

# Study on the Social Dimensions and Trends of Urbanization in India

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**Abstract – Urbanization as the term implies involves the familiar sociological concepts of acculturation, diffusion, assimilation, and even amalgamation — although it involves much more. When people acquire the roles, style of life, symbols, forms of organization, and cultural artifacts contrary to the characteristic of country, and when they share the meanings, values, and perspectives that are characteristically non rural. It logically follows that there are degrees of urbanization because certain religious and cultural values are so deep rooted as a part of Great tradition' and therefore resistant to change. The term urbanization has been made more precise and meaningful by interpreting the aspects of diffusion and acculturation. Diffusion refers to the spread of culture either within the same society or in different societies. Urbanization may be manifest either as intra-society or inter-society diffusion, that is urban culture may spread to or may be acquired in various parts of same society or it may cross cultural or national boundaries and spread to other societies. It involves both borrowing and lending. On the other side of the diffusion coin is acculturation, the process whereby individuals acquire the material possessions, behavioural patterns, social organization and bodies of knowledge. It is in the back drop of this analogy, the study is aimed at the empirical analysis of urbanization in Jammu and Srinagar cities. The point of view is that of a student of sociology, although there are implications for other social science students and urban planners.**

**Keywords: Urbanization, Social, Trends**

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## INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is the process whereby land and in habit ants become urban. It V - x refers to change in both place and people. Infact, it has been measured and expressed chiefly in terms of population statistics that purport or are presumed to distinguish inhabitants of tow ns and cities from those of rural/country side. Urbanization means that an increasing proportion of human society become townsfolk, and as this happens, tow ns grow in population, spread in area, and make an ever-increasing impact on the country side, both upon its appearance and upon the life of its inhabitants. More and more landscape and people com e to live in an environment that is both physically and ^socially urban.

The degree of urbanization of a nation is generally defined as the proportion of population resident in urban places. The demographic conception of urbanization, however, is transcended by many other uses of the term in which urbanization is recognized as a social process which has brought about great transformation in man's way of life. For purposes of convinence, especially in statistical studies, "Urbanization is usually considered merely in demographic sense as an increase in the proportion

of urban population (u) to the total population (t) over a period of time's long as u/t increases, there is urbanization, however, theoretically it is possible that this proportion remains constant over time in a situation w here there is absolutely no rural to urban migration and both the rural and urban popu la tio n s grow at the sam e rate. In such a case, there will be urban growth without urbanization.

## URBANISATION - CONCEPT AND CHARACTERISTICS

Man has spent most of his history on earth as a nomad, a wanderer without any settled habitation due to an extremely unproductive level of technology. Physically modern man, Homa sapiens, has existed since some half million years. While the most impressive fact about man's urban existence is that it is quite recent in origin — some five or six thousand years old. Putting it in another way, the six thousand years of man's urban existence are slightly more than one per cent of his existence as physically modern man. How and where urban traits first appeared? This question is unavoidably involved with the question of when cities began. Generally three major factors

have been recognised as shaping the development of cities.

- (i) Environment - that is, the degree to which a given climate, topography and set of natural resources can support physical requirements of man.
- (ii) Technology - that is, degree to which man's tools and inventions can make use of natural resources. For any urban settlement a high technological competence is required to produce enough food and other facilities for dense population living permanently at a fixed place.
- (iii) Social organisation, that is, the extent to which man's attitude and cultural institutions match with a given community pattern.

Of all changes that human beings have made in the physical appearance of the world, perhaps none is more striking than the construction of cities. From the time the first cities arose they have been the centres of intense political, economic and cultural activities. They promoted division of labour and specialization and generated new ideas. The processes that are set in motion by the emergence of cities have assured their dominance over many aspect of national life. "The history of great civilization is largely the history of what was accomplished in cities

Industrialization is the occupational or 3 professional aspect of modern urbanisation. Although industrialization today has become embedded with urbanisation the latter is something more than mere industrialization. It has many other dimensions too. It may be true that with the advent of industrialization, the pace of urbanization has been fastened. Broadly speaking urbanisation is the transformation of the total way of life of a particular community. While industrialization is the change in the mode of working in the economic sphere, of the community. As a concomitant factor industrialization no doubt, may affect the other aspects of social life of the community. But it is not a rule. Industrialization, therefore, plainly refers to the techniques CJF work, the physical instruments of production, the scale and the size of the enterprise of the people to sustain their life.

'Westernization' is rather a controversial and value loaded concept. It involves the cultural elements and ideology borrowed from the western societies. Generally the adaptation of the western ways is termed as westernization. In the Indian context it usually refers to the pattern of life and ideology borrowed distinctly from the west European and American countries. Thus the western countries have been an ideal or model of urbanisation. But westernization cannot be said to be the necessary element of urbanisation. This may be evident in urban places in India where most of the inhabitants

have not adopted western style of life and ideology and traditionally in respect of family, caste and neighborhood etc. is yet observed.

'Modernisation' is an indice of technological advancement, its application in day to day life and an adjustment with new inventions and ideas. Saving of human labour by replacing it with machines is an essential part of modernisation. But it is also indicative of progressive and advanced ideas and thoughts, feelings and conceptions, behaviour pattern and actions - a change in traditional living. Modernisation, though goes generally with urbanisation, may occur in non-urban places as well. American villages, for example, are more modernised as compared to many Indian cities.

In fact, industrialisation, westernization and modernization are usually taken as the necessary elements of urbanisation. At this juncture one point needs clarification. There is a great deal of confusion in the use of the term 'urbanisation' and 'urbanism'. Urbanisation is not urbanism as it is generally misconceived. Urbanism represents a particular way or style of life contrast with that of rural agriculturally dominated communities while urbanisation refers to the process whereby a traditionally rural bound community wholly or partially moves to adopt a different pattern of living. In act urbanism is the adaptation to the urban traits or characteristics. According to Louis Wirth it is a way of life of urban places. He defines urbanism "the complex of traits which makes up the characteristic mode of life in cities and urbanisation which denotes the development and extensions of these factors, these are thus not exclusively found in settlements which are cities in physical and demographic sense, they do, nevertheless, find their most profound expression in such areas, especially in metropolitan cities". Lynch calls 'urban' to what Wirth termed urbanism. Beals refers to it as the process of the 'adaptation of men to urban life'.

According to Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences: "urbanisation is characterised by movement of people from small communities concerned chiefly or solely with agriculture to other communities generally larger, whose activities are primarily centred in Government, trade, manufacture or allied interests. Thus urbanisation can be said to be characterised by such self-evident factor as;

- a) Mobility of population from agricultural to nonagricultural areas;
- b) Concentration of populace in a new place of habitation or a place characterised by a new way of life;
- c) Variety of professions other than agriculture and continued mobility in these

occupations, mobility both - vertical and horizontal,

- d) A particular mode of habitation and non-agricultural (i.e., industrial, commercial etc.) pattern of economy.

It may be observed that the degree of urbanisation is not merely judged by the percentage of total population living in an urban community, or number of urban places in any political or administrative territory, but also by the influence which an urban place or community exerts on cultural, political and economic life of its own hinterland and abroad. The above analysis shows that urbanisation includes the development of urban locales and urban traits.

### **Characteristics:**

Some of the essential characteristics of urbanism and ruralism are psychological. It is often true that the urban man must think faster and may speak faster keeping his thoughts to himself. The urbanity of the urbanised man is evident in his ability to enter and exit from the impersonal role, as when walking with the crowd, his ability to use anonymity as privacy. He is likely to be mode-conscious in matters of dress, conversation and manners. The urban way of life may also be evidenced in one's possessions, television, radio, telephone, electric devices in home, the type of kitchen, many articles with which the home is decorated, specially types of books and pictures. Let us now give some of the most obvious characteristics.

#### **1. Ways of Work**

Urban work is usually described as industrial which does not mean work in factories only. It is also a work in commerce and trade, in communication and services. Some work may not be different from work in a village, but the ways of work may be different. Emphasis is given on the use of machine and on refined ways of organising the work place in order to increase the productivity of workers. More than in a rural setting, work is sold and bought by time units. Non-work time, time gained from work separation, is leisure, and more efficient man becomes in his work, the more leisure he gains. This is an urban trait,

#### **2. Mobility:**

The urban way of life has never been one of fixed and enduring relationships. Even the most firmly rooted forms and structures must change, rapidly or gradually. The individual may be subjected to many social, economic and cultural pressures to hold him within fixed structures of occupation, family, caste and others. From the outside, he is also subject to pressures which compel him to move and change. It is called social or vertical mobility if one in his work life time moves to a higher occupation with more income or to a lower occupation with less income.

His social status is thereby changed. This may call for moving to a residence more suited to his new status. As more people move in a place more work must be found and that means more in quantity and variety.

#### **3. Impersonal Social Relationship**

It is said that stranger makes of the city the 9 intriguing place that it always is. The stranger feels freer than in the village. Being in the multitude does not permit acquaintance with everyone. Acquaintance and contacts must be selective and in general social interactions must be impersonal as they are also passing. Large family networks diminish but friendship networks remain quite alive, although they change as new friends are added and some -old ones fade into the background. Thus the impersonality of urban life is a necessary and convenient way of urban living.

#### **4. Time and Tempo Compulsions**

Mainly due to the nature of work, life in the urban community becomes "clock regulated". The farmer is not dominated by the clock or his life is very much controlled by the cycles of nature. But urban life increasingly separated from the rule of nature as it becomes increasingly industrial. Machine and mechanism become more important. We think of water supply system, drainage and sewage systems, telephone and other communication networks, the street lighting and traffic control networks as mechanisms. All of these must be regulated by a precise timing instrument and that is clock. Thus the urban way of life adopts a special type of rhythm in which the going and coming of millions must be coordinated and must move at a definite tempo.

#### **5. Family Living and the Individuals**

Traditionally in rural life the family has been and in large measures remains, the unit of most production and consumption. In most complete rural tradition where joint family prevails such as in India, the status of the individual depends on his family membership. But in most urban relationships it is the individual and not the family that becomes the unit in the labour market, in citizenship and other relations. Moreover, the family tends to lose some of its traditional functions, in particular economic and educational functions.

#### **6. The Man-made Environment:**

We have already described the urban environment as mechanical. Trees, grass and flowers are selected and may be found only where man wishes them to do. The streets are underlaid by water supply lines, sewers or gas supply. Lines of transportation may be on the surface, under the surface or overhead. Transit through the streets is

regulated by a system of lights. There are intricate and far reaching systems for communications. Being urbanised means to be informed: about all of these systems so necessary to collective living.

## RURAL-URBAN DICHOTOMY

While urbanization is a factor of social change, it is important to note that urbanization itself has gone considerable changes over a period of time. India had a well-developed tradition of urbanisation: people lived in towns as they lived in villages. When modern urbanization was introduced especially under British rule, it had its initial impact on traditional urbanism. It would be fruitful to compare here the relationship a village had with a city in pre-British India with that of today. Before going into the details of such relationships, some clarification is needed. Throughout our discussion of methodological problems, we have assumed that there is a difference between rural and urban social forms and it is this difference that constitutes the source of change for the traditional social structure of a village. This statement, however, needs some consideration in the light of the views that there is no real difference" between the two situations. D.F. Pocock for instance argues that both village and city are elements of the same civilization and hence - neither rural-urban dichotomy nor continuum is meaningful. The city in the past have provided the ground for maximum caste activity and it was a prime duty of the king to maintain the caste order. While Pocock rightly remarks that village and town formed parts of a single civilization in pre-British India, there are certain specific institutional forms and organizational ways distinguishing the social and cultural life of a village and a town. A brief account of the same will illustrate our statement.

## URBAN STUDIES

As noted earlier in comparison to man's civilized existence on earth, the history of the city is much shorter. And the attempts to understand and study cities are further of recent origin. Till industrial revolution city was taken as the image of the society itself and not some unique form of social life. In the writings of Plato and Aristotle we find such identification. In the social theory of Rousseau during eighteenth century the merging of city and society was powerfully advocated. It was during last two centuries of industrial revolution that there came a change as the cities themselves changed. Increase in the size of cities not only due to internal population growth but mainly due to huge immigration, increased social and occupational mobility, and introduction of market economy have profound impact on the social life of cities. Attempts to study urban life may be divided into two schools of thought. The first school was a German one centred in Heidelberg and Berlnt Celebrated German Sociologist Max Weber, Champion of formal school in sociology George Simmel and prominent linear

theorist Oswald Spengler are the main pioneer of this school. Max Weber's 'city' and Spengler's 'Decline of the west' are the classical piece in the history of urban literature. The second school developed at the university of Chicago in 1920s. The leaders of this school were Robert Park a journalist turned sociologist, Louis Wirth and Earnest Burgess. It was under the impact of this school that Robert Redfield initially an anthropologist became an urban sociologist. Afterwards Nels Anderson, R.N. Mooris and K. Davis have contributed good literature in the field of urban sociology.

## NEED OF THE STUDY

Rapid industrialization and urbanisation have already shown their effects in the form of problems like congestion, over-population and lack of space in many countries. Other social problems such as crime, delinquency alcoholism, prostitution and dehumanization are present to a great extent in west. India is also not free from these influences. Overcrowding, slums, fast tempo of life, break of primary relationships and change in traditional living, occupations, values etc. are fairly evident in Indian scene. Mass migration from the rural areas to cities and towns is creating imbalances in the economy. Urban amenities and the provisions of basic supply are increasingly facing problem of shortage and scarcity. Housing, sanitation, transport and medical facilities are not coping with the increasing demand. Town- and urban planning has therefore become a need of the time. Planners, administrators and social reformers are faced with difficult problems. Population and population concentration at a point involves many social and demographic problems. Demographically speaking city is a human settlement of large size and high density. Socially it is a heterogeneous society - a society of organic solidarity to quote Emile Durkheim or gessels chaft according to Tonnie's. Urban studies are therefore important from demographic and social point of view.

## CONCLUSION

Rapid increase in urban population, particularly during the last two decades, has been accompanied by an even more spectacular increase in the demand for urban land. Types of urban land uses other than residential have also produced augmented demands for land as deconcentration towards suburban areas has taken place. The lag in the political and administrative organization of the rapidly expanding urban areas have been clearly recognised. The problem could be effectively dealt with only when sufficient and precise information and statistics are made available. Present work may be helpful in this regard. Because it takes into consideration the problem of housing, electricity and power, water supply, health and sanitation. Present work also provides information about literacy trends, size of



household, recreation, law and order. This endeavour will be helpful for the town planner and municipal administration as well as for the police and law and order enforcement system. Understanding of the process of urbanisation from economic view point is also important. Work and the setting in which work is done mould and shape human attitude and behaviour. Economic mobility leads to social mobility and thus a shift in the social structure. Diversification of occupation as dealt in the following chapters creates problems of social adjustment. Participation of female population in industrial and extra-domestic occupations creates problem of family adjustment enforcing a different pattern of division of labour. Present study while dealing with social aspects of urbanisation will cover all these dimensions.

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