

Polarization in Cities and Its Policy Implications

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Summary

1. Polarization in cities is a socio-economic phenomenon that is also a distinctive spatial phenomenon.

- According to a preliminary survey of the city of Busan, the urban polarization in Busan shows a marked spatial pattern with wealth and poverty being concentrated in certain spaces.

- The wealthiest 20 percent are mainly concentrated in high-rise multi-use apartments and large-scale apartment complexes.

- The poorest 20 percent are mainly concentrated in unsound, old houses and housing complexes built by government plans

2. There is a need to overcome the limitation of the exhibiting socio-economic statistics and to implement effective policies based on empirical analysis of urban polarization by utilizing financial and spatial big data.

- The financial and spatial data is more specific in temporal and spatial aspects comparing with the traditional statistics survey on household income, and is more akin to all data rather than sample data. This financial and spatial data can be widely utilized in establishing and implementing everyday life policies.

- Breaking from the existing aggregated, non-spatial approach, the financial and spatial data can also be employed to set up and enforce land and urban policies, which are more specific and spatial-oriented.

3. More active policy measures need to be implemented from the perspective of land and cities in order to alleviate and eradicate urban polarization.

- Measures to address urban polarization are needed through evaluation and monitoring based on big data and scientific analytical methods.

- Evaluating and monitoring of urban polarization need to be regularly conducted in order to launch urban regeneration projects led by local communities including residents and to establish comprehensive urban planning.

Policy Implications

- ① The polarization issues need to be approached in terms of land and urban policies as well as socio-economic policies.
- ② To specifically identify the urban polarizations, big data needs to be actively utilized so that it overcomes the limitations of traditional socio-economic statistics.
- ③ There need to be specific data and scientific analytical models to evaluate, monitor, and anticipate the polarization in cities, and related policies need to be improved in order to systemically apply such methods and models to land and urban policies.