Chapter 7

CONCLUSION

The concept of urbanisation has been defined by both demographers and sociologists in various ways. Unlike demographers who analyse urbanisation as a process of mere increase in urban population both due to migration and natural population growth, the main concern of sociologists is to explain it in terms of changes occurred in the traditional social institutions, culture and cultural practices of the people living in urban areas. Besides viewing it as outcome of interplay of these and some emergent social institutions in a city, a few sociologists\(^1\) have also analysed urbanisation in relation to the environment and treated the city in terms of its physical expansion and role differentiation in space. While other\(^2\) have examined it within the given spatial and social structures in a city, still others\(^3\) have viewed it as an outcome of production and reproduction of goods and services, there exchange and the resultant

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\(^3\) Castells, M. *Urban Question*, 1977.
relations among the different sections of urban population.

Urbanism, on the other hand, is different from urbanisation wherein it is the condition that results from the process of urbanisation. Urbanism is usually referred to the style of life that characteristically develops under urban conditions for Louis Wirth\(^4\). Both urbanism and urbanisation are, thus, found in settlements which are called cities in the social and demographic senses. However, both urbanism and urbanisation in developing countries or societies are in many ways different from those in the developed ones where in the case former both are viewed as process and resultant outcome but in the latter both are interviewed and are found even in the countryside.

**Urbanisation in India**

Retrospectively, urbanisation in India had supposedly begun in about 2500 B.C. when a number of urban centres had flourished in the Indus Valley Civilization. Later, the village communities of the Aryans settled around 1400 B.C. grew into urban centres with the fall of the Gupta

Empire. The urbanisation process stagnated in between but was re-activated during the medieval period. However, such process of urbanisation prevalent during both the ancient and medieval periods has been qualified by accepting it as urbanism which was encircled within an urban centre built and lived in by the king, his courtiers and people of the service class.5

But the urban character of Indian cities got transformed during the colonial period when the British ruler in India developed many urban centres in the forms of imperial capitals, provincial capitals and district headquarters as treated in chapter 1. In spatial terms the urban growth rate was not in uniform especially towards the end of the colonial rule. For instance, the growth rate prior to independence was always uneven being sometimes extremely high but another time extremely low. The 1941-51 decade witnessed the rapid urban growth due to influx of the displaced persons from East Bengal and West Punjab on the eve of India's independence. Such growth rate continued, with some uneveness, during the preceding decades and now, according to the 1991 census, India accounts for 25.72 percent of the urban population.

We have also mentioned in chapter 1 as well as in the beginning of this chapter that urbanisation in India especially after independence has occurred due to natural growth of urban population and migration especially of rural people to the urban areas. In fact, it is more because of the latter which has often followed the lines of caste, kinship, friendship and village, linguistic and regional ties. A few of such migrants have successfully settled in urban areas and acquired the middle class status but the large majority of them have not fared well and are bound to live in slums or squatter settlements. They are a category of migrants having little resources to pay for the urban facilities. Thus, the spatio-social structures differ in the different areas or localities in a city depending upon the types of population living there.

**Urbanisation of Delhi**

Going by the demographic meaning of urbanisation, Delhi is highly urbanised amongst all the four megalopolises (Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi and Madras) and stands next to Calcutta. In 1951, the Delhi Union Territory had a total population of 1,744,072 persons covering an area of 577.6 sq miles. The density of population was 1,792 persons per sq km and the sex ratio
was 768 females per 1000 males. The growth of the city was around 11 towns forming the Greater Delhi as discussed in chapter 3. More residential colonies were established to relocate the displaced persons or the refugees immigrated after partition of the country.

During the preceding decades, the city of Delhi has grown manifolds and has become the centre of administrative, commercial and industrial activities. According to 1991 census the urban Delhi has registered a total population of 9,420,644 persons with the density of population being 6,352 persons per sq.km. The literacy rate in the city is 75.29 percent. In its growth, the city has included in itself many old villages including sub-urban villages, thus, stretching its territorial boundaries much beyond the earlier one. To accommodate the fast growing huge population, and to decentralise and relocate the administrative and industrial-commercial activities, the National Capital region (NCR) is being developed. The shape of Delhi in 2001 would depend much upon the planning and development of the NCR.

The present study

In view of the above, the present study has analysed various properties of the process of urbanisation by
identifying a number of factors contributing to variations in its level or degree. Since urbanisation either in demographic or sociological sense occurs in actuality in a given area or spatial unit in a city, we have examined it in relation to the nature of spatial and social structures in these spatial units. It is also a fact that these structures do not exist as independent entity, instead, these are interrelated in some ways. We have elucidated such relationship between both the structures in the present study. Finally, such relationship between both the structures has been analysed within the over riding impact of urbanisation though a reverse relationship between spatial and social structures and the different levels of urbanisation has also been inferred from the analysis made in this study.

Towards this end, a number of hypotheses have been verified with the help of the empirical data. Some of these hypotheses have already been mentioned in chapter 2. Since the present study is located in Delhi, we have selected three areas or localities from South Delhi on the basis of a random sampling as mentioned in chapter 2. These localities are R.K. Puram, Safdarjung Enclave and Mehrauli which are not only differentially located but also accommodate three distinct categories of people as mentioned in detail in chapters 2 and 3. These localities
were selected on the basis of their differential location, spatio-social structures, socio-economic development and the social composition of the population, residing there.

The research design of the present study is exploratory-descriptive in nature. To ensure that every household was represented by a sufficient number of persons, the method of stratified random sampling was adopted so as the universe was equally represented. In other words, out of a total 5348 households (2,459 households in R.K. Puram sectors III and IV, 758 households in Safdarjung Enclave and 2,131 households in Mehrauli) a sample of 258 households (86 households from each of the localities) was drawn. Since one person from each households was interviewed for the purpose of data collection, the total number of respondents selected for the present study was 258, i.e. 86 respondents from each locality.

The data

The data was collected from both the primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included a few informant's and the 'respondents' while in the secondary sources the relevant books, articles, periodical, governments reports, newspapers, magazines, etc where
consulted and used. The primary data was collected both in the exploratory phase in which the informants where contacted and in the second phase the actual field work was done by extensively interviewing the sampled respondents. The data thus collected was computed and both frequency and cross-tables with percentages were prepared analysed the various issues undertaken in the study.

The Spatio-Social structure of the localities

The spatial structure of the localities has been analysed in chapter 4 in terms of housing pattern, use of public space, water channels, sewage system, transport system, etc. Similarly, social structure has been explained in chapter 5 in terms of a number of social institutions and organisations, social interaction and relations, and also socio-cultural practices of the people. Thus it has been found that all the three areas or locality under study differ both in physical or spatial and social structure.

Since the area of R.K. Puram consisting of 13 sectors is a government residential locality housing the government employees of groups A to D, it also has the corresponding housing structure. The cluster of relatively spacious houses are located in such a manner as in front
of these sufficient rectangular space is available. Each sector is a self sufficient unit in itself. Similarly, the area of Safdarjung Enclave is a posh private residential locality inhabited by relatively affluent people who have constructed multi-storied spacious houses, besides a number of DDA flats, there are couple of encircled villages where housing structure is relatively less developed and thus making the whole area congested. Contrary to these two, the locality of Meharauli is highly congested though one can also see few spacious and richly built houses.

The drainage and sewage system is worst in Meharauli and the adjoining Kishangarh village which is also part of our study but the other two localities are much advanced in this regard. The transportation system affects and reflects the spatial structure and economic development of an urban unit. Delhi has a well inter-connected transportation system which integrates all the areas, and people can easily move in and out of the city. Such wide network of transportation is easily available to the people in all the three localities though Meharauli being practically located at the fringe of the city is relatively less privileged in this regard. Moreover, this locality also lacks many basic civic amenities like regular and proper supply of electricity, educational
institutions, medical facilities, etc unlike the other two localities under study.

The spatial structure of settlements of poor reproduces the physical form of a village. The housing pattern is also similar to that found in the villages. The community of the urban poor resembles the village community since they bring with them a whole network of relations and also the corporate institutions like family, marriage, caste, etc. which make the whole spatio-social structure of a locality more complex as seen in Mehrauli.

At the social structural level also, all the three localities differ greatly. For instance, it has been found in chapter 5 that the people in general and a few respondents in particular in both Mehrauli and in Safdarjung enclave are engaged in various kinds of business. Hence, thus structure of family in most of the cases is joint though nuclear families are also found in greater number. Unlike these, the joint families are found only in few cases in the locality of R.K. Puram. Similarly, there is change in the age at marriage of both boys and girls in all the three localities though a large majority of respondents have preferred arranged marriages within the caste.
Regarding gender equality, almost all the respondents were in favour of imparting higher education to both boys and girls. Looking at the growing consumer culture and financial hardships, they were also in favour of their girls taking up employment though most of them preferred teaching job as it provide them (girls) time to manage both the job and domestic chores easily. However the parents (respondents) from Mehrauli appeared to be less liberal in allowing their children particularly girls to have friends from the opposite sex.

Urbanisation and changing spatio-social structure

Every community in a given spatial unit has a social structure which is subjected to change by both the internal and external factors. In other words, the social structure adjusts and readjusts itself to the existing spatial structures though in turn it also influences them considerably. We have found in chapter 6 that both the spatial and social structure in all the three localities are inter-related in which one influences the others. That means in a given span of time both spatial and social structures undergo changes. This we have seen in case of all the three localities under study. We have, however, noted that such changes are contributed more by the nature and degree of urbanisation besides number of factors like
migration, self-initiation, etc. since the localities of R.K. Puram and Safdarjung Enclave are more urbanised, in socio-cultural senses, the changes in spatio-social structures prevalent there are also more advanced than that found in Mehrauli where urbanisation is less in degree.

We have also found in the previous chapter that the spatio-social structure of these localities in turn influence nature and degree of urbanisation found there. This we have seen in the context of culture and cultural practices of the people in all the three localities. More precisely, the locality of R.K. Puram demonstrates some sort of cosmopolitan culture because of diversified groups of people specially the government employees residing there. The resident in Safdarjung Enclave do live with metropolitan culture although such culture is not totally devoid of primordial considerations. Contrary to this, the culture and cultural practices of the people in Mehrauli are traditional as evident from their demonstrations on a number of occasions. The cultural modernisation has started creeping in social structure of the locality but very superficially. In brief the present study has found all the three localities varying in their spatio-social structures and nature and degree of urbanisation found there which has also affected the former in differential manner.