

CHAPTER - VII



SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION





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Towns, being the focal points of economic, cultural, administrative and other activities of society, play an important role in social and economic progress. Urban growth is the most important indicator of the development of a country and its region. The study of the growth of the town and urban system is an essentially element of a scientific motivation for regional planning and development.

An urban centre is essentially a settlement which provide goods and services for the population of its hinterland along with its own. These services includes administrative, judicial, banking, medical, educational, professional services and cultural facilities. Further, towns provides the trading activities of wholesaling and retailing and even employment opportunities. Due to the multi-functional dimentions of towns, they become the attractive magnates to the surrounding goods, commodities, and people. And hence, the towns are growing very rapidly and gaining the functional importance and regional significance.

The growth of urban centres also leads to change in infrastructure, which in term, further affect regional, development, industrialization, transportation linkages, population, distribution and the entire rural-urban continuum. And therefore, the towns are growing in number, size and importance in developing countries.

In this context the measurement of the socio-economic and functional importance of the towns is very significant aspect of the investigation.

In the present study the hierarchy of urban centres in Maharashtra has been attempted. The present study of urban centres in Maharashtra more specifically highlights on hierarchic organisation of urban centres based on 1981 data and statistical information.

The State of Maharashtra, the most urbanised state of the country has selected for the study purpose. It has 14.04 percent share to Indias urban population. The state has 38.73 percent urbanisation which is higher than the national (25.72 p.c.). There were as many as 307 urban centres in the state in 1981. According to 1981 census 21,993,594 persons live in urban localities.

SALIENT FEATURES OF THE STUDY

The present study deals with hierarchy of urban centres in Maharashtra. The hierarchy of the towns in the study region has been established on the basis of population size, the area occupied by towns and the important functions performed by towns.

The population hierarchy of towns of the state shows different hierarchic orders of the towns. The hierarchic arrangement based on population size for 1981 reveals that greater the size of the town, lower the number of towns in the size class.

The population based hierarchy indicates that there are seven orders of the urban centres in Maharashtra. Bombay city appears at the top of the urban hierarchy of the state. It has 8,243,405 population in 1981.

The cities like Nagpur, Pune and Solapur are the second order urban centres of the region. These are regional cities in the State of Maharashtra. The ten cities namely Kolhapur, Thane, Aurangabad, Ulhasnagar, Nashik, Amravati, Malegaon, Akola, Pimprichinchvad and Dhule are the third order urban centres. Most of the cities are district headquarters.

The fourth and fifth categories of the orders includes 15 and 25 urban centres respectively. There are as many as 89 urban centres are the sixth order places having the population range of 20,000 - 50,000. There are large number of towns (164) included in the lowest order of hierarchy.

The urban pyramid of the state reveals that the greater the size of the centres, the lower the number of the centres in the size class. The urban pyramid further indicates that Bombay city, the political capital of the state is at the top of its apex and become the primate city of the urban scenario of the region under study. Thus, 307 urban centres of the state have been classified into sevenfold hierarchy.

A closer examination of the distribution of the urban centres of the state shows the wider regional disparity. The

state as whole has 35.03 percent level of urbanisation. The Bombay division has larger number (105) of urban centres and it has higher level of urbanisation (52.93 p.c.). Aurangabad division shows the lowest number of urban centres (53) and also the lowest level of urbanisation (18.31 p.c.). Poona division has 74 urban centres and 25.54 percent urbanisation, whereas Nagpur region has 75 urban centres and 26.09 percent of level of urbanisation. This clearly indicates the imbalanced patterns of urbanisation in the state.

The area based urban hierarchy of the state when analysed, it is observed that various urban centres have occupied different size of the area. And there is great variations of the geographical area occupied by the towns. The comparative analysis of area occupied by urban centres shows that, generally large size towns occupied larger geographical area and as the size of the towns decreases there is a tendency in the decrease of the area.

In 1981, the geographical area under towns was 5887.80 km² in the state of Maharashtra. A comparative study of area under towns in Maharashtra reveals that Bombay city has the largest (603.00 km²) area and Jejuri town in pune district has the lowest (0.39 km²) area.

The study of the area based urban hierarchy of the Maharashtra shows the seven tier hierarchy. It is observed that Greater Bombay and Nagpur city are the first order

centres which have more than 200.00 km² area. Bombay has national importance whereas Nagpur has regional importance.

The second order centres are Mahabaleshwar, Mangalvedhe, and Pune in Poona division. These centres occupied the area between 100 - 200 km².

The towns like Mhasvad, Ashta, Sangole, Kolhapur, Pimprichinchvad and Shirur of Poona division; Chopda of Bombay division and Dharur of Aurangabad division are the third order centres of the region.

There are 19 urban centres included in fourth order whose area range lies between 60 - 100 km².

The towns having 20 - 40 km² area under their municipal limits are the fourth order centres of the hierarchy. There are 48 such towns in the region.

Out of the 307 urban places of the state 78 places occupied the geographical area between 10 - 20 km².

The seventh order category includes 149 centres which have occupied the geographical area less than 10 km².

A comparative analysis of the orders of the urban centres and the area occupied by them clearly indicates the positive correlations between them.

The functional base urban hierarchy when studied for the towns of Maharashtra, it shows eightfold hierararchic

organisation of the towns. The centrality of the urban centres in the study region has been calculated by selecting certain importance functions and services.

The methods of Godlunds and Davies have been used to calculate the centrality values of the urban centres. A comparative analysis of these two methods proves the suitability of Davies method in which aggregate functional importance of a place is represented. The Godlunds method give the deceptive picture of the centrality score in the region. It shows the high centrality values of small urban centres and sometimes the large centres with values.

On the basis of centrality scores computed by Davies method, all the 307 urban centres have been placed into eight hierarchic orders. It is eight tier functional hierarchy of the state.

The Gr.Bombay city is the first order centre in the urban hierarchy of region. It has the highest centrality values. City Bombay is the political capital of Maharashtra and the economic and commercial capital of India. Moreover, it is the primate city of the region and a nucleus of varieties of industries, national and international trading activities, professional services and other social, cultural and economic activities.

Nagpur and Pune cities are second order centres of the region. Both are division headquarters and regional centres of

trade, commerce and industries, education and administration.

Solapur, Aurangabad and Amravati cities are the third order centres, their centrality values range between 0.01 - 4.00. Aurangabad is division headquarter and a University place; Solapur and Amravati are very important manufacturing and cultural centres of the region.

Fourth order category includes Kolhapur city and Karad town. Both the centres are ancient places. And commercial and educational centres in Western Maharashtra. Both the centres are located on N.H.4 and act as connecting nodes between the Ghat settlement and the Konkan settlements.

Fifth order centres include the cities like Nashik, Ahmednagar and Satara. The functional magnitude of these centres has characterised by the presence of administrative, educational and commercial activities.

The nine urban centres namely Thane, Ulhasnagar, Akola, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Dhule, Nanded, Sangli, Chandrapur and Miraj are the sixth order centres of the region, whose centrality ranges between 0.51-1.00.

Seventy eight urban centres are recognised as the seventh order centres of the urban hierarchy of the state.

The lowest order of the hierarchy (eighth order) includes the highest number of urban places (259). Most of the centres in this order are taluka headquarters and market towns. Their

functional magnitude is comparatively low, hence, they provided the goods and services to limited surrounding areas and population.

The spatial distribution of urban centres in different orders of hierarchy in the state displace the pattern in which the larger number of towns are concentrated in Bombay division. In this region of the state there are 94 towns of eighth orders, sixth towns of seventh orders, 3 towns of sixth order and one centre in fifth order and one city of first order.

The comparative analysis of the spatial distribution of different hierarchic orders of towns shows the regional disparities and imbalanced patterns of urbanisation in the State of Maharashtra.

The study of rank size relationship of urban centres in study area indicates that the actual population of the first ranking city has the larger population than expected population. Similarly the third ranking city Pune, indicates more actual population than the expected. All the remaining urban centres show less population than the expected.

It is observed that the Rank Size Rule is hardly applicable for the year 1981.
