

# Urbanization and Role of Women in Economic Development in Imphal City

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**Abstract:** Urbanization today has become one of the most important factors of development and modernization. In the beginning, the studies of Urbanization were extended to smaller ethno-cultural communities in large western Cities (like the Negros of Harlem) and then were extended to other countries outside the Western civilization. In the poor state like Manipur (India), urbanization does not have a long history though witnessed growth in urbanization trends. To analyze the trends of urbanization with particular reference to the urban structure, the impact of urbanization in urban ways of life and role of women in economic development are some of the important dimensions of our study. The present study is based on primary and secondary data and has an exploratory cum descriptive research design based on sample method. For further convenient of the study multi stage random sample has been made. The degree of social and economic aspects of urban mentality is quite high. Although no definite trends are visible in the case of relationship and interaction patterns yet the total analysis is indicative of an increasing trend towards urbanism in the area under study. It may be said that urbanization is taking place in the area under study resulting in urbanism and the growth and development of modern mentality.

**Keywords:** Urbanization, Urbanism, Women, Economic development, Imphal City.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the trends of urbanization assumes a vital significance in the developing and under developed societies like Manipur. As the cities and town till very recently, have been a phenomena manifest exclusively in the larger advanced countries, urban studies naturally began in Europe and in the United States of America. There are four aspects of urbanization (1) behavioural (2) structural (3) demographic and (4) spatial (TCPO, 1974) from the behavioural point of view, urbanization is considered to be the adjustment of personal behaviour and a change in the style of living to the urban way of life. From the structural point of view, it implies the differential ordering of occupation within a given territorial space. The demographic approach refers to a process involving an increase in the population of urban population to total population of the country over a period of time. The spatial aspect of urbanization refers to the transformation of the landscape with regard to utilisation of space from single or simple use to a complex one. Sociologically opinion is gradually veering round to the view that cities have an important role to play in the development of the region in which they are located. An analysis of the trends of urbanization may help us in planning urbanization which in turn can be an effective instrument of planned social change.

**Objective of the study :** The objective of the present study is to analyze the impact of urbanization in family and role of women in economic Development in Imphal. The urbanization and its impact on ways of life and structural aspect of family system and society in general are some of the important dimensions of urban studies.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The present state of Manipur lies between 23.83 degree to 25.68<sup>0</sup> north latitude and 93.03<sup>0</sup> to 94.78<sup>0</sup> east longitude. Its total Geographical area is 22,327 sq. km out of which 22,181.67 sq. km. has been leveled as rural area and the rest 145.33 sq. km as urban area. The capital of Manipur is Imphal which is at the heart of valley and is almost intersected by the 25<sup>th</sup>

parallel north latitude and 94 degree East longitude. It is at a level of 790 metres above sea level. Imphal city is a part of Imphal valley. There are four valley districts in Manipur namely Imphal East, Imphal West, Thoubal and Bishenpur. Imphal West is the only highly urbanized district in whole of state of Manipur. Politically and even otherwise Imphal city is the most important city in Manipur as it is also the main centre of trade, commerce and education etc. The present study is based on primary and secondary data and has an exploratory cum descriptive research design based on sample method and for the further convenient of the study multi stage random sample has been made. For collection of primary data pretested interview schedule has been used.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Our study shows that the age composition of the sample is representative of all the age groups. The youthfulness of the sample is shown by the fact that 70.24 % of the respondents were below 50 years of age and 29.76% of the respondents were above 50 years of age. Our study shows that tertiary occupation employment predominate our primary and secondary industry employment in Imphal city as 92.17% of the respondents were engaged in tertiary sector, 6.79% in secondary sector and only 1.04% in primary sector. Manipur is one of the Hindu dominated states of the country. We also found that 82.52 % of our respondents were Hindus, 9.14% Meitei Sanamahi, 6% Christian, 1.31% Muslim and 1.04% others. The people of the city of Imphal were attracted towards nuclear family as majority of the respondents lived in nuclear family (55.1%) and 44.9% of the respondents lived in Joint family. It is interesting to note that 96.6% of the respondents were not only literate but also educated and only 3.4% were illiterate. It is noteworthy that 57.57% had higher education in general and 6.48% of them had higher education in technical line. Numerical domination of the middle class is the characteristic features of cities. Our sample is no exemption, 4.44% of the respondents came from the lower income group while 75.98% of the respondents came from middle-income group and 19.58% of the respondents came from upper income group. It is very interesting to note that 93.47% of the respondents were urban born and the remaining 6.53% were born in rural areas and migrated to city. Duration of stay in the city of all the respondents was quite long as the lowest duration of stay in the city of a migrant person is 5 to 7 years. Generally two generation families are a norm in city. We also found that 68.93 % of the respondents have one to two generations in the family. In Imphal city both types of family system are prevalent. Our respondents show that people prefer more nuclear to joint family. 29.77% of the respondents preferred joint family while the maximum percentage of 70.23% of the respondents preferred nuclear family. Preference for nuclear family by a large majority of the respondents indicates their positive orientation towards urbanization, which may well be treated as indication of growing urbanization and urbanism in the area under study. Although majority of the respondents have shown preference for nuclear family yet it is interesting to see that majority of the respondents (66.06%) keep close relationship with their extended joint family. It shows that the ethos of Joint family is still dominant. Our study reveals that 7.31% of the respondents were migrants and the rest 92.69% were natives. 57.14% of the respondents migrated because of employment, 17.86% of them migrated because of education, 14.29% respondents migrated to the city because their family moved and 10.71% migrated to the city for other reasons. In our analysis we see that majority of the respondents migrated to the city for the purpose of employment and education. This shows a positive trend of migration from the perspective of urbanization. In our study we found a high degree of freedom regarding mate selection. It was found that in the case of boys 83.55% respondents reported that decision regarding marriage is taken by the boy himself and in the case of girls this percentage were 76.5. The percentage of such respondents in whose families such decisions were taken by the head of the family were negligible, which indicates that in the matter of mate selection degree of individual freedom is very high. Regarding marriage we found that our respondents were more inclined towards love marriage (50.13 %). 43.34 % of them preferred both love and arranged marriage and only 6.53% liked arranged marriage. Urbanization results in loosening of relations between family members and other kinship resulting in importance of individualism. It is noteworthy that most of the respondents consider marriage as relation of two individuals (89.82%). In Manipur marriage is almost done in the traditional ways as cent percent of our respondents get their marriage done in traditional ways. Here urbanization did not seem to have any impact of the traditional of aspect of marriage performance. It is interesting to note that despite high degree of individual freedom in the mate selection the form of marriage is still traditional. Although, dowry system in local language *Awunpot* (a gift) exists in Manipur, there is no hard and fast rule of practicing it. We found that in 55.87% of the respondents' family dowry was given by the wish of the parents and 27.68% families of the respondents were against dowry. Thus regarding dowry in Imphal the system is not a big problem in the society. Caste plays an important role in mate selection and it is supposed to be an endogamous group. It is interesting to note that the caste restrictions regarding marriage has

weaken, as majority of the respondents were not inclined towards caste restrictions. The respondents had full freedom of mate selection from any caste. Urbanization and caste system do not go together. Normally urbanization results in loosening of the caste restrictions. Our study also supports this view. In our study a good percent of the respondent's family practice inter caste marriage, out of which 65.52% were boys and 34.48% were girls. This shows that the traditional caste rigid society is moving towards urban open society which is an indication of urbanization. Majority of our respondents were of the view that 25 to 30 years of age was the ideal age of marriage for boys and girls. Nobody supported early marriage or child marriage. It indicates that our respondents have a matured outlook regarding the age of marriage. Regarding the matter of inviting people in the family marriages our respondents seemed to have an open mind as majority of the respondents do not practiced the restriction of caste, class, occupation and community in extending invitation. Regarding the freedom of women it was interesting to find that majority of the respondents were totally disagreed with the view that girls should be kept within four walls after marriage (63.19%) and 33.16% were disagreed with this view. This shows that the respondents by and large were in favour of women's participation in the outside activities even after marriage. It also indicates that the traditional gender bias is on its way out. Planned family is a modern urban phenomenon. Our respondents have indicated a high level of consciousness towards planned family as an overwhelming majority of the respondents practiced family planning. In urban areas friendship is supposed to be a personal matter. People are generally choosy about friends. But majority of the respondents give total acceptance for friendship to the people of their own caste, class, occupation and community. This shows that the respondents do not generally want to restrict their friendship circle. We found a unique trend regarding co-workmanship on the one hand and we found the majority of the respondents have shown preference for working with the people of their own caste, class, community and tribe whereas on the other hand an overwhelming majority of the respondents showed their willingness to work with any person. Here no definite trend was found yet there is consideration in the mind of our respondents regarding caste, class, community and tribe. Regarding acceptance of visitors by the respondents it is interesting to note that in the case of caste visitors are accepted where as in class 1.57% respondents give partial acceptance and in the case of community and state the partial acceptance is 0.78%. In the case of country the partial acceptance is 28.46% and in the case of foreigner it is 37.86%. And 1.04% respondents also said they would not accept foreigners as visitors. Neighbourhood plays an important role in one's life. Normally people want to live among their own people. Although majority of the respondents were ready to welcome any family in their neighbourhood. And they also have close / very close relationship with their neighbours. But the traditional system of always helping their neighbours is breaking as majority of the respondents (70.76%) were in favour of helping their neighbour occasionally. In a traditional society like Manipur it may well be treated as an indication of urbanization. But in the case of interaction within the neighbourhood, the trends show an opposite direction. We found that majority of the respondents exchange domestic goods with their neighbours without any consideration of caste, creed etc. An analysis of the occupational structure of our respondents indicates a healthy trend towards urbanization. Majority of our respondents belonged to service sector followed by business. The expenditure pattern of our respondents also revealed some urbanizing trends. Though it is true that majority of the respondents spend maximum percentage of their income in household necessities, it was encouraging to see that the expenditure of our respondents on education and miscellaneous items was also good yet the expenditure on medicine, recreation fashion and entertaining guest and other social functions were also moderately good. Our study shows that the maximum percentage (84.23%) of the respondents was not satisfied with their present economic conditions. And it is also noteworthy that 72.45% of them did either side businesses or work extra hours to raise income. From the viewpoint of urbanism it was also healthy to note that 90.08% of the respondents had a saving orientation. 65.80% of the respondents keep their savings in Banks, 05.80% kept in the post office and 28.40% of them invest their money in business/ share-market. This indicates that the people of Imphal City have an urge to earn more and more money. The above findings are further substantiated by the fact that more than 90% of the respondents save their money for bright future, better education of their children and for raising standard of living. It was also note worthy that a large majority of the respondents (69.28%) keep their saving for daughter's marriage. The basic purpose of saving of the majority of the respondents seem to be a better tomorrow for their family. Our analysis of the mode of making and accepting payment also indicates that urbanism is taking place in the lives of the people of Imphal City. It is evident that cent percent of the respondents make and accept payments commonly through cash only. In our analysis regarding the management of budget of the family, we found that both father and mother has almost equal share in management of budget of the family. It indicates a greater participation of females in the economic management. Our study shows that 96.87 % of the total respondents agreed with the view that women should participate in the economic activities. It is also noteworthy that a large percentage (98.17%) of respondents were against earning black money. Regarding the importance

of money our study shows that majority of the respondents (75.46%) favours the view that money is important in certain respects but it is not the most important thing in one's life. A good percentage (15.92%) also favours the view that money is the most important thing which can buy everything. Here respondents do not have a clear materialistic attitude in money matters. Our study reveals that majority of the respondents were conscious about the universality of economic corruption. But in the case of black money it was interesting to find that the percentage of respondents who were in favour of earning black money was negligible. Gender bias/discrimination is generally supposed to be a characteristic feature of traditional societies. In modern times the attitude towards working outside is gradually changing for the betterment. In this regard majority of the respondents 56.14% totally disagreed and 39.42% disagreed with the view that married women should work only at home. This indicates an urban mentality among the respondents. Our respondents have shown a good consciousness regarding education and its objectives which is clear from the finding that 33.16% of our respondents believed that the purpose of education was to develop self-confidence and 32.11% believed that the purpose of education was to develop awareness. Education consciousness of the respondents is shown by our finding that 83.55% respondents were not satisfied with their present level of educational attainment. Regarding divorce and remarriage we found a high level of modernity among the respondents. We found that only 16% of the respondents were against divorce. In case of male adjustment in married life and the remaining 84% of the respondents were in favour of divorce in such circumstances. It was again interesting to find that nearly 70 % of the respondents totally favoured this view. It was also note worthy to find that nearly 93% of the respondents were to the view that women should be given the freedom of remarriage after divorce whereas nearly 95 % respondents showed a positive attitude towards widow remarriage. It denotes a healthy trend towards modern urbanism. This trend is further supported by the analysis of freedom given to girls in the families of the respondents. We found that in the case of 96.87% of our respondents girls were free to undertake service, 86.16 % were free to go alone to the city, 41.51% were free to go outside town, 6.27% were free to come late at night. We also found that 99.22% girls were free to get education of their choice, 84.60 % girls were free to dress according to their choice. Our study shows that maximum % of the respondents' family did not have restrictions on fooding and social intercourse, occupation according to caste and control over marriage. When we analyze the freedom of decision taking in our respondents regarding certain important social activities, we found that urbanization is taking place in the social sphere also. It is interesting to note that 69.93% of our respondents' families were free to eat and drink according to their choice. Likewise 77.54% of the respondents were free in clothing of their choice, 62.66% were free to choose recreation of their choice. A very large percentage, more than 90% of the respondents were free to plan future and to get married according to their choice. In making friendship 86.68% of the respondents were free and 66.84 % were also free to invite and visit anyone. It shows that urban family does not exercise much control on the members even in some important matter. It may well be treated as in impact of urbanization on the one hand and growing urbanism on the other. It is interesting to note that 97.91% of the respondents worship God, out of which 56.14 % have complete faith in God, 42.3% have partial faith and 01.56% did not have faith in God. We found that 55.35% of the respondents worship God regularly, 42.3% of them worship occasionally and the remaining 2.35% do not worship God. This indicates that religion is not on its way out. There are different reasons for praying God, our study shows that a good percentage of respondents pray God for prosperity and mental peace (49.07% & 41.07% respectively) and only few of them worship for some other reasons. Here we may safely say that praying for mental peace and prosperity by the majority of the respondents shows a little bit of urban orientation in regard to religion though the trend is not clear. The acceptance of the culture of others for raising their social status by a large majority (93.73%) of the respondents is an indication of urban orientation. In the area wise analysis of the culture it is also interesting thing to be noted that in material culture we found a high level of acceptance of culture of others by the respondents where as in the case of non-material culture the acceptance level was low. In short it may be said that respondents exhibit characteristics of urbanism in the area of education, economy and work habit and they may be said to have an urban mentality in cultural field.

Participation of women in economic activities has increased with the advent of urbanization and modernization. In this context our study has shown a positive trend. Our study shows that in the majority of the respondents' families women do job for money (65.27%) while in the remaining 34.73% of the respondents' families do not do job for money because most of them were not qualified (60.9%). It was also interesting to note that women are free to go outside for earning money in the area under study. Our analysis shows that 93.73% of the respondents agreed with the view that women should work outside home for earning. Regarding the status of women we found a modern attitude among the respondents. It seems that regarding the status the respondents did not suffer from gender bias. We found that 87.21% respondents wanted status equality for women and 0.52 % wanted a high status for women. It was interesting to note that

the remaining 12.27% respondents wanted an almost equal status but they wanted it to be slightly lower to men. It is also interesting to note that majority of the respondents want to use money in a productive way rather spending it. In traditional societies job are generally caste based and decided by the elders of the family. In our study we found that majority of the respondents (84.8%) were free to choose the job of their likings. This freedom of job selection may well be treated as an indication of the modernizing trend in the area under study. An analysis of the acceptance of change by the respondents is also indicative of a similar trend. We found in our study that nearly 95% respondents try to change themselves according to the changed situations. It was interesting to note in this regard that only 6.63% respondents indicated a very warm attitude towards change, 37.29% have shown a warm attitude where as 56.08 % respondents had a luke warm attitude towards change. A similar trend was found regarding the acceptance of new fashion by the respondents. We found that 83.55% respondents accept new fashion in a normal way where as 10.18% respondents accept it with great enthusiasm. 6.27 % respondents said that they do not accept new fashion. Political consciousness and participation are important indicators of political modernization. We found that cent percent of the respondents participated in politics by casting their votes in election. According to Lerner, political participation leads to modernization. The voting pattern of the respondents also is indicative of a high degree of political consciousness. It is worthy to note that a very large percentage of the respondents (71.54%) cast their vote on the basis of work done. It is also interesting to note that 18.28% of the respondents cast their vote according to political background, 7.05 % on the basis of educational qualification, only 2.09% on the basis of personal relation and only 1.04 % on caste basis. Our analysis shows that majority of the respondents like women's participation in politics (91.38%). 33.16% of the respondents like to participate in politics and the remaining 66.84% of them did not like to participate in politics. It is also interesting to know that 52.76% of the respondents wanted to participate at the state level and 47.24% wanted to participate at national level. This indicates a broad outlook regarding active participation in politics. Our respondents showed a positive attitude towards city life. We found that more than nearly 66% respondents thought that the city life was very good/good. The positive attitude of the respondents for the city life is further supported by their desire to have more cities in Manipur. 92.17% respondents were in favour of developing more and more cities in Manipur.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

To conclude it may be said that urbanization is taking place in the area under study resulting in growth in urbanism and progress in role of women in economic development. Thus the study of the trends of urbanization becomes important not only sociologically but from the view point of planning also.

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The present study is to analyze the impact of urbanisation and role of women in economic Development in Imphal. The impact of urbanization in urban ways of life and the impact of urbanization in the structural aspect of family and society in general are some of the important dimensions of urban studies with special reference to Imphal city. I am grateful to our principal, Dr. Th. Khelendro Singh who inspired me to work in this area, but also made me work hard to complete this work.

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