



**Research Article**

**MYTHS AND REALITIES OF URBANISATION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT**

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**ABSTRACT**

Urbanisation per se becomes significant since it affects employment, migration, literacy, access to markets and infrastructure. Therefore, an attempt is made in this paper to analyse the relationship between urbanisation and agriculture. Thoothukudi district was selected for the study as the urban population in the district increased from 42.03 per cent in 2001 to 50.28 percent in 2011. A sample of 120 respondents was drawn from 6 villages located in three blocks to represent rural, semi urban and urban settings. Results revealed that vegetables were cultivated in considerable areas in urban areas (3.09 per cent) compared to rural areas (0.51 per cent). Urban villages were placed with medical facilities as they had higher number of clinics. In practical, these villages act as a hub for nearby villages where the medical practitioners set up clinics and provide medical services. As the urban villages registered the highest number of industrial establishments, they also had highest number of hotels and tea shops. The role played by the unscrupulous middlemen in land and real estate business aggravated the problem of idling of lands in this locality. This has resulted in land use pattern adversely impacting on agriculture. The semi-urban farmers considered non availability of suitable machinery as the second major constraint in agriculture in the urbanization context and they expressed that use of suitable machineries would reduce the dependence on labour in agriculture.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Urbanisation is an index of transformation from traditional rural economies to modern industrial one and progressive concentration of population in urban unit. It is arguably the most dramatic form of irreversible land transformation. With per capita incomes higher in urban areas than in rural areas, and non-agricultural growth having a greater impact on urban incomes, access to urban opportunities through migration and remittance is an important aspect of the diffusions of incomes. With large migrations from rural to urban areas, there have been significant changes in land utilisation. Land converted to urban uses is increasing, though it has little effect on total crop production, thanks to the high yielding techniques followed in agriculture. Urbanisation and rising buying power have moved up the food chain. The demand for expensive animal products grows. The developmental factors like agriculture modernisation, commercialisation, increased demand for non-crop goods and services, urbanisation, growing literacy and even welfare-oriented policy intervention leading to increased

job opportunities, etc., have tried to pull the labour force away from agriculture towards more lucrative non-farm activities in the urban/peri-urban areas. At the same time, distress factors like poverty, un/underemployment due to the inability of agriculture to absorb the surplus labour, and even frequent natural calamities like drought have tried to push the rural households to go in search of various non-farm activities to supplement their income and employment.

**Urbanisation in India**

A shift away from agriculture appears to have occurred in most parts of India over the last decade. As per the 2011 registration, the urban population developed to 377 million demonstrating a development rate of 2.76% for each annum during the period 2001-2011. The level of urbanization in the nation overall expanded from 27.8 per cent from 2001 to 31.1 per cent. It is noteworthy to take note that the number of towns at the national level expanded from 5161 to 7935 - a net expansion of 2774 towns (2532 enumeration towns and 242 statutory towns) in 2011 contrasted with 2001 registration. Jain, Ashish Bose, Rakesh Mohan and Chandrasekhar Pant, Kundu, Mills and Becker, Sivaramakrishnan et al., Kadi and Halingali, Bhagat have made critical commitments for the investigation of urbanization in India. The vital part of India's

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urbanization procedure is the best substantial urban pecking order and the metropolitan development. The ideal part of metropolitan development comes about with spatial spread of extensive urban areas which help in accomplishing the objectives of adjusted urban advancement. The basic data relating to Total Population and Urban Population in respect of India is presented in the appendix. It could be observed that with the increasing rate of urbanization but the population growth was decreasing.

**Urbanization in Tamil Nadu**

According to 2011 Census, the aggregate urban populace in the State was 34.92 million expanding from 27.48 million of 2001 Census. The procedure of urbanization is a whiz process related with development. The level of urbanization in Tamil Nadu has dynamically on the expansion over a long traverse of period. The extent of urban populace to add up to populace of the State had consistently expanded from 24.4 percent in 1951. Accordingly, there was a noteworthy ascent in the extent of urban populace to 44.0 percent in 2001. In 2011, it had additionally climbed to 48.5 percent. As per 2011 Census the normal thickness of populace in the State was 554 people for each sq k.m and in urban zones it was 3521 people for every sq k.m. Further, the development rate of urban population in the State at 27.1 percent had outpaced the development in provincial populace (6.6 per cent) in the vicinity of 2001 and 2011 Censuses. The speedier pace of urbanization alongside higher convergence of populace makes weight on the entrance to and nature of fundamental comforts. Table 2 presented in appendix I shows the trend of urban Population in Tamil Nadu.

**Table 1** India's Population and Urbanization

Census year	Total Population (lakhs)	Growth Rate (percentage)	Urban population (Lakhs)	Growth Rate Urbanization (Percentage)	Urbanization (Percentage)
1951	3610.9	-	624.4	-	17.29
1961	4392.3	21.64	789.3	26.41	17.97
1971	5481.6	24.80	1091.1	38.23	19.90
1981	6833.3	24.66	1594.6	46.14	23.34
1991	8464.2	23.86	2176.1	36.46	25.71
2001	10287.3	21.54	2861.1	31.48	27.81
2011	12101.9	17.64	3771.1	32.15	31.16

(Census of India, various rounds)

**Table 2** Urbanization in Tamil Nadu

Year	No. of Towns	Urban Population (millions)	Percentage to Total Population
1951	297	7.33	24.4
1961	339	8.99	26.7
1971	439	12.46	30.3
1981	434	15.95	33.0
1991	669	19.08	34.2
2001	832	27.48	44.0
2011	1097	34.92	48.50

(Source: Director of Census Operations, Tamil Nadu)

**Table 3** Trend of urbanization in Thoothukudi District (in million)

Year	Thoothukudi District		
	Total Population	Urban Population	% share in Total Population
1991	14.75	0.59	4.04
2001	15.72	0.66	4.19
2011	17.50	0.87	4.97

(Source: District Hand Book, Thoothukudi)

Aside from that the quickened pace of urbanization additionally brings about noteworthy overflow into peri-urban regions and in this manner, these regions should be incorporated into urban arranging. In this specific situation, uncommon land utilize methodology might be developed to address urban extension and out development.

According to Census 2011, urbanization rate in 17 locale is beneath the State normal (48.5 per cent). Among these areas, Ariyalur, Villupuram, Dharmapuri, Pudukkottai, Thiruvannamalai, Thiruvarur, Krishnagiri and Nagapattinam are the slightest urbanized ones. Urbanization was higher than the State's normal in the remaining 15 locale. Among them, Chennai, Kanniyakumari, Coimbatore, Thiruvallur, Kancheepuram, Tiruppur, Madurai and Thoothukudi are exceedingly urbanized areas.

**Urbanization Trend in Thoothukudi District**

Urbanizations process in Thoothukudi District has been taking place at a higher rate. Trend in urban population in presented in Appendix I. Owing to its strategic location, it has become the largest hub for development service and production sector in south Tamil Nadu. The urban Population of Thoothukudi increased from 42.03 per cent in 2001 to 50.28 per cent in 2011 and it has occupied 4745 sq km. It has been estimated that the population of the city of Thoothukudi city expands 0.5 per cent annually and more and more industries are being established and hence the city engulfs larger area year after year. Obviously, more and more resources are needed to meet the demand of the burgeoning population. Goaded by its expansion rapidity, saltpan, fishing, power and chemical industries are flourishing in Thoothukudi and also in the adjoining area. Hence, it was decided to study the pattern and impact of urbanization on agriculture in the neighboring areas of Thoothukudi City.

Urbanisation and economic development are broadly synonymous and therefore the issue of agricultural production needs to be dealt in the context of recent developments of sustained growth in incomes and urbanisation as well. Urbanisation per se becomes significant since it affects employment, migration, literacy, access to markets and infrastructure. Therefore, an attempt is made in this paper to analyse the relationship between urbanisation and agriculture. Over all objective of the study was to study the pattern of urbanization and its impact on agriculture. Specific objectives were: i. to analyze the pattern of urbanization in the study area, ii. To assess the impacts of urbanization on farming in the study area.

**Data and Methodology**

The study made use of both primary and secondary data purposively collected for the study. The primary data required for the study were collected through personal interview method with the help of a comprehensive interview schedule. Two separate sets of interview schedules were prepared one for urban area and another for semi-urban/rural area. Thoothukudi district was selected for the study as the urban population in the district increased from 42.03 per cent in 2001 to 50.28 percent in 2011. Among the blocks of the district, three blocks were selected to represent urban, semi-urban and rural settings considering the distance from the nucleus of urbanization like 0-20 kms, 20-40 kms and beyond 40 kms. Two villages were selected at random from each block and

twenty sample respondents were drawn from each village to make a total sample size of 120.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Data collected were analysed with reference to the specific objectives and the results are presented below.

***Cropping pattern in the sample farmers***

Cropping pattern adopted by farmers influence resource use, employment, cost and return in the farming enterprises. Moreover, level of urbanization influences the cropping pattern and hence, the area under different crops were collected from the sample farms and the cropping pattern for the sample farms is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4** Cropping pattern in the sample farms of Thoothukudi District

S.No	Crop	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural
1	Paddy	8.5 (33.59)	39.5 (20.24)	54 (31.59)
4	Banana	7 (27.66)	84 (43.05)	71 (41.54)
5	Pulses	8 (31.62)	22 (11.27)	38.6 (22.58)
7	Ground nut	-	4 (2.05)	5.5 (3.21)
8	Vegetables	1.8 (7.11)	6.4 (3.28)	1.3 (0.76)
9	Other crops	-	39.2 (20.09)	0.50 (0.29)
10	Gross cropped area	25.30 (100.00)	195.1 (100.00)	170.9 (100.00)
11	Area sown more than once	12.25	84.1	112.2
12	Net sown area (NSA)	46	111	138.60

Table 4 clearly indicated the preponderance of banana crop in the study area irrespective of the semi-urban and rural areas. Banana was the more predominant crop in Srivaikundam and Alwarthirunagari blocks and it occupied 43.05 and 41.54 per cent of gross cropped area in semi-urban and rural farms respectively, whereas its share in urban farms was 27.66 per cent only. Cultivation of rice fallow pulses was in vogue in the Srivaikundam and Alwarthirugari blocks of Thoothukudi district and hence, pulses shared 11.27 and 22.58 per cent of gross cropped area in urban and semi-urban farms respectively. It was interesting to note that vegetables were cultivated in considerable areas in urban areas (7.11 per cent) compared to rural areas (0.76 per cent). Location advantage could be reason for the above phenomenon as the fresh vegetables are needed by the urban people and they are much conscious have much interested on their food habits. The rural farms have registered the highest cropping intensity (180.95 per cent) followed by semi-urban (175.76 per cent) and urban (126.66 per cent).

***Food consumption pattern of family members in sample farms***

Data presented in Table 5 shows the food consumption pattern of family members. Ten years before, the usage of cereals were high in all the three study area with 30.5 kg, 32.5 kg and 45.56 kg share in the monthly consumption. During the study period (April-May2018) the usage of cereals were reduced to 25.65 kg, 29.6 kg, 37.35 kg in urban, semi-urban, rural area respectively. The reduced amount was replaced by some other food products like meat, chicken and millets etc., The reason behind the change may be the people go for high value foods. Vegetables consumption increased to 9.7 kg from 8.5 kg in urban areas over the years yet, semi –urban area has recorded a marginal decrease (6.8 kg from 7.6 kg) between 10 years period. Meat and chicken consumption increased in urban areas. It was only 2.34 kg earlier, but it was now 3.02 kg while

in semi-urban areas the consumption of meat and chicken reduced.

**Table 5** Food consumption pattern of family members in sample farm (in quantity/month)

S.No	Particulars	Urban		Semi-urban		Rural	
		10 years before	Now	10 years before	Now	10 years before	Now
1	Cereals(kg)	30.5	25.65	32.5	29.6	45.56	37.35
2	Pulses (kg)	1.5	1.97	2.4	1.6	2.76	2.02
3	Millets(kg)	0.5	1.95	3.1	0.17	1.75	0.3
4	Oil (lit)	2.5	2.76	2.5	1.9	2.02	2.5
3	Vegetables(kg)	8.5	9.7	7.6	6.8	10.57	8.3
4	Meat, chicken(kg)	2.34	3.02	2.5	1.6	1.6	1.9
5	Fish (kg)	2.87	2.12	2.02	1.4	2.5	1.7
5	Milk(kg)	28	32	25	29	25	27
6	Sugar(kg)	2.5	3.4	2.05	2.02	1.75	2.5

***Indicators for urbanization***

The process of urbanization is expected to improve the standard of living as there is congregation of population which also provides scale advantage for creation of public amenities and infrastructure. Besides, increase in population, better availability of education, health, and service were the fall out of urbanization. Hence, data on those vital parameters which would act as indicators of urbanization process were collected from various secondary sources and presented in Table 6.

**Table 6** Indicators of urbanization in the sample villages

S.No	Indicator	Urban	Semi-urban	Rural
1	Literacy ( in per cent)	95	89	84
A	Males	54.58	56.25	57.42
B	Females	45.6	43.74	42.55
2	Number of schools/1000 people	3.39	2.61	1.47
3	Number of clinics and hospitals/ 1000	3.47	2.95	1.80
4	Number of shopping centres/1000	6.41	2.31	1.10
5	Number of hotels/1000 people	6.02	3.90	2.20
6	No. of telephone lines/1000 people	100.0	98.6	88.94
7	No. of manufacturing/ industrial units	12.56	6.25	2.10
8	No. of banks/1000 people	2.13	1.35	0.97

(source:District Census Handbook ,2016, O/O, Director of District census, Thoothukudi)

It could be inferred from the table that in urban area villages had better civic amenities and other facilities when compared to semi- urban and rural villages. The urban area villages had more number of schools and it was reflected in the literacy rate. These villages had the highest literacy rate 95 per cent. Rural villages had a literacy rate of 84 per cent.

Urban villages were placed with medical facilities as they had higher number of clinics. In practical, these villages act as a hub for nearby villages where the medical practitioners set up clinics and provide medical services. Rural villages still do not witness any progress in medical facilities which registered low level of establishment of clinics. Less population density and lesser money rotation among the rural people could be the reason for existence of meagre medical services. As the urban villages registered the highest number of industrial establishments, they also had highest number of hotels and tea shops. Larger mobility of labour force and round the clock demand had lead to establishments of larger number of hotels in these villages. The number of such food establishments was low in rural villages. Besides this, the working hours of these refreshment cafeterias in rural villages were very short due to the existence of demand during dawn and dusk only.

***Problems in cultivation***

The present day farming confronts many types of complex problems which were not witnessed in the past. Lopsided

changes in the industrial sector of the economy had serious ramification on farm sector. It included complexities in employment, land use, input availability etc., Hence, respondents in the study area were asked to rank the problems in crop cultivation and the results are presented in Table 7

**Table 7** Problems encountered in cultivation

S.no	Perception	Urban		Semi-urban		Rural	
		Rank	Mean Score	Rank	Mean Score	Rank	Mean Score
1	Labour scarcity and High wages	I	14 (35.00)	I	13 (32.50)	I	18 (45.00)
2	Shrinking farm area	II	8 (22.50)	VI	2 (5.00)	---	---
3	Non availability of suitable machinery	V	7 (17.50)	II	10 (22.50)	II	12 (30.00)
4	Pollution hazards	IV	5 (12.50)	V	4 (7.50)	---	---
5	Urbanization impacts like idling of lands	III	4 (7.5)	IV	3 (5.00)	---	---
6	Water scarcity	VI	2 (5.00)	III	8 (17.50)	III	10 (25.00)

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage)

It could be inferred that among all the problems that hinder agriculture, labour scarcity was the principal problem in all the farms irrespective of production environments. It hindered farm operations and even to prolong the harvest operations to a month especially during the samba season. The farmers complained that even the aged male and female laborers were employed in the secondary and tertiary sector in security and housekeeping operations respectively but not in farming operations. Second reason was the shrinking in farm area in urban farms, which deny farmers the economies of scale advantage. The farmers had to travel to distant places for purchase of vital inputs like seeds, fertilizers and pesticides adding to their woe. Obviously, idling of lands and related problems were ranked as the third major constraints by the urban farmers in the study area. The role played by the unscrupulous middlemen in land and real estate business aggravated the problem of idling of lands in this locality. This has resulted in land use pattern adversely impacting on agriculture.

The semi-urban farmers considered non availability of suitable machinery as the second major constraint in agriculture in the urbanization context and they expressed that use of suitable machineries would reduce the dependence on labour in agriculture. The same trend was observed in the rural farms also. Since, agriculture is the major occupation in semi-urban and rural areas, water scarcity especially during the summer season was ranked as the third important constraint. Pollution related issues were ranked as the fourth important problem in urban farms and large-scale upcoming of industries over the years and its impact on soil, water and air might have made the farmers to express this problem. The urbanization process has now slowly sneaking in semi-urban areas also and it was properly depicted among the minds of the farmers who assigned the idling of lands as fourth major problem in agriculture.

## CONCLUSIONS

An attempt has been made in this paper to analyse the relationship between urbanization and agricultural growth in India. The pattern of urbanization in Thoothukudi district is characterized by continuous concentration of population and activities in large cities. With heavy migrations from rural to urban areas, there have been significant changes in land utilization. Land converted to urban uses is increasing, though it has little effect on total crop production. Vegetables were

cultivated in considerable areas in urban areas (3.09 per cent) compared to rural areas (0.51 per cent). Location advantage could be reason for the above phenomenon as the fresh vegetables are needed by the urban people and they are much conscious have much interested on their food habits. The rural farms have registered the highest cropping intensity (180.95 per cent) followed by semi-urban (175.76 per cent) and urban (126.66 per cent). Urban villages were placed with medical facilities as they had higher number of clinics. In practical, these villages act as a hub for nearby villages where the medical practitioners set up clinics and provide medical services. As the urban villages registered the highest number of industrial establishments, they also had highest number of hotels and tea shops. The role played by the unscrupulous middlemen in land and real estate business aggravated the problem of idling of lands in this locality. This has resulted in land use pattern adversely impacting on agriculture. The semi-urban farmers considered non availability of suitable machinery as the second major constraint in agriculture in the urbanization context and they expressed that use of suitable machineries would reduce the dependence on labour in agriculture.

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