

A GEOGRAPHICAL ASSESSMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF NAUNGCHO TOWN

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Abstract

Naungcho Town is situated within Kyaukse District of Shan State. Naungcho Town is located in hilly region and it is an important location for strategic area for national defense for national security. The main purpose of this research paper is to study physical factors and its support to spatial distribution of social condition and economic activities which are pointed out by collecting data from field survey and structured questions. To find out this solution we used the structured questionnaires: (i) Where the study area is located? (ii) How the physical factors and its support to spatial distribution relate to social conditions? (iii) What are the forms of settlement patterns and types of urban land use? (iv) Which types of economic activities are currently dominant in the study area? Finally, it is found that there is location limitation of certain socio-economic activities in Naungcho Town.

Key words: physical features, socio-economic activities, Naungcho, spatial distribution, location limitation

INTRODUCTION

Naungcho Town is composed of six wards. Socio – economic conditions of Naungcho Town are the most important factors for the development of functional activities. This study area includes not only social factors of this town, but also economic factors affecting the use of agricultural land. Therefore, agriculture is an economic activity and agricultural economy is influenced more by socio-economic environment. Naungcho Town is situated in the tropical zone, lying on the northern Shan highland, higher than 878 meters above sea level. In relative height, the township can be assumed to be hilly on the highland. Streams are abundant there and there are perennial trees. It has cool climate. These physical factors favor for the development of economic activities of the township.

Data and Method

For primary data, interviewing, questionnaires and open talks are conducted together with field observations during very short period, and secondary data such as maps and other documents are taken from various sources of library in Yangon University and Township Administrative Department in Naungcho Town, data obtained are analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Field map obtained from the satellite and Google Earth by using geo-referencing and digitizing. Procedures of the field survey and study are: First, the present site and situation of Naungcho Town are observed. Open talks with some local people are conducted. Second, there are about 7592 houses, of which 750 houses are selected randomly open talks were done with formatted questionnaires. Finally, data from questionnaires and open talks responses concerning about the socio – economic conditions are analyzed.

Result and Discussion

The study area can be analyzed in three portions. There are Physical influencing factors, socio-economic activities and the major influencing factors that cause to the development of Naungcho Town.

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1. *Physical influencing factors*

Naungcho Town is located in the tropical zone, lying on the Northern part of Shan Highland, Higher than 878 meters above sea level. It is located between North Latitudes 22° 18' 30" and 22° 20' 30" and between East Longitudes 96° 47' 15" and 96° 48' 45". This town has an area of 3.78 square kilometers. It is an elongated shape. The town is constituted with 6 wards. Naungcho Town has abundant of streams and perennial trees in surrounding area. Water for domestic use and for agriculture are easily taken from streams and tube wells. Naungcho Town experience subtropical climate or cool climate. Moreover, the climatic conditions (Temperature, rainfall, bed rock, soil) are favorable for agriculture. The predominant formation is limestones plateau. Soil types (*Mountain Red Earth and Yellowish Brown Soil*) are also support for agriculture. Naungcho Town is surrounded by village tracts, so main economy is agro-based economic activities. 40.68% (3604.2 acres) of town's areas practices agriculture. Fig .1and 2,Tab.1

2- *Socio-Economic Activities*

The total population of Naungcho Town is 17,375 people in April, 2018. The population density is 4597 per sq km. Residential landuse is 57.69% (5146 acres). The main factors of socio economic activities can be divided into; primary sector, secondary sector, tertiary sector, public and government sector. Primary sector, tertiary sector and other sectors are in the residential areas. Primary sector consists of agriculture and livestock, area mostly found in Narshao and Thapyay yay wards and 40.68% (3604.2 acres) of town's areas practice agriculture and raise livestock. Common crops are cereal crops, oil seed crops, sugar cane, vegetables flowers and fruits. Secondary sector includes various types of small scale domestic industries (Rice mill, oil mill, purify drinking water mills etc) used 1.65% (147.2) and tertiary sector contains varieties of services such as tailor, beauty parlors, health care center, repair shops, hotels, motels, , banks, etc. It used 9.5% (854.3) of town's areas. Secondary and tertiary sectors are attached with residential areas and mostly situated in the Zay Ward, Taung Ward, Parhat Ward, Butar Ward. Most of them are located along the transportation lines. Public and Governmental sector occupies 4.3% (383acres) of town's areas and located in the Taung Ward, Zay Ward, Butar Ward.(Fig-2) and (Tab-2)

3- *The major influencing factors that cause to the development of Naungcho Town.*

The major influencing factors of socio-economic development are physical conditions, transportation, primary sector, secondary sector, tertiary sector and public and governmental sector. If these sectors are proportionally organized and practiced, the study area will develop rapidly.

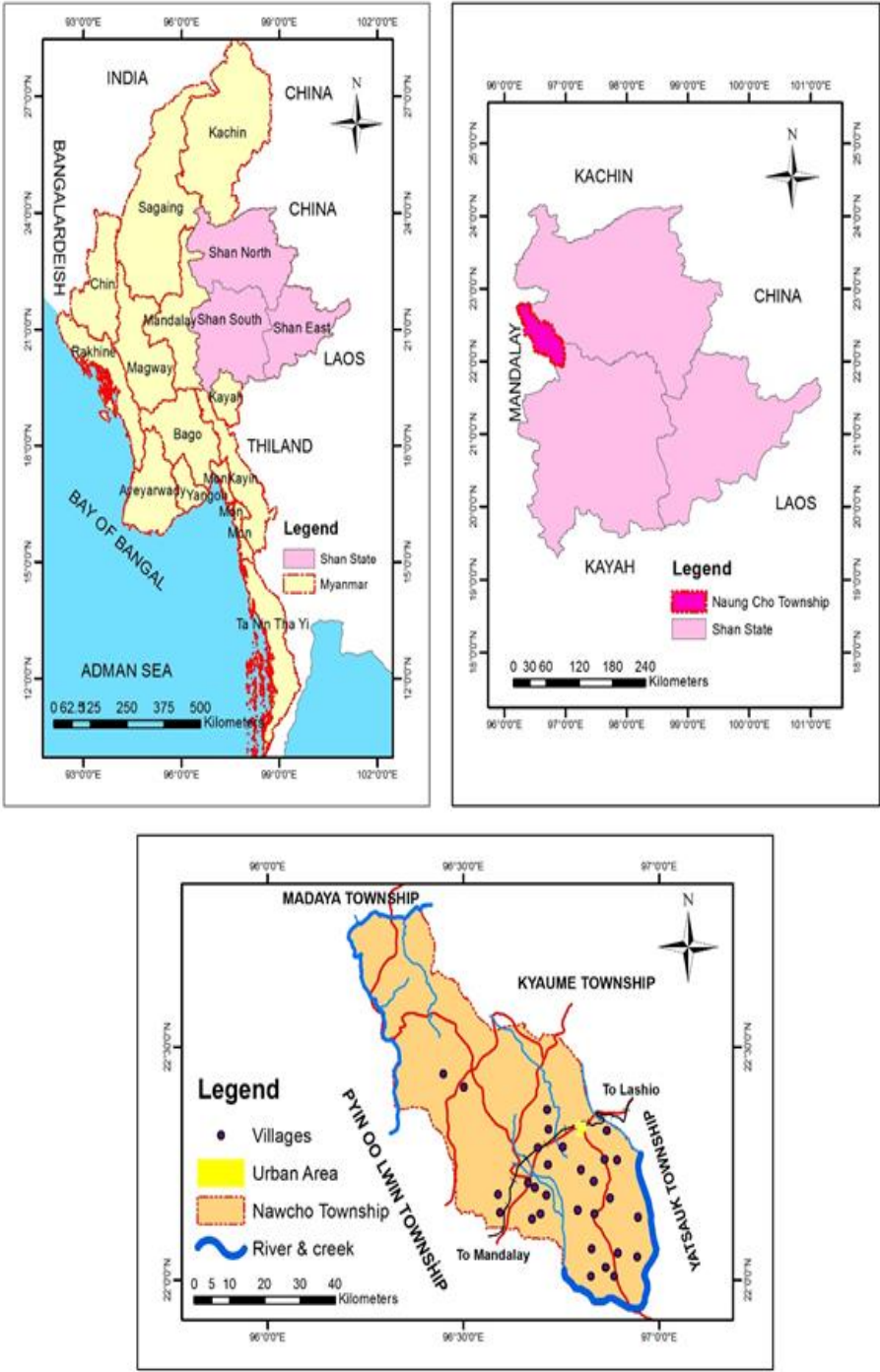
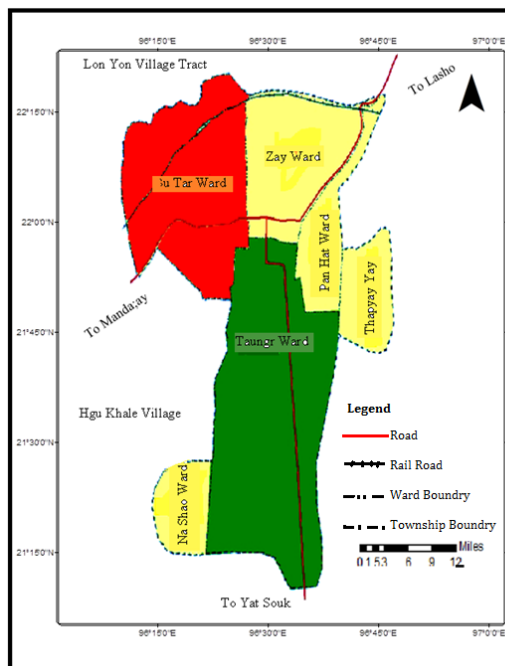


Figure- 1. Location Map of Naungcho Township
Source: Department of Geography, University of Mandalay

**Table -1. Areal Extent by Wards**

No	Wards	Ward Area (acres)	Ares(Sq-Km)	% of Tw's Area
1	Zay	1025	0.53	40.7
2	Butar	1992	1.32	43.5
3	Taung	845	1.30	65.0
4	Parhat	2362	0.41	72.0
5	Narshao	473	0.15	24.7
6	Thapyay yay	2228	0.07	30.0
	Total	8925	3.78	100

Figure 2. Location Map of Naungcho Town

Source: Department of General Administration, Naungcho Township

Analysis of Socio-economic Activities

In this chapter, Development of socio-economic conditions were assessed by the spatial variation of settlement pattern, the spatial variation of economic conditions and social activities.

1- The spatial variation of settlement pattern

The spatial variation of settlement pattern can be classified into three factors. They are number of storeys in a house, house types, and living space. In Naungcho Town, the classes of story can be found four types. One story is highest number with primary activities (garden land or farm land) and some are attached with livestock farming. Most of them are found in Butar, Parhat, Thapyay yay, and Narshao Wards. Two stories are attached with shops and services and it can be found along the main road: Mandalay-Lashio Road, junctions and they are situated in the Zay Ward and Butar Ward. A three stories, a three and half stories and a four stories can be found in Zay Ward. The rests are widely spread in the study area. In Naungcho Town, four stories (0.5%), three stories (0.21%), two stories (11.6%) and one story (88.14%) are collected. Over 85% of settlers possess houses and the rest areas are Governmental Building, Administrative Departments, Educational Buildings, Religious Buildings, Playground and Public Park.

Settlement pattern of house types are good condition and concentrated in the Zay, Bu Tar and Taung Wards. Types of houses are brick building, building with timber and bricks, wooden houses and bamboo houses. Most buildings are constructed with bricks because of water conditions. Bamboo houses are attached with farming and they can be found in the fringe of the wards and along the rail road. In Naungcho Town, the residents possess wide area of living space and living area. Living space is also small in the commercial areas of Zay Ward; along the Mandalay-Lashio Road and main junctions. Zay, Taung, Parhat, Thapyay yay Wards have systematic roads and populated areas of Naungcho. Butar Ward has many commercial

areas, but ward pattern is not systematic. Narcho and Thapyayyay Wards are likely rural pattern. Settlement of Zay and Parhat Wards can have limitation for urban extension.

Table -2. Population Distribution and Density of Naungcho Town (2018)

No	Wards	Bamar	Shan	Danu	Kachin	Others	Total	Density(Sq-Km)
1	Zay	2194	318	277	-	1025	3814	7251
2	Butar	3763	1201	784	116	165	6029	1932
3	Taung	2133	329	821	112	966	4361	3306
4	Parhat	1115	405	132	264	416	2334	5763
5	Narshao	185	-	15	-	70	270	1800
6	Thapyayyay	97	420	22	-	28	567	2723
	Total	9487	2637	2015	492	2670	17375	4597
	Percentage	54.60	15.40	11.60	3.00	15.40	100	

Source: Department of General Administration, Naungcho Township

2- *The Spatial Variation of Economic Conditions*

The economic activities can be classified into four groups; Primary activities, secondary activities, tertiary activities and services. Primary activities include agriculture and livestock and it is major economy of study area. It is total population of 56.0% in this group and 30.30 % of town areas are used. In Naungcho Town, the cultivable area has a total of 2704 acres, but cultivated land are only 1925 acres. Ya cultivation used 50.26% and Le cultivation used 23.0% of total cultivation respectively. Corn, Maize, Paddy and Niger seed (Panhnan) are mostly grown. The secondary activities are domestic manufacturing types, it contains rice mill, oil mill, water purifying, traditional pharmacy, gold smith, silver smith, beverage, cottage industries, and bricks production etc.

Tertiary activities are commercial and services; dry goods shops, personal goods shops, fabric shops, food and beverage shops, electric appliance shops, construction material shops, clinic, beauty parlors, many types of repairing shops (motor car, computer, phone, cycle etc), restaurants, motels ,hotels and banks . The spatial distributions of economic conditions are exposed in term of symbols. Fig 3

3-Social Activities

According to 2018 May, field survey data, there area total population of 17375 people in Naungcho Town. Most of the population are concentrated in Zay Ward, Butar Ward, Taung Ward and 81.6 % of total population lived in this area. Among them the majority of population is Bamar 54.60 % (9487 persons), Shan 15.40 % (2637 persons) Danu 11.60 % (2015 persons), Kachin 3.00 % (492 persons) and Others group has 15.40 % (2670 persons) lived in study area. Bamar is largest group and they live in cluster pattern and other races are grouping pattern and mixing with other groups.(See .Tab 2). According to analyzed results, some people are migrants, due to good economic opportunities, agricultural productivity and transportation network.

Buddhism is largest group and Christian is second largest group. In the study area, (2) Basic Education High Schools,(1) Basic Education Middle School, (8)Basic Education Primary Schools are constructed. There are 4619 students and 126 teaching staffs. In average, a teacher has to handle 36 students; this is a good ratio for an effective learning. Private pre-school and monastery education also support to local education development. The literacy rate is about

85.8%. Most local people are moderate level in basic education. The remaining % is graduated and under graduated level. Naungcho Town has a hospital (25 beds), local health care center, maternity and childcare center. Health care system is fairly well established in this town. They can take treatment in hospital and clinics. Surface well is generally used. In many houses, boiled water usually used for drinking. SWOT analysis method depending upon their effects of socio-economic conditions in the study area was used. If State authorities are more interested in tourism and take encouragement to develop in the study area, it will become one of the popular recreational hill resorts in Myanmar.

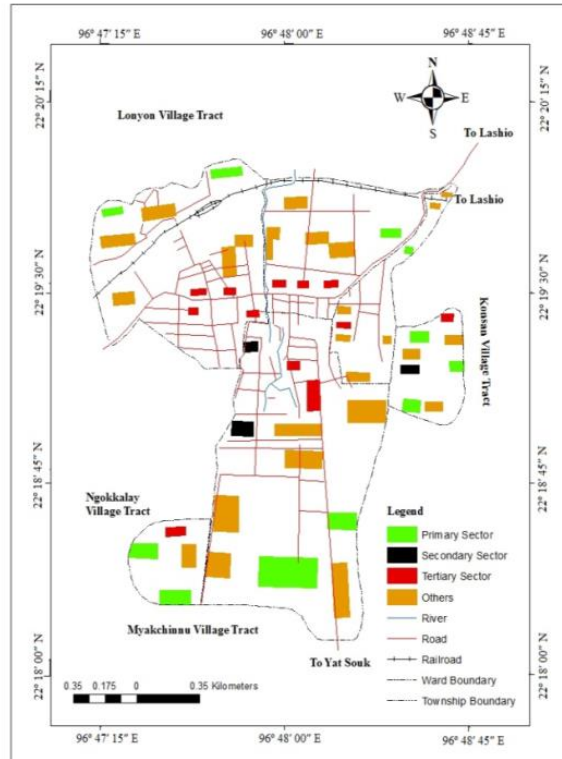


Figure 3 Spatial distribution of economic activities in Naungcho Town

Source: Based on Wards Administrative Office in Naungcho Town

Table- 3 .The Spatial Distribution of Land Use Types in Naungcho Town(2018)

(Acres)

No	Wards	Cultivable	Reserved Forest	Residential	Ward Area
1	Zay	361	-	664	1025
2	Butar	746	-	1246	1992
3	Taung	246	-	599	845
4	Parhat	466	609	1286	2362
5	Narshao	342	-	131	473
6	Thapyay yay	54	465	1220	2228
	Town	2704	1074	5146	8925

Source: Based on Wards Administrative Office in Naungcho Town

Table - 4. SWOT Analysis for Socio-Economic Condition in Naungcho Town

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Good accessibility -Suitable conditions for intensive cultivation (physical features) -Pleasant climate and beautiful scenery -Attractive historical palace of Gotaik Viaduct -Strategic place for defense point of view -Low cost of land value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provision of loans for agriculture -Giving training for intensive agriculture and tourism -Need more motel and hotel -Purify drinking water and systematic supply for domestic water -Road system and housing style need to systematically construct in urban fringe area -Traditional snack shops
Opportunity	Threat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can extent urban areas -More job opportunity with tourism industry -Plantation more develop with modern farming (using green house, motel with fruit plantation garden) and plantation will be extend associated with factory -Traditional dress and food may be develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Waste system -Health care condition -Protect criminal case

Sources: Based on field survey and structured questions.

CONCLUSION

According to the studying of geographical point of view, find out four questions in the introduction of this paper. Firstly, Naungcho Town is located in the hilly region of Naungcho Township, Shan State. Answer of second and third questions are; locational conditions and physical features are supported to the growth of concentrated settlement pattern. This study area has agricultural land such as Ya, Le, Garden and Kaing-Kyun land. Most people practice agriculture and are concentrated in business centers of Zay, Taung, Butha and Thapyay yay Wards. Therefore, these wards have largest population density and good local business area. The structural development of settlement patterns emphasized by means of land use. The respond to the fourth answer, Agro-based economy is currently dominant in the study area. Forms of settlement pattern, housing size and living standard are varied by the economic conditions.

Naungcho Town is proposed that more intensive and extensive agriculture, labour force should be engaged in the agricultural work. It is rare socio-economic variation and agro-based economy of the town. Climate is comfortable condition for visitors, scenery is naturally beautiful, historical place of Gokteik Bridge, farming land with attractive functions are good supporting factors for tourism industry. The result of this study is physical features, social conditions, economic activities and transportation are interrelated, supporting each other and leading to the development of region.

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