

Urbanization in Fiji, 1966-1976

FIJI is relatively highly urbanized country by Third World standards, with 37 percent of its population in 1976 living in urban areas, comprising two cities, seven incorporated towns and five unincorporated towns (Figure I).¹ It is projected that by 2006 more than half the population of Fiji will reside in urban centres.² The rate of urbanization is of much concern to the government which has as one of the main objectives, in its Development Plan Seven, a reduction in the rate of urbanization.

The recent population census of Fiji revealed an acceleration in urbanization. The rate of urbanization³ of 3.8 percent over 1966-1976 period is much higher than the rate for 1956-1966 (2.8 percent)¹ and represents one of the many changes in the pattern of urbanization in Fiji. The accelerated rate of urbanization has an ethnic dimension in Fiji, with the rate of urbanization of Fijians accelerating while that of Indians apparently stabilizing (6.7 percent and 2.6 percent, respectively). Increased urbanization is creating much stress on urban resources, as witnessed by increasing urban unemployment and acute housing shortages, with one out of ten households in Fiji's biggest urban centre, Suva,

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1. Details of towns, cities, urban areas and unincorporated towns are given later in the paper.

2. The projection is reported in Naiker 1978 : 1 but its methodology or assumptions are not indicated, however.

3. The rate of urbanization refers to the change in the proportion of the national population residing in urban areas between censuses in Fiji (10 year intervals).

4. The rate of urbanization between 1956 and 1966 is derived from Walsh 1976 : 172.

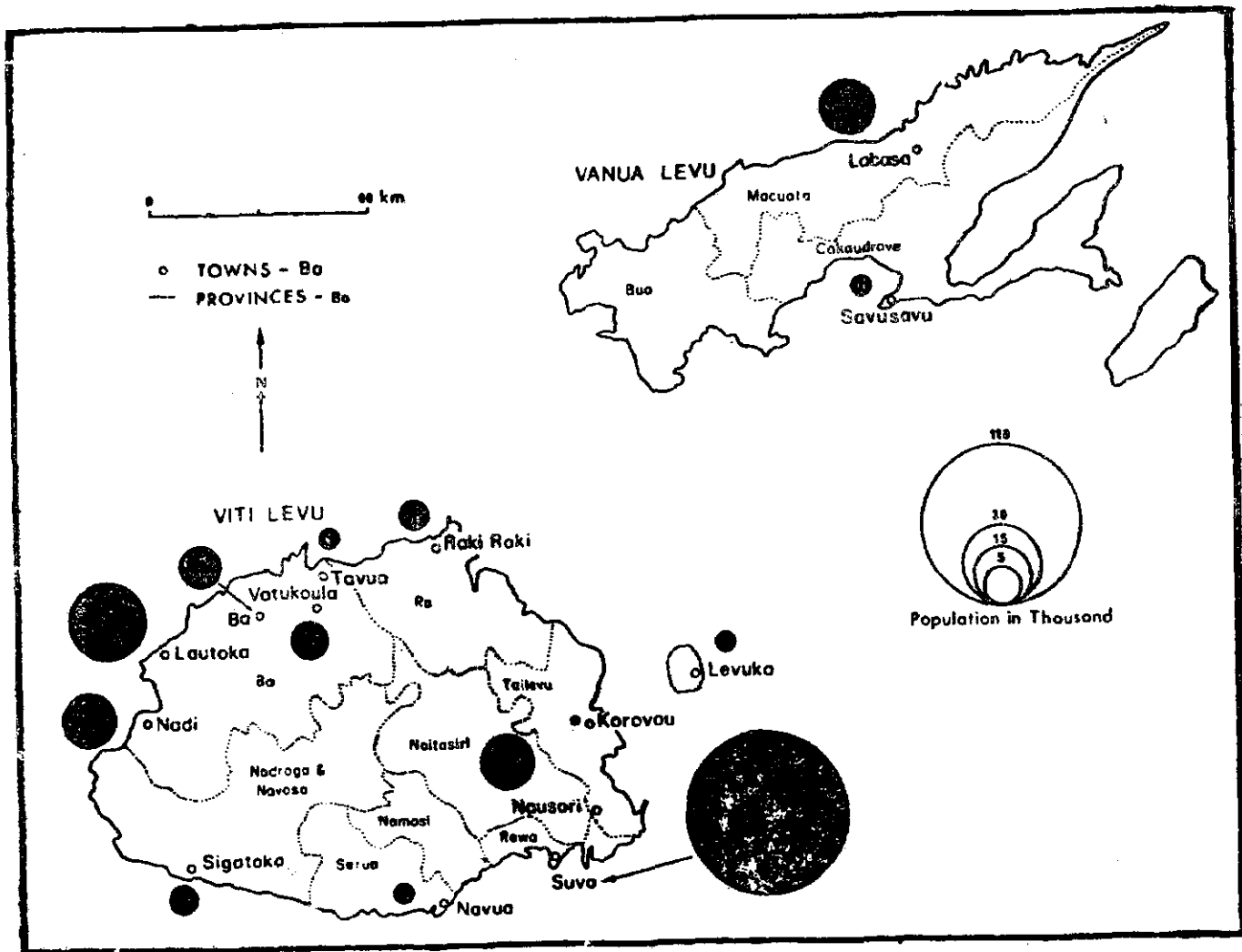


Fig. 1. The location of urban centres in Fiji and their population

being a squatter household.⁵

This paper, using mainly the recently published census information, and other government publications examines the extent and nature (the roles of birth and death rate differentials between urban and rural areas the role of migration, both internal and external) of urbanization, its spatial dimension in terms of different levels of urbanism of provinces, and different rates of growth of urban areas. The ethnic dimension in Fiji urbanization is examined and finally some of the consequences of urbanization are discussed. The conclusion looks into the likely implications of urbanization in Fiji,

Urban research in Fiji is rather recent, and those dealing with urbanization are more recent still.⁶ The pioneering study is that of Ward (1961), which examined internal migration in Fiji, concentrating mainly on the Fijian population.⁷ As early as 1961 Ward had noted an excessive migration into urban areas, with both the source and destination areas suffering consequently. In the same year, Nayacakalou (1960) examined the urban Fijians of Suva, in which he discussed some of the problems which usually arise with urban migration, and how Fijians organized and handled their personal relations with the new people with whom they came into contact. The problems of youth resulting from urbanization were reported in Lechte (1966/7). Walters (1969) attempted a model of internal migration in Fiji and showed how changing conditions of village life were increasingly preparing the Fijian for urban and semi-urban existence. The implications of 'overurbanization' in Fiji were investigated by Finlay and one of the conclusions drawn by Finlay was that the problems presently experienced in the burgeoning cities of Asia and Africa can be seen, in miniature, in Fiji (Finlay 1971 : 65).

The major work on urbanization in Fiji is by Walsh (1976, 77, 78), while Bakker and Walsh (1976) make some reference to it. Walsh (1976) examined internal migration in Fiji with a concentration on the ethnic variable, and value of his work is enhanced by its inclusion of both the major ethnic groups in Fiji, Indians and Fijians. In his later analysis (1977) Walsh presents a simplified overview of urbanization in Fiji, and in his 1978 study he examines the squatter problem in Suva.

Specific aspects of urbanization are discussed by Ponter(1976), who examines the urbanization of a semi-urban village. Sahadeo (1977) who presents a case

5. *The Fiji Times*, 3 February 1979 : 1.

6. A brief commentary on urban research in Fiji and a comprehensive bibliography can be found in R. Chandra 1973.

7. In 1956, the period Ward's data relate to, the population of Fiji comprised Indians (49%), Fijians (43%) and 'others' (8%).

study of rural-urban Indian migration and S. Chandta (1977) who examines urban delinquency in Fiji.

Apart from Bakker and Walsh (1976) who make a passing reference to urbanization, and Walsh (1977), who aimed at a very general audience, no detailed study of urbanization in Fiji between 1966 and 1976 exists. Moreover, Bakker and Walsh's (1976) comments and figures were based on preliminary census data, and the final figures are different in many instances.

Some Problems of Term 'Urban'

'Urban' can connote many sizes of population concentrations and different socio-economic and demographic characteristics. In Fiji, the situation is slightly more complicated by the existence of various categories of urban centres. The first are gazetted cities and towns. Then there are unincorporated towns, which are recognized urban for census purposes only, but which do not have town councils to administer them. Finally, there are peri-urban areas, the 'urban like' settlements surrounding cities and towns, but not unincorporated towns. Called peri-urban in the 1976 census, these formed a part of the larger urban area in 1966, when the concept was first introduced.⁸ Urban area can sometimes, include the town itself, and in other circumstances it can refer also to the peri-urban area. Urban In this paper refers to town and peri-urban area combined.

The size of urban centres in Fiji ranges from 290 to 117827, and averages 15607. Most previous discussions have used the census definitions of urban, and the same practice is continued in this paper.

The Nature of Urbanization

Urbanization takes place when the urban population increases relative to its rural counterpart, leading to an increase in the proportion of people living in urban areas.⁸ Davis (1965) warns of the common mistake of equating urbanization with urban growth; we can experience growth of cities and towns without urbanization if the rural population grows at an equal or greater rate. Theoretically, urbanization can result from a higher rate of natural increase in urban areas, immigration into urban areas from the rural areas or from abroad, or from selective external migration from rural areas.¹⁰

8. See Bloomfield 1967 : 7 and Zwart 1968 : 6.

9. The classic definition of urbanization is provided by Davis (1965). Other useful definitions of urbanization can be found in Jones (1966), Bose(1973), and Weslon (1977).

10. The differential natural increase incorporates the idea of differential birth and death rates- There is, of course, a fourth possibility, of natural disaster affecting mainly rural areas, but this is of little consequence.

The rate of urban natural increase in Fiji is slightly lower than that in rural areas. Urban fertility, as measured by the number of children ever born to ever-married women, is slightly lower than in rural areas. In 1974, women in Suva, the main urban area in Fiji, had an average of 3.3 children, while those in rural areas had 4.0 children (Sahib 1976 : 255). Urban mortality is only slightly lower as well, compared to rural areas (Walsh 1978 : 115). Furthermore, international in-migration into urban areas is largely non-existent, and out-emigration to other countries from mainly rural areas is absent as well. Consequently, **rural-urban** migration is the main contributor to urbanization in Fiji.

Urbanization in Fiji between 1966 and 1976

Of Fiji's total population of 588,068, 218,495 or 37 percent were classed urban at the time of the 1976 census (Lodhia, 1977 : 72-4). This represents a 37.2 percent intercensal increase in urban population, and a rate of urbanization of 3.8 percent. Of the urban population, 128,894 or 59.0 percent lived in cities and towns and 41 percent in peri-urban areas.¹¹ The rate of urbanization between 1966 and 1976 was of 2.6 percent in the case of the former and of 1.1 percent for the latter. Overall, there was a small relative shift of urban population from peri-urban areas to towns, as the peri-urban share of total urban population declined from 42.1 percent in 1966 to 41 percent in 1976. This needs to be qualified, however. The relative decrease in populations of peri-urban areas has resulted mainly from the extension of town boundaries.¹² With the outer boundary of peri-urban area held constant, peri-urban areas lost population to the extended towns. The one peri-urban boundary that remained the same (Suva) gained population from the city area.

During the intercensal period, the growth rate of female urban population was higher than that of the males (3.38 percent and 2.95 percent per annum, respectively), and slightly in excess of the national growth rate of urban population. Although the rate of male and female population increase varied among the ethnic groups (Table 1), females of all ethnic groups increased their population more rapidly.

Changes in urban populations in the fifteen provinces of Fiji are summarized in Table 2. Five provinces, have no urban places, and of the ten that have urban populations, Ba, Naittasiri and Rewa are, by far, the most important.

11. Cities and towns also include unincorporated townships in this calculation .

12. Of the nine incorporated townships and cities, all but Suva increased their areas (Bakker and Walsh 1976:17) and three of the five unincorporated townships had their boundaries changed (Bakker and Walsh 1976:24-69).

TABLE 1—ETHNIC DIMENSION OF SEX DIFFERENTIALS IN THE RATE OF URBANIZATION IN FIJI, 1966 TO 1976

Ethnic Group	Males			Females		
	1966	1976	<i>r</i> (%) ^a	1966	1976	<i>r</i> (%)
Fijian	24449	39215	4.72	23756	40099	5.24
Indian	45380	57824	2.42	43599	57808	2.82
All Others	11411	12069	0.56	10664	11480	0.74
Total Population	81240	109108	2.95	78019	109387	3.38

SOURCES : Computed from Zwart 1968 : 3 and Lodhia 1977 : 184.

^a*r* is the rate of growth of the relevant population, calculated by using the formula

$$P_2 = P_1 \cdot e^{rn}$$

They contained slightly over four-fifths of all urban population in 1966 and 1976, and their share of the national urban population increased slightly in 1966-76. It is also pertinent to note here that these provinces are in Viti Levu, which contains nearly three-quarters of the national population. The intercensal change in urban populations of these provinces was the largest of any province, and accounted for 83.6 percent of all increase in urban population.

Table 2 also points out the fact that nearly all the provinces, save for Rewa and Naitasiri, have either decreased urban populations in 1976, or have increased only marginally. Rewa and Naitasiri, on the other hand, continued to expand, and have increased their share of national urban population to nearly 50 per cent.

The course of urban growth in 1966-67 within the provinces is summarized in Table 3, which examines trends in town and city populations, peri-urban populations, and the overall urban populations. It also attempts to identify trends in growth of different types/sizes of urban places, viz-a-viz, cities, incorporated towns and unincorporated towns.

Urban population increased by 3.2 percent per annum between 1966 and 1976, and the respective figures for township population increase and peri-urban area population increase were 3.4 percent and 2.9 percent, respectively. This compares with an increase of 1.5 percent per annum over the same period in rural population. Thus, although by Third World standards urban growth

TABLE 2—CHANGE IN URBAN PROVINCES IN FIJI 1966-1976

Province	Urban population				Change		
	1966		1976		No	Percent	Rate of growth per annum
	No	Percent of urban population	No	Percent of urban population			
Ba	47823	30.0	59584	27.3	11761	24.6	2.2
Bua	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cakaudrove	1861	1.2	2295	1.1	434	23.3	2.1
Kadavu	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lau	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lomaiviji	3000	1.9	2764	1.3	-236	-7.9	-0.8
Macuata	9716	6.1	12956	5.9	3240	33.3	2.9
Nadroga/Navosa	2339	1.5	3635	1.7	1296	55.4	4.4
Naitasiri	30391	19.1	44101	20.2	13710	45.1	3.7
Namosi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ra	2708	1.7	3755	1.7	1047	38.7	3.3
Rewa	53379	33.5	78395	35.9	25016	46.9	3.8
Serua	1595	1.0	2568	1.2	973	61.0	4.8
Tailevu	6447	4.0	8442	3.9	1994	30.9	2.7
Rotuma	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	159259	100.0	218495	100.1	59236	37.2	3.2

SOURCES : Computed from Zwart 1968 : 3 and Lodhia 1977 : 75.

in Fiji is relatively low, it is still about two times more than the rural population increase.

the rate of urban population growth between 1966 and 1976 was higher than 2.8 percent recorded for the developed countries almost two decades ago, between 1950 and 1960 (Ominde 1975 : 88), but lower than that of the developing countries, where the rate is expected to "fall slightly to 4 percent in 2000" (Ominde 1975 : 88).¹³

13. In Papua New Guinea, in contrast to Fiji, indigenous urban population grew at the rate of 17 percent per annum between 1966 and 1971 (Garnaut, Wright and Curtain, 1977:3).

TABLE 3—URBAN POPULATION CHANGES IN FIJI, 1967-76

Urban place	Town				r%	Peri-urban				r%	Total (urban)				r%
	Number		Change			Number		Change			Number		Change		
	1966	1976	No	%		1966	1976	No	%		1966	1976	No	%	
Cities															
Suva	54157	63628	9471	17.5	1.6	26112	54199	28087	107.3	7.3	80269	117827	37558	46.8	3.8
Lautoka	11287	22672	11385	100.9	7.0	9934	6175	-3759	-37.8	-4.8	21221	28847	7627	35.9	3.1
Towns (incorporated)															
Nadi	2542	6938	4396	172.9	10.0	8809	6057	-2752	-31.2	-3.7	11351	12995	1644	14.5	1.4
Labasa	2182	4328	2146	98.4	6.8	7534	8628	1094	14.5	1.4	9716	12956	3240	33.3	2.9
Nausori	1944	5262	3318	170.7	10.0	7675	7559	-116	-1.5	-2	9619	12821	3202	33.3	2.9
Ba	3849	5917	2068	53.7	4.3	4460	3256	-1204	-27.0	-3.1	8309	9173	864	10.4	1.0
Sigatoka	1059	1816	757	71.5	5.4	1280	1819	539	42.0	3.5	2339	3635	1296	55.4	4.4
Levuka	1685	1397	-288	-17.1	-1.9	1315	1367	52	4.0	0.4	3000	2764	-236	-7.9	-0.8
Savusavu	1861 ^a	1754	-107 ^a	-5.7	—	—	541	— ^a	— ^a	—	1861	2295	434	23.3	2.1
Unincorporated Town															
Vatu-															
koula	4993	6425	1432	28.7	2.5	—	—	—	—	—	4993	6425	1432	28.7	2.5
Rakiraki	2708	3755	1047	38.7	3.3	—	—	—	—	—	2708	3755	1047	38.7	3.3
Navua	1595	2568	973	61.0	4.8	—	—	—	—	—	1595	2568	973	61.0	4.8
Tavua	1949	2144	195	10.0	1.0	—	—	—	—	—	1994	2144	195	10.0	0.7
Korovou	329	290	-39	-11.9	-1.3	—	—	—	—	—	329	290	-39	-11.9	-1.3
Total	92140	128894	36754	39.9	3.4	67119	89601	22482	33.5	2.9	159259	218495	59236	37.2	3.2

SOURCES : Zwart 1968 : 3 and Lodhia 1977 : 75.

Changes and rates of annual growth have been computed by the author.

^aSavusavu was an unincorporated town in 1966.

The Dominance of Suva in Fiji Urbanization

Suva, by far the biggest and most important urban centre in Fiji, accounted for as much as 63.4 percent of the urban population increase between 1966 and 1976. Furthermore, combined with the 12.9 percent increase in urban population accounted for by Fiji's second city, Lautoka, the two cities between them absorbed more than three quarters of all increase in urban population.

The primacy of Suva observed by Walsh (1977, 78) is borne out in this analysis and has become more marked as a result of the urban increase between 1966 and 1967. Suva city itself did not expand its population too much (Table 3), but its peri-urban area increased by over 100 percent, and at nearly twice the rate for Fiji as a whole. Furthermore, it contributed sixteen times the total peri-urban population increase of all the other peri-urban areas together. Combined with neighbouring Nausori, the 'greater Suva' accounted for nearly 70 percent of all urban population increase, and currently represents nearly 60 percent of all urban population.

In absolute terms, the unincorporated towns are almost negligible in the total urban population increase, all of them together accounting for a paltry 6.2 percent of all urban population increase, and making an equally small 6.9 percent of the current national urban population.

The incorporated towns are somewhat more important. Together, they represented 15.5 percent of all urban increase in population, and comprised slightly more than a quarter of the national urban population in 1976. Of these towns, Labasa, Nausori and Sigatoka have been growing especially rapidly, while Fiji's old capital town, Levuka has been declining in its population.

The Ethnic Dimensions of Urbanization and Urban Growth

Walsh (1976) noted the ethnic variable in Fiji urbanization, and ethnicity is a 'fact of life' and a pervasive force in Fiji society. Its significance in urbanization has not decreased, and there was a marked ethnic differentiation in urbanization in Fiji between 1966 and 1976. Thus, while the national urban populations increased by 3.2 percent annually, Fijian urban population increased at almost twice this rate, and Indian urban population grew at half the rate of Fijian urban population growth. 'Others' increased their urban population by less than 1 percent (Table 4).

Having said these, however, two observations are in order. The first is that in absolute terms, the increase in Fijian and Indian population is not very different (31,109 and 26,653, respectively). Secondly, the rapid urbanization of Fijian

TABLE 4—URBAN POPULATION CHANGE BETWEEN 1966 AND 1976 FOR FIJIANS,
INDIANS AND OTHERS

Ethnic Group	Population		Change (%)	Rate of annual growth	%Urban in 1966	%Urban in 1976	Rate of urbanization
	1966	1976					
Fijian	48205	79314	64.5	5.0	23.8	30.5	6.7
Indian	88979	115632	30.0	2.6	36.9	39.5	2.6
Other	22075	23549	6.7	0.6	65.7	66.8	1.1
All groups	159259	218495	37.2	3.2	33.4	37.2	3.8

SOURCES : Zwart 1968 : 1-3 and Lodhia 1977 : 72-73.

population is also a reflection of its low level of urbanization in 1966, although ethnic differential in levels of urbanization is levelling off rapidly. The very low rate of urbanization of 'all others' results from that group having attained a comparatively very high level of urbanization (of 65.7 percent) in 1966.

Some Changes in Urbanization between 1956-1966 and 1966-1976

There are some marked changes in the pattern of urbanization in Fiji in the period 1966-1976 compared to 1956-1966. Walsh noted in his 1976 study that urban growth only slightly exceeded that of rural areas (41.9 percent compared with 37 percent) between 1956 and 1966 (Walsh 1976: 172). During the 1966-1976 intercensal period, however, the respective figures were 37.2 percent and 16.4 percent, and per annum rural population increase was less than half that of urban increase (1.5 percent and 3.2 percent per annum). Moreover, in absolute terms too, urban population increase surpassed that of rural areas (59236 and 52105, respectively) between 1966 and 1976. Urban population increase between 1966 and 1976 was more than twice the 1956-1966 increase, while the rural population increase was almost halved for the same period. Given this build-up in the rate of urbanization, Fiji may be set for an explosive rate of urbanization, such as what is presently characterising Papua New Guinea (Garhart, Wright and Curtain 1977).

Internal Migration: Rural to Urban Influx and Urban to Urban Relocations

The chief source of urbanization in Fiji is rural to urban migration. Census data severely limit the scope of any meaningful analysis of the dynamics of urbanization, as the only data available relate to province by province movement,

which can be deduced from place of birth and place of residence data. However, for the most important urban centre in Fiji, Suva, the census does present the origin, in terms of province of birth, of the population. The strategy adopted in this section is, therefore, to present an overview of internal migration in Fiji, using two indices of the position of provinces in relation to in-migration and out-migration. This movement is both rural to rural, rural to urban and urban to urban as well, and the census data do not enable delineation of rural to urban migration specifically. However, where possible, rural to urban migration will be inferred. This discussion is followed by an examination of the pattern of rural to urban migration, using the case of Suva.

Whatever limited data on internal migration in Fiji exist, suggest a high level of internal population mobility. For instance, just over a third of Fiji's population aged 15 years and over was not living in the province of its birth in 1976 (Table 5). This statistics does not, of course, take account of many movements within provinces.

TABLE 5—INDICES OF MIGRATION IN FIJI PROVINCES, 1976

Province	Proportion of population aged 15 years and over born in the province and residing in another province (%)	Proportion of province population aged 15 years and over born in another province (%)	Description of province	
			Location : Main island (Viti Levu and Vanua Levu) or outlying island	% of province population urban
Ba	17.4	22.0	Viti Levu	35.7
Bua	42.3	23.9	Vanua Levu	0
Cakaudrove	37.1	21.1	Vanua Levu	6.7
Kadavu	56.0	17.8	Outlying Island	0
Lau	59.5	10.4	Outlying Island	0
Lomaviti	53.8	29.1	Outlying Island	20.4
Macuata	18.2	15.5	Vanua Levu	22.6
Nadroga/Navosa	29.7	31.7	Viti Levu	7.9
Naitasiri	30.1	62.6	Viti Levu	67.7
Namosi	47.1	25.6	Viti Levu	0
Ra	42.4	29.2	Viti Levu	14.7
Rewa	44.3	58.9	Viti Levu	89.8
Serua	49.0	45.5	Viti Levu	22.8
Tailevu	45.6	31.8	Viti Levu	21.1
Rotuma	62.6	6.7	Outlying Island	0
Fiji Total	33.7	33.7		37.2

SOURCE : Computed from Lodhia 1977 : 263-4.

The degree of out-migration and in-migration in the fifteen provinces of Fiji are summarized in Table 5, from which a few very clear patterns emerge. The first is that the heaviest out-migration occurs in provinces comprising outlying islands; in all of these provinces more than 54 percent of all people aged 15 years and over born there have moved to other provinces. This brings us to the second point: the presence or absence of urban centres in provinces seems to strongly influence out-migration. Provinces with no urban centre have the highest rate of out-migration, and those with most urban population have the least out-migration.

In terms of migration of people into the fifteen provinces, similar patterns emerge, although these are not as clear-cut as in the case of out-migration. Outlying island provinces attract the least number of people from other provinces, and provinces in the second main island in Fiji, Vanua Levu, are almost as weak in attracting migrants. Viti Levu provinces clearly stand out as the main destinations of migrants; amongst these Naitasiri and Rewa are particularly strong attractions. Notwithstanding an absence of a marked relationship between the urban population of a province and the number of its migrants, thus suggesting a strong element of rural to rural movement in Fiji in addition to rural to urban migration, the most urbanized provinces (Rewa and Naitasiri) are the strongest attractions for migrants.

We now examine internal migration specifically to Suva. Approximately a third of Suva's population aged 15 years and over were born in the capital; the vast majority of them are migrants.¹⁴ The data on the province of birth of Suva's population in 1976 is presented in Figure 2.

Even allowing for the fact that the large number of Suva's population born in the provinces of Rewa and Naitasiri are in fact born in the city itself, Rewa and Naitasiri still account for 3.4 percent and 4.2 percent of Suva's migrants. Nearby province of Tailevu accounts for the largest number of migrants from any one province, and other provinces close to Suva, Ra, Serua and Namosi contribute a large number of migrants to Suva. Although in migration into Suva from other Viti Levu provinces is strong, migration to it from outlying island provinces is particularly marked. Lau, thus, is the origin of more than 8 percent of Suva's population.

It thus appears that although most of Suva's migrants come from provinces neighbouring it, supporting Ravenstein's (1885 : 190) observation that the majority of migrants cover only a short distance, Suva attracts a large number of

14. This figure is based on an estimate of the number of people reported (to be born in Rewa and Naitasiri actually born in Suva.

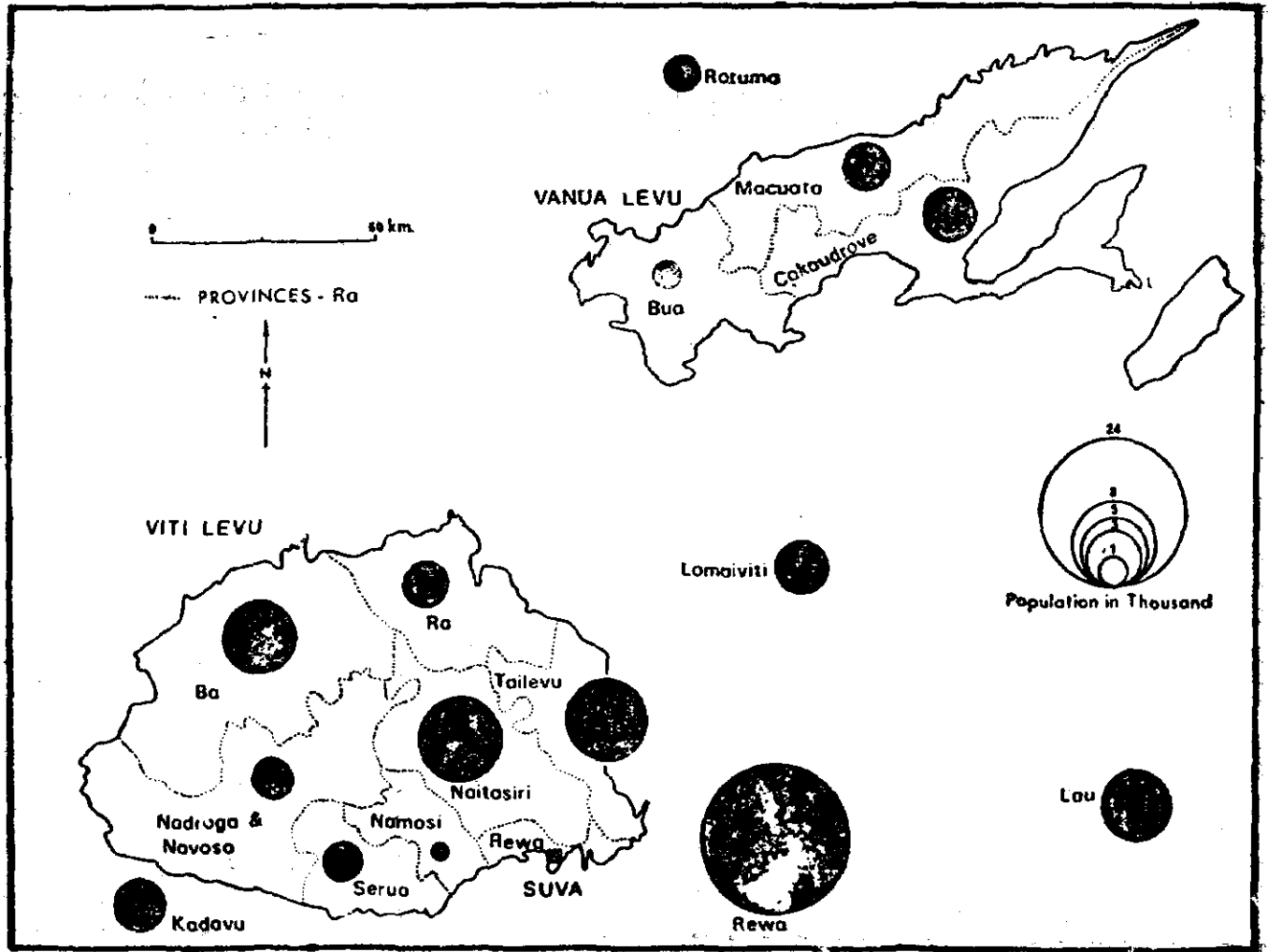


Fig. 2. The province of birth of the population of Suva aged 15 years and over, 1976

people from provinces long distances away. Many of these migrants bypass intermediate urban centres that lie on their transport route.

Some light on population movement in Fiji is also shed in another survey. Kannangara (1975), in a nation-wide survey of unemployment in Fiji, found that of the 2,952 people who had lived at their residences for less than six months, over two thirds (69.6 percent) had come from rural areas, with just under a third having lived in an urban centre previously, although the survey did not indicate whether the previous residence may have been in the urban centre respondents were interviewed in. The survey also indicated that over four-fifths of all movements planned by respondents in the three months following the survey were to urban areas (Kannangara 1975 : 575). The bulk of urban to urban movements take place to Labasa, Nadi, Lautoka, Vatukoula, Tavua, Suva and Nausori. If Tavua and Vatukoula are excluded, as it appears urban residents of these two urban centres located close to each other circulate between the two centres, urban to urban movement primarily takes place to bigger urban areas, with Suva, the primate city of Fiji, being the most important. It appears that urban residents from the smaller urban centres migrate to the bigger urban areas, and may represent a type of chain migration. Suva also accounts for bulk of the counter current. Thus, of the 96 people planning to relocate themselves in rural areas during the three months following the survey, 84 or 87.8 percent were from Suva.

With widespread rural to urban migration in Fiji, leading to increasing rates of urban growth since the last census (of 1966), it is perhaps useful, from a planning point of view, to probe some of the reasons for rural-urban migration, in the hope that remedial action may be taken.

The Motives for Rural-urban Migration

Watters (1969) explores the motivation of a section of Fiji society (Fijians) in migrating to other areas. The economic component is a significant one in his assessment (Watters 1969 : 11). He says, "In the absence of direct evidence I would suggest the hypothesis that towns attract migrants primarily because of the cluster of goals that they offer, and particularly because of the prospect of regular* frequent wages of 'fast money*' compared to 'slow money' earned by cash cropping in the country ..." (Watters 1969 : 11). He does not agree entirely with Belshaw's emphasis on the 'cultural vitality of towns'.¹ Tied with the cluster of goals, according to Watters, is the shortage of land and its influence on migration, and the degree of linkage with the market economy.

Walsh provides another set of reasons why migration takes place, distinguish-

ing between different motivational factors behind Fijian and Indian migration. According to Walsh (1978 : 118) "It is probable that Indian movement is primarily prompted by actual population pressure and insecurity *m* the rural areas", while "Fijian movement... is probably prompted not so much by actual land shortage as by limited opportunities to earn regular money, by the restrictions of the *Mataqali* and chiefly system which has been fossilised by legislation., and by social changes resulting in increased expectation which cannot *be* met *in* rural area*." Walsh hits the real cause of the problem when he declares "Both movements are * consequence of negative institutional factors grounded in colonialism and developments in contemporary Fiji which appear to be widening the gap between rural and urban opportunities despite government efforts to make rural area* more attractive" (Walsh 1978: 118).

Walsh summing up is a perceptive one. Migration from rural to urban areas in Fiji, as indeed elsewhere, must be seen as a function of the income differentials between urban and rural sectors of the economy, and particularly the consciousness of the disadvantage group of this inequality. Urban living standards in Fiji are very much higher than in rural areas, and although detailed data on income differentials in Fiji are almost non-existent, some empirical confirmation can be found of urban-rural income differentials. Brookfield (1975; 5-4) found that the per capita income of Bouma village was \$F76 and those of people in Teveuni (both rural areas) about \$F173. The survey of urban household income and expenditure showed an per capita urban income in 1973 of \$F520 (Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1974.-19)¹⁶. A more general estimate indicates that the per capita income of a rural province in Fiji, Bua (\$F341) is a quarter of that of urban Suva/Nausori area (\$F1368) (Savu, 1978:2). Moreover, urban incomes are increasing much more rapidly than *rural* incomes. Between 1953 and 1970, for instance, average urban incomes grew more than six times faster than average rural incomes (McHaig, n. d.: 2)¹⁷. Added to this rural-urban income differential, incomes in the two largest islands of Fiji, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu are much more than in the smaller islands (R. Chandra 1979a, McHaig, n. d.).

The incomes in urban areas are not only higher, but they are clearly seen and demonstrated to be high, and this makes the rural populace even more prompted to relocate themselves in urban areas to avail themselves of the same ad-

15. A *mataqali* is a unit of Fijian social organization,

16. This is calculated by assessing the yearly household income, and, dividing it by the average number of people in the household.

17. This employed a relatively crude computation of rural income per capita where it was taken to be gross value added in agriculture divided by the total rural population.

vantage and opportunities enjoyed by the urban population.

Coupled with this are, of course, factors that lead to people leaving rural areas even if they do not necessarily want to go to urban areas. This, as Walsh points out, is particularly applicable to Indians and to a sector of the Fijian population. Agricultural Indians do not have access to more land for increasingly large families; a farm is normally sufficient for one son. A rural Indian family, however, consists of 6.4 persons (Lodhia 1977 : 585), and of which three can be expected to be sons. The two are almost compelled to move to urban areas. This insecurity of tenure, loss of land to *Reserve*¹⁸, and generally falling standards of rural living, make the 'push factors' quite potent.

A section of the Fijian population is also driven to urban areas to escape the crunches of the rural Fijian social structure, and to be able to accumulate wealth individually. In the village, the ethic is of communalism. Most writers on Fijian society have commented on the stifling effect of Fijian social structure on individual enterprise;¹⁹ the urban areas are seen as a way of escaping the crippling effect of rural Fijian social structure and of accumulation of wealth on an individual basis.

But this is not the only explanation of increasing Fijian rural-urban migration. To this is allied the problem of increasing competition for rural Fijian resources, and increasing rural Fijian inequality (Knapman 1979 : 4).

Engulfing all these are some psychological factors as well. During the pre-independence era, indigenous people were apprehensive about life in the city; they were more than a little afraid, especially when they saw a large number of Europeans apparently in control of the urban areas. Independence, and increasing localization have removed this fear, and the flow of migrants has increased.

Some Consequences of Urbanization in Fiji

Even though the rate of urbanization in Fiji is low by Third World standards, an accelerated rate of urban growth, particularly during the 1966-1975 intercensal period, is creating a significant strain on the resources of urban and national governments, as well as having deleterious effects on the rural areas which are losing their most educated and economically active manpower.

18. Under the *Reserve* system land in certain areas in Fiji under Fijian ownership is reserved for them. When the current leases expire, the land reverts to the Reserve for (future) use by Fijians.

19. See, for instance, Ward's (1960:41) comment that "For the younger Fijian in particular, the communal system offers few incentives and many disincentives". Similar comments are to be found in Belshaw (1964, Burns (1963), Frazer (1973), Spate (1959) and Ward (1965).

The most obvious and easily felt problem of urbanization is seen in the inadequacy of urban housing. In 1976, there were 38073 urban households in Fiji (Lodhia 1977 : 585), representing an annual increment of 1259 households between 1966 and 1976. However, between 1971 and 1974²⁰, there was an average yearly increment of 801 dwellings for all of Fiji. Thus the rate of supply of housing did not even keep pace with the minimum potential demand for housing in urban areas, let alone all of Fiji. The discrepancy between the supply and demand for houses is much more magnified in urban areas, since the increase in the number of households *in urban areas* is twice that in rural areas. Moreover, with a sizeable proportion of the existing urban houses being sub-standard, the discrepancy *between* supply and total demand for urban housing becomes even more marked. The strain on the housing stock can be gauged by the fact that at the end of 1976, 8207 households, or 21.6 percent of the total number of urban households in Fiji, were on the waiting list of the Housing Authority, the country's statutory body charged with providing housing for the low income workers (Housing Authority of Fiji 1978 : 6).

A much publicised result of the inability of the urban housing market to meet the demands of increasing urbanization in Fiji is the mushrooming of 'squatter' settlements, particularly in Suva. Squatting has become so synonymous with urbanization in Fiji that urbanization is being referred to as squatterization (Bakker, 1977). According to Naiker (1975 : 5), squatting has already become an alternative form of housing to the formal sector housing in Fiji, and that the major urban centres of Suva, Lautoka, Ba and Labasa had over 14000 squatter population. Although the squatters comprise a very small proportion, of the total national urban population, in Suva one person in eight in 1979 was a squatter (The Fiji Times, 3 February (1979 : 1)

While not all of these are squatters *in the* strict legal sense, as many of them have the approval of the landlords, and while there are considerable merits in looking more favourably towards squatting as an alternative form of urban housing, squatters, as at present, present problems of health and inadequate standards of living severely affecting the younger members of squatter families.

The second most glaring problem resulting from rapid urbanization in Fiji is that of employment. The growth in jobs in urban Fiji has not kept pace with the rate of urbanization and this has resulted in a high and increasing level of urban unemployment and underemployment. In 1976, 6.2 percent of the na-

20. There is, in the words of a Fiji Bureau of Statistics publication (1976 : 60) "... an almost complete lack of data about housing in Fiji, since, unlike many countries, this data have not been included in recent censuses". Data is available for these years only.

tional labour force of Fiji was unemployed. The females had a higher proportion (12.2 percent) than males (5.04 percent) unemployed. In contrast, only 4.2 percent of the labour force was unemployed in 1966 (Table 6). Most of those in unemployment were in urban centres (66.3 percent), and within these, in the largest urban centres. For instance, Suva alone accounts for 43.3% of all unemployed, and combined with Lautoka, the two cities account for nearly fifty percent of all national unemployment and three quarters of all urban unemployment. It is important to note that these two cities also accounted for bulk of the urban population increase between 1966 and 1976.

TABLE 6—THE GROWTH OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN FIJI

Year	Total labour force	Unemployment					
		Males	Rate %	Females	Rate %	Total	Rate %
1966	125,809	5210	4.5	25	0.3	5235	4.2
1973	144,060	7792	6.4	1564	7.2	9356	6.5
1976	175,785	7381	5.0	3594	12.2	10975	6.2

SOURCES : Fiji Bureau of Statistics 1976 : 29-31 and Lodhia 1977.

Urban unemployment and poverty give rise to many socially undesirable behaviour. Crime has been increasing rapidly in Fiji, and urban areas are becoming increasingly dangerous places for living. Although crimes of all kinds have increased, those against property have showed a particularly marked increase recently (Fiji Bureau of Statistic 1976 : 44).

Conclusions

Rapid urbanization has far reaching implications for the Fiji economy and its plural society. Increasing number of Fijian in-migrants in its towns is leading to an intensification in the competition for jobs, and is not likely to help race relations in Fiji. Moreover, a large number of Fijian unemployed urban population (the newest arrivals have the most difficulty in obtaining jobs) is a latent revolutionary force for an ethnic oriented Fijian leader with, again, harmful consequences for Fiji's plural society.

Increasing Fijian influx into urban areas, and consequent squeeze on economic opportunities of urban Indians, will also present a potentially explosive situation. Indians, who are already experiencing acute shortage of land in rural

areas, which is the only basis for rural Indian living in Fiji, will feel the pressure even more as the urban outlet for rural land pressure is slowly narrowed. This would offer considerable potential for an Indian sectional leader, and thus harm the cause of political moderation on which the fragile Fiji plural society rests.

Increasing rural-urban migration, which is the chief contributor to Fiji urbanization, is also making the task of effective rural development, which is the most important developmental objective of the current government, almost an impossibility. This applies particularly to the remote outlying islands.

The increasing dominance of Suva in Fiji's urban hierarchy is economically unhealthy for Fiji. Suva is already the country's most developed and richest area, and its increasing size indicates that the government's attempts to spread development more evenly in the country are not succeeding. A more balanced urban growth, with the present fifteen urban centres developed as growth centres for the surrounding regions, is needed for a better pattern of development in Fiji.

Finally, attempts to stem urbanization by promulgating ordinances and through short term policies are not likely to be successful. The dynamics of urbanization are indeed the result of the workings of the society at large, and as long as urban areas have a vastly higher standard of living compared to the rural areas, and as long as rural areas are deprived of some of the basics of comfortable living, people will migrate from rural areas to urban areas, and maintain the tempo of urbanization.

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