ABSTRACT

This study attempts to understand the pattern of residential area that evolves in suburbs of Indian cities. The pattern is essentially a morphological form that is brought about by a complex interacting set of processes in an environment. Here, in the specific case study, the setting is suburban, in eight maujas of the western part of the Ahmedabad city, studied during 1961-81.

The objectives of this study are to understand the growth and development of suburbs, especially residential suburbs. This study is not just concerned with the morphological or structural pattern, but also with the attitude and behaviour of residents. The study also aims at searching for processes that are responsible for such a pattern.

A 'Socio-Demographic' model, which is represented by a three dimensional rectangular parallelepiped graph, has been evolved to classify the residential pattern of the study-area. This model measures the level of 'Modernity' of the suburban residents in their socio-economic status, behaviour and lifestyle and housing characteristics. These three factors represent the three axes of the rectangular parallelepiped graph. The term 'Modern', used in this study, means freedom of thought and technological sophistication, whereas the term 'Traditional' means the belief in age-old traditional institutions of a particular point of time and space. Variables in 'Modernity' of these three factors give rise to a residential pattern of households and housing structure on space. In maujas, where all three factors are modern, the pattern of those maujas has been termed 'Modern', whereas, maujas where three factors are traditional have been termed 'Traditional'. Some maujas, which have the combination of both modern and traditional factors, have 'Mixed' pattern.

The relevance of studying the residential pattern of suburbs
lies in understanding the growth of suburbs - not only in terms of morphology but also in terms of composition and behaviour of residents and how people organise themselves on space and which factors control such a distribution of population. An analysis of processes of the pattern will hopefully throw light on the growth of Indian suburbs on which very little literature is available. The classification of suburbs by housing and households can be helpful in micro-level planning, by understanding the need of each area in terms of the composition of residents.

Various methodologies have been used to test hypotheses which have been formulated to bring out the objectives of the study. The 'Socio-Demographic' model has been represented in a graphical fashion rather than through statistical method, as the nature of the data is qualitative related to the behaviour, perception and attitude of residents. Both primary and secondary data have been used in this study. Primary data of 1500 households, relating to sixty variables, have been collected through field survey. All primary data are qualitative in nature, whereas secondary data, collected from various sources are of quantitative type.

The study area, i.e. the residential suburbs of Ahmedabad city is situated along the western side of Ahmedabad city. The study area has eight maujias of which Vejalpur, Jodhpur, Ranip and Ghatlodiya are much urbanised with the growth of new houses while Meemagar, Vastrapur followed by Chandlodiya and Thaltej, are less urbanised. The level of urbanisation has been measured by the rate of conversion of agricultural land into non-agricultural uses. This rate of change depends on various factors, e.g. nearness to the city, land value, socio-economic status of the residents of the core village around which suburbs grow etc. The study area has mainly three types of residential structures, i.e. core villages which are the original residential structures, existing prior to the development of the suburbs, housing societies which have been built due to suburbanisation and rest includes
In a cross-section of north to south in the study area, low growth of residential land use, low value of land and low growth of population is seen in the northern area where there is less development of various infrastructural facilities. In the south with good connectivity and accessibility the percentage of the residential area is high along with high land value and high growth of population. The northern section has residents with traditional socio-economic status, behaviour and housing characteristics. The situation is reverse in the southern side. In the central part of the study area, residents have the combination of both the traditional and modern characteristics of both morphological and behavioural aspects. So, the 'Socio-Demographic' model has formulated a slope of modernity in the residential pattern from south to north. This model has brought out that behaviour and life style do not change as fast as socio-economic status or housing characteristics of residents. It means that people take longer time to change their behaviour and life style, but external factors like housing, education, income can be changed faster. So modern housing as a result of suburbanisation, may not match with residents' behaviour which may be traditional.

The study area has various problems like mixed landuse, vacant land without being used for a long time, lack of proper infrastructure, dual social characteristics of housing societies and core villages which do not have proper sanitation, and sewerage system. Core villages can soon be converted into urban slums. So government must initiate a number of rigid actions to solve all these problems. Micro-level planning is possible by knowing the attitude and behaviour and need of residents in the suburbs.