



## Intra-Urban Disparity In Level of Living: A case Study on Chandannagar City, West Bengal

### KEYWORDS

Urban, intra-urban disparity, city core, level of living.

**Namita Chakma**

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, The University of Burdwan, Bardhaman, West Bengal

**Mita Nandi**

M.A., Department of Geography, The University of Burdwan, Bardhaman, West Bengal

**ABSTRACT** *Intra-urban disparity of Chandannagar city, West Bengal has been studied in the present paper. The city is continuing the French legacy of inequality in urban development till date. The city core or main city (eastern part) has developed leaving its western part as backward. Perception study has found discrepancy in level of living as an obvious result.*

### Introduction

Chandannagar Municipal Corporation (22°51'35"N to 22°53'05"N and 88°19'26"E to 88°22'26"E) is one of the six Municipal Corporations of West Bengal. It was under French administration until 30<sup>th</sup> June 1952, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1954, Chandannagar was merged with West Bengal. In 1955 Chandannagar municipal act was granted in Legislative Assembly and on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1955, Chandannagar got the status of Municipal Corporation. Though it emerged as a temple town, later flourished as a commercial or trade centre of French; now also identified as a heritage city of West Bengal as it shares a different history of evolution since inception. Intra-urban dichotomy is found in the city as the eastern part or older established city is much developed than the newly added western part of the city. From 1952 to 1995, the city covers only 9.66 sq kms area which is suddenly increased to 22 sq kms in 1995 by incorporating six new peripheral wards: 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33 into the city (Draft Development Report, CMC, 2011).

The present work intends to study the existing intra-urban dichotomy in level of living of Chandannagar city.

### 1.2 Materials and Methods

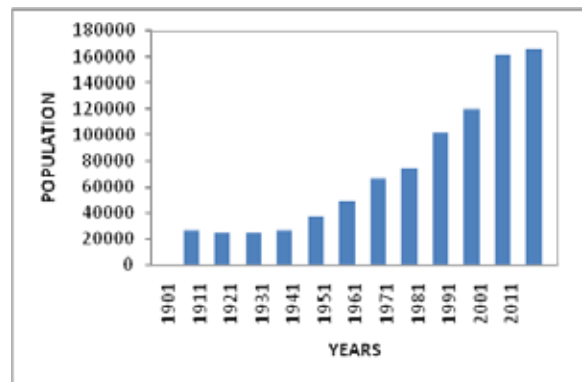
Both primary and secondary data are collected and used for this work. Primary data are collected through the field survey on the basis of a structured questionnaire. Secondary data and information have been obtained from census of India and Chandannagar Municipal Corporation office. Quantitative method has been used in this study. Various statistical techniques have been applied for the analysis and MAP INFO professional ver. 7.0 is used for map making purposes.

### 1.3 Results and Discussion

#### 1.3.1 Population characteristics of the city

According to 2011 census, total population of Chandannagar is 166771 with a density of population 8297. Almost 84% population of Chandannagar is literate and almost 80% people engaged in commercial work. From 1901 to 1931, there was steady but slow growth of population. But in 1931-1941 there was a drastic change in population concentration due to an influx of immigrants towards the city from the surrounding villages. This high growth rate of population continued up to 1961 as in 50's Chandannagar acquire its freedom and get the identity of a city of West Bengal. People started to migrate to this newly add-

ed town of the state quickly. The city maintains a steady growth up to 2001. The cause is the incorporation of six new wards within the city boundary (Fig.1). During 2001 to 2011 the growth rate shows a decreasing trend Chandannagar scores a high density of population though there exists spatial differentiation in it.



**Fig. 1: Population growth of Chandannagar Municipal Corporation; Sources: Census of India (1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2001 and 2011)**

#### 1.3.2 Intra-urban backwardness

Backwardness of Chandannagar Municipal Corporation is calculated through composite score analysis. Four variables are considered for this: scheduled tribe and scheduled caste population, illiterate population, persons engaged in agriculture and nonworking population. It shows a clear distinction between the western and eastern part of the city in terms of level of backwardness. Though in general, level of backwardness is low in the eastern part but a variation is also prevail there because of the presence of slums and high concentration of SC, ST population mainly in ward no. 5,6,11, 25 and 26. On the other hand, the backwardness is at lowest level in the central wards of the eastern part of the city. It is the most developed part of the city indeed. But the situation of the newly added area is really poor in comparison to the old established one. Here out of six wards, four score a high level of backwardness. Only the situation of ward no. 32 and 31 is better in respect to others due to their close physical contact with the main city. But the western peripheral area is still rural in character and they scored a high level of backwardness (Fig.2).

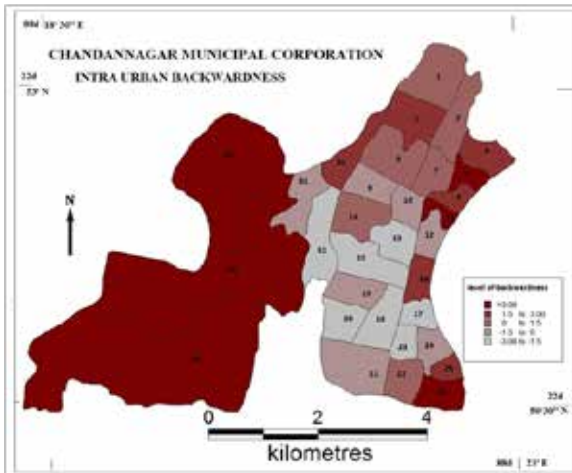


Fig.2; Data source: Census of India, 2011

1.3.3 Level of living

Level of living not only depends upon the income level but also the total environment of one's habitat. In the present study, level of living of ward nos. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33 have been assessed on the basis of some pre-structured questionnaire. The variables taken for calculating level of living are: percentage of family having income more than Rs.10000, percentage of people having education up to graduate level, percentage of family having pucca house, percentage of family having proper sanitation, percentage of family having proper health facility, percentage of people engaged in permanent service or business, percentage of family above the below poverty line (Fig.3).

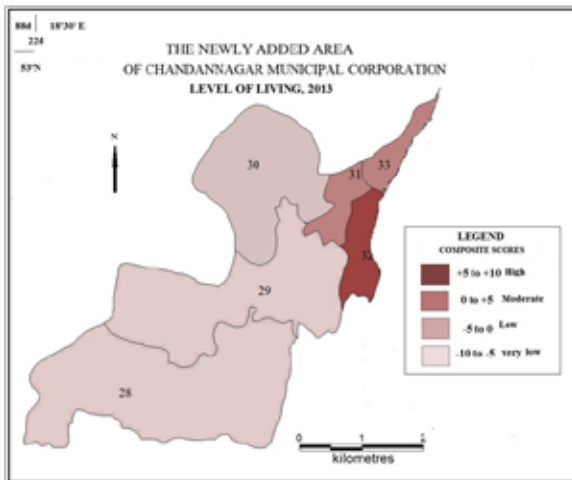


Fig. 3; Source: Field survey, 2013

It has found that there remains a significant gap between the main city and the extended part. But what is really surprising is the fact that there exists intra-ward level disparity in the newly added portion of the CMC also. This is because with increase in distance the intensity of getting ser-

vices decreases. Here four distinct classes are made. These are –

**High quality of life:** The ward no. 32 alone falls in this class as it scores all positive values in every parameter. It has families with high educational qualification, high income, better housing condition, better accessibility to all the basic services, like health, education, sanitation, and lesser concentration of casual or temporal worker than others. 80% people have pucca house to live, and more than 90% family have proper health and sanitation facility. Not only that 75% people are engaged in permanent job or business with an income, more than Rs.15,000 per month and 37% population have education up to graduate level.

**Moderate quality of life:** In ward no. 31 most of the family have access to good quality of education, health facility, sanitation facility, and other services as it is the main centre of the surrounding wards. But the ward no. 33 is somehow lack behind as it is dominated by slum population.

**Low and very low quality of life:** The ward no. 28 to 30 fall under this class. Though situation of ward no. 30 is quite better in terms of sanitation facility and health service but the other two wards faced a worst situation. Though the level of education is high in ward no. 28 than the other two but the other three criteria (families having monthly income above Rs.10000, people engaged in permanent job and good housing condition) are almost same.

1.4 Conclusion

In concluding remarks, it may be said that intra-urban disparity is still remains in the city. The situation of the newly added areas mainly in ward no. 28, 29, 30 are still very poor. Therefore, improvement of basic amenities in the newly added areas is an utmost need. A good public transport system has needed to be developed also to increase the connectivity of the peripheral area with the main city. Finally, a comprehensive area development programme need to be taken care of by the existing authority as the city has great potentiality to become an attractive tourism centre. All these will help to evolve Chandannagar as a sustainable city of 21<sup>st</sup> century with its overall development in near future.

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