

THE FORMATION OF MIGRANT RESIDENTIAL AREA IN LAE CITY

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Purpose and Method

This study aims to help understand the nature and meaning of the process arising from the urbanization P.N.G. through examining the immigration process from rural areas and present urban life and residence in Lae City.

It is summarized by WHITE & WOODS (1980) that the five following variables are used in former migration studies:

- 1) the distance travelled
- 2) the time-period over which migration occurred
- 3) the environments of origin and destination
- 4) the reasons behind migration
- 5) the personal attributes of the migrants

In practical field work, we have two different approaches. One investigate emmigrants in rural villages, and the other investigate immigrants in urban settlements. The best example of the former is a study by VAN GAONINGEN A STULING (1980) on Kilenge village in West New Britain, and the best example of the latter is a report by CHAO (1985) on Nine-Mile Settlement in Port Moresby.

I selected the second approach in this paper and visited on Lae City. There are two kinds of residential area in Lae City. One is the covenant area which is farther divided into the high and the low covenant area, and the other is the non covenant area or urban settlement. The two areas I have selected in this research are the Papua Compound Area which is an example of the low covenant areas and the Buko Settlement which is an example of migrant settlements. Provincial Officers introduced me to the leaders of each residential area. I met about ten householders and asked about twenty questions to each person using questionnaires which I had readied beforehand.

Results

My questions centered around the following three areas:

- 1) migration to Lae
- 2) present life and residence
- 3) relation to mother village

In all tables, P is the Papuan Compound Area and B is the Buko Settlement.

A. Migration to Lae

- 1) Immigration to Lae

Most of the respondents from the Papuan Compound immigrated to Lae in the 1950's, while

Table 1. Year of immigration to Lae.

Year	P.	B.	Total
1950-54	5		5
55-59	3		3
1960-64		2	2
65-69	2	2	4
1970-74		3	3
75-79		3	3
1980-84			
85-89			
Total	10	10	20

those of the Buko Settlement arrived in the 1960's and the 1970's (Table 1).

2) Previous abodes

Eight people had lived in Port Moresby in the Papuan Compound before coming to Lae and eight had lived in their mother villages in the Buko Settlement.

3) Reasons for coming

The respondents came to Lae for three reasons. "Looking for a job" was the most common answer in the Buko Settlement, but "wanting a better job" and "transferring" were the common in the Papuan Compound (Table 2).

Table 2. Reasons coming to Lae.

Reasons	P.	B.	Total
Transfer	3	1	4
Wanting better job	5	1	6
Looking for job	2	8	10
Total	10	10	20

4) Support in Lae upon their arrival

"Brothers and sisters" were the most common support in both areas, followed by other relatives. If they had no relatives living in Lae, they relied on their "wantok" who speak their native languages (Table 3).

5) Job hunting

"Go to companies and ask by themselves" was the most common response especially in the Buko Settlement. In this case, they don't usually get a job on the first attempt. They try several times until they finally get a job. Many people in the Papuan Compound have skills or techniques, for example carpentry, painting or planning, so they can find jobs easily. In general, relatives and "wantok" take care of their accommodations but not the job hunting (Table 4).

6) With whom they came to Lae

"Alone" was the most common answer in both areas, but "with family" and "with friends" was also common in the Papuan Compound (Table 5).

Table 3. Their support living in Lae.

Support	P.	B.	Total
Brothers	3	4	7
Relatives	2	3	5
"Wantok"	2	1	3
Nobody	2	2	4
Unknown	1		1
Total	10	10	20

Table 4. Looking for job.

Looking for job	P.	B.	Total
Go to company and ask	3	7	10
Ask relatives for job	1	1	2
Ask "wantok" for job		1	1
Transfer	1	1	2
Having skills or techniques	5		5
	10	10	20

Table 5. Companion of immigrant.

Companion	P.	B.	Total
Alone	3	8	11
With family (wife)	1	1	2
(wife & children)	3		3
With friend	3	1	4
Total	10	10	20

7) Occupation in mother villages

All immigrants except "students" and "children" were engaged in "village life" in both areas. This means they were sufficiency farmers in their mother villages (Table 6).

B. Their present life

1) Age

All respondents were male as they were the householders. In the Papuan Compound their ages arranged from around 40 to 60 years old, and in the Buko Settlement from around 20 to 40. This reflects differences in when they immigrated to Lae (Table 7).

2) Present occupations

Seven respondents were contractors including five carpenters or builders in the Papuan Compound. But there were many different occupations including three jobless in the Buko Settlement. In general the rate of joblessness will increase in the squatter settlements where the

Table 6. Occupation in their mother village.

Occupation	P.	B.	Total
Village life	6	7	13
Student	2	3	5
Child	2		2
Total	10	10	20

Table 7. Ages of immigrants inquired.

Ages	P.	B.	Total
60' s	3		3
50' s	4	1	5
40' s	2	3	5
30' s	1	3	4
20' s		3	3
Total	10	10	20

Table 8. Present occupation.

P.	B.
Carpenter, Builder 5	Driver 2
Welder (Iron) 1	Operater 1
Planner 1	Clerk in the wharf 1
Cacao farmer 1	Laborer in the wharf 1
Mission 1	Securities supervisor 1
Retired 1	Office cleaner 1
	None 3
Total 10	Total 10

newcomers from highlands live (Table 8).

3) Wives hometowns

The most popular case was that in which the wife comes from the same village as her husband. It was noticeable to find some immigrants in the Buko Settlement married with women born in the Morobe Province (Table 9).

C. Relations to their mother villages

1) Frequency of return visits to their home villages

In the Papuan Compound “once in ten years” was the most common answer and the second was “once in three years”. On the contrary, “seldom” was the most common response in the Buko Settlement (Table 10). Even though these results indicate that they have little contact

Table 9. Origin of their wives.

Orign	P.	B.	Total
Same as hasband	7	6	3
Villages near his	2	0	2
The others	1	4	5
Total	10	10	20

Table 10. Frequency of returning to the home villages.

Frequency	P.	B.	Total
Once or twice a year	1	0	1
Once 2 or 3 years	2	0	2
Once 5 years	0	1	1
Once 10 years	5	2	7
Seldom	2	7	9
Total	10	10	20

with their home villages, it does not always mean a weakness of their relations to the home villages. This will be made clear by the following items.

2) Frequency of making a gift of money and/or other articles

“Not making a gift” was common in the Papuan Compound, whereas the most common answer in Buko Settlement was making a gift at least once or more a year (Table 11). Money is usually used as a gift, and cloth is rarely used.

3) Frequency of letters to home villages

“Three or four times a year” was the most common answer in both areas (Table 12). Exchanging information was more common in the Buko Settlement than in the Papuan Compound. We feel, therefore, that the people in the Buko Settlement have more close contact with their hometowns than the people in the Papuan Compound.

4) Desire of returning to live in home villages in the future

The people who “want to return to their home villages” are more abundant than the people who “want to settle down” in Lae City (Table 13). The following are the reasons for desiring to return to their home villages in the future.

(1) “Urban life was nice at the start but is not comfortable now.”

(2) “Life in Lae is not pleasant.”

(3) “I prefer rural to urban life.”

(4) “I have grown older now.”

(5) “The village is our home land.”

The result is interesting as it shows their strong connection with the home villages.

5) My last question was “what are your hopes for the future?” or “what kind of job do you want to do in the future?”

Table 11. Frequency of making a gift.

Frequency	P.	B.	Total
Bring by themselves	1	0	1
Once a month	1	0	1
Once 2 months	0	2	2
Once 3 or 4 months	1	1	2
Once 6 months	0	3	3
Once a year	0	1	1
Not make a gift	4	2	6
No person to do	1	0	1
Unknown	2	1	3
Total	10	10	20

Table 12. Frequency of the letters/a year.

Frequency	P.	B.	Total
5 or 6 times	1	3	4
3 or 4 times	4	5	9
1 or 2 times	3	1	4
Not send it	2	0	2
Total	10	9	19

note : one person in B area uses telephone
as a means of communication.

Table 13. Desire to returning to home villages.

Desire	P.	B.	Total
Settle down here	4	2	6
Return to villages	5	3	8
Not yet decided	1	5	6
Total	10	10	20

The following are the positive answers in the Papuan Compound:

- (1) I want to manage a cacao plantation and leave it for my children.
- (2) I want to manage a copra business.
- (3) I want to manage poultry farming in my home village.
- (4) I want to become an employer.
- (5) I want to build a house in my home village and save money.

The following are the passive answers:

- (6) We can do nothing without financial help.

- (7) I did everything already, so I have no desire now.
- (8) I have no particular plan.
- (9) I will do my best at the present time. I don't look far into the future.

On the contrary, all answers were negative in the Buko Settlement. Nine of the ten people answered "no plan" and the other answer was "I have not yet thought about it." I felt a general lack of a positive attitude on the whole.

Discussion

A. Land problem

There are two kinds of land problems in Lae. One is a shortage of government land in Lae City. The present government land was purchased from the native people by the colonial authorities in the colonial period. This kind of lands in some cities, like Port Moresby, are fairly spacious, but those in other cities, like Lae, are very limited. The provincial government of Lae desires to increase this government land if possible, as industrial activity has become active and the population is increasing. But the native people refuse to sell their land.

Another problem is nonpayment of land rent by immigrants living on government land. Immigrants living on customary land usually pay their rent, but people living on government land usually do not pay it. It is said that it is not paid even by people living in the low covenant area.

B. Weakness of self management

Locally managed factories or large shops are a very small proportion of the whole. I feel this is the fundamental character of this country compared to other developing countries in South East Asia. Foreigners manage almost all factories and big shops. The following is the reason why this selfmanagement does not increase. If one member of their group gets much money, he must distribute it to his relatives and his "wantoks". This is the strength of communal character of this country. In urban life they also keep their attitude and way of thinking of village life. But, we can also see the following tendencies of breakdown of communal society:

- (1) The advance of urbanization which means the separation of people from village life.
- (2) The growth of marriage with different "wantok" in urban area.
- (3) The existence of people who intend to manage some kinds of business in the future.
- (4) The penetration of commercialism in urban periodical market on which I reported previously (TAJIMA, 1985).

References

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