Chapter - I

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, Homosapiens, 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.¹

(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 specialisation 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".  

Social analysts generally agree with the common sense observation that major social changes are taking place more rapidly now than at any earlier period of history. Some of the important social changes that are taking place in the modern world have created and are creating massive shift in social structure throughout the world. Urbanization is one of such important changes.

In its popular usages the term urbanisation refers to a process whereby a traditionally rural bound community wholly or partially moves to adopt a different pattern of life where activities are primarily centred in Government or manufacture. The process is intimately related with industrialization, westernization and modernization. All these are indices of change in different aspects of society. These concepts apparently look quite synonymous, although differ characteristically in meaning and contents.
The concept of urbanisation can be better understood after having an understanding of these concepts.

Industrialisation is the occupational or 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 industrialisation 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 of 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 neighbourhood 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'.

Differences in connotations, as is evident from the
above discussions are found in the meaning and scope of the
terms 'urbanism' and 'urbanisation'. Urbanism, however,
refers to those elements and factors which are internal to
urban or city life only. Whereas urbanisation is a process
of development and extension of these urban factors. In
Indian context the situation is a bit typical. Here the
city with a population of one lakh or so do not show the
typical urban characteristics as noted above. In this
context McKim Marriott has rightly observed that inspite of
numbers, density and heterogeneity, Indian cities are free
from its consequences. Even in modern cities with big
industries there need not to be the phenomena of isolation, impersonalism and secularism".

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 non-agricultural 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.
Lynch has observed that "urbanisation and urbanism are processes and fact respectively". In a wider perspective urbanisation is not an isolated culture trait but it is a function of total economy, its rapid growth indicates that fundamental changes are occurring at a rate sufficient to transform the pre-industrial societies. It has a positive relationship with industrialization and negative relation with agricultural density.

**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.

These different types of mobility usually mean transiency of contact. Continually making new contacts, one
cannot retain all the old ones. One holds fast to those contacts which are most needed in the competitive life.

3. Impersonal Social Relationship:

It is said that stranger makes of the city the intriguing place that it always is. The stranger feels more free than in the village. Being in the multitude does not permit acquaintance with every one. 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 Individual:

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.

These are some of the characteristics of urban civilization. Many others might be named, such as the
unique system of urban supply and consumption. But these are enough to support the observation that urban way of life is different.

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.

Among different types of towns - capital, commercial and pilgrim - capital towns showed a higher degree of social and economic differentiation. They had the nobility, the royal court, military, merchants, priests, landowners, artisans and crafts - men and servicing castes. Patanjali\textsuperscript{11} (about 4th century A.D.) lists occupations such as an architect (Nagarkara) and a mechanic (Ayaskara) in cities. Similarly, Ain-i-Akbari\textsuperscript{12} records not only several kinds of skilled occupations but also distinguishes three classes of workers based on levels of skill. There was a great deal of occupational mobility in cities than in villages. In the Mughal city of Delhi, the Jats and Ahirs were transporting contractors whereas they were cultivators in the villages. City was the place of both flexibility and consolidation of caste activity. The Brahmin ideology was only one source of legitimization of a particular verna hierarchy under Buddhism Kshatriya were placed at the top of the verna hierarchy.\textsuperscript{13}

Another point of distinction between the city and a village social organization was in the area of legal institutions. B.S. Cohn maintains that in theory, the
Mughal legal system provided regularity in procedure from the Emperor's court to the smallest sub-division - the pargana. But in real practice while kotwal was incharge of law and order in large cities, there was no one corresponding to kotwal in the villages. There the dominant caste settled the disputes. These sketchy examples reveal certain significant differences between the social situation in village and town within a broad frame-work of similarities. But in the post independent India situation started changing. Planned economic development, socio-cultural transformation due to spread of western education and mass media rapid spatial mobility and many other factors have contributed narrowing the rural urban differences. The community - both rural and urban - is becoming increasingly involved in a vast institutional network representing the larger political, economic and social order and it is unrealistic to view community as an entity separate and apart from the larger society. In Indian situation we have seen that cities and towns exert influence on village. Thus the peasants in villages around market towns and sea port grew commercial crops. Irfan Habib notes how the peasants took to tobacco cultivation.\textsuperscript{15}

Although this trend appears to have gone much farther in the technologically advanced countries of the west, it is apparent in the developing countries like India as well. Even in these countries people in all kinds of communities share in a common core culture or what Redfield
calls the Great society - a social, economic or religious system, for example such a social system is societal in scope. A community, while manifesting many distinctive characteristics, which may be unique or shared with other communities, is part of a larger social system and the system part of the community. The development of a social, economic or political organization that transcends the boundaries of any community and makes community and society inter-dependent and reciprocal part of the larger social order has been furthered by modern technology applied to communication and transportation. This trend is readily apparent in the industrialized countries. Communities that have been culturally as well as geographically isolated are being integrated, in varying degree, into the larger society. Urbanization is one phase of this integration and increasingly narrowing the rural-urban gulf.

**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 Berlin. 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.

In India before 1960 urban studies are not commonly done. Sociologists like R.K. Mukherjee and G.S. Ghurye have no doubt, written on the urban life. Cities here have mostly been studied by geographers. Dr. A.R. Tiwari (Agra) surveyed the urban regions of Agra, Dr. R.L. Singh (Varanasi) studied the urban geography of Banaras; Dr.
Ujagir Singh (Banaras) conducted a comparative study of KAVAL towns of Uttar Pradesh; Dr. R.L. Dwivedi (Allahabad) studied the urban geography of Allahabad. Some other studies were conducted by Dr. Madhusudan Singh (Agra) and Dr. S.P. Mathew (Dehradun) on Meerut and Dehradun respectively. Among Sociologist Dr. Baljit Singh in collaboration with late Dr. Radha Kamal Mukherjee, studied Lucknow and Gorakhpur: 'Social Profiles of a Metropolis' and 'A District Town in Transition'. Another study "Trends of Urbanisation in Uttar Pradesh" conducted by Mrs. Sudha Saxena has also been published. In 1970 M.S.A. Rao analysed the social change in Indian village and explain the impact of urbanisation in India in his work "urbanisation and social change". A very valuable work done by Ashish Bose 'pattern of population change in India 1961 (Bombay)' has benefited a lot to urban researchers. Prof. M.S.A. Rao (Delhi) has studied "urbanisation and social change". A recent contribution by Ashish Bose 'changing paradigm' 1991 (Bombay) in the realm of population and urban studies helps the researchers regarding the emerging pattern of population growth and the process of urbanization.

Roy Turner (ed.) 'India's Urban Future' is a valuable work of selected studies on urbanisation in India. Ashish Bose (Delhi) has written on the source material of urbanisation in India. Prof. M.N. Srinivas and Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao have contributed important articles on industrialization and urbanization. Allen G. Noble and
Ashok K. Dutta (ed.) 'Indian Urbanization and Planning' (Delhi) is a good work containing important articles on different aspects of urbanization and planning by distinguished sociologists and demographers of India and abroad. Besides, many articles and papers are contributed in different symposia and conferences. Inspite of these studies there is a growing need of further exploration in this field. Particularly in the context of India there is paucity of urban literature and the scope of urban research here is quite wide.

PRESENT STUDY - Need and Importance:

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 gesselschaft according to Tonnies. Urban studies are therefore important from demographic and social point of view.

Research based on primary data is no doubt useful as it provides first hand information about a social setting. Nevertheless its scope is limited. It fails to provide overall picture of realities. Present study based upon secondary data will be useful to understand the general trend of change in urban composition of the country. It has been generally realised that census data are mostly used in government and administration as records. Academic treatment of these data is not in much practice. This exercise is basically of academic orientation with a view to help understanding urban life. As it will be revealed in coming chapters, stress has been laid on major cities to investigate the pattern of change in the size and characteristics of these cities.

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.
REFERENCES