was the geographical development research and linkage approach²⁰. Unlike prior notions "geographical development research" is understood not solely as a spatial, but also as a social science approach. In the place of "space", the problem "development" is supposed to be the core of analysis. The process of development is obviously reflected in the spatial patterns and as such geographers should simultaneously consider this phenomena, too²¹.

Analysis of population migration logically involves an understanding of the "development process". To know why certain social, economic or spatial patterns appear, one should proceed further and ask, what processes produce such patterns and how do they operate? The

¹⁹ Geographischer Arbeitskreis Entwicklungstheorien (Geographical study group on development theories) - Established by SCHOLZ in 1976. The study group aims at utilizing the development theories of social science for the purpose of geographical research (see BLENCK et al. 1985).

²⁰ "Linkage approach" is translated from the original German term "Verflechtungsansatz" (for "Verflechtungsansatz" see ELWERT/EVERS/WILKENS 1983). It can also be translated as "Articulation approach". Prof. Dr. ELWERT was personally consulted for confirmation.

²¹ It should be emphasized that 'geographical development research' is closely associated with the "Theory of Dependency" and "Theory of Peripheral Capitalism". According to these theories (- unlike the 'Modernization theories') the "Process of development" in the developed and underdeveloped countries is considered inseparable, and the perceivable 'dualism' in the underdeveloped countries is designated and explained as "structural heterogeneity". It is further stressed that 'underdevelopment' is a consequence of highly efficient, indeed social, sectoral and regional selective integration of underdeveloped countries into the world economy (cf. BLENCK op.cit.:69; for further details see SUNKEL 1972; SENGHAAS 1977; also ELWERT/EVERS/WILKENS op.cit.).

above discussion distinctly demonstrates that these questions could be best answered by applying the geographical development research approach, because:

- a) within this approach it is possible to analyze simultaneously the social/economic aspects and the spatial impacts of the mobility process and,
- b) integration of development theories in this framework enables researchers to determine the complex correlation between development process and mobility, precise understanding of which is immensely important for sound interpretation.

Keeping this in view, the following study attempts to analyze some socioeconomic and spatial aspects of rural-urban migration in Bangladesh. At the same time it evaluates the causal relation of rural-urban migration and development process in the country. Besides, the study also sheds some light on the survival mechanism of migrants in Dhaka city.

Before the analysis begins, the concept "migration" should be defined more precisely; because for any scientific research it is immensely important to define clearly the terminologies, or at least the central concepts. Unless an event or a phenomenon is distinctly defined, it becomes difficult to identify the phenomenon, and it consequently complicates the discussion.

As such, the following section discusses the problems of definition and attempts to resolve an empirical definition of the topic for this study.

1.4 DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT

The discussion done in the previous section has shown that migration is a field of interest for a variety of disciplines and divergent theoretical approaches have been taken by various fields. As a result, a wide spectrum of definitions have emerged, emphasizing diversified perspectives. Therefore, it is difficult to find one universally accepted and all encompassing definition of the term "migration". UNO's persistent efforts to standardize the definition has also not shown much success in this regard (cf. SZELL 1972).

The term migration stems from the broader concept "mobility", under which a large number of different types of movements are subsumed. Again, mobility in its most general sense denotes primarily the movements of an individual between defined units of a system (VANBERG 1971). Since the units of such a system may be determined either through social or through spatial features, there arises a basic difference between social and spatial mobility. Social mobility which, according to this notion, designates a movement between different social units, comprises two main sub-categories, namely: vertical and horizontal mobility²², depending on whether the change of position of individuals or groups involves a change in sta-

²² Vertical mobility as a subclass of social mobility, represents an ascend (upward movement) or descend (downward movement) of individuals or groups within a social system. Horizontal mobility, on the other hand, is understood by SOROKIN (1927) as a change in social position which does not involve a change of status (HORSTMANN 1976:43).

tus or not (SOROKIN 1927). Contrary to that, the term spatial mobility denotes the movement of persons through physical space²³. In other words, it includes all those movements which imply a change of place. Sometimes these two terms are considered to be equivalent. It is, however, recommended to differentiate carefully (social) horizontal mobility from spatial or regional mobility²⁴ (cf. HEBERLE 1955). It should be further noted that though it appears meaningful to add adjectives like 'spatial' or 'regional' to the term of mobility to differentiate it from social mobility, in no case should these substitute the concept "migration". The reason is that spatial or regional mobility is definitely more comprehensive than "migration"²⁵.

Thus, it is evident that migration, which in the first instance designates a movement in physical space, can obviously be categorized under the broader concept, spatial or regional mobility. Nevertheless, the terminology itself shows a high degree of flexibility in its application. It has already been mentioned in the beginning that there is substantial controversy regarding the definition of the terminology. A glance into the various types of definitions reveals that opinions regarding the meaning of the terminology deviate widely from each other²⁶. It occurs because authors use different elements in their definitions to specify a certain spatial movement as migration. Thus, it is observed that when one author considers the change of flat within the same house as migration but excludes migratory workers and nomads from the definition (LEE 1969), the other includes them and states further that the change of residence must take place from one municipality into another (HEBERLE op.cit.). The elements which the definitions of migration commonly contain are: "change of residence" between different spatial units²⁷, "duration of stay", "distance travelled", "motives" etc. Selection of one or the other element depends mainly on the theoretical approach and the type of data available. Due to this particular reason, differences in opinions also arise in classifying migration into different categories²⁸.

It is, therefore, not surprising that in empirical research authors try to give an operational definition to the topic. The purpose of such steps is to make the abstract concept "migration" more pragmatic for empirical research. Operationalization of the phenomenon is supposed to

²³ To designate change of place of persons, HORSTMANN (ibid.) applies the term "regional" or "spatial" mobility. For more on this topic see WEBER 1982.

²⁴ At this point it should be clarified that there is certainly close correlation between spatial or regional mobility and social mobility. Precisely stated, spatial mobility may be the implication of social mobility or vice versa, and from this standpoint one may say that spatial mobility should be viewed in terms of social mobility.

²⁵ As a matter of fact all forms of "migration" (be it a single change of flat, inter-city movement or seasonal labour movement, commuting immigration/emigration, mass compulsory movement of wandering of nomads etc.) are subsumed under the term "regional" or "spatial" mobility. Again, all the different forms of regional mobility have one common aspect, i.e. the participants (either individuals or groups), through interposing the process of movement, accomplish diverse activities in different parts of the day, year and life at different locations. In this view, regional mobility is considered to be a process of "creative adjustment" (see SCHOLZ 1974:56-57).

²⁶ For definitions of migration see HOFFMANN-NOWOTNY 1970; ALBRECHT 1972.

²⁷ Whereby lot of possibilities remain open for the selection of spatial units.

²⁸ For an overview of typologies of migration, see HOFFMANN-NOWOTNY ibid.; for more detail on typology, see HEBERLE 1955; PETERSEN 1958.

enable the researcher to identify the topic more precisely and efficiently for their individual research needs (MAI 1976). To do so, certain criteria which seem to be meaningful for the purpose of the study are chosen, while the other which do not appear to be necessary are, at least temporarily overlooked (HOFFMANN-NOWOTNY op.cit.:53). In such circumstances it is wise to mention at the very outset that here it concerns itself with only one particular aspect of migration as well as to clarify further what aspect it is.

After illustrating the scope of definition, we now delineate an operational definition for the study. In the present study, only a particular type of migration is dealt with, namely the rural-urban migration. It should be emphasized here that rural to urban migration²⁹ is supposed to take place more or less voluntarily. The migration stream in this category consists mainly of those individuals or groups from rural population who move to the urban places either temporarily or permanently with various motives/incentives. The basis on which this type of migration is distinguished from the others is mainly the spatial units between which the movement takes place. In this case, the units are the officially defined rural and urban areas.

According to these preconditions, the following definition has been resolved for the present study. It briefly states that:

The movements of individuals or groups from (officially defined) rural areas to the urban places, which involves a change of residence, irrespective of duration of stay in the urban places and the distance travelled, is considered as "rural-urban migration".

It is important to mention here that persons who commute to the urban centers to render some kind of activities and visitors (including tourists) are excluded from this definition; because, in both these categories people are not directly detached from their place of residence.

1.5 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data and literature used in this study were collected by the author during two field trips in Bangladesh and during an archives tour in several cities of the Federal Republic of Germany. The field trips were carried out for the first time in 1984 (January to March) and then in 1986 (January to May). Altogether, eight months were spent in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. The principal aim of these two trips was to collect primary data on migrants through direct field survey, as well as to gather other types of information useful for this study from different

²⁹ It is considered to be a very important form of internal migration, i.e. migration of population within the political boundary of a country.

sources. The archives tour (undertaken in March 1985) made it possible to examine a large number of literature on rural-urban migration in Bangladesh and in other Third World countries. It also helped the author to investigate various other studies conducted previously and relevant for this study.

1.5.1 Empirical Data Collection

The field studies in 1984 and in 1986 were carried out in the capital city, Dhaka. This is the largest city in Bangladesh, both in terms of area and population. According to 1981 census, Dhaka Municipal Corporation (DMC; the study area) had an area of 161 sq.km with a population of 2.4 million. The heavy growth of Dhaka's population within a short span of little over 30 years (1947 to 1981) can be mainly attributed to the inflow of migrants from different rural areas of the country. In this regard, KHAN (1982) notes that, during the period 1961-74, internal migration contributed 74 per cent to the city's population growth. In a more recent study done by ISLAM (1986), it was found that more than 81 per cent of all heads of households in Dhaka metropolitan area were migrants. From these observations, it becomes evident that an overwhelming majority of the population of Dhaka consists of migrants. It has been documented in various studies that a large part of these migrants are poor and destitute hailing from rural areas (CHAUDHURY/CURLIN 1975; FAROUK 1976). In the city these people generally concentrate in the poor quarters called "*Bustees*"³⁰ (CUS 1982 and 1983). As such "*Bustees*" are supposed to be the main abodes of poor migrants in the city. These people are supposed to provide the best possible information on the background and consequences on migration, because they are directly involved in the process. Due to this samples for case study were selected in several "*Bustees*" in Dhaka city.

The first survey in 1984 was carried out in the following phases:

a) Reconnaissance survey and selection of sample areas:

The purpose of reconnaissance survey was to identify the "*Bustees*" in the city, where migrants are presumably concentrated. In this regard a few studies concerning the location of poor quarters were consulted³¹. Before drawing the sample, extensive tours throughout the

³⁰ In this study the terms "*Bustees*" and "poor quarters" are synonymously used. It refers both to "slums" (old dilapidated structures) and "squatters" (unauthorized occupancies). These are the communities, where poor people generally live, with poor housing and high room crowding. It should be mentioned here that this type of settlements have been awarded various generic names in different countries. For example: *Colonias Proletarias* (Mexico), *Barriados* or *Ranchos* (Peru), *Gece Kondus* (Turkey), *Favelas* (Brazil), *Katchi Abadis* (Pakistan), *Bustees* (India and Bangladesh), etc. There are even more names like *Shanti town*, *Hedgra*, *Cheris*, *Chawls* etc. (see BLENK 1973).

³¹ Detailed information on migrants in the city was, however, not available. To make a rough idea about this, two research reports and a map produced by CUS (1979 & 1983) were consulted.

city were also undertaken by the author to identify such areas. Identification of poor quarters was done mainly on the basis of visual observation. These were generally clusters of shacks or very old dilapidated buildings with minimum or no services and utilities³².

Like in other large cities of the Third World countries, "*Bustees*" in Dhaka are also seen beside roads, rail tracks, on vacant plots near water bodies, on footpaths, in old abandoned buildings and in the vast urban peripheries. It was further noticed that in Dhaka these types of settlements were widely dispersed in and around the city. Due to this reason, "cluster sampling method" was adopted to select the sample areas³³. In total nine sample areas were selected for detailed survey. Out of these, six were taken from within the city, and three from the edge of city. Within the city the "*Bustees*" are concentrated more in the southern part and become gradually sparse in the north. As such, three areas were selected in the southern part, two in the middle zone and one in the northern part of the city. On the city peripheries, "*Bustees*" are mainly concentrated in the southern, eastern and western parts. Therefore, the rest three sample areas were taken from these areas.

b) Total census and selection of sample households:

In the second phase of the survey, total census of population was done in the selected sample areas. Through a concise questionnaire, migrant "households"³⁴ were identified in these areas. To cover the population uniformly, 20 per cent of total migrant households were selected systematically for final interviews. The selection of sample households was done in the following manner:

At the beginning a rough sketch of each sample area was prepared and based on this sketch, position of migrant households were located. Then each household was assigned a serial number according to its position. To do so, a convenient end of the locality was chosen to start with³⁵. Afterwards, 20 per cent households was calculated from the total number of migrants' households. To distribute this number evenly in the area, every fifth house (beginning with the household bearing serial number 1) was chosen for final interview. For this purpose, a detailed questionnaire was prepared. However, before the final one was formulated, a rough questionnaire was pre-tested in several sample areas. Objective of this sur-

³² This refers to the supply of water, electricity, gas, etc., as well as sewerage and draining facilities, garbage clearance or other types of services offered by the city authorities.

³³ "Cluster sampling method" is considered to be ideal "if the population is very widely dispersed". This method helps to avoid bias, as well as "... saves immense amount of time". However, the selection of representative clusters is "best done subjectively" (HAMMOND/McCULLAGH 1978:139).

³⁴ In this study, "household" is defined as the minimum residential unit in terms of production and consumption. In this context "household" refers to the groups of persons living together and eating from the same "pot" (i.e., the group maintains a common house economy). It should be further emphasized that the terminology may also be applied to single persons (cf. BERNSDORF 1969:413-15). The term "pot" refers to the bengali terms "*Khana*" (eating unit) and "*Chula*" (hearth group). The other term "Family", also used in this study means the same.

³⁵ It normally coincided with the main entrance to the locality.

vey was to collect data on socioeconomic characteristics of migrants as well as to gather information on causes and effects of migration. Besides, elaborated interviews were also conducted to collect 'life stories' of several migrants.

c) Community survey:

The third phase of field study was community survey. In this phase, information on the physical aspects of the sample areas were collected. A preformulated questionnaire was used for this purpose. In each of the sample areas persons who seemed to be informed about the locality were interviewed. Besides, each of the locality was personally surveyed by the author to collect different types of information regarding community services and physical features.

1.5.2 Mapping

The settlement in the sample areas were mainly of temporary nature. Many of the huts were put up on illegally occupied plots (i.e., squatter settlements). Hence, no reliable maps or sketches of these settlements were available either with the government or with other agencies. For this reason, detailed sketch maps of each sample area had to be prepared by the author. Sketch maps were drawn applying the compass traverse method. A few maps regarding the general features of the city (for instance land use, topography etc.) could be collected from different sources.

1.5.3 Objectives of the Second Field Trip

The aim of second field trip, undertaken in 1986, was mainly to complement and enhance the information, collected during the first field trip. However, during the second field trip it was discovered that some significant changes occurred in the sample areas. For example, some of the settlements were evacuated by the city authorities and the inhabitants were shifted to new areas. In other cases migrants moved voluntarily to other areas for different reasons. In some areas new migrant households were registered, who arrived recently in the city. To investigate these new cases, the field trip was extended. Through repeated visits in the sample areas (selected in 1984) as well as in the new areas where migrants shifted, it was possible to collect a lot of additional information. Interviews were done informally, i.e. without any pre-formulated questionnaire. This proved to be a very appropriate method to collect in depth information.

1.5.4 Outline of the Study

In accordance with the discussions in section 1.2.1 and the hypotheses formulated on this basis in section 1.2.2 the present study is organized in the following stages.

Chapter 2 will give a brief description of Bangladesh, illuminating the basic features of the country. Rapid growth of population is supposed to be a vital factor in the process of migration. Therefore, understanding of the internal migration patterns and processes necessarily involves an understanding of the population dynamics. This is also undertaken in Chapter 2. The effects of population growth on the economy and its significance in rural exodus are investigated in some detail. In this chapter particular emphasis is placed on the examination of the causes of poverty in the rural areas and its implication in migration process.

It has been assumed that in calamity-prone countries sudden effect may become a significant factor of migration. To substantiate this hypothesis, the relevance of this topic in the context of Bangladesh has also been evaluated in this chapter. Finally, the rural-urban interaction and its effects on migration have been examined.

Chapter 3 describes mainly the patterns and processes of rural-urban migration and urbanization in Bangladesh. The purpose of this chapter is to assess the magnitude of rural-urban migration as well as to identify the types of people who move and from where.

Chapter 4 contains the case studies. Findings of the two field studies and the ensuing discussions are presented in this chapter. Attention is paid to the analysis of the migrants characteristics, the causes of migration and its consequences in a large city such as Dhaka.

Conclusions drawn from Chapter 2, 3 and 4 are presented in Chapter 5.

2. UNDERDEVELOPMENT AND RURAL EXODUS IN BANGLADESH

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO BANGLADESH

Bangladesh is the former eastern wing of Pakistan, which emerged as a sovereign country on the 16th December 1971. It lies in the north-eastern part of South Asia (see figure 2). The country is surrounded on the eastern, northern and western parts by India. It has also a common border with Burma in the south-east. A major asset to Bangladesh is its open access to the Bay of Bengal in the south. With an estimated population of 100.6 million in 1986 (UN 1988a) it represents an area of 143,998 km² (about forty per cent of the total area of FRG). For administrative purpose, the country is divided into 21 districts (*Zillas*) under four divisions (see figure 3). The districts are further subdivided into a total of 71 sub-divisions. Each sub-division consists of several police stations called *Thanas*¹. Dhaka is the capital and at the same time the largest city in the country. Chittagong is the second largest city followed by Rajshahi and Khulna (GOB 1981) .

The plain of Bangladesh is an alluvial basin, built up through deposition of three major rivers, Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna². Greater part of the vast Gangetic delta³ lies within Bangladesh (see figure 3). Some 65,000 km² within the country can be classed as deltaic. This huge delta is characterized by a low profile. Particularly low are the areas of Ganges-Brahmaputra delta. The Pleistocene terraces between Jamuna and Meghna river⁴ and between Jamuna and Ganges river⁵ have relatively higher levels than rest of the plain (OYA 1977)⁶. Exception to the monotonous plain are the hill ranges in Chittagong Hill Tracts (1,200 m high) and Sylhet district (600 m high). These are the western out-liers of the Arakan-Yoma mountain chains (RASHID 1981).

¹ It should be mentioned here that to materialize the plan of decentralization, the government of Bangladesh has re-structured the administrative units and has assigned new functions and names to these units. Nevertheless, for the advantage of data utilization we shall consider the old administrative system in the present study.

² Within Bangladesh territory the major rivers are named differently. Thus, after crossing Bangladesh border near Rajshahi district the name of "Ganges" becomes "Padma". The main channel of "Brahmaputra" in Bangladesh is called "Jamuna". The name "Brahmaputra" refers to the old channel flowing over Mymensingh district.

³ Also called Bengal basin.

⁴ Named as "Madhupur Jungle Terrace".

⁵ Named as "Western Barind Terrace".

⁶ The height of the terraces varies between 9-30 m above sea level; most part of the remaining plain is below 9 m.

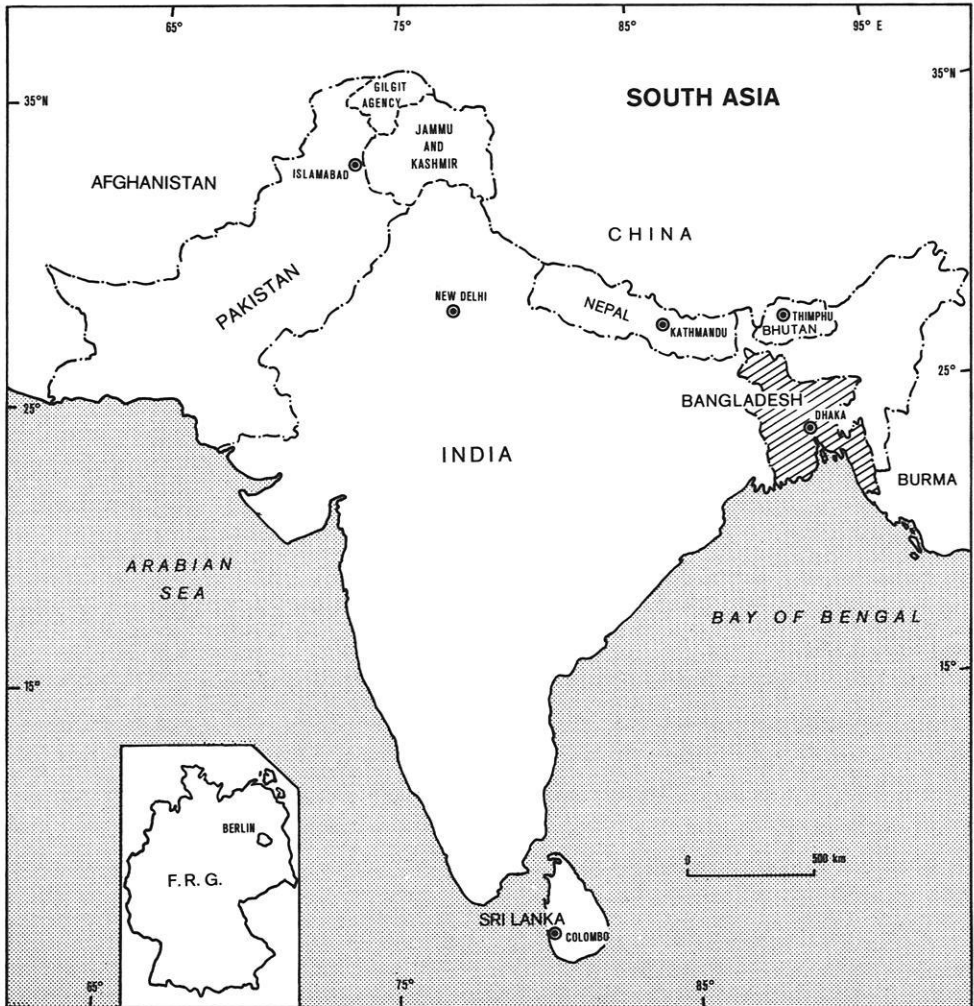


Figure 2: Location of Bangladesh

Bangladesh is characterized by a humid tropical monsoon climate with six seasons in a year⁷. Among these, three prominent seasons are winter, summer and monsoon. The sultry summer (with a maximum temperature of 37°C appx.) prevails from April to June. From December to February is the winter season. This period is mainly dry and cool (with a mini-

⁷ The six seasons in Bangladesh are:

- Grishma* - Summer - (mid-April to mid-June)
- Varsha* - Monsoon - (mid-June to mid-August)
- Shwarat* - Autumn - (mid-August to mid-October)
- Hemanta* - Dewy Season - (mid-October to mid-December)
- Sheet* - Winter - (mid-December to mid-February)
- Vasanta* - Spring - (mid-February to mid-April)

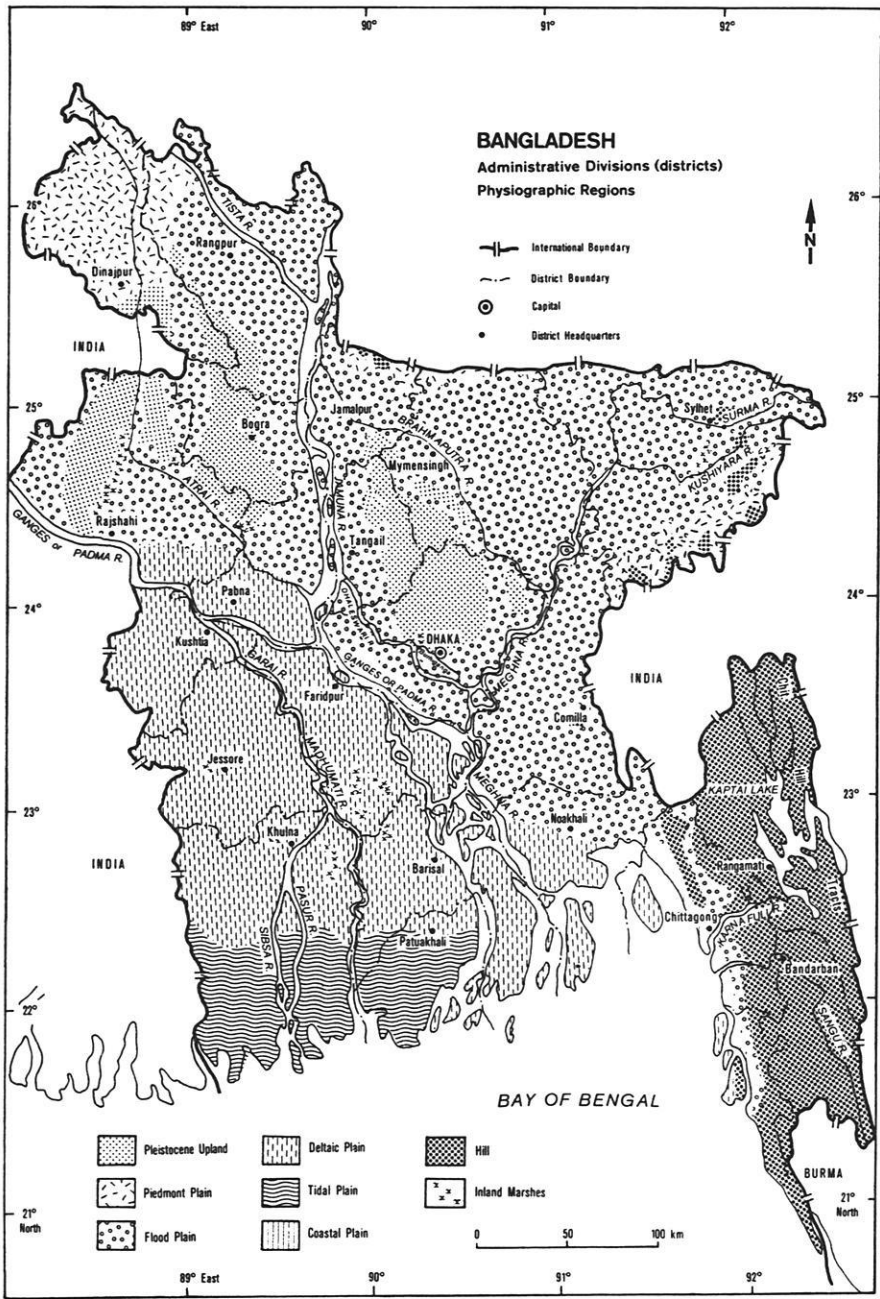


Figure 3: Administrative Divisions and Physiographic Regions, Bangladesh

mum temperature of 10°C appx.). Between June and August is the monsoon period. This is the moist season, characterized by heavy rainfall and high humidity. The average rainfall within the country varies from 1500 mm (annually) in the eastern part to 3000 mm in the west. About one third of the total rainfall flows into the rivers. During the monsoon a huge amount of water comes from India (through melting of snow in the Himalayas and rainfall in the northern hills) through the major rivers and their tributaries and distributaries and flows over the country. The total flow of water through the huge riverine network in Bangladesh is more than that through the twenty biggest rivers in Europe (cf. AHMAD 1968; RASHID 1981).

The abundance of water in monsoon has mixed effects on the economy of the country. Untimely and abnormally large amount of rainfall results in over-flooding of the low lying areas. It causes damage to crops, erodes cultivable lands and disrupts transport and communication. On the other hand it is a blessing for the country. Bangladesh lies on the tropic of cancer, the desert belt in the northern hemisphere. Without monsoon rain and the mighty rivers it would be a very dry country. Inundation of large parts of the country during the monsoon period has another significant impact on agriculture. The flood water brings along with it huge amount of silt and when the water recedes, the land is covered with fertile silt, making it suitable for winter crops. Nevertheless, one cannot avoid to notice the devastating effects of floods which frequently occur, causing extensive damage to life and property. Even in normal situation, most part of the country remains under flood water for at least four to six months in a year. In the recent period the situation has become worse. Denudation of the catchment areas in India and Nepal due to deforestation on the one hand and raising of the river beds in the country due to heavy siltation on the other, have added to the problem. Besides floods there are other types of natural calamities too, which affect the country time and again. The violent thunderstorms called "Nor'westers" are one of such. These storms generally occur in the pre-monsoon months (from March to May) and eventually attain the intensity of a Tornado in its destructive effects. Violent storms also occur in the close of monsoon period (in October). Another type of disaster are the tidal upsurges and cyclones in the southern parts of the country (ibid.). These natural disasters, which strike Bangladesh very frequently have far-reaching effects on the life of people and the economy of the country. In the rural areas natural disasters like flood, drought or river erosion leads to loss of land, lives and crop damage. Thus, in a country like Bangladesh, where large number of people are already living in extreme poverty, sudden natural calamities inevitably bring along with them adverse consequences.

After this short introduction, we shall now turn our attention to the problems of poverty in Bangladesh and its implications in rural out migration. It is widely known that Bangladesh is one of the very poor countries of the world. The causes of poverty are manifold and its effects are diverse. One of the basic problems among many others is that it is a small country with a large number of population and a low resource base. The amount of land (a main resource of

the country) is limited and unequally distributed, favouring a small minority⁸. With the exception of natural gas, exploitable mineral deposits are very few. Coal and limestone deposits found so far are at an uneconomic depth (ALAMGIR 1980:2). The extent of industrialization is very low⁹. Due to the low level in technology, underutilization of available potential, adverse terms in exchange relations etc. the agricultural sector has stagnated. In a country like Bangladesh, where more than 80 per cent of the inhabitants depend primarily on agriculture, this trend obviously expedites the process of impoverishment. These are all reflected in the unusually low per capita income. In such a precarious situation the large population number with a high rate of growth¹⁰ further aggravates the socioeconomic maladies. The increase in the number of population during the last few decades has been phenomenal. This rapid increase in population has particularly affected the ratio between man and resources (especially the man land ratio). As a result the situation has become more critical than before. A closer examination of the poverty condition in Bangladesh would readily suggest that with time the situation is degrading rapidly. This trend of growing poverty, coupled with "population explosion" is supposed to have distinct effects on rural out migration. In the following sections the extent and sequence of these impacts are discussed in some detail. The discussion begins with an analysis of the population dynamics.

2.2 POPULATION AND POVERTY

The problems of poverty, reduction of population growth, and economic growth are inter-related phenomena in economic development plan in Bangladesh. Population is considered to be a main hindrance to country's development (AHMED 1985). For this reason, these topics have gained especial attention both at national and international levels. The analysis of population in Bangladesh is, however, a difficult task due to shortcomings in data. The main source of data on population characteristics in the country are census, vital registration, ad hoc demographic surveys and sample surveys. There is, however, much uncertainty regarding the quality of data of these census materials. Apart from the inefficiencies in data collection, the errors and shortcomings in the census data may be attributed to several reasons such as manipulations for political benefits (e.g. in 1941) or natural and man-made disasters (e.g. war, famine etc.). Underenumeration of births and deaths also affected the data seriously. Moreover, underenumeration of infants and young children was a general feature of the whole cen-

⁸ The total area of land in Bangladesh is 35.31 million acres. The per capita availability of land is 0.38 acres (BANGLADESH 1982).

⁹ In 1984-85, industry accounted to 10.1 per cent of the GDP (GOB 1985a:398).

¹⁰ The average growth rate of population between 1971 and 1981 was 3.3 % per annum. Between 1980 and 1986 the population grew at an annual rate of 2.5 %; It is estimated that between 1986 and the year 2000, population of Bangladesh will continue to grow at an average annual rate of 2.6 % (BANGLADESCH 1989:19).

series¹¹. According to estimations the vital registrations were extremely underreported and these are not even 50 per cent complete (cf. PIDE 1968).

With an aim to supplement the census data a number of surveys are carried out at local, regional and national levels¹². Through these additional surveys the quality of data is supposed to have improved. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that due to several shortcomings it is difficult to produce an accurate sketch of demographic patterns in Bangladesh. The following analysis has been mainly based on different census and research reports.

2.2.1 Demographic Features and Trends

With 98 per cent "Bengali" speaking population and 86.6 per cent Moslems, Bangladesh shows more or less uniform ethnic composition. About 12.1 per cent of the total population are Hindus. The number of persons belonging to other religions (0.6 per cent Christians, 0.3 per cent Buddhists, 0.3 per cent others) are very negligible (BANGLADESCH 1987). The main minority groups are the non-bengali immigrants from India¹³ and the tribal population in Chittagong Hill Tracts and in the northern part of Mymensingh district¹⁴. There are also a small number of tribal people in Dinajpur and Rajshahi district, who time to time migrated from India to Bangladesh.

One of the key problems of population in Bangladesh is its enormous size squeezed in a small territory, and its rapid rate of growth. With an estimated population of 96 million in 1984, Bangladesh was the world's seventh and Asia's fifth most populous country. With an average annual rate of growth of 2.6 per cent, the number of population should have been 113 million in 1990 and is going to reach the level of 122 million in the year 2000 (cf. WORLD BANK 1983). A very spectacular feature of the population of Bangladesh in the recent years has been its rapid increase within a short span of time (see figure 4). From 1951 to 1981, i.e. within 30 years, the size of population in the country has nearly doubled¹⁵. Previously it took 90 years to double and before that almost two centuries (UN/ESCAP 1986a). At the middle

¹¹ The first census of India (and Bengal as a part of India) was undertaken between 1867 and 1872. Since then population census was conducted on a regular basis.

¹² To name a few:

- a) Population growth estimation 1962-65
- b) Population growth survey 1968-70
- c) Demographic surveillance system 1966 to date
- d) Bangladesh retrospective survey of fertility and mortality 1974
- e) Bangladesh fertility survey 1975

¹³ They consist mainly of the Biharis, who migrated from India after the partition in 1947. The estimated number of Biharis in 1983 was between 350,000 to 1.5 million (BANGLADESCH 1983:21). Most of them have gradually been repatriated to Pakistan.

¹⁴ There are approximately 13 tribes in Chittagong Hill Tracts with approximately 300,000 to 600,000 persons (ibid.).

¹⁵ From 42 million in 1951 to about 90 million in 1981 (UN/ESCAP 1986a).

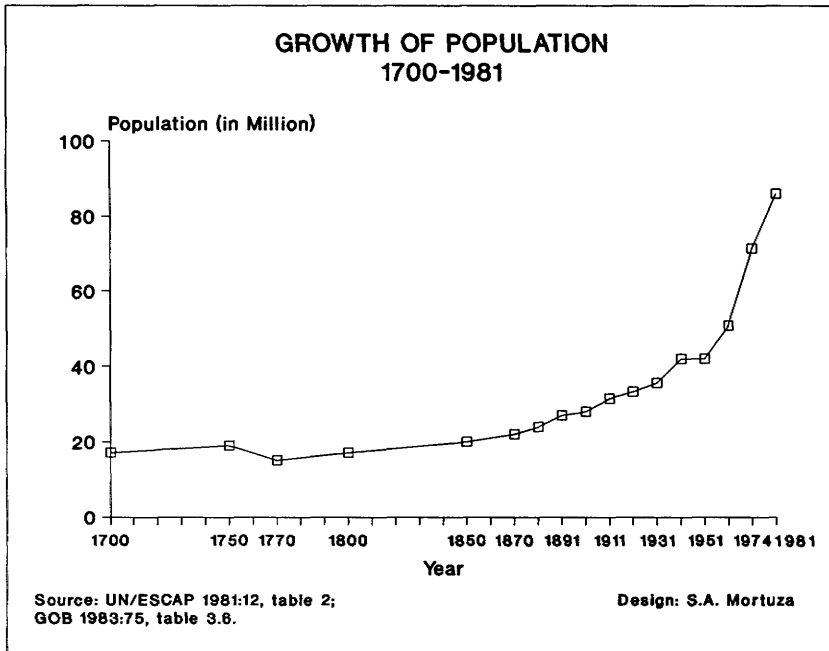


Figure 4: Growth of Population in Bangladesh

of 19th century, population of the part of India now forming Bangladesh was approximately 20 million. During the 17th and the early part of 18th century it was nearly 17 million and reached about 19 million by 1750. The growth rate of population during this period was very slow¹⁶. The pattern was characterized by "gradual growth over a short period followed by an abrupt decline" (UN/ESCAP 1981:11). The abrupt falls in the number of population during this period can be mainly attributed to natural calamities followed by epidemics. The century thereafter is also marked by a very slow population growth (see DAVIS 1951). According to official observation the population of East Bengal after the famine of 1770 had gone back to 15 million and then gradually increased to 17 million till 1800 (UN/ESCAP 1981:12). The following table (table 1) illustrates roughly the estimated populations of different years between 1700 and 1850.

¹⁶ The growth rate of population remained constantly below 1 per cent per annum. An increase to 1 per cent annually was reached for the first time in 1930's (UN/ESCAP 1981:12).

Table 1: Estimates of Population in Different Years

Year	Time interval (years)	Number (000,000)	Absolute increase (000,000)	Annual rate of change (%)
1700	-	17	-	-
1750	50	19	2	0.2
1770	20	15	-4	-1.2
1800	30	17	2	0.4
1850	50	20	3	0.3

Source: UN/ESCAP 1981:12

At the beginning of first census of India (in 1872), about 23 million people were living in the area which forms Bangladesh. The number has increased almost five times till today. The last part of 19th and the beginning of 20th century are characterized by slow growth rate and natural calamities and does not indicate any significant increase in population. Due to small pox epidemic on the one hand and partition of India on the other, a slight decrease in population is observed between 1941 and 1951. A remarkable growth in population took place since 1951. During the intercensal decade 1951-61 the rate of natural growth of population in Bangladesh was 2.16 per cent per annum. With net migration, the growth rate of population was 1.93 per cent annually. By the year 1974 the growth rate reached 2.64 per cent annually. Total population in this census year was 71.4 million. Compared to the number even two decades before, this figure is enormous. It is amazing to note that the total increase of population over the two decades from 1951 was "greater than the cumulative increase in the population over two and a half centuries" (UN/ESCAP 1981:15). According to the 1981 census, the population of Bangladesh was little over 87 million (GOB 1983:76). Thus it becomes evident, that the high growth rate of population in Bangladesh is relatively a recent phenomenon. This trend, under the prevailing circumstances, is going to raise the number of population enormously in near future.

The size of population in Bangladesh depends primarily on the levels of mortality and fertility. Compared to these two components, role of migration (both immigration and emigration) is only moderately significant. In Bangladesh there is a general trend of out-migration of Hindu population to India.

"With the exception of 1901-11 decade when Bangladesh gained about a fifth of a million persons as a result of net immigration from India, Bangladesh was losing population through emigration in all other decades. From an initial low net emigration figure of around 100 thousand in 1911-21, the net emigration rose to over 600 thousand in each of the decades of 1921-31 and 1931-41 to 1.9 million in 1941-51 and around 1.1 million in 1951-61." (KHAN 1973:194)

After this period, it is estimated that the net out flow from Bangladesh is around 1.5 million a decade (ibid.). It is generally argued that reduction of death rates achieved through improved medical care and especially the control of epidemics have mainly contributed to the rapid growth of population. The argument appears to be more or less valid because, as in many other developing countries, spectacular reduction in mortality has been achieved in Bangladesh since 1950's. Without corresponding decline in fertility rate, the decline of mortality has given a phenomenal rise in population growth. Estimates of crude death rates and crude birth rates from different sources present an overall trend of mortality and fertility in the present century (see table 2 and 3).

Table 2: Crude Death Rates in Bangladesh

Year	Crude Death Rates (/000)
1911-21	46.3
1921-31	41.7
1931-41	37.8
1941-51	40.7
1951-61	29.7
1961-65	18.5
1965-74	19.4
1980	10.2
1981	11.5

Source: AHMED 1985:19

Table 3: Crude Birth Rates in Bangladesh

Year	Crude Birth Rates (/000)
1911a	49.0
1921a	49.0
1931a	49.0
1941	-
1951b	45.0
1961b	47.0
1971b	44.5
1981b	34.6

Sources: a ELAHI 1972:57
b GOB 1983:95

Table 2 shows a gradual decline of mortality after 1920's and after 1950's there was an accelerating upward trend¹⁷. The measures to check the intensity of epidemics and local diseases like cholera, typhoid, malaria and small pox etc. were already started as early as in 1920's and were intensified after the partition of India in 1947. Various health programmes were undertaken by the government of that period to make the country free from epidemics and fatal diseases. For instance, the small pox eradication programme was launched with the assistance of World Health Organization (WHO) in 1968 by the ministry of health and by 1970 the incidence of small pox was found unidentifiable (AHMED 1986a:16). The result of such programmes was not only a sharp decline in the overall crude death rates, the infant and child mortality as well as mortality levels of females in the reproductive age periods were also particularly affected.

¹⁷ The major exceptions were 1941-51 decade and the year 1971. The first case may be attributed to the famine (1943) and the unsettled socio-political situation (due to partition of India in 1947) and the latter to the war of 1971. The devastating tidal waves of 1970 and the famine in 1974 also effected the mortality rate.

Compared to mortality, fertility is found to have remained stable (table 3), and the measures to check fertility have not shown much effect. Fertility level in Bangladesh is considered to be the highest among south Asian countries. In spite of the massive population control programme since 1962, it has shown no significant change. Although the overall situation of fertility in the most recent time does show a declining trend, it is not as sharp as it should be (ibid.:14).

The level of mortality is considered to be a function of several factors like socioeconomic condition of the people, availability of medical and health facilities, literacy rate of women etc. In this context it should be noted that in spite of significant reduction, the rate of mortality in Bangladesh is still very high compared to other countries (see table 4). It is further noticed that in the recent years there has not been much change in the levels (see AHMED 1986b). This is a direct reflection of poverty in the country. Moreover, there are large regional variations in the mortality levels. Urban areas for example, have lower neonatal, infant and child mortality rates than the rural areas. Variations are also observed within rural areas.

Table 3 illustrates that compared to crude death rate, the decline in crude birth rate was negligible. KHAN notes that

"... besides religion, high illiteracy, low urbanization and a very high proportion of the population in traditional agriculture are possibly some of the major reasons for high fertility." (KHAN 1973:193)

Table 4: Crude Birth and Death Rates of Selected Countries

Country	Year	Crude birth rate (/000)	Crude death rate (/000)
Bangladesh	1980-85	44.8	17.5
Burma	1980-85	30.5	11.0
China	1980-85	19.0	6.2
India	1984	33.9	12.6
Indonesia	1980-85	32.1	12.6
Japan	1980-85	11.9	6.2
Nepal	1980-85	41.9	18.2
Pakistan	1979	41.7	9.6
Sri Lanka	1980-85	24.3	6.2
FRG	1986	10.2	11.5

Source: UN 1988b:73-4

During the first half of the century high fertility is supposed to have resulted due to the fact that, as the infant mortality was high, parents tended to have more children to offset the possible loss. This resulted in large family sizes in the country. The average family size in Bangladesh is not below 6 (ELAHI 1972:59). There is a positive correlation between percentage of women aged 20-24 ever-married and fertility. In most parts of Bangladesh around

95 per cent of women aged 20-24 were ever-married (UN/ESCAP 1986b:29). Besides, there are several other factors which directly affect the persistence of high fertility. For example, in Bangladesh there is a negative correlation between women's employment and decreasing fertility. Lower fertility rates are observed among working women. The socioeconomic conditions and the agrarian structure in Bangladesh lead people to go for large families. Especially those families who depend upon wage labour and sharecropping, large family size (consisting preferably of males) ensures financial security (MADANI 1972; CLAY 1976). In the absence of social security and income generating assets, earning members of the family become a major source to draw upon in old age and disability (ALAMGIR 1978). Especially in the urban areas large families obviously have broader earning opportunities because the wives and children can contribute to the family income (ISLAM, KHAN and KHAN 1974)¹⁸. A vital factor to reduce fertility is the realization of the family planning programmes. This has not been satisfactory enough in Bangladesh. There are various reasons behind it. Due to religious beliefs and illiteracy, people are often reluctant to adopt family planning. A main reason is that, due to inefficiency of the concerned authorities, family planning programmes could not be extended adequately in the villages.

The expectation of life at birth is considered to be an important indicator of poverty level. Despite the fact that in Bangladesh it shows an upward trend, compared to other countries, especially developed countries, it is still very low (see table 5). It is further observed that life expectations at birth for both males and females are significantly higher in urban than in rural areas (AHMED 1985:23).

Table 5: Expectations of Life at Birth by Sex in Different Countries (Age in Years)

Country	Year	Male	Female
Bangladesh	1981	55.30	54.46
India	1984-85	55.60	55.20
Nepal	1981	50.88	48.10
Pakistan	1976-78	59.04	59.20
Sri Lanka	1981	67.78	71.66
*F.R.G.	1985	71.18	78.08

Source: UN 1988a:162-63

A spectacular problem of population is its high density. In Bangladesh, even in 1961 about 356 persons were living in a square kilometer. The density increased to 605 (persons/km²) in 1981 and reached to almost 700 (persons/km²) in 1986. If one considers the population of the plain land, the density would represent one of the highest in the world for an area of similar

¹⁸ See also Chapter 4.5.2.

size. Excluding Singapore and Hong Kong, Bangladesh is the most densely populated country in Asia (see table 6).

Table 6: Density of Population in Selected Countries, 1986

Countries	Population (^{'000})	Density/km ²
Afghanistan	1305	29
Bangladesh	87119	699
Bhutan	1034	31
Burma	35313	56
China (Peopl. Rep.)	1031882	112
Hong Kong	4980	5294
India	685184	233
Indonesia	1474490	88
Nepal	15022	122
Pakistan	84253	125
Peninsular Malaysia	13183	49
Philippines	48098	185
Republic of Korea	37436	420
Singapore	2413	4185
Sri Lanka	14848	246
Thailand	44824	102

Source: UN 1988a:153

The facts examined hitherto have shown that only in the recent period the growth rate of population in Bangladesh has gained significant momentum and also that declining mortality and high fertility have mainly contributed to the rapid growth, resulting in massive population build-up in the country. The efforts of the government to reduce the growth rate through intensive family planning programmes have not shown much effect and it may be assumed that the recent trend of growth is going to persist for a considerable period. The high fertility level has e.g. resulted in the unbalanced age structure (see figure 5). Apart from the large size, this is another significant problem for the nation. In 1974 census about 35 million people were enumerated under the age of 15 years. It is expected to grow to 44 per cent of the total population in 1990. By this time women of child bearing age will increase from 16 to 22 million. Unless vigorous efforts for population control are undertaken this will be impossible to achieve reduction in fertility. This unbalanced age structure is not only going to affect the fertility, but at the same time will have immense effect on the economy of the country.

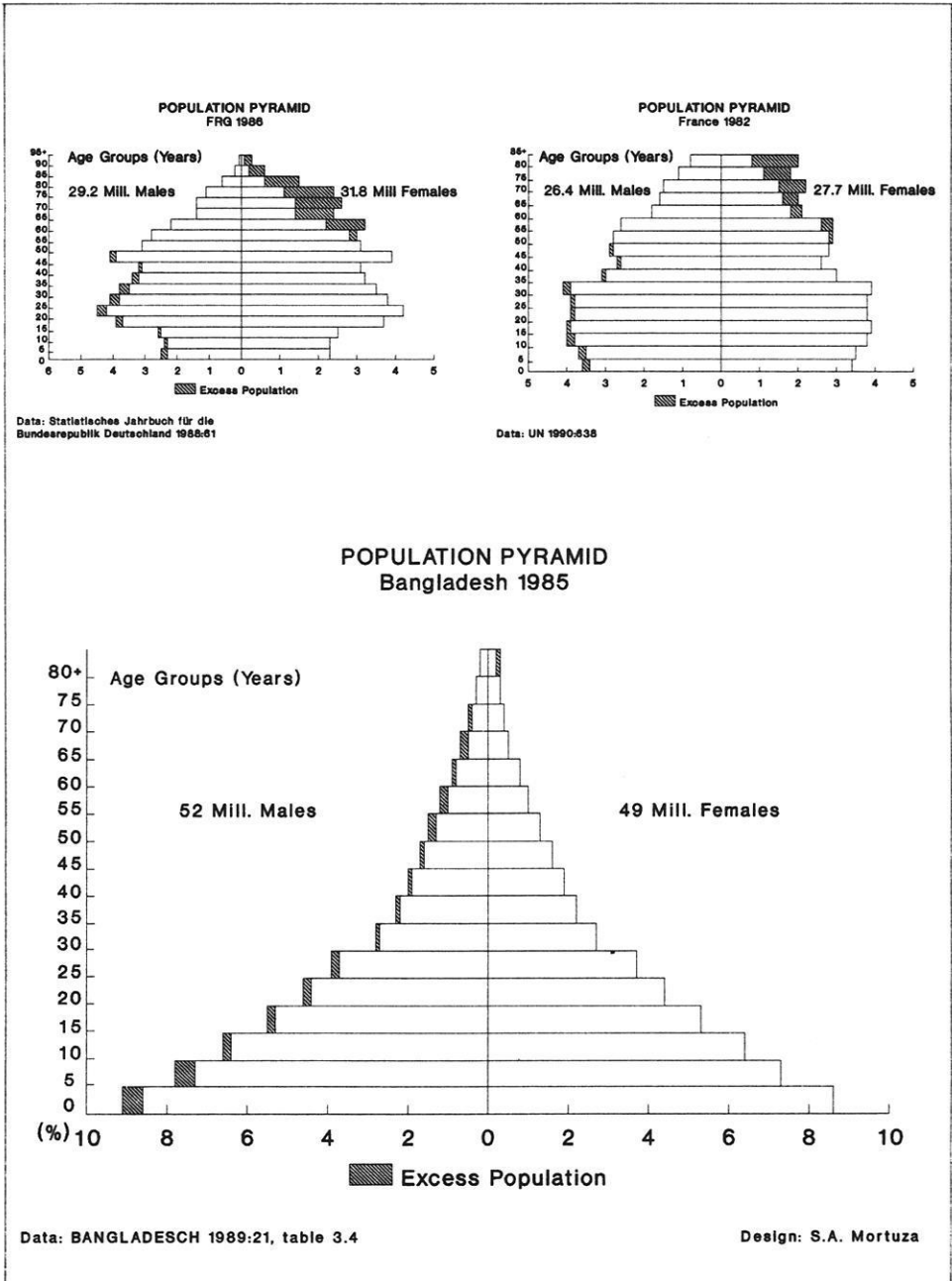


Figure 5: Age and Sex Structure of Population in Different Countries

2.2.2 Implications of Population Growth

The persistence of high rate of population growth distinctly affects the poverty condition and the migration process. It has already been mentioned that resources, particularly land, which is considered to be the most significant resource, is limited in Bangladesh. Due to the vast increase in the number of population the pressure on land has also increased enormously. A glance into the trends in land utilization pattern makes it evident.

The total land area in Bangladesh is little over 35 million acres. Being overwhelmingly an agricultural country, land is considered to be a major factor of production. Figure 6 shows that the area devoted to crop production equals about 65 per cent of the total area (including fallow). With the increase in population number, the demand for cultivable land has also increased. The increasing trends in net cropped area and multiple cropping land are the evidences for this. Similarly the decrease in forest area and the increase in the area not available for cultivation also reflect the increasing pressure of population on the available land. The amount of cultivable waste land is very low (2.3 per cent of total land area in 1984) and is only reclaimable at a relatively high economic cost. A district wise land utilization pattern reveals

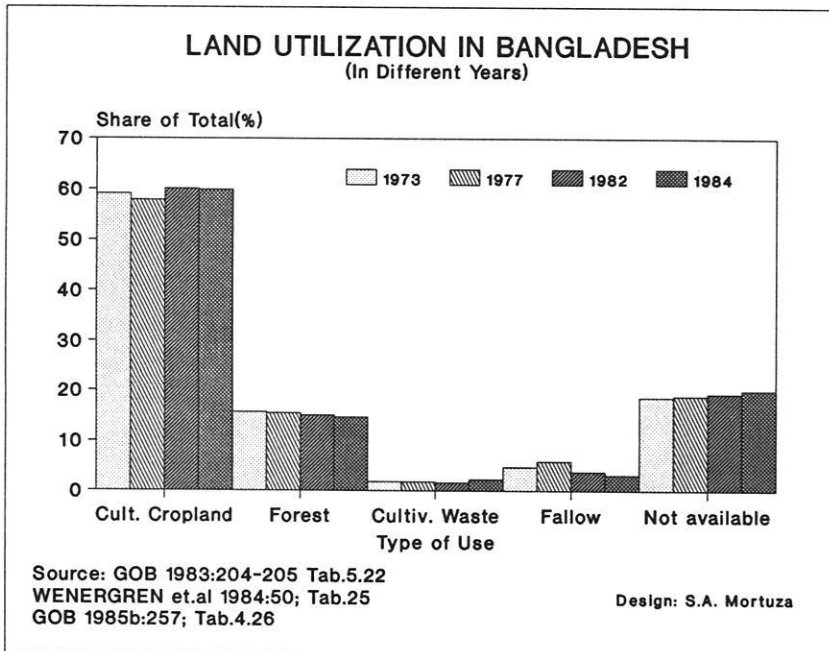


Figure 6: Land Utilization in Bangladesh, 1973-1974

that the districts having high percentage of cultivated land have at the same time high densities of population. The intensity of cropping in these districts are also relatively higher¹⁹ (cf. GOB 1985b, Tables 2.4 and 4.29). It is estimated that if the present trend in land utilization

"... continues for another 25 years, there will be no forest and fallow land left and a large portion of land will be used for housing and establishment. The production of cultivable land will not be sufficient to feed half the size of population." (AHMED 1986a:3)

The adverse effects of the population pressure on land are reflected in the worsening man land ratio. At the beginning of this century there was one person to an acre of land. Today there are four people to each acre, and with the existing growth of population, there will be 8 persons to an acre by the end of this century (FAALAND/PARKINSON 1976:124).

The impacts of population pressure in the internal migration process is quite apparent. Different authors claim e.g., that in Bangladesh inhabitants from more densely populated areas move to less densely populated parts. As far as the movement among the rural areas is concerned, it is noticed that people prefer to settle in those areas where irrigation allows the cultivation of high yielding variety (HYV) rice and wheat and where crops are less liable to damage due to natural calamities. The new *chars* (new alluvium/small island) are also a big attraction for settlers. Apart from this, considerable number of people move to areas having a concentration of urban-industrial centers (ELAHI/SULTANA 1985:23-25). In an earlier study KRISHNAN and ROWE (1978) found that there was out-migration from areas of high demand on land to areas of low demand. The author claims that "this may be due to the fragmentation of land holdings emanating from inheritance pattern ..." (ibid.:1).

In fact, rapid increase of population reduces all types of assets holdings per capita and per household. Combined with the laws of inheritance, the population pressure has contributed towards increasing fragmentation of land holdings in Bangladesh (GOEP 1960; ASADUZ-ZAMAN 1973). Fragmentation and uneconomical size of land holdings is considered to have reduced the output. Besides increasing the amount of wasteland through land demarcation it has also reduced the flexibility of farming operation. Emphasizing the significance of population growth in the process of underdevelopment ALAMGIR-(1978) states that:

"In the absence of technological progress and redistribution of income generating assets, high population growth, increasing family size and a stable dependency ratio contribute towards income inequality and also facilitate the working of the process of pauperization and polarization" (p.95).

The growth of population is supposed to bring about a lot of associated problems in the coming years. It is estimated, for example, that in the year 2000 there will be 25.1 million school going children (in place of 19 million in 1990) and 80.5 million working age population (in place of 76.1 million in 1990). Therefore, it will be an immense task for the government to cope with the situation. So far the present trends suggest, the future appears to be very gloomy. In this regard, FAALAND/PARKINSON state:

¹⁹ These are for example the districts Comilla, Bogra, Mymensingh, Noakhali, Faridpur, Barisal, Dhaka.

"It seems extremely doubtful if the amount of employment that the land can offer can be increased by more than one-third on the average, an additional 5 million jobs." (op. cit.:85)

The attempt so far in this section has been to show the trends and patterns of population growth and its implications in migration process in Bangladesh. The evidences have asserted that the high growth of population has various adverse effects on the economy and society and is correlated in several ways to the process of migration in the country. It should, however, be noted that increase in population is considered to "act as a catalyst to further pauperization of the rural masses" (KHAN 1984:1). The causes of impoverishment are more versatile and demand a critical analysis. To understand the process of impoverishment and its correlation to rural exodus, a closer investigation is done in the following section.

2.3 PAUPERISATION OF RURAL MASSES

Impoverishment of the greater proportion of the rural masses is not a recent and transitory phenomenon in Bangladesh. It emerged gradually over the long history of colonial rule in India and was particularly intensified during the period of British rule. Before the division of India in 1947, Bangladesh was the eastern part of the Indian province, called 'Bengal'. Historically, this province of India was well known for its fabulous wealth and attracted a lot of travellers and traders. The account of travellers to India portrays the prosperity of Bengal, which contrast sharply with the present condition. MANOUCHI (1618-1707)²⁰, the Venetian in his description of Bengal's wealth noted that,

"Bengal is of all the kingdoms of the Moghul best known in France. The prodigious riches transported thence into Europe are proofs of its great fertility. We may venture to say that it is not inferior in anything to Egypt, and that it even exceeds that Kingdom in its products of silk, cottons, sugar and Indigo. All things are in great plenty here, fruits, pulses, grain, muslins, cloths of gold and silk." (Quoted in DUTT 1940:41)

Many other documents of early travellers describe in a similar manner the affluence of Bengal and the well-being of its inhabitants.

In spite of the fact that these reports could have been exaggerated to some extent, it can not be denied that India as a whole and Bengal as a well flourished province of India were rich in wealth. Compared to that, the present situation in Bangladesh appears just to be the reverse. In this country, which was once called 'Golden Bengal', millions of people now find themselves on the threshold of famine and death. To perceive the reasons which turned a country of affluence into the home of some of the poorest people in the world, one has to get a glimpse of the past. Although the process of impoverishment in Bengal (as well as in India as a whole) was embedded in the early history (cf. DUTT op. cit.), it was mainly accentuated in the period of British rule. As soon as the British East India Company won the 'battle of

²⁰ MANOUCHI was the chief physician of the Moghul emperor Aurangzeb.

Plassey' and seized political control over Bengal, "the line between trade and outright plunder faded" (HARTMANN/BOYCE 1979:12). During the two hundred years rule the British exploited the resources and destroyed systematically the traditional socioeconomic and cultural structures of the country (NEBELUNG 1986a). In this regard DUTT (1940) notes:

"... the British conquest differed from every previous conquest, in that, while the previous foreign conqueror left untouched the economic basis and eventually grew into its structure, the British conquest shattered that basis and remained a foreign force, acting from outside and withdrawing its tribute outside" (p.96).

This process of destruction by British rulers was carried out in several distinctive phases. The initial phase of this was characterized by a direct plunder, in that, wealth was directly extorted and transmitted to England. The next phase began with the introduction of "English landed system, private property in land, with sale and alienation..." (ibid.:98). Previously land could not be bought and sold. In Moghul revenue system the peasants had right on the land they cultivated. The central administration used to collect tax from the self-sufficient peasants through local chiefs (*Matabbars*). Although there were some exceptions to this practice, particularly in areas where local rulers like '*Rajas*' or '*Maharajas*' were very powerful. These local rulers used to collect tax from the peasants and pay a fixed amount of tribute to the Moghuls. In some cases the central authorities used to appoint employees to collect tax. In none of these cases, however, the state or the appointed persons had any right on the land. The cultivators were the actual owners of the land.

In 1765 the East India Company obtained mandate from the Moghuls to collect revenue in Bengal. Since then oppression of the peasants, which already existed, was enhanced several times. The East India company introduced several tyrannical practices to increase the amount of tax. In spite of all these aggressive methods they failed to establish the revenue system on a concrete base which could ensure a substantial increase in the amount of collection. To overcome this situation, the permanent settlement act was introduced in 1793. This act converted the *Zamindars*, who were merely agents to collect revenue, into owners of the land and the self sufficient peasants into rent paying tenants of the *Zamindars*²¹. The *Zamindars* had to pay fixed amount of revenue to the state to retain their ownership. In case of failure to pay the revenue the land could be auctioned by the state. Due to extravagant living and incompetence to manage the land on the one hand, and fall in the agricultural products on the other, many *Zamindars* had to sale their estates to other rich people. As a result new interest groups entered the scene who eventually commercialized agriculture. The *Zamindars* found it easier to collect the rent through leasing. As a result a number of intermediaries arose between the owner and the actual producer. Sometimes the number of intermediaries between a *Zamindar* and the peasants were as many as 50, each of whom sub-leased the land and took a share of the rent (ABDULLAH 1976:69). Thus, the ultimate burden had to be borne by the poor peasants. Frequently, the peasants failed to earn enough from their produces and meet the

²¹ For a critical analysis of Permanent Settlement Act, see OMAR 1974.

rents. This forced them to get involved into an exploitative credit relation with the money lenders. A considerable number of peasants had to depend on a regular supply of credit, which eventually forced them to surrender a large part of their produce to the creditors.

The decisive wrecking of the Indian economic structure took place when the British capitalism invaded India in the nineteenth century. Evidences of this are found in the systematic abolition of the cotton industry in East Bengal, and compulsory production of cash crops like indigo, tea and jute to meet the demand of English industries. East Bengal was traditionally famous for its cotton textile industry, which ranked among the greatest industries of the world. The weavers of Dhaka used to produce once the finest cotton textile called *Muslin*, which was in high demand in the imperial courts of Asia and Europe. Cotton was also grown indigenously. As the British textile industries in Manchester developed, the textile manufacturers in Bengal were acutely affected. Either by direct prohibition or by imposing heavy duties on the import of Indian manufactures, the British rule secured the interest of the English monopolies, who demanded the exclusion of Indian manufactures (DUTT op.cit.:98). On the other hand, the amount of English industrial manufactures into India was increased enormously. MARX (1853) observed:

"From 1818 to 1836 the export of twist from Great Britain to India rose in the proportion of 1 to 5,200. In 1824 the export of British muslins to India hardly amounted to 6,000,000 yards, while in 1837 it surpassed 64,000,000 yards. But at the same time the population of Dacca decreased from 150,000 inhabitants to 20,000. This decline of Indian towns celebrated for their fabrics was by no means the worst consequence. British steam and science uprooted, over the whole surface of Hindostan, the union between agricultural and manufacturing industry." (Quoted in DUTT 1940:99)

These oppressive policies of the British rulers led to great hardship of the weavers. Even the reports of high officials of the East India Company revealed the miseries of people (see MUKHERJEE 1974). Today, both the weavers and the cotton has disappeared. Such types of oppression and exploitation continued throughout the colonial period and by the time the British left India, Bengal was reduced to an extremely impoverished land. The extent of poverty was so colossal and its forces so deeply impregnated in the socioeconomic structures, that till today the country has not been able to recover its damage. Instead of improving, the situation has further deteriorated. Nowadays the number of people below the poverty line are much more than ever before.

2.3.1 Poverty in Rural Bangladesh: Dimensions and Trends

During the last few decades, poverty condition in rural Bangladesh has extremely deteriorated. The increasing number of landless people, chronic food shortage, malnutrition and undernourishment are only a few evidences for this. Present Bangladesh is a country of abysmal poverty. Measured in any criteria, majority of the rural population in Bangladesh are

living below the poverty level²² (AHMED and HOSSAIN 1984a:15). As the following table would also suggest, intensity of poverty has increased enormously with time and an ever-increasing number of rural population are being thrown in extreme misery.

Table 7: Rural Population in Bangladesh Living below Poverty Level (%)

Year	According to FAO standard*	According to AHMED and HOSSAIN's adjusted standard
1963-64	75.0	52.0
1973-74	74.5	55.7
1976-77	83.0	61.1

* For the explanation of standard see footnote 22

Source: JAHAN 1986:144

Despite substantial differences, both the data represented in table 7 have one aspect in common, i. e. an upward trend of the number of rural poor in recent period. Both the data also show that far more than half of the rural population in Bangladesh live below the recommended poverty line. No decline in the trends of growing poverty could be observed during the last decades. One of the studies noted,

"while only 5 % of the rural population in Bangladesh could be characterized as 'extremely poor' (defined in this context as unable to obtain 80 % of the recommended daily average calorie intake) in 1963-64, this proportion rose to 25 % in 1968-69 and to staggering 41 % by 1975." (VYLDER 1982:7)

A recent World Bank report similarly claims that during the period 1963-1976 the average per-capita income of all expenditure classes decreased, except for the top five per cent of the population. Most affected were the bottom forty per cent, whose expenditure declined more than the average, depressing in 1976-77 to about two thirds of that in 1963-64 (IBRD 1980).

According to other studies, 60 per cent of the rural population are estimated to obtain less than 85 per cent of the calories required for a minimum subsistence (see FAO/UNDP/GOB 1979). Even before 20 years, only 10 per cent of the population lived in a similar situation (JANSEN 1986:1). The National nutrition survey in 1962-64 revealed that 45 per cent of all rural families had calorie intakes below the acceptable level. Compared to that the level reduced further and in the second National nutrition survey in 1975-76 it has been estimated that the average daily energy intake was around 150 calories less than in 1963-64 (VYLDER 1982:8). There has also been a significant decrease in daily per capita food

²² On the basis of calorie intake and fulfilment of basic needs like clothing, shelter, medical care and educational facilities, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and World Health Organisation of the United Nations recommended minimum standards of living. In a recent research these standards were adjusted for Bangladesh and considered to differentiate "poor" from "not poor" (see AHMED and HOSSAIN 1984b).

consumption among rural population. This was due mainly to declining food availability and gradual drop in the production of crops and other nutrients. Most alarming is the fact that consumption of nutritional foods like fish, meat and pulses, which are the main sources of protein has decreased considerably. Some two-thirds of the population are estimated to suffer from protein deficiency. With the exception of iron consumption, intake of other nutrients has also reduced significantly. Consumption of vitamin A and C e. g., are much below the recommended level. Some 30,000 children are estimated to go blind each year due to lack of vitamin A (see AHMED 1986a:80-81).

2.3.2 Housing and Sanitary Conditions

The poverty of rural population is reflected in a variety of other indicators, too. As for example, if we consider the housing and sanitary conditions in rural areas, the same picture of misery stands out. In the villages of Bangladesh there are very few families who live in well-built houses with hygienic atmosphere. Less than 2 per cent of the houses have brick walls or roofs. The construction materials for walls and roofs are, in most cases, straw, bamboo, clay etc. In some cases unburnt bricks are used to construct walls. Moreover, the houses do not have enough living space. A survey done in the rural areas in 1981 showed that 33.85 per cent of the houses had only one room; 52.31 per cent had three rooms and 13.68 per cent houses had not more than 5 rooms. More than 60 per cent of the houses are estimated to have an area not more than 400 sq. ft. (36 m²), and only 12.3 per cent of the houses have more than 900 sq. ft. (81 m²). Another survey carried out in six villages in two different regions showed that only 8.2 per cent houses had four or more rooms and 40 per cent of all houses had area not more than 150 sq. ft. (13.5 m²). In 15.5 per cent cases four or more persons had only one room to live in and 24.5 per cent houses had only two rooms for five persons or more²³. 35.5 per cent of the houses had no separate kitchen (HOSSAIN et al. 1984). The intensity of the space problem is felt more when we consider that the average family size in Bangladesh is 6.6 persons.

Besides the problem of living space there exists also the problem of poor sanitary conditions. In fact these two problems run parallel and directly affect each other. In different surveys or individual case studies it was revealed that most houses in the rural areas do not have electricity, running water and proper toilets. It should be mentioned here that in rural areas of Bangladesh there exists a strong competition between the land required for agriculture and for housing. People who own small amount of land cannot afford to raise construction on these from which they earn their livelihood. For this reason more and more people have to live in congested space (see JAHAN 1986:149-151).

²³ In FRG e.g., where the average size of household was 2.29 persons (in the year 1986), 29.62 % of the flats had four rooms, each room having an area of at least 6 m²; 18.2 % flats had five such rooms and 8.26 % flats had seven rooms (Statistisches Jahrbuch für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1988:66, 222).

2.3.3 Health

The effects of insufficient food and calorie intake, poor housing and sanitary conditions etc. are reflected in the general health of the rural masses. Despite the fact that the statistical data show some improvements in the health and clinical facilities, this does not mean at all that these have reached the poor people in the rural areas. A glance at table 8 shows that spectacular differences exist in the crude death rates of urban and rural population. The table also reveals that between 1980 and 1982 there was an upward trend in the crude death rates of the rural population.

Table 8: Crude Death Rate/1000 Population, Bangladesh

	1980	1981	1982
National	10.18	11.50	11.90
Rural	10.77	12.23	12.78
Urban	6.81	7.21	6.92

Source: GOB 1983:105

Differences are also observed in the infant mortality. In the rural areas of Bangladesh the infant mortality per 1000 live births was 103 in 1980 and increased to 112.5 in 1981. For the urban areas these were 80.7 and 99.4 for the respective years (GOB 1983:106). Similarly the child death rates per 1000 children of ages 1 to 4 years in 1980 were 13.2 in the rural and 8.0 in the urban areas and increased 17.5 and 9.4 respectively in the following year (ibid:107). The causes of high rates of infant and child mortality are attributed to the lack of medical facilities, unsanitary practices associated with delivery as well as malnutrition. The most frequent causes of deaths in the rural areas are claimed to be malnutrition, diarrhoea (including cholera, dysentery, typhoid) and respiratory diseases (like tuberculosis and pneumonia). These types of diseases are obviously a reflection of poor health conditions resulting from malnutrition as well as unhygienic living. At the same time it also reflects the extreme lack of medical facilities, all of which ultimately give an image of poverty. At this point it is important to note that within rural areas incidence of diseases causing death varies widely among different wealth groups. The highest incidence of diseases is observed among the landless and it gradually decreases among the groups of people owning more amount of land. It is further noticed that the household expenditure in health sector increases with the increase in the amount of land owned by the household (see JAHAN 1986:152-153).

2.3.4 Education

The general literacy rate in Bangladesh is very low and it shows a deteriorating trend²⁴, despite the notable increase in the number of primary schools, most of which are again located in the rural areas. An increase is also observed in the expenditure in education sector. Government expenditure in education sector was Taka 1030 mill. (appx. 129 million US-\$) in 1974 and it rose to Taka 3450 mill. (appx. 144 mill. US-\$)²⁵ in 1982. As is evident from table 9, there was a decrease in the attendance among higher age groups. Similar trends are observed in the school enrollment ratio (see table 10). From these facts it can be assumed that after attending the school for a certain period, people drop out. The most probable reason behind it may be that parents cannot bear the expenses of education and try to engage their children in some other occupation. These tendencies are more common in the rural areas.

Significant disparity exists in the literacy rates of male and female population. Both in urban as well as in the rural areas illiterate women outnumber the illiterate male. It is worthwhile to mention that in a patriarchal society like Bangladesh, women have a lower position in the society and are deprived in all spheres of life. In this regard religion is supposed to play a vital role, too. These are again more acute in the rural areas (see e. g. ARENS/VAN BEURDEN 1977).

Table 9: School Attendance Rate (in %) Among Different Age Groups, Bangladesh

Age group	1974	1981
5- 9 years	18.7	22.5
10-14 years	33.8	33.3
15-19 years	18.8	17.0
20-24 years	7.5	7.0

Source: ISLAM 1987:Table 15

Table 10: School Enrollment Ratio (%), Bangladesh

Level	1978	1981	1982
Primary (5-9 years)	71.0	70.0	67.0
Secondary (10-16 years)	17.0	13.0	14.0
Higher Secondary	1.4	1.2	1.2

Source: ISLAM 1987:Table 14

²⁴ The literacy rate for all ages of population reduced from 20.2 per cent in 1974 to 19.7 per cent in 1981. The percentage of literate persons in the age group 5 years and above reduced within this period, too, from 24.3 % (1974) to 23.8 % (in 1981) and remained constant till 1984 (see GOB 1985b:Table 12.1 and 12.58).

²⁵ Exchange rates in 1974: 1 US \$ = 8 Taka (appx.), in 1982: 1 US-\$ = 24 Taka (appx.).

From the facts presented above, one gets, however, a picture of deterioration in the field of education. It is convincingly a reflection of growing poverty.

2.3.5 Income

Income is supposed to be an important indicator to reflect the well-being of a country. In Bangladesh, the per-capita income is low²⁶ and stagnant, and its distribution is highly uneven. It is one of the very few countries in the world which experienced zero or even negative growth in the per-capita income during the last decades (cf. OSMANI/RAHMAN 1986). Although some improvements in per-capita income could be observed towards the end of the decade of sixties and over the late fifties (cf. ALAMGIR 1978:6), it is claimed to have been brought about by the spectacular growth in urban income. In the rural area, stagnation reigned during the whole of this period (OSMANI/RAHMAN, op.cit.:5). The situation at the end of seventies was still worse than it was a decade ago. In this regard ALAMGIR (cf. 1974 and 1978) notes that in the rural area the per-capita income declined between the early 1950's and late 1960's. In the post liberation period (i.e. after 1971) it deteriorated further from that in the period immediately prior to liberation. Available data indicate that there is a considerable degree of inequality in the distribution of income (cf. ALAMGIR 1974:13). It is noticed that both in rural and urban areas, inequality declined towards the end of sixties, but went up in the seventies. Differences also exist between rural and urban income. The gap between urban and rural income is found to have widened in the recent period (table 11).

Table 11: Rural-Urban Income Differential in Bangladesh
(Taka per household in 1963-64 prices)

Years	Rural Income (Taka per annum)	Urban Income (Taka per annum)	Rural as % of urban
1963-64	1,680	2,700	0.62
1966-67	1,250	2,103	0.59
1973-74	1,383	1,961	0.70
1976-77	1,344	2,398	0.56

Source: OSMANI/RAHMAN 1986:13, Table 6

The change of income distribution between 1963 and 1977 reveals that top 15 per cent of the urban and rural population enjoyed absolute increase in their income. As the aggregate income reduced during this period, the burden was borne by the bottom 85 per cent of the

²⁶ Per capita GNP in Bangladesh was US \$ 120 in 1980 and it increased to US \$ 160 in 1986. In the same year (1986) per capita GNP in the neighbouring countries were: India US \$ 290; Pakistan US \$ 350; Sri Lanka US \$ 400 (BANGLADESCH 1989:15).

population. It distinctly demonstrates that only a small minority could enrich themselves absolutely, pushing the majority into increasing impoverishment (cf. OSMANI/RAHMAN, op.cit.). The number of persons living below poverty line has been increasing sharply. Already in 1973/74, about 64 million people in Bangladesh were living below the poverty line. It is officially recognized that 3/4 of the country's population currently live below the poverty line (RAHMAN 1986).

2.4 IMPOVERISHMENT AND SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

The discussion carried out so far has documented some aspects of poverty, its dimension and trends in the rural areas of Bangladesh. From this discussion it becomes evident that in Bangladesh there is a severe scarcity of resources, particularly of those resources which are vital for survival²⁷. Moreover, the discussion has also outlined some effects of population explosion on the poverty situation. The evidences provided in the foregoing sections have revealed that the greater majority of the population live in a condition of absolute poverty. The underlying causes (both exogenous and endogenous) which led to the widespread poverty in Bangladesh are very complex and deep-rooted. Nevertheless, a basic problem of the country is its "social structure characterized by exploitative production relations ..." (ALAMGIR 1978:2). The process of exploitation which characterizes the Bangladesh villages is justly termed by JANSEN (1986) as "the competition for scarce resources", in which

"... the commonest way for people to maintain and improve their economic position is to secure for themselves better shares of limited resources at the expense of their fellow human being" (p. 1).

JANSEN (ibid.) distinguishes in the rural areas of Bangladesh two conspicuous categories of people in relation to their economic position. Identified on household²⁸ basis he classifies them as households with surplus budget and those with deficit budget position. In his opinion the surplus peasants, who produce more than they consume, are never content with the amount of land²⁹ they possess. As a result they continuously try to expand their land property. This expansion occurs, however, at the expenses of the people with deficit budget. The poor people on the other hand are compelled to adopt various alternative strategies to cope with the deficit budget. To do so they get involved into dependent economic relation with the surplus peasants, which ultimately weakens their own position. This argument seems to be rea-

²⁷ This is, however, considered by several authors to be a paradoxical situation. Because, if the social constraints could be removed and the existing potentials optimally utilized, Bangladesh could supposedly become a self-sufficient country (see HARTMANN/BOYCE 1979; VYLDER 1982).

²⁸ Household is defined as the "basic unit of production, reproduction, consumption, and of social, ceremonial and political interaction" (cf. JANSEN 1986).

²⁹ Both agricultural land as well as homestead plot land.

sonable if one considers the social structures and economic interactions in the villages more closely.

In Bangladesh the most important natural resource is land. In the rural areas it is the chief means of production and the most important criteria to determine social class position. People who own more land are obviously well-off and more powerful than the others. Since the availability of land is limited, the competition for land is also very severe. As in other instances too, this competition generally favours the rich people, thereby weakening the poorer groups further. The outcome of this is the concentration of productive assets in a fewer hands. Consequently, it expedites the process of landlessness in the villages. Table 12 shows that in 1977-78 a large number of rural households were landless. The number of landless farmers is found to have increased enormously with time³⁰, because trends in rural areas of Bangladesh

"show a process of gradual alienation - a process through which marginal farmers get disposed of their land and join the rank of landless agricultural labour" (RAHMAN 1986:13).

**Table 12: Land Holding Patterns
in Rural Bangladesh, 1977/78**

Ownership Patterns	% of Households
Landless*	46.6
Marginal (0.5-1.0 acres)	9.8
Small (1.0-2.5 acres)	21.4
Medium (2.5-7.5 acres)	18.0
Large (7.5 acres and above)	4.2

* Persons owning only homestead plot
or without any possession

Source: RAHMAN 1986:12

It is observed that in 1978, percentage of households possessing 0-2 acres of land constituted 74.58 per cent of the total households. The amount of land possessed by these households were 21.10 per cent of the total (JANUZZI/PEACH 1980). If one considers the fact that at least two acres of land are necessary for an average size family (having six persons) to subsist³¹, at least 46.5 million people could be identified as living either marginally or below subsistence. In the present time at least three-fourth of the total population are supposed to

³⁰ In 1951 only 14% of all households were classified as landless; it was 17% in 1960. In 1978 the figure rose to 28.8% (VYLDER 1982). According to BIDS rural studies project, about 30% of all households in rural areas have no agricultural land at all (KHAN 1984:3).

³¹ Though it depends largely on the quality of land, availability of seeds, water, fertilizer, pesticides etc.

live below subsistence level (NEBELUNG 1986b:184). These are the main groups of people with deficit budget. The question reasonably arises, how do these people manage to cover their deficits and survive? These issues are thoroughly dealt with elsewhere (see ALAMGIR 1978; JANSEN 1986). In the following sections some common practices, by which people generally cover the deficits are discussed. There are, in fact, several alternative ways by which people generally supplement their income. The most common ways are either to work as wage labourer or to manage other's farms as share cropper. In other cases, people engage themselves in non-agricultural activities. Another common strategy to cover the deficit budget is to take loan (both in cash and/or in kind) from rich people. In several instances, people even beg. To see the mechanism and outcome of these different alternatives, each of the topics are treated separately.

2.4.1 Employment in Agriculture

In the rural areas one of the main sources of income is to work in the field. With the exception of big landlords, working in the field is a common practice among rural population. Particularly for poor people who own either no land or very small amount of land, the only source of security is to join the rank of wage labourer (in both farm and non-farm sectors) or to cultivate other's farms on sharecropping basis. In both the cases, the prospects are, however, bleak. The agricultural labour force in Bangladesh was calculated to be about 28 million in 1983-84 (GOB 1984b:23). This was about 86 per cent of the total labour force. Between 1961 and 1983-84, the growth of labour force in the rural areas was phenomenal³² (see figure 7). This was mainly due to the rapid increase of population in the working age³³. The rural sector has, however, not been able to absorb this huge labour force effectively. Agricultural sector, which directly or indirectly absorbs about 50 per cent of the rural labour force, has failed to create sufficient number of employment in the whole period. Different studies reveal that in 1969-70 about 32 per cent of the rural labour force was unemployed (AHMED 1973). The later period was marked by an increasing trend in the absolute number of unemployment. In 1975-76, the estimated number of unemployment in agriculture was around 35 per cent³⁴. According to the trends in labour force increase and rural unemployment, the absolute number of unemployed persons in the rural areas has significantly increased in the recent time.

³² Between 1961 and 1983/84 the rate of labour force growth in the rural areas was 1.9 per cent annually. Within this period the rate of growth for male labour force was 1.8 per cent and that for female labour force was 4.1 per cent. It is estimated that by the year 2000 the labour force in the rural areas will increase to 42.1 million. Thereby, it should be noted that due to higher growth rate, the female labour force by the year 2000 will be 90 per cent higher than that in 1980 (WORLD BANK 1983).

³³ People in the working age consists of persons, 10 years of age and above (GOB 1984b).

³⁴ For more on rural unemployment, see MUKTADA 1975; ALAM et.al. 1976; ISLAM 1977; WORLD BANK 1983; AHMED 1986c.

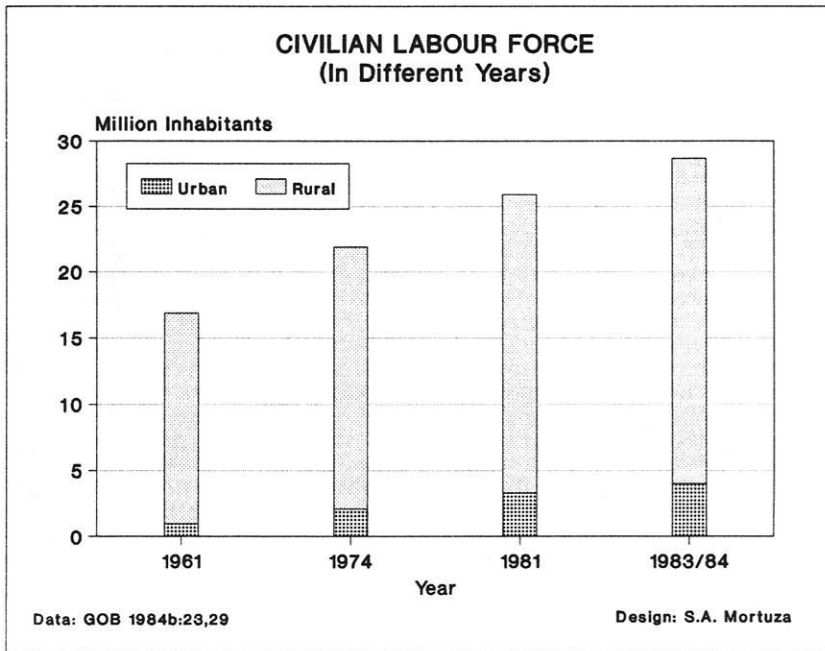


Figure 7: Civilian Labour Force in Bangladesh

Figure 7 further shows that during the last decade there has also been a notable increase in the number of urban labour force. In contrast to the rural areas, the increase in the urban labour force is a combined effect of natural growth as well as migration from the rural areas. Although there is no exact data on the level of unemployment in urban areas, it is believed to be equally high (FARASHUDDIN 1979). The trends of employment in Bangladesh over a period of 30 years show that the increase in the number of employed persons in agriculture within this period was not very significant (figure 8). While within the same period, the increase in the number of persons employed in the non-agricultural sector was quite high. As a result, the relative share of agricultural employment over this period declined. These trends in employment implies that with time, growing number of persons were joining the non-agricultural sector. Among various reasons which give rise to such a situation, stagnation or low wages in agriculture and shift of labour from the rural to the urban areas are noteworthy.

The evidences provided above convincingly reveal the gloomy scene in agricultural sector. Lack of employment in the agricultural sector on the one hand and sufficient supply of labour on the other, obviously lead to low wages. It should, however, be mentioned at this point that low wages and lack of employment has not been a permanent case in the agricultural sector.

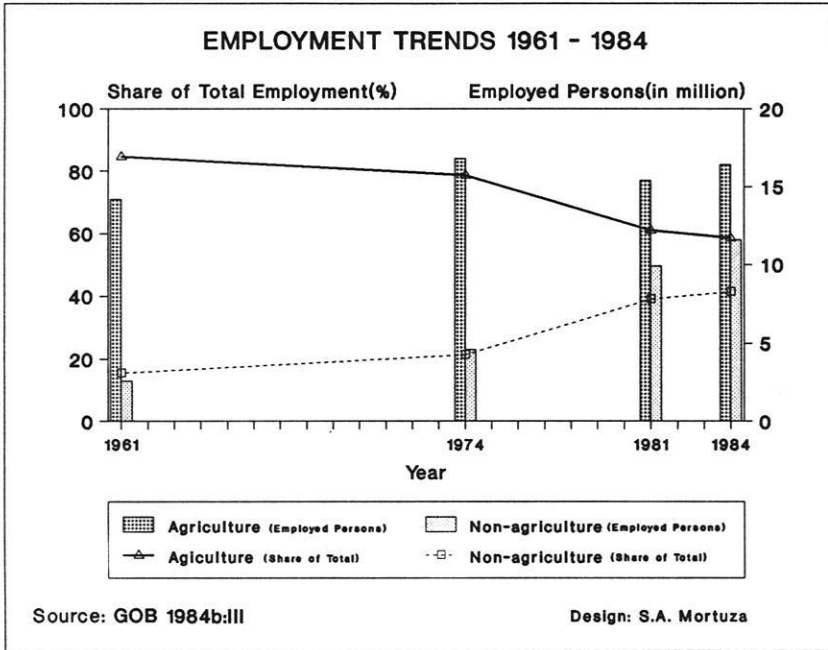


Figure 8: Trends in Employment by Different Sectors in Bangladesh

Traditionally there has always been a shortage of labour during the peak period³⁵. As such, during peak periods, when the demand of labour was high and the supply low, wage rates used to push up. But with the increasing supply of labour due to 'population explosion' and lack of new employment in agriculture, the wage rates have been drastically reduced. Nowadays, in most rural areas, the supply of labour has begun to outstrip demands. Especially the cheap supply of labour during peak periods due to the influx of migrant labourers from other rural areas are continuously affecting the wage rates and employment in a variety of ways. At this point it is important to mention that the wage rates also depend on several other factors like type of labour, type of contract and the social relationship between employer and labourer³⁶.

³⁵ Normally during sowing and harvesting.

³⁶ These phenomena are, however, not typical for Bangladesh only. In many other developing countries too, wages and employment are actively regulated by specific types of contracts and labour-employer relationship. In this context we can mention the impacts of "informal institutions" (which has an intermediary role between actual producers and owners) on the wage and labour market. In many developing countries the "informal institutions", which are considered to be internal structures of the "informal sector", are supposed to effect the terms of wages and employment decisively (see SCHOLZ 1986). The very existence of "informal institutions" within the "informal sector", obviously reduces the wages of actual producers to a level of sheer subsistence, obstructing the possibility of accumulation by the actual producers and thereby jeopardizing the expected positive role of the "informal sector" in the whole process of development.

An important phenomenon of the rural societies in Bangladesh is the existence of factional and/or kinship relations, which operate as an unwritten system of social security. Due to the abundant supply of labour and the spread of wage labour market, these traditional bondages are gradually disintegrating in Bangladesh (see ALAMGIR 1978; JANSEN 1986; ARENS/VAN BEURDEN 1977). Availability of cheap labour has also aggravated the terms of contract. As a result of these the workers' share of agricultural produce has been reduced, thereby contributing to the further impoverishment of rural poor.

2.4.2 Sharecropping

In Indian subcontinent, sharecropping is a comparatively recent practice. It did not exist before the British colonization (MUKHERJEE 1957:16). As already mentioned, the Permanent Settlement Act introduced by the British rulers in 1793 created large landed interests, and brought about major changes in the agrarian and power structures in the rural areas. The agricultural lands were divided into large sections (*Taluks*) and handed over to land lords (*Zamindars*). Most of the new *Zamindars* had no previous experience, were extravagant and lacked all sorts of managerial competence. As such they had to depend on others who would take over the task. For this reason the *Zamindars* used to lease their lands to the medium land lords (*Jotdars*), and these *Jotdars* leased out lands further to the sharecroppers. The sharecroppers had no legal rights on this land³⁷. The oppressive policies of the British rulers and their allied *Zamindars* led to extreme sufferings of the peasants. It increased substantially the number of landless labourers and sharecroppers. Historical evidence show that in 1842 there were no landless farmers in India. In 1872, i.e. within 30 years the number of landless farmers in India was 7.5 million and it accounted for 30 per cent of the total population of India in 1931 (cf. OMAR 1974:39). Similarly the Floud Commission found that about 29.5 per cent of land alienated between 1929 and 1939 in East Bengal were cultivated by share croppers.

As a matter of fact both land labourers and sharecroppers are exploited by the land lords. The sharecropper must work hard to maintain his living. The types of leasing agreement are generally very unfavourable for the tenants and lead to pauperization of these people. For instance, two types of agreements are generally made between the owner and the tenant³⁸. According to one of these agreements the tenant must surrender 50 per cent of the produce to the land owner³⁹. The other agreement is such that the tenant has to give the owner certain

³⁷ Although the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 was supposed to preserve some rights of the tenants and sharecroppers, it did not have much influence to change their fate. It is important to note that this law was repealed with the passing of State Acquisition and Tenancy Act in 1950's. The later does not recognize any tenancy on the agricultural land except that directly under the government (ALAMGIR 1980:22).

³⁸ Agreements are mostly verbal and there are no written documents.

³⁹ This type of agreement is called *Adhi* or *Borga*.

pre-determined amount of crop, no matter what the actual output may be⁴⁰. It is important to note that in these agreements the tenant bears the major cost of production, i.e., the cost for seed, fertilizer, pesticides and irrigation. The owner, in contrast, pays the land taxes only. In both the cases the tenant is obviously disadvantaged (see table 13).

Table 13: Sources of Agricultural Inputs as Reported by Tenants

Types of Input	Provided by Landowner or Not Used (% of Total Household)	Provided by Tenant (% of Total Household)
Seed	0.59	99.41
Fertilizer	0.36	99.64
Pesticide	0.22	99.78
Irrigation	0.03	99.97

Source: GOB 1977a:122, table 4.7

If one calculates the amount of time and money the tenant invests to produce, it invariably shows a negative balance for him. These adverse terms of agreement compels the sharecropper to get involved into indebtedness and eventually make them landless. Several studies in Bangladesh show that there has been a declining trend in the number of owner-cum-tenants as well as in the share of land operated by them. On the other hand evidences document an increase in the incidence of pure tenancy (cf. ALAMGIR 1975; ABDULLAH et.al.1976).

In spite of all these disadvantages rural people prefer to do sharecropping than to work as wage labour. There are several reasons for this. In sharecropping the farmer can take his own decision and unless unexpected calamities occur, he is assured of at least certain amount of produce. The sharecroppers have also a higher social status than the wage labourers. On the other hand the wage labourers are completely dependant upon the mercy of the land owners.

Sharecropping, however, demands some prerequisites. The tenant must own at least some amount of land, draft animals and agricultural implements. The fate of share croppers in Bangladesh is worsening day by day. As the wage rate is falling, owners find it cheaper to cultivate their land with hired labourers. In many cases owners prefer mechanization, as it increases the productivity. As a result, share croppers face immense problems to get new contracts. They are thus, forced to take up other alternatives like mortgaging their land to money lenders or eventually sell their land. This phenomenon is clearly borne in the transfer of assets in the rural areas. KHAN (1976) observes that due to indebtedness, a large segment of small farmers (perhaps 50 per cent of the total) are forced to borrow and sale their assets (including land). People generally do not prefer to sale their land and try to hold it as long as possible.

⁴⁰ The various names of this type of agreement are, *Tong, Gula, Shanjabhag, Mokrabag* etc. (cf. OMAR 1974:75).

But as the burden of debt increases and particularly when it combines with an emergency situation like flood, famine etc., they are forced to do so. The distress sale of land and other assets, which emanates through these processes, raises the number of destitutes, many of whom ultimately joins the rank of potential migrants.

2.4.3 The Nature and Implications of Credit

For the disadvantaged and pauperized section of population, credits are a chief means of survival. It is at the same time a mechanism of transfer of assets (mainly land) and vice versa. The attempt in this section will be to analyze in short some aspects of rural credit system and its implications in the process of impoverishment. In a poor agrarian society such as Bangladesh, credit plays a decisive role for the survival of peasants. There are generally two types of credits in the rural areas. One is the institutional credit and the other is non-institutional credit. The institutional credit is not sufficiently developed and expanded in Bangladesh. It meets only a limited part of the demand and is not significant for poor and marginal farmers (see ISLAM 1987). On the other hand, the non-institutional credit has been traditionally controlling the rural credit market and is supposed to have considerable significance in rural economy. As such only the latter type is discussed here. Credits are mainly taken for consumption purposes, though some people may also take loan for commercial use. The creditors are generally rich farmers and business men (the money lenders are called *Mahajans*). A salient feature of the non-institutional credit system is its exploitative nature. Since other sources of capital are extremely limited in the agriculture, people, particularly the disadvantaged groups, are highly dependant on non-institutional credit. Especially in lean periods or in emergency situations like natural calamities, funeral or marriage, people have in many cases no other choice than to borrow. A significant proportion of household in the rural areas goes into debt to meet the current consumption and working capital expenses (ALAMGIR 1978:35). This is particularly applicable for small and marginal farmers as well as landless. Nevertheless, credit in any form prerequisites collateral. The money lenders would not be willing to lend unless they knew that in case of failure to repay they could appropriate the assets of the borrower. Besides material resources, human resources may also be considered as a deciding factor, whether the household will get credit or not. For instance, households possessing hard working and trustworthy male members have better chances to get credit. The possibility of getting credit may also depend on the type of social bondage and kinship relations⁴¹.

Whatever the case may be, the fact remains that indebtedness of poor people obviously leads to further impoverishment. The credits are generally given with high rates of interest

⁴¹ For more on social system and credit relations in rural Bangladesh see ARENS/VAN BEURDEN 1977; VAN SCHENDEL 1981; JANSEN 1986

(*Sud*) or through property (mainly land) mortgage (*Bondhoki*). Mortgage of land means transfer of rights of use to the creditor. The terms of contract in the mortgage may be different. In one type, the creditor takes over the usufruct rights of the land. Within certain limitations he can use or rent out the land to anyone he likes. The borrower gets back the right of the land after he returns the loan. In the other system, the right of use to cultivate the land is transferred to the creditor for a certain period and after this period is over the borrower gets back the right of his land (*Khai Khalasi*). But this type of contract is not common between well-to-do and poor households. Furthermore, if the creditor is powerful, he can make efforts to prevent the poor person from getting the rights back. In fact, mortgage of land is the first step to lose it. In majority of the cases, poor people do not have any savings and cannot return the money they borrow. As a result, his loan accumulates and ultimately forces him to sell his land at a much lower price than the market value. The same is true for the other type of loan with interest. The interest rates in the non-institutional credit are extremely high (see ARENS/VAN BEURDEN 1977:148), and the total amount of money to be paid ultimately is so high that it goes beyond the reach of poor people. Thus, credit system, in all its forms, inevitably results in impoverishment of the disadvantaged groups.

The various evidences of pauperisation, described so far is pushing increasing number of population in Bangladesh into absolute poverty. This is manifested in the ever-increasing number of landless and job-seekers in the rural areas. The negative trend in development, which is supposed to persist, further deteriorates the 'exchange entitlement' (see SEN 1981) and escalates the struggle for survival. For instance, the declining productive asset ownership reduces the possibilities to receive credit, a vital source to cover the deficit budget. For the creditor, people without asset are the least attractive clients. Nevertheless, in the face of reduced wage rates and lack of employment opportunities, poor people have to take up loans. When this essential source of support is exhausted, people look for other alternatives, like moving to the next village or to urban centers. It has been discussed in a previous section, how the chances of migrant labourers are diminishing (within rural areas in Bangladesh) due to growing labour force on the one hand, and stagnation or mechanization of agriculture, on the other. Consequently, the impoverished rural population constitutes a "reserve pool of migrant, primarily to the urban areas" (ALAMGIR 1978:31). Hence, for a large part of poor population, migration to urban centers denotes an alternative strategy for survival. It is particularly true for those sections of population who are uprooted from their homelands either through the gradual process of impoverishment or by sudden effects like flood, drought or similar other natural disasters. In Bangladesh, the process of uprooting of the rural poor and concentration of these in the urban center shows an upward trend (cf. FAROUK 1976). As far as natural calamity is concerned, it mainly uproots the poorest segments of people. However, in Bangladesh the incidences of rural exodus due to natural disasters are many, because of the large number of poor people and frequent occurrence of calamities.

2.5 SUDDEN EFFECTS AND MIGRATION

Sudden and unusual changes in the environmental condition, which may immensely affect the condition of people, are suggested to have considerable implication in migration decision (UN 1973). As far as rural exodus in Bangladesh is concerned, this hypothesis is supposed to hold true to a large extent. Due to the unique environmental features, Bangladesh is frequently subjected to natural disasters like flood, cyclones or excessive rainfall. Occasionally, these calamities take a severe shape, damaging crops, infrastructure and human lives. Natural calamities thus, play a significant role in the process of impoverishment.

Most pronounced of all natural calamities are the floods. Due to the flat topography and unfavourable drainage conditions, vast parts of the country are vulnerable to flood affecting a large percentage of population (see figure 9). In normal case, about 26,000 km² or 18 per cent of the country is submerged under flood water (MPO 1986). But in unusual situation the flood water engulfs much more area and the damage of properties may exceed several times than in the normal years. Recent examples of these are the floods which occurred in 1974, 1977 and 1978.

In 1974, one of the worst floods of this century occurred, in which 80 per cent of the entire country was submerged under water, destroying almost 90 per cent of the monsoon rice crop (CHOGUILL 1983:76). The floods of 1987 and 1988 were also extremely devastating. During these floods, even the areas which are normally not vulnerable to flood were submerged under water.

The sources of flooding are different in various parts of the country. In most of the northern and north-eastern parts as well as in the western part floods occur due to overflow from the main rivers, excessive rainfall, poor drainage conditions etc. Throughout most of the southern parts flooding is mainly associated with storm surges and poor drainage (MPO op.cit.). The hilly areas in the north-east and south-east are characterized "by flash floods which are mostly of short duration but unpredictable in frequency and intensity" (ibid.:60).

Whatever the cause may be, the effects of floods on the economy are of immense significance. Particularly its impact on agriculture is by far the most important. On the one hand vulnerability of large parts of cultivable land to flood constraints farmers to go for low-yielding rice, and on the other abnormal or prolonged flood causes damage to standing crops⁴². The transplantation and harvest of *Aman* rice, for example, is greatly dependant upon the timing and quantity of seasonal rainfall. Irregularity in the timing and quantity of rainfall may reduce or damage the yield of this variety of rice. An unexpected damage of crop obviously aggravates the poverty condition and can accelerate the chain of rural-urban migration (CHOGUILL op.cit.:76). Besides this, a notable effect of high rainfall and flooding is the erosion of river banks. It causes damage to cropland or homestead beside the rivers. Evidences of

⁴² It should be noted here that about 80 per cent of all rice, excluding *Boro* and HYV (High Yielding Variety) are grown in monsoon period, between May and October.

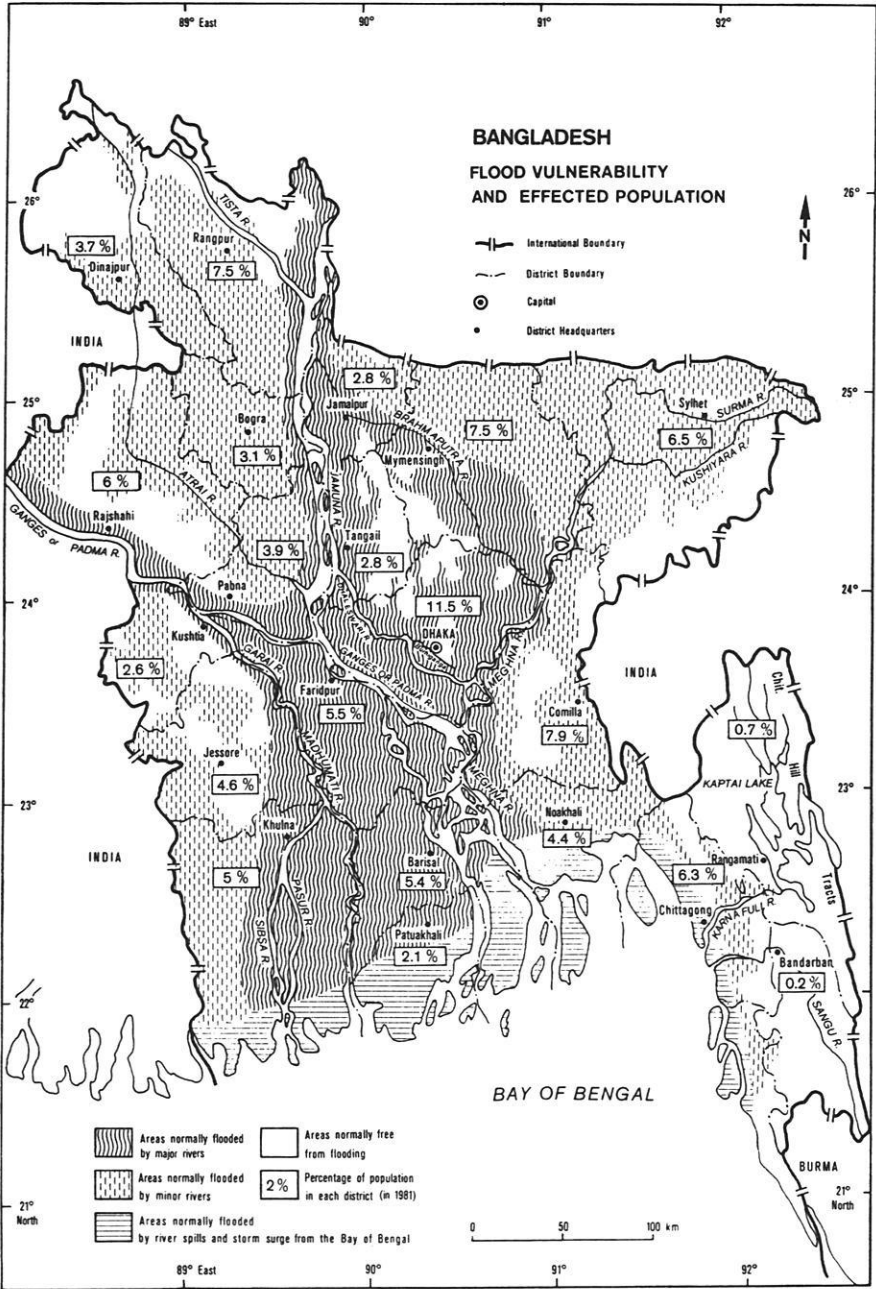


Figure 9: Flood Vulnerability and Affected Population in Bangladesh

families who become destitute through loss of small patch of cropland or homestead they possess due to river-erosion and move to urban centers are not few in Bangladesh (see CUS 1982 and 1983).

Of particular importance are the aftermaths of natural disasters like floods, river-erosion or cyclones. The damages caused by these types of disasters have often led to famine in Bangladesh and increased the rate of rural-urban migration. An example of this is the famine of 1974. Due to the severe flood hundreds of thousands of families in rural areas became destitute. These people lost all their economic means with which they could obtain food. The relief measures either by the government or other organization were not at all sufficient to save the starving population. Being unable to procure food and ensure their survival in the rural areas, nearly 100,000 refugees took shelter in the 138 special relief camps established around Dhaka. Many of these families preferred to remain in Dhaka supporting themselves in any way that they could (CHOGUILL 1983). For them there was no incentive to return to their villages. The flood destroyed the minimum sources of security which these people had in the rural areas. Moreover, after the flood the prices of food and other necessary goods increased sharply in the rural areas and the government failed to control the situation⁴³.

Besides floods, there are other types of natural or man made calamities like cyclones, tidal surges and wars, which cause damage to properties and lead to impoverishment of the people which ultimately expedites the rural exodus. To see the nature and extent of damages which cyclones may cause, the example of the cyclone accompanied by tidal bore of December, 1970 can be cited. This cyclone is supposed to have affected 5400 square miles and 4.7 million people, destroying 400,000 houses. Similarly the damage caused by the war in 1970 was also very extensive. In physical terms, the total damage amounted to US-\$ 1.2 billion at the prevalent exchange rate (ALAMGIR 1980:58-59). These huge damages of properties obviously affect the poorest people at most and become a valid ground of rural exodus. In one of the studies on the dynamics of rural migration, CHAUDHURY and CURLIN (1975) found that in Matlab Thana (Comilla district) the disruption caused by the war of 1971 increased the rate of rural out-migration.

Hence, the evidences suggest that in Bangladesh natural calamities play a significant role in the rural-urban migration process. This is supposed to persist also in the near future, because the process of impoverishment and occurrence of natural calamities continues further and the protective measures which should have been adopted to save people do not show any sign of improvement.

⁴³ The effect of floods and accompanied famine was also felt in those areas where crop production was not affected by flood. This was caused mainly by leakage through smuggling and hoarding (see ALAMGIR 1978).

2.6 RURAL - URBAN INTERACTION

A major cause of the rural out-migration in Bangladesh has been the urban-based policy and the transfer of resources from the rural to the urban areas. The urban bias in planning which was a characteristic feature of the British period (cf. ETTIENNE 1977) survived in the later period and resulted in the unbalanced rural-urban relationship. This has, as in many other developing countries⁴⁴, dominated the development planning in Bangladesh and has actively contributed to the transfer of resources ('back wash' effects) from rural areas to the urban centers. The urban bias and concomitant transfer of resources in its turn has influenced the out migration of both the poor as well as the rich section of the population to the cities. The concentration of resources and decision making authorities in the urban areas, particularly in the capital city, has been an increasingly important phenomenon in Bangladesh. Financial resources, wherever they are mobilized from are ultimately transferred to the urban areas. This inevitably happens because decision making authorities and resource mobilizing machineries are mostly located in the urban areas and are controlled either by the urban elites or by their rural counterparts. As a result, the urban areas are gradually claiming a larger share of the resources than would be justified either by their relative population or by their relative contribution in the total resource generated (ALAMGIR 1978:116).

A basic reason of urban bias in Bangladesh was the option for growth pole policy by the planning authorities. At one time (particularly during the period of Pakistan) development was perceived in terms of Lewiss's bisectoral model (LEWISS 1955). It was thought that industrial development should precede the agricultural development. The economic growth which could thus be achieved in the industrial sector was supposed to spread out and generate regional development. In other words, the free operation of market forces was supposed to create 'ripple' or 'trickle down' effects and stimulate economic growth throughout the whole region⁴⁵. The implications of such policies are that investment should primarily be urban and industrial in nature. This should in turn lead to rural development, which should spread out from the growth pole. Although some progress was achieved in the industrial sector, its beneficial 'trickle down' effect has on the whole failed to materialize. In contrast, the 'back wash' effects were more pronounced. Moreover, during the 1950's and 1960's, the provincial government of erstwhile East Pakistan was forced to follow the central governments extremely discriminating substitution policy whose aim was to favour the industry at any cost (VYLDER 1982:25). In contrast, the agricultural sector was neglected, favouring the import intensive urban sector. Fiscal policies mainly benefited industries and urban activities at the expense of agriculture. Moreover, investments were mostly done in the manufacturing industries in West Pakistan. These development strategies certainly brought about some improvements in the

⁴⁴ For an overview of adverse effects of growth pole policy and urban bias in various Third World countries see CONROY 1973; SANTOS 1975.

⁴⁵ For more on these topics see UNWIN 1989.

industrial sector, but it failed to give any solution to the large number of surplus labour in the agricultural sector. When Bangladesh as an independent country came into being, the rural-urban inequalities continued. Although in the post liberation period increasing emphasis has been put on the agricultural sector⁴⁶, in reality the situation was just the reverse. The net transfer of resources was in the opposite direction, i. e. from rural to the urban areas. The different channels through which resource is transferred from the rural to the urban areas, were the adverse terms in exchange relations, banking net work, taxation of peasant etc. An important way by which resource was transferred to urban centers was the remittance of cash and manpower from the village. The peasants whose children were residing in the cities for the purpose of education received remittances from their parents (see ISLAM 1986:56-57). The most unfortunate event is that these children of the peasants, who get their education at the cost of the villages, in most cases stay back in the city. Thus, the urban areas get skilled manpower, for whose development the villages pay.

Due to the negligence of rural sector and concentration of power and politics in the urban centers, resources are being mobilized and concentrated mainly in the urban sector. These are reflected by the increasing facilities in health, education and employment in the large cities, especially in the capital city. Moreover, there are several other facilities which are enjoyed mainly by the urban residents, particularly by those who live in large urban centers. An example of this is the food subsidy system (also called "Food Rationing System"). In this system foodstuffs such as grains (rice, wheat), sugar and oil, which are supplied largely by foreign donors, are distributed at subsidized prices. The beneficiaries are the holders of permanent ration cards⁴⁷ and the "Priority Groups"⁴⁸. The food subsidy system operates in the rural areas, too. It is called "Modified Ration System". The beneficiaries in this system, however, are entitled to receive only one half of the ration received by the urban dwellers. Furthermore, due to various technical difficulties like insufficient distribution system, corruption etc., the real amount of food which ultimately reaches the rural areas is very negligible and it covers only a small range of the rural poor. Thus, in actuality the effectiveness of the "Modified Ration System" is very low (see VYLDER 1982:32-35). For rural population, these are all valid grounds to move to the cities, so that they can take a share of these. The implications of these are, however, different for various sections of people. While for rich sections of population it denotes an opening of new avenues and more luxurious lifestyle, for the poor it primarily represents a survival strategy.

The discussion carried out so far has clearly revealed some crucial aspects of rural-urban migration in Bangladesh. It has mainly illustrated the process of impoverishment which forces

⁴⁶ Which is reflected in the first and second five year plans.

⁴⁷ All people of the six largest cities, who have been living there since before 1974, were allotted ration cards. The holders of this cards get foodstuffs once a week from dealers at a price that is almost 50 per cent lower than the market price.

⁴⁸ "Priority Groups" include members of the armed forces, government officers, students residing in hostels and employees in large enterprises.

poor people to move out of the villages and concentrate in the urban centers. It has also indicated that the process of underdevelopment has different undertone for various economic groups. So far the direction and volume of the migration flows are concerned, it shows a considerable degree of variation. All urban areas are not equally attractive and people are not supposed to move to all urban places in the same intensity. To shed some more light on this issue, we shall discuss in the following chapter the differential rates and trends of urbanization and the direction and intensity of internal migration in Bangladesh.

3. MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION IN BANGLADESH

3.1 THE LEVEL OF URBANIZATION

Despite the fact that Bangladesh has an old history of urbanization, which dates back to the ancient and medieval period (see KHAN 1955), the level of urbanization in Bangladesh remains still low (see table 14). The traditional urban centers of Bengal, which were once the foci of trade, administration and culture, gradually lost their importance in the British colonial period and the number of population living in these urban centers declined. The urbanization process in this part of Bengal stagnated or declined during the British period. The reasons of low urbanization in East Bengal during the British period was mainly a result of the colonial government's policies to concentrate trade, administration and industries in Calcutta. It may also be attributed to the destruction of indigenous industries in East Bengal (described in chapter 2.3). The process of urbanization in this region gained some impetus after 1951. Concentration of large number of refugees from India was a main reason for this. The rate of urbanization was, however, not significant till the end of sixties and it gained particular momentum in the post liberation period (after 1971).

Table 14: Population in Urban Areas

Country	Year	Population (%)
Bangladesh	1985	18.0
Burma	1983	23.9
India	1986	25.4
Korea	1985	65.4
Malaysia	1980	37.2
Pakistan	1986	28.2
Sri Lanka	1981	21.5
Japan	1985	76.7

Sources: UN 1988a:177-79; Bangladesch 1989:23

Figure 10 shows that over a long period of four decades (1911-1951) the change in the percentage of urban population was very insignificant. At the beginning of this century less than 3 per cent of the population of the area which constitutes present Bangladesh were living in urban places. It increased to 4.34 per cent in 1951. Notable change in the number of urban

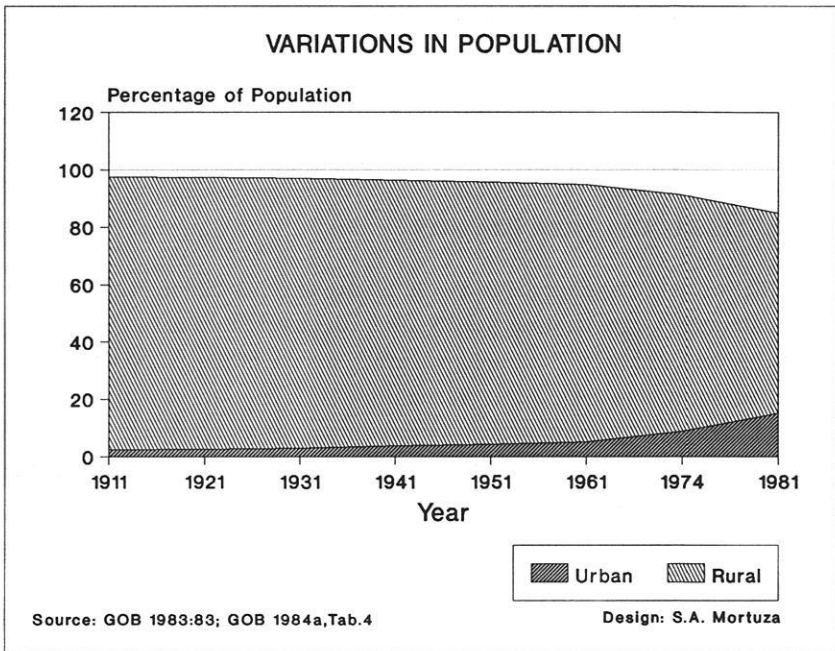


Figure 10: Variations in Rural and Urban Population in Bangladesh

population was observed for the first time between 1961-74. The number of population living in urban areas increased from 2.6 million in 1961 to 6.2 million in 1974, an increase of 137.56 per cent. Between 1974 and 1981, the population of the urban areas almost doubled. This was for the first time in recent history of this country, that such a spectacular change in urbanization could be achieved. While the increase between 1951 and 1961 was mainly a result of migration of Moslem population from India, the later is claimed to have been mainly due to migration from rural areas (KHAN 1982). In 1974, about 9 per cent of the population were living in 108 urban centers. The absolute number of population living in the urban places increased to 13.2 million (15.0 per cent of the total) in 1981 and 18.2 million (18.0 per cent) in 1985.

It is important to note that since the beginning of this century, the growth rate of urban population has always been higher than that of the rural population (figure 11). Only in the decades 1911-21 and 1941-51, the growth rates of urban population slightly decreased. The relatively slower rate of growth during the 1911-21 decade is mainly attributed to the plague epidemic in 1921, which resulted in a large scale depopulation of the urban areas. The later was perhaps due to several reasons like Bengal famine of 1943, Second World War and partition of India in 1947. Between 1961-74 the urban population grew at an average annual rate

of 6.70 per cent. Comparatively, the rate of growth of rural population with 2.33 per cent (annual) was much slower (CHAUDHURY 1980:5). The growth rates of urban population increased substantially in the later period¹. It is difficult to predict the future levels of urbanization. Estimates, however, suggest that with the anticipated rate of growth, urban population of the country could increase to almost 25 million or 22 per cent of the total population by 1990². Compared to other countries in the region, this level of urbanization is still not very high. This should, however, be clarified that the low level of urbanization persists because the overall population of the country, and particularly the rural population also grows at a considerably high rate. Anyhow, if the absolute number of population living in the urban areas is considered, it appears to be quite significant.

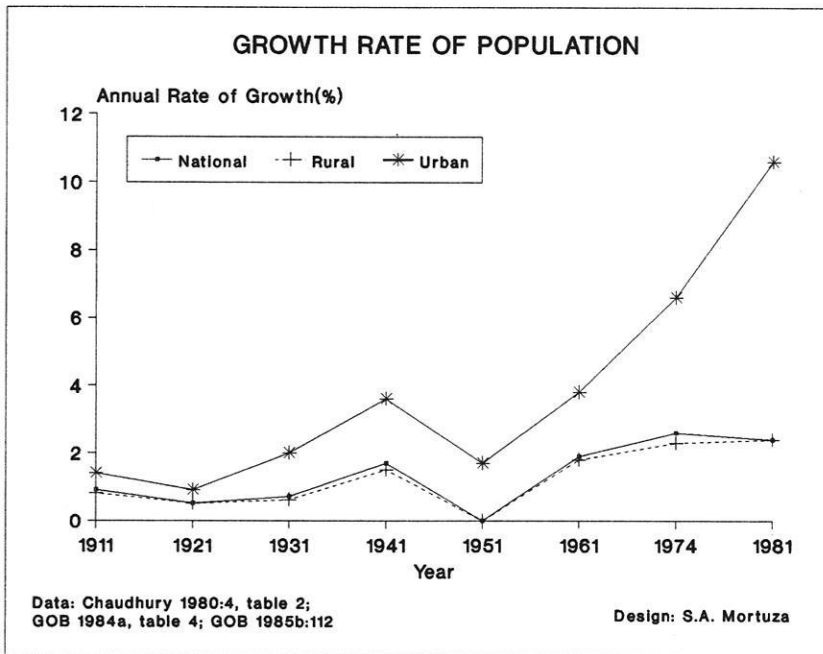


Figure 11: Growth Rate of Population by Region in Bangladesh

- ¹ The estimated rate of growth of urban population in 1981 was more than 10 per cent (GOB 1984a).
- ² Projections on the basis of 1961-81 trends suggest that by 1990, 29.6 million or 26 per cent of the total population would live in urban places (UDD 1984).

3.2 TRENDS IN URBANIZATION

A characteristic feature of the urbanization in Bangladesh has been the concentration of urban population in a few large cities. Although the situation in Bangladesh satisfies the conditions that help to sustain a primate city³, the trends in urbanization in the country have been different. Similar to various other countries in South Asia (see UN/ESCAP 1983; also BURKI 1973; BOSE 1975), in Bangladesh too, a few major cities keep on growing simultaneously at a relatively higher rate (see CHAUDHURY 1980). At the beginning of the present century, there were 48 urban places in Bangladesh. It increased to 63 in 1951, to 78 in 1961 and 108 in 1974 (see table 15). In the inter-census period 1974-81 there has been a threefold increase in the number of urban places. In 1981, there were 383 places which were designated as urban⁴ (UDD 1984). It clearly indicates the phenomenal increase in the number of urban places in the recent period. It should, however, be noted here that the increase in the number of urban places in the last decade mainly resulted due to the change in the definition of urban centre in 1981 census. A more significant fact is revealed by the changing pattern in the number of urban places of given size. Table 15 shows that between 1901 and 1974, the number of all the urban places with a population of more than 10,000 was increasing, while the smaller urban places (with a population below 5,000) showed a decreasing trend in their number. Since the later part of sixties, spectacular changes took place in the number of large cities. The number of cities having a population of 100,000 or more were only 2 in 1901. It remained constant till 1951 and then within a decade the number rose to 4 (in 1961). In 1974 the number of such places increased to 6. At the beginning of the present decades (in 1981), 15 urban places in Bangladesh had a population of more than 100,000 (GOB 1983). Among these, two cities, namely Dhaka, the capital and Chittagong, the Port city in the south-east, had populations more than 1 million. But only before two decades there was no million city in Bangladesh and even a decade ago there was only one.

This profile of growth in urban places suggests that in Bangladesh, the medium and large size cities have been growing more significantly than the smaller urban places. In a study on urbanization in Bangladesh, KHAN (1982) confirms that due to various reasons, the relatively larger urban centers have been growing more rapidly than the smaller ones. In many cases the smaller urban areas were experiencing a decline in their growth. Table 16 shows that during the last decades, there was an increasing concentration of urban population in a few large cities. For instance, in 1951, 34 per cent of the urban population were concentrated in the two cities with a population of more than 100,000. Two decades later, more than half of the total urban population lived in six such urban places. Of the total increase of urban population

³ These are the conditions such as a large number of population squeezed in a small area with high growth rate, low per capita income, agricultural export-based economy and a colonial past (JEFFERSON 1939; LINSKY 1965).

⁴ With a population of 5000 and more.

Table 15: Urban Places by Size and Census Years (1901-1974)

Distribution of Urban Places

Size of Places (in terms of population)	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1974
Total number of urban places	(48) 100 %	(48) 100 %	(50) 100 %	(58) 100 %	(59) 100 %	(63) 100 %	(78) 100 %	(108) 100 %
> 100,000	(2) 4.16 %	(2) 4.16 %	(2) 4.0 %	(2) 3.44 %	(2) 3.39 %	(2) 3.17 %	(4) 5.12 %	(6) 5.55 %
> 50,000 < 100,000	-	-	-	-	(2) 3.39 %	(2) 3.17 %	(5) 6.41 %	(14) 12.96 %
> 25,000 < 50,000	-	-	(5) 10.0 %	(7) 12.06 %	(13) 22.03 %	(14) 22.22 %	(15) 19.23 %	(23) 21.29 %
> 10,000 < 25,000	(21) 43.75 %	(23) 47.91 %	(20) 40.0 %	(21) 36.2 %	(20) 33.9 %	(20) 31.74 %	(23) 29.48 %	(49) 45.37 %
> 5,000 < 10,000	(15) 31.25 %	(13) 27.08 %	(13) 26.0 %	(17) 29.31 %	(19) 32.2 %	(18) 28.57 %	(21) 26.92 %	(12) 11.11 %
< 5,000	(10) 20.83 %	(10) 20.83 %	(10) 20.0 %	(11) 18.96 %	(3) 5.08 %	(7) 11.11 %	(10) 12.82 %	(4) 3.7 %

Source: CHAUDHURY 1980:7, table 3

Table 16: Percentage Distribution of Urban Population, by Size of Place and Census Years (1901-1974)

Size of Place (in terms of population)	Distribution of Urban Population							
	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1951	1961	1974
> 100,000	33.57	34.55	33.52	34.44	33.85	34.39	45.86	57.26
> 50,000 < 100,000	-	-	-	-	7.43	12.01	11.18	15.55
> 25,000 < 50,000	-	-	14.66	19.62	28.80	27.14	20.60	12.85
> 10,000 < 25,000	47.67	49.73	37.12	31.31	20.71	17.88	14.58	12.66
> 5,000 < 10,000	14.36	11.40	10.26	10.91	8.66	7.14	6.35	1.53
< 5,000	4.38	4.31	4.43	3.91	0.54	1.42	1.42	0.14
TOTAL	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: CHAUDHURY 1980:12, table 5.

between 1961 and 1974, Dhaka city alone accounted for 31 per cent. The remaining 107 accounted for only 37.5 per cent of the total growth (CHAUDHURY op.cit.).

The dominant role of larger urban places becomes even more evident when we trace the recent patterns of population growth in different urban centers. Figure 12 reveals that in relation to other urban places three cities namely, Dhaka, Chittagong and Khulna were convincingly more dominant. Among these, Dhaka was again the most dominant one. As a matter of fact, these three cities have been playing a very important role in the urbanization process since several decades. OBAIDULLAH (1967) notes that since the beginning of 1960's Dhaka has been attracting comparatively more people than other urban places, because of its importance as provincial capital. Another vital reason was that much of the industrial and other development activities were going on around Dhaka and Narayanganj⁵. The city of Chittagong with its port and railway workshop also attracted a lot of migrants from various districts as well as from outside the country. Similarly Khulna, another important port city with industrial concentration, also grew rapidly through the influx of population from other districts. The important role of these cities has continued in the recent period. The persistence of their rapid growth in the last decade is an evidence of this. Figure 12 further indicates that compared to these three large cities the other urban places which could be categorized in the next rank, were much smaller in size (in terms of population). Although quite a few of them⁶ had spectacular growth of population between 1974 and 1981, in terms of total number of population these were far behind the large cities. It is amazing to note that by 1981, nearly six million people⁷ (which was half of the total urban population) were concentrated in three major cities. Dhaka alone with a population of 3.4 million was three times larger than the next big city Chittagong. In the same year, almost 75 per cent of all urban inhabitants lived in places with 20,000 or more population (UDD 1984:17).

From all these evidences, it becomes quite apparent that throughout the present century and particularly in the recent decades, large cities have been dominating the urban scene.

⁵ A river port in the vicinity of Dhaka, which is the main centre for jute trade and industry in Bangladesh.

⁶ For instance, Sylhet, Rangpur, Jessore and Barisal (see figure 12)

⁷ Almost the total urban population of 1974.

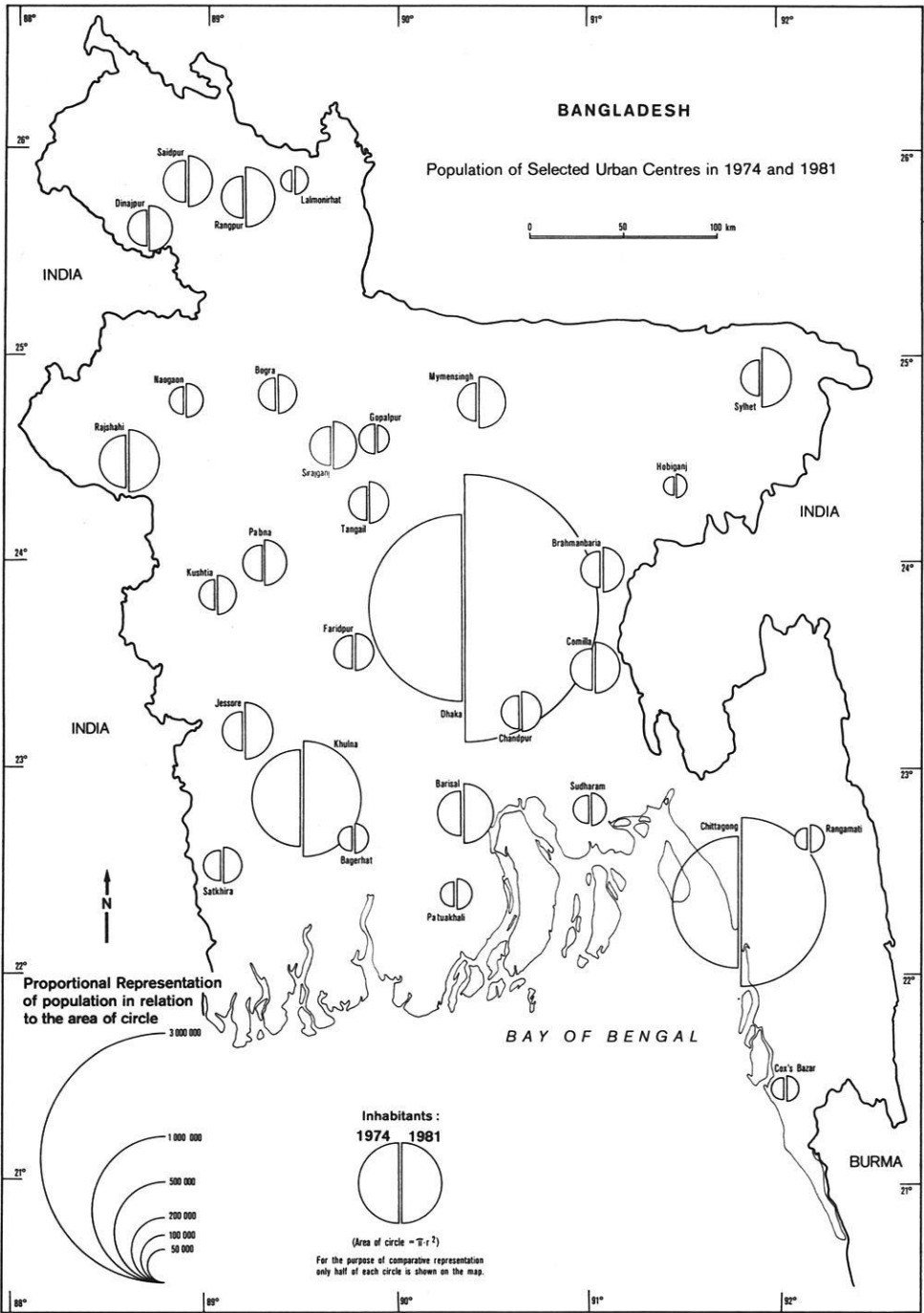


Figure 12: Population of Selected Urban Centres in Bangladesh

3.3 COMPONENTS OF GROWTH

The increase in the level of urbanization is supposed to be a net effect of several processes. These are namely, a) the natural increase, b) net migration and c) creation or reclassification of new areas as urban (DAVIS 1969). The degree to which these components contribute to the urban population growth varies among different countries. Nevertheless, in several south Asian countries, rural to urban migration is considered to be the decisive factor which has contributed significantly to the rapid urbanization⁸ (SKELDON 1984). The validity of this notion in Bangladesh context has been confirmed by several authors (see e. g. KHAN 1982). Indeed, the natural growth of the urban population has also played a role in this regard. Compared to these two components, reclassification had a minor role in the previous decades. Due to the changes in the definition of urban centres⁹ reclassification has presumably contributed more significantly in the recent period to the growth of urban population than in the earlier decades.

It has already been mentioned that since the beginning of 1960's there has been a significant difference between the growth rate of urban and rural population. As far as the natural growth rate is concerned, no eloquent difference could be observed till 1974. In this year, e.g., the urban rate was 3.2 and the rural one was 3 per cent (MUHAMMED 1974). The natural growth rate of the urban areas has decreased in the period thereafter (table 17). This trend conclusively indicate the decisive role of in-migration and reclassification in urban growth. It is, however, difficult to asses the relative role of these two components. Due to lack of precise data it is particularly difficult to evaluate the impact of changes in urban boundaries on urban growth. Nevertheless, KHAN (1982) notes that during the 1961-74 period creation of new urban areas or the reclassification of rural areas as urban accounted for 21 per cent of the increase. While the contribution of natural increase was slightly more than 29 per cent, rural-urban migration is supposed to have accounted for 50 per cent of the increase. KHAN (ibid.:383) further emphasizes that rural-urban migrants and the population of the newly created urban areas constituted almost 50 per cent of the total urban population. During 1961-74 period in-migration was the main factor of population growth in the three large cities. For instance, 74 per cent of the population increase in Dhaka, 43 per cent in Chittagong and 73 percent in Khulna were due to in-migration. Annexation contributed to 8 per cent of the pop-

⁸ In a more recent study, it was found that out of the total 25 countries of South, South-East and East Asia and the Pacific, migration contributed to more than 50 per cent of the growth of urban population in 11 countries, and natural increase played a smiliar role in 14 other countries (ISLAM 1985).

⁹ In the census of 1974, urban places were defined as areas having municipality (*Paurashavas*), a town committee (*Shahar committee*) or cantonment board. These were areas having a population of at least 5,000 persons, mostly in non-agricultural activities. In addition other areas having town committee, areas with public utilities such as road, electricity, water supply, sanitary arrangements etc. or areas having population with high literacy rates has also been considered as urban irrespective of their population number. But in 1981 census all *Thana* head quarters, irrespective of the area and level of urbanization, as well as *Hats*, a weekly market place and *Bazars* having electricity are considered as urban (GOB 1983:113)

ulation growth in Dhaka and 29 per cent in Chittagong. For other big towns, in-migration was less important. In the above mentioned period several urban centres were losing population due to out-migration to larger cities (ibid:384).

Although several authors claim that the role of migration in the urbanization process of South Asian countries could have been over-emphasized (LIPTON 1977; PRESTON 1979), one can not deny that migration has at least an important secondary effect on the urban population growth. This implies that a substantial proportion of the natural increase is made up of the children born to migrants (SKELDON 1984:19). Thus, if not the principal component, migration still remains a major component of urban growth. These are, however, yet to be investigated in Bangladesh. On the basis of previous experiences and available studies, we can only presume that rural-urban migration has been and will remain in near future a main factor (either as a direct or as a secondary component) of the urban growth in Bangladesh.

Table 17: Natural Growth Rate by Rural-Urban Residence

Area	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
National	2.32	2.31	2.26	2.27	2.17
Rural	2.31	2.35	2.41	2.32	2.32
Urban	2.24	1.76	1.60	1.96	1.74

Source: GOB 1985a:146, Table 3.24

3.4 PATTERNS OF INTERNAL MIGRATION IN BANGLADESH

At the very outset it should be elucidated that due to insufficient data and lack of studies, it is extremely difficult to comment on the patterns of internal migration in Bangladesh. The census data show only some general patterns regarding the volume and direction of migration within the country and fail to render specific information about the origin or destination of the migrants. Nevertheless, on the basis of a few empirical studies and census data, some general comments can be made regarding pattern of internal migration and its dimension in the country.

In general, the people of Bangladesh seem to be less mobile, compared to those in the neighbouring countries. Available data show that during the early part of last decade notable number of people (both in absolute and relative terms) in India, Pakistan or Sri Lanka moved from their birth place to other areas (see table 18). Compared to these, the relative number of internal migrants in Bangladesh was much less (at least in relation to the total population of the country).

Table 18: Number of Internal Lifetime Migrants in Selected Countries

Country		Number of Migrants	Percentage of Total Population
Bangladesh (1974)	A	2,831,432	4.0
	B	1,327,563	1.9
India (1971)	A	157,404,964	29.2
	B	53,808,719	10.0
	C	18,628,309	3.5
Pakistan	A	4,560,150	8.3
	B	1,981,416	3.6
Sri Lanka (1971)	A	3,304,900	26.3
	B	1,901,680	15.2

Notes:

BANGLADESH (1974 Census; de jure; place of birth data; base unit = Division)

A Intra-division and Inter-division migrants

B Inter-division migrants

Source: GOB 1977b

INDIA (1971 Census; de facto; place of birth data, base unit = District)

A Intra-district, Inter-district and Inter-state migrants

B Inter-district and Inter-state migrants

C Inter-state migrants

Source: GOI 1977, table D-1

PAKISTAN (1973; Housing, Economic and Demographic Survey; de jure; place of birth data; base unit = District)

A Inter-district and Inter-province migrants

B Inter-province migrants

Source: GOP 1973, table 12

SRI LANKA (1971 Census; de facto; place of birth data; base unit = District)

A Intra-district and Inter-district migrants

(against place of usual residence)

B Inter-district migrants

(against place of actual residence)

Source: GOSL 1978, tables 4.3 and 4.6

Table 18 shows that while the total number of migrants (in Bangladesh) in 1974 was 2.8 million, the number of inter-division migrants was less than half of it. This indicates that majority of the movers were 'short-distance'¹⁰ migrants. The predominance of 'short-distance' moves in Bangladesh is also confirmed from other sources. OBAIDULLAH (1967) in his

¹⁰ For the convenience of data interpretation, we are considering the 'inter-division' migration as 'long-distance' migration, and 'intra-division' migration as 'short-distance' migration. This is also reasonable, because the inter-division migrants should usually travel longer distances than the intra-division migrants. Although there may be some exceptions to these usual trends.

analysis of internal migration in Bangladesh emphasizes that in the beginning of the present century majority of the migrants moved between contiguous districts. After the division of India, the number of persons moving between non-contiguous districts and from outside the province (Bangladesh) increased considerably. This was mainly due to the inflow of Moslem migrants from India. In the decade of sixties, migration from India gradually decreased, but movements between non-contiguous districts increased during the decade ending. These trends in internal migration reveals that long-distance movements in the country are comparatively more recent. It is generally assumed that long-distance movements are more urban-oriented than the short-distance movements (SKELDON 1984:12). It should, however, not be overlooked that there are several short-distance moves like circulatory movement or commuting, which may also be urban oriented. Yet, there is considerable controversy as to which type of internal-migration predominates in Bangladesh. While some authors claim that rural to urban migration is by far the most important type (see STOECKEL et.al 1972; CHAUDHURY/CURLIN 1975), the census data indicate the predominance of rural to rural migration. According to government statistics, 47.2 per cent of all inter-division migrants in 1974 moved from rural to rural areas. Compared to that rural to urban migrants were 40.2 per cent of the total inter-division migrants (GOB 1977b).

As already mentioned, the inter-division or long-distance migrations are mainly urban-oriented and short-distance moves (which have larger volume, see table 18) are generally between the rural areas. Therefore, it can be reasonably assumed that in terms of volume the rural to rural migration predominates in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, it is not to deny that transfer of population to the urban centers, especially to large cities, is assuming an important role in Bangladesh in various contexts. Available data show that compared to India and Pakistan, Bangladesh has "higher proportion of migrants in the rural to urban and the urban to urban categories" (SKELDON 1984:26). It is also to be emphasized that the long-distance flows are generally from less developed rural areas to the more developed urban areas (see OBAIDULLAH 1967; CHAUDHURY/CURLIN 1975; KRISHNAN/ROWE 1978; CHAUDHURY 1978). In this regard KHAN (1982:393) states that "disparities in economic and social opportunities between urban and rural areas were the main factors for the high rate of urban in-migration. The large cities of Bangladesh offer more opportunities to potential in-migrants than do small urban centers".

In terms of long-distance flow of population, the urban areas are found to receive population mainly from the rural areas. It can be gleaned from figure 13 that out of the total migrants which the urban areas receive, more than three fourth stem from the rural areas. In contrast, the rural areas receive only a negligible percentage (3.3 %) of migrants from the urban areas. Even the percentage of population that the urban areas send out to the rural areas is quite low (12.6 %). It obviously indicates that return migration from the urban areas is still very insignificant in the whole process. It is also noticed that an overwhelming number of people move out from various urban places into other urban areas. It denotes the signifi-

cance of population movement between the urban areas. As a matter of fact, migration among urban areas has been gradually taking a more important role in Bangladesh. People, however, prefer to move from smaller urban areas to the larger urban centers. This trend of movements is clearly reflected in the growth patterns of urban centers of various size. It has already been shown in the previous section that over the last few decades, the smaller urban places have been declining while growth persists in the medium and large urban places.

Sofar the outflow of population from the rural areas is concerned, it is noticed that a significant proportion of population leave the villages for distant urban destinations (see figure 13). All these facts convincingly outline the important role of rural to urban migration in the whole internal migration process in Bangladesh.

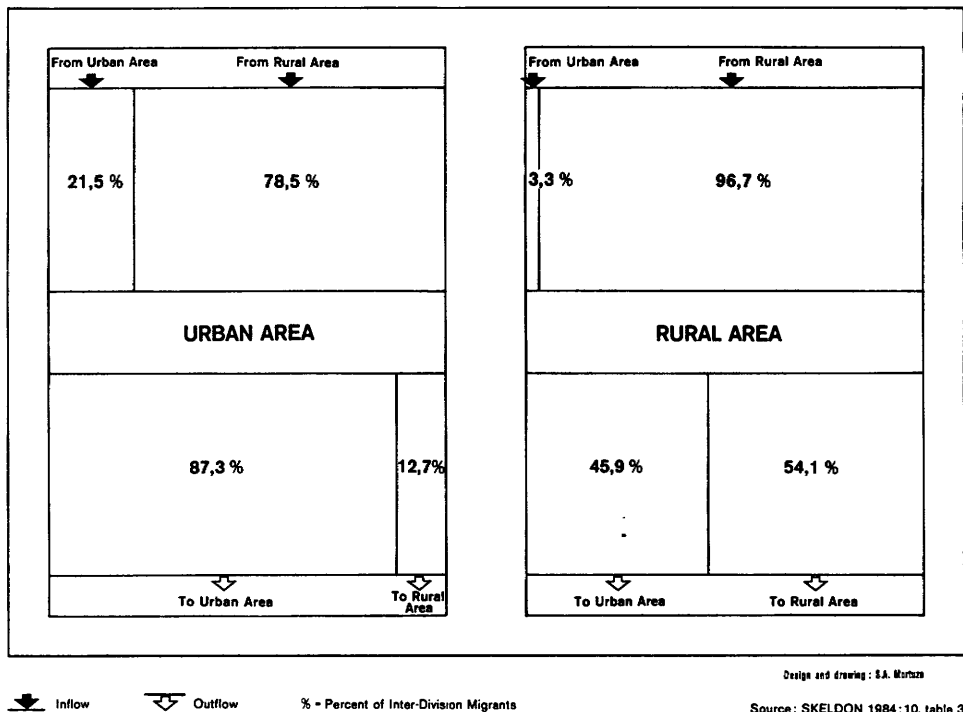


Figure 13: Flow of Population in Bangladesh

3.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS

In various studies of migration in the Third World countries the selective nature of migrants in terms of age, sex, education and occupation has been frequently documented (see e. g. ZACHARIAH 1966; SIMMONS et al. 1977). The selective nature of migrants is supposed to reflect basically the economic motives; though the non-economic factors are not altogether rejected. In Bangladesh, however, both types of factors are found to influence the types of migrant. It should be once more mentioned that due to insufficient data it is not possible to figure out accurately the types of migrants for the whole country. I shall, therefore, discuss here mainly the results of a few empirical studies and compare those with my findings in the next chapter.

The census data in Bangladesh markedly indicate the preponderance of male migrants over female¹¹. The sex-differentials of net migrations are found to vary among different districts. In one of the studies, KRISHNAN/ROWE (1978) found that between 1961 and 1974 the districts of Dhaka, Chittagong and Rajshahi received more males than females; the other receiving districts had a more net in-flow of females than males. Among the districts who were losing¹², Patuakhali, Mymensingh, Sylhet and Chittagong Hill Tracts had more number of net outflow of males. Except these districts and also Khulna, which showed less sex-differential in this respect, in other districts with negative net migration the out-migrants were mostly females. Similarly, in the study of CHAUDHURY/CURLIN (1975) a higher proportion of males were found to leave their villages in search of occupational opportunities. Most of the male out-migrants were found to move towards urban areas. There were, however, various categories of people with different motives. The majority of the migrant stream constituted of job-seekers followed by those who moved for 'better living'¹³ and/or as dependants. The male migrants who made primarily long-distance moves to the urban areas were selected in the young adult ages (i. e. 20-24 years). In contrast, the females were mainly short-distance migrants in the age groups 10-19; and they moved mainly between the rural areas as dependants. It implies the predominance of marriage migration of females in the rural areas. It is assumed that due to the traditional socioeconomic structures, single migration of females, particularly to the urban areas is more restricted. Even the married males, who go to the urban places in search of 'economic opportunities' are supposed to leave their families behind in the villages at the first instance, and fetch them only at a later stage. The authors further claim that the urban-ward migrants emanate from two distinct economic classes, the economically poorest and the economically richest families of the rural community (CHAUDHURY 1978; RIBOULEAU 1983). The migration motivation of the people of these two different sections

¹¹ In 1974 census, among the total number of out migrants from different districts, 57.64 per cent were male and 42.36 per cent were female (GOB 1985b:137, tables 2.68 & 2.69).

¹² Meaning that the net migration was negative.

¹³ This may be interpreted in terms of urban amenities, which offer better educational, health and employment opportunities.

is considered to differ widely. CHAUDHURY (op.cit.) claims that migrants from rich families are supposed to travel longer distances than the poor migrants and are supposed to have better possibilities at the destination, because of their better educational background, skill and better contacts. RIBOULEAU (op.cit.) emphasizes that rich people in the rural areas generally come to the city to improve their living standard, to get better education and to participate in the 'modern sector' of economy. Their motive is to change their life-style in the city, which offers them a higher social status. To the other, the poor urban migrants are 'pushed out' of their villages due to several reasons like modernization of agriculture, introduction of new varieties of crops (e. g. High Yielding Varieties, HYV) which has mainly benefited the rich farmers (see Chapter 2.4). The author further claims that frequently the burden of credit with interest compels the poor peasants to sale their last resort (the small landholding) and become landless (see Chapter 2.4). Due to enormous poverty in the rural areas poor people desperately attempt to improve their economic conditions in the urban areas. In many cases, the elderly members of the families stay in the village and send the young adult members to the urban areas. For this section of people the principal objective in the urban areas is to earn money.

The discussion carried out so far has revealed several aspects of migration and urbanization in Bangladesh. It has shown that despite a glorious past in urbanization, its level in the country is still low. Among others, the slow rate of urban growth in the past century is to be attributed to the discriminating policies of the colonial rule. It has further illustrated that relatively rapid rate of urbanization was achieved since early 1970's. According to estimates, the country will have significant number of urban population by the end of this century. so far the present trends suggests, most of this urban population will live in the large cities. The discussion has further revealed that till now large cities in Bangladesh has been growing at a much faster rate. Among these the growth of Dhaka, the capital city, has been most spectacular. It has been emphasized that in the growth of urban population, the role of rural-urban migration has been very significant.

The different evidences presented in the foregoing chapter has shows that in the recent period, long-distance or urban ward migration has significantly increased. Several studies indicate that these moves are generally from less developed rural areas to the more developd urban areas. In other words, economic motives has been the most important factor in this type of movement. An interesting aspect which has been noticed is that generally two distinct groups of people migrate to the cities: The richest and the poorest from the rural areas. The migrant stream is, however, dominated by the rural poor.

To get a closer view of the migration process, its causes and consequences, facts are now being presented in the case study, which follows in the next chapter.

4. MIGRANTS IN DHAKA CITY - A CASE STUDY

4.1 THE STUDY AREA

The area of study is Dhaka city, the capital of Bangladesh. Different reasons which led the author to select this particular city for the purpose of present study have already been described in chapter 1. The following section deals with the delimitation of the study area, its location, a short history and description of the main features of the city.

4.1.1 Delimitation of the Study Area

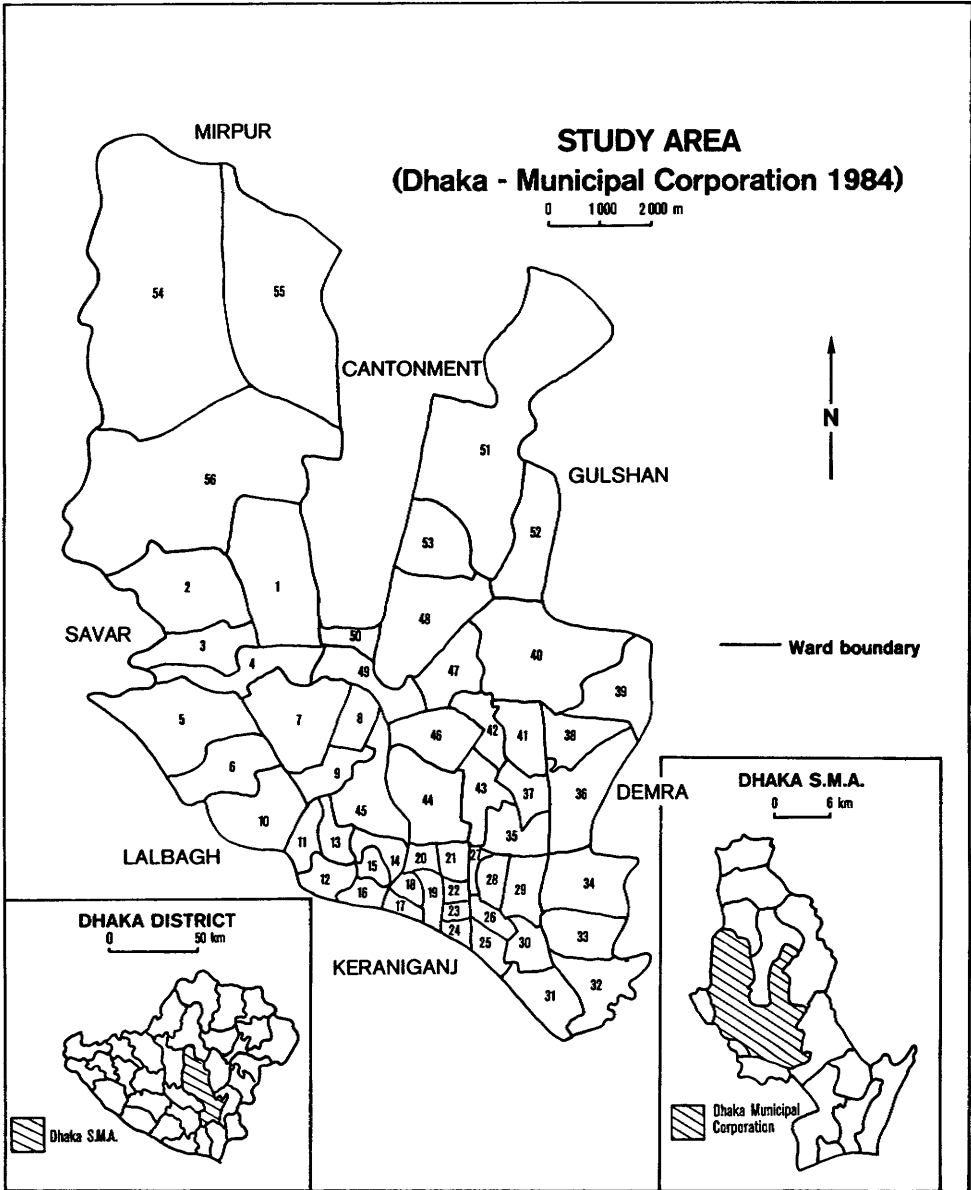
The present study is limited to the area of Dhaka city, which comprises 56 wards¹, including Gulshan and Mirpur municipalities² (see figure 14). It should be mentioned that Gulshan (ward 19), Mirpur (ward 54) and two other municipalities, namely Tongi and Savar in the north and north-west of Dhaka city, were small townships with own administration. Since 1984, Mirpur and Gulshan municipalities were merged with Dhaka Municipal Corporation (DMC). Due to the rapid growth of the city, several new areas were annexed to existing city area. In this context Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) introduced the concept of Statistical Metropolitan Area (SMA), according to which the SMA constitutes Dhaka municipality (including Mirpur and Gulshan), Dhaka cantonment Board, Tongi (a municipality in the north) and Narayanganj (a relatively smaller river port in the south) as well as 12 other townships with their adjoining sub-urban areas. However, for convenience, only Dhaka Municipal Corporation boundary (including Mirpur and Gulshan municipalities), as per 1984 will be considered as the city area in the present study.

4.1.2 Location and Short History of Dhaka City

Dhaka is located on the southern part of the river terrace "Madhupur-tract", formed during the Pleistocene period. River Burhiganga forms the southern boundary of the city. The city has a flat surface and major part of it lies between 6-7 meter above sea level. Since the normal flood level is 5.5 meter, main part of the city remains above flood water during mon-

¹ Smallest electoral unit of the municipality. It is managed by a council (*Ward Parishad*) (SAA 1985).

² Urban areas declared and administered as municipalities under the "*Paurashava Act*" 1977. Currently there are 80 municipalities in the country (SAA 1985).



Source : S A A 1985 : 97, 103

Figure 14: Map of Dhaka Municipal Corporation

soon period (June to September). Being the most centrally located city in the country, it is the focus of business, industry, administration, education and commerce. The origin of the city is lost in obscurity. Records indicate, however, that during the Mughal dynasty from AD 1608 to 1706 the city experienced its golden age. During this period considerable development was achieved in terms of trade, administration and infrastructure. Around 1640 the city had a population of 200,000. Before the Moghuls, Dhaka was the nucleus for Hindu craftsmen like weavers (*Tanti*), conch shell-cutters (*Shankharis*) and others. It was bounded by Burhiganga river in the south and Dholai Khal³ in the north. During this period the town consisted of a few market centers and residential quarters.

During the early part of the seventeenth century Europeans started to arrive in Dhaka. The first of these were the Portuguese, followed by Dutch, French and British (around 1660), all of whom established factories near the water front. The Armenians and Greeks reached Dhaka in the eighteenth century. They were mainly traders.

The city has witnessed many vicissitudes in its history⁴. As already mentioned, it attained immense importance when the Moghul viceroy Islam Khan made it the capital of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and named it "Jahangir Nagar", after the Great Mughal emperor Jahangir in the year 1608. With the transfer of capital in Murshidabad (now in West Bengal) in 1717 the status of the city as capital came to an end. During the British rule (1764-1947) the city lost its importance as Calcutta forged ahead as the British capital of Imperial India. In 1906 Dhaka was again made the capital of Bengal and Assam on the initiative of Lord Curzon, after the historic division of Bengal. This status, however, did not last long. In 1911, the capital was again shifted to Calcutta.

Dhaka regained its importance only after 1947, when it became the capital of East Pakistan. Since then it experienced remarkable growth in area and population.

4.1.3 Area and Population

At the time of partition (in 1947) Dhaka was a small town with a university and a handful of industries. The city area at that time was only 31 sq. km. Immediately after 1947 there was a rapid increase in the city population. This was mainly due to the movement of large number of migrants from India to the new provincial capital. In the post-partition period, significant development in trade and industry was also achieved. Several new industries were established in Tejgaon, Hazaribagh and Postagola areas. Besides, a number of new shopping centers in different parts of the city came into being. Till 1961 the city area expanded to 72 sq. km. with a population of 556,713 (CHAUDHURY 1980:27). Growth of city population gained partic-

³ The canal system known as Dholai Khal was excavated in the early Mughal period for strategic reasons (see KARIM 1964:34).

⁴ For the history of Dhaka see TAIFOOR 1956; KARIM 1964; see also MAY 1987.

ular momentum in the intercensal period 1961-74. This is supposed to have been mainly due to the migration of large number of people from the rural areas (see CHAUDHURY 1980; SHANKLAND 1981(3); GOB 1985c). After 1974, the growth rate decreased slightly⁵. The estimated population in 1974 was 1.6 million (CHAUDHURY op. cit.). In the decade after liberation (1971-1981), Dhaka grew immensely both in area and population. In 1981, Dhaka municipal corporation had an area of 161 sq. km. having a population of 2.4 million (GOB 1985c). During the same period, the area of Dhaka SMA was 402 sq. km. with a population of 3.4 million. Extension of the city area has, however, taken place in the northern direction. Possibilities of extension in the south are rather restricted due to unfavorable topographic conditions. The areas south of river Burhiganga are low lands and are inundated during the monsoon period. Nevertheless, there have been efforts in the recent period to extend the city in south.

Dhaka is considered to be a city of migrants. Majority of the population now residing in the city are from the rural areas and are very poor or destitute. It has been shown in a study that the population of the urban areas of Dhaka district, which grew in the recent past due to net migration and its natural increase was at least three times larger than the growth due to natural increase (SHANKLAND 1981(3)). This trend is more applicable for the city area itself, where the migrants mostly concentrate. The rush of poor migrants in the city is evidenced alone by the high growth of squatters⁶ and floating population⁷ in the last decades. The existence of large number of poor people in the city can also be perceived from the fact that 85 per cent of city population are estimated to live below the "poverty" line of Taka 220 monthly household expenditure per capita, and 50 per cent are below an "extreme poverty line" of Taka 115 per capita per month (SHANKLAND 1981(2):8).

The age structure of the city population reflects clearly its high growth rate and youthfulness. According to 1981 census reports, more than 38 per cent of the population were in the age-group 0-14 years. So far the religious composition of the population is concerned, there have been enormous changes with time. Once a town of largely Hindu craftsmen has gradually been transferred into a city where around 94 per cent of the inhabitants are now Moslems. It can mainly be attributed to the gradual shift of Hindu families to India after 1947. Besides the Moslems and Hindus, there are also people from other religions, such as Christianity and Buddhism. Their percentages are, however, very insignificant.

⁵ The annual rate of growth between 1951-61 for Dhaka SMA was 5.63 per cent and it increased to 8.08 per cent between 1961-74. After 1974, the rate decreased to 7.26 per cent (GOB 1985c:XXXVI-XXXVII).

⁶ In a survey conducted in 1973 by the Center for Urban Studies (CUS), Dhaka University, the squatter population was estimated to be roughly 200,000, distributed in nearly 120 settlement clusters (ISLAM 1975/76:83). According to the United Nations World Housing Survey Statistics 1974, 18 per cent of the total city population were living in slums and squatters in Dhaka city. A more recent study indicates that in 1980, 25 to 30 per cent of the population of Dhaka were living in slums and squatters (SHANKLAND 1981(1):32).

⁷ In 1981 census, it was found that 3 per cent of the total population of Dhaka SMA were floating population. These were the persons enumerated in the specific census night (i.e., 5th March, 1981) in railway or launch stations, boats, open spaces (including footpaths), hotels, rest houses etc. (GOB 1985c:XXXVIII).

4.1.4 Functional Differentiation of the City

Throughout the whole of 18th and 19th century, Dhaka city was confined mainly within the old city core. The main expansion of the new city began in the middle of present century. Particularly from 1947 when it became the capital of East Pakistan, Dhaka began to spread. Several residential, administrative and commercial areas have been developed in the north and north-eastern directions. Besides, a significant number of industries have been established in different parts of the city. At this point it is worthwhile to mention that as in many other Third World cities the morphology of Dhaka presents a very complex social as well as spatial pattern, which makes it extremely difficult to discern clearly delineated units. Thus, one finds growth of small informal industries within a medium or low income residential area or low income living quarters within a commercial or administrative sector. However, on the basis of major functions, the present city area (study area) can be broadly classified into the following main characteristic zones (see figure 15).

a) Central Business District (CBD):

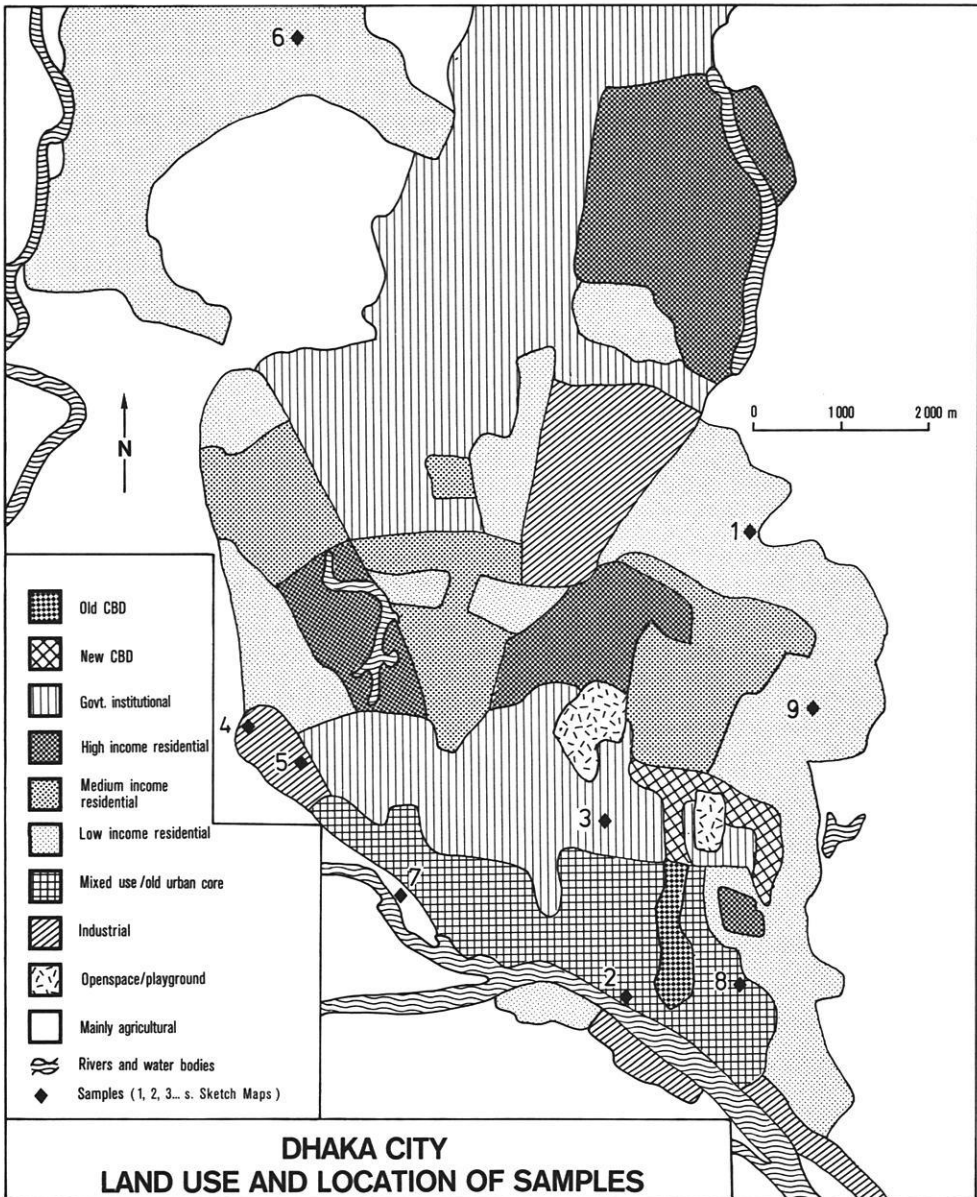
The north-south elongated CBD has two distinct zones namely, the old CBD in the south and the planned modern CBD in the north. The old CBD, which existed since long, is characterized by complex road patterns, deteriorating buildings and high population density. Comparatively, the modern CBD is less congested having wider roads and high rises. This part of the CBD started to grow after 1947 and has developed more rapidly in recent times. This modern CBD includes some of the major administrative, commercial and business offices as well as modern fashionable retail shops. Besides the CBD there are other commercial areas, spread along the main roads in the form of street oriented shopping ribbons or shopping centers.

b) Government Institutional/Administrative Areas:

There are two distinct administrative zones, one in the south, adjacent to the modern CBD extending eastward and the other in the northern part of the city. The southern zone consists of the main seats of higher education and civil administration. The northern zone, excluding cantonment (Defence), is relatively recent and contains the most modern buildings planned by foreign architects.

c) Residential Areas:

Several residential areas with a high, medium, low and mixed income can be identified in the city, at least three of which are planned residential areas, located on the east, west and northern part of the city. The other areas are either unplanned or planned but uncontrolled.



Source : SHANKLAND 1981 (1), Fig. 3.7 and Authors field investigation

Figure 15: Land Use of Dhaka City and Location of Samples from 1984 Survey

d) Areas of Mixed Use:

This is the area where land-use has no pure functional characteristics. It comprises the area on the southern periphery and is also known as "Old urban core". In this area a combination of residential and industrial or residential and commercial use of land is found to have developed side by side.

e) Industrial Areas:

There are at least two distinct industrial areas in the city. The unplanned industrial area on the south-west edge of the city is located amidst the medium to high density residential area with congested streets. Compared to this the other industrial area located in Tejgaon in the north is relatively new, modern and planned. This area is less congested and contains several industries of vital importance.

f) Bustees

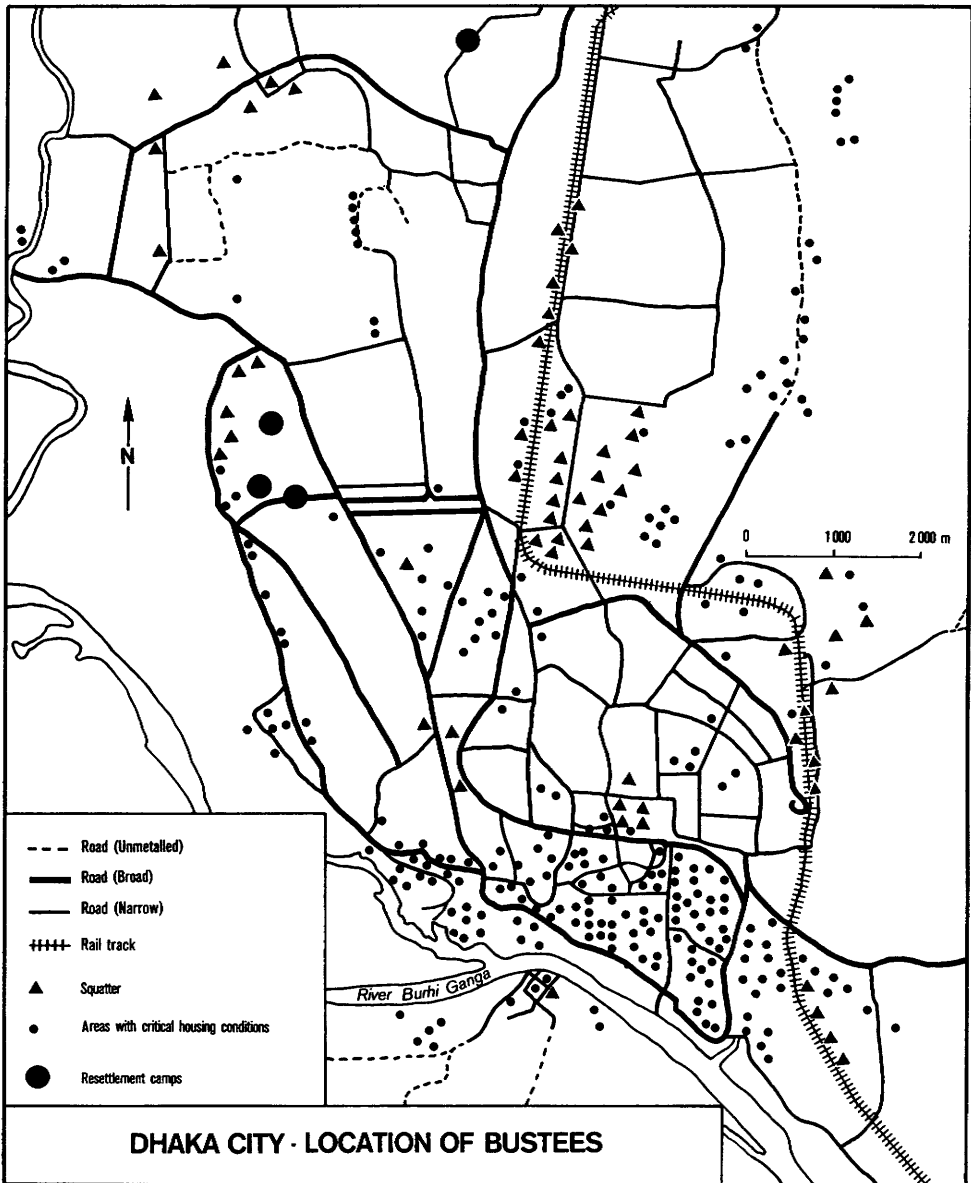
A notable feature of Dhaka city is the growth of authorized and unauthorized low cost structures (*Bustees*, see definition p. 17) scattered overall in the city. The mushroom growth of these settlements, which has resulted mainly due to the influx of migrants from different parts of the country, has been given special attention in the present study.

The *Bustees*, which include both slums and squatters (see definition p. 17) are common features in the city nowadays. With the increase of city population *Bustees* have also been growing rapidly. Some of these are of more recent origin (erected mainly after 1970's). At the same time there are others which are of very old origin. The CUS (1983:19) study reports that out of the 771 *Bustees* covered by this study about one third were raised after 1971. From the rest, some came into being in the late 1950's or 1960's while the others were of much older origin. Particularly the *Bustees* in the old part of the city are of very early origin.

Growth of squatters in the city is a relatively recent phenomenon. It emerged mainly after 1954, when a large number of rural population who lost their homes due to the unusual flood, came to Dhaka city as destitutes. Since then, the squatter population kept on growing (SULTANA 1984:6).

In Dhaka *Bustees* are indiscriminately distributed in the city. Nevertheless, the concentration is little higher in the southern part than in the northern. In the recent period new *Bustees* have been shooting up in the city peripheries (see figure 16).

There is no exact figure on the total number of population living in different slums and squatters. Estimates of different studies suggest that in the early 1980's some 800,000 population (about one third of the city's total population) were *Bustee*-dwellers (see CUS 1983; SHANKLAND 1981(1)). In reality the number could, however, be much higher. The land on which *Bustees* are raised may either have private, government or semi-government/autonomous ownership. In many cases, particularly in case of squatters, huts are put up on government land or on land with disputed ownership (SULTANA 1984:4). Most of these



Source : SHANKLAND 1981 (2), Fig. C.1,C.2

Figure 16: Distribution of Bustees in Dhaka City

are situated on low lying marshy areas and at the edges of railway lines or roads and close to the highly valued land. The physical environment of *Bustees* is characteristically very poor. The water supply is inadequate, sewerage and drainage facilities are almost absent and mostly there is no electricity. Even in those few *Bustees* which are located on relatively higher and flood-free land, the physical conditions are equally unsatisfactory.

Bustees are inhabited by poor people of rural origin (ISLAM 1975/76:83), who are mostly engaged in the informal sector (CUS 1983:72). These people prefer to live in areas which are close to their place of work and have at the same time low accommodation costs. Thus, two factors which basically determine the location of *Bustees* are nearness to the place of work and availability of vacant plots where huts can be raised with little investment. Therefore, the rents of *Bustee* houses are also relatively low. It, however, varies among different *Bustees*, depending on the living space available, its location as well as facilities.

The houses in the *Bustees* are makeshifts, built-up of tin, bamboo, thatch, scraps and polythene sheets. It is improbable that the poor *Bustee*-dwellers would own a piece of land in the city. But in a few cases people are found to own a small piece of land. These are generally inherited from their ancestors (CUS 1983:38). With a few exceptions most houses in *Bustees* are tenant occupant. In several instances people share a small room with friends or relatives for either a minimum or no rent. In squatter settlements most houses are free occupant.

For the purpose of present study, sample *Bustees* were selected in different parts of the city. The reasons of selection and methods of sampling have already been described in Chapter 1.5. In the following section each individual sample *Bustee* is described in detail.

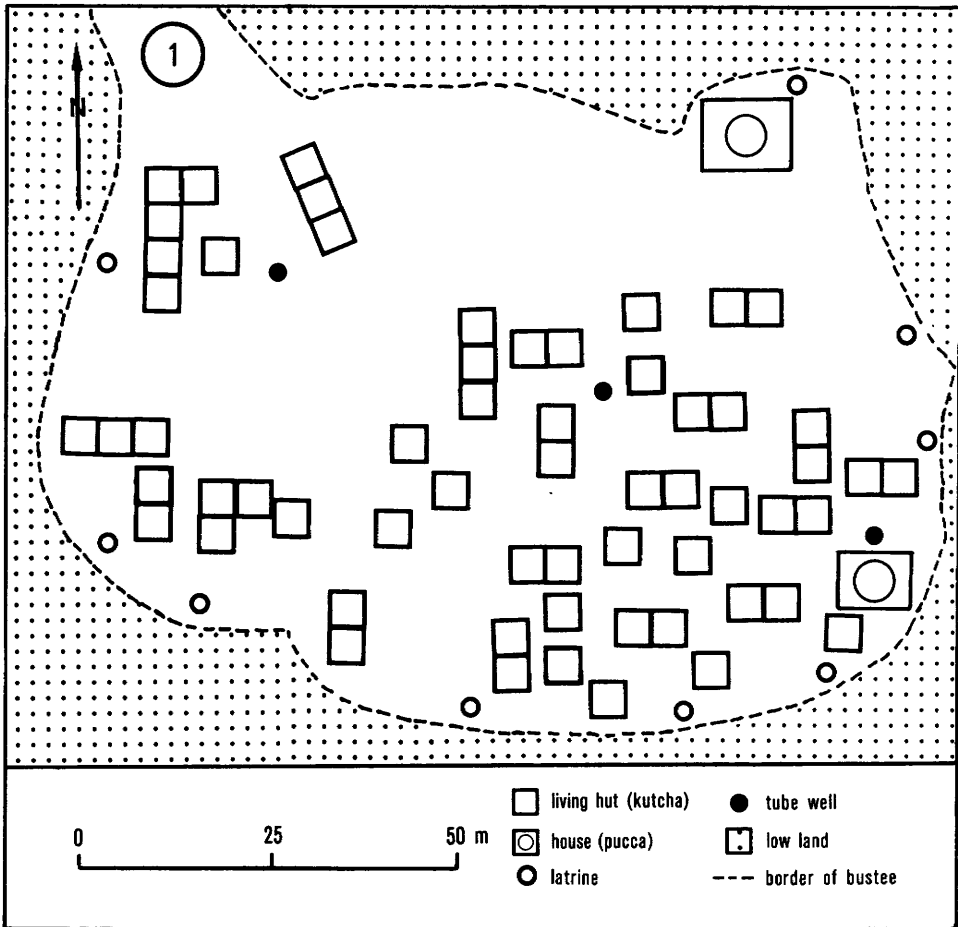
4.1.5 Location and Description of Samples

It has already been mentioned that data was collected from areas where poor migrants concentration was relatively higher. These areas were identified through reconnaissance survey with the help of previous studies. The samples were selected both from central and peripheral city areas, from old as well as newly developed parts of the city. Figure 15 reveals that the samples have been chosen from different parts of the city having different functional characteristics.

In terms of physical condition all *Bustees* demonstrate on the whole a similar picture, e.g. overcrowded dwellings with congested small rooms and an unhygienic environment lacking all types of services and utilities. A closer investigation reveals that each individual *Bustee* is, however distinctive in its internal features, forms and functions.

Sample 1: Maulavirtek (figure 17)

This *Bustee* is located in the north-western periphery of the city, on the edge of a newly developed unplanned residential area with low population density (see figure 15). Beyond this settlement land is exclusively used for agricultural purposes. This was originally a low lying



Source : Mapping by author 1984

Figure 17: Sketch Map of Maulavirtek Bustee

area subject to annual floods. It was later raised by earth filling to construct residential buildings. The sample itself is a site for residential construction where the owners of the housing plots have raised temporary huts and let them out to avoid unauthorized occupation.

The Origin of the *Bustee* is relatively recent. It is not older than ten years. The land is privately owned. More than 80 per cent of the tiny huts are built with thatch and straw. The remaining 20 per cent is tin and bamboo⁸. The structures are more or less thinly scattered. Almost all the huts are tenant occupied. In a few cases the land owners constructed a temporary thatch hut and kept a care-taker to prevent illegal occupation. Compared to similar

⁸ Average sizes of the rooms are not more than 75 sq.ft., i.e. approximately 6 to 7 m².

Bustee houses in the central and southern city areas, the rents are very low here. About 70 per cent of the huts with one small room have a rent below Taka 50 per month. The rest 30 per cent of the huts with two or more rooms have a rent between Taka 70 and 100 per month⁹.

Drinking water facilities are very inadequate in *Maulavirtek*. Tap water is completely absent, main sources of drinking water are the three tube wells. It is similar in the case of latrines. For the whole community there are only nine *kutchas*, open latrines for common use. Drainage and waste disposal are also very poor. Although within the municipal area, *Maulavirtek* does not enjoy any urban facility. There are also no paved streets. Electricity and gas have not yet reached this area. People use kerosine lamps (*kupis*) for light. Cooking is done mainly with dry leaves, waste and sometimes with wood.

These types of poor quarters are generally very neglected areas. With a few exceptions, there are neither any initiatives made by government authorities nor by local or international development agencies to improve the condition of the people. In *Maulavirtek*, for example, there are no educational, recreational or religious institutions, no playground for the children and no medical services. In answer to the question as to whether any local or international voluntary agency has been rendering any kind of services to the locality, most people replied that they had no idea about such organisations.

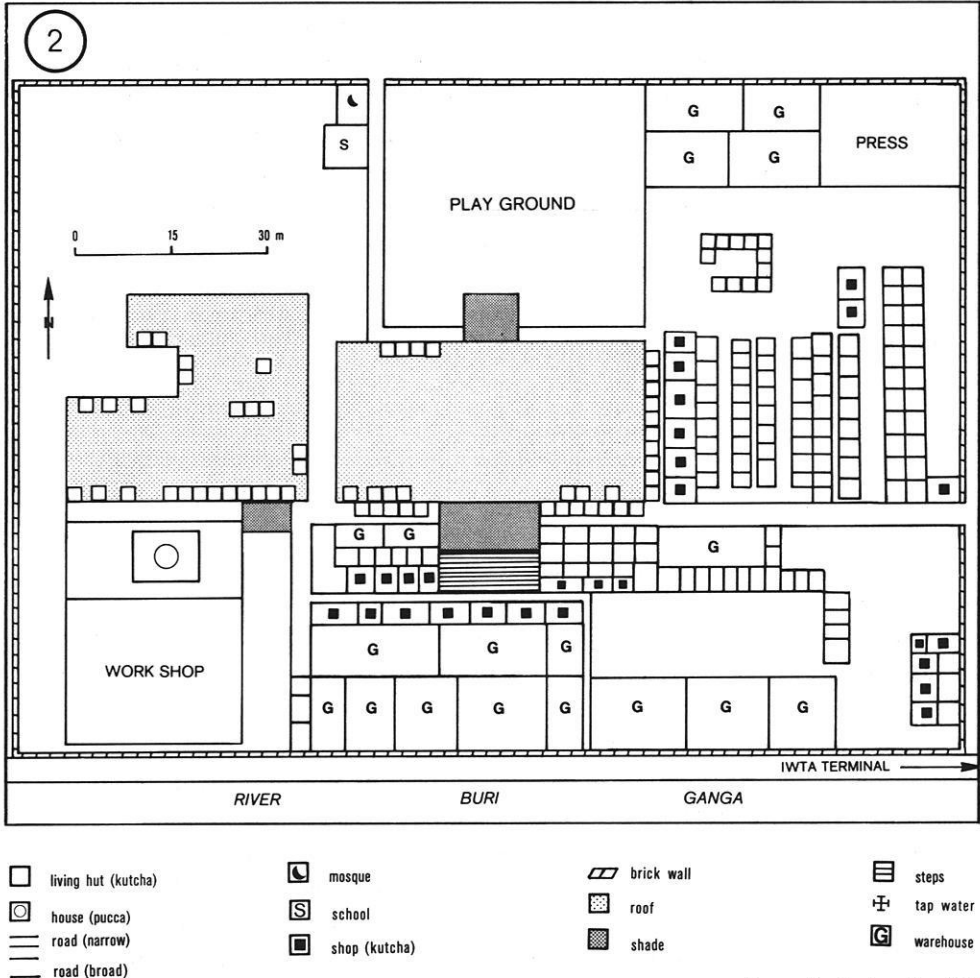
In spite of all these disadvantages the overall environmental condition in this *Bustee* is comparatively better than that in the inner city areas. The people living therein maintain friendly relations to neighbours and help each other in various household activities. They also try to keep the locality clean. The fresh migrants of rural origin still try to maintain the lifestyle they had in their home villages. The *Bustee* itself looks like a small village on the edge of the city.

Sample 2: Nawabbari (figure 18)

This sample was selected for questionnaire survey during the first field trip in 1984. Among all the samples this was the single example of a squatter settlement, located on the rooftop of an old, abandoned palace of *Nawabs* (Chapter 8, photo 1). The palace itself is an acquired government property, supposed to be converted into a museum. In late 1985 the *Bustee* was totally evacuated by the city authority and a tin wall was erected all around the palace to protect it from further illegal occupation. *Nawabbari* is located on the bank of river Burhiganga, in southern part of the old city core, close to the launch/steamer station. Due to easy accessibility it was a simple solution to the accommodation problem of the migrants who came to Dhaka by river. As a result the concentration of destitutes in the building was very high. The narrow and congested huts (appx. 9 x 6 feet or 3 x 2 metre) were constructed mainly with bamboo, thatch and scraps. About 80 per cent of all the squatting population lived in this type of structures. Rest 20 per cent took shelter in the ground floor of the palace. According

⁹ For comparison, we take the example of the *pucca* buildings adjacent to the *Bustee* (see figure 17). In these two buildings the rent of a flat with two rooms, one kitchen and toilet is approximately Taka 1000 per month.

to information given by interviewees, squatting in the building began approximately 14 to 15 years ago. It was interesting to note that, in spite of illegal occupation, 90 per cent of the inhabitants used to pay rents ranging between Taka 10 and Taka 40. The recipients were the earlier occupants who erected the huts and let these out to the newcomers.



Source : Mapping by author 1984

Figure 18: Sketch Map of Nawabbari Bustee

Some of the rooms in the ground floor and additional spaces around the building were used for business purpose. Several rooms in the building were thus used as warehouse, work shop, tea/food stalls and small shops for daily necessary articles. There was also a small press within the boundary of the palace. Owners of the press as well as of the warehouses were

businessmen who lived elsewhere in the city. Some of the tea/food stalls and shops were, however, owned by the inhabitants. A few residents also worked in the warehouses, press and workshop.

The Physical environment in the *Bustee* was extremely poor. There was not a single toilet in and around the palace. The only source of drinking water was the water tap at the entrance. Water was supplied twice a day; in the morning and in the afternoon. Each time there was a big queue. The warehouses, press and workshop tapped electricity from the street lamp post. The other rooms where migrants lived as well as the huts on the rooftop had no electricity. Cooking was done with dry leaves, dry coconut shells and cowdung. For some people selling cowdung and coconut shells as fuel in the neighbourhood was a source of income.

The open space at the entrance was used by the inhabitants as a playground. There was a "Bachelors Athletic Club", formed by the residents to organize various types of recreational activities. There was also a primary school run by a local voluntary social organisation (*Muktijodhha Sangsad*). Within the palace premises there was also a mosque. It was used both by *Bustee*-dwellers and other people in the neighbourhood.

Sample 3: Babupura (figure 19)

This *Bustee* is situated amidst the government institutional/administrative quarters with medium to low population density. It is very close to the modern CBD (see figure 15). The land on which it stands is partly private and partly public or of disputed ownership. The land is high and free from flooding. As can be seen in figure 19 the locality is encircled by main roads on all sides. On three sides there are continuous rows of different types of shops. All four roads encircling the *Bustee* remain very busy. Particularly the road in the eastern part, which connects the old part of the city with the new one, is extremely busy during the day. All these aspects indicate its favourable location. The origin of this settlement is not very recent. It came into existence in the mid 1970's.

Due to favourable location, it attracts a lot of people. As a result, concentration of huts is very high (see Chapter 8, Photo 2). There is hardly any space left for new construction. The type of materials used are thatch, bamboo and tin. The huts are, however, as small as in the previous samples. The average floor space for each family is approximately 55 sq.ft. or 5 m². In spite of its good location near the CBD, the rents are relatively low. Depending on the size of the hut, the rents range between Taka 50 and Taka 150. A notable feature of this *Bustee* is that almost all the huts are tenant occupied.

This is an overcrowded settlement of poor people. The physical conditions are extremely dissatisfactory. Although there are two tube wells and two pipelines for tap water, it is not at all sufficient for the whole community with such a large number of population. A few toilets for common use are also not adequate. Except for the road-side drains, there is no internal drainage system. Garbage is, however, not generally dumped inside the locality. People throw their waste in the road-side dustbins. Despite its good location almost in the heart of the city,

the neighbourhood has no electricity. Gas is also not available. People use waste and dry leaves for cooking and *kupis* are the only source of light.

Inside the *Bustee* there are several huts where people meet to play cards, drink tea and gossip. There is also a mosque close to the locality.

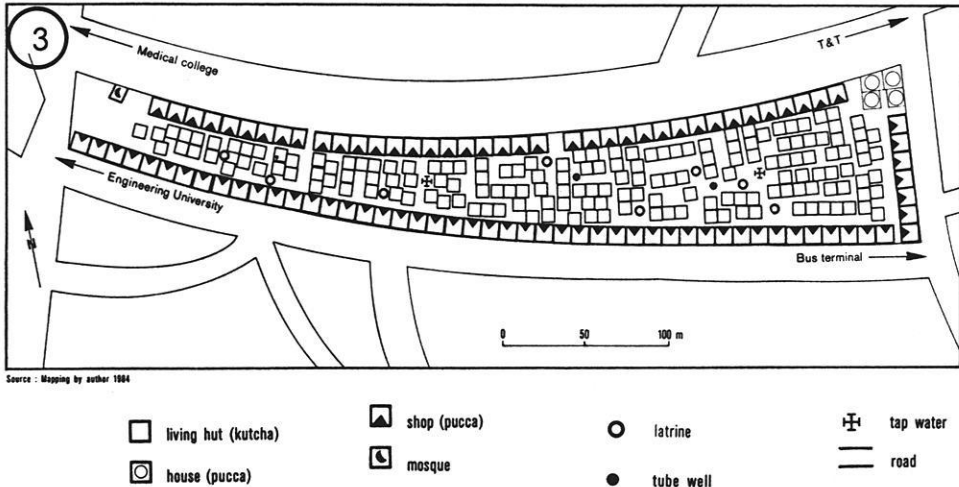


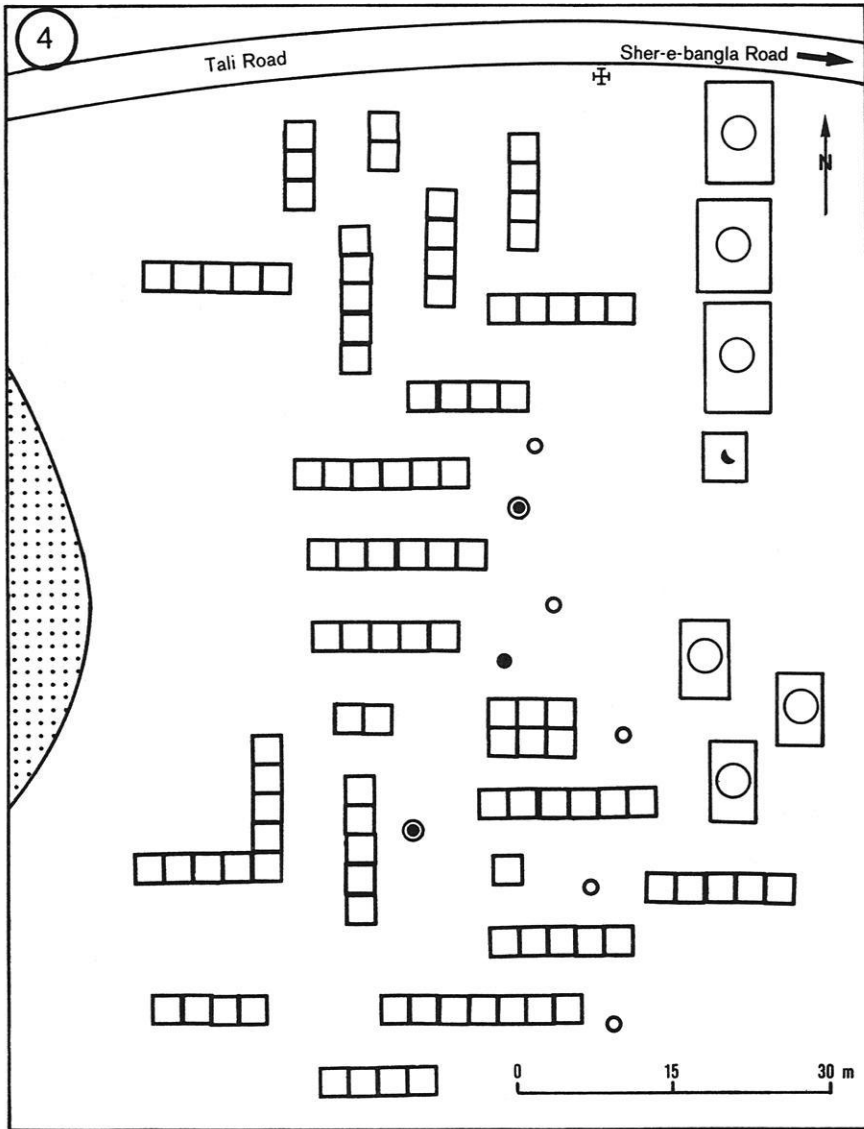
Figure 19: Sketch Map of Babupura Bustee

Sample 4: Tali Road (figure 20)

Similar to Sample 3, this *Bustee* is also located at the extreme city periphery (see figure 15). It is a group of thatched huts, raised on the western tip of the old industrial area to accommodate poor people (Chapter 8, Photo 3). Just a few steps further west, low land begins.

The land and huts are all privately owned. The occupants of the huts pay rents on a monthly basis. Here, too, the rents are low, ranging from Taka 30 to Taka 100 per month. The huts are also very small. Average space available for each household is not more than 60 sq.ft. or 5.5 m². Construction materials are thatch, bamboo and tin.

The first structures in this *Bustee* were erected about twenty years back. Since then it has gradually grown to its present size. In terms of environmental and hygienic conditions this *Bustee* is no exception to the others. For the whole community there is only one tube well. To supplement the source of water for drinking, cooking and washing, the inhabitants have dug two more wells. A third source of water is the road-side tap, which is used by other people in the neighbourhood, too. There are five common latrines, all of which are *kutcha* and open. Within the *Bustee* there are no dustbins. Waste is thrown away at fixed spots. Since there is no regular garbage disposal, the waste keeps on accumulating for several days or even weeks and



Source : Mapping by author 1984

- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------|--|---------------------|--|-----------|
| | road (narrow) | | living hut (kutcha) | | tap water |
| | low land | | house (pucca) | | well |
| | latrine | | mosque | | tube well |

Figure 20: Sketch Map of Tali Road Bustee

pollute the environment. There are no electricity and gas connections. As an alternative, people adopt the usual methods described earlier. There is one mosque nearby and a school within 100 yards. Here, too, no organizational efforts either by the city authority or by voluntary agencies to develop the community could be identified. According to the statement of the *Bustee*-dwellers, the locality is totally neglected by the city authority. Neither the government nor other agencies render any kind of services or help to the community.

Sample 5: Bashtoli (figure 21)

This is a privately owned and well organized *Bustee* in the old industrial area, not too far away from *Tali Road*. The whole area is enclosed by a brick wall with an entrance in the north. The land and huts belong to two families who live in the brick built houses adjacent to it. According to the interviewees, the owners are very helpful and take regular care of their tenants. It is a kind of typical worker's colony. It is a very old settlement and exists for about 50 years. Most of the people living here are engaged in different types of informal activities like rickshaw-pulling, petty business and construction works. The environment is quiet and

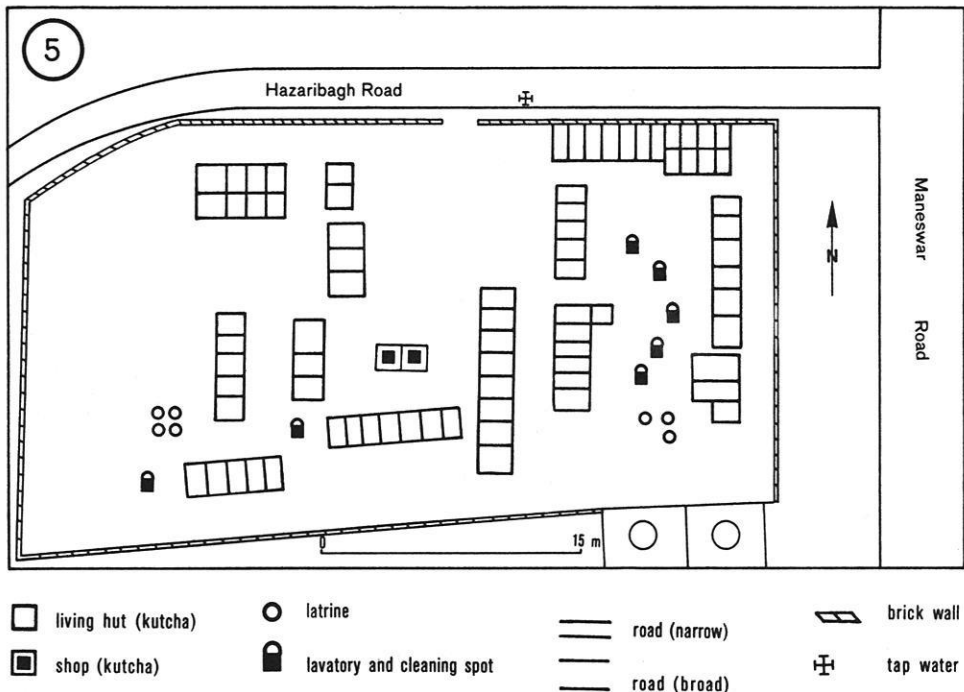


Figure 21: Sketch Map of Bashtoli Bustee

clean. The road-side tap water at the entrance is exclusively used by the dwellers. Perhaps for this reason people do not have the urge to dig additional wells or tube wells. An uncommon feature in *Bashtoli* is that, for a couple of households there is a covered spot for cleaning, a so called lavatory. Seven such lavatories and seven *pucca* latrines have been constructed by the owners for the convenience of the dwellers.

Available living space for each household is also much larger than in other *Bustees*. On an average, each household has a living space of at least 120 sq.ft. or 11 m². The rents are accordingly very high. The minimum rent for a hut of about 10 m² space is not less than Taka 150. The upper limit of rent is Taka 250 to 300. There is an internal drainage system. The owners have also arranged electricity and gas lines for the tenants. On the other hand, the tenants are equally co-operative and help the owners for all types of maintenance works. For small shopping people do not have to go far away. There are two shops owned by two residents of the *Bustee*, where different daily necessary goods are available.

People of *Bashtoli* have taken up several self-help programmes to improve the conditions of the neighbourhood. An evening course for adult education is run by a group of young people. Costs for the course are borne by the attendants themselves. Moreover, the residents and owners get together at least once a week to discuss the common problems.

Sample 6: Nayabari (figure 22)

It is the example of an uncontrolled pocket of temporary living quarters of low-income people within a planned residential area with medium population density (figure 15). This is a site for residential buildings where the construction works have not yet started. The temporary huts, constructed with thatch, bamboo and tin, have been put up either by the owners of the housing plots or by the occupants. The *Bustee* exists since 1960. At the beginning there were only two or three huts. Most of the huts were constructed after 1970.

The locality is far away from the city centre and not an attractive area for migrants. For this reason, the population density of the *Bustee* is also relatively low. Almost 75 per cent of the households are tenants and 10 per cent are owners. Out of the remaining 15 per cent, some are free occupants living with acquaintances or relatives and the others are squatters.

Due to its distant location from the main city, the rents are very favourable here. The average rent of a house with two rooms, a small portico and a separate space for cooking¹⁰ is Taka 75 to 100 per month.

The physical environment in *Nayabari* is quite satisfactory. It is situated on a high, flood-free land. There are two water-taps in the community, and at least 50 per cent of the houses have electricity. The residents mentioned that within a short time gas-lines would be installed. The latrines are located outside the *Bustee*. There are two dust-bins placed in the neighbourhood by the municipality for garbage disposal.

¹⁰ Similar to a farmer's house in a village.

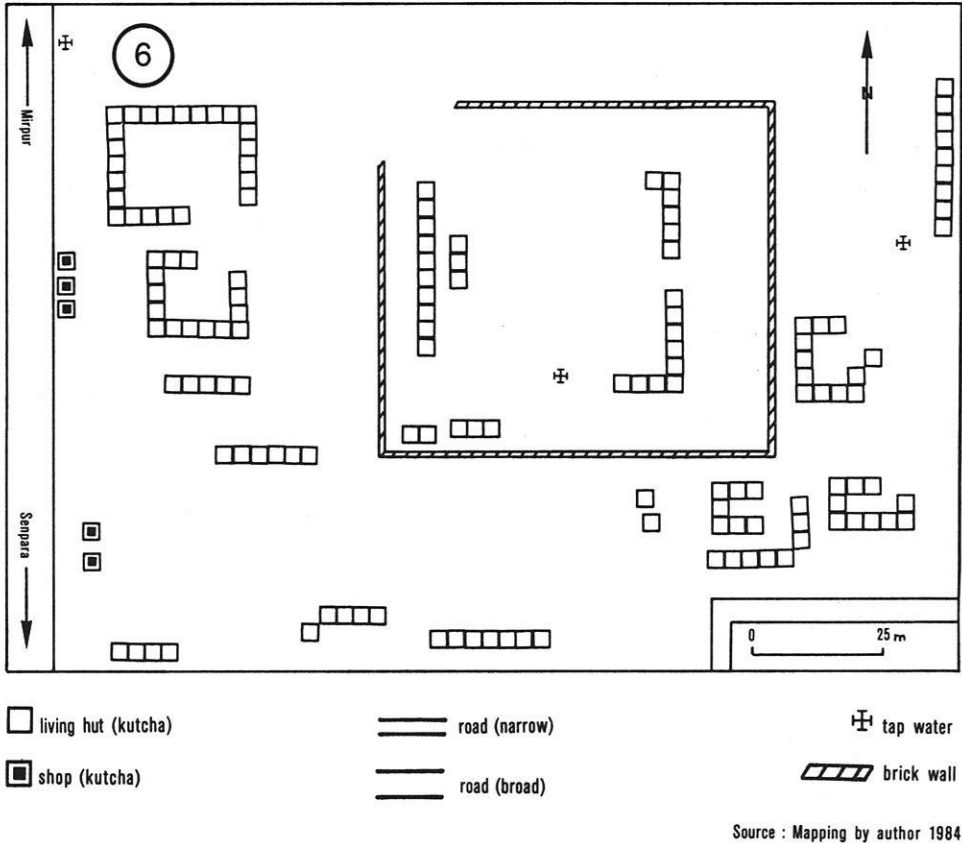


Figure 22: Sketch Map of Nayabari

The local mosque committee runs two *Madrasas* for the primary education of the children of *Nayabari*. Common free-time activities of the young male members are either gossiping at the road-side tea stall or watching films in a nearby cinema hall. No organized recreational facilities could be observed.

Beside the main road on the eastern side of the *Bustee* there are several shops for daily necessary goods. Several families have domestic animals like cow, goat and chicken. These families supplement the income by selling milk and eggs.

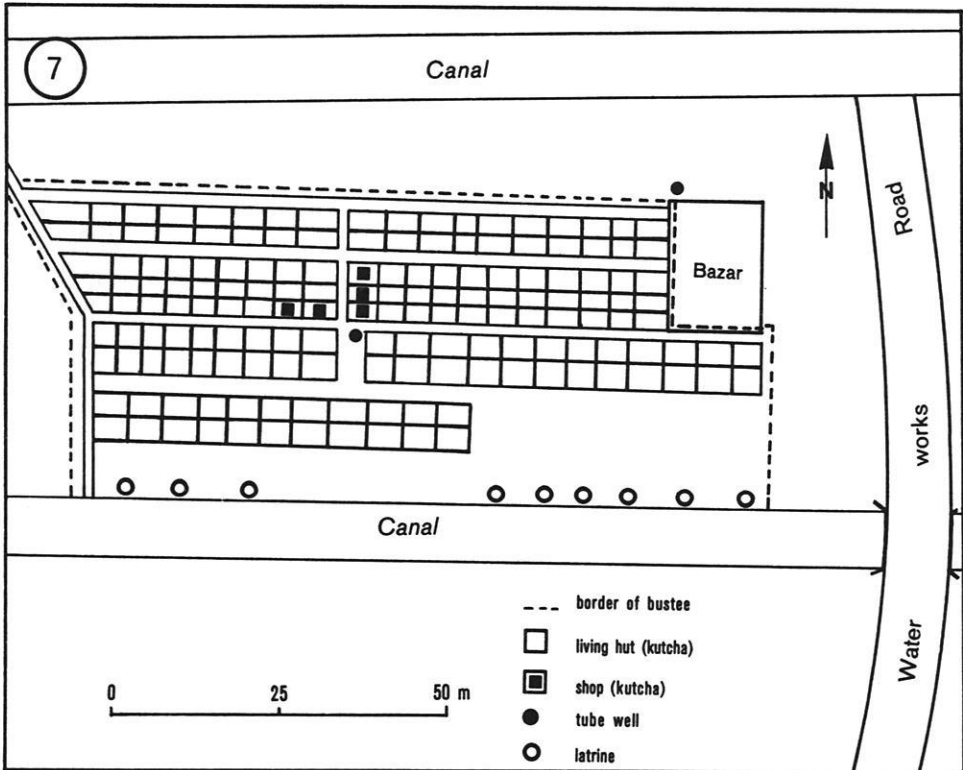
Sample 7: Maurertek (figure 23)

With the rapid flow of migrants into the city, available space in and around the central city areas to erect poor quarters is gradually being exhausted. As a result, an increasing number of newcomers are concentrated in the peripheral areas. *Maurertek* is one of such poor quarters

which is located on the low land in southern part of the old city core. The settlement is one of the oldest in the city. Elderly residents mentioned that it existed even before the partition of India (before 1947). At that time, only a handful of families lived here. The main growth of the *Bustee* took place after 1975.

The site of *Maurertek* is very unfavourable. It is a low-lying area, subject to annual floods. To protect the huts from flood-water these are raised on bamboo pillars. During the Monsoon the whole area is submerged under water and people have to use boats for movement. In spite of this and several other disadvantages, population density in the *Bustee* is relatively high and it keeps on growing.

Maurertek is a private *Bustee*. The land and the huts are owned by a single person. This person is an influential businessman of the locality. All residents are tenants. The huts are very narrow and congested. The average floor space available for each household is approximately 80 sq.ft., i.e., 7 m². The rents are medium, between Taka 70 and 130.



Source : Mapping by author 1984

Figure 23: Sketch Map of Maurertek Bustee

Even a few years ago, the communication of this area with the main city was very poor. It has recently improved due to the construction of the water works road (see figure 23). On the north and south of the *Bustee*, there are two canals emerging from river Burhiganga. On the bank of the southern canal several *kutch*a latrines have been erected. Within the *Bustee* there is only one tube well, which is exclusively used by the dwellers. The other source of drinking water is the tube well beside the *bazar* on the eastern side.

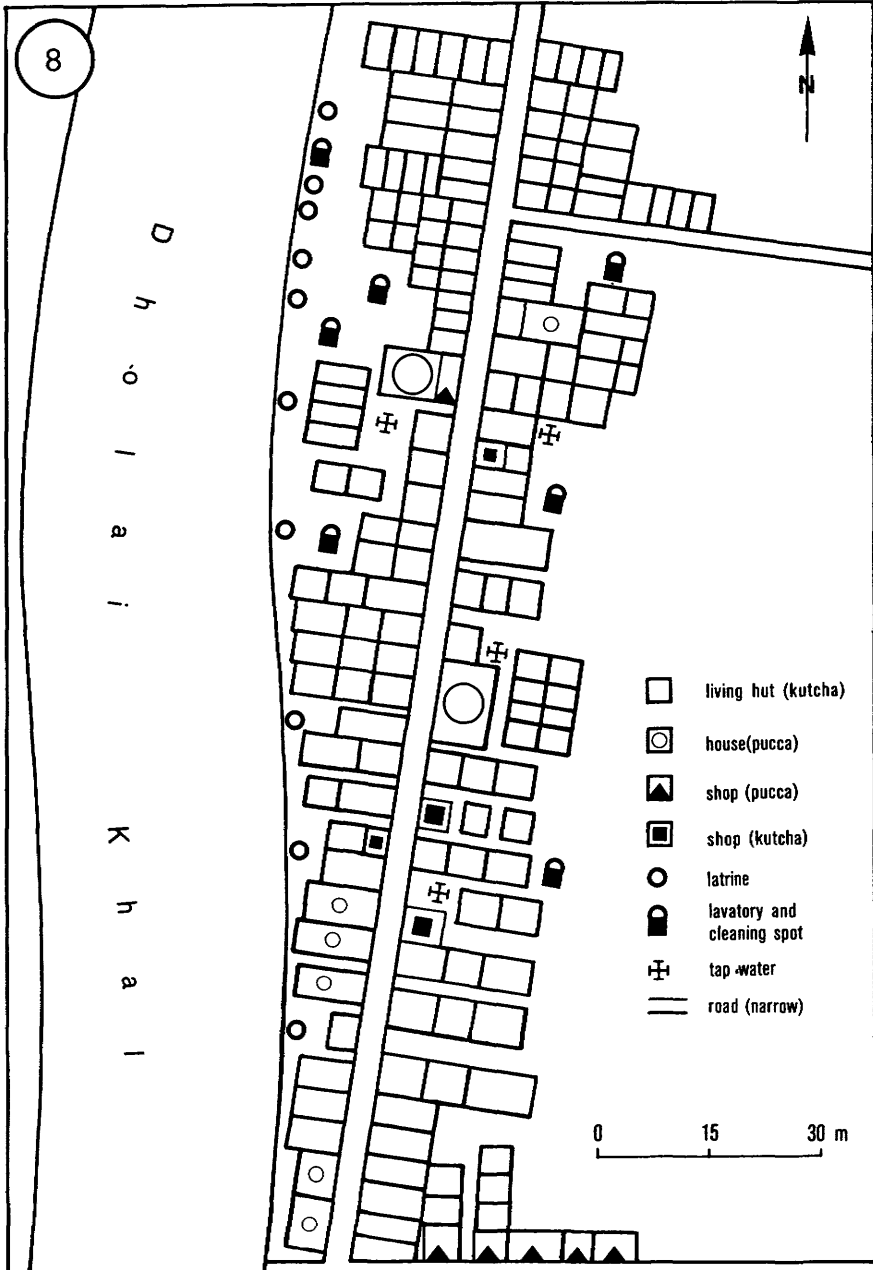
This locality is lacking in all types of services and utilities. Till the time of the interview there were no services like garbage disposal, street lights, gas, etc. The physical condition of the *Bustee* is extremely bad. Particularly during the rainy season, when the area is submerged under water, people find themselves in a helpless situation. The flood water submerges the tube wells and the dwellers have to drink contaminated water. As a result, this is a common place for epidemics like Cholera, Typhus and Diarrhoea. Efforts to solve these problems either by government authorities or by any other organisation are extremely inadequate.

Sample 8: Murgitola (figure 24)

Murgitola is also a very congested *Bustee* with a high density of population. It is located in the old city core, beside Dholai Khal (Chapter 8, Photo 4). The total area of this locality is significantly large. It is in fact a combination of several *Bustees* adjacent to each other. The whole area is known as *Murgitola*. It is the largest of all samples selected.

All the houses in this *Bustee* are privately owned. More than 90 per cent of the occupants are tenants and the rest are owners. None of these are of unauthorized occupation. Several houses are brick-built (*Pucca*), while the rest are constructed with tin, wood, bamboo, and thatch. Most of the *Pucca* houses are, however, of medium to low quality. Some of these are even old and dilapidated. These houses are constructed in rows on both sides of a narrow lane. In size and standard, the *kutch*a structures in *Murgitola* are similar to those in other *Bustees*. Narrow rooms, with an average living space between 6 and 10 m² for each household. Compared to these, the conditions of the *pucca* houses are considerably better. The living space in the *pucca* houses is three to four times more than in the makeshifts. The rents are also much higher. Average rent in the makeshift houses is between Taka 50 and 100 and for the *pucca* buildings, it is between Taka 300 and 700.

Murgitola enjoys several urban facilities like water supply, electricity, sewerage, and garbage disposal. Almost all the *pucca* houses have sanitary toilets. For the dwellers of *kutch*a structures, there are common latrines on the bank of Dholai Khal. Inside the *Bustee*, there are several lavatories. Compared to other *Bustees*, its location is much better. It is not very far from the central areas of the city. Within 500 yards, there are two mosques, one primary school, one large playground, and an athletic club. A *bazar* is also very close to the *Bustee*. Moreover, there are several shops for daily necessary goods, dispensaries, and a maternity hospital nearby.



Source : Mapping by author 1984

Figure 24: Sketch Map of Murgitola Bustee

Despite this, it can not be overlooked that in terms of environmental conditions, *Murgitola* is no exception from other *Bustees*. The facilities which the inhabitants receive are not at all adequate. Like many other poor quarters, this locality is also neglected by the city authority. None of the development organizations render any kind of services to the people of this area. The condition becomes particularly precarious in extraordinary flood situation. Such a situation arised in 1986. In this year, along with most parts of Dhaka city, this area was also submerged under flood water. Almost all the makeshift houses and ground floors of the buildings remained for several weeks under the contaminated flood water. Drinking water became scarce, and people had no other alternative than to use the polluted water for cooking and washing.

Sample 9: Mughdapara (figure 25)

This is a typical squatter settlement in the eastern part of the city, adjacent to the main railway station (see figure 15). It is an elongated settlement beside the main road. The land is public property. The level of land is a little lower than the level of the road and hence water accumulates during the rainy season. The age of the *Bustee* could not be ascertained exactly. According to the people of the locality, it exists for quite a long time. The city authority has evacuated the squatters several times; but every time it was re-occupied either by the same or a new group of destitutes.

The people of *Mughdapara* live in poor physical condition. A large number of

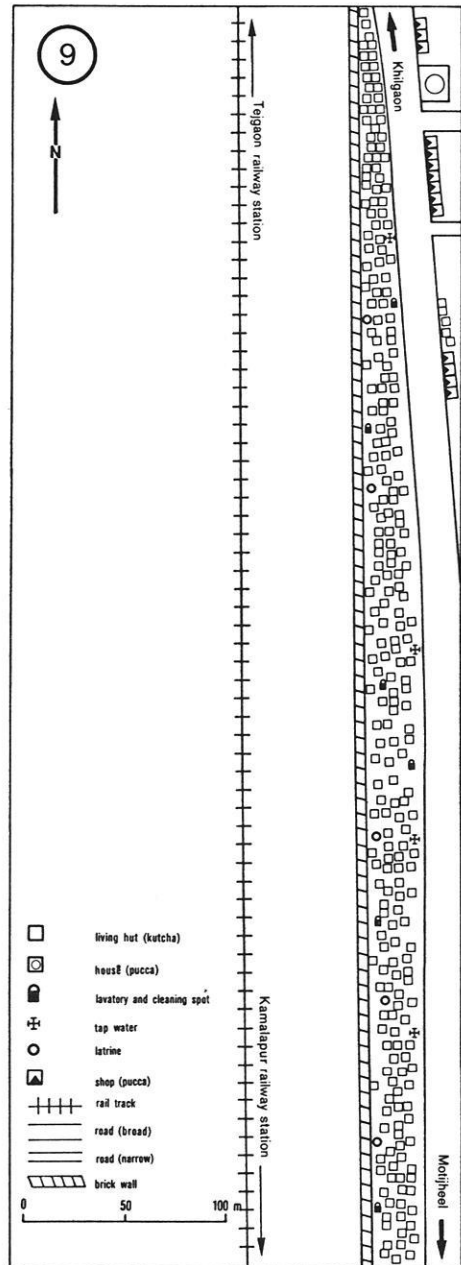


Figure 25: Sketch Map of Mughdapara Bustee

thatched huts, concentrated on the patch of low land between the road and the boundary wall of the railway station, are deprived of all types of facilities. This is an undesired settlement and the dwellers face the constant threat of being evacuated. The small huts are constructed mostly of thatch and scrap. None of these has a living space of more than 5 m². Some are so narrow that one has to crawl into these. Most of the huts are free-occupant. Only in a few cases people were found to pay a minimum rent, not more than Taka 30 per month. Recipients were mostly friends or relatives with whom they shared the living space.

Since there are no drainage and garbage disposal, waste water and debris accumulate everywhere in the *Bustee*. It obviously makes the environment very unhygienic. Street light is the main source of illumination during the night. Cooking is done with waste, dry leaves, etc.

Mughdapara is one of the most neglected poor quarters, where people live in extreme misery. A large number of children suffer from various types of skin and diarrhoeal diseases. In spite of this, it is an attractive area for poor people; firstly because people can live here without rent and secondly due to its nearness to the central parts of the city.

4.2 DHAKA - THE CITY OF MÍGRANTS

Dhaka is considered to be a city of migrants. The majority of the population of this city have their origin elsewhere. This actuality has been emphasized in various studies (cf. SHANKLAND 1981(1); CUS 1982). It is further noticed in these studies that the largest section of the migrants in the city have their origin in the rural areas. This is consistent with the general pattern which prevails in other large cities of the country (see Chapter 3). Internal migration has been playing a significant role in fact in population growth of all the urban places in Dhaka district. It is estimated that the population growth of the urban areas of Dhaka district in the recent past due to internal migration and its natural growth was at least three times larger than the growth due to natural increase (SHANKLAND op. cit.:18). This trend is more applicable for Dhaka city itself. Although the exact number of immigrant population of Dhaka city cannot be presented here (because complete figures do not exist), estimates suggest that at the beginning of the present decade more than half of the population of this city were migrants from different areas of the country (ibid.). A large number of the migrant population are again considered to be constituted of the poor rural population. This is reflected in the concentration of destitutes in the city (see FAROUK 1976; CUS 1982).

Survey data shows that an overwhelming majority of the population in the sample areas are migrants (see appendix 1), most of whom were born in the rural areas. The migrant households account for 79 per cent of the total households covered in the census survey. Out of the remaining 21 per cent, some families lived traditionally in the city, while the rest are the

successors of migrants who came before many years to the city¹¹. More than 90 per cent of all head of households in the samples have rural origin. The place of birth data of all members of the migrant households (see appendix 2) show that 66.2 per cent of these are born outside the city and about 33.8 per cent are born in the city. These are the children of the migrants who are born in the city. It refers obviously to the secondary effect migration which is considered to be taking an important role in the growth of the cities in South Asia. In this context it should be mentioned that through informal discussion with the elderly members of the migrant families it was observed that they (the migrant families) prefer to give birth to their children in the city, although many of them cannot avail of the maternity and/or medical facilities. In Bangladesh, there is a traditional system that the woman expecting child returns to her parents house and stays there till the child is born. A few such cases were also reported in the study area, where the female members returned to the parents' house to give birth to the children. But in most cases women do not return, because either the parents do not exist or the parents are very poor and cannot afford the expenses. Several families mentioned that they prefer to stay in the city during child birth because they feel that in case of emergency or complication during delivery there would be at least some alternatives in the city. This indicates the impact of urban amenity on migrant population.

Due to the influx of new migrants on the one hand and high rate of natural growth in these communities, the population of the *Bustees* keeps on growing at a very fast rate. A comparison of the field study in 1986 with that in 1984 clearly shows that in most of the samples (of 1984) the total population increased enormously. Besides the fact that individual families increased in size¹², a large number of new migrant families were identified in most of the samples, who came to the city between 1984 and 1986 (see table 19). Continuous increase of population due to arrival of new migrant families was reported in most of the samples. Exceptions to this were three samples, namely *Maulavirtek*, *Nawabbari* and *Nayabari*. This was mainly due to evacuation of the *Bustees* either by the city authority or by the private owners of the land. Among these three samples *Nawabbari* was totally evacuated, because the old historical building in which the migrants took temporary shelter was to be converted into a museum. In the other two samples, the owners of the housing plots constructed buildings and the temporary *Bustees* were cleared.

¹¹ At this point it should be clarified that in the present study migrant households are determined by the first generation status, which means that the head of the household is a migrant. If I would go beyond the first generation, much more households could be classified as migrant households, whose predecessors originated from elsewhere than Dhaka city.

¹² Either due to birth of children or due to the fact that close or distant family members or acquaintances came to the city and joined the families.

Table 19: Number of Households in Each Sample in 1984 and 1986

Name of the Sample	Number of Households	
	1984	1986
Maulavirtek	60	40
Nawabbari	221	-
Babupura	318	559
Tali Road	120	280
Bashtoli	115	250
Nayabari	140	50
Maurertek	350	657
Murgitola	460	694
Mughdapara	186	291
Total	1970	2791

Source: Author's Survey Data, 1984 and 1986

4.3 SOCIO - DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES OF MIGRANT POPULATION

In the context of the demographic and social characteristics of migrants, various studies have revealed that migrants are generally selective. Regarding the age of migrants, for example, it is generally claimed that migrant stream mainly consists of people in the young adult age; or that long-distance urban-ward migration is dominated by young males (cf. Chapter 3). It is similarly asserted that migrants, particularly the long-distance migrants are mostly males.

So far the demographic characteristics of the migrant population in the samples are concerned, similar results are also found. As can be seen in figure 26, an overwhelming majority of the head of the households are males in the age group 25-45 years. The heads of the households, who are the main earning members of the family¹³, are in fact the chief decision makers who directly influence and guide the migration process (see appendix 3). At the time of migration majority of these persons were between 20 and 30 years. Figure 27 shows that while most of the heads of households at the time of migration were in the young adult groups, many of them were again below 10 years. This is due to the fact that the respondents mentioned their age at the time when the household migrated. In many cases the children who were below 10 years at the time of migration have grown up and taken over the role of household heads. It was noticed that the household heads are generally husband or an elderly male member of the family. In many cases where there are no other persons to take over the responsibilities, people has to bear the responsibilities even in very old age (see figure 26). In terms of total population, the samples show that significantly large number of people are

¹³ As per definition (p. 18).

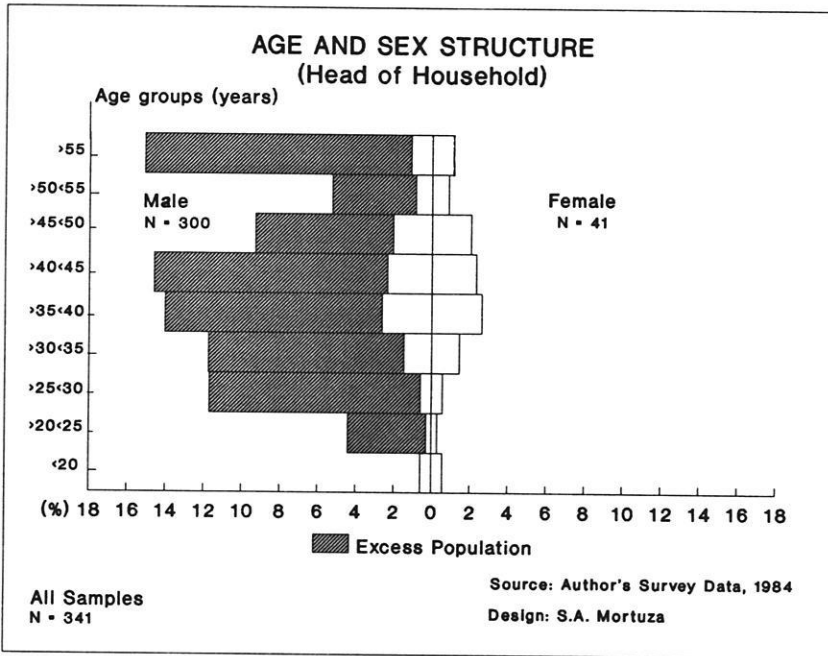


Figure 26: Age and Sex Structure of Heads of Migrant Households

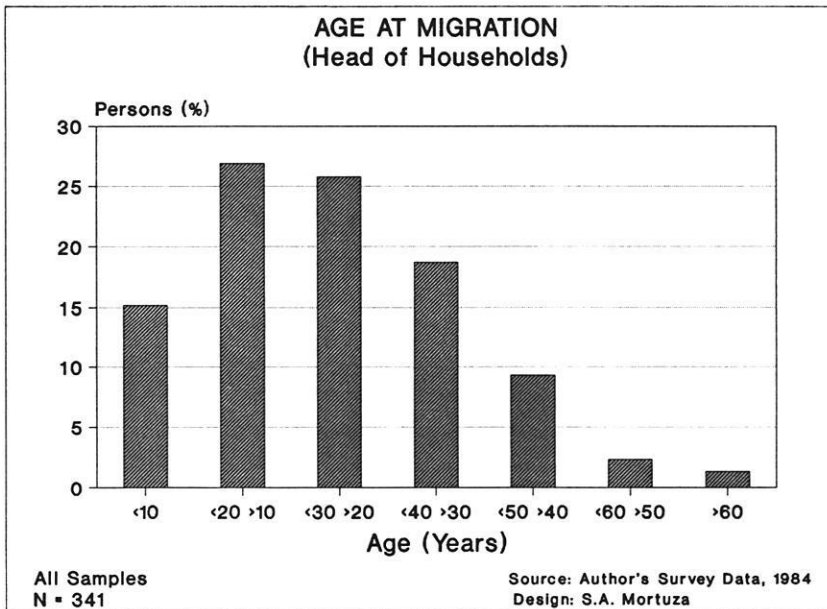


Figure 27: Age of the Heads of Migrant Households at the Time of Migration

children below 10 years (see figure 28). This is similar to the structures of the population of Dhaka SMA, which also exhibits the predominance of children below 14 years of age. It clearly indicates the high rate of natural growth among migrant population as well as its high labour potentiality.

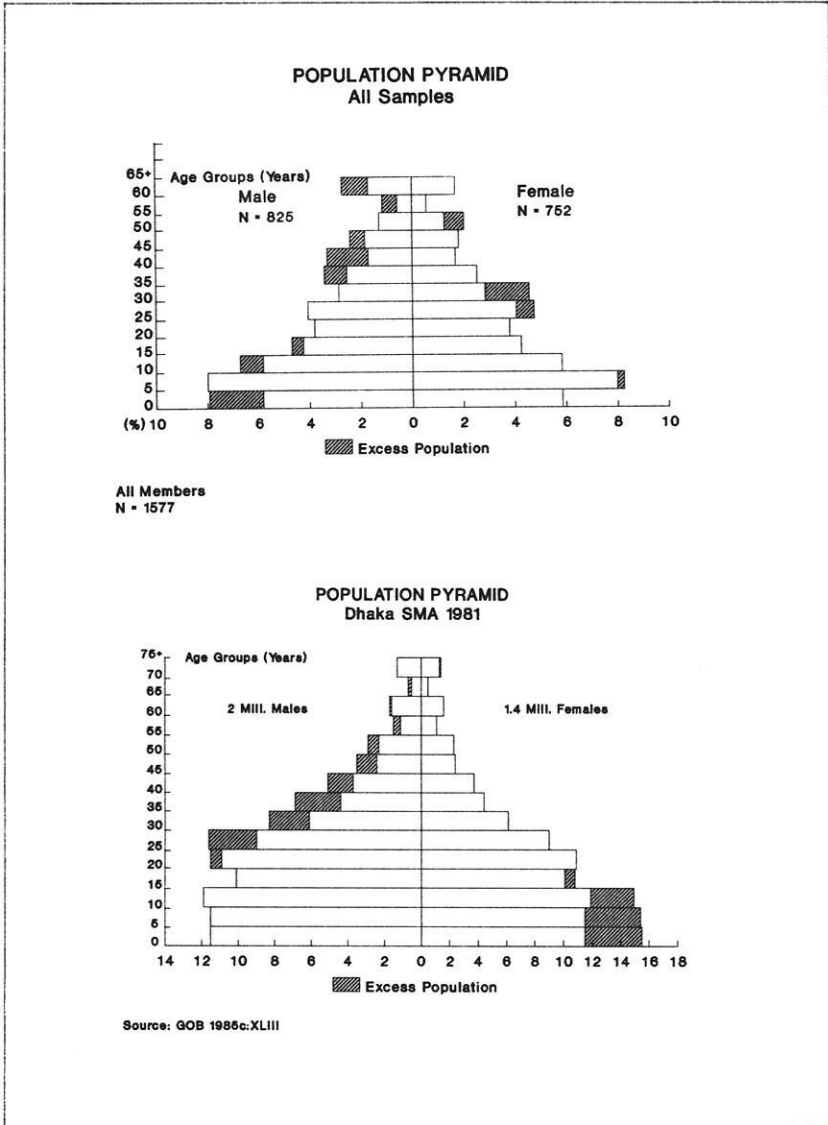


Figure 28: Age and Sex Structure of Migrants

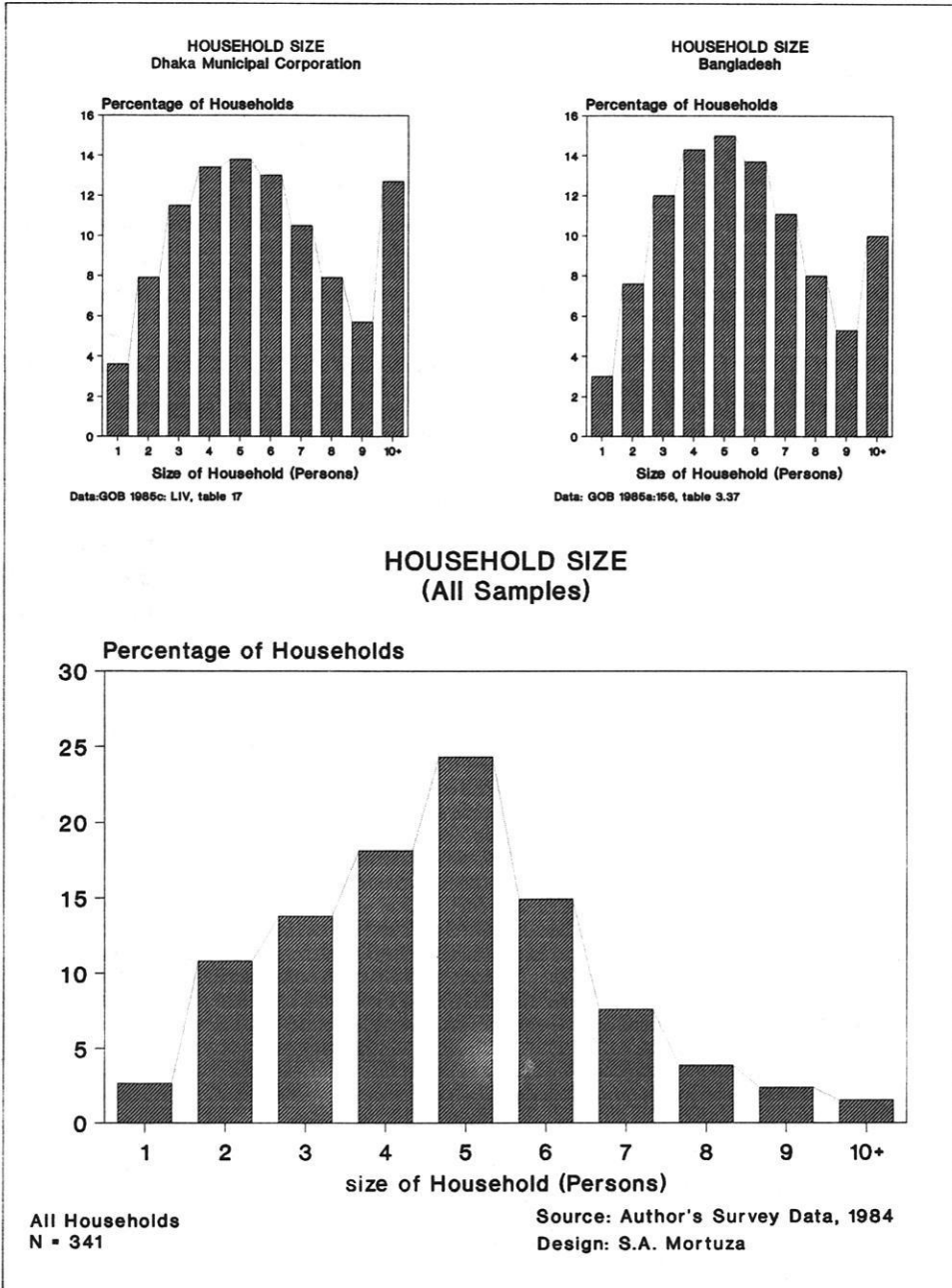


Figure 29: Household Size of Migrant Families

The migrant households are medium in size (figure 29). Unlike in the rural areas joint and/or large extended families are not common among the migrant families. Instead of that nuclear families are more frequent. This type of family accounts for three fourth of the total households in all samples. About 15 per cent of the households were reportedly joint families. Compared to these, the number of single families were negligible (see table 20). Several families were separated and a part of the family lived at the place of origin. Various types of reasons were mentioned by the respondents for this type of separation. Many families hold a small plot of agricultural land or a little homestead in the villages. In case the whole family moves to the city, there is a chance of misappropriation of these properties by others. In case there are no close relatives who can look after their properties, people leave their wives or children back at home. Some of the migrants mentioned that it was less costly for them to leave their families in the villages. Cost of living in the cities for a single person was obviously much less than that for the whole family and thus it was possible for them to save and remit some money to their families at home. Moreover, the part of the family at the village could also earn through different activities and enhance the total income of the family. Nevertheless, there are other people for whom insecure feeling was a major factor for not bringing the families to the city. These people stated that they had no previous experience in the city and were not certain whether they could manage a suitable place to live or earn sufficient money to maintain the family. Since there was an alternative in the village, they left their families over there. Such cases were, however, limited in number. In most incidences, people moved either with the whole family or brought their families later to the city.

Table 20: Household Structure (All Samples)

Sample	Single	Nuclear	Joint/ Extended	Separated	Total
Maulavirtek	-	6	3	1	10
Nawabbari	-	33	4	7	44
Babupura	5	33	7	3	48
Tali Road	-	13	3	2	18
Bashtoli	1	17	3	1	22
Nayabari	-	24	5	1	30
Maurertek	1	68	10	3	82
Murgitola	1	37	9	1	48
Mughdapara	2	27	7	3	39
Total	10	258	51	22	341
(%)	(2.93)	(75.66)	(14.96)	(6.45)	(100.0)

Explanation of the terms:

Single - Single person without dependant

Nuclear - Husband/wife/children

Joint - Husband/wife/children/in-laws

Extended - If the families were separated and first grade relation/dependants lived at the place of origin

Source: Author's Survey Data, 1984

More than half of the total population in the samples were unmarried. One of the reason for this is the large number of children (see figure 30). It was further noticed that among the migrant families both males and females were married at a comparatively later age than in the villages. Nevertheless, compared to the general population of the city, people in the *Bustees* marry at an earlier age¹⁴. If only the heads of the households are considered, more than 84 per cent were found to be married. Little over 10 per cent of them were still unmarried. Very insignificant number of population were either divorced, widowed or separated (see figure 31). It should be emphasized here that unlike in the middle or upper educated classes in the city, rates of divorce and repeated marriage are more frequent among the *Bustee* dwellers. It has various types of implications. Particularly for women, divorce without compensation brings adverse consequences¹⁵.

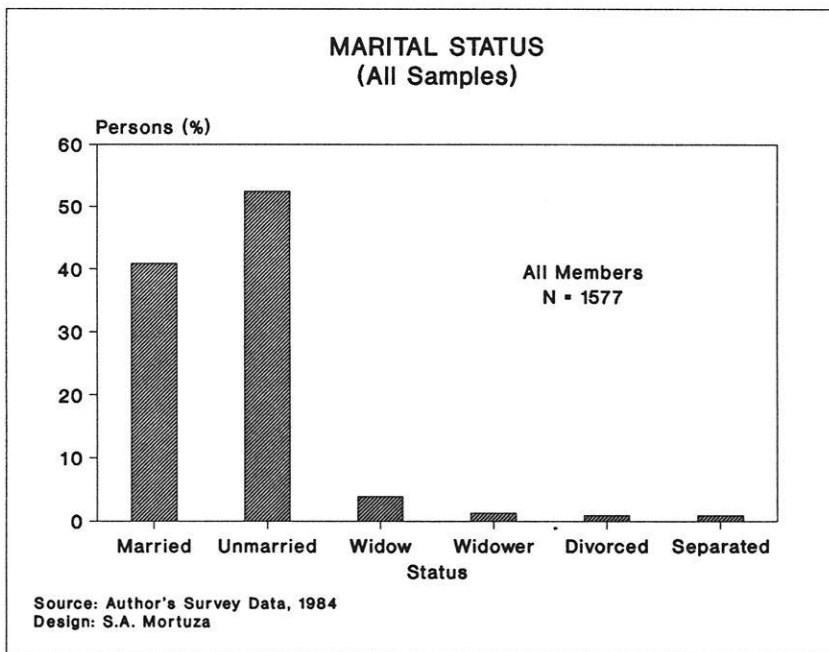


Figure 30: Marital Status of the Migrants' Family Members

¹⁴ Mean age at marriage in the city is 26 years for males and 23 years for females (GOB 1985c).

¹⁵ It may compel the women, who generally have to accept the responsibility of the children, to take up hard and low paid jobs, begging or prostitution.

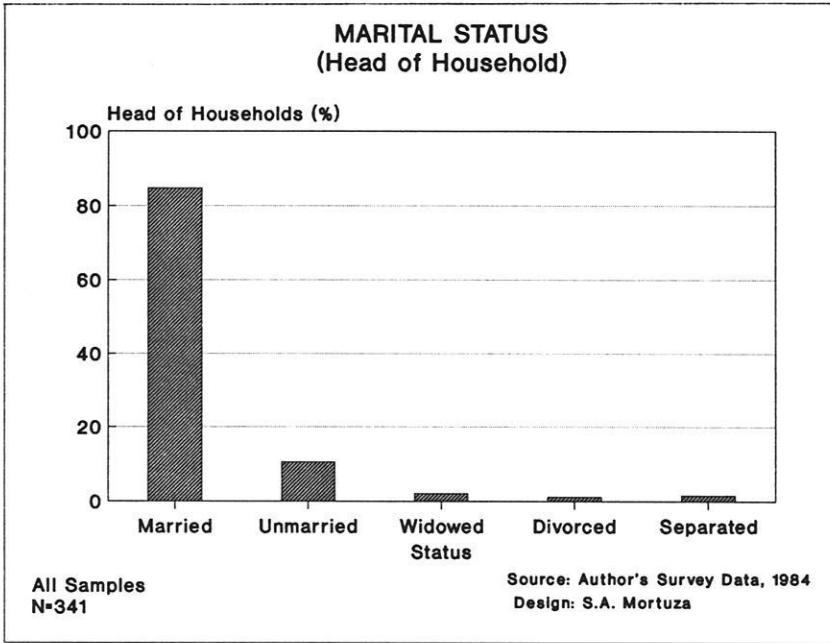


Figure 31: Marital Status of Heads of Migrant Households

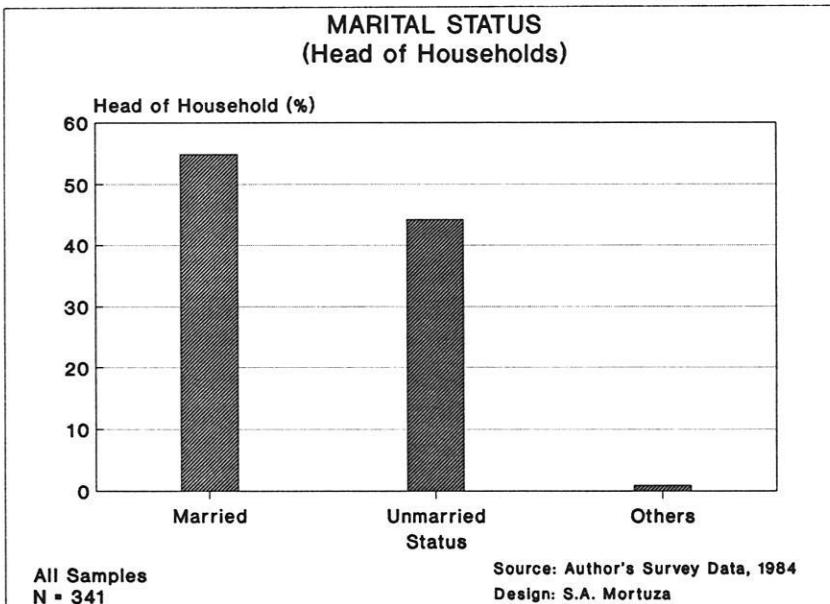


Figure 32: Marital Status of the Household Heads at Migration

Figure 32 shows that at the time of migration most of the household heads were unmarried. It consists with other studies where the preponderance of out-migration of single males to urban places has been emphasized (see CHAUDHURY/CURLIN 1975). As the field investigation was carried out only in the place of destination, it was not possible to compare the data of movers with those of stayers. In spite of that, a few assessments can be made on the basis of retrospective statement of migrants and general socio-cultural background of the country. The city-ward migration of the relatively poorer sections of the population is particularly job oriented. Due to various socio-economic factors and cultural background, the scope of women to participate in the employment sector is much restricted compared to that for men. As such, mostly males travel longer distance (or to urban areas in this case) to look for jobs. Except in special cases, females travel to the cities mainly as dependents. Moreover, journey to the city involves a risk factor and the young unmarried males can afford to take the risk. Apart from these, journey to the city also involves a cost factor and for the young unmarried males it is easier to recover the costs in the city. For this reason, many families prefer to send their young capable sons to the city.

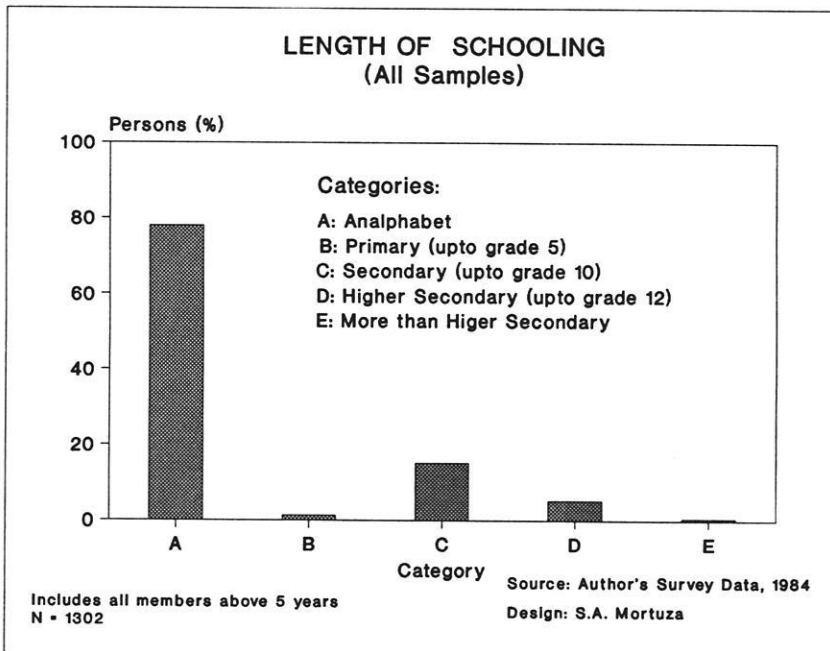


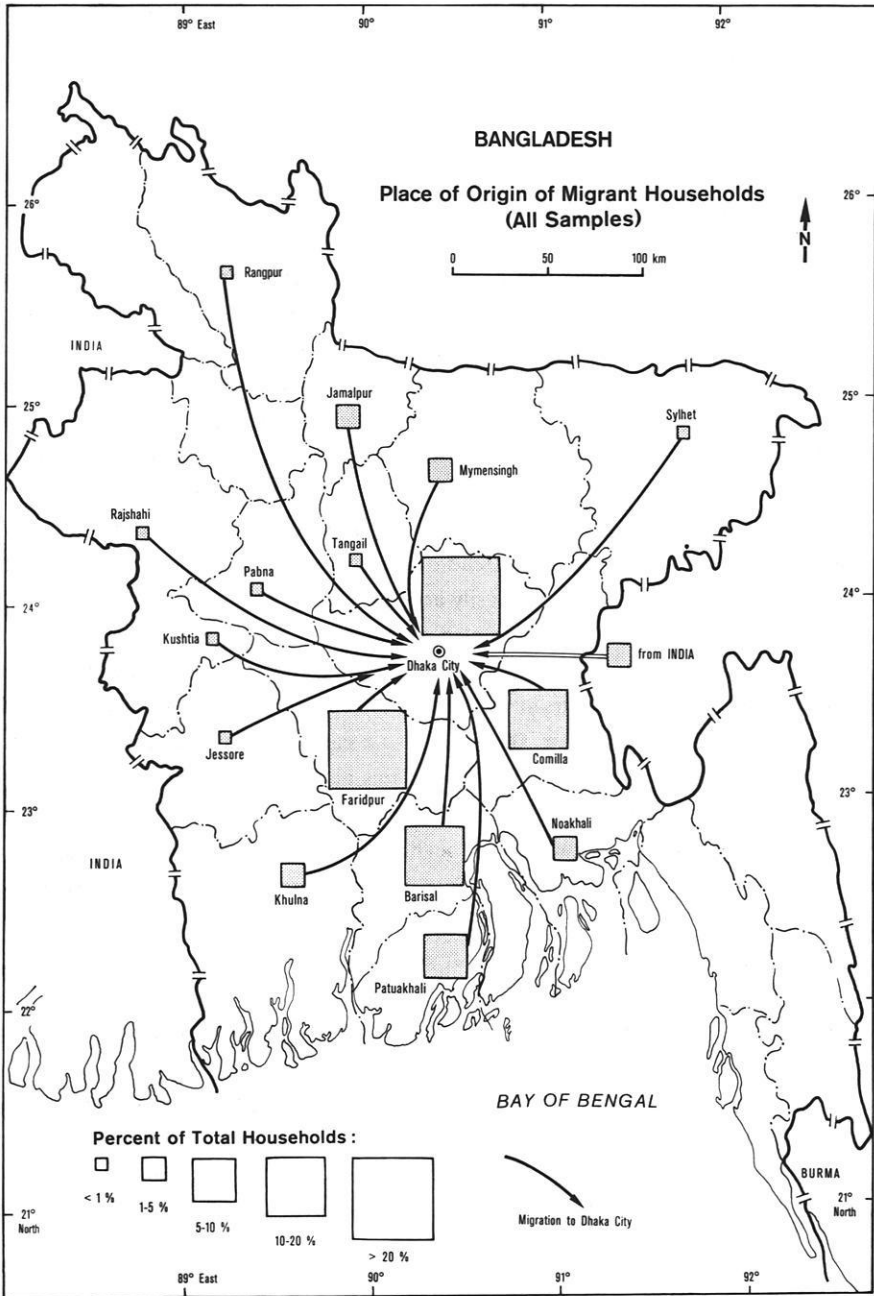
Figure 33: Migrants Level of Education

The migrants in the sample areas show a very low level of literacy (figure 33). About 80 per cent of the population above 5 years of age were found to be analphabets. This of course contradicts the general features of the city. According to 1981 census, more than 50 per cent

of the population of Dhaka Municipal Corporation area were found to be able to read and write. It has been further emphasized that the rapid increase of the literacy rate in 1981 over 1961 and 1974 was mainly due to the fact that large number of literate people from different parts of the country migrated to Dhaka city (GOB 1985c). It, therefore, needs some clarification as why the sample areas show such a contrast. It has been mentioned earlier, that the *Bustees* are the abodes of have-nots from the rural areas. The mainstream of poor migrants to the city find their shelters in these communities. In the rural areas, these sections of people have less access to education. Many of them were either poor peasants holding a small amount of land or wage labourers. For them, education is almost a matter of luxury. The income of these types of households are very low and therefore, instead of sending to school they prefer to send their children to work. Some people even send their children initially to schools and then withdraw. This is evidenced in the pattern of enrollment and drop-outs in the primary level (discussed in Chapter 2). In the city, sending children to school is a costly affair, and most families in the *Bustees* cannot afford it. The initiatives of the government or non-government organizations (NGO's) to extend educational facilities to the poorer sections of population are very insufficient. As a result of these, major part of these people do not receive any formal education. Figure 33 shows that compared to primary education, the percentage of population with secondary education was more pronounced. This relates to the smaller sections of young people who move to the city with some educational qualification or skill. It also includes those fortunate children of the migrant households who have been able to receive some education. It is worthwhile to mention that poor people in the rural areas usually cannot send their children to the cities for educational purpose. But the families who are already living in the city may try to educate their children. The prospects of education and skill are not unknown to the migrants and they obviously strive for this as far as they can.

4.4 MIGRATION OF THE POOR

There are numerous reasons which influence or motivate people to leave their places of origin and move into the strange urban environment. Not all people move for similar reasons. The various causes of rural-urban migration in the Third World countries and the different patterns which it exhibits has already been discussed in previous chapters. In the context of Bangladesh it has been assumed that major part of the rural to urban migrants constitute the poorer section of the rural population. The different evidences have revealed that large number of migrants come from the villages with relatively weaker economic background. For them the main motive of migration is economic. The evergrowing poverty in the rural areas continuously pushes large number of people in the marginalized groups. For these people



Source : Author's Survey Data, 1984

Design : S.A. Mortuza ; Drawing : D. Engel

Figure 34: Place of Origin of Migrant Households

survival in the rural areas is at a stake. On the other hand cities are places of opportunities where people can secure survival. This basic causal relation brings people from gloomy rural areas to the hopeful urban scene. To assess the validity of these assumptions examples are now being presented in the following chapter.

4.4.1 Origin and Background of Migrants

The notion that majority of the migrants in Dhaka city have rural origin holds true for the sample areas (see figure 37). It is further noticed that most of the households in the samples came either from contiguous areas of Dhaka district or from the adjacent districts in the south and south-east (see figure 34). It is observed that migration has direct correlation to distance. Aside from Dhaka district, other important sending areas are Faridpur and Comilla district, followed by Patuakhali. It should be mentioned here that major part of the population who migrated from Faridpur were reported to have come due to river erosion or general poverty. This is a calamity prone district and the people living in the catchment areas of Padma and its distributaries frequently lose their homestead or agricultural land due to flood and river erosion. Faridpur is close to Dhaka and is easily accessible by riverway. In contrast, Comilla district is relatively more resourceful. The rate of education in this district is comparatively higher than in other districts. It is close to and well connected with Dhaka city by road and rail. Another district in the south from where a significant number of migrants in the samples came is Barisal. Similar to Faridpur, Barisal is also a calamity prone district. Quite a few of the most violent cyclones in the country affected this and the adjacent district Patuakhali in the recent past. A significant feature which figure 34 reveals is that the number of migrants from west, north-western districts were very negligible. In fact, river Jamuna is a great barrier which makes Dhaka city less accessible to these districts. Especially for poor migrants, migration to Dhaka from these areas entails huge material and psychological risk factors. In the samples there were seven households who came from India. These people are originally from Bangladesh. After the partition in 1947 they first migrated to India. For various reasons they could not settle down there and ultimately came back to Bangladesh and landed in the *Bustees* of Dhaka.

In the villages greater part of the male migrants were engaged in agriculture (see figure 35). It implies that the migrants either had a little amount of land which they cultivated or they leased in land as share-cropper. A significant number of people were either land labourer or totally unemployed. It should, however, be emphasized that many of the unemployed persons actually belonged to the category of land labourer or other occupational groups. Due to scarcity of employment in the rural areas they remained unemployed for longer period of time. Most of the adult females stated that they were housewives. It again needs some clarification. In the rural areas of Bangladesh housewives indeed belong to the working population. Besides managing the household and taking care of the children, most

housewives in the poor families actively take part in various income generating activities. Many of them work in the rich households as casual labour. In total 12 skilled workers and 14 petty business men were identified in the samples. There were also a few persons (in total 19) who were enrolled in schools or colleges at home. A few number of persons belonged to other categories like beggars, priests (*Imams* or *Mollahs*) or street singers.

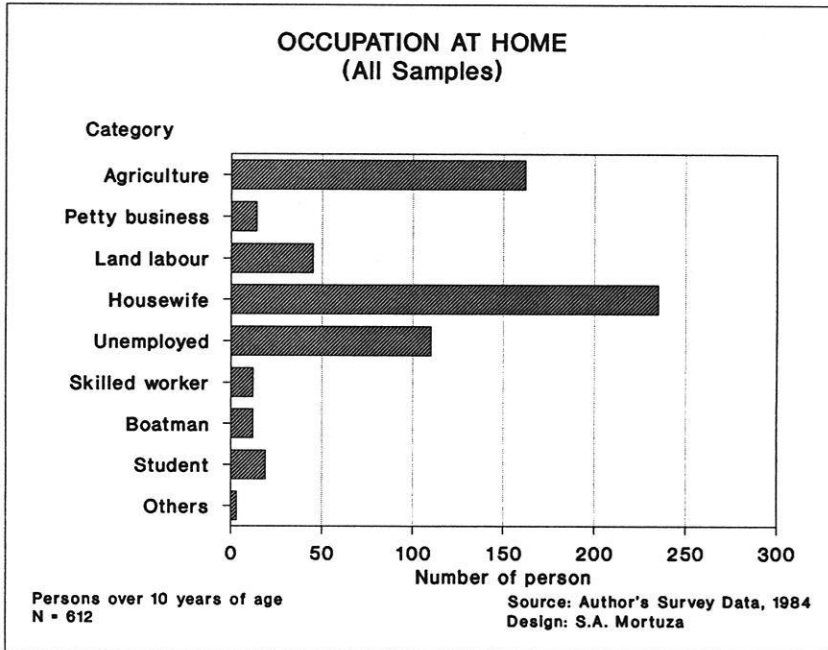


Figure 35: Migrants Occupation at Home

4.4.2 Why Do People Move?

To the question "Why did you migrate", the most common answer was, "due to poverty". Nearly half of the household-heads responded in this way (see figure 36). Though there were others who mentioned various specific reasons, these were again related in one way or other to poverty. For instance, about 20 per cent of the respondents mentioned that they could not find any job in the villages, or that wages were not adequate to maintain living.

It is depicted in figure 35 that quite a significant number of persons were totally unemployed at home¹⁶. They had neither land nor other assets with which they could generate in-

¹⁶ In this category all persons over 10 years of age are considered as labour force (see figure 35). In the government statistics, too, persons over 10 years are considered as civilian labour force (see GOB 1984b). The reason is, in Bangladesh large number of children belonging to poor families start working at a very early age.

come. Discussion with migrant families on many occasions revealed that several of these persons who were unemployed at home, were the heads or the main earning members of the family. Due to lack of employment in the village it was extremely difficult for them to maintain the cost of living. Out of the 110 persons who were reportedly totally unemployed, 50 persons were previously small farmers. The little amount of land which they possessed was either sold or mortgaged out to cover the cost of living. As they had no source of earnings, they could not recover the mortgaged land. These persons further narrated that even before a decade it was not so difficult to find a job with well to do farmers as casual labour. But the situation in the villages has deteriorated to such an extent that people (rich people) even refused to give them alms. Many of them, therefore, moved to other villages to find a job. Sometimes they travelled long distances (to other villages) during the peak periods to work as land labour. But the wages were so low that they could not save much and bring back home. For this reason, working in other villages was also in many instances not fruitful. As a result many of them remained for long time unemployed.

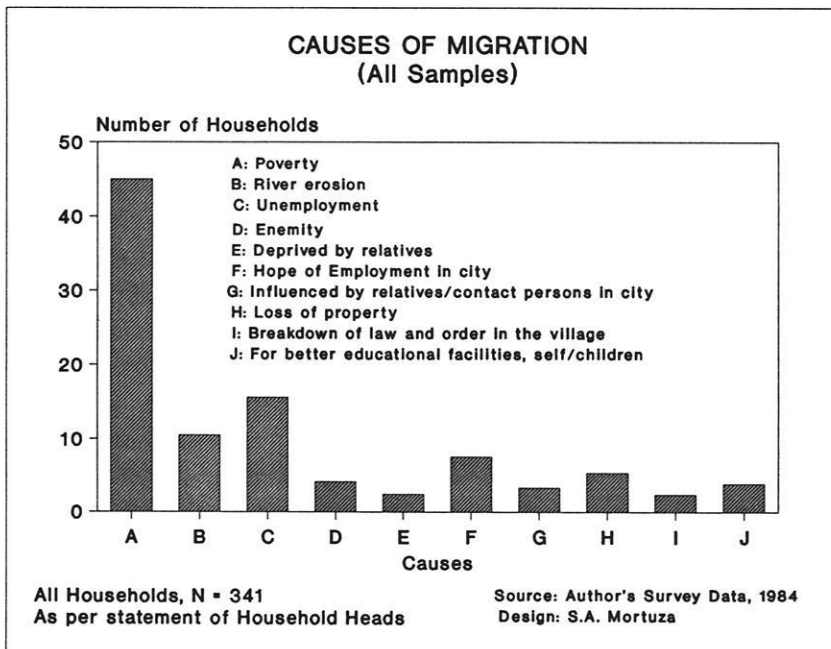


Figure 36: Causes of Migration

The second large group of respondents mentioned river erosion as a main cause which brought them to the city. It mainly relates to those persons who came from the *char* areas of the southern districts like Faridpur, Barisal, Patuakhali or Noakhali. Loss of property

(homestead or agricultural land) due to river erosion is very frequent in these areas which render thousands of people each year homeless. It was noticed that many of the households migrated either during the monsoon or in the period thereafter. The obvious reason was that at one instance or other, the families were affected by the floods or river erosion. The relief measures by the government or voluntary organisations usually do not reach the villages in proper time. Having no other alternative, people desparately move to the capital or other cities with the hope that they would find some means to survive. In the *Busteas*, people described that although in several cases relief goods reached their villages, they did not get any share of these. The influential local leaders or rich households in the villages misappropriated these goods and sold them for high prices to other people who could afford to buy. Moreover, relief or other types of helps could only save them from immediate disaster and were not long-term security for survival.

The number of persons who migrate to the city for better education is not very significant. It is, however, uncommon among the poor migrants that they move for better education to the city. In a few cases people mentioned that there were no educational institutions (like high school and college) and therefore, they came to the city for better educational facilities. These are mainly persons in the younger age groups who come to the city with the hope to get better facilities for education. In the cities, however, the costs of education are very high and at the same time it is very difficult to get admission. Therefore, many of them, who actually had the intention to study, change their mind and begin to earn money. In the *Busteas* there were some students who could not get accomodation in the hostels, had no relatives in the city or could not manage a host family to live with. Thus, they had to rent a hut in the *Busteas*. This was, however, in their opinion a temporary shelter.

Migration of one group or the other from the rural areas to the city has definite impacts on the remaining population. Migration to the city is not an once for all affair. Many people return to the villages in holidays or on religious or cultural festivities. They propagate the information of the urban centers among their relatives and acquaintances. In this way, the rural population come to know about the virtues of the cities. Information of the cities, thus diffused mainly through informal channels creates hope in the minds of rural people. In the sample *Busteas* 7 per cent of all heads of households stated that they came to city with the expectation to get a reasonable employment. They came to know from their friends and relatives or other contact persons in the city that in contrast to the villages, cities offered much more alternatives to the job seekers. Some of the interviewees mentioned that they have been influenced in this way by their friends and/or relatives who were already living in the city. Besides these, there were several incidences where people moved out of their villages due to enmity with relatives, neighbours or local people. It should be mentioned here that enmity arising from the right on the possession of land property is very common and frequent in the rural areas. In many cases it ends up with fatal consequences. Some of our respondents said that they were forced out of their villages by their enemies. A few cases were found where

people left their villages due to the breakdown of law and order. Two Hindu families in *Nawabbari* and three families in *Maurertek* told that the communal feeling among the Moslem inhabitants was increasing day by day and they did not find it anymore safe for them to live there. They would prefer to migrate to India. But they had neither enough money nor any close relative or friend in India who could help them and as such they came to Dhaka.

4.4.3 Steps and Period of Migration

It can be noticed in figure 37 that most of the migrants irrespective of their origin came directly to Dhaka city. Only a negligible portion of the migrants moved to other places before they came to the capital city. Among those, a good number of people moved between various smaller urban centers before they decided to come to Dhaka city. Among all the samples, 7 cases were recorded who moved first to India and then decided to come back to Bangladesh. But before they left for India, they sold all their properties and as a result could not return to their villages.

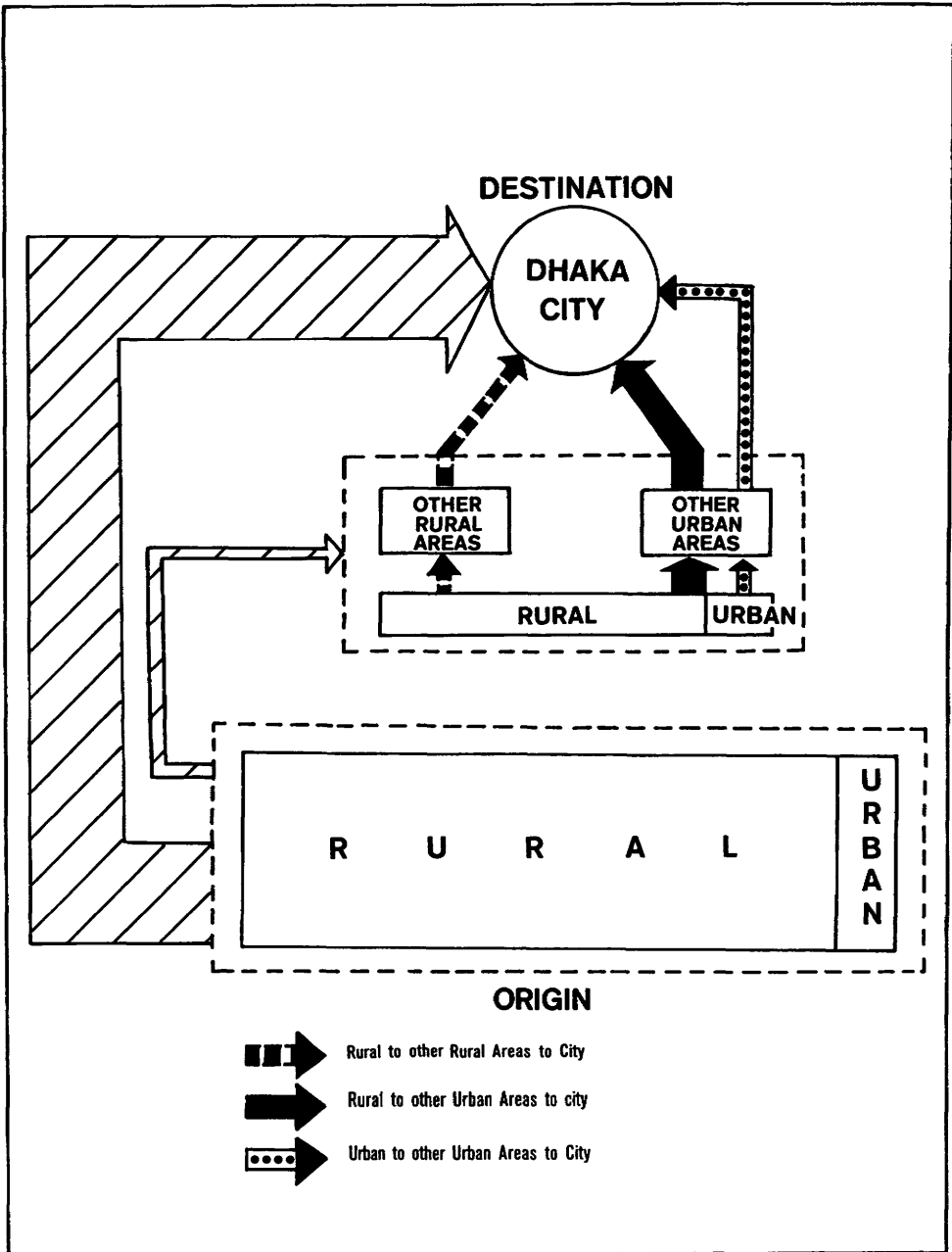
For the people who came directly to Dhaka city, the main factor was that they believed that compared to other cities, possibilities to find a way of earning was much better in Dhaka. The second important reason was the contact persons. In many cases people came to the city for short visits to see the situation themselves. After they were convinced, they moved permanently.

Various studies on internal migration in Bangladesh have shown that the movements to urban areas took particular momentum in the post independence period (see Chapter 3). The case study also show that the main stream of migrants came to the city after 1970 (see appendix 4). Particularly between 1970 and 1973 highest percentages of moves were recorded. This was most probably due to famine (discussed in Chapter 2) of 1974 when thousands of families in the rural areas were facing the threat of hunger and death. The *Langar Khanas* (gruel kitchen) opened in and around Dhaka city¹⁷ during the famine attracted a lot of migrants; many of whom decided to stay permanently in the city.

It can be gleamed from appendix 4 that in the period between 1975 and 1979 there was a sudden drop in the migration flow. This pattern is, however, unique for the sample areas and does not coincide with the general pattern in the city¹⁸.

¹⁷ According to official data several hundred gruel kitchen were opened in and around Dhaka during the famine of 1974.

¹⁸ In other studies, however, it was found that the rate of migration in the *Bustee* population was relatively low in the decade of 1980's (see CUS 1983).



Source : Author's field investigation, 1984 & 1986.

Design and Drawing : S.A. Mortuza

Figure 37: Steps of Migration

4.4.4 Financing the First Migration

Migration to city obviously entails costs. Even the very poor families try to manage some money for the road and for initial expenses. Despite the fact that many migrants have friends or relatives in the city, where they take the first shelter, these friends or relatives are also not rich enough to maintain them for longer period. Though in many cases these contact persons are very cooperative and do their best to help the newcomers. In the view of migrants carrying some cash money is essential for the initial security in the city. In the samples, only 22 household-heads mentioned that they came to the city without any money. Rest of the household carried some money with them. Various families managed this money in different ways. Over 34 per cent said to have saved money to finance the migration. Others (18 %) said that they were supported by their parents. A large number of people mortgaged their land or sold the small asset they had. This is a clear evidence for that most of these people were economically not strong enough to support their moves. Many of them sold even their houses, which is in fact the last resort in the villages. Even very poor people in the rural areas have at least a homestead and unless there is a very acute reason, they would not prefer to sale it. In extreme cases, when people do not have any other means, illegal practices may occur. Such a case was noticed in *Maurertek*, where a person confessed to have stolen rice from a neighbour to manage the trip.

The evidences presented in this section have clearly shown that larger section of the migrants in the samples stem from the rural areas. They are generally the poor people who risk their last assets to move to the city. The living conditions in the rural areas are deteriorating continuously and people believe that cities are alternative places where they can secure survival. Migrants are aware of the situation in the city. Information propagated through various informal channels and presence of contact persons in the city make them aware about the situation in the city. As a result large number of migrants move directly towards this city.

4.5 CONSEQUENCES OF MIGRATION TO THE CITY

What are the consequences of this type of migration? Are these people benefitted from this type of migration or was it simply a miscalculation on the part of migrants? To shed some light on these topics it is now attempted to investigate the survival mechanisms of migrants in the city. Survival of the migrants in the city is basically guaranteed by employment and housing. For this reason I shall explore these two basic indicators in some detail.

4.5.1 Housing of the Migrants

In the post independence period (after 1971) Dhaka city grew at a tremendous rate in terms of population. It is claimed that most of this increase was due to in-migration of population from different rural areas of the country. Compared to in-migration, natural increase contributed less to the growth of its population (see SULTANA 1984). Due to the flood vulnerability of the low lying areas around the city, its physical expansion capacity is very limited. As such the large number of people coming from the rural areas due to poverty do not have sufficient accommodation. The city authorities are practically paralysed by this large-scale inflow and fail to take appropriate measures to help these people¹⁹. As such these people adopt self-help strategies to accommodate themselves. This has resulted in massive growth of *Bustees*, which are noticed all over the city.

This type of unplanned and uncontrolled settlement has been going on in the city since long. According to the CUS (1982) study, at least one third of the city's total population live in these types of settlements. The rural migrants generally select vacant spaces and preferably public places to construct their huts. A main factor which determines the location of *Bustees* is the nearness to the place of employment (CUS 1976). Many of these *Bustees* are located on government land or on land with disputed ownership. It is claimed that about two thirds of the households live on private land. The rest live on government land, on railway property and on land owned by other authorities (SULTANA op.cit.:3).

The community survey in the sample areas (Chapter 4.1.4) makes it evident that most of the migrant families in these areas are huddled in shabby accommodation. Most of the *Bustees* do not enjoy services like sewerage, electricity, gas and garbage clearance. As a result the environment of the *Bustees* is extremely unhealthy and polluted. The *Bustee* houses are densely occupied. Average living space of the rooms is between 6-8 m², occupied with at least 4 to 6 persons. In some cases it was found that 7 to 8 people shared a single room of this size. Several *Bustees* are located in low lying areas. These are submerged under water during monsoon which causes immense disadvantage to the inhabitants.

Migrants generally do not own the huts they live in. Most of the migrant households are poor and therefore it is also not expected. Only in a few cases people were found to own a small piece of land, which they mostly inherit from their ancestors. Otherwise most of the households are tenants.

Examples in the sample areas show that *Bustees* are raised both on private and public lands. Ownership of the *Bustee* houses varies from case to case. In several instances it is noticed that owners of the *Bustees* are financially better off people. Some of them own more than one *Bustee*. In other cases, particularly in case of squatters, the dwellers are found to construct the structures themselves. For example in two of the *Bustees*, namely *Nawabbari* and *Mughdapara*, which were unauthorized occupation (squatters), most of the huts were con-

¹⁹ These people are commonly known as *Bastuhara*, which means people without home.

structed by the dwellers themselves. Also the huts in the *Busteess* selected during 1986 field study were raised by the dwellers themselves.

Except in the squatter settlements, where people generally live free of cost, in other *Busteess* people pay rent. The rents vary widely, depending on the size of the living space and available facilities. For *Kutchaa* houses it is generally between Taka 100 and 500 per month, for *Puccaa* houses the rent may go up to Taka 1000 per month.

The shacks in the *Busteess* are generally built with bamboo, thatch, tin and polythin. In a few cases woods, bricks and cement are also used.

Except for a few *Puccaa* houses where sanitary toilets existed all other people of the sample *Busteess* use open toilets constructed with bamboo. In relation to the population size, number of such common toilets are very limited. In terms of water supply the situation in almost all *Busteess* is precarious. Although in some of these one or two spots of tap-water exist, these are actually meant for public use and not particularly for the *Bustee* people. Water is generally supplied twice a day and every time there are long queues. Some of the *Busteess* also have limited number of tube wells, which are arranged either by the owner or by the inhabitants themselves.

Sanitation and garbage disposal are extremely poor in the *Busteess*. Though they are located in the municipal areas, the city authorities are absolutely reluctant about the matter. As a result, garbage keeps on accumulating beside the living huts and pollutes the environment.

In spite of all these negative aspects people in the *Busteess* feel satisfied that they have at least a shed over their heads. They obviously compare themselves with those people who live on the footpaths in open air or at rail and steamer terminals. With the rapid rate of in-migration, the number of homeless or floating people in the city has sharply increased in the recent period. It is important to note at this point that getting accommodation in a *Bustee* depends largely on contacts. Sample data show that at first arrival overwhelming majority of the people in the samples lived with their relatives and friends (see figure 38). Although another large group of people mentioned that they rented a hut when they first arrived, further discussions with migrant households revealed that it was only possible because they had contact persons in the city. The people who lived at terminals or on the footpaths were mainly those who did not know anyone in the city and had no place where they could go for shelter. Sometimes they had to wait for long time to manage a small hut. These people mentioned further that after arrival, they fortunately met other people from the same locality or some friends and acquaintances who helped them to find a shelter. Some of them, however, managed it by their own efforts.

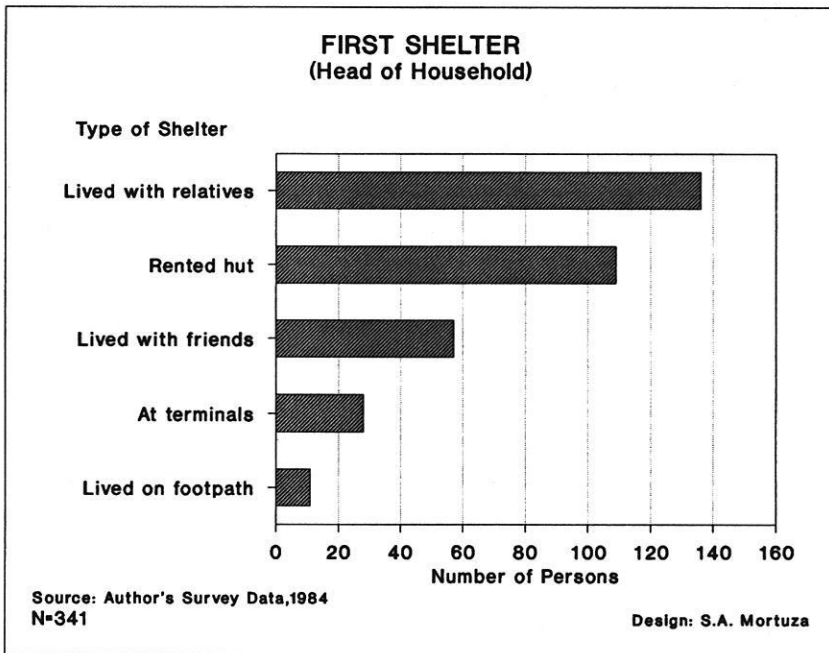


Figure 38: The First Shelter in Dhaka City

Due to this reason, a cluster of migrants from the same origin could be observed in each of the samples. It was found, for instance, that out of the 48 families in *Murgitola* 23 were from Dhaka district, 13 from Faridpur and 9 from Comilla district. In *Mughdapara* there was a cluster of persons from Comilla (9 families) and Khulna (7 families). The majority of the migrant households in *Maurertek* came from Dhaka district. Out of 82 households 29 were those from Dhaka. In *Nayabari* 9 households were from Patuakhali and the rest were from different other districts. *Maulavirtek* showed a cluster of migrants from Faridpur district. Out of 10 households interviewed, 9 were from Faridpur. *Nawabbari* on the other hand was concentrated with people from Comilla (14 families) and Faridpur (8 families). *Babupura* tended to receive migrants mainly from Dhaka, Faridpur, and Comilla (14, 10 and 10 families respectively from each district). In *Tali Road*, migrants from Barisal and Faridpur dominated (10 and 5 families respectively) and in *Bashtoli* the cluster was mainly of migrants from Barisal (7 families) and Faridpur (6 families).

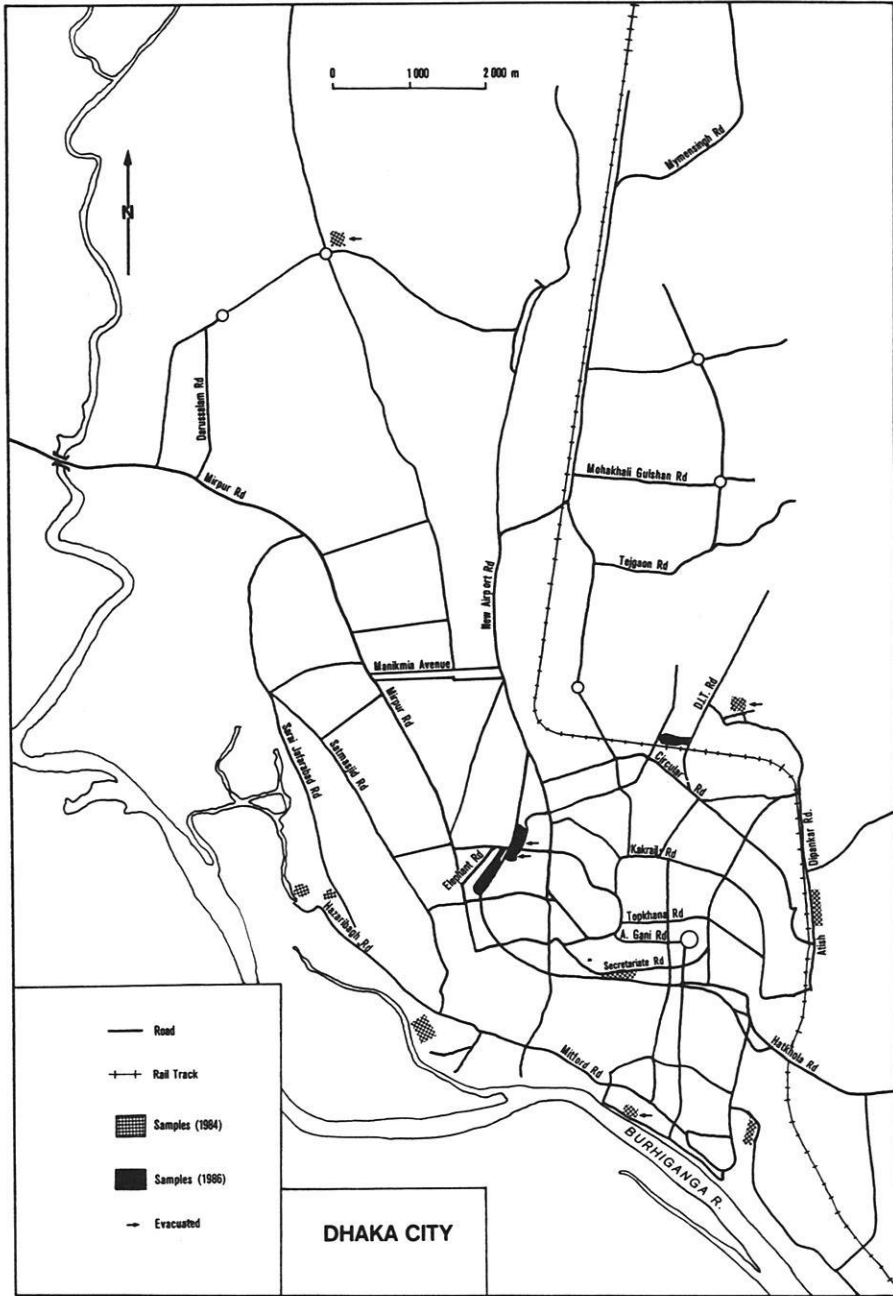
Concentration of *Bustees* in the heart of the city is considered by the city authority as a hindrance to normal city development. As a result, these shelters of the poor are frequently cleared. There are many evidences that the *Bustees* were forcefully cleared by the city authority. It mainly affected the squatter population. In 1974, for instance, the Ministry of "Public

Works and Urban Development' was assigned with the task to clear the unauthorized *Bustees* in Dhaka city. For rehabilitation, the evacuated population was brought to the resettlement camps far away from Dhaka city. Two such rehabilitation camps are located in Demra-Champara, and Tongi-Dattapara. These are 10 and 23 km away from the main city. The rehabilitation of the *Bastuhas* brought about immense distress for them. First of all, these areas where they were shifted are far away from the heart of the city and the communication was extremely bad. Thus, it detached the people physically from their job locations. In those areas there were no possibilities of employment. The authorities could not provide jobs to such a large number of people. Moreover, the physical condition and services of the rehabilitation camps were extremely poor and it severely affected the health of the people. Due to these reasons, people started to return to the city and reiterate squatting (see GERULL 1981).

Similar incidences of squatter clearance have also occurred in the later period, but mostly without much success. Besides the squatters, other *Bustees* on legal plots are also cleared from time to time due to various reasons. During the field study in 1986, several such cases of *Bustee* clearance were recorded (see figure 39). The *Bustee* at *Nawabbari* was forcefully cleared in 1985, because the building was to be converted into museum. The people from this *Bustee* moved in various directions. Some of them crossed the river Burhiganga and rented cheap huts in the newly developing areas in southern part of the city. Many of them were scattered in different other squatter settlements within the city or became homeless. *Maulavirtek* and *Nayabari* were raised on private plots. In 1984, these plots were still vacant and the owners of the plots raised *Kutcha* huts and rented them out. By 1986, several buildings were constructed on these plots and the poor people who were residing there had to move to other places. Similarly, the *Bustee* along Elephant road (see figure 39) was on the area which belongs to Dhaka university. The people who were living there were mainly the lower grade employees of the university. Since the plots were vacant, and the university authority had no immediate plan to utilize it, these people were tolerated. With the increasing number of students at the university and limited number of hostels, accommodation of these students became a major problem. Due to this, university authority planned to construct new hostels on this land. The result was that the poor employees had to vacate the place. As the university authority could not provide new accommodation for them, many of these people shifted to the footpaths adjacent to this land and raised new huts. These are, however, only a few examples. These incidences have become almost a conventional affair in the city.

Thus we find that housing is one of the major problems of migrants in the city. The examples show that this problem is largely solved by the migrants themselves. Thus it can be said that in terms of housing migrants are self-sufficient. The case study has also revealed clearly the positive role of migrant's friends and relatives in this regard.

In the following chapter it is now attempted to analyse the different strategies which the migrants adopt to generate income in the city.



Source : Author's Field Investigation, 1986.

Design and Drawing : S.A. Mortaza

Figure 39: Clearance of Bustees

4.5.2 Employment and Income Strategies

A basic problem which the rapid urbanization and high concentration of population in the city brings about is the severe competition for employment. Abundant supply of cheap labour from the rural areas affects the wage structures enormously. The formal sector of economy is very small to absorb the vast number of job seekers. It should be borne in mind that thousands of young people from the rural areas who come to the city mainly in search of employment have little or no education and skill. As a result, most of them join the informal sector²⁰, which shows a trend of rapid increase (see AMIN 1981; UDDIN 1983). Various studies in Bangladesh have shown that the greater portion of these "self-employed" persons consists of the migrant population (see CUS 1976). As far as the prospects of earnings are concerned these studies indicate that employment in the informal sector help the migrant households to generate income, which in most cases appear to be highly satisfactory compared to their earnings in the rural areas (CUS 1976; AMIN 1981).

The findings of the present study conform largely to these results. Before describing the survey results it appears important to illustrate in short some salient features of the informal sector in Dhaka city. In terms of definition, the literature on informal sector indicates a high degree of variation (see MAZUMDAR 1976; BROMLEY/GERY 1979). The empirical studies on informal sector in Bangladesh have defined the sector in the following manner:

1. "The informal sector as its name suggests is not formal in character. Thus the economic activities in any field not formally recognized by an appropriate authority may be included as activities under informal sector." (UDDIN 1983:11)
2. In terms of unit "the informal sector in Dhaka is defined to comprise those economic enterprises which employ less than 10 persons (including the owner) per unit and which simultaneously satisfy one or more of the following conditions: (a) it operates in open premises; (b) it is housed in a temporary or semipermanent structure, (c) it does not operate from spaces assigned by the government; (d) it operates from residences, or backyard; and (e) it is not registered." (AMIN 1981:81)

Application of the term 'informal sector' in the present study mainly refers to these determined criteria. Defined in this manner, the studies identified a large number of activities which could be categorized in the informal sector (see appendix 6).

Sample data reveal that about half of the total working population in the samples could be directly identified to be engaged in the informal sector. Out of the 34 per cent female members, who were recorded as housewives, majority were engaged in some sort of parttime job, also mainly in the informal sector. Compared to that the number of persons identified as

²⁰ For informal sector in Third World countries, see SETHURAMAN 1981.

skilled labour or service holders²¹ were very limited. It is interesting to note that the informal interviews with migrant families during the second field trip in 1986 indicated that a large number of adult females were appointed in different garment industries. It should be noted at this point that in the decade of 1980's there was a considerable growth in garment industries in Bangladesh, most of which are located in Dhaka city. Quite a significant amount of industrial disbursement in the private sector took place in this form. For various reasons, female labourers are preferred in these industries. The different aspects of exploitation and low payments that are frequently reported in these industries were not studied in detail and therefore cannot be described here. The employees, who were found in the samples, however, reported that compared to the nature of work, wages were very unsatisfactory.

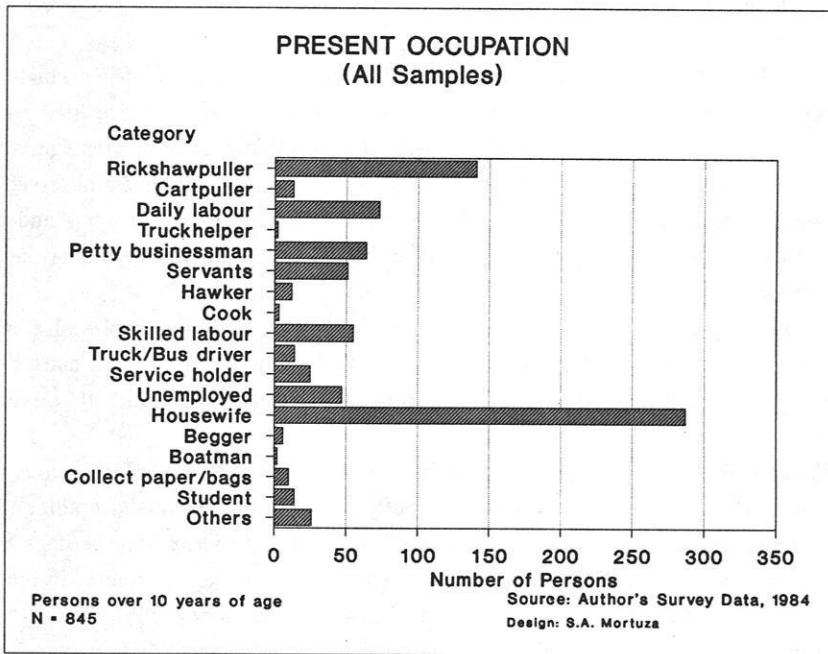


Figure 40: Present Occupation of Migrants

Major categories of occupation in the samples can be identified from figure 40. These are namely, rickshaw and cart pulling, daily labour, petty businessmen and servants. Due to the inadequacy of public transport, rickshaw is the main vehicle for the large sections of middle class people. Though the nature of job is very hard, rickshaw-pulling appears to be a lucrative sector of employment for the poor migrants, because the earnings are relatively higher. Of course, the huge supply of labour makes the situation rather disadvantageous for the employ-

²¹ Many of whom were supposedly engaged in the formal sector.

ees. Rickshaws are in general not owned by the pullers themselves. They hire the rickshaws for half day from the owners and pay a definite pre-determined amount of money to the owners. The owners of rickshaws are generally better off people. In *Bashtoli*, for instance, most of the rickshaws belonged the *Bustee* owners. It was further noticed that terms of relation with the owner as well as with fellow migrants who were already engaged in rickshaw-pulling played a decisive role in getting the contracts. For people who had less connection it was difficult to get a contract of pulling.

Most of the daily labourers in the *Bustees* were engaged in the construction works. Works like earth digging, mason helpers, brick-breaking for the construction of roads were most common. Particularly in brick-breaking many females and child labourers could be identified. Another job which is mostly done by the children is collection of plastic bags, utilized for recycling.

Among the petty businessmen identified in the samples, majority own a small tea or vegetable stand or sell daily consuming items like vegetable, spices or rice in the market. There are also several hawkers among the migrants who sell food or other items on a mobile stand on road sides or on footpaths. These types of mobile venders can be observed on all busy roads and particularly in the central business district, in front of schools and around recreation centers. In relatively busy areas city authority continuously drive the hawkers away from the foot paths to avoid congestion. It often leads to conflicts.

Very few people were recognized in the *Bustees* who were totally unemployed. Little over 5 per cent of our respondents reported to have no jobs at the moment. As a matter of fact, people in the *Bustees* cannot afford to remain unemployed, because it directly threatens their survival.

In the migrant households different family members are found to exploit various sources of income. For instance, if the husband is a petty businessman or rickshaw-puller the wife works as maid servant by a rich or middle class family and the children are perhaps engaged in brick-breaking or plastic bag collection. This types of employment structures in the household enhance the total family income and help them save some money.

In terms of monthly earnings the migrant households display a positive image. About two thirds of the families have earning of over Taka 500 per month (see figure 41). Among these, nearly 10 per cent households have over Taka 1000 and about 17 per cent of the households have less than Taka 500 monthly income. Migrants mentioned that since the prices of daily necessities are relatively high, savings is difficult for the families with monthly earnings less than Taka 500. So far the other households are concerned, many of them can save some money after all necessary expenditures. Some of them also remitt money to their dependants back at home (see appendix 10).

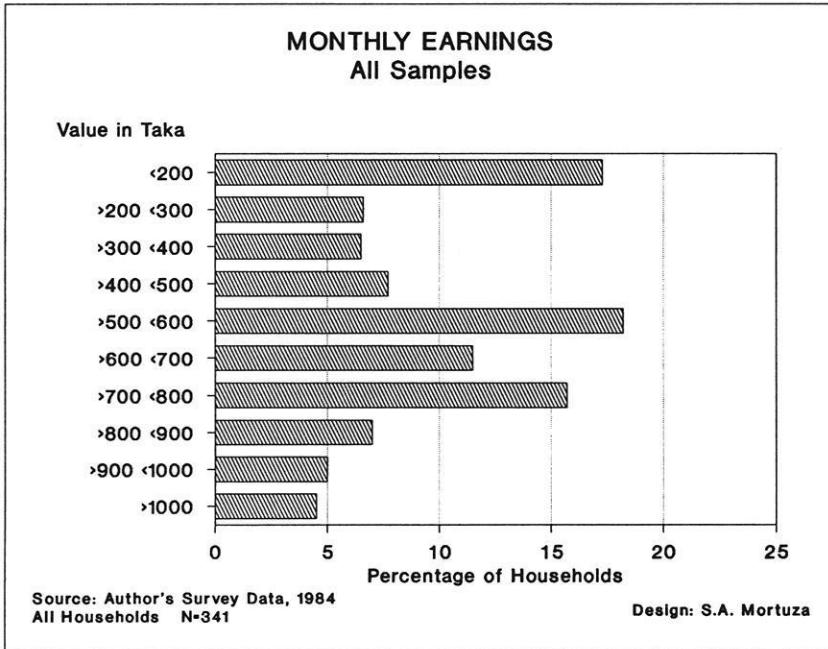


Figure 41: Monthly Earnings of the Migrants

4.5.3 Consequences of Migration - in Migrants' Perspective

In the view of migrants, shift to the city was a positive decision. Many of them live in the city since long and do not intend to go back to the villages (see appendices 7 and 8). According to their opinion going back to the village means a retreat to poverty. Many of the families sold their last resort to manage the trip and hence there are no ways left to go back to the villages. Others feel more comfortable in the city than in the villages. When asked about the change of overall status, 42.8 per cent said that their overall conditions changed to some extent (see appendix 9). About 10 per cent mentioned that their condition has changed substantially and 12 per cent cases were registered where the conditions has supposedly deteriorated. This was, however, perceived both in economic and social terms. For some migrant families the poor living conditions in the *Bustees* is a sign of deterioration, in spite of the fact that they are earning comparatively more money in the city than in the village. They mentioned that the living conditions in the village were more hygienic and pleasant. However, majority of the respondents considers the city as a better alternative, because here they can at least survive.

4.5.4 Migration to the City - An Interim Solution?

Appendix 8 shows that for most of the migrant households the city is the ultimate destination. For one reason or the other they do not intend to go back to their villages. Some of them even plan to bring to the city remaining family members or friends who live in the villages. Many of the respondents expressed the wish to bring relatives and friends to the city as soon as their economic condition would permit. It has been shown earlier (see Chapter 4.3) that a good number of households are separated. In spite of the fact that these households find it economically advantageous to live separated, many of them stated that if they decide to live permanently in the city, they would prefer to bring the remaining family members to the city. It was noticed that migrants continue to maintain contacts with their places of origin. Particularly those who have close relatives in the village, visiting the relatives is quite frequent. Most of the families visit their home village at least once in a year while there are others who visit twice, thrice in a year or even more frequently. For those households who have no close relatives back at home, visit to the village is seldom. Thereby, distance of the village from the city plays a vital role. For people from adjacent areas, it is easier to pay frequent visits. On the other hand people from distant places can not afford to visit their home villages very frequently.

5. CONCLUSIONS

RURAL - URBAN MIGRATION IN BANGLADESH

Rural-urban migration is considered to be one of the most important pattern of internal migration in Bangladesh. Besides contributing significantly to the rapid urbanization, it is profoundly interrelated to the process of underdevelopment, which characterizes the country. In spite of that, the subject has not gained sufficient attention of researchers in Bangladesh (Chapter 1.1). Particularly empirical research elucidating the complex interrelationship between this type of migration and underdevelopment process is extremely inadequate in the country. It has been discussed that lack of empirical studies makes it difficult to incorporate the topic into a theoretical framework (Chapter 1.2). Considering this, the main objective in the present study has been to analyse the causes and consequences of rural-urban migration in Bangladesh on the one hand and to identify its complex interrelationship with the process of underdevelopment, on the other. To do so, the "geographical development research" approach, which proposes to integrate development theories in the framework of spatial research, has been employed. On the basis of available literature on rural-urban migration in other Third World countries, several hypotheses have been formulated (Chapter 1.2.2). Through case studies in the *Bustees* of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, these hypotheses have been verified (Chapter 4). The consequences of migration have been analysed in terms of migrant's survival strategy in the city. In this regard, the migrant's perspective was given special attention.

Bangladesh exhibits an extremely poor economic structure with a large population base concentrated in a small territory. Similar to other Third World countries the population of Bangladesh continues to grow at a significantly high rate. Especially in the last few decades the rate of growth of population in this country has been phenomenal (Chapter 2.2.1). This high population growth rate can mainly be attributed to the reduction in mortality rates resulting from various health measures, undertaken by national and international concerns and without a corresponding decline in the rates of fertility. Due to various social, economic and organizational factors the birth rate in Bangladesh remains high.

High population growth rates continue to act as a 'catalyser' in further impoverishment of the rural population. Besides reducing the man-land ratio it in fact decreases all types of asset holdings. The social aspects like inheritance add to the problem and lead to fragmentation of land which in turn reduces the output capacity of the land (Chapter 2.1-2.2.2).

The rural areas of Bangladesh are characterized by gruelling poverty. Impoverishment of the greater section of population which emerged over the long history of colonial rule (Chapter 2.3) has been intensified in the recent time. Measured according to any criteria, the majority of the population of the country are found to live below the poverty line (Chapter 2.3.1). Vital resources for survival are very scarce in the country, and the rural areas exhibit that there is severe competition for these scarce resources. This competition obviously favours

a handful of rich people at the cost of large masses. Thus rural poor must resort to several alternative "strategies" to survive. In this perspective rural-urban migration represents a "strategy" for survival (Chapter 2.4 and 2.4.2).

Bangladesh is predominantly an agricultural country. The majority of its population live in the rural areas. Due to stagnation in agriculture and inadequate exploitation or misappropriation of resources, employment in agriculture becomes more difficult from day to day. Except for agriculture, other sectors are extremely underdeveloped and cannot absorb the large number of job seekers in the rural areas (Chapter 2.4.1). Thus the impoverished rural population constitutes a reserve pool of migrants. The rural-urban linkage in Bangladesh is typically characterized by an unbalanced interrelationship. Due to various reasons like adverse terms in exchange relations or urban-bias in policy planning, resources are continuously drained out of the rural areas and are concentrated in the urban centers (Chapter 2.6). Rural-urban migration constitutes a part of this unbalanced interaction through which the urban areas get cheap labour, for whose reproduction the rural areas have borne the costs. These facts obviously affirm the assumptions regarding the significance of underdevelopment process in rural-urban migration (Hypothesis a).

It has been hypothesized that in a calamity-prone country such as Bangladesh "sudden effects" would play a role in the migration process. The various pieces of evidence presented in Chapter 2.5 have largely validated this assumption. It has been shown that Bangladesh is frequently affected by different types of natural hazards. These have far-reaching effects on the existing poverty. Particularly the hazards like flood, river erosion and cyclone, which result in abrupt loss of assets of the poor rural people actively contribute to the out-migration.

The level of urbanization in Bangladesh is still in its initial phase. In spite of that the rate of growth of urban population has been notable in recent times. Rural-urban migration has been playing an eminent role in this rapid growth (Chapter 3.1-3.3). It is further observed that a few large cities in the country keep on growing simultaneously at a high rate. It occurs because power and politics are based in a few large cities and as such resources are transferred and concentrated in these cities. Through various information channels rural people become aware of these and also orient their goal towards these cities. In Bangladesh, Dhaka is best known for its resources and consequently attracts most of the migrants (Chapter 4.4.3). This evidence is a confirmation of the hypothesis regarding the rapid growth of large cities (Hypothesis b)

Most of the migrants from the rural areas comprise poor people (Chapter 3 and 4.4). Poverty, unemployment and natural hazards are the main reasons which push the people out of their villages (Chapter 4.2.2). They come to the city mainly to secure survival. The migrant's stream consists mostly of young, unmarried males, who often travel long distances to come to the city. In the city these people are concentrated in the poor quarters, the so called *Busteas* (Chapter 4.1, 4.2 and 4.5.1).

Within the city the survival of the migrants is mainly possible through participation in 'collective consumption' (Chapter 4.1.4 and 4.5). Utilization of the public amenities by the migrants for their survival results in heterogeneous spatial structures in the city. In the migrants' view, migration to the city obviously leads to positive balance and influences them to eventually settle down in the city. Examples from the *Bustees* in Dhaka reveal that migrants are, to a large extent self reliant. The investigation has further shown that in spite of adverse situations, migrants are able to secure their survival themselves. In this respect the friends and relatives of migrants in the city play a meaningful role. The clusters of people from the same origin at residential and job locations, which has been observed in the samples (Chapter 4.5.1), reflects mainly the influence of friends and relatives in migrant's survival mechanisms. All these evidences illustrated in the case study distinctly validates the hypotheses regarding migrant's survival in the city (Hypothesis c, d and e).

Nevertheless, it can not be overlooked that for poor migrants, survival in the city, in the absence of a social network, is a very difficult task. These people must struggle hard to survive in the city. In spite of all, migrants believe that migration to the city is a tangible solution to their poverty problem.

6. APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Distribution of Households by Different Categories in the Samples

Name of the Sample	Total Number of Households	Total Number of Migrant Households*	Number of Households Interviewed	% of Total Migrant Households
Maulavirtek	60	46	10	21.73
Nawabbari	221	211	44	20.85
Babupura	318	226	48	21.23
Tali Road	120	91	18	19.78
Bashtoli	115	92	22	23.91
Nayabari	140	133	30	22.55
Maurertek	350	339	82	24.18
Murgitola	460	240	48	20.00
Mughdapara	186	186	39	20.96
Total	1970	1564	341	21.68

* Identified through Census Survey

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984 and 1986

Appendix 2: Place of Birth Data

Name of the Sample	Total Number of Family Members of the Interviewed Households	Number of Persons born outside Dhaka
Maulavirtek	55	41
Nawabbari	226	126
Babupura	185	163
Tali Road	104	78
Bashtoli	90	75
Nayabari	125	105
Maurertek	366	225
Murgitola	268	121
Mughdapara	158	111
Total	1577 (100 %)	1045 (66.2 %)

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 3: Migration Decision

Name of the Sample	Self	Father	Mother	Husband	Wife	Brother/ Sister	Relatives	Friends	Spouses jointly	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	6	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	10
Nawabbari	24	6	2	4	2	-	4	-	2	44
Babupura	29	4	4	-	-	2	1	6	2	48
Tali Road	9	2	-	-	1	1	5	-	-	18
Basholi	14	5	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	22
Nayabari	27	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	-	30
Maurertek	44	10	2	8	-	1	8	3	6	82
Murgitola	32	5	1	2	-	-	-	-	8	48
Mughdapara	28	1	4	1	-	1	2	-	2	39
Total	213	34	14	19	3	7	21	10	20	341
%	62.46	9.97	4.11	5.57	0.88	2.05	6.16	2.93	5.87	100.0

Note: As mentioned by the Head of Household
Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 4: Period of Migration

Name of the Samples	Before 1940	1940-44	1945-49	1950-54	1955-59	1960-64	1965-69	1970-74	1975-79	1980-84	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	4	1	2	10
Nawabbari	-	1	2	8	3	6	9	9	4	2	44
Babupura	-	1	-	5	2	6	15	8	4	7	48
Tali Road	-	-	1	-	1	-	4	5	3	4	18
Bashtrali	-	-	-	3	3	4	4	5	1	2	22
Nayabari	-	-	-	-	1	3	1	12	5	8	30
Maureritek	-	3	5	7	5	8	19	12	10	13	82
Murgitola	-	-	-	1	13	9	12	10	3	-	48
Mughdapara	-	-	3	1	1	5	4	9	9	7	39
Total	-	5	11	26	30	42	68	74	40	45	341
%	-	1.47	3.23	7.62	8.80	12.32	19.94	21.70	11.73	13.20	100.0

Heads of Households only

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 5: Financing the Migration

Name of the Samples TOTAL	Savings	Loan	Supported by Parents	Supported by Relatives	Mort-gaged Land	Sold Land Property	Sold House	Mort-gaged Ornaments	Sold Ornaments	Sold Domestic Animals	Without any Money
Maulavirtek 10	2	-	3	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
Nawabbari 44	9	4	8	5	2	3	7	2	-	-	4
Babupura 48	17	2	16	6	1	1	4	-	-	-	1
Tali Road 18	2	1	-	1	2	3	7	-	1	-	1
Bashtroli 22	10	2	5	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	1
Nayabari 30	11	-	1	7	-	2	6	-	-	-	3
Maurertek 82	40	5	16	10	-	1	3	-	-	-	7*
Murgitola 48	13	5	7	4	2	3	8	1	3	1	1
Mughdapara 39	13	2	7	4	2	2	3	-	-	4	2
Total	117	21	63	40	9	16	39	5	4	5	22
341											
%	34.31	6.16	18.48	11.73	2.64	4.69	11.44	1.47	1.17	1.47	6.45
100.0											

* One person stole rice from neighbour and managed the trip

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 6: Activity Groups in Informal Sector in Bangladesh

1. Street selling and other petty reetailing:
 - Clothes and garments
 - Raw food (fruits, vegetables, fish, meat etc.)
 - Pan-cigarettes
 - Second-hand clothes
 - Cooked food (pavement eating and tea stalls)
 - Buying and selling of old/scrap items
 - Stationary items
 - Grocery items
 - Newspapers
 - Others
2. Repair and other personal services:
 - Shoe-repairing
 - Appliance repairing
 - Motor vehicle repairing
 - Pen, watch and eye glass reaping
 - Lock and key repairing
 - Garments repairing
 - Cycle and rickshaw repairing
 - Other repairing
 - Hair cutting/barbers
 - Shoe-polishing
 - Street-typist
 - Book binding
 - Sign board writing
 - Others
3. Crafts and other manufacturing:
 - Tailoring
 - Metal works
 - Shoes and other leather goods
 - Weaving (sarees, carpets)
 - Furniture
 - Bakeries
 - Pottery
 - Others
4. Construction work:
 - Earth digging
 - Mason helpers
 - Brick-breaking
 - Carpentry
 - Painting
 - Masonry
 - Plumbing
5. Rickshaws and other informal transport:
 - Rickshaws
 - Tempos (rebuilt rejected auto-rickshaws)
 - Hand carts
 - Bullock carts

Appendix 7: Length of Stay in Dhaka City

Name of the Sample	Below 5 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25-29 years	30 and above	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	2	1	4	-	1	1	1	10
Nawabbari	3	5	8	9	5	4	10	44
Babupura	8	5	8	13	7	1	6	48
Tali Road	4	3	5	4	-	1	1	18
Basholi	2	1	5	4	5	4	1	22
Nayabari	9	5	11	1	3	1	-	30
Maurertek	14	10	16	14	8	6	14	82
Murgitola	-	3	9	13	10	10	3	39
Mughdapara	8	9	9	4	4	1	4	341
Total	50	42	75	62	43	29	40	341
%	14.66	12.32	21.99	18.18	12.61	8.50	11.73	100.0

All households

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 8: Opinion About Going Back to Village

"Do you ever think about going back to your village?"

Name of the Sample	Yes	No	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	3	7	10
Nawabbari	9	35	44
Babupura	10	38	48
Tali Road	6	12	18
Bashtoli	6	16	22
Nayabari	15	15	30
Maurertek	32	50	82
Murgitola	10	38	48
Mughdapara	9	30	39
Total	100	241	341

Respondents: Heads of Households

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 9: Opinion about Change of Overall Conditions of the Migrants

Name of the Sample	Changed substantially	To some extent	Not upto expectation	Deteriorated	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	-	7	3	-	10
Nawabbari	-	25	17	2	44
Babupura	3	15	8	22	48
Tali Road	-	13	5	-	18
Bashtoli	6	9	4	3	22
Nayabari	9	11	8	2	30
Maurertek	12	21	45	4	82
Murgitola	1	26	21	-	48
Mughdapara	3	19	7	10	39
Total	34	146	118	43	341
%	9.97	42.82	34.60	12.61	100.0

Respondents: Heads of Households

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 10: Remittances to the Village

Name of the Sample	Regularly	Never	Casually	TOTAL
Maulavirtek	3	3	4	10
Nawabbari	8	20	16	44
Babupura	19	13	16	48
Tali Road	1	10	7	18
Bashtoli	7	5	10	22
Bayabari	5	19	6	30
Maurertek	12	47	23	82
Murgitola	4	23	21	48
Mughdapara	11	19	9	39
Total	70	159	112	341

Respondents: Heads of Households

Source: Author's Survey Data 1984

Appendix 11: Glossary of Bengali Words

<i>Adhi:</i>	A type of leasing agreement in sharecropping between land owner and tenant. In this type of agreement the tenant surrenders 50 per cent of the crop to the landowner.
<i>Aman:</i>	Autumn rice.
<i>Bastuhara:</i>	People without home.
<i>Bazar:</i>	Market place.
<i>Bondoki:</i>	Mortgage.
<i>Borga:</i>	see, <i>Adhi</i> .
<i>Boro:</i>	Winter rice.
<i>Bustee:</i>	Poor quarters.
<i>Char:</i>	A raised river-bed above the level of water, due to siltation.
<i>Chula:</i>	Hearth group.
<i>Grishma:</i>	Summer season.
<i>Gula:</i>	A type of agreement in sharecropping in which the tenant has to give the land-owner a certain pre-determined amount crop, irrespective of the actual output.
<i>Hat:</i>	Periodic Market.
<i>Hemanta:</i>	Dewy season
<i>Imam:</i>	Leader of a muslim congregation/Head of a mosque.
<i>Jotdar:</i>	Medium land lord
<i>Khai-Khalasi:</i>	A particular system of land-mortgage.
<i>Khana:</i>	Eating unit.
<i>Kupi:</i>	A small Kerosine-Lamp.
<i>Kutch:</i>	A makeshift construction, built with thatch, bamboos, tin, polythin or scraps.
<i>Langar Khana:</i>	Gruel kitchen.
<i>Madrasa:</i>	A mohamedan school/college; A mosque school.
<i>Mahajan:</i>	Money lender.
<i>Maharaja:</i>	Superior king.
<i>Matabbar:</i>	Local chief in village/A village leader.
<i>Mokrabag:</i>	see, <i>Gula</i> .

<i>Mollah:</i>	Head of a mosque.
<i>Muktijodha Sangsad:</i>	Freedom Fighters Association.
<i>Muslin:</i>	A fine soft cotton fabric.
<i>Nawab:</i>	A big land lord and/or administrator.
<i>Parishad:</i>	Council.
<i>Paurashava:</i>	Municipality.
<i>Pucca:</i>	A durable construction, built fully or partly with bricks.
<i>Raja:</i>	Local ruler (king).
<i>Shahar Committee:</i>	Town Committee.
<i>Shanjabhag:</i>	see, <i>Gula</i> .
<i>Shankhari:</i>	Shell-cutter.
<i>Sheet:</i>	Winter season.
<i>Shwarat:</i>	Autumn season.
<i>Sud:</i>	Interest.
<i>Taka:</i>	The monetary unit of Bangladesh.
<i>Taluk:</i>	Section of agricultural land.
<i>Tanti:</i>	Weaver.
<i>Thana:</i>	Administrative unit of Bangladesh.
<i>Tong:</i>	see, <i>Gula</i> .
<i>Varsha:</i>	Monsoon season.
<i>Vasanta:</i>	Spring season.
<i>Ward:</i>	Smallest electoral unit of the municipality in Bangladesh.
<i>Ward parishad:</i>	The council managing the ward.
<i>Zamindar:</i>	Originally revenue collector, later converted into large land lord.

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8. PHOTOS



Photo 1: Nawabbari *Bustee*. Thatched huts are erected on the roof top of an old abandoned palace in the old part of the city. In front of the huts, fuels such as cowdung and coconut shells are being dried in sunshine.



Photo 2: Densely populated Babupura *Bustee* amidst the government institutional/administrative quarters.



Photo 3: Tali Road *Bustee*. The man on the Rickshaw is a resident of this *Bustee*. The Rickshaw is his own. He bought it on credit.



Photo 4: Part of Murgitola *Bustee* beside Dholai Khal. There are several bamboo dealers in the *Bustee*. The free spaces are used by them as storage place.

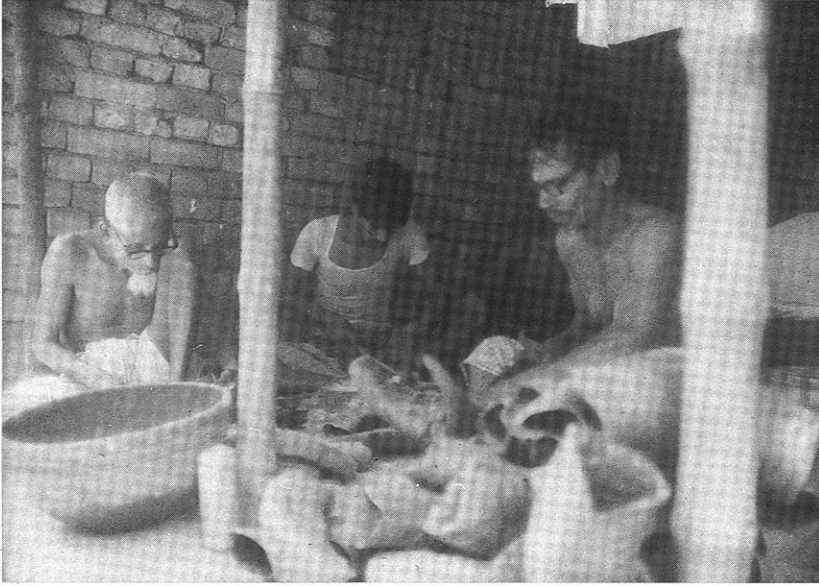


Photo 5: Informal activities in the *Bustee*. On this photo people are cutting ornaments (bangles etc.) and combs from horns.



Photo 6: The shacks in the *Bustees* are extremely over-crowded. This small hut (approximately 9m^2) accommodates 6 people.



Photo 7: A typical *Bustee* along the railway line in the southern part of Dhaka city.



Photo 8: The squatter settlement along Elephant Road in Dhaka - a consequence of forceful clearance of the *Bustee* which existed in the university campus.



Photo 9: A petty businessman of Murgitola *Bustee* - dealing in vegetables.

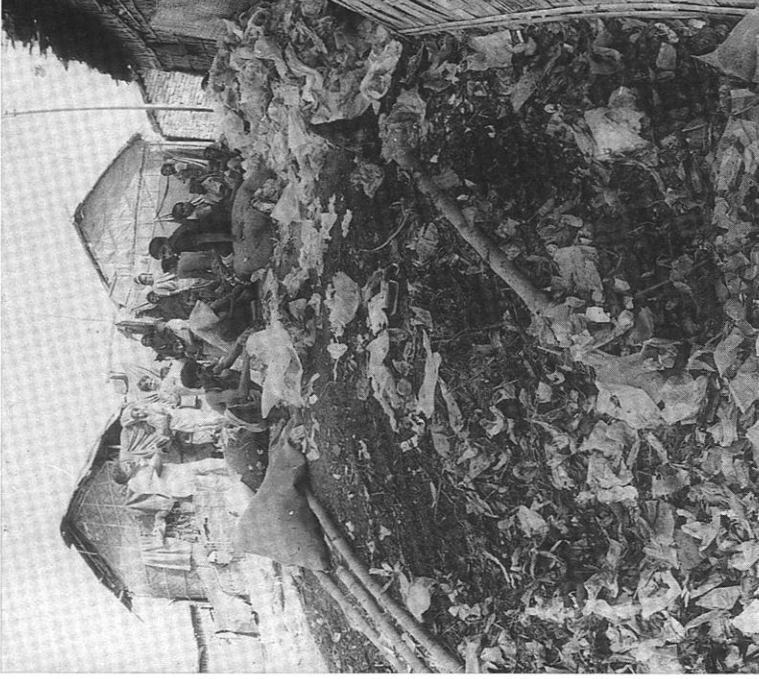


Photo 10: Collection of plastic bags by *Bustee* dwellers from wastes. These bags are used in the recycling industries.

The photographs were taken by the author between 1984 and 1986

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